

CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



Report Date: October 26, 2006
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TO: Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets
FROM: Assistant Director of Cultural Affairs
SUBJECT: 2006 Opportunity Initiatives Grant Allocation

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve 2006 Opportunity Initiatives grants totalling \$150,000 to five (5) organizations listed on Table 1, the source of funds to be the 2006 Opportunity Initiatives Grants budget.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services recommends approval.

COUNCIL POLICY

On October 10, 2002, Council approved a three-year pilot grant program to encourage the support of three types of festival and celebration initiatives:

- A. New annual/biennial festivals or celebrations
- B. One-time opportunities for Vancouver as the site of a festival or celebration
- C. Joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations

On July 13, 2006 Council approved a funding allocation of \$150,000 to allow the continuation of the program for one further year.

Approval of grant recommendations requires eight (8) affirmative votes.

PURPOSE

This report recommends grants to five (5) organizations, outlines selection processes, discusses the applications in more detail (Appendix A) and appends the evaluation criteria in the Program Information Guide (Appendix B).

BACKGROUND

In 2002, Council established Opportunity Initiatives grants to support new large-scale initiatives that expand the scope and profile of festivals in Vancouver. In recognition of the cultural, social and economic benefits that festivals and celebrations bring to Vancouver, the Opportunity Initiatives grant provides funding for three types of new initiatives related to major festivals or celebrations taking place in the city:

A. New annual / biennial festivals or celebrations.

This category is designed to support the development of a major annual or biennial festival or celebration that offers unique activity in Vancouver related to the city's distinctive character as expressed in its history, arts and culture, demographics, location or other attributes. Festivals or celebrations would also provide for a high standard of programming and be professionally produced for a city-wide audience by a registered not-for-profit society.

B. One-time opportunities for Vancouver as the site of a festival or celebration

This category is designed to support major new, one-time festival or celebration that take place in Vancouver as part of a cultural exchange or is a major regional, national or international initiative taking place in the city. Events would also be professionally produced and publicized to a city-wide audience and have a Vancouver-based not-for-profit organizational component.

C. Joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations

This category is designed to support joint venture, cultural exchange or other type of partnership that represent a new and major innovative strategy for cultural tourism or community development in Vancouver. They would also involve two or more main partners, one or more of which must be an experienced festival or special event organization registered as a not-for-profit society and based in Vancouver. The scale of events in this category would be of a scale that can have a significant impact. The partnership may also include community service organizations or private sector partners (e.g. the hospitality industry).

Between 2002 and 2005, the program supported the launch of such new initiatives as the PuSH Festival, SeaVancouver, the Vancouver Arts Awards and the Earth Festival associated with the World Urban Forum.

Although the pilot program is scheduled for a full review, a number of organizations were identified who were producing events which were eligible under existing criteria and could benefit from the continuation of the program for one final year in 2006, while the review is underway.

On July 13, 2006, Council approved a funding allocation of \$150,000 to a one year extension of the Opportunity Initiatives grants. This would provide access for support to organizations that demonstrated eligibility under existing criteria and guidelines as well as demonstrated need for support. See **Appendix B** for detailed program guidelines and criteria.

DISCUSSION

For the September 18th deadline, nine (9) applications were received totalling a request of \$575,000 for access to an available budget of \$150,000.

The nine (9) applications were reviewed, against the Council-approved guidelines, by an Assessment Committee comprised of Staff and five independent community members with a range of experience and expertise. The independent members are:

Sarah Kirby Yung, Director of Marketing & Corporate Sponsorship, Tourism Vancouver
 Bill Richardson, Author and Broadcaster
 Keith Wallace, Associate Director/Curator, Belkin Gallery, UBC
 John Wright, Artistic Director, Black Bird Theatre
 Roy Yen, Music Promoter

These consensus recommendations reflect a careful assessment of each application in the context of the categories in which each organization submitted their request.

