



The Corporation of the Town of Milton

Report To: Council

From: Kristene Scott, Commissioner, Community Services

Date: November 15, 2021

Report No: COMS-011-21

Subject: Milton Small Grants Program

Recommendation: THAT the proposed guidelines as outlined in COMS-011-21 Schedule A for the introduction of a pilot Milton Small Grants program be approved;

AND THAT up to \$20,000 be allocated annually in 2022 and 2023 from the Milton Community Fund budget to support this pilot program;

AND THAT grants of up to \$400 be allocated per activity;

AND THAT Milton Council delegate authority to the Commissioner, Community Services, to approve funding allocations through the Milton Small Grants Program;

AND THAT an annual report be provided to Milton Council on all Milton Small Grant Program allocations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Milton Small Grants program will encourage events and activities that support relationship building among community members and provide opportunities for connection, knowledge sharing, cultural exchange and community-building.
- This pilot program is proposed to be funded through an allocation of up to \$20,000 from the Milton Community Fund.
- The program is being introduced as a pilot to encourage and enhance support for small scale citizen-led activities.



REPORT

Background

The Milton Community Fund provides funding support for not-for-profit organizations that provide artistic, cultural and recreational programs and services that benefit the community.

The recently approved Culture Plan acknowledges the Town's role in strategically encouraging Milton's diverse and evolving culture. The plan's vision provides direction to support the community, offering inclusive opportunities to create, imagine and invest in the future.

The development of a Milton Small Grants Program will advance the Culture Plan's mission which speaks to the role of the Town in collaborating and investing in Milton's diverse people and places in order to elevate local capacity, talent, experiences and relationships.

Discussion

In response to our growing and increasingly diverse community, staff recommend introducing a new funding stream to encourage and enhance support for small scale citizen-led activities.

Many communities have small grants programs that support resident-led projects and neighbourhood initiatives that contribute to quality of life for residents. Examples include programs like the City of Burlington's 'Love My Hood' and the City of Waterloo's 'mini grants for neighbours program.' A Milton Small Grants Program (MSGP) would encourage events and activities that support relationship building among community members, provide opportunities for connection, knowledge sharing, cultural exchange and community-building.

The MSGP would be a new funding stream that encourages community members to invest in one another by connecting people socially and by sharing knowledge, talents and space with one another. The program intends to increase and celebrate the number of small scale citizen led events and activities happening that enhance the well-being of Milton residents. Empowering the community to take pride and ownership in their neighbourhoods, and with others who share similar interests is a healthy mechanism for



Discussion

building a connected, vibrant community - a place of possibility. Staff anticipate this program will appeal to a wide applicant base.

The program will be open to all residents and would fund up to \$400 per event or activity on a first come, first served basis. Due to the lower level of risk associated with the program, the application process will be simplified as much as possible, with requirements and assessment relative to the maximum funding allocation.

To ensure the MSGP is well-positioned to respond quickly to community requests, delegated authority will enable the MSGP to respond in an agile manner to maximize the impact and effectiveness of MSGP investments. As noted in the report's recommendations, staff will provide a report back to Council on all MSGP allocations at the conclusion of each year.

The program is being introduced as a pilot. This will allow staff to gauge interest in the program and understand the impact and potential as part of determining optimal methods to support citizen led activities in the future. While it is understood that the Community Fund Program is a valuable resource for established not-for-profit organizations, the alternative to access the MSGP will provide options for organization's to consider relative to their objectives. The MSGP is expected to be of greater value to smaller grass root groups who are spearheading initiatives to build a community where they can feel rooted.

A short story following completion of the initiative will allow not only an important check and balance for the program but will also provide information to understand the program's impact.

Financial Impact

The 2022 operating budget request will include \$250,000 to support the Milton Community Fund Program. An allocation of up to \$20,000 will be allocated for this pilot program from the Milton Community Fund budget. Any funds that remain unallocated by early November would be redirected back to the Milton Community Fund.

The recommendation of up to \$400 per event would support approximately 50 projects per year. This is sufficient to support the approach outlined in this report.

