

2021 Investments in Organizations - Sustain

Recommendation

That Community and Public Services Committee recommend to City Council:

That the grant recommendations, as outlined in Attachment 2 of the February 17, 2021, Edmonton Arts Council report EXT00257, be approved.

Executive Summary

The Edmonton Arts Council (EAC) has been working towards the implementation of ***Connections & Exchanges: A 10-Year Plan to Transform Arts and Heritage In Edmonton*** as adopted by City Council in late 2018. This includes the development of new investment models and processes, guided by the Ambition in Book 4 of ***Connections & Exchanges: A Thriving and Well-Funded Arts and Heritage Ecosystem***.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the public health restrictions imposed by the Government of Alberta have had major impacts on the arts and festival communities. The EAC's Board of Directors through its Grants Review and Transitions (GRT) Committee, developed an investment framework for 2021 to balance stability and flexibility in support of arts and festival organizations. These processes and approaches were designed to integrate and transition to the future implementation of funding structures as directed by ***Connections & Exchanges***.

This report summarizes the first of those processes for 2021 and recommends investments of **\$4,225,375** in **138** existing organizations. City Policy 211H, Community Investment Grants to Organizations and Individuals, requires City Council approval when a grant to any one recipient is over \$30,000. Twenty-one (21) of the attached grant recommendations are more than that threshold.

These recommendations are made in accordance with Policy C211H and are within the Edmonton Arts Council's 2021 Budget as previously approved by City Council.

Report

Background

- For more than 20 years the EAC has managed various grant programs that support the Arts and Festival communities on behalf of the City of Edmonton.
- As part of the implementation of the ***Connections & Exchanges*** plan (see the October 17, 2018, Edmonton Arts Council report CR_6355) new and revised structures are replacing those historical programs.

- Adjustments to that implementation work were needed to respond to the impacts of COVID-19, while continuing the transition towards the future granting structures outlined in Book 4 of *Connections & Exchanges*.
- The EAC Board and its Grants Review and Transition Committee developed a framework to support Arts and Festival organizations in 2021. The framework was built with the future in mind and was based on balancing stability and flexibility in the short-term to enable the sector to manage through the current COVID-19 pandemic.
- This report summarizes the Sustain pillar of that framework, which responds to existing organizations with a stable track record of past annual support, to help maintain their current capacity and organizational stability.
- Sustain was built specifically to provide an investment structure based while recognizing the wide range of impact of COVID-19 has resulted in a lack of useful data.
- The Activate and Invent and Adapt pillars will provide further opportunities for supporting arts and festival organizations in 2021, as they seek to maintain and create new capacities, innovate and build resilience.

Sustain Investment Process

- One Hundred and Forty-Two (142) applications were received at the December 1, 2020 deadline.
- The information from applicants included basic organizational, financial and statistical information, and a summary of the organization's current status.
- Edmonton Arts Council staff reviewed the submissions to confirm that the organizations were eligible, going concerns, and had provided the required information.
- Four (4) applications were found to be not eligible. Those organizations were contacted by EAC staff and redirected to other funding options or granting programs.
- Grant amounts were calculated based on the size of the previous operating support the organization received in 2020.
- The process and resulting grant amounts were discussed by the Grants Review and Transitions Committee, then recommended to the EAC Board.
- The Edmonton Arts Council Board reviewed and accepted those recommendations at their January 20, 2021 meeting.
- Applicants were notified electronically of the recommendations.
- One hundred and thirty-eight (138) organizations are recommended for funding to a total of **\$4,225,375**, listed in Attachment 2.
- These organizations remain eligible in varying degrees for more support through the Edmonton Arts Council in 2021. City Council can expect future reports about those processes and decisions in accordance with policy C211.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

- The *Connections and Exchanges* plan (see report CR_6355 from October 2018) contains a measurement, evaluation and learning framework that is beginning to inform reporting.
- The Edmonton Arts Council is actively implementing a new digital granting and information management system to standardize the collection of outcome measurements as part of the implementation and operationalization of *Connections & Exchanges*. That system is expected to be in operation for the 2022 granting cycles.

Corporate Outcome(s):			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
Connections & Exchanges Ambition Book 4: A Thriving and Well Funded Arts and Heritage Ecosystem	Number of Organizations is one of the measures in the framework	This report recommends support to 138 Organizations. The overall number of organizations the EAC supports in 2021 is expected to be lower than previous years due to the pandemic.	Not applicable
Connect Edmonton: Healthy City / Personal Wellness / Arts and Culture	Percentage of Edmontonians who indicate they attended arts or cultural activities	90% City of Edmonton Community Perception Survey (2019) A 2015/16 Economic Impact Study estimated 3.9 million attendees at arts events in Edmonton annually. The pandemic restrictions have drastically reduced opportunities to attend these activities.	Not applicable

Attachments

1. 2021 Edmonton Arts Council - Investments in Organizations - Overview
2. 2021 Sustain Grant Recommendations