

Service User Advisory Group Expression of Interest

Application and Process Overview
July/August 2025



Land Acknowledgement

The City of Toronto acknowledges that we are on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The City also acknowledges that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

African Ancestral Acknowledgement

The City of Toronto acknowledges all Treaty peoples – including those who came here as settlers – as migrants either in this generation or in generations past - and those of us who came here involuntarily, particularly those brought to these lands as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery. We pay tribute to those ancestors of African origin and descent.

Overview of Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) Division

- TSSS is responsible for managing a coordinated and effective system of shelter homelessness services. Toronto's homelessness system provides immediate, housing-focused, person-centred services:
 - Emergency shelters
 - 24-hour respite sites
 - 24-hour drop-ins
 - Temporary COVID-19 response programs
 - Street outreach services and encampment response to individuals living outdoors
 - Daytime drop-ins
- TSSS works closely with 75+ community service providers and sector partners to deliver these services.

Expressions of Interest



Expression of Interest

- TSSS developed an **Operator Expression of Interest (EOI)** process to:
 - Provide opportunities for non-profit organizations, in Toronto, to submit proposals to operate a Service User Advisory Group on TSSS' behalf.
 - Identify an operator with demonstrable experience working closely with people with living experience of homelessness on peer led programs/projects to support this group with policy development and improving service delivery across TSSS.
 - Ensure that all organizations that apply (“Proponents”) receive fair treatment in the solicitation, receipt, and evaluation of their Application(s).

Service User Advisory Group – Objectives

- The successful Proponent will support the development and operation of a Service User Advisory Group.
- The Service User Advisory Group is being funded to create opportunities to meaningfully engage people with lived experience of homelessness in policy development and improving service delivery.
- This group is expected to be comprised of service users staying in shelters and/or sleeping outdoors or in encampments.
 - These populations include but are not limited to youth, seniors, people with disabilities, Indigenous service users, Black and other racialized people, 2SLGBTQ+ service users, people who use substances and experience mental health issues.
- The group will apply their expertise as people with lived/living experience of homelessness in developing and implementing policies, programs and service delivery improvements in homelessness services in Toronto.

Resources and Funding

- The program funding for the Service User Advisory Group is until the end of 2025, and with possibility of extension at the discretion of the City.
- The funding allocated for this specialized program is up to \$125,000 annualized.
- Proponents must submit a proposed budget, using the template provided, as part of their Application.

EOI Resources



Key Resources

- This presentation provides a **high-level overview** of the EOI.
- TSSS' Service User Advisory Group's EOI website will contain full details, including:
 - The EOI Guidelines
 - Details on deadlines
 - The link to the application
 - Contact information (tsssEOI@Toronto.ca)

Key Documents

- **The Service User Advisory Group EOI Guidelines:** Defined details of the EOI
- **Application Form** (in Medallia, online platform)

Eligibility and Requirements



Who Should Apply

- TSSS is seeking Applications from non-profit organizations that:
 1. Meet all the eligibility requirements for this EOI (see [4.0 Eligibility Requirements](#)),
 2. Have demonstrable experience managing and supporting advisory groups comprised of people with lived experience of homelessness, and/or operating peer led programming/programs serving this population.
- Organizations will be scored according to their experience in delivering relevant programs and services to people experiencing homelessness, as well as their proposed approach to the Service User Advisory Group, in keeping with the requirements outlined in the Guidelines.

Eligibility Requirements

Proponents must meet ALL the following requirements to be eligible for this EOI:

1. Be incorporated as a non-profit organization with a recently audited financial statement (audited within the last 23 months).
2. Complete an organizational profile in the City of Toronto's [Toronto Grants Rebates and Incentives Portal](#) (TGRIP) prior to submission.
3. Be primarily located in Toronto and whose primary activities are in person and take place within Toronto.
4. Be in good standing with the City.
5. Have demonstrable experience managing and supporting advisory groups comprised of people with lived experience of homelessness, and/or operating peer led programming/programs serving this population.
6. Commit to and provide proof of applying an equity lens to the referral and membership selection process, in keeping with the City's policies around equity and inclusion as well as relevant frameworks.
7. Commit to taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the Group is accessible (e.g. meetings, engagements etc.) to interested service users in keeping with the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#) and [Ontario Human Rights Code \(OHRC\)](#).

Service Provider Requirements

Proponents must demonstrate how they meet the service provider requirements:

- Experience operating and supporting advisory groups comprised of people with lived experience of homelessness or peer led programming serving this population.
- Staff hired or assigned to operate the Group need to have appropriate qualifications
- Ability to offer or coordinate capacity building (e.g. skills building opportunities that will enhance employability/work experience), training and resources for group members comprised of people with lived or living experience of homelessness

Proponents who indicate on their application that they will assign the staff with lived experience of homelessness to support this group will be scored higher during evaluation.

