



# Festival and Event Subsidy Program (FESP) Application Guidelines

R 1722A (2020-09)

## Background Information

Festivals and events enhance the quality of life in Calgary. They are an essential part of complete communities. These experiences have significant value for citizens and visitors. They are vital to Calgary's on-going development as an active and creative city.

To officially recognize all of this, City Council adopted a [Festival and Event Policy](#) for The City of Calgary on Feb. 8, 2010. This policy gives us the [Festival and Events Subsidy Program \(FESP\)](#).

## What is FESP?

- This program is for registered not-for-profits, charitable organizations and business improvement areas.
- FESP is how The City of Calgary gives financial support for these festivals or events.
- We accept applications once a year from October 1st to October 31st.

Subsidy support from FESP is **only** to cover costs related to City services if your event requires them. Some of these include:

- City Permits & Inspections (does not cover Temporary Occupant Load Cards for Liquor Service Areas and/or Cannabis Consumption Areas)
- City Waste & Recycling (blue and green carts only)
- City Roads (closures and/or detours)
- City Production (tent & bike rack rentals)
- Calgary Police Service (Pay Duty Officers)

Subsidy **will not** cover some kinds of expenses like these (and others):

- Operating Expenses (insurance, taxes, etc.)
- Venue Rentals (Max Bell Centre, arenas, athletic parks and pools)
- Non-City services such as, but not limited to:
  - Marketing and advertising expenses
  - Equipment, machinery, office supplies, etc.
  - Repairs or upgrades to existing assets, or any damages caused by the event

## When do I Apply?

We accept applications once per year. This year starts on October 1, 2020. **The deadline to apply is October 31, 2020 11:59 P.M. MST. Late applications will not be considered.**

## Eligibility

To be eligible to apply, all events must meet all criteria listed below:

- Meet The City's definition of a festival or event<sup>ii</sup>
- Be hosted by a registered not-for-profit, charitable organization or business improvement area
- Occur within the calendar year
- Be non-commercial<sup>iii</sup> in nature
- Not have received funding through the Council Strategic Initiative Fund

## How can I get help with my FESP Application?

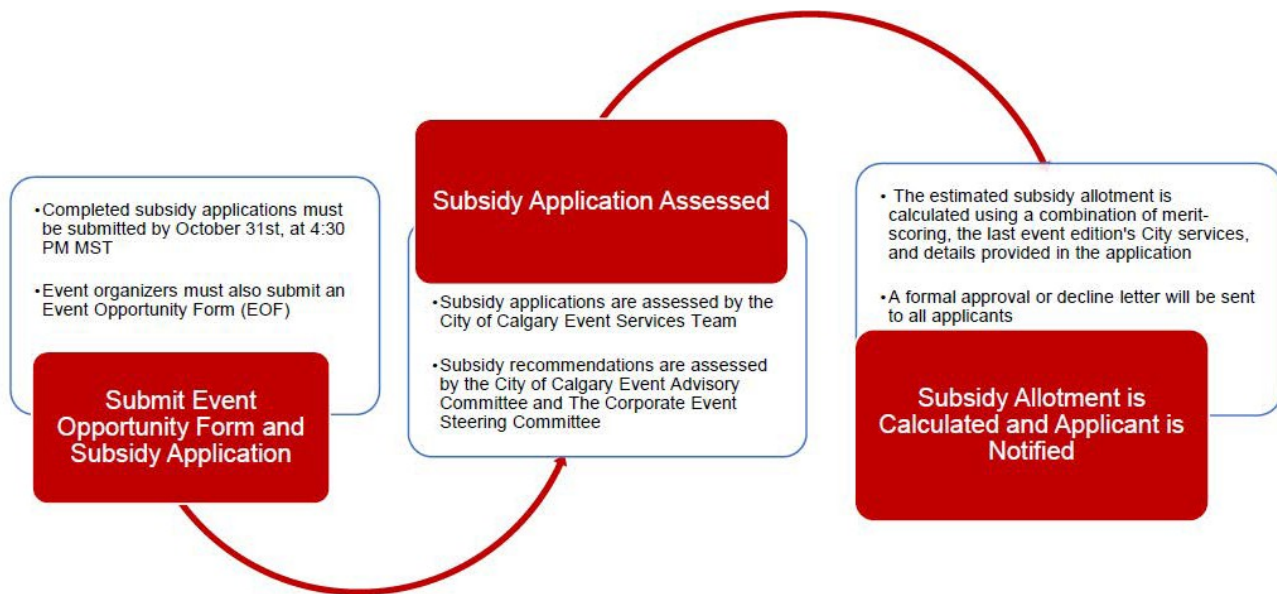
You can contact our Festivals & Events team at any time during your application process.

- **Contacting us for the first time?** Please email [eventservices@calgary.ca](mailto:eventservices@calgary.ca)
- **Are you already working with an Event Specialist or Coordinator?** Please contact them directly.