The Advisory Committee recommend funding to five (5) applicants as per Table 1, reflecting those projects which best met the evaluation criteria as outlined in **Appendix B** and are discussed in more detail under individual headings in **Appendix A**. In this competitive evaluative process four (4) applicants are not recommended for support and are discussed in more detail in **Appendix A**.

Table 1
Recommendations: 2006 Opportunity Initiatives grants

Organization	Festival Name	Requested	Recommended	Category
Coastal Jazz and Blues Society	Winterruption	\$ 50,000	\$ 25,000	A. New annual / biennial festivals or celebrations.
Electric Company Theatre Society	Magnetic North Theatre Festival	\$ 75,000	\$ 40,000	B. One-time opportunities
Live Biennial of Performance Art Society	Live	\$ 80,000	\$ 40,000	C. Joint ventures
Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Society	Cherry Blossom Festival	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	C. Joint ventures
Vancouver Dance Centre Society	International Dance Day	\$ 60,000	\$ 35,000	C. Joint ventures
Total		\$ 275,000	\$ 150,000	

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2006 Opportunity Initiatives grants budget is \$150,000. The proposed grant allocations in this report leave no unallocated balance in the 2006 Opportunity Initiatives Grants fund.

CONCLUSION

This report contains recommendations from an Advisory Committee for funding of the Opportunities Initiative Grant program to support new opportunities, festival and celebrations in 2006.

The Assistant Director, Office of Cultural Affairs notes the importance of the Assessment Committee's expertise, insight and carefully balanced consideration and recommends approval.

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RECOMMENDED

Coastal Jazz and Blues Society

\$25,000

The Coastal Jazz and Blues Society (CJBS) requested funds to present *Winterruption*, a three-day multidisciplinary winter festival that will celebrate Vancouver's diverse arts and cultural communities from February 23-25, 2007 at various indoor and outdoor venues situated primarily on Granville Island.

First initiated as a pilot last year, the CJBS intends to develop this new event into a major annual interdisciplinary arts festival to promote accessibility to the arts and animate the city with cultural activity during the winter season. Featuring local, with some national and international artists, *Winterruption* will offer a broad range of primarily free presentations in a variety of media and disciplines including music, film, literary and visual arts, theatre, dance, and the culinary arts. Based upon community consultation and a call for proposals, CJBS will also program in collaboration with other Vancouver arts organizations such as the Vancouver International Writers Festival, and several theatre and film festival organizations. The festival will utilize established indoor performance and gallery spaces, existing outdoor spaces, as well as create alternative performance spaces to allow audiences to experience a variety of events in traditional and non-traditional locations.

Evaluated under criteria "A" (new annual/biennial festivals or celebrations), the Assessment Committee recommends a grant of \$25,000 in support of the CJBS developing their pilot event into a major annual festival. The society has the organizational capacity to undertake this large interdisciplinary festival that would bring festival consciousness to another time of year. With many free events and performances, the festival is accessible to youth, families, residents and tourists, and Vancouver will be showcased as a primary cultural tourist destination in the shoulder season to a substantially broader audience.

Electric Company Theatre Society

\$40,000

Electric Company Theatre Society requested funds to present/host the 6th Annual Magnetic North Theatre Festival in 2008 in Vancouver. This national festival of contemporary Canadian theatre features plays in English and Francophone works in translation. It also highlights theatre from Canada's ethnically diverse and Aboriginal communities. Magnetic North is a major Canadian festival and the only one of its kind in the country.

This travelling festival began in Ottawa in 2003 and moves from Ottawa to other cities throughout Canada in alternate years; 2004 in Edmonton and 2006 in St. John's Newfoundland. The program features 10-12 export-ready theatrical productions presented at 5-7 popular venues throughout Vancouver and an Encounter Series which includes a Speaker Series, Lunchtime Panels and post-performance talkbacks. Programming of this variety and breadth is delivered at an annual expense of \$1.4 million. Vancouver based theatre companies featured at previous festivals has included Rumble Productions, Urban Ink, NewWorld Theatre, Electric Company and the Vancouver Playhouse Theatre Company. In 2008 the festival will showcase some of Vancouver's site specific companies including Boca del Lupo, Leaky Heaven and Theatre Replacement.

