FESTIVAL AND EVENTS

Program Guidelines
PROGRAM GUIDELINES

PURPOSE
The Festival and Events Program (F&E) is intended to provide financial support for festivals and events that generate significant positive economic impacts and contribute to the cultural diversity and vitality of St. Catharines. The F&E program has been specifically tasked to generate greater economic benefits by attracting and supporting festivals and events which will attract significant resident and non-resident audiences. Financial support under the F&E program will prefer applications with strong marketing and business plans that help to maximize visitation and positive economic impacts to the City.

PRIORITIES
The F & E program is intended to financially support festivals and one-day events that:

- generate significant economic impact
- attract a regional or wider audience and increase visitation to the City and/or demonstrate that an external audience exists
- deliver unique continuous programming that is entertaining and creates public animation within the City of St. Catharines
- create real opportunities for local artists, performers and businesses
- are professionally managed addressing crowd and traffic control, waste and safety planning and comply with all legal and municipal requirements

DEFINITIONS
The following categories describe the nature of the festivals and events to be supported through this program:
Major Signature Festival

- A multi-day programmed event offering a unique experience that has broad community support, demonstrable tourism outcomes by attracting a provincial or wider audience, and attracts significant media attention.
- Budgeted expenditures are more than $250,000 and the event is professionally managed.

Festival

- A multi-day programmed event offering a unique experience that has broad community support and demonstrable tourism outcomes by attracting a significant regional or wider audience.
- Budgeted expenditures are between $50,000 and $250,000 and the event is professionally managed.

Major One Day Event

- A significant public one-day event that attracts a sizeable regional or wider audience.
- Budgeted expenditures are greater than $50,000 and the event is professionally managed.

ELIGIBILITY

Subject to City Council budget approval, funds will be made available to eligible Festivals and Events held between March (Funding year) and February 29 (Following year). Applications to the F&E program are eligible if:

- the event is based in St. Catharines and is consistent with the categories described above
- applicants are a Federally or Provincially incorporated not-for-profit organization that has been in existence for a minimum of two years, or; a non-incorporated organization that confirms it operates on a not for profit basis
- there is a diversified revenue base to support the event, which can include memberships, significant earned revenue, funding from other levels of government and support from the private sector through fundraising activities, donations and sponsorships
the event provides programming or services that are continuous, open and or otherwise accessible to the public

the applicants is in sound financial standing

the event is consistent with the F&E categories defined on page 1

**INELIGIBILITY**

The F&E program will not fund any project or operation in its entirety nor will it provide funds retroactively (i.e. projects taking place prior to March 1, 2015). If an applicant initiates a project before notification of funding they do so at their own risk. In addition, the program will not fund the following activities, purposes or organizations:

- City departments, board, commissions or advisory committees
- City programs or projects,
- social service, religious, sports organizations
- educational institutions (schools, colleges etc.)
- conferences, conventions or banquets
- workshops, courses and other forms of training
- scholarships, prizes and awards
- individuals
- donations (including the waiving of fees and charges)
- for fundraising
- for uniforms or personal equipment
- deficit reduction
- Festivals or events with a running deficit of more than 20% of their budget are ineligible.

**Applicants to the Festivals & Events Program may not apply to any other civic funding stream for the same event.**
Exceptions to Ineligibility

Should a club, community centre, social service, religious or sports organization have a significant festival or event that will substantially engage broader audiences and addresses all other program eligibility criteria, they may be eligible to apply.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Priority will be given to festivals and events that have more than one day of continuous programming. Applicants to the F&E program will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Organizational Competence

- There is a clear mandate, competent administration, functional board and an appropriate administrative and governance structure where appropriate.

- The organization must demonstrate its capability to deliver all programmed activities related to the proposed event OR has hired expertise to ensure quality management and delivery of the festival’s content and program.

- The organization can demonstrate its capabilities to manage and deliver all non-program related aspects of a significant festival or event. This may include, but not be limited to, security, waste management, hospitality services, relevant licensing and permits, etc.

- The organization is financially stable and accountable, and there is evidence of effective short and long term planning, including contingencies in the possible event of budget shortfalls.

- There is a demonstrated need for financial assistance from the City.

- There is evidence of a diversified revenue base, which can include: memberships; significant earned revenue; funding from other levels of government; and support from the private sector through paid advertising, fundraising activities, donations and sponsorships.
Festival / Event Interest

- The festival/event is distinct and innovative in the context of other events in St. Catharines and Niagara.
- The applicant can demonstrate and verify their experience in successfully staging previous festivals or events OR can demonstrate equivalent experience.
- The festival has clear goals and program mandates with identifiable target markets.
- The event must be accessible to the public. Events may be ticketed, but must be available to all members of the public. Closed events for example, by invitation or by membership only, will not be supported.
- The festival or event provides opportunities for artists, vendors and/or other cultural organizations. Local content and support for local artists and service providers is an important component of the event.
- Providing on-site vendors and other opportunities for local businesses to participate in the event is an integral part of the event.
- The event should be a programmed celebration of a theme of interest which has appeal to the general public. It must help to animate the streetscape with performances, exhibits and other opportunities for audience and business engagement.

Marketing and Development Planning

- The business plan for the event is sound and addresses all aspects and responsibilities of the organizers regarding responsibly staging the proposed event.
- The marketing plan has a clearly articulated target market and marketing approach.
- There is evidence of past success in attracting audiences from the region and beyond OR a detailed plan of how this will be achieved.
- Applicant has ability to collect and document visitation and relevant economic impacts of the event.
- A realistic plan for other grants and sponsorships is in place.
▪ The event has sufficient resources – financial, staff, volunteers, etc. – to meet the event goals.

▪ There are opportunities for volunteers and a volunteer management plan is in place.

▪ Applicants will commit to a data collection process to document patron and visitor numbers and information relevant to reporting on the economic impact and other beneficial impacts generated by the event.

▪ The successful applicant will need to work with City staff during pre-event (financing) and post event (reporting) phases.

2016 Deadline for Application is Friday February 5, 2016 at 4:30pm

For more Information

Please contact Rebecca Cann, Cultural Services Supervisor at 905-688-5601 ext. 5232 or rcann@stcatharines.ca

Cover Photo: Niagara VegFest