

# EVALUATION OF THE TORONTO URBAN HEALTH FUND APPLICATION, REVIEW, AND ALLOCATIONS PROCESS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### BACKGROUND

In 2013, the AIDS Prevention Community Investment Program and the Drug Prevention Community Investment Programs were restructured to form the Toronto Urban Health Fund. With the consolidation of the programs, three funding streams (HIV Prevention, Harm Reduction and Child & Youth Resiliency) along with one and three year funding were created.

Link to Toronto Board of Health decision:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.HL24.6>

### METHODS

The evaluation consisted of the following four quantitative and qualitative components:

1. Applicant Tracking Sheet
2. Review Panel Survey
3. Review Panel De-Briefing Session and Interviews
4. Applicant Survey

### RESULTS

#### A) QUANTITATIVE DATA

##### Application Statistics

A total of \$868,179 was recommended for projects under the HIV Prevention stream, \$865,925 under the Harm Reduction stream, and \$479,951 under the Child and Youth Resiliency stream, representing 39%, 39%, 22% of the total TUHF budget respectively. Of the returning applicants, 41% in the HIV Prevention stream were funded, 37% were funded in the Harm Reduction stream, and 22% were funded in the Child and Youth Resiliency stream.

##### Review Panel Survey

Review Panel members were satisfied with the information provided regarding the review process and the memory sticks provided with the assessment forms and applications. Half of the Review Panel members were satisfied with the Review Panel orientation, the information provided by TPH staff at the subpanel meetings, and the process of the allocations meeting. Review Panel members were unsatisfied with the assessment form.

**Applicant Survey**

The evaluation revealed that, overall, the majority of funding applicants (60-80%) were satisfied with most components of the application, review, and allocations process. Applicants were satisfied with the overall application process but were overall unsatisfied with the application form. In terms of the review process, the majority of applicants agreed that: a) TPH staff answered questions they had during the review; b) TPH staff was helpful during the review; and c) TPH staff responded to questions within 48 hours during the review process, however, fewer than half of applicants agreed they understood how funding decisions were made.

Overall, appellants agreed that the appeals instructions were easy to understand and that TPH staff answered questions within 48 hours. Fewer than 50% of appellants agreed that: a) the feedback provided on the decision letter was helpful; and b) they had enough time to speak at the appeals meeting.

The most frequently identified challenges faced when completing the application were: a) understanding how to answer the questions; b) using the technology required to complete the application; and c) lack of access to evaluation and research evidence.

**B) QUALITATIVE DATA**

Two major themes and 16 sub-themes emerged from the combined qualitative data (see [Table 2](#)).

**Table 2 Major Themes and Sub-themes Identified through Evaluation Process**

Successes of the New TUHF Process
<div>a) review process was perceived as fair; b) funding guideline was useful and helpful; c) orientation was helpful; d) TPH staff were helpful; e) increased transparency; f) increased accountability; and g) enhanced community engagement.</div>

### Challenges of the New TUHF Process

- a) application form was not user-friendly;
- b) appeals process needs restructuring;
- c) enhanced clarity needed
- d) not enough funds to meet the need;
- e) enhance orientation for review panel members
- f) work on enhancing agency capacity;
- g) enhance funding guidelines;
- h) time commitment to review and assess applications;
- i) application scoring was too cumbersome

## ACTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Based on the results of the evaluation, TUHF staff will take action in the following three areas to improve the application and review processes for the 2015 funding cycle.

### 1. PROGRAM PROMOTION AND OUTREACH:

- a) Work with relevant advisory committees, including the Toronto HIV Network, the Toronto Harm Reduction Alliance, as well as the City of Toronto's Social Development Finance & Administration division:
  - i. to identify agencies to expand the reach of TUHF to organizations serving newcomer and high-risk youth in particular those residing in NIAs; youth-in-care; sex workers who use alcohol and other drugs; and sexual partners of high risk populations
  - ii. to enhance the capacity of organizations working to address the primary prevention needs of people living with HIV/AIDS
- b) Work with TPH's Aboriginal Health Community of Practice, the City's Aboriginal Affairs Committee and the Toronto Central LHIN developing an aboriginal health strategy to identify how aboriginal health issues can be better addressed and supported through the TUHF.

### 2. APPLICATION PROCESS:

- a) In addition to ongoing outreach and support to population groups being funded, address health equity and population-specific concerns related to the primary



prevention needs of aboriginal youth, newcomer and ethno-racial populations and people living with HIV/AIDS through evidence informed practices

- b) Revise the application form and consolidate the application and budget sections using the more user-friendly writeable PDF format.
- c) For each funding cycle, provide information on the total amount of funds available and the estimated number of fundable proposals per funding stream.

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### **3. REVIEW PROCESS:**

- a) Develop a tool that incorporates quantitative and qualitative information to assess the performance, capacity, and developmental needs of currently funded projects and incorporate the assessment into the Review Panel summaries.
- b) Provide Review Panel committee members with a more comprehensive orientation and include information on available population-specific epidemiology, geospatial data, and evidence-informed approaches.
- c) Work with the 2015 Review Panel to determine optimal allocation of review workload
- d) Enhance the diversity of community input by increasing the membership of each subpanel committee from three to five citizen experts and account for unplanned attrition by recruiting and orienting alternate members.
- e) Provide specific feedback on areas of strength and weakness in the application to help appellants address concerns and issues raised with their project proposal and to provide feedback to applicants for continuous quality improvement for future applications.
- f) Restructure the appeals process by providing sufficient time for appellants to prepare their deputation, for Review Panel members to review and assess deputations and to replacing the oral deputations with written submissions.

## DETAILED REPORT

### HISTORICAL FUNDING STRUCTURE

In 2013, the AIDS Prevention Community Investment Program and the Drug Prevention Community Investment Programs were restructured to form the Toronto Urban Health Fund. With the consolidation of the programs, three funding streams (HIV Prevention, Harm Reduction and Child & Youth Resiliency) along with one and three year funding were created.

Link to Toronto Board of Health decision:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.HL24.6>

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the restructured TUHF application, review, and allocations process. This evaluation will determine if the application and review process allocated funding to organizations that reach TUHF priority populations and what successes and challenges occurred within this new TUHF process.

The evaluation aims to answer the following questions:

1. How many and what type of organizations/community partners have been 'reached' through the TUHF?
2. Are applicants satisfied with the application and grant allocation process?
3. Are Review Panel members satisfied with their experience on the Review Panel?
4. What were the successes of restructuring the funding program?
5. What were the challenges of restructuring the funding program?
6. How can we improve the funding program for future funding cycles?

The results will help inform and improve the application, review and allocation process for future funding cycles.

### METHODS

The evaluation methodology consisted of multiple data collection mechanisms and tools with various stakeholders. Opinions were sought from Review Panel members and TUHF applicants. Respondents involved in this evaluation project formed a non-randomized/strategic sample of willing participants. Data collection tools were developed by TUHF (Appendices 2-4) and online survey software (i.e., FluidSurveys<sup>TM</sup>) was used for data entry and provided files for data analysis.

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## **DATA COLLECTION TOOLS**

The data collection tools were developed to answer the evaluation objectives, gather various perspectives, and to be easy to administer. The data collection period took place during May 2014. Quantitative data were collected through applicant data tracking sheets, a Review Panel Survey, and an Applicant Survey. Quantitative data were analyzed using quantitative software (i.e., SPSS version 19.0). Qualitative data were collected through the Review Panel de-briefing session and interviews. Open ended/textual questions were coded by themes. All analyses are based on valid (non-missing) cases only.

### **1. COLLECTION OF APPLICANT TRACKING SHEETS**

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Electronic tracking sheets were used to record the number of new and returning applicants in each stream, the number of one- and three-year funded organizations from each stream, the number of applicants funded as a purchase of service agreement, and the total funds allocated to each stream. Using previously collected data from 2010-2014, a comparison of proportion of funding for each stream was completed. When comparing information from the current and previous funding years, data were analyzed using percentages.

### **2. REVIEW PANEL SURVEY**

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At the end of the grant allocations and appeals process, all Review Panel members were asked to complete a questionnaire which included client satisfaction, knowledge, and skills questions. The questionnaire was completed anonymously through FluidSurveys<sup>TM</sup>. Invitations and reminders to participate were delivered via email. The questionnaire was developed by the TUHF Health Promotion Specialist, in conjunction with the TUHF team. Quantitative data were analyzed using the summary analyses from FluidSurveys<sup>TM</sup>. Qualitative data from the open ended questions were separately categorized into themes by two TUHF staff. The two staff discussed the themes and the comments under each theme until consensus was reached. See Appendix 2 for a copy of the Review Panel survey.

### **3. REVIEW PANEL DE-BRIEFING SESSION AND INTERVIEWS**

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At the end of the grant allocations and appeals process, all Review Panel members were invited to attend a Review Panel de-briefing session. The session lasted three hours and took place at City Hall. The TUHF Health Promotion Specialist led the session while TUHF staff took notes. Review Panel members were asked to provide feedback on each component of the review process, in addition to feedback on overall communication with TPH staff.

The City Councillors who participated on the Review Panel were unable to attend the de-briefing session. As a result, following the de-briefing session, two individual interviews were held with the City Councillors. Qualitative data from the de-briefing session and interviews were separately categorized into themes by two TUHF staff. The two staff discussed the themes and the comments under each theme until consensus was reached. The same questions were asked of the Review Panel and City Councillors during the de-briefing session and interviews. See Appendix 3 for a copy of the Review Panel de-briefing and interview questions.

