

2022 Toronto Urban Health Fund Review Process and Allocations

Date: May 6, 2022

To: Board of Health

From: Medical Officer of Health

Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report outlines the funding priorities, application review process, and funding allocation recommendations for the 2022 Toronto Urban Health Fund (TUHF). The 2022 TUHF Review Panel recommends the total allocation of \$483,677 for seven one-year projects and \$2,852,659 for thirty-five third-year projects previously approved by the Board of Health in 2020. The combined total allocation of \$3,336,336 for the forty-two projects is to be used between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. Recommended projects focus on HIV prevention through sexual transmission, harm reduction, child and youth resiliency, and Indigenous health promotion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. The Board of Health authorize the Medical Officer of Health to allocate \$483,677 from the 2022 Approved Operating Budget for Toronto Public Health for seven one-year projects and to execute Funding Agreements with the approved applicants, as outlined in Tables 1 and 2 and Appendix 2 to this report.
2. The Board of Health authorize the Medical Officer of Health to allocate \$2,852,659 from the 2022 approved Toronto Public Health Operating Budget for Toronto Public Health to carry out third-year activities for 35 three-year projects and to execute Funding Agreements with the approved applicants, as outlined in Tables 1 and 2 and Appendix 2 to this report.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This report recommends an allocation of \$3,336,336 for seven one-year projects and thirty-five three-year projects as outlined in Tables 1 and 2 and Appendix 2 to this report.

There is no financial impact associated with this report beyond what has already been approved in the 2022 Approved Operating Budget for Toronto Public Health.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed the report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of June 8, 2020, the Board of Health approved thirty-five three-year projects to be implemented from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.HL17.3>

COMMENTS

The modernized Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS 2018) from the Ministry of Health mandates the provision of HIV/AIDS prevention and substance use prevention and harm reduction programs and services through local public health units. The TUHF provides funding for community-based non-profit organizations to deliver some of these programs and services because they build individual and community capacity to support HIV prevention, harm reduction, and child and youth resiliency.

Community-based funding strategically addresses a variety of factors relevant to HIV transmission and substance use including cultural and language barriers; stigma and discrimination; distrust of government organizations; and colonization. Community agencies are uniquely positioned to provide accessible, relevant, timely and culturally-safe HIV prevention, harm reduction, and child and youth resiliency programming to marginalized and vulnerable populations in Toronto.

Funding Criteria and Priorities

The Toronto Urban Health Fund provides one and three-year funding opportunities to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations. The objective of one-year funding is to fund innovative interventions or pilot projects that address emerging or short-term public health issues, or to conduct needs assessments in order to increase the understanding of the health and programming needs of high-risk populations. High-risk populations include people who use substances, those who are at-risk of engaging in high-risk sexual behaviours, and Indigenous peoples. The objective of three-year

funding is to fund projects that are based on effective interventions and community-based best practices that are flexible and responsive to longer-term trends.

Non-Indigenous funded projects must address the needs of TUHF priority populations through resiliency building, organizational and community capacity building, and health promotion strategies including creating supportive environments, strengthening community action, re-orienting health services, and developing personal skills. Projects funded under the Indigenous stream must use a holistic approach to Indigenous health and healing that is modeled around traditional ways of knowing. Projects funded in this stream must promote Indigenous self-determination, cultural safety, and health, in addition to addressing HIV and/or substance use prevention within Indigenous populations.

In addition, consideration is given to projects servicing high-needs geographic areas, such as City of Toronto-designated Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs) or neighbourhoods with a high incidence of HIV, Hepatitis C, or at higher risk of substance use and overdose. Similarly, further consideration is provided to projects with services targeting youth residing in NIAs and African, Caribbean and Black populations. Emphasis is also placed on reducing the duplication of services focusing on these populations by other community agencies, funders, and Toronto Public Health.

Community Outreach, Request for Proposals and Support – 2022 Project Solicitation Process

The TUHF application process is a two-phased process involving the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) which occurred in November 2021 and the submission of a funding proposal for successful EOI applicants which occurred in February 2022.

Toronto Urban Health Fund staff supported potential applicants by providing two EOI writing workshops and two proposal writing workshops. In addition, TUHF staff were available to applicants for clarification around the applications, review, and allocations process, as well as to provide technical support on the application forms.

In November 2021, TUHF received 33 EOIs requesting \$4.9 million for the 2022 funding year: one from the Indigenous stream, one from the HIV Prevention through Sexual Transmission stream, eleven from the Harm Reduction stream, and twenty from the Child and Youth Resiliency stream. The EOIs were independently reviewed by TUHF staff using standardized TUHF project eligibility and assessment criteria. Sixteen EOIs did not meet TUHF assessment criteria and seventeen successful EOIs were invited to submit funding proposals.

Of the 17 successful EOIs, two applicants withdrew from the process and did not submit funding proposals while 15 proposals were received requesting \$1.25 million for the 2022 funding cycle: none from the Indigenous stream, one from the HIV Prevention through Sexual Transmission stream, six from the Harm Reduction stream, and eight from the Child and Youth Resiliency stream.

