



ST. CATHARINES CULTURAL INVESTMENT POLICY

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VISION STATEMENT

A vibrant arts and culture scene is important to a livable city. St. Catharines' creative sector is a foundation for community transformation and sustainability: artists and not-for-profit arts organizations are at the heart of this sector.

PURPOSE AND PRIORITIES

Stable municipal cultural investment in the arts stimulates growth, innovation and cultural vitality. It ensures a wide range of cultural experiences, activities, events, facilities, programs and services that serve all of St. Catharines' citizens regardless of age, ethnicity or income. The St. Catharines Cultural Investment Policy is **designed to strengthen local arts creation, cultural distribution and engagement** in order to improve the spirit and quality of life for its residents.

The St. Catharines Cultural Investment Policy aims to serve long term community sustainability by strengthening cultural vitality, economic diversity, environmental awareness and social inclusion with the following investment priorities:

- cultivate the growth and development of a dynamic and robust creative sector;
- support original, made-in-Niagara arts creation;
- foster a range of cultural experiences for all of St. Catharines residents, including educational, participatory and audience-based programs;
- stimulate innovation and creative enterprise;
- celebrate and encourage cultural, social and artistic diversity.

PROGRAM STREAMS

The program designed to facilitate this policy will be known as SCCIP – the St. Catharines Cultural Investment Program. Within SCCIP are three (3) program streams which each offer more than one (1) grant. These serve distinct segments of the creative sector and thus strengthen the overall cultural ecosystem within St. Catharines. The program streams and grant types are:

- **Sustaining Funding** – Grants for core and midsized arts organizations, and festival producers.
- **Development Funding** – Grants for small and emerging arts organizations, and culture-related projects.
- **Individual Artists Funding** – To be developed.

Each program stream has different eligibility and evaluation criteria.

Sustaining Funding

Sustaining funding has three (3) grant programs, designed for established organizations that are Core and Midsized as well as Festival producers. Applicants are eligible for multi-year funding for a maximum of three (3) years, at which time a renewal of funding will be considered.

Core Program

Intended for St. Catharines-based, established professional non-profit arts organizations with a mission to develop, create, produce, present and disseminate artistic work in any artistic discipline.

The program is for organizations that have a clear and relevant mission guided by long-term goals and strategies. They have been incorporated for at least five (5) years, have well-established programs and services, developed and delivered with consistency. They are artistically strong with proven impact in the community. There is full-time paid professional leadership (artistic and/or administrative), well-developed administrative structures, stable financial resources and planning, and an active Board of Directors with a clear governance role.

Recipients are ineligible for any other SCCIP program stream, with the exception of the Culture Days Activity Program. Capital requirements or festival activities may be considered for additional investment through this program.

Midsized Program

Intended for St. Catharines-based, professional non-profit arts organizations that have a mission to develop, create, produce, present and disseminate artistic work in any artistic discipline. They have been incorporated for at least two (2) years, have impactful annual programs or services that are delivered with consistency and are artistically strong. There is paid professional leadership, developing and/or stabilizing administrative structures and financial resources, emerging long-term planning, and an engaged Board of Directors.

Festival Program

Intended for professional festivals that generate cultural tourism and/or significant economic impact, and contribute to the cultural vitality and diversity of St. Catharines. The festival has been produced at least two (2) times and offers unique programming which includes a significant component that takes place in St. Catharines. The festival attracts audiences from within and beyond Niagara, and engages local artists and businesses in festival activities. Festival operations are professionally managed with paid staff resources and/or a dedicated volunteer management team. There is evidence of effective marketing and business planning, stabilizing administrative structures and financial resources, grant support from other government sources and an engaged Board of Directors.

Development Funding

Development funding has three (3) grant programs, designed for small and emerging arts organizations and artist ad-hoc groups, non-profit organizations leading culture-related projects and businesses and individuals leading community-engagement activities. Repeat applicants must show evidence of organizational evolution, program innovation, creative partnerships and/or growth in community engagement.

