



**INVEST BARRIE
CREATIVE ECONOMY DEPARTMENT
MEMORANDUM**

TO: MAYOR J. LEHMAN, AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

FROM: A. DYKE, CULTURE OFFICER, DEVELOPMENT

**NOTED: K. DUBEAU, DIRECTOR, CREATIVE ECONOMY DEPARTMENT
Z. LIFSHIZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INVEST BARRIE
M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

RE: CITY OF BARRIE CULTURAL GRANTS PROGRAM

DATE: MARCH 25, 2019

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 results of the 2019 funding, successes and challenges of the program, and proposed next steps for a program review.

Overview of the Cultural Grants Program

The City of Barrie's Cultural Master Plan, "Culture, Building a Creative Future", identified the need for the City to foster and support excellence in Barrie's culture sector. In order to implement this strategy, a cultural grants program was designed to create a fair and equitable opportunity for all arts organizations, which serve the City of Barrie, to apply for grant funds that were designated as part of the City's investment in the local culture sector. The cultural grants program was launched in 2005. Objectives of the grants program include:

- 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.

Due to the use of an independent juried process for the grants program, the program was seen as a viable and more equitable way of serving the arts community as it evolved from the need for artists to approach Council directly with requests for financial support, and provided a standard framework against which requests could be assessed.

In addition to directly fostering and supporting excellence in Barrie's cultural sector, Barrie's Cultural Grants Program is also a key enabler of local cultural organizations being able to access additional funding sources to support their growth and development. Specifically, major provincial and federal cultural funding agencies require applicants to demonstrate financial support from their local municipality and community in order to be eligible to apply for federal and provincial grant programs. Since the inception of the program, there have been many successes experienced by the arts organizations and individuals funded by the City of Barrie, and organizations have seen a significant increase in all levels of funding - including from other levels of government, private and corporate sponsorships and revenues generated from ticket sales.



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For several years, the program included three streams: Operating grants for not-for-profit organizations, project grants for organizations, and project grants for individual artists. In 2014, the individual artist grants fund was removed and the funding limited to applications from not-for-profit organizations.

The Grants Process

The Guidelines and Application Form are available online and in hardcopy for all interested applicants to review. Applications are received in the strictest confidence and reviewed by staff to ensure that all documents listed are included. Staff are available to answer all questions regarding the application and the process of applying. In order to apply to the Grants Program, organizations must have submitted all outstanding reports on previously funded work.

The applications are reviewed and funds allocated to successful applicants by a five member jury, which is selected based on the jurors' 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. Four of the five jurors are from outside of Barrie but from within the province of Ontario. The Culture Officer for Development and an assistant attend the jury sessions in order to provide administrative support and document the feedback to be given to each applicant. Staff is restricted from participation in the decision making process.

Grants Awards for 2019

For 2019, a record number of applications were received (23), requesting a record amount of funding of \$540,140. Eighteen applications were successful and \$335,000 was presented to community arts organizations through the City of Barrie's Cultural Grants process - as per the approved budget. The list of awarded grants is below:

2019 Operating Grants

Organization	Amount Awarded
Barrie Concert Band	\$ 4,000
Barrie Film Festival	\$ 35,000
Huronian Symphony	\$ 20,000
Kempfenfelt Community Players	\$ 5,000
MacLaren Art Centre	\$ 137,000
Ontario Musicians Cooperative	\$ 5,000
Simcoe Contemporary Dancers	\$ 15,000
Talk Is Free Theatre	\$ 62,000
Theatre By The Bay	\$ 24,000
Word Up	\$ 1,000
Total	\$ 308,000



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2019 Project Grants

Organization	Amount Awarded
Barrie Concert Band	\$ 3,000
Barrie Native Friendship Centre	\$ 4,000
Bravado Show Choir	\$ 4,000
Caring Kids Concerts	\$ 4,000
Huronian Symphony	\$ 3,000
King Edward Choir	\$ 4,000
La Cle de la Baie	\$ 2,000
Skyliners Youth Big Band	\$ 2,000
Total	\$27,000

With the growth of the arts and culture community, there has been an increased demand for grant funding, which has resulted in some pressures on the program. This year's jury noted that with the existing budget, it was challenging to reward culture sector champions for their ongoing excellence, while also awarding funds to growing or evolving organizations that have made a concerted effort to implement previous juries' feedback and improve their operations accordingly.

