

TAF Grants Program Updates

Date: April 14, 2026
To: Board of Directors of the Toronto Atmospheric Fund
From: Senior Grants Manager

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on enhancements to TAF's Grants Program in 2026 and recommends Board approval of the allocation of endowment proceeds to grants approved in 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senior Grants Manager recommends that the Board of Directors of the Toronto Atmospheric Fund:

1. Approve the allocation of funding to grants approved in 2025 as presented in Attachment 1.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact to the City of Toronto resulting from the adoption of the recommendations in this report.

DECISION HISTORY

On March 26, 2026, the Grants and Programs Committee discussed and provided feedback on a staff proposal for a streamlined pathway for small and time-sensitive grant requests.

In 2025, the TAF Board approved ten (10) grants totalling \$1,469,477. These approvals were made at Board meetings on April 29, 2025 (<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.TA10.8>), July 18, 2025 (<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.TA10.8>), and November 24, 2025 (<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.TA12.11>).

COMMENTS

Two Grant Intakes in 2026

Following analysis and consultation, staff determined that moving from three grant intakes to two beginning in 2026 will strengthen the overall quality and impact of TAF's grants program. There will be more time for applicants to prepare robust proposals and for staff to conduct thorough review and due diligence and provide feedback at each stage. It will also facilitate proactive cultivation and engagement with prospective applicants to identify opportunities aligned with TAF's mandate. Staff will monitor outcomes and report to the Grants and Programs Committee with learnings and any recommended adjustment.

Streamlined Pathway for Small Projects

In 2026, a streamlined pathway for recommending small, time-sensitive grant requests will be piloted. This is designed both to address the abovementioned move to two annual intakes and be responsive to community needs, while maintaining appropriate due diligence and full compliance with TAF's Grants Policy. The pathway will apply only to tightly scoped, time-bound projects that are ready to launch and requests of no more than \$50,000. Grants approved through this mechanism will be capped at 15% of the annual grants budget. Staff will use the same evaluation criteria as regular applications, but rather than proceeding to the Grants and Programs Committee for review, staff assessments will be brought to the CEO, who will make funding recommendations directly to the Board for approval. The Board retains the obligation to and authority for approval of all grants. Recommendations may be presented to the Board alongside Grants and Programs Committee recommendations or as standalone items. For compliance with the Ontario endowment agreement, projects recommended will not exceed \$25,000 of Ontario proceeds. Activity and outcomes will be monitored and reported to senior management and a determination will be made on whether to continue or adjust the approach. The Grants and Programs Committee will be consulted and informed.

Allocation of Endowment Proceeds to Grants Approved in 2025

Each of TAF's endowments is subject to specific requirements, including that lobbying activities are ineligible for Ontario funds. In order to undertake the robust triple-fund accounting required, staff undertook a detailed, activity-based assessment of the grants approved by the Board during 2025. Any lobbying-related expense is funded only by proceeds of the Toronto and Canada endowments, and other activities funded proportionally from the three endowments. For a conservative approach, notwithstanding the above, projects that are predominantly focused on policy reform will not have an Ontario endowment allocation. This evolution in practice improves alignment with endowment purpose and restrictions and supports strong stewardship and transparency in the administration of TAF's grant funds. Attachment 1 summarizes the allocations for 2025. There is no change to the total funding, project scope or deliverables approved by the Board.

Carbon Quantification Guide for Grant Applicants

Staff have developed a comprehensive Carbon Quantification Guide for Grant Applicants to increase clarity, consistency, and transparency in how TAF evaluates the carbon reduction potential of proposed projects. This new resource is intended to improve application quality, ensure comparability across proposals, and support evidence-based decision-making, while recognizing that applicants may have varying levels of technical familiarity. The guide explains TAF's approach to assessing

emissions impact, outlines the information applicants are expected to provide, and clarifies how carbon impact factors into funding decisions. It reinforces that carbon reduction is central to TAF's mandate and accounts for 20% of total application scoring. It describes TAF's focus on funding projects that address the GTHA's largest sources of emissions, and distinguishes between projects that deliver direct, quantifiable emissions reductions and those that support critical pathways for longer term impact, such as workforce development or enabling tools and standards. To support applicants, the guide provides sectors-specific examples of relevant metrics (e.g., energy and emissions reductions, technologies deployed, and adoption or utilization rates), as well as illustrative examples of high, medium, and low impact projects. The guide has been shared with colleagues in the grantmaking community who have found it very useful and provides an avenue for scaling impact.

CONTACT

Sadia Khan, Senior Grants Manager, skhan@taf.ca

SIGNATURE

Sadia Khan
Senior Grants Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Grants Approved in 2025