



P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Item No. 9.1.2**  
**Special Events Advisory Committee**  
**April 30, 2025**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Special Events Advisory Committee  
**SUBMITTED BY:** Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer  
**DATE:** March 5, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve Grants 2025 Report

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### **ORIGIN**

Applications received pursuant to Administrative Order 2014-020-GOV - *Respecting Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve Grants*.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Pursuant to Administrative Order 2014-020-GOV - *Respecting Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve Grants (AO)*, this report summarizes the recommended Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve Grant (MLSER) awards for the first 2025/2026 intake period.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Special Events Advisory Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve the total funding in the amount of \$833,000 from the Community and Events Reserve, Q621, as shown in Table 2;
2. Pending final approval of the 2026/2027 budget, approve \$738,000 from the Community and Events Reserve, Q621, as shown in Attachment 3;
3. Pending final approval of the 2027/2028 budget, approve \$738,000 from the Community and Events Reserve, Q621, as shown in Attachment 3;
4. Pending final approval of the 2028/2029 budget, approve \$10,000 from the Community and Events Reserve, Q621, as shown in Attachment 3; and
5. Pending final approval of the 2029/2030 budget, approve \$10,000 from the Community and Events Reserve, Q621, as shown in Attachment 3.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Special Events Advisory Committee (SEAC) was created by Halifax Regional Council on March 27, 2007. The Committee was created to make grant recommendations to Regional Council based upon

evaluation criteria provided in the Civic Events Policy Framework that was also approved by Regional Council on March 27, 2007.

On November 15, 2015, Halifax Regional Council approved Administrative Order 2014-020-GOV Respecting Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve Grants (AO). Members of SEAC review and evaluate staff recommendations and make recommendations to Regional Council regarding the allocation of the MLSER with support from Parks & Recreation staff.

The funding for the MLSER comes from the marketing levy imposed on the purchase price of accommodations within Halifax Regional Municipality. The levy collected is deposited into the Community and Events Reserve (Q621). Withdrawals are approved by the Regional Council in accordance with the MLSER AO.

There are four established funding programs governed by the MLSER AO each with their own eligibility criteria:

- 1) **Signature Events:** supports established annual events (minimum five years) with a minimum budget of \$100,000. Eligible organizations must have three years of experience. Sustainable funding offered up to three years; intake every three years.
- 2) **New Events (Emerging):** supports new events in Halifax with a minimum budget of \$50,000. Organizations must have one year event management experience. Sustainable funding offered up to five years; two intakes per year.
- 3) **Distinguished Events:** supports one-time large-scale events with national/international exposure, a minimum budget of \$50,000 and generates multi-day visits to the municipality; two intakes per year.
- 4) **Major Hosting Events:** supports major event bids and hosting efforts that boost tourism and profile the municipality globally, have a minimum budget of \$500,000 with support from other levels of government; open intake.

In 2016, SEAC recommended guidelines to set the maximum funding award amounts in each program, as well as a maximum allocation for each program to ensure a portion was reserved for Major Hosting Events. Initially, the MLSER fund totaled \$1.2 to \$1.5 million annually and the program allocations were established to ensure \$400,000 of the total MLSER funding would be earmarked for investment in future Major Hosting event opportunities. The remaining funds were distributed to eligible applicants. Unused approved withdrawals were redirected to the municipality's major hosting commitments.

#### **Legislative Changes to the HRM Marketing Levy Act**

April 22, 2022, the province passed amendments to Bill 154 - Tourist Accommodations Registration Act to remove an exemption of a person's primary residence from registration as a short-term rental, therefore are required to register annually.

In November 9, 2022 Bill 204 - An Act to Amend Chapter 18 of the Acts of 1998, the Municipal Government Act, and Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008, the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, Respecting Marketing Levies was introduced, including the amendments allowing the municipalities to begin charging the hotel levy to all overnight sleeping establishments, including those under 20 rooms or less (e.g. Airbnb's) and increase the marketing levy charge from 2% to 3% on the purchase price of an accommodation.

July 11, 2023 Regional Council approved the adoption of By-law M-400 Respecting Marketing Levy, which came into force on October 1, 2023.

This report outlines the recommended MLSER grant awards for applications submitted to the 2025/2026 first intake, and reviews and updates the Business Case regarding the program allocations and maximum grants per program.