Arts Development Program

Intended for emerging arts organizations and artist ad-hoc groups, or arts organizations that work on a project to project basis, as well as for new arts festivals. This program supports a range of cultural activities, art forms, and art practices, with priority given to Niagara-based arts creation and diverse cultural traditions. Applicants will have been active and/or in existence for at least one (1) year. Equipment and small capital costs will be considered under this program if it is demonstrated that this investment will directly serve the priorities of the St. Catharines Cultural Investment Policy.

Culture Builds Community Program

Intended to support projects that engage residents through community art experiences, neighbourhood cultural activities and/or experiences that encourage participation, creativity and innovation. The program is open to artists, cultural organizations and other not-for-profit organizations that have the ability to engage residents at a local community level. Projects will culminate in a work of art or a public event. Projects that engage under-served local communities will be given priority.

Culture Days Activity Program

Intended for artists, businesses or organizations who wish to run a Culture Days activity in St. Catharines. Activities must respond to the mandate of Culture Days and create public participation in cultural experiences, with the aim of inspiring future involvement in the cultural life of the community. Culture Days is a 3-day national event at the end of September to raise the awareness, accessibility, participation and engagement of Canadians in the arts and cultural life of their communities.

Individual Artists Funding

To be developed.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The City of St. Catharines seeks to ensure a transparent and accountable application, selection and reporting process for all eligible applicants. The process shall be relevant to the nature and expectations of the sector, and ensure the City has sufficient information to evaluate applications. All applicants are required to provide completed applications, must sign Terms and Conditions at the time of application, and abide by them if funding is approved.

Cultural Services staff undertake the administration of the program and related communications with SCCIP applicants, clients and Review Committees. Staff are responsible for creating application materials and final report forms and procedures, and have the authority to make changes to program materials at any time, to maximize success of the program. Staff will consult with the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee should changes be deemed of a significant nature.

The City of St. Catharines aims to promote social diversity and inclusiveness in all areas related to SCCIP. This includes providing, to the best of its abilities, barrier-free access to information and services for organizations, ad-hoc groups and collectives applying to SCCIP for funding, and striving to ensure members of the Review Committees reflect the social diversity of the community.

Reporting

The City of St. Catharines requires accountability from all organizations and individuals in receipt of public funding. Successful applicants are required to submit a final report in the format provided by the City no more than three (3) months after the completion of their project. Organizations approved for multi-year funding will be required to submit interim reports. Any organization or individual that fails to submit reports within the time allotted **will not be eligible for future funding** until completed reports are submitted. Where applicable, the 10% of funding held back at time of approval will be forfeited.

EVALUATION

Evaluation Criteria

St. Catharines Cultural Investment Program (SCCIP) applicants must demonstrate that they meet the evaluation criteria of the program stream to which they are applying, which fall under the following categories:

- community impact;
- cultural interest;
- activities and services (Sustaining – Core and Festival Programs only);
- organizational competence / project leadership;
- marketing and outreach (Festival Program only);
- St. Catharines Cultural Investment Policy Purpose and Priorities.

This criteria will be used by the Review Committees to develop detailed breakdowns of each category, to be approved by the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, and made publicly available at the time of program application release.

Evaluation Process

The City's Cultural Services staff facilitate the work of the Review Committees, coordinating materials, meetings and minutes. City staff function as liaison between applicants and reviewers. The Review Committees will undertake an evaluation of all applications and work together to make recommendations for funding. These will be presented to the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee for approval, and then presented to City Council for final approval through a Corporate Report from Parks, Recreation and Culture Services.

Members of the Review Committees are subject to the Conflict of Interest section of this policy.

St. Catharines Cultural Investment Program Review Committee

The St. Catharines Cultural Investment Program (SCCIP) Review Committee shall be comprised of community members that reflect, as best as possible, a diversity of knowledge, experience and perspective in the areas of arts and culture and, ideally, both professional and community practice. It is a subcommittee of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (ACAC), with a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of five (5), ACAC members. To maximize diversity, ACAC may invite up to two (2) additional community members to participate on the Review Committee. The SCCIP Review Committee will evaluate five (5) of the six (6) SCCIP program streams, and make recommendations for funding.