Evaluated under criteria "B" (one-time opportunities for Vancouver as a site of a festival or celebration), the Assessment Committee recommends a grant of \$40,000 to support the planning activities in 2007 in preparation for the 2008 Festival. The Assessment Committee noted that there is significant value in the cultural exchange generated by bringing artists from across Canada to Vancouver audiences and this impact also extends into the local theatre ecology through many ancillary activities. The Committee also noted that the society has a proven track record of its ability to produce a well run 10 day event in Ottawa and other major centres.

Live Biennial of Performance Art Society **\$40,000**

LIVE has requested funds in support of the 5th biennial which will take place at various sites and galleries throughout the city from October 12 - November 5, 2007 on the theme of "public". Inaugurated in Vancouver in 1999, LIVE is an international biennial performance art festival produced in collaboration with over twenty Vancouver arts organizations including many artist-run centres. It is estimated the participating arts organizations collectively contribute \$145,000-\$160,000 in program funds into each biennale.

Vancouver is internationally known as a centre for innovation in the performance art world. The programming planned for 2007 will take Vancouver's reputation in the discipline to another level. In 2007 LIVE will significantly deepen its relationships with partnering organizations. There are approximately 40 events planned for a 25 day period with more than 20 partnering organizations. There is a plan to develop curatorial programming specific to LIVE, develop audiences through outreach as well as the creation of a new program of off-year activities to sustain interest in the festival and performance art on an annual basis.

Evaluated under criteria "C" (joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations), the Assessment Committee recommends a grant of \$40,000. The Committee noted that this planned significant shift will result in substantial community development for audiences and artists alike as well as affirm Vancouver as a centre for performance art on the national and international stage. The event also contributes to the cultural sector in its exploration of ideas and performance art practice locally and in dialogue with a larger national and international network.

Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Society **\$10,000**

Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Society requested funds to present the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival which will take place throughout Vancouver in March and April 2007. The applicant requested funding to support its cultural tourism strategy to position Vancouver as a travel destination during a tourism shoulder season. With participatory programming activities for tourists and local residents timed to following the peak bloom of the City's 36,000 cherry trees, the festival will welcome the return of spring with Japanese traditions and cherry-themed events such as Ohanami (blossom viewing), haiku-writing, blossom watches, as well as multi-day Cherry Jam concerts on Granville Island and in the downtown core.

The society presented a request for funding that showed increased financial commitments from the Vancouver Board of Trade as a principal partner in the festival as well as a new

partnership established with the Vancouver Park Board. These commitments, along with support from such key members as the Canada-Japan Society of British Columbia, the National Nikkei Heritage Centre and Japan-Canada Chamber of Commerce, created an opportunity for substantial growth in the length of the event and the overarching programming proposed. As such, the proposal was evaluated under criteria "C" (joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations). The Assessment Committee recommends a grant of \$10,000 with funding targeted to artist fees and programming costs. The Assessment Committee encourages the society to continue to develop its established tourism partnerships and opportunities while continuing to pursue diversified arts and cultural programming that builds on the creative foundations of its uniquely-themed program.

Vancouver Dance Centre Society

\$35,000

The Vancouver Dance Centre Society (VDCS) requests funds to support celebration of International Dance Day on April 29th, a comprehensive program of dance in public spaces over a three-year period.

VDCS has partnered with a number of cultural organizations, including the Vancouver Public Library, MainDance and the Downtown Vancouver BIA to produce "Spirit of Dance". Representing the diversity of dance styles found in Vancouver, the program's activities will extend beyond traditional venues to present performances and participatory activities in alternative spaces such as parks, city squares, libraries, community centres, schools, pubs, and malls during the week leading up to and culminating on International Dance Day, April 29th.