#### **4. APPLICANT SURVEY**

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At the end of the grant allocations and appeals process, all TUHF applicants were asked to complete a client satisfaction questionnaire. The questionnaire was completed anonymously through FluidSurveys<sup>TM</sup>. Invitations and reminders to participate were delivered via email. The questionnaire was developed by the TUHF Health Promotion Specialist, in conjunction with both the TUHF team and external stakeholders. Data were entered into SPSS version 19.0. Where appropriate, chi square analyses were used to determine whether a difference in satisfaction occurred between applicants who were funded, and those who were not funded. Significance levels were set at  $p \leq 0.05$ . Anticipating that statistical analyses would yield non-significant changes due to small sample sizes, the results were also analyzed using percentages. Qualitative data from the open ended questions were separately categorized into themes by two TUHF staff. The two staff discussed the themes and the comments under each theme until consensus was reached. See Appendix 4 for a copy of the applicant survey.

#### **5. CODING SYSTEM**

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To allow for quick visual scanning of the results, data has been colour categorized. Data in orange is considered an immediate area for improvement, data in yellow is considered an area for improvement, and data in blue is not considered an area for improvement. Colour coding was done as follows:

- Where less than 50% of participants responded positively, the item was coded as orange;
- Where 50% of participants responded positively, the item was coded as yellow;
- Where less than 50% of participants responded negatively AND less than 50% responded positively, the item was coded as yellow;
- Where more than 50% of participants responded positively, the item was coded as blue; and
- Where the data did not warrant the orange, yellow, blue colour coding, the coding system was not applied.

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## LIMITATIONS

With any evaluation, limitations to the design, sample, and results can be found. Participant data is subjective, and may be impacted by social desirability bias, in that participants may be more likely to answer questions in a way that they perceive is most socially desirable.

Additionally, survey results may be impacted by non-response bias, in that data are unavailable from those applicants who chose not to complete the surveys. Finally, this evaluation was completed by TPH staff on the TUHF team and this staff had a vested interest in the application, review, and allocations process. While bias is inherent in all evaluation, attempts to minimize bias were made by: a) ensuring all surveys were anonymous; b) encouraging all participants to complete surveys through multiple reminders; and c) using TUHF team and non-TUHF TPH staff in the methods development and data analysis, particularly consulting with a Program Evaluator on the Planning and Performance team.

Due to tight time lines to meet the Board of Health summer schedule for the presentation of this report, the development and implementation of the evaluation plan is limited to what can be collected and analyzed in a two month period.

## RESULTS

### QUANTITATIVE DATA

#### APPLICANT TRACKING SHEETS

Following the allocations and appeals meetings, decisions were made for recommendations to fund a total of 44 projects. See Tables 2, 3, and 4 for more information regarding applicants and successfully funded applicants.

After reviewing each funding application, members of the Review Panel recommended that \$868,179 be allocated towards projects under the HIV Prevention stream, \$865,925 towards projects under the Harm Reduction stream, and \$479,951 towards projects under the Child and Youth Resiliency stream, representing 39%,39%,22% respectively, of the total TUHF budget. Overall, the TUHF will provide \$2,214,055 of funding to successful applicants with \$349,526 towards one-year projects and \$1,864,529 towards three-year projects.

While most of the identified priority populations were reached (see Table 4), some priority populations received no or decreased funding from previous years. This gap in funding can be attributed to: a) proposals did not meet the criteria established for any of the three funding streams ( $n_{proposals} = 3$ ); b) proposals did not meet the TUHF mandate ( $n_{proposals} = 5$ ); and c) receiving no proposals for specific priority populations.

The City of Toronto is divided into 144 neighbourhoods and has identified 31 of them to be Neighborhood Improvement Areas (NIAs).<sup>1</sup> The services provided by funded organizations in the HIV Prevention stream cover 79% of all City of Toronto neighbourhoods and involve 11 of the NIAs. All City of Toronto neighbourhoods and NIAs are being served by Harm Reduction services funded through TUHF. The services provided by funded organizations in the Child and Youth Resiliency stream however only cover 24% of the 144 City of Toronto Neighbourhoods and only 8 NIAs are being served by this stream's funding.

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<sup>1</sup> In March 2014, City Council adopted the Toronto Strong Neighborhood Strategy 2020. These NIAs received a neighborhood equity score that falls below the recommended benchmark. Neighborhood Equity Scores measure unnecessary, unfair and unjust differences faced by neighbourhood residents in five key areas: Economic Opportunities, Social Development, Healthy Lives, Participation in Decision-Making and Physical Surroundings. low score signals that the overall burden of inequities faced by a neighbourhood requires action.

From the current funding year, 32 projects (73% of funded projects) are returning projects funded from the 2013 funding year. Of these projects, 41% were funded in the HIV Prevention stream, 37% were funded in the Harm Reduction stream, and 22% in the Child and Youth Resiliency stream. These projects received an overall increase of 17% in funding when compared to their 2013 funded amounts, and the overall value of this increase is \$259,962.

**Table 3 2014 TUHF Applications**

	<b>HIV Prevention</b>	<b>Harm Reduction</b>	<b>Child and Youth Resiliency</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of 1 Year Applications (% of total)	5 (33%)	4 (27%)	6 (40%)	15 (100%)
1Year Funding Request (% of total)	\$177,183 (31%)	\$164,889 (28%)	\$237,493 (41%)	\$579,565 (100%)
Number of 3 Year Applications (% of total)	22 (39%)	16 (28%)	19 (33%)	57 (100%)
3 Year Funding Request (% of total)	\$1,213,555 (38%)	\$1,123,555 (35%)	\$868,002 (27%)	\$3,205,112 (100%)
Total Number Applications (% of total)	27 (37%)	20 (28%)	25 (35%)	72 (100%)
Total Funding Requests in \$ (% of total)	\$1,390,738 (37%)	\$1,288,444 (34%)	\$1,105,495 (29%)	\$3,784,677 (100%)

**Table 4 2014 TUHF Successfully Funded Applicants**

	<b>HIV Prevention</b>	<b>Harm Reduction</b>	<b>Child and Youth Resiliency</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of 1 Year Funded (% of total)	4 (36%)	3 (28%)	4 (36%)	11 (100%)
1Year Funding in \$ (% of total)	\$145,277 (42%)	\$81,160 (23%)	\$123,089 (35%)	\$349,526 (100%)
Number of 3 Year Funded (% of total)	13 (40%)	12 (36%)	8 (24%)	33 (100%)
3 Year Funding in \$ (% of total)	\$722,902 (39%)	\$784,765 (42%)	\$356,862 (19%)	\$1,864,529 (100%)
Total Number Funded (% of total)	17 (39%)	15 (34%)	12 (27%)	44 (100%)
Total Funding in \$ (% of total)	\$868,179 (39%)	\$865,925 (39%)	\$479,951 (22%)	\$2,214,055 (100%)

**Table 5 2014 TUHF Funding Distribution by Funding Stream and Service Population**

<b>Funding Stream</b>	<b>Service Population</b>	<b>Funded (\$)</b>	<b>Funded (%)</b>
<b>HIV Prevention</b>	Gay and bisexual men and youth, and men who have sex with men (MSM)	\$360,530	42%
	People from countries with high rates of HIV	\$294,729	34%
	People living with HIV**	\$26,810	3%
	Sexual partners of gay youth/men, people from endemic countries and persons living with HIV***	\$ 0	0%
	Youth-in-care***	\$ 0	0%
	Aboriginals*	\$ 0	0%
	Transsexuals	\$47,937	6%
	People from countries with emerging high rates of HIV	\$138,173	16%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$868,179</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Harm Reduction</b>	People who inject drugs	\$374,946	43%
	People who are homeless and street-involved	\$83,873	10%
	People who are incarcerated	\$144,250	17%
	People involved in sex work***	\$0	0%
	Individuals currently involved in high risk activities, including alcohol and other drugs	\$262,857	30%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$865,925</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Child and Youth Resiliency</b>	History of family members misusing illicit substances	\$84,213	18%
	Youth with behavioural, mental health, and/or social problem	\$207,186	43%
	Youth excluded from school or with poor school attachment	\$23,343	5%
	Young offenders or in youth conflict with the law	\$33,052	7%
	Youth from racialized groups facing extreme socio-economic disadvantage	\$132,158	28%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$479,951</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note:

\* Proposals did not meet criteria established for any of the three funding streams

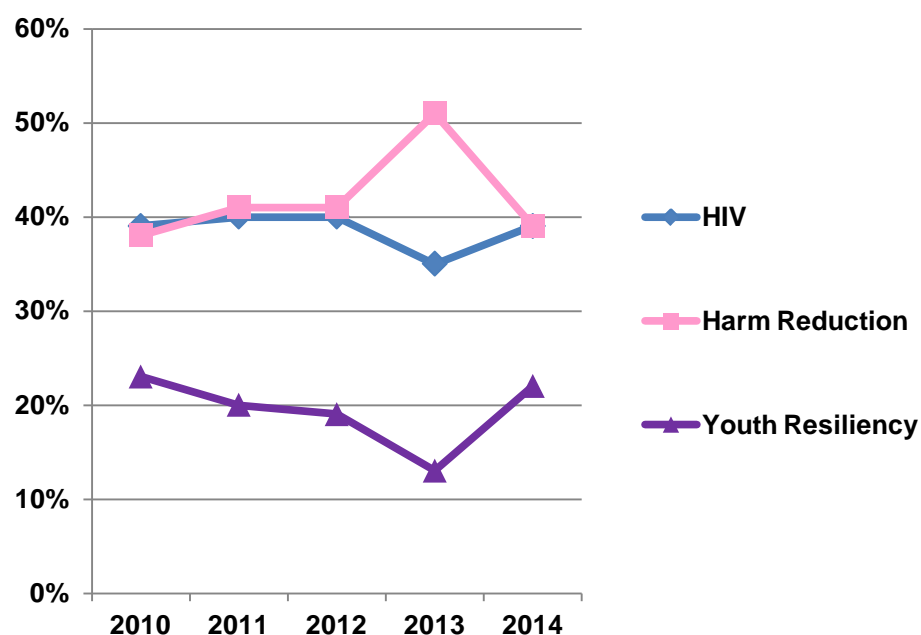
\*\* Proposals did not meet the TUHF mandate

\*\*\* No proposals received



Figure 1 outlines the percentage of funding allocated to projects falling under each of the three streams (i.e., HIV Prevention, Harm Reduction, and Child and Youth Resiliency) from 2010-2014. Prior to 2014, the trend was toward decreased funding in HIV Prevention and Child and Youth

**Figure 1 Proportion of projects by funding amount for 2010-2014**



Resiliency, with increased funding in Harm Reduction. Funding allocated in 2014 has reversed those trends back to 2010-2012 levels.