**DISCUSSION**

**Business Case**

The municipality began implementing legislative changes to the marketing levy mid 2023/2024 fiscal, resulting in an increase in funds deposited into MLSER. To coincide with the increase in MLSER funds, program allocations and maximum grants will increase beginning in the 2025/2026 fiscal year. Additionally, the 2025/2026 increases will coincide with a new three-year funding cycle for the municipality’s long time Signature Events.

The updated MLSER Business Case and Program Information is detailed in Attachment 1 and the increases are summarized below in Table 1.

<b>Table 1: MLSER Program Maximum Grants and Allocation</b>				
<b>Program</b>	<b>Maximum Grant</b>		<b>Total Allocation</b>	
	<b>Previous</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>New</b>
New Events (Emerging)	\$ 25,000	\$ 30,000	\$100,000	\$250,000
Distinguished Events	\$ 50,000	\$ 75,000	\$250,000	\$350,000
Signature Events	\$100,000	\$135,000	\$500,000	\$800,000
Major Hosting Events	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Each program has received an increase in the maximum grant to attract new events to come to Halifax Regional Municipality, as well as an increase to support the municipality’s long-time annual events. All remaining unallocated funds will be reserved within the MLSER to build capacity for future major events.

**2025/2026 MLSER 1<sup>st</sup> Intake**

There were 16 eligible applications in total submitted during the 2025/2026 first intake. These applications include: 1 New Event (Emerging), 4 Distinguished Events and 11 Signature Events. Information on the eligible applications can be found in Attachment 2.

**Ineligibility**

Based upon the eligibility criteria, two events are deemed ineligible to receive 2025/2026 MLSER funding: Rising Tides Canada Youth Cup and Moonlight Bazaar.

The Rising Tides Canada Youth Cup is an annual event that was established in 2022. For two years the event was successfully hosted without municipal funding. In 2024, the organization applied and received MLSER funding for the first time. The original application received was for New Events (Emerging), however the event was not new; was not “held in Halifax for the first time within the past five years” as per the AO requirements and therefore was redirected to Distinguished Events where the event was eligible for one year only, as this program supports non-annual one-time events. The organization submitted a New Event (Emerging) application in 2025 for Rising Tides Canada Youth Cup. The event is not eligible to receive MLSER funding in either category as it is not a new event, nor does Distinguished Events support annual events.

The organization applying for Moonlight Bazaar funding; Moonlight Events Ltd. does not meet the non-profit society status pursuant to the *Societies Act* (R.S.N.S. 1989, c. 435); or a or registered Canadian charitable organization. A future application will be considered if the organization’s status becomes eligible.

**Evaluation**

Applications are evaluated based on the degree of economic impact, multiple day visits from tourists, diversity of their programming, accessibility in planning and enhanced visibility to Halifax as a tourist destination.

- Economic impacts are assessed by applying an industry recognized economic assessment tool using basic parameters of an event that are translated into a full economic impact analysis.

- Tourism impacts are assessed based on room nights (guaranteed and estimated), along with seasonality and location (urban vs suburban vs rural).
- Media impacts (enhanced visibility of the municipality) are assessed using information outlined in proposed media plans representing live streaming, television broadcast and social media campaigns, as well as media expense budgeted.
- Financial stewardship and governance of the event organization are assessed as well the prestige the event offers to enhance Halifax's reputation as a successful event destination.
- New (Emerging) and Major Hosting programs are assessed on funding commitments from other levels of government.
- Support to multiple communities is assessed by reviewing accessibility in their planning and diversity and inclusion in their programming.

**2025/2026 MLSER Proposed Grant Awards**

The 2025/2026 proposed MLSER funding recommendations include: one New Event (Emerging), four Distinguished Events and eleven Signature Events. The recommended total funding amount of \$833,000 to fund sixteen events is summarized in Table 2 below.