Festival Program Review Committee

For the Festival Program only, applications will be reviewed by a Review Committee made up of the following representatives:

- one (1) staff member from the City of St. Catharines' Tourism Services;
- two (2) tourism industry representatives;
- two (2) members of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee.

The Festival Review Committee will make recommendations for funding to City Council through the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee.

Conflict of Interest

Review Committee members will abide by Conflict of Interest procedures as outlined herein. As per the Simplified Meeting Procedures for Advisory Committees of Council, all members should disclose any personal financial interest in an application, and should avoid taking part in any discussion of the matter or voting on the related recommendation, if their interest is of a significant and personal nature that could influence their participation.

A personal financial interest is reasonably assumed significant if the Review Committee member is connected to a SCCIP applicant through:

- board membership;
- a contract for services;
- rental of facilities or equipment, to or from, an applicant;
- a bartering of services/equipment with an applicant; and
- if they have occurred within the previous twelve (12) months, or are reasonably anticipated within the next twelve (12) months.

This list is not exhaustive.

It is the responsibility of all Review Committee members to declare their own conflicts of interest. Members will be asked to declare conflicts of interest prior to applications being distributed for review. In the event conflict of interest is declared, a committee member will not review that application, and will remove him/herself from the room during discussion of that application. On return, he or she will refrain from any future discussion related to that applicant or related recommendations.

No Review Committee members will be paid staff of any SCCIP applicant. Should a committee member accept a paid position with any current applicant or active client, he/she will resign from the Review Committee immediately, return all application materials, and respect application information as confidential.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

General Eligibility

St. Catharines Cultural Investment Program (SCCIP) funds are available to not-for-profit arts organizations engaged in ongoing creation, production, presentation and dissemination activities related to the performing, visual, literary and media arts.

All applicants must:

- be active in St. Catharines;
- provide programming or services that are open to the public and publicized city-wide;
- have a diversified revenue base, which can include memberships, significant earned revenue, funding from other levels of government, and support from the private sector through fund-raising activities, donations and sponsorships.

Additional eligibility requirements apply for each grant program. Some programs provide exceptions to General Eligibility.

Arts organizations and artist ad-hoc groups that operate on a not-for-profit basis but are not incorporated, may apply to some programs. First-time applicants that are not incorporated are eligible for a maximum of \$3,000 in funding.

Ineligible Activities and Organizations

Some activities are beyond the scope of this program, regardless of their merit. No activities will be funded retroactively.

Grants are not available for:

- civic departments, boards, commissions or advisory committees, City programs or projects (i.e. libraries, community centres);
- social service, religious, or sports organizations;
- educational institutions (schools, colleges etc.);
- club or community centre programs;
- conferences, conventions or banquets;
- scholarships, prizes and awards;
- as donations (including the waiving of fees and charges);
- for groups raising funds for non-cultural causes;
- for uniforms or personal equipment;
- for deficit reduction.

Exceptions

- Non-cultural organizations that are incorporated and individual artists may be eligible for the Culture Builds Community Program. Businesses and individual artists may be eligible for the Culture Days Activity Program. Projects that are political or religious in nature, or that further related doctrine, are not eligible to apply.
- If an arts organization that is based and active in St. Catharines has been in existence for at least five (5) years, is owned and operated by an educational institution, but meets **all** other existing SCCIP criteria, and:
 - It's mandate or mission focuses on artistic endeavor (either creation or presentation) as the primary objective of the organization;
 - It's activities are consistent with the artistic focus of the mandate or mission;
 - It has not-for-profit status through its owner or independently;
 - And shows evidence of being a distinct and discrete arts organization, other than an academic unit of an educational institution;

It will be deemed eligible to apply to SCCIP programs according to program eligibility. Funding to educational institutions may only be used for cultural programming purposes.

