

Festivals and Events Subsidy Program

Operations Assistance Fund

Guidelines

City Of Calgary Arts & Culture Division

Core Principles

The City of Calgary's Arts & Culture Division administers several grant programs and services for the community which:

- encourage active and healthy lifestyles
- build strong neighbourhoods
- enhance cultural vibrancy
- facilitate the development of activities
- enhance social sustainability

Organizations seeking funding support from The City of Calgary through any of the grant programs administered by the Arts & Culture Division should be aware of and aligned with one or more of these core principles.

Values

Any organization supported by The City of Calgary Festivals and Events Subsidy Program Operations Assistance Fund will commit to the following values:

- **Accessibility, diversity, and inclusion:** ensuring open, equitable access for all Calgarians.
- **Accountability and fiscal responsibility:** ensuring resources and public funds are used effectively to leverage opportunities that optimize value and create impact.
- **Partnerships and collaborations:** working with contractors, stakeholders and community partners by building meaningful relationships based on mutual respect and understanding.

Program Overview

The Festival & Events Subsidy Program Operations Assistance Fund (FESPOAF) provides financial assistance to Festival and Events Subsidy Program (FESP) subsidized events to support essential operational and logistical services required to safely deliver festivals and events in Calgary. This fund replaces the former Festival & Events Subsidy Program Innovation Microgrant (FESPI) and now focuses strictly on operational reimbursement for contracted services.

This fund supports both:

- Events that have already occurred (submitted with invoices + receipts), and
- Upcoming events (submitted with contractor quotes, followed by mandatory submission of final invoices for reconciliation).

FESPOAF ensures that event organizers have access to necessary logistical support while maintaining fairness, transparency, and alignment with City policies and service standards.

Purpose of the Fund

FESPOAF helps event organizers offset costs tied to operational services that are essential for event delivery. These services must be directly contracted by the event organizer unless otherwise stated.

2026 Eligible services include:

- Electrical services and power distribution
- Snow and ice clearing
- Waste and recycling services

Special Note on City of Calgary Parks Electrical and Other Services

If electrical services are contracted through The City of Calgary (Parks):

- These services will be subsidized directly through internal billing process.
- No reimbursement application is required.
- Event organizers will be notified of their eligible subsidy at least 60 days before the event start date.

Note: Some park sites are managed by external contractors rather than The City of Calgary.

- If your event requires snow clearing, this is considered an eligible contracted service and must be arranged and paid for directly by the event organizer.
- If Parks chooses to coordinate the snow-clearing service, the cost will be treated as a City-contracted service and subsidized at 50%. In this case, it will not be eligible for FESPOAF reimbursement.

Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for FESPOAF, applicants must meet all of the following:

- Be a current-year approved FESP recipient. This means:
 - Your event is reviewed and approved through the Interdepartmental Event Team (IET) process.
 - Be a registered non-profit, charitable organization, Community Association, or Business Improvement Area.
 - Be in good standing with The City of Calgary (no outstanding invoices or compliance issues).
 - Host a publicly accessible festival or event in Calgary.
- For more information on becoming a FESP recipient, please visit [Festivals and Events Subsidy Program](#)
- Contracted service providers supporting multiple services must specify costs specific to the eligible services to be considered eligible for reimbursement.

Events must:

- Demonstrate need for contracted operational services.
- Submit valid documentation depending on event status as of October 31st:
 - Completed events: final invoices + receipts.
 - Upcoming events: contractor quotes, followed by required final invoices.

Ineligible Service Expenses

- Any services or expenses incurred by the event organizer that are not specific to the eligible operational services under FESPOAF are not eligible for reimbursement.
- In addition, all reimbursable services must be delivered by contractors who hold valid business licenses and any required permits at the time the service is provided.
- Services delivered through informal arrangements, individuals, or unlicensed contractors are not eligible for reimbursement.

Funding Amount & Reimbursement

- Final reimbursement percentage will be determined after all applications are received by October 31.
- Funding is not guaranteed and may be prorated.
- Final reimbursement will be calculated based on the total available funding available divided by the total eligible funding requested.
- The final percentages will be communicated once all submissions are reviewed.

Timeline & Submission Requirements

- Events may apply at any time prior to the final submission deadline October 31.
- Events without final invoices must submit quotes before October 31 to qualify.
- Final invoices must be submitted once available for accurate reimbursement.

Application Process

1. Complete the FESPOAF application form.
2. Attach all required documentation:
 - Completed events → final invoices + receipts
 - Upcoming events (after submission deadline) → contractor quotes (mandatory). Final invoices will be required prior to payment.
3. Email all required documents to FESP-Microgrants@calgary.ca using the subject line: "FESPOAF – [Event Name]"
4. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis.
5. Final reimbursement is calculated after October 31st.
6. Funding notifications are issued in Mid-November.
7. Reimbursements are processed by December 31st.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be reviewed based on:

- Alignment with FESPOAF purpose (operational and logistical need).
- Clarity and completeness of documentation (quotes, invoices, receipts)
- Reasonableness and eligibility of requested services.
- Accuracy of vendor costs and consistency with industry standards.

Conditions

By applying for reimbursement through FESPOAF, recipients agree to:

- Use funds only for eligible operational services connected to the event.
- Notify the City if vendor details, costs, or service scope changes (applicable to only upcoming events).
- Submit accurate invoices and supporting documents.

Funding may be reclaimed if:

- Documentation provided is inaccurate.
- Event details materially change without sufficient documentation (applicable to only upcoming events).

Questions?

For more inquiries or questions, please email Fesp-Microgrants@calgary.ca