## APPLICANT SURVEY

Out of a total possible 72 applicants to TUHF, 63 completed the online applicant survey, resulting in an 88% response rate. Of the respondents, 41% were from the HIV Prevention stream, 25% were from the Harm Reduction stream, and 33% were from the Child and Youth Resiliency stream. Of the applicants completing the survey, 72% attended an orientation to the new TUHF process in Fall, 2013; 82% stated that the orientation was helpful for completing their application.

### Application process

Overall, applicants either strongly agreed or agreed that they were satisfied with the application process. However applicants were not satisfied with the application form.

**Table 6 Applicant Satisfaction with the Application Process**

	<b>Strongly Agree or Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree or strongly disagree</b>	<b>Total Valid Responses (n)</b>
<b>The Application Form was Easy to Understand</b>	66%	16%	18%	57
<b>The Application Form was Easy to Use</b>	36%	14%	50%	56
<b>The Application Guidelines were Easy to Understand</b>	65%	23%	13%	56
<b>The Application Guidelines were Useful</b>	67%	18%	15%	56
<b>The Scoring Criteria were Easy to Understand</b>	67%	18%	16%	57
<b>When I had a Question about the Application, Toronto Public Health Staff Responded within 48 hours</b>	77%	7%	16%	45
<b>When I had a Question about the Application, Toronto Public Health Staff were Helpful</b>	73%	10%	17%	48

### Review process

In terms of the review process, the majority of applicants agreed or strongly agreed that a) TPH staff answered questions they had during the review; b) TPH staff members were helpful during the review; and c) TPH staff responded to questions within 48 hours during the review process. Fewer than 50% of applicants agreed or strongly agreed that they understood how funding decisions were made.

**Table 7 Applicant Satisfaction with the Review Process.**

	<b>Strongly Agree or Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree or Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total Valid Responses (n)</b>
<b>The Review Process was Transparent</b>	58%	23%	19%	52
<b>The Review Process was Easy to Understand</b>	63%	21%	16%	51
<b>Toronto Public Health Staff Answered any Questions I had during the Review Process</b>	69%	16%	15%	32
<b>Toronto Public Health Staff were Helpful during the Review Process</b>	68%	20%	12%	35
<b>Toronto Public Health Staff Responded to my Questions within 48 Hours during the Review Process</b>	77%	13%	10%	30
<b>I Found out the Results of the Review in a Timely Manner</b>	80%	12%	8%	52
<b>I Understood How Decisions for Funding were Made</b>	47%	23%	30%	52

### Appeal process

Fifteen survey respondents participated in the appeals process. Overall, appellants agreed or strongly agreed that: a) the appeals instructions were easy to follow and understand; b) TPH staff answered questions during the appeals process; c) TPH staff answered questions within 48 hours; d) they understood the questions from the Review Panel; and, e) they were informed of the appeal decision in a timely manner. Fewer than 50% of appellants agreed or strongly agreed that the feedback provided on the decision letter was helpful and that they had enough time to speak at the appeals meeting. Other areas of concerns for appellants included time to prepare the appeal, TPH staff providing helpful support, the organization of the appeals meeting, and time to answer questions from the Review Panel at the appeals meeting. It must be noted that while all appellants replied to this section of the survey, only 67% stated that they made an attempt to contact TPH staff with questions during the appeals process.

A total of 57% of applicants stated that feedback provided in their decision letters by the Review Panel and TPH staff would help them improve their future applications. Only 14% said that the feedback would not help them improve their applications, while 28% stated that they didn't know or was not applicable.

**Table 8 Applicant Satisfaction with the Appeals Process.**

	<b>Strongly Agree or Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree or Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total Valid Responses (n)</b>
<b>The Feedback on my Application Provided in the Decision Letter from TPH and the Review Panel was Helpful</b>	20%	20%	60%	15
<b>The Appeal Instructions were Easy to Understand</b>	60%	33%	7%	15
<b>The Appeal Instructions were Easy to Follow</b>	54%	33%	14%	15
<b>I had Enough Time to Prepare my Appeal</b>	40%	20%	40%	15
<b>TPH Staff Answered Any Questions I had during the Appeals Process</b>	57%	29%	14%	14
<b>TPH staff were Helpful during the Appeals Process</b>	34%	47%	20%	15
<b>TPH Staff Responded to my Questions within 48 hours during the Appeals Process</b>	79%	7%	14%	14
<b>The Appeals Meeting was Well Organized</b>	36%	21%	43%	14
<b>At the Appeals Meeting, I had Enough Time to Speak</b>	14%	20%	67%	15
<b>At the Appeals Meeting, I had Enough Time to Answer Questions from the Review Panel</b>	34%	27%	40%	15
<b>At the Appeals Meeting, I Understood the Questions from the Review Panel</b>	64%	21%	15%	14
<b>I was Informed of the Decision of the Appeals Meeting in a Timely Manner</b>	64%	21%	14%	14

### **Challenges Completing the Application**

Applicants were asked to identify the challenges they faced when completing the application forms. The most frequently identified challenges were: a) using the technology required to complete the application; b) understanding how to answer the questions; and, c) lack of access to evaluation and research evidence. Other challenges identified by applicants included: the amount of work to complete the application, competing time and priorities with other City grants that were due around the same time as the TUHF applications, too heavy of a reliance on partnerships, and the perception that TUHF favoured smaller as opposed to larger organizations. Finally, applicants were asked to identify how TPH could provide support to them in the future. Developing an evaluation plan, using evidence, and writing a workplan were most frequently identified as areas in which applicants would like support during the application process. See [figures 2](#) and [3](#) for the challenges faced when completing the TUHF application and the supports requested.

Figure 2 Challenges Faced When Completing the TUHF Application

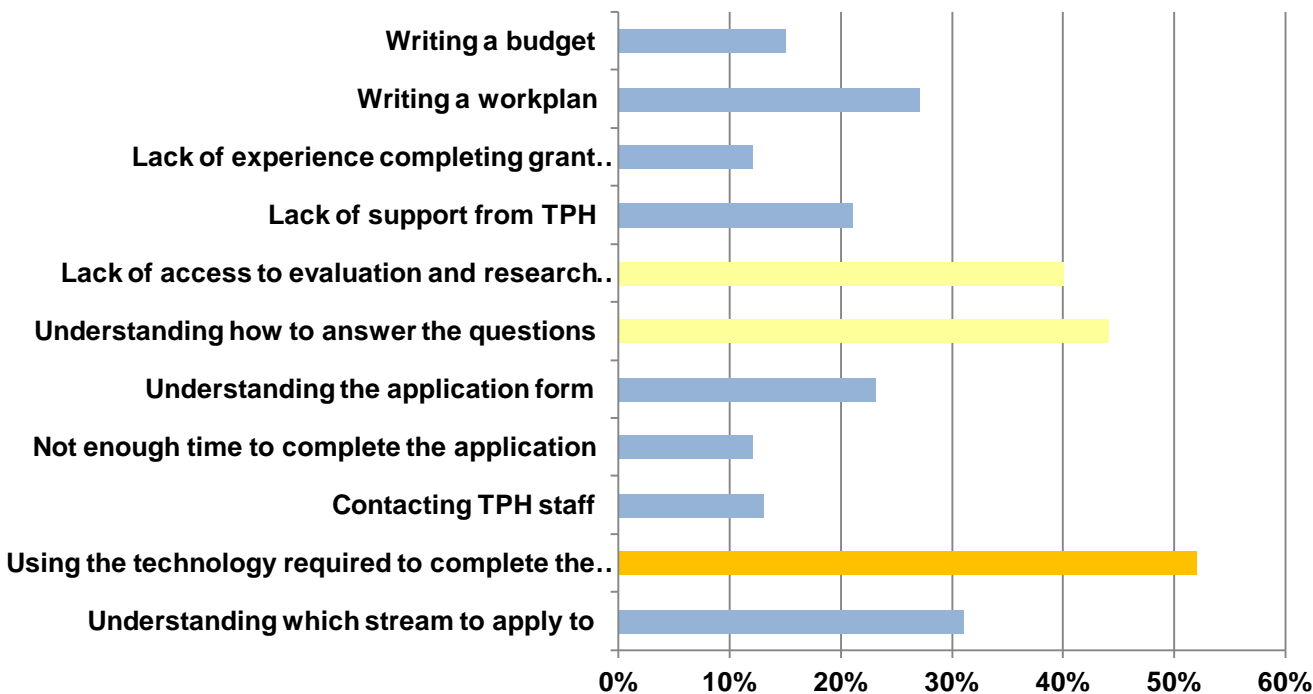
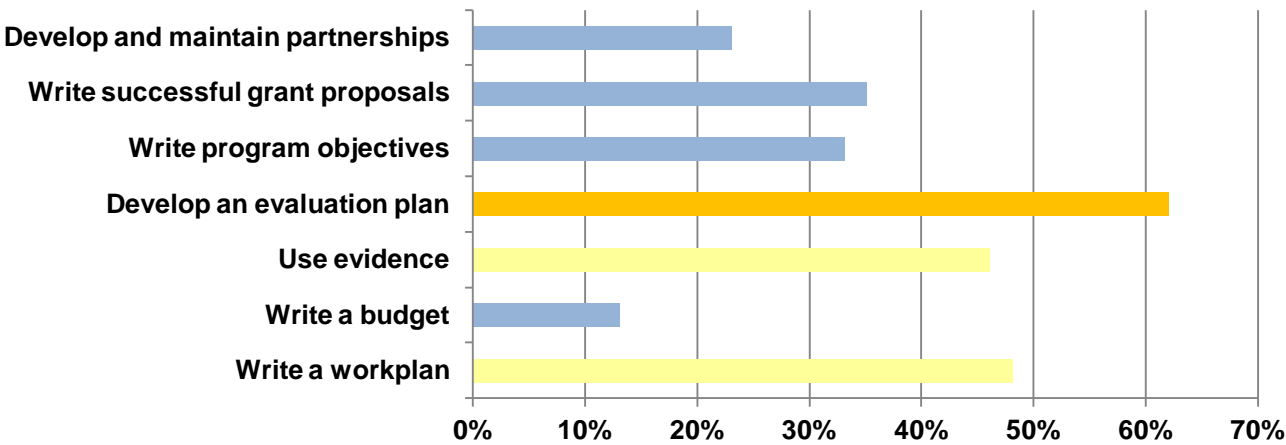