Our team is available to support you if you:

- Have questions related to the application and/or guidelines
- Need language translation on any written materials
- Need advice on how to correctly complete the budget portion of the application
- Need to determine what City services are required to host your event

## Subsidy Application Process



## How do I Apply?

1. Submit an [Event Opportunity Form \(EOF\)](#)
2. Complete a [Festivals and Events Subsidy Program Application](#) form. Answer all questions directly into the PDF document, save it, and email it to [eventservices@calgary.ca](mailto:eventservices@calgary.ca) before the deadline.

Note: We recommend that if it is your first time applying, speak with Festivals & Events staff at [eventservices@calgary.ca](mailto:eventservices@calgary.ca). We can help you estimate what City service costs are for your festival/event. City service cost estimates must be listed in "Section C" of your subsidy application as expenses, so we can accurately estimate an event's recommended subsidy amount.



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## How are Applications Reviewed?

All applications are reviewed using the same assessment criteria and are given a score. The criteria is based on merit. The criteria comes from The City's Event Impact Model in the [Festival and Event Policy](#). What do we mean by merit? Please see the Frequently Asked Questions section of this document.

The five assessment criteria categories are how well the event:

1. supports the outcomes of The City's Festival and Event Impact Model
2. supports current [Council Directives](#)
3. demonstrates long-term viability in financial management, leadership, planning and its ability to deliver on the event's mandate
4. makes itself accessible and inclusive for participants
5. contributes to the diverse landscape of events in Calgary

## Using the Criteria to get a Score

1. Our Festivals & Events team reviews each completed application based on the criteria and gives it a preliminary merit score.
2. All applications with a preliminary merit score are sent to The City's Event Advisory Committee (EAC)<sup>vi</sup>. This group reviews the scores and recommends a final list of festivals/events to receive subsidy. These are applications with a minimum merit score. The minimum merit score can be different each year. It depends on the subsidy budget for the year and the number of applications.
3. The City of Calgary Event Steering Committee<sup>vii</sup> has the final approval of subsidy amounts, based on that year's budget.

## Subsidy Calculation

Our Event Services Team estimates an event's subsidy amount using

- information from the FESP application and
- the previous year's City service requirements

If this is your first time applying, contact our Event Services staff. They will estimate what the City service costs are for your festival/event, and then calculate the total dollar value of those services.

Costs or charges related to damages or cancellations are excluded from subsidy coverage. The City reserves the right to exclude any other extraordinary fee or service from subsidy. Some examples of costs this subsidy doesn't cover:

- billable fees that are not on the Festivals and Events Fee Schedule
- significant changes to the services requested *after* subsidy approval

## When will I know if my Application is approved?

If you apply, you will get your results in writing within 90 days of the application deadline.



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## Conditions of Receiving a Subsidy

The City reserves the right to withhold subsidy at any point if it finds that the actual event operations are inconsistent with information provided by the event in its subsidy application.

The subsidy you are awarded must be used in the 2021 festival and event season from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

When City services are provided to your event at no-charge your event must acknowledge The City as a sponsor. This means you must give proper credit and recognition to The City as a sponsor in all of your publicity, advertising and event promotions.

If your event received subsidy support in the past, you are responsible for filling out Section D of the Subsidy Application - The Post-Event Report. The Post-Event Report is critical to track the success of Calgary's festivals and events. Our team uses this information to track and report on the social and economic impacts of festivals and events. If you fail to complete and submit this report you may not get future subsidy funding for your event.

## Next Steps

If you are approved for subsidy, see the [Festival and Event manual](#) for more information on the next steps you will need to take.

## Other City of Calgary Funding

### [Council Strategic Initiatives Fund \(CSIF\):](#)

If you are planning a one-time event or this is the first edition of a proposed regular event that does not qualify for assistance from the Festivals and Events Subsidy Program you may be eligible to apply for the CSIF. An event can either be eligible for the Festivals and Events Subsidy or Council Strategic Initiatives Fund, but not both.

## Contact

For more information about this program or if you have questions about the application process, email [eventservices@calgary.ca](mailto:eventservices@calgary.ca) or call 403-476-4304.

The City of Calgary website provides information if you are planning new or returning events. For more information, please visit [calgary.ca/festivalsandevents](http://calgary.ca/festivalsandevents).

## Definitions

**Festivals (includes Street Festivals):**

Are specifically to celebrate a unique aspect of the community. Activities include a variety of acts and performances with multi-faceted arts, cultural or recreational experiences. Festivals are likely (or have the potential) to be multi-day and/or multi-location. The primary purpose is entertainment.

**Parades:**

Are a gathering of people, and/or animals, and/or vehicles which travel in unison for the purpose of celebration or to raise awareness for a cause.