<b>Table 2: 2025/2026 Proposed MLSER Grant Awards</b>			
	<b>2024/2025 Grant</b>	<b>2025/2026 Request</b>	<b>2025/2026 Proposed</b>
<b>New Events (Emerging)</b>			
Halifax Open Volleyball Challenge	n/a	\$20,000	\$10,000
<b>TOTAL New Events (Emerging)</b>		<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Distinguished Events</b>			
2025 Baseball Canada 22U Championship	\$25,000*	\$25,000	\$25,000
Festival of Rings	n/a	\$50,000	\$50,000
Lacrosse Canada Men's Field National Championships 2025	n/a	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Lacrosse Canada Minor Box National Championships 2025	n/a	\$15,000	\$15,000
<b>TOTAL Distinguished Events</b>		<b>\$95,000</b>	<b>\$95,000</b>
<b>Signature Events</b>			
Atlantic International Film Festival	\$ 50,000	\$100,000	\$ 60,000
CheerExpo National Championship	\$ 35,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000
Emera Blue Nose Marathon	\$ 75,000	\$100,000	\$ 90,000
Hal-Con	\$ 60,000	\$100,000	\$ 70,000
Halifax ComedyFest	\$ 35,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 45,000
Halifax International Busker Festival	\$ 60,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 75,000
Halifax Jazz Festival	\$ 60,000	\$100,000	\$ 80,000
Halifax Pride Festival	\$ 38,000**	\$ 70,000	\$ 50,000
Halifax Urban Folk Festival	\$ 13,500	\$ 20,000	\$ 18,000
Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo	\$100,000	\$135,000	\$135,000
SEDMHA Minor Hockey Tournament	\$ 50,000	\$100,000	\$ 60,000
<b>TOTAL Signature Events</b>	<b>\$576,500</b>	<b>\$920,000</b>	<b>\$728,000</b>
<b>TOTAL 2025/2026 Proposed MLSER Grant Awards</b>		<b>\$1,035,000</b>	<b>\$833,000</b>

\*Baseball Canada 22U Championship received 2024 Distinguished Events MLSER funding. Distinguished Events funding is to support one-time non-annual events; however Halifax may not win the rights to host the 22U Baseball Championships again for several years and therefore is included in the funding recommendations.

\*\*Halifax Pride Festival moved from Regional Special Events Grants to MLSER funding program.

**Sustainable Funding**

The MLSER AO provides the ability to award up to three-year sustainable funding to organizations under

the Signature Events program. Regional Council approves funding for this program category during year one of the three-year cycle, awarding the majority of the allocated budget precluding any public calls for applications until the next three-year funding cycle.

Similarly, the New Events (Emerging) program has the ability to award up to five-year sustainable funding to support organizers grow and develop the new event to potentially become an annual Signature Event. Two intakes per year are offered for this program.

Pending approval of the proposed grant awards listed in Table 2 and budget approvals in 2026/2027, 2027/2028, 2028/29 and 2029/2030, Attachment 3 outlines the remaining two years of multi-year funding for Signature Events and the remaining 4 years of multi-year funding for New (Emerging) Events.

Additionally, for significant awards, the AO permits Major Hosting installments to be released over multi budget years.

**Previously Approved Funding**

In 2024/2025, the Major Hosting Event: 2025 Canadian Curling Trials was awarded a \$500,000 grant to be broken into two fiscal years: \$250,000 in 2024/2025 and \$250,000 in 2025/2026. Similarly, Rock The Harbour was previously approved to receive five years of funding through the New Events (Emerging) program. These grants are included in this report for budget purposes only and are summarized below in Table 3. Both of the 2025/2026 grants will be released to the organizations after the budget is approved.

<b>Table 3: Previously Approved MLSER Multi-Year Grants Awards</b>			
	<b>Year within Funding Cycle</b>	<b>Date of Approval</b>	<b>2025/2026 Grant</b>
<b>New (Emerging) Events</b>			
Rock The Harbour	2 of 5	April 23, 2024	\$25,000
<b>TOTAL New (Emerging) Events</b>			<b>\$25,000</b>
<b>Major Hosting Events</b>			
2025 Canadian Curling Trials	2 of 2	April 23, 2024	\$250,000
<b>TOTAL Major Hosting Events</b>			<b>\$250,000</b>
<b>TOTAL Combined Previously Approved MLSER Multi-Year Grants Awards</b>			<b>\$275,000</b>

**Funding Disbursement**

Grant awards for applications that receive final approval by Regional Council will be dispersed according to a schedule outlined in the executed HRM Event Grant Agreement, with up to twenty per cent being withheld until the completion of the event and submission of the final report.