Figure 3 Areas in Which Applicants Requested Support



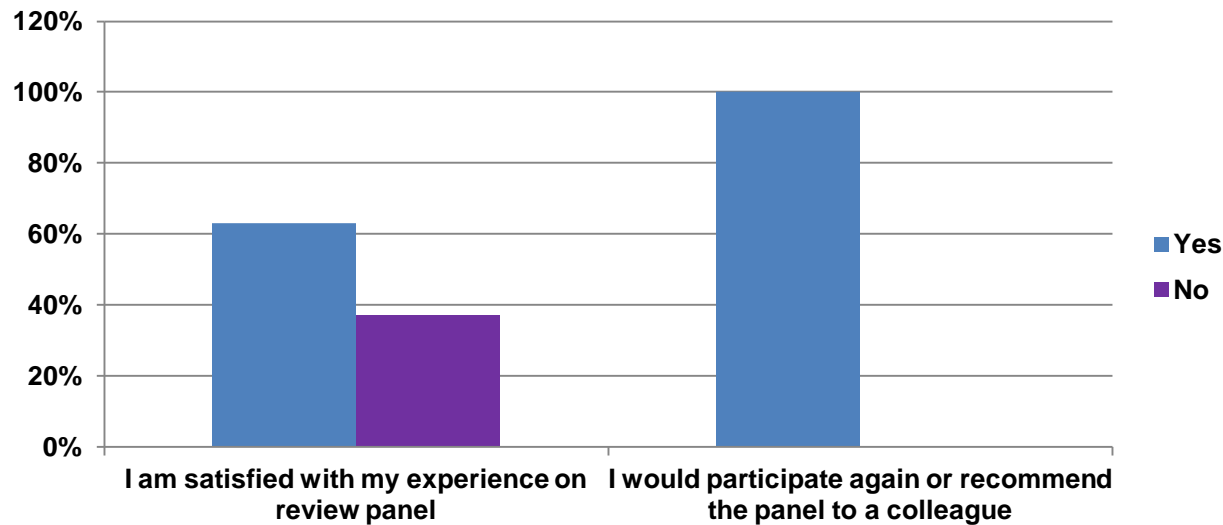
REVIEW PANEL SURVEY

The Review Panel survey had a 67% response rate, with eight of the 12 members completing the survey. Due to the small sample size of Review Panel respondents, it can only be suggested

that these results represent the views of all Review Panel members. In terms of satisfaction, Review Panel members tended to report that they were either very satisfied or satisfied with the information provided regarding the review process and the memory sticks provided with the assessment forms and applications. Half of the responding Review Panel members were either very satisfied or satisfied with the Review Panel orientation, the information provided by TPH staff at the subpanel meetings, and the process of the allocations meeting.

Half of the responding Review Panel members were either very unsatisfied or unsatisfied with the assessment form. Satisfaction levels among Review Panel members were mixed for: the process of the subpanel meetings; information provided by TPH staff at the allocations meeting; information provided by TPH staff at the appeals meeting; the appeals process; and the appeals assessment tool. Overall, 63% of responding Review Panel members stated that they were satisfied with their experience as a Review Panel member. All survey participants stated that they would participate as a Review Panel member again, or recommend the Panel to someone they know (Figure 4). See Appendix 1 for the satisfaction levels with each component of the review process.

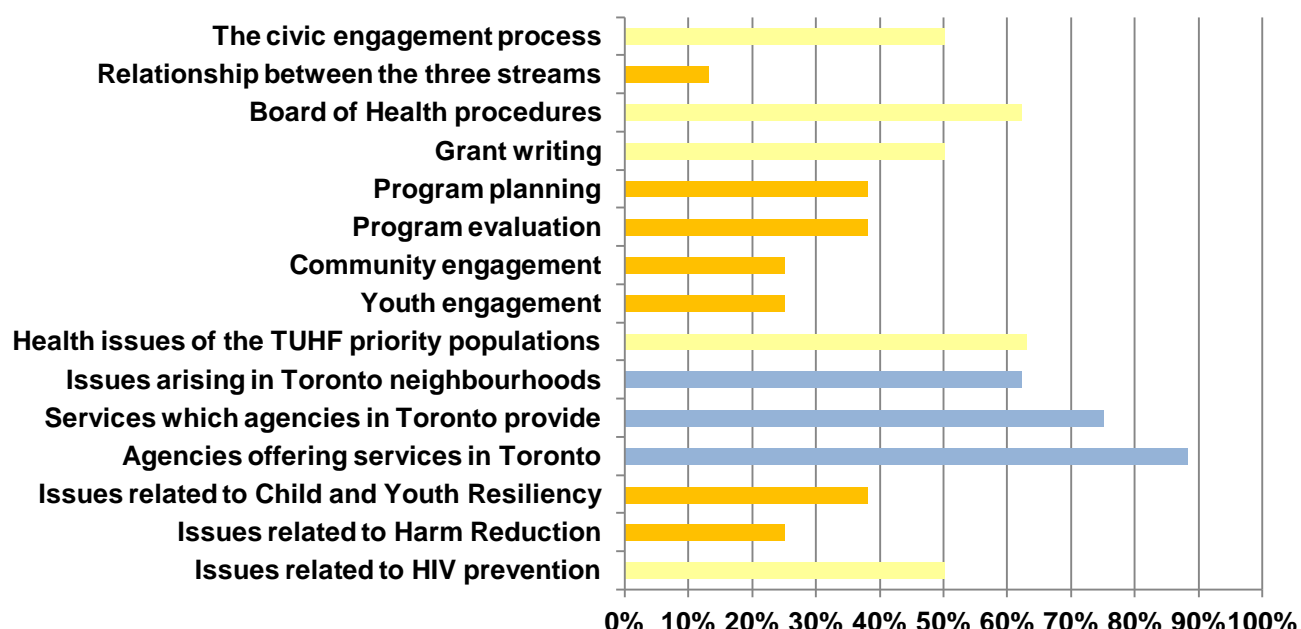
**Figure 4 Review Panel Members' Overall Satisfaction with their Participation on the Review Panel**



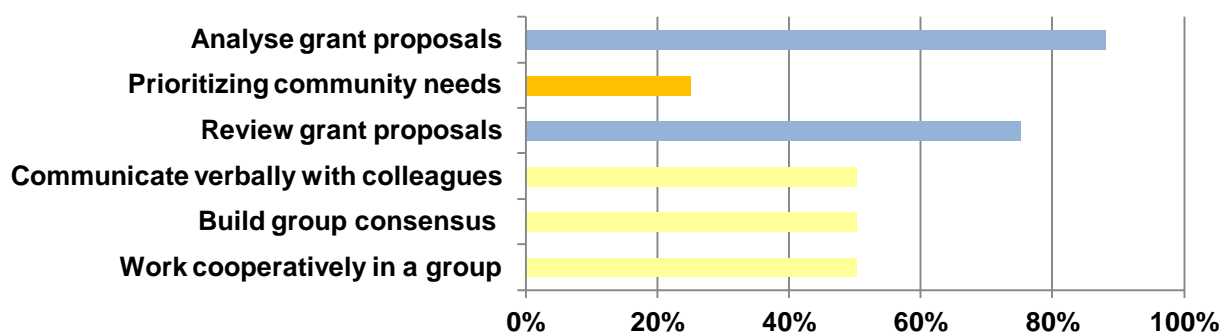
In terms of knowledge and skills gained, Review Panel members identified an increased knowledge of: a) agencies offering service in Toronto; b) programs/services which agencies in Toronto provide; and c) issues arising in Toronto neighbourhoods. Areas which Review Panel members were least likely to gain knowledge included: a) issues related to Harm Reduction; b) issues related to Child and Youth Resiliency; c) youth engagement; d) community engagement;

e) program evaluation; f) relationships between the three streams; and, g) program planning. Responding Review Panel members most frequently identified increased skills in: a) analyzing grant proposals; and b) reviewing grant proposals. Members least frequently identified increased skills in prioritizing community needs. See Figures 5 and 6 which depict the knowledge and skills gained by the Review Panel members as a result of participating on the Panel.

**Figure 5 Knowledge Gained as a Result of Participating as a Review Panel Member**



**Figure 6 Skills Gained by Participating as a Review Panel Member**



The five returning Review Panel members who responded to the survey and who had been on a previous APCIP or DPCIP Review Panel were asked to rate whether the TUHF review process enhanced accountability, transparency, and community input. Overall, the majority of returning



Review Panel members either strongly agreed or agreed that the process increased public accountability. Responses on whether the process was transparent and increased community input were mixed. Appendix 1 outlines the responses from the returning Review Panel members.

