

Community Recreation Investment Program – 2014 Allocation Recommendations

Date:	March 3, 2014
To:	Community Development and Recreation Committee
From:	Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	18698

SUMMARY

This report recommends funding under the 2014 Community Recreation Investment (Community Recreation) Program. Of the 93 applications received, 16 are recommended for funding of \$450,000.00. An amount of \$36,410.00 has been held for appeals.

Community Recreation provides short-term funding to outcome-focused projects that contribute to the City's goal of increasing participation in recreation activities that support social and physical development. The program makes resources available to community-based, not-for-profit groups that are in a unique position to reach those with the greatest need and ensure recreational activities reflect diverse needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration recommends:

1. City Council approve the 2014 Community Recreation Investment Program (Community Recreation) allocations totalling \$450,000.00 to 16 organizations as recommended in Appendices A and B;
2. An amount of \$36,410.00 be held for appeals.

Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report will have no impact beyond what has already been approved in the 2014 operating budget.

This report recommends allocations for 16 organizations totalling \$450,000.00 with an appeal fund of \$36,410.00.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agree with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

The City of Toronto provides support to the not-for-profit sector through funding programs under the general authority for making municipal grants provided in Section 83 of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* (S.O. 2006, c.11)

The Social Development, Finance and Administration Division's 2014 Approved Operating Budget includes funding for the Community Recreation Investment program. The approved budget amount includes an increase towards Investment Funding programs representing the economic factor increase as approved by Council at its meeting of January 29 and 30, 2014

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewPublishedReport.do?function=getCouncilDecisionDocumentReport&meetingId=7848>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

A key priority of the Recreation Service Plan approved by City Council in November 2012¹ is to increase participation in recreation in order to help Toronto residents live long, healthy, active and fulfilling lives.

Community-led efforts to increase participation in recreation activities help create opportunities for people to work together to address a clearly identified recreation service gap or issue.

The Community Recreation Investment Funding Program (Community Recreation) provides short-term funding to Toronto-based not-for-profit groups offering quality projects that a) increase participation in recreation, b) engage diverse residents reflective of their neighbourhoods, c) builds skills, and d) uses recreation as a tool to develop the physical and social health of Toronto's residents.

¹ Recreation service plan can be found at

<http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=0991dada600f0410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD&vgnextchannel=efb31d94f4301410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>

COMMENTS

Community Recreation Funding Streamlining

The Community Funding Unit is conducting a review of Investment Funding grant programs. The Community Recreation program guidelines and application processes were further streamlined to ensure that the information requested informs decision making without placing unnecessary administrative burden on applicants.

In response to feedback from the community, the Community Recreation grant program was launched earlier to support community organization's programming that starts in late spring/early summer. Other changes included accepting requests for program enhancements and/or expansions to existing programs and for new project requests. While funding is time-limited, the activities may continue after funding has ended. However, in keeping with the Investment Funding program parameters, an organization's ongoing operating costs remain ineligible for funding.

Further review will be conducted over the year to ensure that Investment Funding programs effectively responds to the changing needs of the community, incorporates funding best practices, and achieves highest impact.

Application Process

Organizations applied for Community Recreation funding through the Corporate Grants Information System, the City's online funding database. Applicants were required to register to access the application forms from any internet-based computer. The online funding system is part of the City's plan to manage its funding program requests and grant recipient reporting more efficiently.

Guidelines and on-line registration for the 2014 Community Recreation Investment Program were available in December 2013 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2014.

Staff assisted applicants one-on-one to help them determine the funding programs best suited to the needs and priorities of their communities, talk about their project idea, answer questions about program criteria, or get help with their applications.

A total of 170 groups registered for access to the Recreation online application form (a 17% increase from 2013). 93 organizations completed and submitted the application by the deadline date (compared to 57 last year).

In order to help assess the changes piloted in the Community Recreation application process for applicants, registered organizations will be asked to complete a survey on their experience and suggestions. Staff will use the detailed survey responses to continue improvements to the grant program and application process for the 2015 funding cycle.

Assessment of Applications

93 applications were assessed. In order to be recommended for funding, applicants must meet common eligibility criteria, which are provided in the Community Recreation program guidelines². Core eligibility requirements include: non-profit status, located in the City of Toronto and demonstrated financial accountability. Organizations not incorporated as a not-for-profit must partner with an incorporated trustee organization to provide the financial accountability.

The assessment process includes a review of the following information: project description and rationale, work plan, project budget, organization's documents (audited financial statements, budget), and the applicant's resource capacity to carry out the proposed project.

Assessment of previously funded applicants considers their track record in providing progress and final reports on the implementation and outcomes of previously funded activities.