**Post Event Reporting**

Events that receive MLSER funding are required to submit a final event report including a detailed finalized budget as part of the funding process within 120 days of the conclusion of the event describing the impact of the funding received from the municipality. The final event reporting provides information on the success and challenges associated with the event. This is a key deliverable for Signature and New Events (Emerging) that receive multi-year sustainable funding to ensure criteria are met and no significant changes have occurred.

At the time of writing this report, nine events have not yet submitted final reports; five of which are fall/winter events and either have not yet taken place or have time remaining within the 120 days to submit their final report. Staff will continue to work with these organizations and ensure final reporting is received.

Four events have not submitted final reports at the time of writing this report and are past due. Staff are in communication with these organizations to submit final reporting as all reporting requirements must be up to date to receive future grants from the municipality. Upon receipt of final reporting, the organization will

be eligible to receive future grants. There are no immediate concerns with any of the organizations with outstanding reports.

**Short-Term Sustainability Planning Fund**

Also to note, for MLSER budget purpose only, on December 3, 2024 Regional Council approved \$350,000 from the 2025/2026 marketing levy to create a one-time funding envelope to support current Signature Events. The funding envelope would support the creation of a sustainability plan, or expenses associated with implementing a sustainability plan that was created after April 1, 2020. At the time of writing this report, the program is being developed and will be open for application in the 2025/2026 fiscal.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Reserve budget, the funding available in Community and Events Reserve (Q621) with no additional increased withdrawal required.

**Budget Summary: Community and Events Reserve, Q621**

Projected Opening Net Available Balances. 2025/2026 as of Q3	\$5,489,212
Contribution Show Case 2025/2026	\$ 410,000
Contribution MLSER 2025/2026	\$3,000,000
Projected Interest 2025/2026	\$ 108,900
Withdrawals Show Case 2025/2026	(\$ 400,000)
Withdrawals MLSER 2025/2026	<u>(\$1,695,000)</u>
Projected Ending Balances, 2025/2026	\$6,913,112

**RISK CONSIDERATION**

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations in this report. The risks considered rate low. To reach this conclusion, consideration was given to financial and reputational risks. A contribution agreement, using HRM's standard form of contribution agreement, will be negotiated between the event organizers and the municipality prior to the release of funding. The agreements will include details regarding the rights and benefits outlined including media coverage and advertising opportunities.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Information regarding program eligibility and applicant timelines are posted on the HRM website. Staff contacted all previously funded Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve Grants recipients within the past year advising of the 2025/2026 intake opening and deadline date. Corporate Communications promoted the open intake throughout of the municipality's social media platforms. Communication is ongoing with program clients on the status of events. Discover Halifax utilized their event contact database to inform event organizers and also host a section on their webpage to inform potential new organizers about the programs available. The Special Events Advisory Committee includes members of the public.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

**ALTERNATIVE**

The Special Events Advisory Committee may choose to make a recommendation to council to amend the

value of an award.

### **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, S.N.S. 2008. c. 39*

29A(5) The marketing levy collected pursuant to this Section may be only used by the Council to promote tourism.

79A(1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the Municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes if the expenditure is included in the Municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the Municipality;

Administrative Order 2014-020-GOV – *Respecting Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve Grants*

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: MLSER Business Case and Program Information

Attachment 2: 2025/2026 MLSER Applicants Event Information

Attachment 3: Proposed MLSER Multi-Year Event Grants (Remaining Years)

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Shari Dillman, Event Grants Administrator, 902.497.3729

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## **Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve Business Case and Program Information**

### Business Case

Funding from the Hotel Marketing Levy is deposited in the Community and Events Reserve (Q621) under the opportunity's category in which the business case, approved by Regional Council, defines the purpose of the reserve as follows:

- To provide funding to attract and host large-scale special events that create significant economic impacts, promote Halifax as a multi-experiential event destination and attract tourists to Halifax Regional Municipality for multiple day visits.

Withdrawals are approved by Regional Council, in accordance with *Administrative Order 2014-020-GOV Respecting Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve Grants* (MLSER AO).