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## Community Events:

Are larger-scale local, regional or international events with a unique audience or participant experience. These may result in a significant local economic or tourism benefit. Attendance is generally greater than 1000 people.

## Community Programs:

Are community developed events which typically have a singular focus or target audience. Most likely geographically defined to a community or specific location. Attendance is typically less than 1000 people.

## Sport/Recreation Events:

Are a recreational or competitive participant-based activity. Participants and spectators may cover a large area such as with walks and runs. The primary purpose is to either raise awareness, raise charitable funds or allow participants to qualify for other sport/recreational events. These events generally need multiple locations (i.e. pathways, parks and/or roadways.)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***Q: What is a festival or event's "merit"?***

A: For this program, merit means impact. An event that has, or is very likely to have, a high impact in Calgary. We evaluate impact using the framework in the [Festival and Event Policy's Impact Model](#). The assessment criteria used to score event merit come directly from the Impact Model.

### ***Q: Do I have to reapply for subsidy every year? Do I have to reapply if there are significant changes to my event?***

A: Yes, you must reapply for subsidy every year. And you must reapply if there's a "significant change". A "significant change" generally means:

- a major shift in direction of the event's stated mandate or purpose
- an order of magnitude change (smaller or larger) to the event's operational size/scope

City Event Services staff determine if a change to an event is a "significant" change. If you think this might apply to your event contact The City's Event Services team **before** the application deadline to discuss it.

### ***Q: Can I reapply for subsidy if my first application was declined or if I want to improve my merit score?***

A: If your event is declined for subsidy you are allowed to apply the following year. You are welcome to contact our team for advice on how to increase your merit score.

### ***Q: How does The City establish the value of the subsidized fees and services it provides?***

A: Each City business unit determines the rates/fees for its own services. These rates go into the official Festivals and Events Fee Schedule. This Fee Schedule is approved each year by the Corporate Event Steering Committee.



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***Q: I was approved up to a certain amount, but my bill is higher. Will the City subsidize these costs?***

A: If there are additional costs, your event is responsible for everything above the approved amount.

This is why it is critical for us to have a good estimate of the City services your event needs. We do our best to estimate the service costs and subsidy required by each event. We use costs from previous editions, your service requests, and the fee schedule to determine your subsidy allotment. We also must do our best to have a fair distribution of subsidy and to be fiscally responsible.

If you are new to the subsidy application process, it is important to speak with a City of Calgary Event Services staff member to accurately assess the City services your event needs.

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<sup>i</sup> “Subsidy” or “subsidized support” as set out in this Policy means City Council’s approved funding to cover transactional and hard costs for services from The City of Calgary for events and festivals. The subsidy program is based on Council-approved budget.

<sup>ii</sup> **Festival/Event:** “Festival” and “Event” share a common definition under this program. When the word “event” is used by itself in these guidelines it includes festivals. A “festival” or “event” is defined in The City of Calgary’s Festival and Event Policy as:

- An organized gathering of people for the primary purpose of supporting a community, cultural, recreational or sport experience within a limited period of time and available to the general public; and/or
- A parade of people, and/or animals, and/or vehicles that travel in unison for the purpose of celebration; and/or
- A sport competition, or recreational or cultural activity that is sanctioned by a recognized authority, such as City Council and/or its designated authority;
- Any such activity that would have a significant impact on public property, facilities and/or public safety;
- Any such activity that would involve the support and/or services of two or more business units of The City of Calgary.

<sup>iii</sup> **Non-Commercial:** Refers primarily to festivals and events organized by not-for-profit organizations registered in Alberta, or Business Improvement Areas (BIA) recognized by The City of Calgary.

<sup>iv</sup> **City Council Bid Endorsement:** A bid that has been approved by a motion in Council.

<sup>v</sup> **Interdepartmental Events Team:** A committee of City Administration, led by Recreation and its designated division, with representation by the technical staff of the main City business units involved in providing services and support to festivals and events, including Calgary Police Services. Their review determines the type and level of services and support required for each festival and event. They also schedule these services for incorporation into the event’s Service Standard Agreement.

<sup>vi</sup> **Event Advisory Committee:** A committee established by The City of Calgary to advise City Administration on matters related to The City’s Festival and Event Policy. Its membership consists of representatives from the Calgary Sports Council, Calgary Sport Tourism Authority, Federation of Calgary Business Improvement Areas, Tourism Calgary, Calgary Arts Development Authority, Calgary Economic Development and City Administration, as well as two Citizens at Large. The Event Advisory Committee’s role in FESP is to ensure an open and transparent assessment process and to make final recommendations of subsidized events to City Administration.

<sup>vii</sup> **Event Steering Committee:** A committee of City Administration led by the Director of Recreation, with representation by the directors or designates of the main business units involved in providing services and support to festivals and events. The committee is responsible for the oversight and implementation of the Festival and Event Policy throughout The City of Calgary.