

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NUMBER 2022-005-ADM
Respecting the Community Grants Program

WHEREAS the Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality values the contribution of volunteers in providing a range of leisure, learning, and recreational opportunities for residents and the provision of programs, services, and amenities to enhance public safety and the well-being of individuals and families who require specialized services or accommodation;

AND WHEREAS the Council supports the principles of diversity and inclusivity;

BE IT RESOLVED AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER of the Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality under the authority of *the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*, as follows

Short Title

1. This Administrative Order may be known as the Community Grants Program Administrative Order.

Interpretation

2. In this Administrative Order:

(a) “applicant” means an organization making application for funding to the Community Grants Program;

(b) “CFO” means the Chief Financial Officer of the Halifax Regional Municipality;

(c) “Council” means the Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality;

(d) “Grants Committee” means the Committee of Council convened to advise and make recommendations to the Council with respect to the allocation of grants;

(e) “non-profit organization” means:

i. a non-profit society incorporated pursuant to the *Societies Act* (R.S.N.S. 1989, c. 435);

ii. a non-profit association incorporated pursuant to the *Co-operatives Associations Act* (R.S.N.S. 1989, c. 98);

iii. a not-for-profit corporation incorporated pursuant to the *Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act* (S.C. 2009, c. 23); or

iv. a non-profit organization otherwise incorporated under an Act of the Nova Scotia Legislature or an Act of the Parliament of Canada;

(f) “parent organization” means a non-profit organization or registered Canadian charitable organization that has, as part of its organizational structure, associations of individuals that have a common interest but are not independently incorporated;

(g) “registered Canadian charitable organization” means a charitable organization registered pursuant to the *Income Tax Act (Canada)* and registered with the Canada Revenue Agency; and

(h) “registered in good standing” means the registration status of the applicant has not been revoked or suspended.

Purpose

3. The aim of the Community Grants Program is to support the volunteer participation of residents of the Halifax Regional Municipality in local nonprofit and charitable organizations that develop or deliver a project, program, service, or amenity to benefit members of the public and that aligns with elements of the Municipality’s 5-Year Strategic Priorities Plan.

Grants Available

4. The community grants program is hereby continued.

5. There are two types of grants available:

(a) Project Grants: available annually in an amount of \$500 to \$5,000 to support projects that are modest in scale or expense and enhance an existing program or service, or the development of a new program or service; and

(b) Capital Grants: available annually in an amount of up to \$25,000 to support large-scale property-related projects or expensive or specialized equipment as follows:

i. the purchase of real property;

ii. construction, repairs, renovation, upgrade or improvements to real property owned by the applicant;

iii. the purchase of a large or specialized item of equipment, including vehicles, costing over \$5,000; or

iv. a public art commission or purchase, a monument, or installation.

6. (1) Notwithstanding sub-clause 5(b)(ii), Capital Grants are available to support improvements to land leased from the Government of Nova Scotia or the Government of Canada if the following conditions are met:

(a) the applicant has a signed lease agreement with a minimum of three (3) years remaining in the current term;

(b) the property owner has provided written consent; and

(c) an application has been made for provincial or federal funding in support of the project in an amount equal to or exceeding the value of the municipal grant requested.

(2) Capital Grants approved in accordance with this section shall be contingent upon confirmation of receipt of the provincial or federal funding referenced in clause (c) of subsection 1.

(3) Improvements to municipal or private property are not eligible for a Capital Grant.

7. Only projects located within the geographic boundary of Halifax Regional Municipality are eligible for a grant under this Administrative Order.

8. The Community Grants Program does not provide multi-year funding commitments.

Funding Categories and Priorities

9. The funding categories for Project and Capital Grants shall be as set out in Schedule 1 of this Administrative Order.

10. The program's funding categories shall support community-based programs, services, and amenities that advance inclusion, diverse cultural representation, and accessibility.

11. The CFO may set priority outcomes within the funding categories, which may change annually.

12. The funding categories and priority outcomes shall be published in the program's guidelines and be made available to the public.

13. The funding categories listed in Schedule 1 of this Administrative Order shall be reviewed regularly in relation to the Municipality's 5-Year Strategic Priorities Plan and other municipal assistance programs and practices. Upon review, the Council may amend Schedule 1 to continue, amend, or discontinue funding categories.

Eligibility of Applicant

14. (1) Subject to subsection (2), to be eligible for consideration for a grant pursuant to this Administrative Order, the applicant shall:

- (a) be a non-profit organization or registered Canadian charitable organization;
- (b) be incorporated for a minimum of one (1) year prior to the deadline for applications;
- (c) be registered in good standing in accordance with their constating legislation; and
- (d) not otherwise have their eligibility suspended under this Administrative Order.

(2) An association of individuals that have a common interest but is not incorporated is eligible for consideration for a grant as part of a joint application in accordance with section 22.