The assessment process determines the extent to which proposed projects address a clearly identified recreation service gap or issue using a community development approach. As well, the project must be delivered in line with the established quality and standards for the recreation activity. The following priorities were also considered: previously approved multi-year programs; projects that address some of the key areas identified in the Recreation Service Plan as needing continued focus such as youth, Aboriginal, newcomers, people with disabilities and seniors; and, recreation projects for residents living in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas.

The implementation strategy for the Recreation Service Plan informed the 2014 Community Recreation Funding Program in order to ensure alignment with the City's broader recreation strategy. Parks, Forestry & Recreation division provided input on the Community Recreation guideline revisions.

2014 Allocation Recommendations

Of the 93 applications received, 16 are recommended for funding and 77 are not recommended for support. This is equivalent to an approval rate of 17%.

The 16 projects recommended for funding requested a total of \$503,198, with an average request of \$31,450. \$450,000 is recommended for funding with the average grant amount of \$28,125.

The following are some of the benefits of the 16 projects recommended for funding:

² Program guidelines can be found at <http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20of%20Toronto/Social%20Development,%20Finance%20&%20Administration/Shared%20Content/Grants/Docs%20&%20Excels/Funding%20Guidelines%202014%20Community%20Recreation.pdf>

- A total of 9,504 people from across Toronto, including elders from marginalized communities, moms, children and youth, newcomers, and people living in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas, will be engaged in diverse, accessible recreational activities.
- Of the 16 projects recommended, 12 will be delivered in a neighbourhood improvement area (many serve multiple NIAs), three will work in other neighbourhoods, and one has a city-wide focus.
- The investment of \$450,000 will leverage an additional \$192,766.00 in in-kind support from project partners.
- In-kind supports committed for the projects include offerings such as free space and facilities, volunteer coaches, food donations, project equipment such as gardening tools, promotion, and project administration and oversight from community organization staff.
- 16 projects will directly employ people for a total of 13,609 hours, and leverage an additional 13,144 hours of in-kind staffing from community organization partners.
- A total of 259 volunteers will support the work of staff to implement the projects.

CONTACT

Jenn Miller, Manager, Community Funding
Social Development, Finance and Administration
Phone: 416.397.7302 Fax: 416.392.8492 Email: jmiller4@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Chris Brillinger,
Executive Director,
Social Development, Finance and Administration

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Community Recreation Investment Program – 2014 Allocation Recommendations

Appendix B: Community Recreation Investment Program – Detailed Project Summaries of Projects Recommended for Funding

**Appendix A:
Community Recreation Investment Program – 2014 Allocation Recommendations**

<u>Applicant Group</u>	<u>Trustee Organization (if provided)*</u>	<u>Ward**</u>	<u>2013 Approved Allocation</u>	<u>2014 Amount Requested</u>	<u>2014 Amount Recommended</u>	
Projects Recommended For Funding						
1	3T Program	COSTI Immigrant Service	42	n/a	\$ 15,000.00	\$15,000.00
2	Art Starts Neighbourhood Cultural Centre		16	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 30,290.00	\$30,000.00
3	Arts for Children and Youth (AFCY)		20	n/a	\$ 47,347.00	\$35,000.00
4	Better Living Health and Community Services (E. P. Taylor Place)		25	n/a	\$ 43,500.00	\$40,000.00
5	Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre		36	\$32,000.00	\$ 33,510.00	\$32,000.00
6	Canadian Mental Health Association Metropolitan Toronto Branch		15	n/a	\$ 45,000.00	\$38,000.00
7	Centre for Community Learning and Development (formerly East End Literacy)		28	n/a	\$ 29,980.00	\$29,000.00
8	Centre for Spanish-Speaking Peoples		9	n/a	\$ 25,173.50	\$25,000.00
9	Community Action Resource Centre		12	n/a	\$ 10,040.00	\$10,000.00
10	East Scarborough Storefront-Tides		43	\$ 49,800.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$36,000.00
11	Evergreen		29	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$40,000.00
12	FCJ Refugee Centre		17	n/a	\$ 25,000.00	\$25,000.00
13	Harbourfront Community Centre		20	n/a	\$ 35,899.00	\$32,000.00
14	P.O.I.N.T. Inc. (People and Organizations in North Toronto)		16	n/a	\$ 15,690.00	\$15,000.00
15	Self-Help Resource Centre		22	n/a	\$ 33,768.00	\$30,000.00
16	Thornccliffe Neighbourhood Office		26	n/a	\$ 18,000.00	\$18,000.00
Grand Total:					\$503,197.50	\$450,000.00
Appeals Fund:						\$ 36,410.00
2014 Approved Budget:						\$486,410.00

**Wards represent the mailing addresses of the applicant group. Project service locations vary considerably.