

OTF INVESTMENT STREAM: SEED GRANTS

OVERVIEW



OTF provides Seed funding to develop new ideas and different approaches to achieving results. Projects must align with an OTF Priority Outcome and broadly align with a Grant Result.

The purpose of OTF Seed funding is to:

- Come up with new or better ways of doing things (more efficiently or effectively), leading to greater impact
- Develop an evidence base, through the testing or piloting of new or unproven approaches
- Allow an organization to learn as a result of testing ideas or concepts that have not been tried before
- Respond to emerging issues in a community
- Experiment with innovative approaches without knowing what the results might be
- Explore the feasibility of ideas or things that are new or unproven

Types of projects funded

All projects need to be focused on seeding new ideas or approaches that will drive at achieving greater impact in their community by:

- Researching a new concept, idea or approach
- Developing, launching or testing a new idea, approach or event; Piloting a new program or running a demonstration project
- Conducting a feasibility study
- Convening around an emerging issue

Amount and term

Amount range: \$5,000 to \$75,000

Duration: Up to 1 year

Hold back: 10% of the funding will be held back, to be paid upon satisfactory review of the final report

Seed projects must align with one of the following Seed-specific Grant Results associated with an Action Area:



GRANT RESULTS

- Trained and certified coaches, officials and volunteers
- Programs are safe, inclusive, fair and age- and ability-appropriate
- Ontarians participate in an active lifestyle



GRANT RESULTS

- People have a say shaping the services and programs that matter to them
- People who are marginalized take on leadership roles in their communities
- Diverse groups work together to improve community life
- People who are isolated have connections in their community



GRANT RESULTS

- People participate in ecosystem, conservation and restoration efforts
- Conservation and restoration efforts are better planned and more sustainable
- People connect with the environment and understand their impact on it
- People and resource users take deliberate actions to benefit the environment
- Mechanisms are developed to promote responsible resource stewardship



GRANT RESULTS

- Skills and knowledge are transferred to the next generation of artistic leaders
- Access to arts-based learning opportunities and compelling artistic, cultural and heritage experiences
- People are engaged in community-based arts creation
- Preservation and animation of cultural heritage



GRANT RESULTS

- Parents, caregivers and adult allies have the skills to support children and youth who are facing barriers
- Children and youth who are facing barriers develop strong emotional and social skills
- Youth facing barriers volunteer and are in leadership roles



GRANT RESULTS

- People who are economically vulnerable have access to community services that enhance financial stability
- People who are economically vulnerable are able to meet their basic needs
- People have the skills and knowledge to achieve greater financial independence
- People become and stay employed
- People become entrepreneurs

TYPES OF COSTS FUNDED

All costs funded by OTF must be eligible and necessary to carry out the described project.

Direct Project Costs

- Direct personnel costs: Salaries, mandatory employment-related costs and employee benefits of new or maintained staff positions funded specifically to carry out the project

Direct non-personnel costs

- Purchased services (from contractors or subject experts) specifically related to the delivery of the program/service
- Workshop, meetings, convening costs incurred relating to the delivery of the program/service
- Supplies and materials purchased to use in the delivery of the program/service
- Travel costs incurred by employees, volunteers and participants that are directly related to the project
- Evaluation costs: Up to a maximum of 10% of the total OTF Budget Request can be used for planning and executing an evaluation of your grant project. This amount is only for the evaluation of your grant project
- Other costs: Other costs directly related to the delivery of the program/service but not captured in the categories provided

Overhead and Administration

OTF will support overhead and administrative costs directly associated with the funded project **to a maximum of 15% of the total OTF Budget Request**. These do not include the direct costs to run or deliver a project, including the staff associated with the program. These are eligible expenses that are part of separate budget categories.

Overhead and administration costs can include a portion of regular operational expenses that can be attributed specifically to the funded project.

Please refer to the [Overhead and Administrative Costs Policy](#) for further details.

Types of costs and projects not funded

- Requests to fund a previously/currently offered program or project
- Requests that do not clearly align with an OTF Priority Outcome and a Seed-specific Grant Result
- Renovations, repairs, new buildings
- Activities completed or costs incurred prior to the approval of the OTF grant application
- Taxes, such as GST and HST, for which the recipient is eligible for a tax rebate, and all other costs eligible for rebates
- Contingency costs

SEED GRANT APPLICATION

Grant applicants will be required to:

- Identify an OTF Priority Outcome and one Seed-specific Grant Result. Learn more about the [Priority Outcomes, Grant Results and Metrics](#) associated with all Action Areas
- Clearly describe what idea, challenge or opportunity they will be exploring in relation to an OTF Priority Outcome and a Seed-specific Grant Result
- Describe the community need that will be addressed through the project
- Describe the activities required to complete the project
- Provide pictures/diagrams to support the request
- Describe what they are hoping to learn from the project
- Complete a [Financial Workbook](#) outlining the request budget

View the [Seed grant application](#) questions and applicant advice, as well as the [Financial Workbook Instructions](#).