There were some issues related to the structure of the Review that may have impacted Panel performance and the survey results. The committee did not have full complement at the start of the review process due to the withdrawal of two members. Board of Health approval is required to appoint Review Panel members and due to time constraints imposed by the appointment process, new members could not be recruited. Maintaining quorum in Review Panel and subpanel meetings also proved difficult due to external commitments of Review Panel members. Attendance may also have been affected by meeting schedule changes and the requirement to host meetings at City Hall.

## QUALITATIVE DATA

### APPLICANT SURVEY

Through open-ended questions embedded into the online Applicant Survey, applicants provided feedback on the application, review, and allocations process. Qualitative data from the survey were analyzed and coded into themes by two members of the TUHF team. Where a discrepancy in coding occurred, the team members discussed the data until consensus was reached.

Two major themes and 11 qualitative subthemes emerged from the Applicant Survey data. The major themes were: a) Successes achieved as a result of the new TUHF process, and, b) Challenges faced in the new TUHF process.

***Under the theme, Successes achieved in the new TUHF process, four subthemes emerged:***

- staff were accessible and helpful;
- review process was perceived as fair;
- funding guideline was useful and helpful; and
- orientation was helpful.

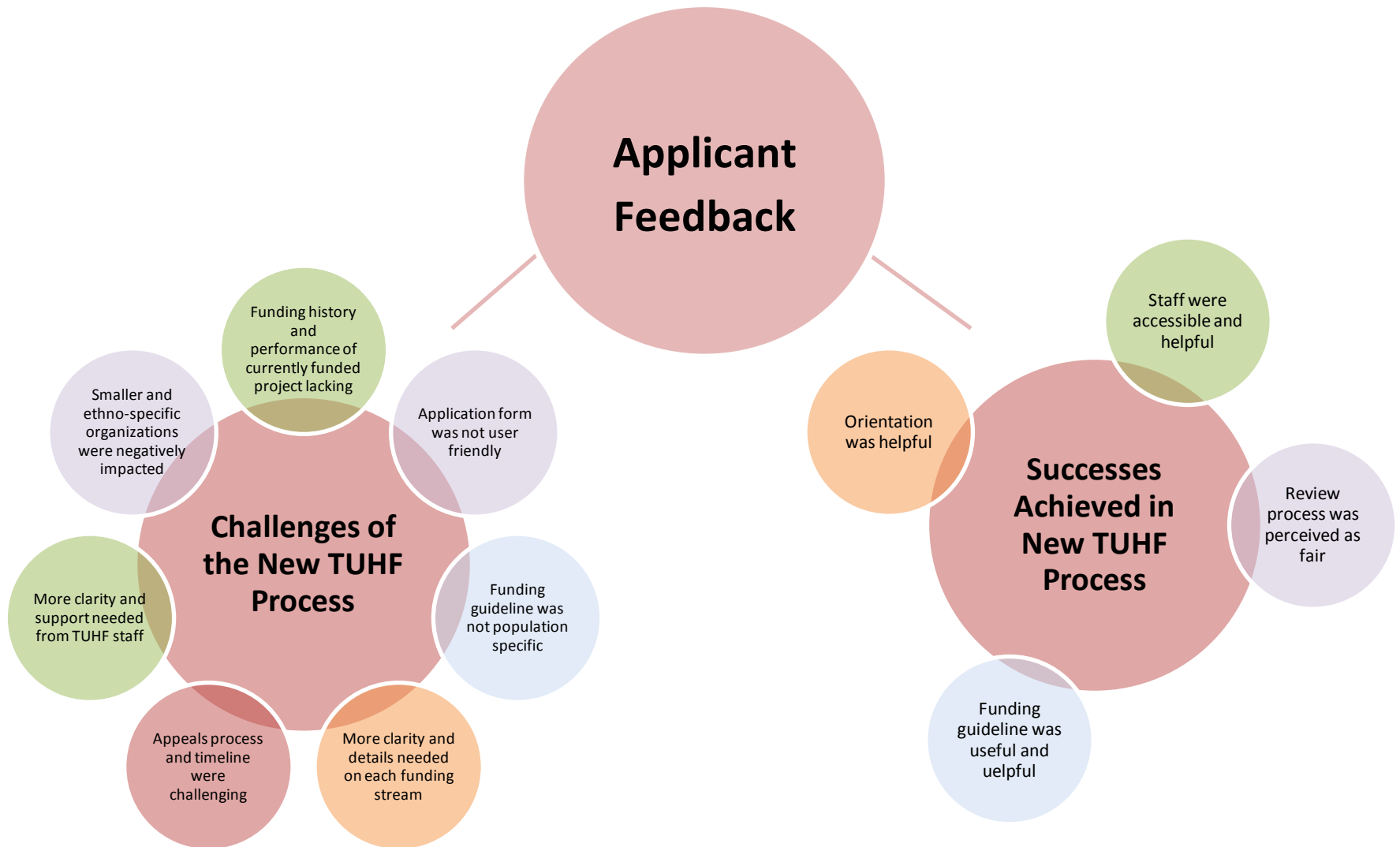
***Under the theme, Challenges faced as a result of the new TUHF process, seven subthemes emerged:***

- funding history and performance of currently funded project lacking;
- application form was not user friendly;

- funding guideline was not population specific;
- more clarity and details needed on each funding stream;
- appeals process and timeline were challenging;
- more clarity and support needed from TUHF staff; and,
- smaller and ethno-specific organizations were negatively impacted.

[Figure 7](#) and [Pages 28](#) and [29](#) to [30](#) depict the themes and subthemes as well as some relevant quotes representing each subtheme.

Figure 7 Themes and Sub-themes Emerging from the Applicant Qualitative Data



## **THEMES, SUB-THEMES, AND SAMPLE QUOTATIONS FROM THE QUALITATIVE DATA IN THE APPLICANT SURVEY: SUCCESSES**

### **SUCCESSES ACHIEVED IN THE NEW TUHF PROCESS**

#### **Staff were Helpful**

*"TPH staff were accessible and available to support me in the application process."*

*"The support I received from the Toronto Public Health staff was helpful."*

#### **Review Process was Fair**

*"I think the review process is professional and to standard."*

*"I do not have any concerns with the review process. I think the Review Panel is fair and is doing a great job."*

#### **Funding Guideline was Useful and Helpful**

*"I like the application guidelines, it was well presented and useful. Questions on the grant application were clearly asked and applicable to the stream I applied to."*

*"Once the stream was established, using the application guidelines, info sessions, and point system were also helpful."*

#### **Orientation was Helpful**

*"The orientation provided a good base from which to work and staff were readily available."*

*"Info session in the fall was very helpful."*

## **THEMES, SUB-THEMES, AND SAMPLE QUOTATIONS FROM THE QUALITATIVE DATA IN THE APPLICANT SURVEY: CHALLENGE**

### **CHALLENGES OF THE NEW TUHF PROCESS**

#### **Funding history and performance of currently funded project lacking**

*"We don't want [TPH staff] to come just for the period of application, but they should be with the funded agencies at their workshops or outreaches or activities at least 4 times a year, to understand their funded organization, we want practical assistance not theoretical assistance, to know that fire is a danger you have to put your hand in it, for the staff to score us, they have to be with the community."*

*"...there were no staff with historical familiarity with community agencies [which] added to the difficulty with the application process..."*

#### **Application form was not user friendly**

*"The form was difficult to use due to formatting. It was also hard to print and read, and proofreading functionality was not there...."*

*"Create a more accessible application form that can be completed with all types of computers include Mac computers. The application form needs to be community friendly to enable multiple people [to] review and edit or comment on..."*

#### **Funding guideline was not population specific**

*"It would be helpful if the funding guidelines were more detailed with useful examples in order to ensure more success in receiving funding for smaller agencies."*

*"Let the guidelines be clear. Involve the community in developing the guidelines, for example the Poz prevention guidelines used were from the US when the Gay [Mens] Sexual health Alliance in Toronto have developed a very clear poz prevention guideline that could have been more useful for our communities."*

#### **More clarity and details needed on each funding stream**

*"Clearly define the streams and give examples of what types of projects would fit under each (e.g.) if I am doing a drug education curriculum based on harm reduction principles for youth, is it harm reduction or resiliency?"*

## CHALLENGES OF THE NEW TUHF PROCESS-2

*"It would have been helpful to have known in advance how much of the money was going to be allocated to each stream."*

### **Appeals process and timeline were challenging**

*"There was limited opportunity for [the] committee to review our appeal package before the appeal – the packages were handed out at the time of appeal but the committee should have had time to really review them properly beforehand. Determination of appeals was made available on line before being communicated with us directly - this is very unprofessional and should not happen again....5 minutes is not sufficient to properly appeal...even 7 minutes would be great."*

*"This appeals process feels like a hunger games, we are all put in a room and given 5 minutes each to prove we are better than each other. It's a do or die kind of thing and very oppressive and colonial. I find this appeals process very frustrating, oppressive and dehumanising. There should be a better way of doing this..."*

### **More clarity and support needed from TUHF staff**

*"The feedback from staff was not in line with the objective scoring matrix so I do not think that the feedback was helpful."*

*"As the first year of the new program, the strategy of Toronto Public Health staff [should] have been [to] work more collaboratively with agencies [and] guide them step by step to avoid confusion and failures in the application."*

### **Smaller and ethno-specific organizations were negatively impacted**

*"The funding decisions have had impact in the community service sector - both positive and negative. Smaller organizations are most vulnerable yet often serve the most marginalized communities - a transition plan should be created to support the grant application process rather than cutting funding entirely for these organizations."*

*"Think about [how] you can support ethno-specific agencies who continue to be losing funding and have the need to access your small project funds. Protect of some of your funding for small ethno-specific groups."*

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## REVIEW PANEL DE-BRIEF AND INTERVIEWS

Review Panel members ( $n = 8$ ) provided qualitative feedback during a 1.5 hour semi-structured de-briefing session. Additionally, in order to accommodate scheduling conflicts, several members were interviewed separately. Data from the de-briefing session were analyzed and coded into themes by two members of the TUHF team. Where a discrepancy in coding occurred, the team members discussed the data until consensus was reached. Two major themes, and 13 qualitative subthemes emerged from the Review Panel data. The two major themes were: a) Successes of the new TUHF process, and, b) Challenges of the new TUHF process.

