

Region of Waterloo
Planning, Development, and Legislative Services
Cultural Services

To: Community and Health Services Committee
Meeting Date: June 4, 2024
Report Title: Major Arts and Culture Organizations 2024 Grant Recommendations

1. Recommendation

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve the 2024 funding allocations of \$306,000 under the Major Arts and Culture Organizations grant program as outlined in report PDL-CUL-24-008 dated June 4, 2024.

2. Purpose / Issue:

To approve the allocation of funds for the 2024 Major Arts and Culture Organizations grant program, in alignment with the Region's discretionary grant policy and processes.

3. Strategic Plan:

The Major Arts and Culture Organizations grant supports Strategic Focus Area #3: Equitable services and opportunities. Through collaboration and innovative design, we will provide equitable, accessible services across Waterloo Region that support the social determinants of health, safety and complete communities as we grow.

4. Report Highlights:

- On April 19, 2023, Regional Council voted to amend the Key Cultural Institutions eligibility criteria and add \$340,000 to the funding envelope to allocate to eligible arts and culture organizations within the community. This in-year approval was funded on a one-time basis from the Tax Stabilization Reserve.
- On December 13, 2023, Regional Council approved a 10 per cent reduction to discretionary grants. The 2024 budget for Major Arts and Culture Organizations has been amended to \$306,000 and is funded by the property tax levy.
- The application process opened Monday April 8, 2024, and closed Friday May 10, 2024. The grants were publicized on the Region's website, on social media channels, and potentially eligible grant applicants were contacted directly via email. The Region received 13 grant applications totalling \$469,666. Of the 13 applications, 10 met the program's criteria. Total recommended funding is \$306,000, consistent with the amended budget. The recommended grant amounts are calculated as outlined in the program guidelines.
- This program provides one-time operating funding to eligible organizations to

enhance their ability to produce and/or present artistic works and cultural programming.

5. Background:

The Major Arts and Culture Organizations Grant Program (MACO) was established by Council at its April 19, 2023 meeting. The program is based on the Key Cultural Institutions Grant Program, which was established in 2015. The eligibility criteria for the MACO program includes:

Operating Budget: Organizations must have operating expenditures exceeding \$250,000. (KCI's must have operating expenditures greater than \$1 million).

Relationship to Public Facilities: To be eligible organizations must have programming intrinsically linked to a public facility. (KCI's must share responsibility for public buildings).

Streamlined Process: The application requirements and adjudication process have been simplified for ease of use and efficiency.

This grant program aims to support the vibrancy and resiliency of Arts and Culture Organizations that present artistic and cultural programming in public facilities. This program provides one-time operating funding to eligible organizations to enhance their ability to produce and/or present artistic works and cultural programming.

6. Funding Recommendations

As outlined in the program guidelines, each eligible organization's annual operating revenues is divided by the sum of the operating revenues for all eligible organizations.

This number is then multiplied by the approved budget (\$306,000) to determine the allocation of funding to each organization. The target grant amount is 10 per cent of annual operating revenues.

Grant Applicant	10 per cent of most recent revenues	2024 recommended funding amount
Neruda Arts	49,589	36,600
Homer Watson Gallery	59,908	44,200
Registry Theatre	29,486	21,800
CAFKA	43,410	32,000
Interarts Matrix	31,776	23,500
MT Space	54,073	39,900
Fashion History Museum	40,023	29,500

Button Factory	22,875	16,900
Grand Philharmonic Choir	44,092	32,600
Green Light Arts	39,266	29,000
TOTAL	414,498	306,000

Notes on Eligibility

Staff have reached out to ineligible organizations, directing them to other funding opportunities from the Region, such as the Cultural Drivers of Tourism Incentive Program.

7. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities: area municipal staff were informed of the funding opportunity. Staff from all area municipalities have also shared information about grant programs and grant funding amounts. Staff in all area municipalities were notified about the grant applications.

Public: The grants were publicized on the Region's website and social media channels and previous grant applicants were contacted directly by email.

8. Financial Implications:

The approved 2024 budget for the Major Arts and Culture Organizations Grant Program is \$306,000, funded by the property tax levy. Staff recommend allocating the full \$306,000 to eligible applicants based on the formula prescribed in the program. Details of all applicants and their allocated amounts are provided in Appendix A.

9. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Council's approval of the recommended expenditure for the Major Arts and Culture Organizations Grant Program Funding would initiate the process of distributing these one-time funds. Staff will continue to work with eligible organizations on funding opportunities for 2025.

Attachments:

Appendix A: Major Arts and Culture Organizations 2024 Funding Recommendations

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