

2021 Anti-racism Grant Program Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION

That Community and Public Services Committee recommend to City Council:

That the grant recommendations, as outlined in Attachment 1 of the November 8, 2021, Citizen Services report CS00793, be approved.

Report Purpose

Council decision required

Council is being asked to approve Anti-racism Grants Program recommendations, in accordance with Bylaw 18970 - Anti-racism Advisory Committee Bylaw.

Executive Summary

- The Anti-racism Grant Program aims to support anti-racism initiatives developed by youth, grassroots organizations and non-profit organizations in Edmonton.
- The inaugural intake cycle of the grants program concluded on July 16, 2021, with a total of 52 eligible applications received.
- Administration recommends the disbursement of \$213,591.25 in grant funding to 16 organizations as part of the first cycle of the grant program.

REPORT

In Fall 2019, City Council established the Anti-racism Advisory Committee through Bylaw 18970 - Anti-racism Advisory Committee Bylaw and approved funding of \$300,000 for an anti-racism grants program. The Anti-racism grant program is managed by Administration with advice on recommendations from the Anti-racism Advisory Committee.

In Winter 2020, Administration and the Anti-racism Advisory Committee's Funding Subcommittee developed the Anti-racism Grants Program, aimed to support anti-racism initiatives in Edmonton and achieve the following outcomes:

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- Edmontonians are more aware of racism and its impact and have a greater understanding of how to take action to address it.
- Edmontonians will be knowledgeable of the community organizations that are working to dismantle individual, systemic and structural racism.
- Edmontonians will work together to build a diverse, inclusive and equitable city.

The grant program consists of five funding streams:

- Youth Activation (\$25,000 available in total)
- Project Ready Matching (\$75,000 available in total)
- Local Community Participatory Action Research (\$50,000 available in total)
- Local Anti-racism Capacity Building/Innovation (\$100,000 available in total)
- Anti-racism Advisory Committee Administration and Special Projects (annual set-aside; \$50,000 in 2021-2022)

Review process

The Anti-racism Grants Program launched on June 4, 2021, and the end of the first intake period was July 16, 2021. In total, 52 eligible applications were received for the Youth Activation, Project Ready Matching, Local Community Participatory Action Research and the Local Anti-racism Capacity Building/Innovation streams.

Four members of the Anti-racism Advisory Committee's Funding Subcommittee and one member of the public formed the Anti-racism Grants Program Review Panel to review applications. The review panel was guided in its decision-making by an evaluation tool to ensure a consistent and fair assessment of each application. After reviewing the applications, the panel members met to discuss and finalize their recommendations.

Review outcome

The review panel's list of recommended grant recipients was presented to and ratified at the September 2, 2021, Anti-racism Advisory Committee meeting. The Anti-racism Advisory Committee is recommending approval of 16 applications, totalling \$213,591.25, in the Project Ready Matching, Local Community Participatory Action Research and the Local Anti-racism Capacity Building/Innovation streams (Attachment 1).

Administration will bring forward more information on the Youth Activation stream applications as well as a request for an amendment to Bylaw 18970 to facilitate disbursement decisions regarding Youth Activation stream applications later in the first quarter of 2022.

Budget/Financial Implications

City Council approved \$300,000 in ongoing tax levy funding for the Anti-racism Advisory Committee as part of the 2019 Fall Supplemental Operating Budget Adjustment. The recommended grants of \$213,591.25 will be funded by this previously approved budget.

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COMMUNITY INSIGHT

The Anti-racism Advisory Committee's Funding Subcommittee advised on all elements of the Anti-racism Grants Program, including program development, promotion of the program, review and assessment of the applications and grant award recommendations. To ensure that diverse community perspectives were represented in the grant review and decision-making process, the subcommittee sent invitations to various community organizations to join the Anti-racism Grants Program Review Panel in an ad-hoc advisory capacity.

Internal and external feedback on the first cycle of the Anti-racism Grants Program will be used to inform process improvement and ensure that the program continues to meet the needs of the community.

GBA+

Youth, grassroots and non-profit organizations led by or working to support racialized people often face increased barriers to accessing and applying for grant funding. These barriers might include limited time available for grant writing due to competing community priorities or smaller operational budgets which impacts their ability to hire staff with specific expertise in grant writing. Given these barriers, implementing a traditional grant program without additional support, flexibility or prioritization would likely negatively impact those applicants.

In designing the Anti-racism Grants Program, efforts were made to mitigate or remove barriers to ensure equity and support equality of outcomes for applicants. These efforts included:

- Application process
 - meeting with applicants virtually, via email or by phone to answer questions about the grant program and the application process
 - providing transcription services to applicants upon request
 - flexibility around timelines for the provision of supporting documents upon request
 - providing standby support until midnight on the closing date
 - assessing late applications on a case-by-case basis
- Grant review process
 - ensuring that all review panel members were aware of and adhered to the review process confidentiality and conflict of interest statement
 - utilizing an evaluation tool (a scoring rubric) to ensure consistent and fair assessment of each application
- Recommendation process
 - providing priority to organizations that demonstrated that they were led by Black, Indigenous or persons of colour, had an operating budget under \$250,000 per year, had not received prior City of Edmonton funding, and/or demonstrated the involvement of partner organizations from other diverse communities (intersectionality)

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ATTACHMENT

1. 2021 Anti-racism Grants Program: Recommended Grant Award Recipients