*Under the theme, Successes of the applications, review, and allocations process, three subthemes emerged:*

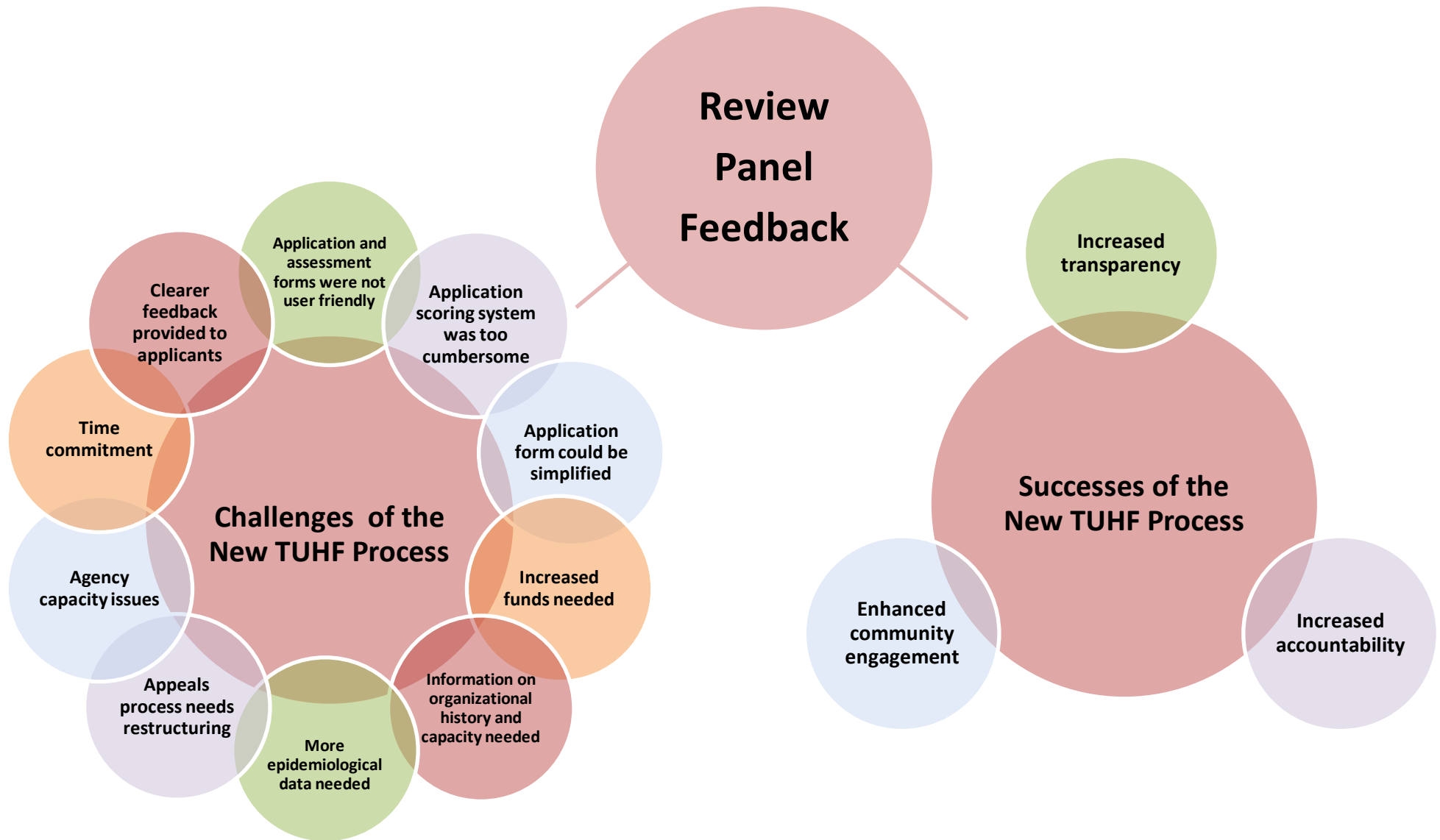
- increased transparency;
- increased accountability; and,
- panel membership enhances community engagement and community expertise on the panel was valued.

*Under the theme Challenges of the applications, review, and allocations process, ten subthemes emerged:*

- application and assessment forms were not user friendly;
- application scoring system was too cumbersome;
- application form could be simplified;
- increased funds needed;
- information on organizational history and capacity needed
- more epidemiological data needed;
- appeals process needs restructuring;
- agency capacity issues;
- time commitment; and
- clearer feedback needs to be provided to applicants.

[Figure 8](#) and [Pages 33-36](#) depict the themes and subthemes as well as some relevant quotes representing each subtheme.

Figure 8 Themes and Sub-themes Emerging from the Review Panel Qualitative Data





## **THEMES AND SUB-THEMES EMERGING FROM THE REVIEW PANEL QUALITATIVE DATA: SUCCESSES**

### **Successes of the new TUHF process**

#### **Increased Transparency**

*"I have some experience with other grant processes; this one is most transparent and equitable, even though we often struggle with allocating funds because one or more projects of merit are always left out due to financial constraints."*

*"I was getting concerned about how we would take the pot from the three panels and combine them. It really did help me when [staff] presented the breakdown of numbers of what the numbers were and did in real time what the pot would be as we adjusted."*

#### **Increased Accountability**

*"Comprehensive process...I really appreciate the fact that the staff thrives on evaluation and values input."*

*"The overall process did increase accountability."*

#### **Enhanced Community Engagement**

*"Serving on this panel gives me a sense of community engagement which I value."*

*"It is valuable to participate in a process that has direct impact on the health of vulnerable communities."*

## **THEMES AND SUB-THEMES EMERGING FROM THE REVIEW PANEL QUALITATIVE DATA: CHALLENGES**

### **Challenges of the new TUHF process**

#### **Application and assessment forms were not user friendly**

*"About the forms...if I filled out the forms with my comments I didn't bring my laptop with me so I had to create something small so that I brought it to the meeting. It was complicated. Notes easier to print off etc."*

*"The whole macro thing was difficult."*

#### **Application scoring system was too cumbersome**

*"I found the assessment forms we were provided with too onerous to complete."*

*"If the panel could [only] have a section of the form and that is what they reviewed [that would make the review process simpler]."*

#### **Application form could be simplified**

*"The reality is that nobody knows the answer to [the sustainability] question [on the application form] because it means different things to different people. If it is a project, why does it have to be sustainable? I get that bigger organizations take on pieces, but for smaller ones just starting out at a beginning place...."*

*"It would be ideal if somehow the workplan in Part B and the Excel budget sheet(s) could be one document - this would make it easier for applicants and reviewers and would result in fewer discrepancies between activities and projected costs."*

#### **Increased funds needed**

*"I am not sure if we satisfied all applicants with need, but we need more money for the next year."*

*"I'm very glad that the City has funds for this important HIV, harm reduction and resiliency building work. I think that the work is important, and that supporting community-based agencies to carry it out is vital. I wish there was more funding available for the TUHF."*

## Challenges of the new TUHF process-2

### Information on organizational history and capacity needed

*"I would really value the opportunity of staff perspective in terms of how an organization performed...I'm wondering if there is a way of modifying the scoring so that: a) it's not as onerous on us; and b) if there is an opportunity for staff [to] provide [e] input in terms of if an agency is fulfilling what it says it was doing, so that we can assess capacity of an agency."*

*"I didn't measure the capacity but I looked at, will they collapse if they don't get funded[?]. Do they have a history with the organization? Then I asked the staff. We need TPH staff input. The best part of meetings was the discussion."*

### More epidemiological data needed

*"If we're not given any background around epidemic then it's hard to assess [the applications]."*

*"Being in the youth meeting, we did talk about the issues. I don't think that piece was missing, but we were missing who are the most at-risk youth and what are the best programs to reach these youth....How do you show this on a map?"*

### Appeals Process needs restructuring

*"I don't know if the verbal piece [of the appeals was valuable]. I struggle with that..."*

*"[The appeals] are so quickly aligned one after another, is there any way we could get a couple of minutes in between appeals? Just so that we could get ourselves together so that we could have the right information in front of us. "*

### Agency Capacity Issues

*"...a lot of the [youth] applications were not connecting to the substance abuse thing and a lot were not dealing with that and we're thinking "is that okay?". When you're dealing with resiliency you're dealing with connecting to supports. Really about building skills within the youth. More skill building [needed for those agencies]."*

*"[I] spoke to a number of different organizations having trouble filling [out the] applications...I know that you have [a] forum on filling out the applications...are you able to have a consultation process as a step back...some agencies fell through the cracks..."*

### Challenges of the new TUHF process-3

#### Time Commitment

*"As a community member, it took me a very long time (over 40 hours) just to review and score the ...applications. This is a lot to expect of volunteers."*

*"The significant time commitment for reviewing the applications...[has] had the biggest impact on my satisfaction levels."*

#### Clearer feedback provided to applicants

*"Do the applicants know about their chances? Do they know how many people applied?"*

*"Is there value in the appeals process? Yes, but maybe we need to be a little more honest with the applicants. They should know that they really need to pay attention [to] the comments they received from the Community Project Grants Officers (CPGOs). ..[and that] they also come from the Review Panel."*

### OVERALL QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Given the large quantity of qualitative data, Figure 9 represents the themes occurring across all of the qualitative data, and provides a brief description of the content of each theme. In order to provide a quick visual guide, similar themes from the two sets of data were combined, resulting in 2 major themes (successes and challenges) and 16 sub-themes. Subthemes in orange represent the challenges of the new TUHF process, while those in blue represent the successes of the new TUHF process. Darker shaded subthemes correspond to the frequency in which that theme emerged from the two sets of data (i.e., opinions from applicants and Review Panel members). Additionally, Figure 10 (word cloud), was developed on [www.wordle.com](http://www.wordle.com) and used all of the qualitative data. A word cloud uses font size to represent the more common words in a set of data.

