



Report
Staff Report
 The Corporation of the City of Brampton
 6/26/2024

Date: 2024-06-11

Subject: **Advance Brampton Fund – 2025 Framework Update**

Contact: Kelly Stahl, Director, Cultural Services

Report number: Community Services-2024-290

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the report from Kelly Stahl, Director, Cultural Services to the Council Meeting of June 26, 2024, re: **Advance Brampton Fund – 2025 Framework Update**, be received;
2. That Council endorses the Advance Brampton Fund framework as outlined in this report for implementation starting with the 2025 program year; and,
3. That the Commissioner, Community Services be delegated authority to approve funding recommendations and execute on behalf of the City any required grant agreements and other agreements and documents deemed necessary for implementing approved funding from the Advance Brampton Fund and exercising the City's rights under such agreements beginning with the 2025 program year, on such terms and conditions as may be satisfactory to the Commissioner, Community Services or designate and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor or designate.

OVERVIEW:

- The City of Brampton's Community Grant Program has funded local nonprofit organizations and charities since 2015.
- In 2019, Council approved the Advance Brampton Fund (ABF) framework, launched in 2020, to support impactful projects aligned with Council and Corporate priorities.
- Since its inception in 2020, the ABF has received 603 applications, with funding requests totaling \$6,946,429.
- Funding allocations are based on application scores and project alignment with City priorities, ensuring an impactful and strategic distribution of resources.

- To ensure ongoing effectiveness, the program undergoes annual closeout reports and solicits community feedback to inform improvements and adjustments.
- Proposed updates to the ABF framework are designed to support more efficient and equitable resource distribution.
- A 2019 report by Hill Strategies highlighted significant underfunding of cultural grants in Brampton compared to Mississauga, prompting strategic adjustments.
- Establishing a \$2 million grant fund target by 2026 will help meet the increasing demand for community support and project funding and bring the City of Brampton into closer alignment with neighbouring municipalities.
- There are no immediate financial impacts resulting from the adoption of the recommendations in this report. However, staff will include a \$250,000 increase in the annual operating budget submission in 2025 and 2026 to increase the Advance Brampton Fund from \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Brampton's Community Grant Program has operated since 2015. It provides funding to eligible Brampton-based unincorporated and incorporated nonprofit organizations (NFPs) and charities for events, programs, and projects that positively impact residents and improve their quality of life.

On October 16, 2019, Council approved a framework for a new Community Grant Program, the Advance Brampton Fund (ABF) (CW386-2019). First delivered in 2020, the program opened to Brampton-based unincorporated NFP organizations, incorporated NFP organizations, and registered charities for strong project proposals that advanced Council priorities and took place in Brampton.

Program Statistics

Since launching in 2020, the program has received 603 applications totaling \$6,946,429 in funding requests.

Table 1: Advance Brampton Fund Grant Allocations (2020-2024)

Year	Number of Applications Submitted	Total Request Value	Total Number Approved	Total Value of Grants Funded	% of Requested Funding	Average Score
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2020	113	\$1,080,600	48	\$435,561	40%	58.8%
2021	122	\$1,336,614	67	\$634,302	47%	72.5%
2022	122	\$1,427,019	64	\$615,769	43%	74.8%
2023	113	\$1,270,589	105	\$1,250,751	98%	73%
2024	133	\$1,831,607	117	\$1,488,394	81%	77%
TOTAL	603	\$6,946,429	401	\$4,424,777	n/a	n/a

Grant Cycle

The Advance Brampton Fund program follows a typical grant cycle, including the following steps:

- 1. Call for Applications**
- 2. Deadline for Applications**
- 3. Evaluation**
 - a. Administrative Review**
 - b. Scoring**
- 4. Funding Allocation**
- 5. Funding Recommendation**
- 6. Notice to Applicants**

Program Review and Feedback

To ensure the Advance Brampton Fund continues to meet community needs and advance City priorities, staff gather impact data through annual closeout reports and program feedback through surveys, discussions at seminars, workshops and 1:1 meetings.

CURRENT SITUATION:

Program Budget

A 2019 report by Hill Strategies highlighted that Brampton's cultural grants were notably low, both per capita and as a proportion of the city's overall cultural investment. In contrast, in 2024, the City of Mississauga delivered \$4.7 million in grants, with approximately 50 percent allocated to arts and culture.

In 2023, Council adopted an incremental funding strategy to achieve a \$2 million grant fund by 2027 (CW275-2023). However, Table 1 shows that between the 2023 and 2024 program years, staff observed a 17.7% increase in applicants and a 44.2% increase in requested funding, totalling over \$1.8 million.

To better address the growing community need, Council should consider accelerating the funding strategy to reach a \$2 million grant fund by 2026. This would require increasing funding by \$250,000 in the 2025 and 2026 program years.

Advance Brampton Fund Framework

The Advance Brampton Fund Framework (Table 2: Advance Brampton Fund Framework proposed) details the requirements for the effective delivery of the funding program.

The Advance Brampton Fund Framework includes proposed changes (bolded), which, upon Council approval, will be incorporated into ABF guidelines and applications beginning with the 2025 program year.

