

Community Event Support Grant (CESG)

Application Guide | 2026



Contents

1.	Purpose	2
2.	Applications Deadlines.....	2
3.	Key Obligations	3
4.	Eligibility.....	3
4.1	Eligible Events	3
4.2	Eligible Event Categories	4
4.3	Eligible Applicants.....	4
4.3	Ineligible Events.....	5
4.4	Ineligible Applicants.....	5
5.	Eligible & Ineligible Expenses	6
5.1	Eligible Expenses	6
5.2	Ineligible Expenses.....	7
6.	In Kind Contributions	10
6.1	Volunteer Hour Valuation	10
7.	Funding Details.....	11
8.	Fundraising Events.....	12
9.	Application Process.....	12
10.	Event Definitions	13
10.1	Funding Level.....	13
10.2	Event Duration	13
10.3	Post Approval Requirements	13
11.	Evaluation Criteria.....	14

1. Purpose

The **Community Event Support Grant** provides funding support for not-for-profit organizations to initiate and develop new events or to assist with the maintenance of existing events. The City of Lethbridge recognizes the value of special events and the contribution they make to the community vitality, cultural expression, affordable entertainment, and economic benefit.

The purpose of the program is to provide funding support, investing in non-profit community organizations that organize and deliver events which enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Lethbridge, contribute to the culture of the community, and create affordable entertainment and provide economic benefit to the City. Initiatives, events, and programs should align with the vision and direction of the outcomes (additional details can be found in the Evaluation Criteria section of this Guide). Funding is intended to support the delivery of community events and is **not intended to support ongoing operations or financial sustainability** of an organization.

2. Applications Deadlines

Applications will be accepted through quarterly intakes (see below) and will be reviewed and approved by the Community Event Support Grant Scoring Committee. **Late applications will not be accepted. Applicant events must occur at least 30 days after deadline application**, to allow time for scoring committee to review applications and allow appropriate time for successful applicants to include City of Lethbridge logo on all marketing material.

Applications must be submitted by **11:59 PM** on:

- **January 31**
- **May 31**
- **September 30**

*With this new parameter added, events must occur at least **30 days after application deadline**, and will assess case-by-case, and may make special approvals (within reason) for events that occur a few days inside the 30 days for all 3 deadlines deemed eligible.*

3. Key Obligations

Applicants must be aware of the following requirements before considering applying:

- **Events must occur at least 30 days after the application deadline** to allow sufficient time for application review, notification of results, and for successful applicants to include the City of Lethbridge logo on all promotional materials.
 - **Events scheduled to occur before the intake deadline will be deemed ineligible for scoring.**
- The **City of Lethbridge logo must appear on all promotional materials** where applicable; failure to do so will result in an ineligible final report and may render a loss of funding.
- **Final Reports are required within 90 days following the event date** (e.g., an event held on April 20 will have its final report due by July 20). Late or incomplete final reports may result in reduced or forfeited funding.
- Events that generate a **net profit from their final report may have the second payment reduced** to ensure no surplus remains beyond the amount advanced.
- Organizations with **outstanding, past-due final reports** from previously funded projects are not eligible to receive new CESG funding.

4. Eligibility

4.1 Eligible Events

Applicants are eligible to submit **up to two (2) unique events per intake period**. To be eligible for the Community Event Support Grant, events:

- Must be **held within the City of Lethbridge**.
- Must be organized for the purpose of **building and celebrating community** and held primarily for the benefit of **Lethbridge residents**.
- Demonstrate a **high degree of community support** through participation, attendance, volunteers, and/or in-kind contributions.
- Must **not be duplicated or similar in nature to existing celebrations or events currently being offered**.

- Must **not be receiving financial assistance from other City of Lethbridge grant programs or funding decisions of Council** for the same event.

4.2 Eligible Event Categories

- **Sport Competitions**
 - Single event or tournament competition comprised of a combination of local and external competitors, coordinated by a local organizing community and volunteer base.
- **Community Festivals**
 - Annual events are actively programmed around a theme, with a focus on community organization and participation, requiring a significant commitment of facilities or impact on the community. Entertainment-based, where the festival celebration is the primary goal.
- **Conferences**
 - Events providing an education or networking opportunity that benefit citizens of Lethbridge, while attracting delegates or participants from outside the community are eligible. Events cannot be exclusive in manner and should include at least a minimal opportunity for the general public or special interest groups.
- **Advocacy**
 - An apolitical or non-religion based gathering that benefits the community at large. It cannot be controversial or divisive in nature.

4.3 Eligible Applicants

Applicants must:

- Be an **incorporated not-for-profit organization and in good standing** or **apply under the auspices of an incorporated not-for-profit sponsoring organization.**
- Not be a public institution or related foundation.
- Demonstrate organizational capacity to deliver the event as proposed.