### Program Descriptions

There are four programs under the Marketing Levy Special Events Reserve (MLSER) grant program:

- **New Events (Emerging)** – supports organizations that bring or create a developing event with potential to become an annual tourism event, have a minimum budget of \$50,000 and secured corporate and government funding;
- **Distinguished Events** – supports one-time large-scale events that have a minimum budget of \$50,000, have potential for national/international exposure and encourages multiday visits;
- **Signature Events** – supports annual large-scale events that have been in existence for five years and have a minimum budget of \$100,000; and
- **Major Hosting Events** – supports organizations bidding on the rights to host major events that draw tourists, have a minimum budget of \$500,000 and are in receipt of funding from other levels of government.

### Evaluation

Applications are evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Tourism impacts are assessed based on room nights (guaranteed and estimated), along with seasonality and location (urban vs suburban vs rural).
- Economic impacts are assessed by applying an industry recognized economic assessment tool which the basic parameters of an event are translated into a full economic impact analysis.
- Media impacts are assessed using information outlined in proposed media plans representing live streaming, television broadcast and social media campaigns, as well as media expense budgeted.
- Support multiple communities by including accessibility in their planning and diversity and inclusion in their programming.
- Financial stewardship and governance of the event organization, as well the prestige the event offers to enhance Halifax's reputation as a successful event destination.
- New (Emerging) and Major Hosting programs are assessed on funding commitments from other levels of government.



### Program Allocations

The total annual allocation for each program is as follows:

- New Events (Emerging) – \$250,000
- Distinguished Events – \$350,000
- Signature Events – \$800,000
- Major Hosting – no maximum

The maximum grant amounts for each program are as follows:

- New Events (Emerging) – \$30,000
- Distinguished Events – \$75,000
- Signature Events – \$135,000
- Major Hosting – no maximum

All marketing levy revenue unallocated, as well as approved withdrawals that are not released to a particular event in the year the withdrawal is approved are carried forward for future major hosting funding opportunities. This supports the SEAC's commitment to accumulate funds to build capacity in the reserve to host Major Events that require significant hosting fees.

### Sustainable Funding

The MLSER AO also outlines the option for HRM to provide five-year funding to the New Events (Emerging) and three-year funding for Signature Events to assist with the sustainability of events. With Regional Council's review and approval, large international Major Hosting Events have received multiple year funding, due to the significant size of the event grant and sustainability of the reserve.

### Program Intakes

The intake periods for each grant program shall be as follows:

- New Events (Emerging) – two intakes per fiscal year
- Distinguished Events – two intakes per fiscal year
- Signature Events – one intake per fiscal year\*
- Major Hosting – open take

\*Note: Signature Events program allocations have historically been awarded at full capacity during the three-year sustainable funding intake, therefore Signature Events intake opens every three years.

## 2025/2026 MLSE Applicants Event Information

**NEW (EMERGING) EVENTS**

**Event:** Halifax Open Volleyball Challenge  
**Organization:** Volleyball Nova Scotia  
**Date:** April 5-6, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$70,250	965	350	400	\$257,726

Halifax Open Volleyball Challenge event organizers have entered into new partnership with Volleyball Nova Scotia and Sports Entertainment Atlantic to aggressively grow and expand the size and stature of the tournament. The new partnership aims to double the teams participating to 80 and add a festival portion to the event. The indoor volleyball tournament will include both dual and mixed gender athletes in recreational and competitive divisions.

**Media Impact:** The event will drive awareness and engagement through social media campaigns with several key partnerships: Volleyball Nova Scotia, Volleyball New Brunswick, Volleyball PEI, Volleyball Newfoundland and Discover Halifax. Advertising will mainly focus on website promotion, email and e-newsletter.

**DISTINGUISHED EVENTS**

**Event:** 2025 Baseball Canada 22U Championships  
**Organization:** 22U Renegades Baseball Society  
**Date:** August 6-10, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$100,055	9,010	1,280	1,850	\$1,873,274

For back-to-back years, 22U Renegades Baseball Society was awarded the rights to host 10 teams representing all provinces (except Alberta and British Columbia) compete in a round robin championship at Beazley Field, Dartmouth and Mainland Common, Halifax for the Canadian Championship title. The event begins with an opening ceremony Thursday and ends with bronze and gold medal games on Sunday. A participant social is hosted at Beazley Field where players, coaches, umpires and fans can mingle, then participate in the home run derby and an alumni game.