Service Delivery Requirements

Responsibilities of the Successful Proponent will include:

1. The development and implementation of a strategy, application and screening process for selecting group membership, with input and approval from TSSS.
2. Support the Group in establishing its governance structure and decision-making process.
3. Develop materials and resources, including for onboarding new members, with input from TSSS.
4. Coordinating training, identifying and connecting members to capacity building opportunities.
5. Providing coordination and administrative support, such as:
 - a. Managing internal communications (e.g. sharing updates, announcements, news etc.)
 - b. Liaising between the group, TSSS, and other community partners
 - c. Scheduling group meetings, support in developing agendas, taking meeting minutes, and ordering refreshments
 - d. Book and payout vendors for meetings, refreshments, and for space rental (if not using own facilities)
 - e. Overseeing the budget, including tracking expenses, distributing reimbursements to members (e.g. transportation costs, childcare costs etc.) and honoraria
6. Assist the group in fulfilling requests from TSSS, including consultations, focus group and input to key documents.
7. Support the group in advancing its mandate, in alignment with TSSS priorities.

Application Process



Application Instructions

1. Read all information available on TSSS's EOI webpage, including the EOI Guidelines.
2. Ensure that your organization meets all eligibility requirements, as listed in the EOI guidelines.
3. Complete an organizational profile in the City of Toronto's Toronto Grants Rebates and Incentives Portal (TGRIP)
 - In the case of the organization having an existing organizational profile on TGRIP, the Proponent is required to ensure that all information is up to date, inclusive of Audited Financial Statements that reflect that last 23 months.
4. Complete an electronic application via Medallia prior to Application closing: August 15, 2025.

Budget

- Proponents must submit a budget outlining costs for the proposed project using the template provided in the online Application. The budget should provide a detailed breakdown of how funds up to \$125,000 will be allocated if successful.
- Operational costs may include:
 - a) Salary/benefits for staff to provide coordination and other supports needed to operate the group
 - b) Training, onboarding and capacity building for Group members
 - c) Materials and supplies to support for service user members, interpretation supports
 - d) Honoraria, transportation and childcare for service user members
 - e) Meeting space rentals to support meetings with service user members
 - f) Refreshments for meetings with service user members
- Proponents must complete create a budget using the template provided. The budget template is accessible through the online electronic application form, or you may request a copy by emailing tsssEOI@toronto.ca.

Application Instructions

The Application form will ask for:

1. Basic organization details
2. Your service delivery interests (e.g., sector, geography)
3. Your program and service experience
4. Your operational plan for delivering scope of work as outlined in EOI Guidelines

Your TGRIP Organizational Profile will be reviewed for:

1. Organization info
2. Financial standing with the City
3. Governance
4. Documents

Recommendations

1. Review the PDF copy of the survey ahead of time, to ensure that you have all necessary information. Note that you cannot submit via PDF, and you must submit via Medallia.
2. **Write your responses in a separate word document prior to entering information into Medallia** to ensure that you have a backup. This is essential in the event of a power outage or computer crash.
3. If you are unsure at any time, contact TSSS at tsssEOI@Toronto.ca.
4. If you use the "back" button in this application, you will be redirected to the previous screen BUT you will lose all information that you entered on the current page and subsequent pages.
5. Ensure that you have enough time to complete the survey in one session, otherwise use the pause button to continue later.

Evaluation Process



Evaluation Process

- Eligible applications will be evaluated and scored by an Evaluation Committee made up of a staff from across the City's Toronto Shelter & Support Services Division.
- Staff bring with them expertise and knowledge in the areas of service user engagement, policy development, and will apply an intersectional lens mobile case management, and training shelter staff and building organizational capacity, among other areas.

Evaluation Criteria	Value
Section 1: Eligibility Verification	Pass/Fail
Section 2: Financial and Organizational Health Verification, assessed on TGRIP	10% of Total
Section 3: Service Experience	35% of Total
Section 4: Proposed Operational Plan	40% of Total
Section 5: Proposed Budget	15% of Total
Total Application Content	100%

Scoring

- Information collected in the application is used to verify eligibility, inform the evaluation committee, match proponents to sites, and score applications.
- The following three application sections factor into scoring:
 1. Financial and Organizational Health Verification
 2. Service Experience
 3. Proposed Operational Plan
 4. Proposed Budget
- The following application sections will be evaluated as Pass/Fail to continue:
 1. Eligibility verification
 2. Letter(s) or support for proposed partnerships (only if required)

Announcements

- The evaluation will take approximately 6 weeks following the Application Deadline, depending on the volume of Applications.
- Once the Evaluation Committee has completed their evaluation, they will inform all Proponents of their outcome, regardless of whether they are the Successful Proponent or not.
- Unsuccessful Proponents can request feedback from TSSS via email to **tsssEOI@Toronto.ca** within 30 calendar days of receiving notification of its unsuccessful Application.
 - In this case, TSSS will provide a written summary of opportunities for the Proponent to improve their application for a future EOI.

Questions?

Thank You