Respectfully submitted,



The Corporation of the Town of Milton

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Kristene Scott
Commissioner, Community Services

For questions, please contact: Kristene Scott, Commissioner, Phone: Ext. 2180
Community Services

Attachments

Schedule A: Milton Small Grants Program 2022 Draft Program Guidelines

CAO Approval
Andrew M. Siltala
Chief Administrative Officer

Recognition of Traditional Lands

The Town of Milton resides on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We also recognize the traditional territory of the HuronWendat and Haudenosaunee people. The Town of Milton shares this land and the responsibility for the water, food and resources. We stand as allies with the First Nations as stewards of these lands.

Milton Small Grants Program

2022 Program Guidelines

Purpose and Background

The Milton Small Grants Program supports community residents and not-for-profit organizations whose initiatives enhance the well-being of Milton residents. This pilot funding program encourages members of the community to invest in one another by connecting people socially and by sharing knowledge, talents and space.

The program is aligned with Milton's Culture Plan – Here to Stay. Proposals that facilitate relationship and capacity building within the Milton community are encouraged.

About the Milton Small Grants Program (MSGP)

The MSGP supports the important role that local residents play in building resilient communities and the Town's commitment to local culture. The MSGP is part of the Town of Milton's approach to building a vibrant, inclusive and engaged community.

To be considered for funding, initiatives must:

- meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the funding guidelines
- ensure activities are free to attend, accessible and welcoming

2022 Application Intake Process

Applications will be accepted until all available 2022 funding has been allocated.

To apply for funding, please review the guidelines and complete the application form.

If you are unable to complete the online application form, please email miltoncommunityfund@milton.ca or call (number to be confirmed) for assistance.

Funding Available

The program provides \$20,000 in annual funding and is being introduced as a 2-year pilot program. The Town will fund up to \$400 per event or activity.

Submission Instructions

Applications for funding must be completed using a fillable form. The form will be available on the Town's website.

Applicants will receive an email confirmation that their application has been successfully submitted.

Submission Content

Applicant submissions will include an online application to provide contact information, amount of funding being requested, how funds would be used, along with a short description of the initiative including where and when it will take place and its total cost.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- Milton resident OR a not-for-profit organization
- The event / activity for which funds are requested must:
 - take place in, or directly benefit the Milton community
 - provide for community building, an opportunity for connection, knowledge sharing and relationship building
 - be free to attend, accessible and welcoming
 - be held in a public place (in-person events)

Examples of activities (virtual or in person) include:

- Knowledge sharing (i.e. arts and culture workshops/events, cooking demonstrations, games nights, storytelling workshops)
- Support for vulnerable or isolated community members
- Health and wellness workshops, gardening events
- Neighbourhood street or block parties
- Walking tours

Notes:

- The examples above are not a complete list. All ideas that meet the program's purpose are welcome for funding consideration.
- Individuals can only receive one grant per funding year.
- Not-for-profit organizations can receive funds from only one of these two funding programs within a calendar year; Milton Small Grants Program or the Milton Community Fund.
- No fundraising for other projects / organizations can be part of the event / activity.

2. The following types of requests will not be considered:

- Applications from business or social enterprises
- Requests to reimburse individuals for time invested
- Activities that do not directly benefit Milton residents
- Fundraising events or drives
- Religious or political activities

Application Review -

- Applications are reviewed by staff to assess eligibility and alignment with the program's purpose.
- Investment decisions will be informed through assessment of the activity plan, target audience, required budget and fit with the program's purpose.
- All applicants will be notified of their application status (approval or decline).
- The Town will determine the amount of funding to be distributed to applicants approved for funding, including full or partial funding.
- Submission of an application does not guarantee funding.

- All decisions are final.

Awarding of Funds and Reporting Requirements

- Eligible applicants will be funded on a first-come first-served basis until the funding pool is depleted.
- Funding will be dispersed following the submission of a project story as detailed below.
- Should the disbursement timing be a deterrent to application, please call 905-878-7252, ext. 2529 to discuss.
- Following the completion of the funded activity, recipients are to submit:
 - A project story via a fill-in form including a brief description of the project and its impact on the community, total amount spent and expenses funded by the program.