**Media Impact:** Promotion plans for the event will mainly be through radio ads, billboards, website, Facebook and Twitter. Plans to develop promotional videos to distribute through social media network as well as on air radio ads (ticket giveaways, interviews, etc.) leading up to the event.

**Event:** Festival of Rings  
**Organization:** Nova Scotia Curling Association  
**Date:** November 22-30, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$250,000	7,217	2,127	8,020	\$1,247,993

This free-standing festival is in support and conjunction with the 2025 Canadian Curling Trials held at the same time. The Festival of Rings is free to the public to attend, is designed to attract food, music and culture from across the province and locations include: the Halifax Convention Centre, Argyle Street and Grand Parade.

**Media Impact:** Marketing for the Festival of Rings will be done through various digital and social media

channels with the following events partners: Nova Scotia Curling, Curling Canada, Events Nova Scotia and Destination Halifax.

**Event:** Lacrosse Canada Men's Field National Championships 2025  
**Organization:** Lacrosse Nova Scotia  
**Date:** August 28 – September 1, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$80,100	2,000	1,130	1,800	\$1,967,731

Lacrosse Canada Men's Field National Championships will include coed/male teams for U17 and U19 age categories called the Alumni Cup and the First Nations Cup. The Championships is field lacrosse played on turf fields outdoors and will include teams from all provinces in Canada and the First Nations Lacrosse Association. The event includes opening and closing ceremonies and competition game play leading to medal games to crown a 2025 champion in each division.

**Media Impact:** Lacrosse Nova Scotia will promote this event using community networks and digital platforms and a dedicated social media team. Partnerships with Lacrosse Canada and the Halifax Thunderbirds will amplify the event's visibility via their social media platforms and digital newsletters. TV coverage is anticipated through CTV, as well as a dedicated website for scores, schedules, statistics, and specific event details.

**Event:** Lacrosse Canada Minor Box National Championships 2025  
**Organization:** Lacrosse Nova Scotia  
**Date:** August 9-17, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$137,600	3,600	2,465	4,000	\$ 5,918,418

Lacrosse Canada Minor Box National Championships will include female and coed teams for U13 and U15 age categories, as well as a U22 female category. The Championships will include teams from all provinces in Canada and the First Nations Lacrosse Association playing on indoor arenas throughout HRM. This event includes opening and closing ceremonies and competition game play leading to medal games to crown a 2025 champion in each of the 5 divisions.

**Media Impact:** Lacrosse Nova Scotia will promote this event using community networks and digital platforms and a dedicated social media team. Partnerships with Lacrosse Canada and the Halifax Thunderbirds will amplify the event's visibility via their social media platforms, and digital newsletters. TV coverage is anticipated through CTV, as well as a dedicated website for scores, schedules, statistics, and specific event details.

**SIGNATURE EVENTS**

**Event:** Atlantic International Film Festival  
**Organization:** Atlantic Film Festival Association  
**Date:** September 10-17, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$1,571,701	19,147	242	1,380	\$1,782,024

Atlantic International Film Festival is an eight-day celebration of film and media from around the world showing screenings of over 100 Canadian and international feature films, documentaries and short films. The festival will host panels, artist talks and live script readings, as well as an awards ceremony recognizing Atlantic Canadian talent. Also, the festival hosts a Filmmaker Lab, a development program for emerging filmmakers with a focus on underrepresented groups.

**Media Impact:** Atlantic Film Festival Association have created a marketing plan which will focus on radio and TV PSA's, targeted media releases, and e-blasts to subscribers directing them to the festival website. The marketing will focus on digital ad campaigns via social media channels, the use of screen displays at Cineplex Cinema Park Lane, as well as standard print promotion.

**Event:** CheerExpo  
**Organization:** Cheer Nova Scotia Association  
**Date:** Match 20-22, 2026

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$359,725	6,000	4,769	2,204	\$ 3,424,096

CheerExpo is a national competitive cheerleading competition and expo including over 100 teams aged U8, U12, U16, U18 and open teams (14+). Saturday and Sunday the teams compete once each day and their final score is a combination of the two scores. Winners of each division are announced on Sunday. The event is a qualifier for other prestigious Cheer events including The Summit, the Global Games, the Spirit Network and The Cheerleading World Championships.