4.3 Ineligible Events

Ineligible events include, but are not limited to:

- Weddings, religious gatherings, demonstrations, marches, or events for commercial purposes.
- Events incurring retroactive expenses or accumulated deficits.
- Capital projects not related to or necessitated by the proposed event.
- Events that occur within 30 days of an application deadline.

4.4 Ineligible Applicants

The following organizations are not eligible:

- Commercial and/or for-profit organizations
- Political party, political action group, or lobby groups
- Educational institution, school, or school authority
- Religious institutions
- Any other organization whose primary purpose is not to operate for community benefit; commercial business; private organizations; municipal departments.

5. Eligible & Ineligible Expenses

5.1 Eligible Expenses

CESG funding may be applied to eligible costs directly related to the delivery of the event including:

- City services.
- Event Infrastructure such as facility, venue, stage, lighting, and other equipment rentals.
- Event marketing and communication.
- Bidding costs.
- Event supplies (organization to list the supplies)
- Volunteer expenses.
- Services offered by a 3rd party business or not-for-profit, security wages (through a professional security company), and 3rd party entertainment expenses are eligible expenses.
- Safety.
- Minor capital expenditures or for the operation of the event.
 - Minor Capital Costs: capital costs that are essential to the delivery of the event and, when completed, must be owned and/or managed by the organization. Expenditures may **not exceed 30% of the total CESG funding awarded** (i.e. if \$5,000 CESG funding is awarded, the maximum to minor capital expenditures is \$1,500).
- Honorarium defined as: a payment in recognition of services provided (e.g. guest speakers and performers) where such payment was not agreed to in advance of the event and therefore, no fee is legally required to be paid. An honorarium is simply a "thank you" or a token of appreciation. It may be an Honorarium if:
 - there was NO negotiation of fees,
 - there is NO invoice,
 - if the value is UNDER \$500,
 - if it is to an individual.

5.2 Ineligible Expenses

- Salaries & wages of organization's staff.
- Prizes.
- Awards that are of cash or material value (trophies and medals are an eligible expense).
- Alcohol.
- Merchandise for resale.
- Costs invoiced/billed by your own organization (e.g. Charging for your own rental space).
- Specific In-Kind expenses (see description below). Any services or **charges from own organization including rental of space are ineligible to be considered in-kind.**

6. In Kind Contributions

In-kind contributions are defined as third-party facilities or services provided **at no real cost** to the event with the following criteria:

- Must come from an **external party**.
- The dollar value of these contributions can be attributed to the budget, but they must be listed in the in-kind column on the application budget and final report template, both in sections:
 - **Planned or Final Expenditures (A)**
 - **Anticipated or Final Revenue (B)**
- Ineligible to be internally generated by the hosting organization.

6.1 Volunteer Hour Valuation

Volunteer Hours for In-Kind are calculated at the following rate:

- Unskilled Labour: **\$20.00/hour** working directly on the project (must report actual hours in final report).
- Skilled Labour: **\$35.00/hour** for skilled labor (must report actual hours in final report).
- Heavy equipment (with operator): **\$70.00/hour** and must report actual hours in final report.
- Donated materials and Professional services are calculated at fair market value (invoice required with final report).

Final reports must include:

- Name of Volunteers
- Wage Category (unskilled, skilled, heavy equipment, donated & professional - w/ invoice)
- Number of hours
- Total number of hours, see example below:

Final Project Report (Actuals)		
Event Name:	Cash \$	In-Kind
Example Event		
Final Expenditures (A) – Itemize and list costs		
Volunteer hours-John Doe and Jane Doe-Unskilled labor-8 hrs, total 16hrs		\$ 320.00

7. Funding Details

Total funding available for 2026 CESG is **\$97,500.00**:

- Intake 1 will see up to \$60,000 of the funds awarded.
- Intakes 2 and 3 will see \$18,750 each.

The maximum grant awarded would be matching cash financial contributions to a maximum of **\$7,500 and not exceed 50% of the event expenditures budget and actuals**:

- Approved grants applications exceeding \$1,000 require the organization to provide 50% matching contributions.
- **50% of eligible funds are received upfront** (after confirmation of event booking or permit), the **remaining 50% is received after the City of Lethbridge reviews and confirms acceptance of the organization's final report**.
- Event final reports **must balance** and **events that turn a profit will receive a lower second payment disbursement** and not allow profit beyond what was advanced.
- The total amount of which will be calculated by subtracting the total profit amount from the awarded grant total or adjusting the awarded grant. Grant budgets (application form) and actuals (final report) must be balanced, and applicants will not be awarded the full, or any second 50% payment if it increases profit to applicant.
- Return of Funding Clause: funding that is not expended as per the details of the application shall be returned to the City for re-investment in other services through this grant program.