It is important to note that 82% of the 2019 funding goes towards five organizations who receive funding annually.

Return on Investment for Arts and Culture Grants - 2018

In 2018, the City of Barrie dispersed \$325,000 in funding via the Cultural Grants Program. The investment by the City enabled recipient groups to leverage significant additional funding from provincial and federal programs, as well as private and corporate sector sponsorships. Since the inception of the 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 2018, the following outcomes were realized from the \$325,000 in funding that was dispersed via the Grants Program:

2018 City of Barrie Investment	\$ 325,000
Public Sector Funding Leveraged in 2018	\$ 795,526
Earned Revenue in 2018	\$ 3,858,945
Sponsorship Revenue in 2018	\$ 211,338

The City of Barrie's financial support provides an essential degree of credibility to the recipient organizations, enabling them to secure additional funding from other public sector agencies and levels of



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government. In many cases, these other sources of funding would not be available without the demonstrated municipal commitment.

The total leveraged funding represents a **1497% return on investment** for the City of Barrie's cultural grant funding, resulting in local job creation in the cultural sector, and directly supporting growth. The funds raised by the organizations are primarily spent locally, generating further spin-off value for local businesses and creating local employment opportunities.

In addition to the quantitative analysis of the Grants Program, the Creative Economy Department also collects qualitative data that include testimonials from the arts organizations that were funded in 2018. Those comments reflect the degree of importance placed on the City's financial investment in the cultural sector and the level of support that local arts organizations were able to secure from other levels of government, residents and private sponsors. The ongoing positive feedback and reports of increased support from other sources are a result of the City of Barrie's investment in culture grants and training workshops. A selection of testimonials can be found in Appendix "A".

NEXT STEPS

The City of Barrie's Cultural Grants Program has been deemed a great success by many members of Barrie's culture sector, due to its role in helping to build capacity in the arts. However, some artists or organizations have voiced dissatisfaction with the funding approach taken by the current program. Specifically, in discussion with some cultural grant recipients, it was noted that despite showing year-over-year improvements in their applications and organizational performance/results (which included implementing improvements that were recommended by previous juries, driving increased growth in several areas of their organizations, or even deploying new types of community-focused programming), these recipients were not being rewarded by the jury with funding increases for their ongoing responsiveness and organizational improvements.

The Cultural Master Plan recommended a review of the program in 2016. The review was not performed at that time, as the department underwent major changes that caused a shift in roles and responsibilities. Additionally, the perspective of how the cultural sector can support and enable economic growth and diversification (for example, contributing to place-making for talent attraction and retention, supporting tourism development, and leveraging culture as tool for communicating Barrie's brand nationally and internationally), added new facets for consideration.

Based on the feedback that has been received, and the Culture Master Plan's recommendation for a program review, staff have recommended that a full review of the program is required. In support of this recommendation, staff will be submitting an intake form as part of the 2020 budget and business planning process, to retain an independent, third party organization to conduct the review and community engagement. Recommendations from this process will be brought forward to Council for review and approval.



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APPENDIX "A"

ARTS ORGANIZATION TESTIMONIALS

From Kempenfelt Community Players

"By helping to provide stability, the grant has given the newly expanded Board an opportunity to grow into its potential. We have re-written our by-laws and our Production Manuals, we have implemented multiple new policies that add cohesiveness to the organization, we have installed a Code of Conduct, we have changed banks and insurance companies to better serve our needs, and we are working with a strategic plan; in effect we've cleaned up our house. This strengthening of the core of the organization bodes well for the future through a better capacity to conduct the business of community theatre, a vital part of the culture of our community".

From La Clé d'la Baie

"The revenue that we have been able to generate as a direct/indirect result of funds received from the City of Barrie allows us to maintain rich programming that promotes francophone culture in Barrie as well as throughout Simcoe County. It enables us to support our local and national francophone artists and provide them with a platform to enrich the cultural diversity of our community. The revenue generated also helps support local businesses (hall rentals, local hotels, local restaurants, etc)".

From the Barrie Film Festival

"We are grateful that the City of Barrie through the Creative Economy Department invests and recognizes the importance of the arts. We are dedicated to enhancing the cultural landscape through our programming as well as working with other arts groups to build a strong and vibrant arts community".