



**ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE  
DEVELOPMENT  
MEMORANDUM**

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**TO: MAYOR J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

**FROM: A. DYKE, CULTURE OFFICER - DEVELOPMENT**

**NOTED: S. SCHLICHTER, DIRECTOR, ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**  
**A.MILLER, RPP, GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH  
MANAGEMENT**

**RE: 2021 CULTURAL GRANTS PROGRAM RESULTS AND 2020 PROGRAM IMPACTS**

**DATE: MARCH 22, 2021**

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The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of Council with an update concerning the City of Barrie's Cultural Grants Program, including the changes to and results of the 2021 intake period, impacts of the 2020 funding on the community, and linkages between the current program review and economic recovery for Barrie's arts and culture sectors.

**Background**

The City of Barrie's Plan for Culture, Building a Creative Future, articulated as a significant strategy the support of excellence in Barrie's Culture Sector. In order to implement this strategy a cultural grants program was designed to create fair and equitable opportunity for all arts organizations serving the City of Barrie, so they could access the public funds that were designated as part of the City's investment in the local culture sector.

The current program allows for organizations to apply for ongoing operational support for various amounts depending on their jury-assessed application. Organizations asking for less than \$50,000 in operating funds may also apply for project grants for up to \$5,000.

Outcomes for the Grants Program are:

- To encourage creation and displays of arts and cultural expressions to enhance the quality of life for Barrie and area residents and tourists.
- To increase the opportunity for funding to City of Barrie arts organizations and artists from other (non-municipal sources) such as corporate sponsors and federal and provincial government.
- To raise artists' and arts organizations' awareness of the need for strategic planning, business planning, sustainability planning, sector analysis, understanding competition and more.
- To encourage market and product development.
- Identification and support of sector champions.
- Maximization of the City of Barrie's return on investment in the culture sector.

**The Granting Process**

The Guidelines and Application Form are made available online for all interested applicants to review and staff is available to answer all questions regarding the application and the process of applying. The applications are reviewed and funds allocated to successful applicants by a five member jury. Jury members are selected based on their arts expertise, education, and experience in the arts. Efforts are made to ensure diversity with regards to arts disciplines and residential geography of the jurors, with all but one of the jurors being located outside of Barrie to ensure impartiality.



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Following a several week review of all applications and support documents, the jury are convened to discuss the applications and review each applicant's sustainability, business strategies, artistic merit, community impact, audience development efforts and determine level of funding investment, should an applicant be successful. The role of the Culture Officer is to provide administrative support and document the feedback to be given to each applicant. Staff are restricted from participation in the decision-making process.

Successful recipients must agree and accept the City's conditions for funding that include commitments to spend the funding for the purposes for which it was awarded, standards for acknowledging the City as a funder, and restrictions on the kinds of expenditures the funding is to be utilized for. All applicants are provided constructive feedback from the jury to improve future applications. Staff will also meet with applicants to review their results, on a requested basis.

### Changes to 2021 Program related to COVID-19 and Sector Recovery

Motion 20-G-206 from ECD018-20 states:

That in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 Cultural Grants Program be modified to address the specific needs of the City of Barrie's arts and culture not-for-profit organizations as follows:

- a) By replacing the 2021 Operating Grant Application with the amended application identified in Appendix "A" to Staff Report ECD018-20;
- b) The recipient organizations of the Cultural Grant Program in 2020, who are unable to deliver on their proposed programming due to COVID-19 be permitted to carry over their funding in support of sustaining their operations and recovery activities from COVID-19 for 2021; and
- c) The reporting on 2021 funding by organizations allow for operating and programming flexibility based on the shifting state of the pandemic and opportunities that may arise.

In addition the changes above, the application process was moved to an online process and the adjudication process was completed via online meeting platform in response to COVID conditions. Further, Council approved a one-time increase of \$50,000 in the cultural grants budget for the 2021 program, which was allocated to organizations as part of the process.

