

Frequently Asked Questions – Neighbourhood Grants

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Current Neighbourhood Grant Recipients

Please visit Social Planning Toronto's Neighbourhood Grants' website at:
<http://www.socialplanningtoronto.org/grants>.

How much money can I ask for in my Neighbourhood Grant application?

Residents of the [31 Neighbourhood Improvement Areas \(NIAs\)](#) and [8 Emerging Neighbourhoods \(ENs\)](#) can apply for \$1,000 - \$3,000 grants for activities/events that advance the key themes of the [Toronto Strong Neighbourhood Strategy \(TSNS 2020\)](#). A maximum of \$5,000 will be available in each of the 39 neighbourhoods in 2019.

How do I get help to apply for the Neighbourhood Grant?

We strongly encourage you to attend a Neighbourhood Grant Planning Session in October/November to help you shape your idea, identify a mentor and other groups that can assist you with your grant.

You can find which Neighbourhood Grant Planning Session you should attend by clicking [here](#).

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We encourage resident-led groups to find a mentor for the Neighbourhood Grants. More details about the mentor role and relationship can be found in the mentor guidelines on the [Additional Resources](#) tab.

How were the 39 neighbourhoods selected?

Research showed us that 31 of Toronto's 140 neighbourhoods need a stronger support system. These neighbourhoods are called the Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs). In addition, 8 other neighbourhoods in Toronto were identified in needing special attention. These are called Emerging Neighbourhoods.

In 2014, the City of Toronto approved the Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020 (TSNS 2020) that provides extra supports on the ground in these 39 neighbourhoods. One of the extra supports put in place are the Neighbourhood Planning Tables – a collection of local agencies, residents and city staff who want to work together to improve their communities. Local networks in Emerging Neighbourhoods are also supported.

Residents and agencies from these neighbourhoods have come up with a list of changes they want to see – called the TSNS Actions. The Neighbourhood Grants are for use by resident-groups to bring those Neighbourhood Actions to life!

How do I find more information about the application and how to apply?

The Neighbourhood Grants' [website](#) has all information that you need to apply.

If you want a document to print and share with your other group members, we encourage you to share the [Working/Planning document](#), the grant guidelines, and the [list of eligible and ineligible expenses](#).

How do I get a permit with the City for my activity/event?

If you are holding an event in a park or a city of Toronto recreation or civic centre, you will have to apply for a permit with the city's Parks, Forestry & Recreation division. Remember to budget for permit and other fees (like noise exemptions).

Please note that permit applications decisions usually take anywhere from 4 – 8 weeks. You'll need to apply way in advance of your event.

The city allows resident-led not-for-profit and charitable groups to use parks and community recreation centres for special events provided they meet all criteria and regulations.

- [Complete list of Parks](#)
- [Complete list of Recreation Centres](#)
- [Booking Special Events in Parks & Recreation Centres](#)

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How do I get insurance for my activity/event?

You need to have insurance for your activity/event. Remember to budget for the insurance. There are a four different ways that this can happen. Make sure your group receives written confirmation that you have insurance before doing your activity or event.

Your four options are:

1. If you get a permit from the City of Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation, you can also apply to be covered by City of Toronto's insurance policy
2. If your event takes place at Toronto Community Housing, you are likely covered by Toronto Community Housing insurance, but make sure to get confirmation
3. If your event takes place at a school (e.g. Toronto District School Board school), your group should get confirmation about whether you will be covered by their insurance. Funded Neighbourhood Grant groups have recommended that for permits with Toronto District School Board, make sure that it includes your equipment needed for your event. You will need to go through the school's principal or Superintendent to get the space permit and insurance.
4. If options (1), (2) and (3) do not work, we suggest that you partner with a community organization in your neighbourhood and see if they will cover your insurance needs.

What happens if a Member of Parliament wants to attend or speak at our event?

If you get Neighbourhood Grants funding, your group must follow the City of Toronto's Community Grants Policy. The Community Grants Policy states that City of Toronto grants **cannot** be used for political activities at any activity/events funded by the City.

The federal election will be held on October 21, 2019. It is fine if your local Member of Parliament (MP) or candidate attends your event. But, if you invite one politician to attend your event, you will need to invite all local candidates for the ward in which your event takes place. No politician or candidate can distribute political materials at your event (buttons, flyers, etc.).

If you are funded, a document will be shared with you outlining this in more detail at a Neighbourhood Grants' orientation session for funded groups. You may also be asked to sign a document to acknowledge that you understand that City of Toronto grant funds cannot be used for political activities.

Are there mentors that can help me plan my activity/event?

Check out these links to help you and your group plan your Neighbourhood Grant event:

- For a how-to guide on organizing public events in parks, Toronto Park People has great guides ([check them out by clicking here](#)).
- For an easy event planning check-list, [click here!](#)
- [Complete list of Parks](#) and [Complete list of Recreation Centres](#)
- [Permit fees – Outdoor Special Events – Not for profit](#)

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What happens after I submit my application for a Neighbourhood Grant?

- Your application is reviewed by City of Toronto staff to ensure that your group is eligible. For example, we check to see that all group members live in one of the 39 eligible neighbourhoods.
- Your application is shared with your local Neighbourhood Planning Table or the Resident Advisory Committee (if there is not an active Neighbourhood Planning Table) to make recommendation for funding.
- We encourage your group to attend your local Neighbourhood Planning Table to present your idea and answer questions when they make their selections.
- The Executive Director of Social Development, Finance and Administration reviews the recommendations from the Neighbourhood Planning Tables and approves the neighbourhood grants.
- In late February, all group members will receive an email about whether their grant application was successful or not.
- In April, successful groups will be invited to a Neighbourhood Grants' orientation session by Social Planning Toronto, the Neighbourhood Grants' coordinating partner.
- Funded groups will be contacted by City of Toronto and Social Planning Toronto, the Neighbourhood Grants' coordinating partner. Funded groups are required to do the following:
 - Agree to the City's Anti-Discrimination policies
 - Become a free member and report your activity to the Neighbourhood Planning Table
 - Submit receipts to the Coordination Partner and report to the Neighbourhood Planning Table.

What if I need to make changes to my event/activity after I get funding?

We understand that your event or activity may change from what you submit in your application.

Changes to the date, event location, or idea will need to be approved by the Neighbourhood Planning Table. Changes to the group members and to the budget will need to be approved by Carolyn Doyle (Agency Review Officer at Carolyn.Doyle@toronto.ca).

A change request form will be shared with funded groups during the Neighbourhood Grants orientation session.