

# Community Event Support Grant (CESG)

Application Guide | 2026



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## Purpose

The **Community Event Support Grant** provides funding support for not-for-profit organizations to initiate and develop new events or help with the maintenance of existing events. The City of Lethbridge recognizes the value of special events and the contribution they make to the vitality of our community.

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). The funding is not intended to directly support ongoing operations or financial sustainability of the applicant organization.

## Eligibility

The following eligibility requirements apply to the Community Event Support Grant.

- Events qualifying for assistance must be held within the City of Lethbridge, be organized for the purpose of building and celebrating a sense of community and be held primarily for the benefit of Lethbridge residents. Eligible events are:
  - **Sport Competitions** (i.e, 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** (i.e, annual events 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** (i.e, 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** (i.e, An apolitical or non-religion based gathering that benefits the community at large. Cannot be controversial or divisive in nature).
- Applicant must be incorporated as a not for profit entity and in good standing, or be affiliated with a not for profit entity. They may not be a public institution or related foundation.
- Demonstrate a high degree of community support based on attendance, participation, organization, member, volunteers, financial contributions, and in kind donations.

- Not duplicate or be similar in nature to existing celebrations or events currently being offered.
- Not receive financial assistance through other City of Lethbridge funding policies or decisions of council.
- **Events must occur at least 30 days after the application deadline** to allow time for the scoring committee to review application, notification of scoring results and successful applicants to provide City of Lethbridge logo on all promotional material
- Organizations may submit *two* events per intake period.
- Funding may not be received if there are outstanding (past due) reports for previously granted projects.
- Fundraising events are still considered eligible. Final reporting requirements will differ if the event has direct financial barriers (ie. tickets, registration fees, etc.). **For additional information on fundraising events, please refer to page 6 under "Funding".**

*The following are **Ineligible Events**:* special interest events (ex, weddings, religious gatherings, demonstrations, marches, or events for commercial purposes), retroactive expenses or accumulated deficits, and capital projects not related to or necessitated by the proposed event.

*The following are **Ineligible Applicants**:* commercial and/or for-profit organizations; political party, political action group, or lobby group; educational institution, school, or school authority; religious institution; any other organization who's primary purpose is not to operate for community benefit; commercial business; private organizations; municipal departments.

## Eligible Expenses

Funding may be applied to the following items for Community Event Support Grant:

- City services.
- Event Infrastructure such as facility, venue, stage, lighting, and other equipment rentals.
- Event marketing and communication.
- Bidding costs.

- 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.
- 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.
- It may also be used for 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 provided (i.e if \$5,000 CESG funding is awarded, the maximum to minor capital expenditures is \$1,500).

## 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.

## In Kind Expenses

- In Kind Expenses: an in-kind contribution is where third party facilities or services are provided to the event at no real cost to the event. The dollar value of these contributions can be attributed to the budget, but they must be listed in the in-kind column on the budget and final report, both in sections "Expenditures (A)" and "Final Revenue (B)." In Kind can only be from an external party, not internally by the organization providing the event.
- Volunteer Hours for In-Kind: calculated at a rate of: \$20.00/hour for unskilled labor working directly on the project (must report actual hours in final accounting report), \$35.00/hour for skilled labor (must report actual hours in final accounting report); \$70.00/hour for heavy equipment (including operator) (must report actual hours in final accounting report), donated materials and professional services at verified fair market value. **Must include: Name of Volunteer, Wage Category (unskilled, skilled, heavy equipment, professional - w/ invoice), number of hours, and total.** 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

## Funding

Total funding available for 2025 is \$97,500.00.

- There will be 3 application intakes for 2025 (see Key Dates). 1st Intake will see up to \$60,000 of the funds awarded, and the 2nd/3rd 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. 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 of scoring results. Applicants will be notified of scoring result 2 weeks after the application deadline.

- All approved grant applications exceeding \$1,000 require the organization to provide 50% matching contribution.
- 50% of eligible funds are received upfront, 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 balance* 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.
- 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 (ie. 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 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 the ability of someone from the community to attend/participate (ie. 50/50 tickets, silent auction, live auction, etc.) will not be required to disclose those revenues in the application budget, nor final report actuals.

## Key Dates, Application and Post Approval

Applications will be accepted quarterly intakes in 2025 and will be reviewed and approved by the Community Event Support Grant Scoring Committee. Dates are subject to change. **Late applications will not be accepted. Applicant events must occur at least 30 days\* after deadline application**, to allow scoring committee to review applications and allow appropriate time for successful applicants to include City of Lethbridge logo on all marketing material.

### Deadlines:

- January 31 @ 11:59 PM
- May 31 @ 11:59 PM
- Sept 30 @ 11:59 PM

*Deadlines that fall on the weekend, are due the following business day*

*\* With this new parameter added for 2026 that 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.*

## Applications

Submissions to be completed through a Cognito Online Form at: [lethbridge.ca/grants](https://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. Presented budgets must be balanced.

## Part D-Event Information definitions

- 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 event 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
- Event Duration (One Week +, 4-6 days, 2-3 days, 1 day). If event is reoccurring 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 .

## Post Approval

- 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](mailto: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.

## Evaluation Criteria

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

<b>Attendance</b>	<i>Estimate number of participants and spectators</i>
<b>Scope of Participation</b>	<i>Based on where the participants and/or spectators are expected to travel from.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International, National, Regional or Local</li> </ul>
<b>Event Duration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One week +</li> <li>• 4-6 days</li> <li>• 2-3 days</li> <li>• 1 day</li> </ul>
<b>Organizational Status and Experience/ Capacity</b>	<i>The City strives to assist not-for-profit organizations seeking to deliver community events. Does the applicant have experience successfully delivering an initiative, event and/or program of similar scale?</i>
<b>Community Benefit</b>	<i>Opportunity for community involvement as organizers Level of Competition/ Prestige for Participants (Sports/Entertainment/ Conference/Advocacy)</i>
<b>Media Exposure</b>	<i>Includes anticipated reach of transitional media and social media sources external to Lethbridge.</i>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<i>Economic Access/Affordability. If ticketed, level of economic access. Event open-ness to the the public and physical accessibility.</i>
<b>Inclusion Diversity Equity Accessibility</b>	<p><i>How does the proposed event consider cultural, social and economic <b>IDEA</b>? Think about... 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>
<b>Budget</b>	<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>