Review Process

On March 9, 2022, the Medical Officer of Health appointed six members and three alternate members to the 2022 TUHF Review Panel (Appendix 1).

Toronto Urban Health Fund staff and Review Panel Members used a matrix to assess proposals based on the following established criteria: evidence informed/based approaches; project planning and development; target population reach; population needs, and risks addressed; and cost effectiveness. In addition, allocation recommendations considered the distribution of funding across the four funding streams, priority populations, geographic areas, and epidemiological needs.

Funding for Three-year Projects

During routine project monitoring, staff noted an error in the funding allocation for Asian Community AIDS Services (When You're Ready - Supporting Asian LGBTQ+ Youth, Project Number: 20-3-RES-01). The error has been addressed in the revised funding amount of \$89,526 (\$78,846 previously).

Summary of Recommendations from the TUHF Review Panels

On April 12, 2021, applicants were informed of preliminary recommendations from the Review Panel. The Review Panel made preliminary decisions to approve four proposals, approve three proposals with conditions, recommend that two proposals be appealed, and not fund six proposals. An applicant with an approved proposal subsequently withdrew. An amount of \$245,637 representing 43 percent of the allocations budget was set aside for the appeals process.

On April 26, 2022, the 2022 TUHF Review Panel met to consider five appeal submissions from applicants that received conditional approvals and those that were recommended to appeal. Four applicants addressed the conditions and issues set out by the Review Panel and were preliminarily approved for funding. In total, seven projects are recommended for funding. Table 1 provides a summary of the distribution of projects recommended for funding, broken down by the TUHF funding streams. Table 2 provides a summary of the distribution of funding to TUHF target populations.

Table 1 – 2022 Funding Allocation Recommendations by Funding *Stream*

Funding Stream	One-Year Projects Amount Recommended (number of projects)	Three-Year Projects Amount Recommended (number of projects)	Total Funding Amount (percentage of total)	Total Projects Number (percentage)
Indigenous	\$0 (0)	\$405,036 (4)	\$405,036 (12%)	4 (10%)
HIV Prevention through Sexual Transmission	\$90,600 (1)	\$808,852 (10)	\$899,452 (27%)	11 (26%)

Harm Reduction	\$135,798 (2)	\$908,130 (11)	\$1,043,928 (31%)	13 (31%)
Child and Youth Resiliency	\$257,279 (4)	\$730,641 (10)	\$987,920 (30%)	14 (33%)
Total	\$483,677 (7)	\$2,852,659 (35)	\$3,336,336(100%)	42 (100%)

Table 2 – Funding Distribution by TUHF Target Population

TUHF Population	One-Year Projects Amount recommended (percentage)	Three-Year Projects Amount recommended (percentage)	Overall Amount recommended (percentage)
Vulnerable and high-risk youth	\$164,419 (34%)	\$594,214 (21%)	\$758,633 (23%)
Indigenous populations		\$462,501 (16%)	\$462,501 (14%)
People who Inject Drugs	\$51,048 (11%)	\$436,078 (15%)	\$487,126 (15%)
People who use drugs		\$206,866 (7%)	\$206,866 (6%)
People living with HIV/AIDS	\$175,350 (36%)	\$40,346 (1%)	\$215,696 (6%)
African Caribbean Black population		\$195,450 (7%)	\$195,450 (6%)
People who engage in Sex Work		\$173,289 (6%)	\$173,289 (5%)
Sex Partners of High-Risk Populations		\$159,348 (6%)	\$159,348 (5%)
People in prisons	\$92,860 (19%)	\$142,177 (5%)	\$235,037 (7%)
Men who Sex with Men		\$133,496 (5%)	\$133,496 (4%)
People who are Transgender		\$81,303 (3%)	\$81,303 (2%)
People who are Street-Involved		\$227,591 (8%)	\$227,591 (7%)
Total	\$483,677 (100%)	\$2,852,659 (100%)	\$3,336,336 (100%)

Funding Oversight and Management

The management of the TUHF program is aligned with the City of Toronto Grants Policy, the City of Toronto Risk Management Framework, and the TPH Accountability Reporting Framework. Toronto Public Health staff oversee and monitor funding recipients' service delivery, data collection and reporting, financial reporting, and project evaluation throughout the lifecycle of the funding agreements. Should funded organizations not meet the conditions of their Funding Agreements at any point, TPH will discontinue funding.

Project Monitoring

Funded projects are bound by the terms and conditions outlined in their Funding Agreements. Material changes to the budget and nature of the contracted activities for which funding has been approved require prior written approval by TPH staff. Project monitoring is conducted by TPH staff through site visits, consultations, and face-to-face, phone and e-mail communications with the funded organizations. Toronto Public Health staff also observe workshops, presentations, and community events, and assess resources developed by funded agencies. Organizations must complete all contracted services to qualify for future funding. All funded agencies are required to submit interim and year-end progress and financial reports for their projects in each year of funding.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Dr. Eileen de Villa
Medical Officer of Health

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: Toronto Urban Health Fund Review Panel Members Appointed by the Medical Officer of Health

Appendix 2: Project Summaries and Recommended Activities for Each Project Recommended for Funding