**Figure 9 Themes Occurring Across All Qualitative Feedback from Applicants and Review Panel Members**

<b>Review process perceived as fair</b>	• Process was fair and professional
<b>Funding guideline was useful and helpful</b>	• Application guidelines and scoring system helpful to applicants, more streamlined
<b>Orientation was helpful</b>	• Orientation provided by staff on completing the application was helpful
<b>Staff were helpful</b>	• Staff were accessible and available to support applicants
<b>Increased transparency</b>	• Compared to other granting processes, this was transparent and equitable
<b>Increased accountability</b>	• Comprehensive which thrives on evaluation and values input
<b>Enhanced community engagement</b>	• Review panel members increased sense of engagement and impact on communities
<b>Application scoring too cumbersome</b>	• Review panel scoring needs to be simplified
<b>Time commitment to review and assess applications</b>	• Decrease time review panel spends reviewing applications
<b>Enhance funding guidelines to enhance clarity around streams</b>	• Provide population specific examples, provide details on each funding stream
<b>Work on enhancing agency capacity</b>	• Enhance grant writing and work-planning capacity of agencies
<b>Enhance orientation for Review Panel members</b>	• Provide organizational history and epidemiological data to review panel
<b>Not enough funds to meet the need</b>	• Smaller and ethno-specific organizations impacted, provide guidelines of funds available per stream
<b>Enhanced clarity needed</b>	• Clearer feedback to agencies, enhance external communication and agency support
<b>Appeals process needs restructuring</b>	• Remove verbal portion of appeals, increase organization at appeals meeting, councillor chair appeals
<b>Application form not user friendly and could be simplified</b>	• Compatibility, copy-paste functions, printable applications, decrease length of application

**Figure 10 Word Cloud Depicting Word Frequency in the TUHF Process Evaluation Qualitative Data**



## DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present evaluation was to assess the restructured TUHF application, review, and allocations process. The data collected from various stakeholders indicated that the new TUHF application, review, and allocations process was effective in reaching TUHF service populations. There were successes and challenges within this new TUHF process. The evaluation set out to answer the following six questions:

1. How many and what type of organizations/community partners have been 'reached' through the TUHF?
2. Are applicants satisfied with the application and grant allocation process?
3. Are Review Panel members satisfied with their experience on the Review Panel?
4. What were the successes of restructuring the funding program?
5. What were the challenges of restructuring the funding program?
6. How can we improve the funding program for future funding cycles?

### **QUESTION 1: HOW MANY AND WHAT TYPE OF ORGANIZATIONS/COMMUNITY PARTNERS HAVE BEEN 'REACHED' THROUGH THE TUHF?**

In the HIV Prevention stream, the majority of funding (42%) was allocated to projects serving gay and bisexual men and youth, and men who have sex with men, followed by projects serving people from countries with high rates of HIV (34%), and people from countries with emerging high rates of HIV (16%). Six percent of funding was allocated to agencies working with people who identify as Transsexual while only three percent of funding was allocated to poz prevention projects serving people living with HIV/AIDS. Except for poz prevention projects, the proportion of funding for these populations under the HIV prevention stream is comparable to historical funding under the APCIP. No funding was allocated to projects serving sexual partners of gay youth/men and partners of people from endemic countries and persons living with HIV; youth in care and aboriginal peoples.

In the Harm Reduction stream, the majority of funding was allocated to projects serving people who inject drugs (43%), followed by individuals involved in high risk activities, including illicit substance use (30%). Seventeen percent of funding was allocated to projects serving people who are incarcerated and 10% for people who are homeless and street-involved. No funding was allocated to projects serving people involved in sex work.

In the Child and Youth Resiliency stream, the majority of funding was allocated to projects serving youth with behavioral, mental health and/or social problems (43%), followed by youth



from racialized groups facing extreme socio-economic disadvantage (28%), and youth with a history of family members misusing illicit substances (18%). Seven percent of funding was allocated to young offenders or youth in conflict with the law and five percent of funding was allocated to youth who are excluded from school or with poor school attachment. This stream received the least proportion of funding compared to the other two streams; however, funding was allocated to all priority populations in this stream.

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**QUESTION 2: WERE APPLICANTS SATISFIED WITH THE APPLICATION AND GRANT ALLOCATION PROCESS?**

Applicants were satisfied with many components of the application, review, and allocations process. Despite technological issues, applicants thought the application form was easy to understand, the application guidelines were useful, and the scoring criteria was easy to understand. Applicants also stated that during the application and review process, staff provided timely and helpful responses to their questions. Additionally, applicants stated that the review process was transparent and easy to understand. Appellants also stated that the appeals instructions were easy to understand and that staff responded in a timely manner to their questions during this process.

However, applicants stated that the application form was difficult to use due to technological issues associated with the format used. While the funding guideline was helpful and useful, some agencies working with ethno-specific populations and agencies working in poz prevention needed more guidance, clarity and examples of interventions for their subpopulations. Applicants also needed more clarification on the specific approaches for each funding stream and would like to see more concrete examples of effective intervention provided.

During the review process, some applicants stated that they were unsure as to how the funding decisions were made and how much funding was available for each funding stream. This lack of clarity is also reflected in applicant dissatisfaction with the feedback provided in the funding decision letters.

Feedback from the appellants suggests that the oral component of the appeals adds little value to the appeals experience. Appellants and review panel members agreed that the experience was not only demoralizing due to the pressure placed on appellants having to present their deputation in front of a Panel, but required a significant amount of agency staff time to compete for a relatively small sum of funds.



Both review panel and applicants stated that understanding the history and capacity of organizations and their work is of value to gauging their performance and delivery of services. Furthermore, Review Panel members also stated that information on organization capacity and history needs to be highlighted more in the allocation process.

Some smaller organizations particularly those from ethno-specific organizations felt vulnerable to competing against larger and more established organizations. They expressed the need to address equity issues and disparities in organization capacity.

---

**QUESTION 3: WERE REVIEW PANEL MEMBERS SATISFIED WITH THEIR EXPERIENCE ON THE REVIEW PANEL?**

Despite challenges with scoring, technology, and time commitment, all Review Panel members agreed that they would participate on the Panel again or recommend it to someone they know. Review Panel members did echo issues with communication between TPH and applicants, noting that despite having provided the feedback for the funding decision letters, that feedback solely reflected the discussion around the application and did not necessarily include all feedback on the application.

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**QUESTION 4: WHAT WERE THE SUCCESSES OF RESTRUCTURING THE FUNDING PROGRAM?**

Review Panel members and applicants noted that the restructured process enhanced transparency. Review Panel members also found the new process increased accountability and community engagement. Review Panel discussions allowed for valuable and extensive community input, which was not possible in the previous APCIP and DPCIP review process.

As one of the original goals of restructuring the funding program was to provide opportunities for previously unfunded community agencies to receive funding, having funded 12 new projects and 9 new agencies is a success of the restructured funding program.

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**QUESTION 5: WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES OF RESTRUCTURING THE FUNDING PROGRAM?**

A key challenge identified in this evaluation was the capacity of agencies to complete successful funding proposals. Agencies themselves, reported they had difficulty developing an evaluation plan, a workplan, and using evidence to make a strong case for funding their project. Review panel members similarly noted that agency capacity issues were reflected in the quality of the proposals, and this was most evident within the Child and Youth Resiliency stream.

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**QUESTION 6: HOW CAN WE IMPROVE THE FUNDING PROGRAM FOR FUTURE FUNDING CYCLES?**

The following recommendations will be taken to improve future funding cycles.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the evaluation the following actions will be implemented to enhance the application and review processes of the TUHF program for future funding cycles.

### 1. PROGRAM PROMOTION AND OUTREACH:

- a) Work with relevant advisory committees, including the Toronto HIV Network, the Toronto Harm Reduction Alliance, as well as the City of Toronto's Social Development Finance & Administration division:
  - i. to identify agencies to expand the reach of TUHF to organizations serving newcomer and high-risk youth in particular those residing in NIAs; youth-in-care; sex workers who use alcohol and other drugs; and sexual partners of high risk populations
  - ii. to enhance the capacity of organizations working to address the primary prevention needs of people living with HIV/AIDS
- b) Work with TPH's Aboriginal Health Community of Practice, the City's Aboriginal Affairs Committee and the Toronto Central LHIN developing an aboriginal health strategy to identify how aboriginal health issues can be better addressed and supported through the TUHF.

### 2. APPLICATION PROCESS:

- a) In addition to ongoing outreach and support to population groups being funded, address health equity and population-specific concerns related to the primary prevention needs of aboriginal youth, newcomer and ethno-racial populations and people living with HIV/AIDS through evidence informed practices
- b) Revise the application form and consolidate the application and budget sections using the more user-friendly writeable PDF format.
- c) For each funding cycle, provide information on the total amount of funds available and the estimated number of fundable proposals per funding stream.

