

# CD2.9

## Attachment 1

# Distl.

March 6, 2015

**Councillor James Pasternak**

Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West, Suite A22  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2  
Phone: 416-392-1371  
Fax: 416-392-7299

**Re: Funding for the 2015 NXT City Prize**

Dear Councillor Pasternak,

Please accept this letter as a request for funding for the 2015 NXT City Prize from the Community Development and Recreation Committee. Financial support from the committee will help us take the programming of this year's NXT City Prize to new heights, help us inspire and nurture future leaders and showcase the City of Toronto as a destination for bold ideas, innovative thinking and world-class public spaces. This year's competition theme will explore how public spaces can create opportunities (social, economic, health etc.) for people in our City. We believe that this theme aligns with the mandate of your committee.

**Summary:**

In 2014, Distl conceived of and successfully launched the NXT City Prize, a new engagement platform that invites young people to imagine creative ideas for public spaces in Toronto. Through the NXT City Prize platform, we have a credible and engaging brand that connects directly with young people in ways that municipal governments find challenging. It also directly supports the City's new Youth Engagement Strategy.

Using our platform and brand, we provide the public and the City of Toronto with a unique opportunity to improve the public spaces around them. Here's how it works:

1. NXT City Prize connects with young people to inspire them and provide them with a tool to apply their creativity and innovation to public space improvement.
2. Young people submit their public space ideas in a competition-style call for proposals, with generous cash prizes as incentives.
3. NXT City Prize establishes key partners – including the City of Toronto, members of the creative sector and development leaders – as a panel of jurors to decide which proposals are the best improvements to public spaces.
4. The winning submissions are paired with the partners (City of Toronto staff, corporate partners, non-profits, and others) to implement the winning ideas and integrate young people into the process.

Thanks to the support of the City of Toronto as well as numerous other civic organizations, foundations, and the corporate community, the inaugural NXT City Prize enjoyed widespread success in its inaugural 2014 year, including:

- Over 120 entries from young people across Ontario.
- Coverage by over 20 national and local media outlets including the CBC, Global News, the Toronto Star and BlogTO.
- Over 500 guests at the NXT City Night awards ceremony, including Mayor John Tory.
- Total reach of over 100,000 people through social media channels and over 4,000 page visits to [www.nxtcityprize.com](http://www.nxtcityprize.com) within months of the competition launch.
- The winning project is a tangible public space improvement project for the transformation of downtown Yonge Street into a major pedestrian-focused thoroughfare.
- Many runner-up groups are now working towards implementation of their own projects with support from their local community organizations.

**Request:**

Dedicated funding from our partners at the City is critical to help run and grow this important program successfully year after year. While we continue to engage corporate sponsors to help us execute this initiative, the budget for 2015 is \$160,000 and we are anticipating a shortfall of \$75,000 at this point, limiting our ability to deliver the program in its fullest capacity. We are seeking funding assistance from the Community Development and Recreation Committee to help relieve this shortfall.

To see more information on the competition from last year, please visit [www.nxtcityprize.com](http://www.nxtcityprize.com).

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your response. Please feel free to call 647.470.7021 or 647.922.0504 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mackenzie Keast  
Partner, Distl