Evaluated under criteria "C" (joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations), the Assessment Committee recommends a grant of \$35,000. The Committee noted that this proposal promotes and celebrates dance and provides unique ways for the public to experience dance in streets, parks and malls, as part of their daily activities. Engaging the public with the art form directly will have a significant impact on the community and will cultivate a broader audience. Focusing around the burgeoning Granville/Davie creative cluster and the Downtown South neighbourhood will certainly result in significant community development. The Committee further commented that the Dance Centre was well-positioned in the dance community to take on this initiative which has the potential to attract and develop new audiences for dance, connect communities and neighbourhoods through dance.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Dancing on the Edge Festival Society

Dancing on the Edge Festival Society, in partnership with the Firehall Arts Centre, Powell Street Festival Society, and the Vancouver Police Centennial Museum applied for the development phase of "Celebration of the Arts", an initiative designed to enhance and focus attention on summer programming of these organizations based in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

Evaluated under criteria "C" (joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations), the Assessment Committee does not recommend support for this event. The Committee noted a lack of programming information, marketing plans and clarity of vision for the implementation phase of the project at this time.

In the context of a competitive grant round and limited funds, the Committee therefore does not recommend support.

Kokoro Dance Theatre Society

The Kokoro Dance Theatre Society, producer of the Vancouver International Dance Festival requested support for the development and implementation phases of "i-Dance", a project designed to promote Vancouver dance companies and artists using video technology and internet-based distribution systems. This would be done in partnership with Rainmaker LP, a Vancouver-based animation and visual effects studio.

Evaluated under criteria "C" (joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations), the Assessment Committee does not recommend support for this initiative. The Committee noted a lack of clarity of the project's guiding vision and a strong reliance on corporate fundraising to implement the initiative. The Committee also expressed concern with the Society's ability to raise adequate funds to ensure the long-term sustainability of this project which, given the technology, would be significant.

In the context of a competitive grant round and limited funds, the Committee therefore does not recommend support.

Transmission Music Alliance

Transmission Music Alliance (TMA) requested funds to present Transmitnow Block Party, a free public outdoor event planned for Saturday December 2nd from noon to 6:00 pm on the north west lawn of the Vancouver Art Gallery. The organization plans for this event to play a key role in furthering the careers of participating artists by helping them to develop their audiences. Through the staging of this outdoor event, TMA aims to highlight the contribution music can make towards community development.

Evaluated under criteria "C" (joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations), the Assessment Committee does not recommend support for this event. While the efforts to program an outdoor concert during the winter months are encouraged as valid attempts to develop cultural tourism, the Assessment Committee felt that the limited programming and the lack of local artists did not represent a scale that could have a significant impact on community development or meet the society's objectives of playing a key role in the careers of the artists involved.

In the context of a competitive grant round and limited funds, the Committee therefore does not recommend support.

Vancouver Art Gallery

The Vancouver Art Gallery requested \$150,000 for its year-long program of activities celebrating its 75th anniversary. The celebration includes a series of four exhibitions with a focus on 75 years of collecting, an accompanying web-based publication that highlights 75 works from the collection, a Founder's Day community celebration with 1930s admission rate of ten cents, and a marketing and branding campaign to support the year's program.

Evaluated under criteria "B" (one-time opportunities for Vancouver as a site of a festival or celebration), the Assessment Committee does not recommend support of this application. Presentations throughout the year including Raven Travelling: Two Centuries of Haida Art, Brian Jungen and the retrospective of Emily Carr, as well as others listed in the application, were noted as exceptional exhibits. The Committee felt however, that the incremental expenses directly related to the 75th anniversary celebration, beyond the Gallery's normal high standard of programming, marketing and community outreach were achievable within the within the Gallery's resources, including the \$2 million annual Operating grant awarded by the City.

In the context of a competitive grant round and limited funds, the Committee therefore does not recommend support.