### City Investment and Recipients

Since the inception of the program there have been many successes. Organizations have experienced a significant increase in all levels of funding, including other levels of government, private and corporate sponsorships and revenues generated from ticket sales.

For 2021, the approved Cultural Grants budget was \$389,785, which included a one-time \$50,000 increase to the funding program. This year, 24 applications were received, requesting a total of \$539,200 in funding. Of those applications, one was withdrawn and 22 were successful.

The jury noted that the \$50,000 increase was instrumental in their ability to provide funding to nearly all of the project applications in part or in full. They noted the increase allowed them to not only reward organizations who have continued to persevere and find alternative solutions to in-person programming in 2020 and beyond with minor operating increases, but gave them the chance to also fund one-time project asks that will allow smaller and developing organizations the opportunity to delivery new programming.



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2021 Operating Grant Recipients

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Barrie Concert Band	\$ 4,350.00
Barrie Film Festival	\$ 38,000.00
Huronian Symphony Orchestra	\$ 20,000.00
Kempfenfelt Community Players	\$ 6,000.00
MacLaren Art Centre	\$ 142,000.00
Ontario Musicians Cooperative, Inc.	\$ 10,435.00
Simcoe Contemporary Dancers	\$ 19,500.00
Talk Is Free Theatre	\$ 70,000.00
Theatre By The Bay	\$ 30,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 340,285.00</b>

2021 Project Grant Recipients

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Bravado! Show Choir	\$ 4,500.00
Caring Kids	\$ 4,500.00
Central Ontario Music Council	\$ 3,500.00
Huronian Symphony Orchestra	\$ 3,000.00
Kempfenfelt Community Players	\$ 2,000.00
King Edward Choir	\$ 4,500.00
La Cle de la Baie	\$ 5,000.00
Ontario Musicians Cooperative, Inc.	\$ 5,000.00
Simcoe Contemporary Dancers	\$ 5,000.00
Skyliners Youth Big Band	\$ 1,000.00
Theatre By The Bay	\$ 2,000.00
Word Up	\$ 4,500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 49,500.00</b>



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Return on Investment for Arts and Culture Grants

In 2020, the City of Barrie dispersed \$339,750 in funding via the Cultural Grants Program. The investment by the City enabled recipient groups to leverage additional funding from provincial and federal programs, as well as private and corporate sector sponsorships. Since the inception of City-presented workshops and granting programs, staff have seen compelling growth in return on investment for the City of Barrie, particularly in the area of revenue from other government sources as well as earned revenue. In 2020, COVID-19 had a dramatic impact on the sector, preventing much of their planned operations and projects, which negatively affected their revenue streams. The following outcomes were realized from the funding that was dispersed via the 2020 Grants Program:

2020 City of Barrie Investment	\$ 339,750
Other Public Sector Funding in 2020	\$ 2,073,281
Earned Revenue in 2020	\$ 3,362,751
Sponsorship Revenue in 2020	\$ 109,581

The total leveraged funding represents a 1010% return on investment for the City of Barrie’s cultural grant funding, resulting in continued operations for these organizations despite limited opportunities to deliver on planned activities. The current year’s funding will continue to support these organizations’ operations through the pandemic, giving them the ability to present work in a safe manner if and when possible. For those organizations that may not be able to return to programming in 2021, it will support their efforts to maintain organizational processes until regular programming is possible.

Review Process

The City of Barrie is currently undertaking a review of the Cultural Grants Program to ensure it is serving Barrie’s arts and cultural sectors, meeting corporation standards and is aligned with City Council priorities. The retained firm of PROCESS is reviewing the current program process, prior applicant feedback, stakeholder consultation and industry best practices to inform recommendations. Upon completion of the consultation and review process, a consultation workshop will be delivered back to stakeholders to validate findings and the recommendations moving forward.

The complete report from PROCESS will be presented to City Council with recommendations for the program’s evolution that, if approved will be actioned for the 2022 Cultural Grants program.