**Media Impact:** Promotion will mainly be through various social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Information regarding registration, sponsorship, scoring system and events will be sent via email blasts and the website. Leading up to the event promotion through Virgin Radio has been confirmed.

**Event:** Emera Blue Nose Marathon  
**Organization:** Halifax International Marathon Society  
**Date:** May 16-18, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$1,083,806	36,646	9,141	4,450	\$8,013,440

The Blue Nose Marathon weekend consists of three key events: 1) Walking/Running events including a Full Marathon, Marathon Team Relay, Half Marathon, 10KM, 5KM and two Youth Runs (4KM and 2KM). 2) The Expo two-day lifestyle event with 50+ exhibitor booths. 3) The Charity Challenge, a fundraising initiative Blue Nose participants raise money for a charity of their choice.

**Media Impact:** Marketing efforts are focused on returning participants with a communication plan using emails, website and newsletters. Advertising efforts to promote to new participants via digital marketing, including social media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) and Google display ads, along with the traditional radio and print.

**Event:** Hal-Con  
**Organization:** Hal-Con Sci-Fi & Fantasy Association  
**Date:** November 7-9, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$804,593	10,491	4,082	875	\$2,071,784

Hal-Con is a 3-day event offering 600 programmed hours of pop culture including various games, talks, workshops, educational sessions and demonstrations held at the Halifax Convention Centre.

**Media Impact:** Hal-Con marketing strategy will reply heavily on radio and social media using various digital platforms. An email campaign will be deployed to all previous ticket holders to communicate announcements, program promotions and updates.

**Event:** Halifax Comedy Festival  
**Organization:** Halifax Comedy Festival Society  
**Date:** May 7-10, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$820,980	4,043	990	950	\$917,923

The Halifax ComedyFest hosts 15 shows annually in various theatres and pubs in downtown Halifax and Dartmouth. The festival is supported by CBC TV, which produces six half-hour episodes each year to broadcast on CBC TV and CBC Gem (repeated multiple times nationally throughout the year). Free shows are offered to the public.

**Media Impact:** The primary focus of the marketing strategy for the Halifax ComedyFest is through various social media platforms. Additionally, efforts will be focused on radio ads, email newsletters, digital screens inside various venues, as well as partnering with Discover Halifax for event promotion.

**Event:** Halifax International Busker Festival  
**Organization:** Atlantic Buskers Festival Society  
**Date:** July 30 – August 4, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$464,712	175,051	120,763	2,240	\$ 3,562,128

The Halifax International Busker Festival offers a large, long running, ungated event held over the Natal day weekend on both sides of the harbour. For six days, the festival hosts hundreds of shows from musicians and fire breathers to acrobats and magicians, from all over the world.

**Media Impact:** The Halifax International Busker Festival begins promotion in the spring with the release of artists and information on performance locations via the festival’s social medias (Facebook and Instagram) and the website. Radio and local tv (Global, CTV and CBC) ads run weeks prior to the event.

**Event:** Halifax Jazz Festival  
**Organization:** Jazz East Rising Association  
**Date:** July 15-20, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$ 1,779,250	42,600	10,880	360	\$ 9,658,767

Halifax Jazz Festival continues to present 70+ performances on 12 stages throughout Halifax and Dartmouth. The waterfront stage remains the heart of the 2025 festival with evening ticketed concerts and free daytime programming. Secondary locations such as The Carleton, The Local and The Lighthouse will host concerts and artists talks.

**Media Impact:** Halifax Jazz Festival will focus their efforts on print, radio and digital ads, television, email blasts, social media and their event website. Traditional festival programs and posters are printed and distributed.

**Event:** Halifax Pride Festival  
**Organization:** Halifax Pride Society  
**Date:** July 17-27, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$ 1,075,000	103,079	22,604	4,620	\$8,135,161

The 11-day festival features 30 events around HRM with the centre of events taking place at the main Festival Site, located at the Garrison Grounds. The festival features a vibrant lineup of events, including a parade, live music, drag performances, community social gatherings, art exhibitions, film screenings, workshops, and family-friendly activities.

