

# Arts & Culture Development Fund 2024

## Remarks & Recommendations

The information below is a summary of several aspects of the Arts & Culture Development Fund (ACDF). Various aspects were reviewed by category and recommendations have been identified to improve the process for applicants; attract more applicants and provide clearer communications, pre and post the grant award process.

### ***Timing***

- In 2024 the application process was launched on May 9<sup>th</sup>., and closed on May 31<sup>st</sup>. This allowed applicants just over three weeks to submit an application.
- Three weeks is a very short turn around to time apply; it limits applicants to plan their projects.
- This short turn-around time is insufficient time and problematic as it may deter applicants from applying.
- Release of funds in late spring, fails to provide for sufficient time for potential applicants & attract projects that would be executed & released earlier in the year, e.g. April, May.

In 2024 - 3 applications were received

In 2023 - 9 applications were received

### **Recommendation**

- Launch the grant immediately following confirmation of the annual budget approval & allocation of funds is confirmed. (mid-February, early March).
- Increase the active application process to four weeks.
- The ACDF adjudication committee should establish a timeline for publicity, communications to attract potential applicants, conduct the phases of application review, scoring, and adjudication.
- Potential award of grant date, if possible.

### ***Communications***

required information as requested. This puts them at risk of elimination from the process. In order to ensure applicants, have all the supporting information required and potentially avoid incomplete or missing information, late submissions or being disqualified from the process, the following is recommended.

### **Recommendation**

Information on application requirements need to have clear timelines associated with every step, including:

- Submission of applications, with closing date of the process.
- Expected award date for grants
- Timeline to submit report post project & consequences of not meeting this requirement.

All published articles/communiqués (North Grenville Times, NG Web Site, etc.) should include the following links.

- Link to NG website, (*specifically, within the ACDG site, document links to*)
- ACDF Overview – amend to include section on failure to meet application requirements.
- A&C policy
- Community Strategic plan

Published articles should clearly stipulate that grant applications need to be:

- Complete if they fail this requirement - potential for being disqualification
- Impact of not meeting the criteria i.e.: budget, project description, marketing & performance
- To assist in creating awareness and increase the number of applications received, the use of social media platforms, Instagram, FB, etc. could assist in achieving this.

## ***DOCUMENTS***

•To avoid any discrepancies and ensure all changes and updates are captured, all supporting documents & information need to be accurate and consistent.

### Recommendation:

- All ACDF program documents need to provide a revised date in the footer of the document
- Review and update of documents prior and post grant launch. (included in timeline)

### **Current document REVISIONS Needed:**

#### **ACDF Overview document**

- Remove the eligibility criteria assessment checklist section – as contained in the ACDF Overview document. This version should not have been posted for the 2024 process.
- Remove the evaluation criteria (in the table), this is redundant info., as it is all stated in the eligibility criteria.

- Remove the table with Revenues & Expenses

## **Application**

Include:

- They are encouraged to include attachment with additional information as needed.
- Note to applicants: Applications use “Jot-form” software and have limited characters. Each section within the application has a 100-word maximum. Should you wish to include more information, we encourage you to include an attachment, etc.
- Add *new question*: “If you were awarded a portion of your \$ request, how would this impact your project/event?”
- Review and edit the reporting template
- Documents need to emphasize that successful applicants must agree to submit a report 8 weeks after their event.
- Upon receipt of applications received, they should be date stamped, by NG staff.
- Include a checklist for applicants to cross reference to ensure application is complete.

## **Report Template**

- Report template should include Date of Event & Report Received On
- Report should focus less on strategic outcomes (already covered in application) and more on actuals achieved.

## **Evaluation**

- Scoring grid/document to be reviewed annually prior to the launch of the application process.

## **Arts & Culture Policy**

- Dated 2022-02-15 – should be reviewed to ensure no updates are required, etc.

## **Evaluation Process**

- When information is missing or is incomplete, applicants will be emailed and offered an opportunity to respond back via email.
- A tracking process needs to be in-place and responses recorded, etc.

## ***Reporting***

- Upon receipt of reports they should be date stamped
- When successful applicants are awarded a grant, the Outcome Report should be included. This will emphasize the importance of reporting back and the need for them to think about how they are going to capture the required elements to report back on.
- Develop a process to follow up with applicant.
- If the grant recipient does not submit a report, what is our process?
- Does this block them from applying in the future?
- What is our policy/stance on projects that do not get executed?
- What is our policy/stance on project funds that are used differently than what was stated in the application?

*Once we have determined answers to the above questions, we will need to amend policy & ACDF grant overview document.*

A final yearly report should be drafted by the ACDF committee to include (but not limited to) :

- Timelines – launch, closing date, adjudication date, results published, project dates
- Results – were all projects executed as stated in the application, who? what? when? etc.

## ***Support to applicants***

- In reviewing post event reports, it has become apparent that applicants have difficulty in capturing and reporting back on some of the reporting requirements. This includes:

Metrics - Number of people who attended or participated at the event.

Getting the word out – How to advertise their event

## **Recommendation**

- The advisory committee should develop some guidelines, ideas and concrete suggestions of how applicants can measure and capture metrics of their event.
- Provide applicants with suggestions on how they might advertise, get the word out about their project/installation, etc.