

What are Vital Community Grants?

Vital Community Grants are the Community Foundation's small grants program open to a wide range of charities. These grants address immediate community needs, strengthen the non-profit sector, and help build a vital community for everyone.

Over the past five years, Vital Community Grants have contributed nearly \$480,000 to 57 different local charities.

The Community Foundation is always looking for ways to address community needs, to shift power, and to improve our granting practices. That's why Vital Community Grants look slightly different each year.

What is the 2023 Granting Focus?

The Community Foundation recognizes the ongoing and systemic barriers facing many in our community. Vital Community Grants in 2023 will continue to prioritize applications from charities that work to advance equity in the community.

While we are aware that there is a deep need for funding throughout all parts of the charitable sector in the community, Vital Community Grants will be further prioritized for organizations working on the top issues facing our community as identified through our own consultations and in alignment with the [City of Peterborough's Community Safety and Well-being Plan](#) (CSWBP) of 2022.

- Housing and Homelessness
- Mental Health and Addictions
- Poverty
- Climate Change
- Belonging & Inclusion

Given the small size of the Vital Community Grants pool, the Foundation does not expect organizations to solve these issues single-handedly but we do want to support organizations working on these issues. The CSWB provides some examples suggested through a community survey:

- Fostering belonging and building community by offering peer mentorship, engaging volunteers, or addressing racism and discrimination;
- Raising awareness through ongoing community education, particularly in the areas of harm reduction, stigma, and systemic causes of poverty, mental health, homelessness and addictions;
- Supporting meaningful outreach and engagement, centring the voices of people with lived experience in decision-making;
- Creating and delivering inclusive and accessible programs and services with wrap-around supports and a focus on life stabilization.

Where does the money come from?

Vital Community Grants are made possible through disbursements from over 10 funds that grant at the discretion of the Foundation's Board of Directors. We pool these funds to increase their impact in the community, and to direct resources where they are needed most.

How much are the grants?

Grant size varies from year to year. The average Vital Community Grant in 2022 was \$7,900 with 17 grants awarded ranging from \$1,000 to \$13,000.

Who decides?

Vital Community Grants are decided through a participatory grantmaking process; the privilege and responsibility for making decisions about the process and allocation of funds is shifted to those with deep knowledge of the needs of the people they serve in the community.

Based on the principle of "nothing about us without us", participatory grantmaking invites representatives of organizations who are most affected by an issue or cause to join a granting circle and share the work of grantmaking. For the Community Foundation, participatory grantmaking is an expression of our values of trust, inclusivity, collaboration, and community vitality.

How much time does this process take?

Most grant applicants estimate that writing the Expression of Interest takes 1 to 2 hours. The Granting Circle meetings are scheduled for 2 hours each with some time spent reflecting and preparing between them.

Eligibility (2023)

Applicants must meet all of the eligibility criteria in order to apply:

1. Organizations must be registered charities operating within and providing services to people in the City and/or County of Peterborough, Hiawatha First Nation or Curve Lake First Nation. Status as a "qualified donee" in good standing will be verified through the CRA website as part of the application process.
2. Organizations that are not qualified donees must contact the Community Foundation.
3. Applicant organizations must specifically work with and on behalf of people who face systemic barriers to inclusion and belonging (for instance, racialized people, people experiencing poverty, or people with disabilities). This focus must be reflected in the organization's mission, purpose and programs. Applicants must demonstrate that they incorporate the experiences of the people served in their decision making processes.
4. Applicants must be willing to actively participate in a granting circle to determine the priorities and allocation of the available funds. This is a commitment of time and energy as

participants may need to read and consider applications from other organizations, listen to other participants, and discuss and decide on options for the allocation of funds.

5. Organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disabilities, age, status as a veteran, national origin, or any protected classes are not eligible for Vital Community Grants.

What expenses do we fund?

Vital Community Grants provide flexible operating funds to help strengthen and build resilience for eligible organizations in our community. Eligible expenses include:

- General operating costs including staffing
- Technology adaptation and upgrading
- Projects, programs or initiatives
- Organizational capacity building (including staff wellness, training and professional development, costs associated with organizational mergers, etc.)
- Small capital costs critical to the organization fulfilling its mission (including purchasing or upgrading technology, safety equipment, office equipment, etc.)

What don't we fund?

Ineligible expenses include:

- Fundraising campaign contributions including contributions to endowment funds
- Sponsorships
- Capital campaigns (e.g. for new buildings, land, monuments)
- Religious activities or services including faith-based programming
- Political activities that are prohibited by the Canada Revenue Agency
- Projects or programs that will be completed before the grant decision takes place, or expenses incurred prior to the grant date

How to Apply

Expressions of Interest must be made through our granting portal:

<https://www.grantinterface.ca/Home/Logon?urlkey=cfgp> . This application is designed to be accessible and easy to complete. Assistance and accommodations can be provided on request. Please call (705)740-2347 or email info@cfgp.ca

Timeline

August 29	Call for Expressions of Interest opens
September 25	Deadline for Expressions of Interest
	Applications sent for review by shortlist panel
	Shortlisting meeting
	Shortlisted applications invited to Granting Circle
October 12	Granting Circle 1
October 19	Granting Circle 2

Vital Community Grants 2023



**Community
Foundation**
of Greater Peterborough

November 2	Granting Circle 3 (if necessary)
November 15	Grant announcements (date to be confirmed)
May 2024	Grant reports due