**Media Impact:** Multi-media platforms will be used in event promotion such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. Email newsletters through community engagement will be used, as well as paid advertisements leading up to the event. The Pride Parade is planned to be livestreamed via CBC.

**Event:** Halifax Urban Folk Festival  
**Organization:** Halifax Urban Folk Festival Society  
**Date:** September 28 – October 5, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$106,700	2,107	42	200	\$129,584

Halifax Urban Folk Festival (HUFF) is an 8-day live music festival that takes place in various indoor and outdoor venues in Halifax. The festival will present singers, songs and stories throughout the festival through several styles of performances: solo singer/songwriter, songwriters' circles, and band performances. HUFF also presents at least one Youth Song Circle at the Carleton where 10 young songwriters are selected to perform.

**Media Impact:** The festival's largest promotional avenue is via The Carleton's email newsletter which is distributed weekly. Additionally, TV, radio and online interviews will aid in increasing awareness of the festival, as will social media posts linking directly to the festival's website.

**Event:** Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo  
**Organization:** Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo Society  
**Date:** June 27-July 1, 2025

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$2,158,625	27,345	10,100	5,950	\$7,319,450

The Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo is a cultural event celebrating the rich heritage of Nova Scotia and the broader global community. The Tattoo brings together hundreds of performers from around the world, including military bands, choirs, dancers, acrobats, cultural groups, to create a dynamic mix of music, dance, drama, and precision performance that honors the service and contributions of the armed forces, first responders, and community heroes.

**Media Impact:** The Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo will focus marketing efforts on radio, TV (CTV) and social media. Additionally, digital screens and digital billboards in high traffic areas and will be used for event promotion. Plans are in the works to partner with airports to display ads in high foot traffic areas. Traditional print flyers placed in strategic locations will remain for local and tourist engagement. The 2025 show will be recorded and available via stream or download in fall of 2025.

**Event:** SEDMHA  
**Organization:** SEDMHA Minor Hockey Tournament  
**Date:** November 28-December 1, 2025 (Female), March 20-23, 2026 (U9 Jamboree), March 27-31, 2026 (Minor), C-City Championship

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Outside HRM</b>	<b>Room Nights</b>	<b>Event Impact</b>
Estimate	\$594,050	28,831	4,410	13,230	\$ 14,350,610

The SEDMHA Minor Hockey Tournament is an annual event that now encompasses four components held throughout the year – SEDMHA Female Tournament (November), SEDMHA U9 Jamboree (March)

and SEDMHA Minor Tournament (March) and C-City Championship. The events attract approximately 360 teams totaling 7,200 participants plus friends and family members over the four tournaments. The flagship event is the Minor (U11-U18) held in March where 260 teams attend.

**Media Impact:** The primary methods to market the SEDMHA Tournaments is via SEDMHA's website where online registration and scheduling information is located. Secondary marketing and promotional efforts will use social media blasts (Facebook).

<b>Proposed MLSER Multi-Year Event Grants (Remaining Years)</b>				
	<b>2026/2027 Proposed Grant</b>	<b>2027/2028 Proposed Grant</b>	<b>2028/2029* Proposed Grant</b>	<b>2029/2030* Proposed Grant</b>
<b>Proposed Signature Event Grants</b>				
Atlantic International Film Festival	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	n/a	n/a
CheerExpo National Championship	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	n/a	n/a
Emera Blue Nose Marathon	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	n/a	n/a
Hal-Con	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	n/a	n/a
Halifax ComedyFest	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	n/a	n/a
Halifax International Busker Festival	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000	n/a	n/a
Halifax Jazz Festival	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	n/a	n/a
Halifax Pride Festival	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	n/a	n/a
Halifax Urban Folk Festival	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	n/a	n/a
Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo	\$135,000	\$135,000	n/a	n/a
SEDMHA Minor Hockey Tournament	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	n/a	n/a
<b>TOTAL Proposed Signature Event Grants</b>	<b>\$728,000</b>	<b>\$728,000</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Proposed New Event (Emerging) Grants</b>				
Halifax Open Volleyball Challenge	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
<b>TOTAL Proposed New Event Emerging Grants</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>TOTAL Proposed MLSER Multi-Year Event Grants</b>	<b>\$738,000</b>	<b>\$738,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>

\*These Signature Events funding years will be determined during next three-year funding intake.