Application Requirements

15. There is one intake period per fiscal year. The intake period and application deadline will be established by staff and advertised in all print and digital media, the application form and program guidelines.

16. If the application deadline falls on a weekend or holiday the application deadline shall be the next business day.

17. Late or incomplete applications shall not be reviewed or considered.

18. (1) An applicant may apply for one grant per fiscal year.

(2) The application may be for either a Project Grant or a Capital Grant.

(3) For greater certainty, where a non-profit organization or registered charity is a parent organization to more than one association of individuals that have a common interest but are not independently incorporated, the applicant shall be the non-profit organization or registered charity.

19. Applications shall be submitted on the form provided by the Municipality and shall include:

(a) an itemized financial statement for the applicant for the previous fiscal year showing all revenues, expenses, assets, and liabilities;

(b) a detailed project budget; and

(c) a listing of other sources from which funding is being sought by the applicant, including any other municipal program, and the status of the application(s).

20. An application form must be signed by two authorized representatives of the applicant, one of which must be a member of an applicant organization's Board of Directors.

21. Applications may be submitted by mail, email, in-person through an HRM Customer Service Centre, or by courier to the addresses provided in the program guidebook and application form.

22. (1) An application for a grant may be submitted jointly by more than one applicant.

(2) At least one applicant in a joint application shall meet the eligibility criteria as set out in sub-section 14(1).

(3) Where a joint application is submitted, each applicant shall:

(a) sign the application form in accordance with section 20; and

(b) provide an itemized financial statement for the previous fiscal year showing revenues, expenses, assets, and liabilities in accordance with section 19, and in the case of an association of individuals that have a common interest but are not incorporated, a simple statement of its cash position may be substituted, as applicable.

(4) In the event of the approval of a grant for a joint application, payment shall be made to one applicant, which shall be that applicant meeting the eligibility criteria as set out in sub-section 14(1).

(5) A joint application shall be funded in accordance with the maximum funding threshold stated in section 5.

(6) In the event of default in submitting a final report with proof of payment for the expenditure of the grant awarded to a joint application, the eligibility of both applicants shall be suspended pursuant to sections 45 and 47.

Eligible Grant Expenditures

23. A grant awarded under this Administrative Order shall be used only for the project as set out in the application and approval.

24. The expenditures shall be made in the same fiscal year (April 1 – March 31) in which the grant was approved unless an extension has been approved under sections 41 to 43.

Ineligible Grant Expenditures

25. No portion of a grant awarded under this Administrative Order shall be used for:

- (a) an organization's operating costs including but not limited to salaries, wages, insurance, utilities, rent, debt, registration or membership fees;
- (b) a stipend, bursary, scholarship, honoraria, prize, financial gift, or item(s) for personal ownership;
- (c) leasehold improvements, repairs and/or fixed upgrades to a building, land or equipment that is not owned by the applicant(s), except as provided for under sections 6;
- (d) housing or residential accommodations used for an institutional purpose, private ownership, or any part of a dwelling provided as an employment-related benefit;
- (e) costs associated with the purchase of surplus municipal property in accordance with Section 17, Schedules 1 and 2 of Administrative Order 50;
- (f) events including but not limited to a dinner, trade show, reunion, meeting, conference, festival, fundraising event, or tournament;
- (g) consumables including but not limited to office supplies, travel, admission or membership fees, food, utilities, or fuel;
- (h) academic or school-based projects or educational programs including preschool and childcare programs and facilities;
- (i) projects directly or indirectly serving the interests of a trade, profession, industry, commerce, or business including a sole proprietorship;
- (j) economic development or employment except for an inclusive employment project, program, service, or amenity exclusively serving persons with a disability;
- (k) a medical program, service, amenity, facility, or equipment;
- (l) international development;
- (m) pre-paid expenses; or
- (n) a project, program, service, or facility that advances a political or religious doctrine.

Application Evaluation

26. (1) Applicants recommended for an award will be screened by the Finance Department for any outstanding payments owed to the Municipality.

(2) If payments are identified to be outstanding under subsection (1), an application may be declined or a grant payment withheld pending resolution of the debt or the execution of a signed payment plan.

27. The following criteria shall be used by staff to evaluate applications for consideration by the Grants Committee for recommendation to Council:

- (a) the way in which a project addresses a program funding priority;
- (b) the applicant's demonstrated financial capacity and the incremental impact of a municipal grant;
- (c) the applicant's reliance on volunteers and self-generated revenues – preference may be given to organizations not in receipt of recurring municipal, provincial, or federal government funding; and
- (d) the type and scope of public benefit in terms of one or more of the following: accessibility, diversity, affordability, or inclusivity.

28. Preference may be given to:

- (a) applicants ineligible for consideration under another municipal grant program;
- (b) geographic or interest-based communities with limited access to public amenities; or
- (c) amenities open to the public at no or low cost.

Application Review Process

29. Applications shall be reviewed by staff and a recommendation report submitted to the Grants Committee, for recommendation to Regional Council.

