

Staff Report

Corporate Services Department



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REPORT TO: Finance & Corporate Services Committee

DATE OF MEETING: September 13, 2021

SUBMITTED BY: Suzanne Charles Watson, Director of Equity, Anti-Racism & Indigenous Initiatives

PREPARED BY: Elin Moorlag Silk, Project Manager, Equity, Anti-Racism & Indigenous Initiatives

WARD(S) INVOLVED: All Wards

DATE OF REPORT: September 2, 2021

REPORT NO.: COR-2021-22

SUBJECT: Community Grant Program for Black, Indigenous and Racialized Groups and Organizations

RECOMMENDATION:

That the proposed grant program for Black, Indigenous & Racialized Communities in Kitchener, as outlined in Appendix A of COR-2021-22, be approved with an annual budget of \$50,000 for the first three years;

That the unused Community Grants balance of \$138,000 be reallocated to fund the proposed community grant program for the first three years;

That the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer and General Managers be authorized to execute agreements with recipients pertaining to the proposed community grant program; and

That starting in the Fall of 2021, the City will begin the collection and reporting of demographic data for organizations receiving grants in all other grant streams.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to present, for Council consideration, a new grant program for Black, Indigenous and racialized communities in Kitchener
- This specialized grant will provide support for community-led programs, initiatives and events meant to decrease inequities and increase opportunities and well-being for Black, Indigenous and racialized communities
- The financial implications are \$150,000 allocated to this grant stream over the first three years of the program.
- Community engagement conducted in the development of this grant proposal included ongoing consultation with members of the Mayor's Task Force on Equity, Diversity and

Inclusion and targeted engagement with local organizational leaders and racialized community members in Kitchener

- This report supports A Caring Community by completing a comprehensive Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

BACKGROUND:

This proposed community grant program was developed as one of the eight bodies of work to come out of the Mayor’s Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion as a tangible deliverable of the Corporate Equity & Anti-Racism Strategy, as outlined in the table below.

Table 1: Corporate Equity & Anti-Racism Strategy - Status of Actions

	ACTION	EXPECTED OUTCOME	CURRENT STATUS	UPCOMING WORK/ MILESTONES
1	Staffing Model	Creation of a new permanent full-time 5-person staff team to lead this work at the City	COMPLETE	Director hired, onboarded June 2021 Hiring underway for additional positions; team in place by early 2022
2	Policy	Creation of an Equity, Inclusion & Anti-Racism Policy for the City of Kitchener	COMPLETE	Broad staff engagement Fall 2021 Develop evaluation plan for actions related to policy, Fall 2021
3	Community Funding Program	Development of a sustained community funding program for Black, Indigenous, and other racialized groups & organizations in Kitchener	COMPLETE	Present to Council Sept 2021 Develop plan and timeline to implement program, Fall 2021
4	Training Strategy	Creation of an Equity & Anti-Racism training strategy for City Staff, Volunteers, and City Council, to be implemented over 3 years	COMPLETE	Training Strategy approved Content development underway for first mandatory training courses, to be launched 2022
5	HR Audit: Hiring & Recruitment	Completion of an Equity Audit of HR policies and practices pertaining to recruitment, hiring and promotion at the City of Kitchener	COMPLETE	Develop workplan & timeline for recommendations, Fall 2021
6	Equity & Anti-Racism Advisory Committee	Approval of an Equity & Anti-Racism Advisory Committee to Council to advise on Equity & Anti-Racism issues and serve as a mechanism of community accountability	COMPLETE	Establish interim Nominating Committee Sept 2021 Launch application process for Advisory Committee Oct 2021 Council to appoint members Nov 2021 Advisory Committee begins Dec 2021
7	Demographic Data Collection	A strategy and resources to facilitate the standardized collection of demographic data across the corporation on an ongoing basis	IN PROGRESS	Begin implementation Fall 2021
8	Communications Guide	An Equity and Anti-Racism guide for City staff, leadership, the Communications team, and Council	IN PROGRESS	Launch guide & other materials January 2021
9	Youth Mentorship Program	Develop recommendations for the development of a Youth Mentorship Program specifically for low-income youth, sponsored and/or facilitated by the City of Kitchener	IN PROGRESS	Progress reliant on ability to conduct in-person meaningful community engagement

The process of drafting this grant program included research into current best and emerging practices locally and across Canada, drawing on the lived experiences and expertise of members of the working group, and consultation with local organizations run for and by racialized community members.

The need for this kind of funding opportunity has been developed in response to community calls for increased support for Black, Indigenous and racialized groups for their own vital community-based support systems. Recent events related to anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism that have come to light over the past year may have been the catalyst for this community call to action, but there is ample evidence to indicate that inequities have long existed within organizations and systems, and that these inequities have had consistent, disproportionate impacts on particular groups. For instance, studies show that those with the poorest measures of health and wellbeing in Ontario identify with one or more of the following groups: African, Caribbean or Black, First Nations, Inuit or Metis, and Refugees.