Additional Eligibility per Program Stream

Sustaining Funding

Core Program

In addition to the General Eligibility requirements, applicants must:

- be in existence for at least five (5) years, must operate on a year-round basis and be a Federally or Provincially incorporated not-for-profit;
- have full-time paid professional artistic, curatorial and/or administrative staff;
- have operating revenues of no less than \$250,000 per year;
- produce a full season of programming as per industry standards;
- have significant resources that serve the local arts sector (ie. facility, equipment, and people);
- pay principal artistic contributors for their services in accordance with professional industry standards.

Midsized Program

In addition to the General Eligibility requirements, applicants must:

- be in existence for at least two (2) years and be a Federally or Provincially incorporated not-for-profit;
- have ongoing paid professional artistic, curatorial and/or administrative staff;
- produce a minimum of three (3) public activities per year;
- have operating revenues of no less than \$30,000 per year;
- pay principal artistic contributors for their services in accordance with professional industry standards.

Festival Program

In addition to the General Eligibility requirements, applicants must:

- be in existence for a minimum of two (2) years and be a federally or provincially incorporated not-for-profit organization or; a non-incorporated organization that confirms it operates on a not-for-profit basis;
- meet the definition of a festival (see Glossary of Terms) and provide programming or services that are continuous, open and or otherwise accessible to the public;
- Have paid staff and/or a contracted festival coordinator and/or a dedicated volunteer management team;
- have completed two (2) successful festivals prior to application;
- pay principal artistic contributors for their services in accordance with professional industry standards;
- have a revenue base of no less than \$30,000 and be an applicant for festival funding from other government sources such as Niagara Investment in Culture, Celebrate Ontario or the Department of Canadian Heritage Festival Program.

Eligibility Exception to Festival Program

Should a club, community centre, social service, religious or sports organization have a significant festival that substantially engages broader audiences and meets all other program eligibility criteria, they may be eligible to apply. The festival cannot be a fundraiser.

Development Funding

Arts Development Program

In addition to the General Eligibility requirements, applicants must:

- pay principal artistic contributors for their services in accordance with generally accepted industry standards, and according to the applicant's practices and associations;
- have been in existence for a minimum of twelve (12) months, with evidence of public activity.

Repeat applicants must show evidence of organizational evolution, program innovation, creative partnerships and/or growth in community engagement.

Culture Builds Community Program

In addition to the General Eligibility requirements, applicants must:

- engage people from a local community in St. Catharines;
- Pay lead artists for their services in accordance with generally accepted professional arts management standards.

All organizational applicants must have been in existence for a minimum of twelve (12) months, with evidence of public activity.

Eligibility Exceptions for Arts Development and Culture Builds Community Programs

- Non-cultural organizations that are registered not-for-profits and meet all other program requirements may apply for the Culture Builds Community Program.
- Individual artists leading a community art project that engages the broader community and meets all other program requirements may apply to the Culture Builds Community Program stream.
- Arts organizations and artist ad-hoc groups that operate on a not-for-profit basis, but are not registered, may apply to the Arts Development and Culture Builds Community Programs.
- Subject to prequalification, first-time applicants that have been in existence for less than a year at the time of the application deadline may be permitted to submit an Arts Development or Culture Builds Community grant application outside of normal program deadlines.

Prequalification will require that the applicant demonstrate that they are on a 2-year trajectory to be eligible for sustaining programs. Consultation with City staff will be required and the applicant may also be required to present to the Arts & Culture Advisory Committee. All other program eligibility requirements apply. Prequalification must be granted prior to submitting an application and does not guarantee that the application will be successful.

Culture Days Activity Program

Applicants to the Culture Days Activity Program are not required to meet all of the General Eligibility Requirements of SCCIP. Activities must:

- take place in St. Catharines during the Culture Days weekend;
- be free and open to the public;
- engage the public in hands-on, interactive cultural experiences and encourages continued involvement in local culture;
- employ (and pay) local artists and cultural workers;
- be distinct from normal activities offered by applicant.

Eligibility Exceptions to Culture Days Activity Grant

For-profit businesses are eligible for this program when all other eligibility requirements are met. Business applicants are eligible for artist fee costs only.