Because funding is limited, all organizations that meet the eligibility criteria may not be supported or receive the full amount requested. This determination will be based off scoring results. Applicants will be notified of scoring results **2 weeks after the application deadline**.

8. Fundraising Events

Fundraising events are still considered eligible under CESG. Final reporting requirements will differ if the event has direct financial barriers and will be evaluated on the following criteria for eligibility:

- If the primary purpose of the event is fundraising and the ability of someone from the community to attend/participate is limited by a direct financial barrier (i.e. tickets, registration fees, etc.), the applicant will be required to disclose those revenues in the application budget and final report actuals. Ultimately, these revenues will impact on the grant funding amount initially granted and/or final payments and in some cases, reducing the eligible funding to \$0.
- Events that include a fundraising aspect that does not impact on the ability of someone from the community to attend/participate (i.e. 50/50 tickets, silent auction, live auction, etc.) will not be required to disclose those revenues in the application budget, nor final report actuals.

9. Application Process

Submissions to be completed through a Cognito Online Form at: lethbridge.ca/grants
Information needed to complete application:

- Organization information, including incorporation number. Organizations that are not incorporated may apply under the auspices of an affiliate or sponsoring organization.
- Main Contact information.
- Event Information such as date, time, number of participants/spectators, type of event, event category, funding level and type.
- Project details: brief description of project and how your group is planning to organize the activities.
- How does your event enhance a sense of community? Indicate the benefits to Lethbridge residents.
- Marketing timeline, budget (if applicable), and projected reach of event (local, regional, etc.).
- Project Budgets- planned expenditures and anticipated revenue. The budgets presented must be balanced.

10. Event Definitions

10.1 Funding Level

- **One Time Special:** event does not occur each year, but rather is a special event that rarely, if at all, occurs. For example, Olympic Torch lighting event.
- **Inaugural:** intent is for events to become ongoing and occur each year.
- **Ongoing (2-3 Years):** event has occurred in previous years.
- **Mature (4+ Years):** event has occurred in previous years.

10.2 Event Duration

- **One (1) day**
- **2-3 days**
- **4-6 days**
- **One (1) week or more**

If event is recurring over a number of weeks or months, each occurrence will be counted as a day, and participants/ spectators will be the total per occurrence. For example, event occurs once a week for 4 weeks, with participants/spectators total 60 individuals for each event occurrence. Event duration= 4 days, participants/spectators=240.

10.3 Post Approval Requirements

Approved event is expected to be posted on the City of Lethbridge website. It is an expectation of City grant programs that the City of Lethbridge logo where applicable. **Not providing the logo on promotional material will make your final report ineligible and risk loss of funding.**

Organizations must submit a Final Report the following to grants@lethridge.ca within **90 days following your event:**

- A completed Final Report form (form found on City of Lethbridge CESG website).
- A Final Report (which includes actual or verifiable expenditures) signed by at least one executive officer.
- Copies of promotional material with the City of Lethbridge logo on it, and if available photos of the event (jpg or jpeg format) with permission for the city to use the photos.

11. Evaluation Criteria

All applications will be reviewed by a scoring committee composed of various internal departments. Evaluations will be based on the following criteria:

Attendance	<i>Estimate number of participants and spectators</i>
Scope of Participation	<i>Based on where the participants and/or spectators are expected to travel from.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>International, National, Regional or Local</i>
Event Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>One week +</i> <i>4-6 days</i> <i>2-3 days</i> <i>1 day</i>
Organizational Status and Experience/ Capacity	<i>The City strives to assist not-for-profit organizations seeking to deliver community events.</i> <i>Does the applicant have experience successfully delivering an initiative, event and/or program of similar scale?</i>
Community Benefit	<i>Opportunity for community involvement as organizers</i> <i>Level of Competition/ Prestige for Participants (Sports/Entertainment/ Conference/Advocacy)</i>
Media Exposure	<i>Includes anticipated reach of transitional media and social media sources external to Lethbridge.</i>
Accessibility	<i>Economic Access/Affordability. If ticketed, level of economic access. Event open-ness to the public and physical accessibility.</i>
Inclusion Diversity Equity Accessibility	<p><i>How does the proposed event consider cultural, social and economic IDEA? Think about...</i></p> <p><i>What potential barriers are there to accessing the proposed event?</i></p> <p><i>Are there unique or under-represented voices that the proposed initiative, event and/or program seeks to highlight?</i></p> <p><i>Are there opportunities for local/small businesses, equity seek communities or others facing barriers to get involved as partners, programmers or participants?</i></p>
Budget	<i>Is the budget comprehensive and realistic? Does the proposed initiative, event and/or program provide good value for the money invested by the City? Value is determined through aspects like anticipated attendance and accessibility. Does the event rely on CESG to be successful?</i>