Table 2: Advance Brampton Fund Framework (proposed)

Advance Brampton Fund Framework (proposed)			
Funding Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts & Culture • Recreation • Community Safety and Well-being 			
Program Stream	New and Small Projects	Developing	Amplifying
Project & Applicant Type	Small-scale projects delivered by new, emerging, or established organizations.	Projects led by experienced applicants with potential for growth and development.	Large-scale projects managed by experienced applicants with a proven history of success and significant impact.
Project History		These projects must have been successfully completed at least once before in Brampton.	These projects must have been successfully completed at least twice before in Brampton.
Tiers	Up to \$5,000, including up to \$2,500 in capital expenses.	Up to \$12,500, including up to \$5,000 in capital expenses.	Up to \$25,000, including up to \$5,000 in capital expenses.
Proposed Program Funding*	\$1,750,000 (proposed 2025 fund) \$2,000,000 (proposed 2026 fund)		
2023 Funding Envelopes	\$250,000 50 projects @ up to \$5,000	\$500,000 40 projects @ up to \$12,500	\$750,000 30 projects @ up to \$25,000
Matching Financial Requirement	No	Yes. 50% financial contribution is required from the applicant.	Yes. 50% financial contribution is required from the applicant.

Holdback	No	10% holdback, released upon staff approval of closeout report.	10% holdback, released upon staff approval of closeout report.
Project Timelines	January 1 – December 31 (within each program year)		
Eligible Organizations (must be Brampton-based)**	Unincorporated NFPs*** Incorporated NFPs Registered Charities	Incorporated NFPs Registered Charities	Incorporated NFPs Registered charities
Number of Grants	Each organization can receive a maximum of one successful ABF grant annually across all streams and priority areas.		
Insurance Requirement	All organizations must carry \$2M Commercial General Liability insurance year-round. Proof of this insurance is a requirement to apply and, if successful, must be kept in full force for the duration of the funding agreement.		
Intake	There is one intake period annually for applications, with the possibility of a second intake if funds remain.		
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications are evaluated by City staff with subject matter expertise within tiers with other projects of the same scope and scale. • Evaluated on likelihood of project success and advancement of funding priorities. • Projects must take place in Brampton. • Any third-party fundraising efforts must be secondary components of the project and be directed back into the City of Brampton. 		
Minimum Score	Minimum 50% score to be considered for funding.	Minimum 60% score to be considered for funding.	Minimum 70% score to be considered for funding.
Funding Allocation	Funds are allocated based on the number of requests received and the scores obtained by applicants across all program streams. Different allocation strategies may be used to achieve the best outcomes, aiming to reach the highest number of applicants and maximize the program's impact. Once the allocation is complete, funding recommendations are prepared for the Commissioner of Community Services' approval.		
Approval Authority	Commissioner, Community Services to approve funding recommendations and execute any required agreements and other documents deemed necessary for the Advance Brampton Fund in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor or designate.		
Results	At the end of each intake period, applicants are notified of funding decisions.		
Closeout	Closeout ensures that final reports are received and evaluated, allowable costs are determined, and holdback payments are made. Closeout reports must be submitted within 60 days of the end of the project period or December 31 of each program year (whichever is earlier). Failure to submit timely and accurate final reports may affect future funding to the organization.		

*Pending council approval of the annual operating budget

**Brampton-based" is defined as having a permanent organizational address in the City of Brampton.

***When two or more Brampton residents agree to pursue a common purpose, which is not-for-profit. The organization must be governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, provide evidence of their nonprofit purpose and activity (i.e., the organization's by-laws, constitution, terms of reference or charter), and have two authorized Board Members over the age of 19 with permanent residential addresses in Brampton, that

will execute grant application and the City's grant agreement both personally and on behalf of the organization.

Proposed Changes in Detail

Project and Applicant Type: This section has been updated to offer clearer distinctions regarding the types of projects and applicants that are likely to succeed within each stream. These updates aim to better guide applicants in understanding the eligibility criteria and aligning their proposals with the appropriate funding stream.

Proposed Program Funding: To better address the growing community need, Council should consider accelerating the funding strategy to reach a \$2 million grant fund by 2026. This would require increasing funding by \$250,000 in both the 2025 and 2026 program years.

Funding Envelopes (removed): To maximize the number of funded organizations, staff propose removing funding envelopes for each stream and instead allocating funds based on the number of requests received and the scores obtained by applicants. By removing strict funding caps per stream, staff can more flexibly distribute resources to ensure that as many eligible organizations receive support as possible, aligning with the City's goal to meet the community's diverse needs.

Number of Grants: The proposal to limit each organization to one successful ABF grant per year is a strategic decision aimed at promoting equity, maximizing the impact of the available resources, and ensuring the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the grant program.

Intake: There is one intake period each year, with the potential for a second intake if funds remain available. This approach ensures staff can effectively manage resources while providing flexibility to accommodate additional projects if financial capacity allows.

Funding Allocation: This change involves allocating funds based on the number of requests received and the scores obtained by applicants across all program streams. Different allocation strategies may be employed to achieve the best outcomes, aiming to reach the highest number of applicants and maximize the program's impact. This approach ensures a fair and transparent distribution of resources, allowing the program to effectively meet program demand while supporting a diverse range of projects and organizations within the community.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

There are no immediate financial impacts resulting from the adoption of the recommendations in this report. However, staff will include a \$250,000 increase in the annual operating budget submission in 2025 and 2026 to increase the Advance Brampton Fund from \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000.

	Current	2025	2026
Proposed Increase	\$ -	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000
ABF Funding	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,750,000	\$ 2,000,000

Legal Implications:

Legal Services will review and approve as to form all grant and other agreements required for the Advance Brampton Fund.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

This report is strategically aligned with the priority area of Government & Leadership. The framework ensures that the City of Brampton's funding programs are managed to a high standard by implementing updated guidelines and operational processes. This approach strengthens the City's capacity to deliver impactful community projects and reinforces its commitment to transparent and accountable stewardship of public resources.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed updates to the Advance Brampton Fund framework aim to enhance the efficiency, equity, and strategic impact of the City's community grant program. By receiving the report and endorsing the revised framework, Council ensures that the program remains aligned with Brampton's evolving needs and priorities.

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