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### 3. REVIEW PROCESS:

- a) Develop a tool that incorporates quantitative and qualitative information to assess the performance, capacity, and developmental needs of currently funded projects and incorporate the assessment into the Review Panel summaries.
- b) Provide Review Panel committee members with a more comprehensive orientation and include information on available population-specific epidemiology, geospatial data, and evidence-informed approaches.
- c) Work with the 2015 Review Panel to determine optimal allocation of review workload
- d) Enhance the diversity of community input by increasing the membership of each subpanel committee from three to five citizen experts and account for unplanned attrition by recruiting and orienting alternate members.
- e) Provide specific feedback on areas of strength and weakness in the application to help appellants address concerns and issues raised with their project proposal and to provide feedback to applicants for continuous quality improvement for future applications.
- f) Restructure the appeals process by providing sufficient time for appellants to prepare their deputation, for Review Panel members to review and assess deputations and to replacing the oral deputations with written submissions.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the data, the evaluation of the TUHF application, review and allocation process concludes that funding reached most TUHF priority populations; and overall, applicants and Review Panel members were satisfied with the application and review process. The evaluation identified that the process was fair, equitable, transparent, and was run by helpful staff. Despite these successes, the process was not without its challenges; namely the application form needed to be more user-friendly, the review process was time consuming and cumbersome, and feedback and supports for agencies needed to be enhanced. Using the results of the evaluation, in consultation with key stakeholders, actions identified for improvement will be implemented as part of TUHF commitment to continuous quality improvement.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: REVIEW PANEL SURVEY DATA

Table A1 Review Panel Satisfaction with the Review Process

	<b>Very Satisfied or Satisfied</b>	<b>Neither Satisfied or Unsatisfied</b>	<b>Unsatisfied or Very Unsatisfied</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>	<b>Total Valid Responses (n)</b>
<b>Review Panel Orientation (January 27, City Hall)</b>	50%	38%	12%	0%	8
<b>Information Provided Regarding the Review Process</b>	62%	12%	25%	0%	8
<b>Memory Stick Provided with Assessment Forms and Applications</b>	62%	12%	25%	0%	8
<b>Assessment Form</b>	38%	12%	50%	0%	8
<b>Information Provided by TPH Staff at Sub-panel Review Meetings</b>	50%	25%	25%	0%	8
<b>Process of the Sub-panel Review Meetings</b>	25%	25%	38%	12%	8
<b>Information Provided by TPH Staff at the Allocations Meeting</b>	38%	12%	38%	12%	8
<b>Process of the Allocations Meeting</b>	50%	25%	25%	0%	8
<b>Information Provided by TPH Staff at the Appeals Meeting</b>	38%	12%	38%	12%	8
<b>Appeals Process</b>	38%	12%	38%	12%	8
<b>Appeals Assessment Tool</b>	25%	25%	38%	12%	8

**Table A2 Returning Members' Perceptions of Changes in Accountability, Transparency, and Community Input**

	<b>Strongly Agree or Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree or Disagree</b>	<b>Total Valid Responses (n)</b>
Compared to Previous Years, the Review Process Increased Public Accountability	60%	20%	20%	5
Compared to Previous Years, the Review Process was Transparent	40%	60%	0%	5
Compared to Previous Years, the Review Process Allowed for Increased Community Input	40%	40%	20%	5

## APPENDIX 2: REVIEW PANEL SURVEY

The review panel survey is intended to determine whether review panel members are satisfied with their experience on the review panel, and whether they gained any new knowledge or skills as a result of participating on the panel. The review panel de-brief session will allow for greater discussion of the improvements Toronto Public Health can make to the review process. Your participation in the questionnaire is voluntary. All results are anonymous, and when we report the results, we will be using aggregate data only.

Do you agree to participate in the Review Panel Questionnaire?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please rate your satisfaction level with the following components of the TUHF review process.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied	Not applicable
Review panel orientation (January 27th, City Hall)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information provided regarding the review process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Memory stick provided with assessment forms and applications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assessment form	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information provided by TPH staff at sub-panel review meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Process of the sub-panel review meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information provided by TPH staff at the	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied	Not applicable
allocations meeting						
Process of the allocations meeting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information provided by TPH staff at the appeals meeting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appeals process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appeals assessment tool	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide comments on your satisfaction level with the above components.

Overall, I am satisfied with my experience as a review panel member

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Is this your first year on the review panel?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please rate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Compared to previous years, the review process increased public accountability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Compared to previous years, the review process was transparent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Compared to previous years, the review process allowed for increased community input	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As a result of participating in the review process as a review panel member, I have increased my knowledge of:

(choose all that apply)

- ☐ Issues related to HIV prevention
- ☐ Issues related to Harm Reduction
- ☐ Issues related to Child and Youth Resiliency
- ☐ Agencies offering services in Toronto
- ☐ Programs/services which agencies in Toronto provide
- ☐ Issues arising in Toronto neighbourhoods
- ☐ Health issues of the TUHF priority populations
- ☐ Youth engagement
- ☐ Community engagement
- ☐ Program evaluation
- ☐ Program planning
- ☐ Grant writing
- ☐ Board of Health procedures

- ☐ The civic engagement process
- ☐ Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

As a result of participating in the review process as a review panel member, I have increased my skills to:

(choose all that apply)

- ☐ Work cooperatively in a group
- ☐ Build group consensus
- ☐ Communicate verbally with colleagues
- ☐ Review grant proposals
- ☐ Analyse grant proposals
- ☐ Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

Please rate how much you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Funding was allocated to the right projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding was allocated equitably	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel comfortable with the decisions made for funding allocations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide comments.

Would you participate as a review panel member again, or recommend someone you know to participate?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Why or why not?

Do you have any further comments you would like to add?

## APPENDIX 3: REVIEW PANEL DE-BRIEFING AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### Review Panel Orientation

- How was the timing (January 27<sup>th</sup>) of the orientation?
- What was useful about the meeting?
- What would you change about the meeting?

### Review forms and Memory Stick

- In terms of the review forms and memory stick, what worked?
- What would you change about the review forms and memory stick?

### Subpanel Meetings

- What worked in the subpanel meetings?
- What would you like to change about the subpanel process?

### Allocations Meeting

- What worked in the allocations process?
- What would you change about the allocations process?

### Appeals Meeting

- What worked in the appeals process?
- What would you change about the appeals process?

### Communication

- What did you like about how TPH communicated information about the review process?
- What would you change about how TPH communicated information about the review process?

### Other

- Do you have any other comments about the review process that you would like to add?

## APPENDIX 4: APPLICATION SURVEY

Thank you for applying for funding under the Toronto Urban Health Fund (TUHF). As this is the first year of the fund, we are hoping to get your feedback on how we can improve in the future. Any information provided in this survey will be kept strictly anonymous and confidential. When we report our results, we will use aggregate data only, and will never report names of people or agencies. Do you agree to participate in the questionnaire?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please complete one survey for EACH project that your agency applied for.

Did your PROJECT receive funding from TUHF?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Under which stream did your PROJECT fit?

- ☐ HIV prevention
- ☐ Harm Reduction
- ☐ Child and Youth Resiliency

Did you attend an orientation session in Fall, 2013?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Was the orientation session helpful for completing your application?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Applicable

Please rate your satisfaction level with each of the components of the APPLICATION process.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
The application form was easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The application form was easy to use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The application guidelines were easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The application guidelines were useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The scoring criteria were easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I had a question about the application,	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
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Toronto Public Health  
staff responded within  
48 hours

When I had a question  
about the application,  
Toronto Public Health  
staff were helpful

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

What could Toronto Public Health staff do to help you feel more supported during  
the APPLICATION process?

What could Toronto Public Health do to improve the APPLICATION FORM?

What could Toronto Public Health do to improve the APPLICATION GUIDELINES?

Some challenges that I faced during the APPLICATION process include:

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Understanding which stream to apply to
- ☐ Using the technology required to complete the application
- ☐ Contacting Toronto Public Health staff
- ☐ Not enough time to complete the application



- ☐ Understanding the application form
- ☐ Understanding how to answer the questions
- ☐ Lack of access to evaluation and research evidence
- ☐ Lack of support from Toronto Public Health
- ☐ Lack of support from my organization to complete the form
- ☐ Lack of experience completing grant applications
- ☐ Writing a workplan
- ☐ Writing a budget
- ☐ Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

What did you like about the APPLICATION process?

Check of which of the resources provided by Toronto Public health that you READ and/or USED when completing your application.

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

	I read this	I used this
Application Guide	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poz Prevention Literature	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth Resiliency Literature	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please rate your satisfaction with each of the following components of the REVIEW process.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
The review process was transparent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The review process was easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toronto Public Health staff answered any questions I had during the review process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toronto Public Health staff were helpful during the review process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toronto Public Health staff responded to my questions within 48 hours during the review process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
I found out the results of the review in a timely manner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understood how decisions for funding were made	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What could Toronto Public Health do to improve the REVIEW process?

Did you participate in the APPEALS process?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Please rate your satisfaction with each of the components of the APPEALS process.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
The feedback on my application provided in the decision letter from Toronto Public Health and the Review Panel was helpful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The appeal instructions were easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The appeal instructions were easy to follow	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had enough time to prepare my appeal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toronto Public Health staff answered any	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
questions I had during the appeals process						
Toronto Public Health staff were helpful during the appeals process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toronto Public Health staff responded to my questions within 48 hours during the appeals process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The appeals meeting was well organized	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At the appeals meeting, I had enough time to speak	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At the appeals meeting, I had enough time to answer questions from the Review Panel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At the appeals meeting, I understood the questions from the Review Panel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
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I was informed of the decision of the appeals meeting in a timely manner

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Did you contact Toronto Public Health staff for further feedback and support when preparing your appeal?

☐ Yes

☐ No

What could Toronto Public Health staff do to help you feel more supported during the APPEALS process?

What could Toronto Public Health do to improve the APPEALS process?

The feedback from the Review Panel and Toronto Public Health on my application will help me improve my future applications

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I don't know

☐ Not applicable

In the future, Toronto Public Health can help me complete grant applications by increasing my capacity to:

DRAW AND DROP YOUR TOP THREE (3) CHOICES ON THE LEFT TO THE RIGHT

	Choice 1	Choice 2	Choice 3
Write a workplan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write a budget	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use evidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop an evaluation plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write program objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write successful grant proposals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop and maintain partnerships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Is there anything else about the application, review, or appeal process that you would like to share?