On May 10th, 2021 staff presented a draft outline of this proposed grant program to members of City Council in a strategy session focused on providing a comprehensive update on the eight bodies of work undertaken by the Mayor's Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The following question was posed to members of City Council for discussion:

Having reviewed the draft outline of the proposed Community Funding Opportunity for Black, Indigenous, and other Racialized Groups, what suggestions for improvement should staff consider before bringing the proposal forward for Council's consideration/approval?

The discussion generated by members of Council in response to this question was positive and supportive of the proposed grant program and comments made by members of Council helped form the current draft of the program.

REPORT:

The objective of this proposed grant has been identified by members of the working group as the following:

“A sustained funding opportunity for groups or organizations run by Black, Indigenous and other racialized community members for the purpose of providing support for community-led programs, initiatives and events meant to decrease inequities and increase opportunities and well-being for racialized communities in Kitchener.”

When developing this funding opportunity, the working group was particularly focused on decreasing barriers, as it was acknowledged that historically, multiple barriers have been experienced by Black, Indigenous and other racialized groups in traditional granting processes, including those administered by the City of Kitchener. Some examples of barriers that were raised in the working group include the following:

- Traditional granting processes are often cumbersome in terms of bureaucratic requirements for organizations, to demonstrate history and capacity for doing the work – organizations who are unable to demonstrate this requirement are then not able to access funding
- Colonial assumptions around “organizing” and rules around being registered as an organization are experienced as a barrier for many groups
- Capacity-building and operational funding is often needed for informal/grassroots groups, but few existing grant opportunities fund these needs
- Ways that success are being measured by granting agencies can be problematic The Western/colonial business model that shaped the way we do things doesn't necessary fit with how Indigenous, Black, or other racialized groups organize themselves or want to be organized.
- The demographic representation of those making decisions about grants is often not representative of the community

Implementation

Implementation of this community grant program is outlined in the table included in Attachment A. Each element outlined has been carefully considered in relation to the

barriers listed above and the feedback received from the community during the consultation process. In particular, some of the elements identified in the development process considered crucial for the success of this funding opportunity are the following:

- This opportunity is open to registered charities and not-for-profit organizations as well as new and grassroots groups who are not registered as a charity or not-for-profit organization (following the same process and systems of accountability as Love my Hood currently operates)
- The funding criteria is broadly defined in order to allow for communities to identify what it is that they need for their own well-being rather than being forced to fit into narrow categories created by the City
- *Capacity Building* is a funding category for groups to utilize in order to provide resources for groups to build and develop internal capacity prior to launching projects or events
- A selection committee representative of the communities this funding opportunity is intended for will be responsible for applicant selection and decision-making
- Starting the granting budget at \$50,000 per year and then potentially growing it over time as we have more experience and local data. This is a similar approach used by the Love my Hood grant and proved to be a successful way to implement a newly developed grant program

Three-year review

The intent of this grant program is that it become a permanent, sustained stream within City grants, starting with an annual budget of \$50,000 per year, with plans to review the program after three years. At the three year mark, staff will generate a report with recommendations which can then be brought to Council outlining the operation of this grant, and using evidence-based criteria, will then be able to determine demonstrated need and the potential ongoing benefit in the community this grant may have in the long term. For instance, if more applications that meet the funding criteria are consistently submitted than what can be funded with the budget over the three years, an increase in budget allocation may be brought to Council at this time. This strategy will also allow for a 3-year phase of the grant rollout whereby potential barriers or gaps may be addressed and changes or improvements can be made in response to community need.

For context, a summary of other City of Kitchener Community grants is included in the table below. The recommendation for this grant is that it will start as a three-year program as a stand-alone grant; and during this phase, applicants would still be able to apply for Love my Hood grant and/or Tier 2 community grants. Once the three years are up and if the program is deemed successful through the data and evidence collected, it is recommended that it be rolled in to the Tier 2 Community Grants program as a permanent stream whereby grant recipients would then become eligible for Tier 1 grant status after 5 years of funding, as per the current criteria.

Granting Category	Annual Budget	Maximum granting amount
Tier 1 Community Grant	\$1,477,797	No set maximum
Tier 2 Community Grant	\$213,391	None specified
Grant for Black, Indigenous & Racialized Groups	\$50,000 to start	\$10,000 to start
Love my Hood	\$150,000	\$30,000

Ongoing Demographic Data Collection

Starting in the Fall of 2021, it is the recommendation of staff that systematic demographic data collection for organizations receiving grants in all grant streams at the City be implemented. Currently this kind of data is not collected by the City of Kitchener within the grants programs, which means we do not know how many of our grants are being accessed by organizations supporting Black, Indigenous, or other racialized communities. By collecting this data we will gain a better understanding of which communities are accessing grants, potential barriers communities may be facing, and by using a data-driven approach we can start to look at potential changes to other grant streams in order to reach a broader and more diverse number of residents.