Assessment Criteria

Seed grant applications will be assessed on three [criteria](#): Strategy, Process and People.

Strategy

- The project must align with an OTF Priority Outcome and a Seed-specific Grant Result
- The idea, challenge or opportunity being explored is well understood
- The type, level, and urgency of the community need is described
- The way the project will impact the community is clear (e.g. breadth and depth)
- There is a link between the community need, how the project will address it and achieve the Grant Result

Process

- The application must show a reasonable timeline and describe links between the project activities and the project objective

People

- The expected learnings for the organization, community or sector are clear and demonstrate alignment with the Grant Result
- The application indicates how the learnings will be used and the next steps

Documentation Requirements

Applicants are not required to submit the following items with their application, however, these documents must be in place and available by the application deadline. OTF may request them at any time including during the assessment process or once the grant is approved.

Quotes

When you are requesting OTF funds for goods and/or services individually valued above \$10,000, OTF asks your organization to show that it sought the best value for money. The amount requested must be reasonable and supported by competitive bids. OTF requires two or more written quotes for purchases of individual goods and/or services valued above \$10,000.

Multiple sub-contracts with the same organization/supplier on the same project will be considered as a cumulative total. This means if the total of these goods and/or services exceeds \$10,000, competitive bids of two or more written quotes are required.

Applicants may be requested to provide copies of quotes at any time after the application is submitted.

Collaborative Agreement

Collaborative applicants must have a formal agreement in place when the application is submitted. The agreement must detail the purpose and nature of the collaborative, and must be signed by all members making a collaborative application for OTF funding. For more information, please read the [Collaborative Applicants Policy](#).

Reporting on your grant

OTF asks for a final report that provides the following information:

- Whether the project achieved the chosen Grant Result
- The costs incurred were in accordance with approved budget
- What was learned from the results of the project and what will be done with the learnings
- Next steps
- Compliance with the terms and conditions of the Grant Contract and full (100%) expenditure of project costs. Please note that 10% of the grant will be held back, to be paid upon satisfactory review of the final report. Please refer to the [Payment Release for Grantees Policy](#).

Learning

Upon request, the grantee will provide OTF access to relevant documentation of products that resulted from the project for purposes of OTF analysis and aggregation of information.

Learnings from completed Seed projects will help build the OTF knowledge base and allow applicants, other organizations, staff and volunteers to learn from these projects. In some cases, successful Seed projects that produce meaningful evidence with proven results could potentially be used by a grant recipient to subsequently apply for a Grow or Capital Grant for funding for a large, implementation-oriented project.

DEFINITIONS AND RESOURCES

Concept: A concept is an abstract idea, a general notion.

Emerging issue: An emerging issue is one that is newly created or noticed and growing in strength or popularity; becoming known or established.

Feasibility study: A feasibility study is a study aimed to objectively and rationally uncover the strengths and weaknesses of an existing process or proposed undertaking including opportunities and threats, resources needed to carry through, and ultimately the prospects for success.

New: For OTF purposes, this includes things that are new for an organization, a community or a sector; piloting a new program or approach; undertaking research that has not been previously undertaken by that organization, community or sector, etc.

Project: A project is an initiative proposed by an OTF applicant for funding. For OTF purposes, a project or initiative has a defined beginning and ending and a specific objective. The term 'project' is frequently used in the OTF online application and may sometimes be used interchangeably with the term 'initiative'.

Unproven: For OTF purposes, "unproven" means that there isn't an existing evidence base to demonstrate that this idea, approach or program does or does not work. The Seed stream is the place for organizations to try out or test a *new approach*, to prove, or create evidence, that the approach works or even that it doesn't, allowing the organization to learn from its efforts.

Related Documents

[POL-INV-01 Eligibility Policy](#)

[POL-INV-06 Overhead and Administration Costs Policy](#)

[POL-INV-09 Recognition Policy](#)

[POL-INV-10 Payment Release for Grantees Policy](#)

[POL-INV-11 Reallocation of Grant Funds Policy](#)

[POL-INV-13 Grant Rescind and Recovery Policy](#)