30. The staff recommendation may include additional terms and conditions upon which approval is recommended for individual grants.

31. The Grants Committee shall review the staff recommendations and may recommend that the Council:

- (a) approve the staff recommendation;
- (b) decline the staff recommendation;
- (c) amend the value of the award or the terms and conditions recommended for approval in the staff recommendation; or
- (d) refer an application to staff for further review.

32. Final approval of all applications for a grant, and the amount thereof, is a decision of the Council in its sole discretion.

33. Approval of grants is conditional upon Council's approval of the annual program budget.

34. Not all eligible applications may receive funding.

Notification and Payment

35. Applicants will be notified in writing of the Council's decision.
36. Written notification to grant recipients shall include the terms and conditions of funding, which shall include a final report on grant expenditures and the reporting submission timeline in accordance with sections 44 to 47.
37. Payment may be issued in full or in installments.
38. Payment may be withheld under the following circumstances:
 - (a) pending confirmation of an ability to proceed with the project as presented in the application;
 - (b) pending confirmation of an applicant's registration status; or
 - (c) pending resolution of debt to the Municipality.

Inability to Proceed

39. If a funded project cannot be completed and no extension has been granted pursuant to section 41, the grant shall be refunded in full to the Municipality.
40. If any portion of the grant has been expensed prior to suspension of the project, the grant recipient shall submit a final report with proof of expenditures and refund the balance of the grant remaining.

Extension of Term of the Grant and Final Reporting

41. If a project cannot be completed by the stated reporting deadline the grant recipient(s) may request an extension of up to twelve (12) consecutive months.
42. Confirmation of an extension shall be issued in writing with a revised reporting due date.
43. During the term of an extension, the grant recipient is ineligible to apply for a grant under this Administrative Order.

Mandatory Final Report and Default Penalty

44. The recipient of a grant shall submit a final report by the reporting deadline stated on the form provided by the Municipality, which shall include proof acceptable to the Municipality of expenditures funded using the grant.
45. (1) A grant recipient that fails to submit a final report by the stated deadline shall have its eligibility to apply for grants under this Administrative Order suspended for a term not to exceed three (3) consecutive years.
 - (2) An applicant may have their eligibility restored prior to the end of the term of suspension under subsection (1) upon the Municipality receiving the final report with proof to the satisfaction of the Municipality of expenditures funded using the Municipality's grant.

(3) Where eligibility is restored pursuant to subsection (2), it will be effective for grant applications for the following fiscal year.

(4) An applicant that failed to submit a final report for a community grant awarded prior to April 1, 2023 may have its eligibility to apply for a grant under this Administrative Order restored in accordance with this section.

46. Any surplus funds of \$50 or more remaining at the time of the final report shall be returned to the Municipality at the time the final report is submitted.

47. Where funds are found to have been spent on ineligible costs or for purposes other than those approved in the grant application, the applicant shall be notified that the amount shall be refunded to the Municipality by a stated date, failing which their eligibility to apply for grants under this Administrative Order shall be suspended for a term not to exceed three (3) consecutive years

General Provisions

48. Council delegates to the CFO the ability to create procedures to support the administration of grants under this Administrative Order, and to set standard terms and conditions for the issuance of grants hereunder.

Mandatory Public Reporting

49. Awards shall be reported annually in compliance with section 79C of the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* and HRM Administrative Order 2019-007-ADM Respecting Grants Reporting.

Scope

50. Nothing in this Administrative Order shall be interpreted to limit or otherwise prescribe Council's general discretion to provide grants under the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* or otherwise.

Transition

51. This Administrative Order applies to community grants awarded by Council on or after April 1, 2023.

Done and passed in Council this 13th day of December, 2022.

Mayor

Municipal Clerk

I, Iain MacLean, Municipal Clerk of the Halifax Regional Municipality, hereby certify that the above noted Administrative Order was passed at a meeting of Halifax Regional Council held on December 13, 2022.

Iain MacLean, Municipal Clerk

Schedule I

1. The funding categories for the Community Grants Program are as follows:
 - (a) Affordable Housing: enhances housing safety, availability, suitability, and affordability
 - (b) Community Arts: encourages residents' engagement in the arts as a learning or leisure activity
 - (c) Community Histories: protects, interprets, and presents the region's culturally diverse histories
 - (d) Diversity & Inclusion: addresses barriers to participation for under-represented, economically-disadvantaged, equity-seeking, or interest-based communities
 - (e) Emergency Assistance & Public Safety: community-based supports for individuals and families unable to meet their basic needs for daily living and projects that enhance public safety
 - (f) Environment & Climate Change: prevents or remedies harm to the natural environment
 - (g) Leisure: strengthens social connection through community-based organizations, self-directed group activities, and community-owned venues
 - (h) Recreation: encourages physical fitness through non-elite and inclusive sport and recreational activity

Notice of Motion:
Approval:

November 22, 2022
December 13, 2022