This demographic data collection will be a component of the larger Data Collection Strategy currently under development as one of the deliverables of the Corporate Equity and Anti-Racism Strategy (as outlined in Table 1).

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports A Caring Community by completing a comprehensive Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Staff propose reallocating the unused 2020 balance of \$138,000 in the Community Grants Program to partially fund the first three years of the Indigenous & Racial Equity Fund, given the natural affinity between these programs.

Staff anticipate that there will be unused funds from the 2021 Community Grants Program due to the continued barriers of the pandemic; it is proposed that \$12,000 of this positive variance be allocated to the Indigenous & Racial Equity Fund for the remaining budget needed for the first three years.

Administration and support of this grant will be provided by the Equity, Anti-Racism and Indigenous Initiatives team within the Corporate Services Department.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

- **INFORM** – This report has been posted to the City’s website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.
- **COLLABORATE** – This grant program was developed in collaboration with a working group of the Mayor’s Task Force on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, which is predominantly comprised of community members, whose lived experiences and expertise in a wide variety of areas directly informed the direction, scope and contents of the proposed grant. In addition to this, consultation was done with local organizations run for and by racialized community members as early drafts were being developed.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- [CSD-21-4](#) Task Force on EDI Update
- [Special Council Strategy Session](#), May 10th, 2021

APPROVED BY: Victoria Raab, General Manager of Corporate Services
Michael May, DCAO and General Manager of Community Services

ATTACHMENTS: Attachment A –Proposed grant program for Black, Indigenous & Racialized Communities; current working title is “Racialized and Indigenous Support for Equity” Fund (RISE)

Attachment A – Racialized & Indigenous Support for Equity (RISE) Fund: Proposed Grant Program for Black, Indigenous & Racialized Communities

Component	Details of Funding Opportunity
Objective/ Vision	A sustained funding opportunity for groups or organizations run by Black, Indigenous and other racialized community members for the purpose of providing support for community-led programs, initiatives or events meant to decrease inequities and increase opportunities and well-being for racialized communities in Kitchener.
Criteria for Applicants¹	<p>Open to formal and informal organizations, community groups in Kitchener, whether the group is newly formed for the purpose of a specific project, or is a pre-existing group undertaking a project.</p> <p>Applicants must demonstrate that their organization/ group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is led by and for Black, Indigenous or racialized individuals/groups in Kitchener • Has a project budget outlining how they propose to use funds • Has a bank account to receive grants over \$1000, or has an agreement with an organization to sponsor them financially as a third party • Agrees to report back upon completion of the project, including accountability of all revenues, expenses and proof of purchases.
Criteria for Projects/ Potential funding categories	<p>Project Criteria The project/initiative/event will contribute to the well-being of Black, Indigenous or other racialized community members in Kitchener.</p> <p>Potential Funding Categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building • Core operational costs – with a specified 3 year granting limit for this category • Project funding • Event funding • Other (at the discretion of the granting authority and City solicitor)
Application process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications will be done through a simple online form consisting of questions relating directly to the criteria. • Demographic data collection will be consistently collected with all applicants and grant awardees and tracked over time in order to identify potential gaps, barriers & areas for improvement • Templates of any required documents will be provided, such as budgets and tracking tools for tracking expenses. • Paper versions of the application will be available upon request. Applications will be accepted on a quarterly basis, following the same application deadlines as Love my Hood. • Staff support will be available for applicants.
Granting amounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum grant amount = \$10,000 • Minimum grant amount = \$1000 • Events eligible for \$5000
Selection Process	The Equity & Anti-Racism Advisory Committee will serve as the selection committee for this grant. This committee will be comprised of 12 community members representing a diversity of voices who have been historically underrepresented or excluded: specifically those who are Black, Indigenous, racialized, 2SLGBTQ+ identified, people with disabilities,

¹ It was very important to the working group members that it will need to be made clear that this funding is not intended for white-led organizations to hire a Black, Indigenous or racialized person to run a program within their organization.

Component	Details of Funding Opportunity
	<p>religious minorities, and the intersections of these identities. Facilitative and administrative support specific to the grant selection process will be provided by one member of City staff.</p> <p>Additional City staff will be consulted based on need for expertise in the selection process, following a similar process used for Love my Hood applications.</p>
Grant Administration	<p>The Deputy Chief Administrative Officer and General Managers are authorized to execute agreements with recipients pertaining to the City's Indigenous & Racial Equity Fund. The agreements will be used to outline the roles and responsibilities related to grants including, if applicable, safety, liability insurance, maintenance and project ownership.</p> <p>Staff within the City's Equity, Anti-Racism and Indigenous Initiatives team will oversee the grant program under the leadership of the Director of this Division.</p>
Annual Budget & Program Duration	<p>This grant program will be launched with an annual budget of \$50,000 for the first three years of operation. At the three year mark, staff will generate a report with recommendations which can then be brought to Council outlining the operation of this grant, and using evidence-based criteria, will then be able to determine demonstrated need and the potential ongoing benefit in the community this funding opportunity may have in the long term.</p>