

Staff Report

Community Services Department

REPORT TO: Community and Infrastructure Services Committee

DATE OF MEETING: April 3, 2023

SUBMITTED BY: Michael May, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, 519-741-2200 ext. 7079

PREPARED BY: Carrie Kozlowski, Executive Assistant, 519-741-2200 ext. 7395
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WARD(S) INVOLVED: All Wards

DATE OF REPORT: February 22, 2023

REPORT NO.: CSD-2023-087

SUBJECT: 2023 Community Grants Tier 2

RECOMMENDATION:

That 2023 community grants (Tier 2) in the amount of \$198,137 be approved as outlined in Attachment A to Community Services Department report CSD-2023-087; and further,

That the following organizations be approved to move to the Tier 1 grant process for the 2024 grant cycle:

1. Arts4All (Young@rt event)
2. Belmont Village Bestival
3. Big Brothers Big Sisters Waterloo Region (Big Bunch Program and Holiday Party)
4. Caribbean Dreams Concert
5. JM Drama Alumni/Registry Theatre

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

This report:

- outlines the process used to assess community grant applications.
- recommends the transfer of several organizations from Tier 2 to the Tier 1 grant process.
- lists the organizations/groups that applied for 2023 Tier 2 funding, including the amount of each request and the recommended grant allocations (see Attachment A).
- supports the delivery of core services.

BACKGROUND:

Tier 2 community grants assist organizations/groups providing not for profit services intended for the common good of residents within the City of Kitchener. These grants typically fund new or emerging community organizations, events, and/or initiatives. Organizations providing municipal services in the following sectors are eligible for funding:

- arts and culture
- special events

*** This information is available in accessible formats upon request. ***
Please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994 for assistance.

- sports and recreation
- community support and development

A Peer and Staff Review Committee (PSRC) composed of three community volunteers and five to six staff (from arts/creative industries, special events, sport development, community development and grant administration) reviews applications against the eligibility criteria set out in the Council-approved Community Investment policy (FIN-GRA-525). This committee allocates resources within budget availability and makes funding recommendations to Council (outlined in this report).

In November 2018 (CSD-18-088), Council delegated the consideration of appeals to a panel of staff.

REPORT:

For 2023, 54 Tier 2 grant applications were received (\$544,341 in requested funding). The total amount of Tier 2 funding available is \$208,550. The PSRC recommends funding 45 groups (\$198,137).

Highlights of the 2023 Tier 2 grant process include:

- **Information sharing:** Corporate Communications and Marketing developed a campaign to promote the Tier 2 community grant funding opportunity and its benefits to eligible groups. An online video presentation was available from the City's web site to introduce applicants to the grant process and to provide tips about how to submit a strong application.
- **Thorough review of applications:** PSRC members completed an independent review/assessment of the applications against the grant criteria using an online decision-making platform. Then the committee participated in three group sessions (January 31, February 1 and 2, 2023) to develop funding recommendations.
- **Opportunity for appeals:** Applicant organizations had the opportunity to appeal their recommended funding allocations. The appeal deadline was February 21, 2023.
- **Communication:** applicants were notified of the outcome of the deliberations.

Assessment process

PSRC members, both community volunteers and staff, dedicate considerable time and effort to reviewing/assessing the applications. Each member spent approximately 20 hours independently reviewing the applications. Then the committee met three times for a total of seven hours to make funding recommendations as a group. The PSRC's diversity of knowledge and expertise, in combination with the detailed review process whereby applications are considered against the Council-approved eligibility criteria ensures that funding recommendations are made responsibly, in the context of all the applications received and within budget availability.

Appeal process

Tier 2 grant applicants are notified of the PSRC's recommended funding allocations and advised of the option to appeal the recommendation via an online appeal form. No organizations/groups appealed their allocations in 2023.

Transfers to Tier 1

FIN-GRA-525 outlines that organizations receiving Tier 2 funding for five or more years may be considered for Tier 1 funding. To be eligible for Tier 1, organizations must:

- be incorporated as a not-for-profit entity or agree to become incorporated within a set timeframe (12 months, for example),
- enter into a legal agreement with the City, from one to five years in length. The agreement outlines the responsibilities of the City and the responsibilities of the organization, including details of services/events for which the grant is provided, financial reporting requirements, and insurance/indemnity requirements.

The chart below summarizes the organizations recommended to transfer to the Tier 1 grant process for the 2024 grant cycle. If approved, these groups will move with a base grant amount equal to their 2023 Tier 2 grant. As a result of this transfer, there will be a corresponding reduction of \$33,984 in available funding for Tier 2 grants in 2024.

Organization	2023 grant recommendation	previous Tier 2 funding
Arts4All Inc. (Young@rt event)	\$3,000	2018-2022
Belmont Village Festival	\$10,000 (\$7,000 cash, \$3,000 in kind)	2018-2022
Big Brothers Big Sisters Waterloo Region (Big Bunch Program and Holiday Party)	\$5,984 (\$5,000 cash, \$984 in kind)	2016-2020, 2022 <i>(didn't apply in 2021 due to pandemic)</i>
Caribbean Dreams	\$5,000 (\$3,500 cash, \$1,500 in kind)	2016, 2018-2022
JM Drama Alumni/Registry Theatre	\$10,000	2018-2022
total	\$33,984	

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The budget for 2023 Tier 2 community grants is \$208,550. The PSRC recommends a total 2023 Tier 2 allocation of \$198,137. \$10,413 of the 2023 Tier 2 grant budget remains unallocated, available to be posted as a positive variance at the end of the year and then transferred into the tax stabilization reserve.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – The 2023 Tier 2 community grant program was advertised on the city's website, on social media and in Kitchener Life. A promotional strategy featuring testimonials from previous grant recipients was used to reach new demographic groups and to demonstrate, through storytelling, the benefits that participation in the community grant program can afford to new and emerging groups. Previous Tier 2 grant recipients were informed of the 2023 application process. The virtual presentation about Tier 2 grants allowed applicants to learn about the program at their convenience and from their own locations.

All grant applicants were informed of the PSRC's recommended grant allocations and were given the opportunity to appeal their allocations via an online form.

This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

CONSULT – The PSRC provided invaluable expertise throughout the assessment process. Their commitment and dedication are very much appreciated. Both applicants and PSRC members are provided an opportunity to comment on the grant process, and comments are considered for implementation in the next grant cycle.

ENTRUST – Through the provision of grants, community groups/organizations are entrusted to deliver valued programs, initiatives and services to the community.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- CSD-18-088 Community Grants Appeal Process Update
- FIN-GRA-525 Community Investment Policy

APPROVED BY: Michael May, Deputy CAO, Community Services Department

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – CSD-2023-087