CITY OF VANCOUVER
CULTURAL SERVICES
Office of Cultural Affairs

Opportunity Initiatives Guidelines

Description

In recognition of the cultural, social and economic benefits that festivals and celebrations bring to Vancouver, the City may provide Opportunity Initiatives funding for three types of new initiatives related to major festivals or celebrations taking place in the city:

- A. New annual / biennial festivals or celebrations
- B. One-time opportunities for Vancouver as the site of a festival or celebration
- C. Joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations

Category Guidelines

An organization(s) may apply for support for one of the following types of initiatives:

A. New annual / biennial festivals or celebrations

For the development of a major annual or biennial festival or celebration that:

- offers unique activity in Vancouver related to the city's distinctive character as expressed in its history, arts and culture, demographics, location or other attributes;
- provides for a high standard of programming; and
- is professionally produced for a city-wide audience by a registered not-for-profit society.

Funding may be available for this Opportunity Initiatives category for the development and/or implementation phases of an event. Events in this category will have budgets of \$400,000 or more.

B. One-time opportunities for Vancouver as the site of a festival or celebration

For a major new, one-time festival or celebration that:

- takes place in Vancouver as part of a cultural exchange or is a major regional, national or international initiative taking place in the city;
- is professionally produced and publicized to a city-wide audience; and
- has a Vancouver-based not-for-profit organizational component.

Funding may be available for this Opportunity Initiatives category for the development and/or implementation phases of an event. Events in this category will have budgets of \$400,000 or more.

C. Joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations

For a joint venture, cultural exchange or other type of partnership that:

- represents a new and major innovative strategy for cultural tourism or community development in Vancouver;
- involves two or more main partners, one or more of which must be an experienced festival or special event organization registered as a not-for-profit society and based in Vancouver; and
- is on a scale that can have a significant impact.

The partnership may also include community service organizations or private sector partners (e.g. the hospitality industry).

Funding may be available for this Opportunity Initiatives category for the development and/or implementation phases of an event. Events in this category will have budgets of \$250,000 or more.

Ineligible Activities

- Regular and ongoing activities of applicants
- Activities that are already funded through Celebration or Cultural grant programs
- Sports and athletic events, runs or walks
- Competitions or events with either commercial or fund-raising purposes
- Block parties, garden shows, street markets and fairs with amusement rides
- Religious rites and ceremonies

Levering Requirement

City funds are contingent on leveraging funds from other public or private sector sources provided specifically for the proposed initiative. In some cases, City funds may be approved in principle, subject to confirmation of funds levered from other sources.

In looking at leveraging funding for the *implementation phase of an initiative*, the following in-kind donations may be included in the revenue budget:

- performance space rental
- a portion of advertising
- technical equipment and related operating crew

However, for the *development phase of an initiative*, only cash support will be considered.

Process

1. The Opportunity Initiatives deadline is **September 18th, 2006**.
2. Prior to making a formal request, prospective applicants will be required to discuss their plans with staff at the Office of Cultural Affairs well in advance of the Sept. 18th deadline to discuss eligibility. In addition, a two-page letter summarizing the proposed initiative, including a projected budget, will be requested and reviewed by staff to help determine feasibility and eligibility. Once staff has determined that the proposal is both technically feasible and eligible, applicants will be asked to make a formal request.
3. There is no application form. Requests for funding should include:
 - a. the society name of applicant, society number, and contact information of organizers and all board members;
 - b. the names, contact information and description of all other participating organizations;
 - c. the component under which you are requesting funding, and the request amount;
 - d. a full description of the proposed initiative, including time frame, complete budget (expenses and revenues, including the amount requested from the City), site and venue information;
 - e. a detailed explanation of what the initiative is intended to accomplish, and how this relates to the Opportunity Initiatives guidelines and objectives;
 - f. an explanation of how the anticipated outcomes of the initiative will be measured;
 - g. audited financial statements of the society submitting the request; and
 - h. a cover letter signed by the society's senior staff person as well as the Board chair.
4. After an Assessment Committee (including community members and City staff) has reviewed the application, staff will forward the Assessment Committee's recommendations to City Council for consideration and approval.
5. The evaluation and approval process following receipt of the formal application is expected to take approximately eight weeks, depending on City Council's schedule.
6. All Opportunity Initiatives recipients will be expected to provide a final report back on their project. The final report will include: an evaluation of the event (summary of activities in the context of projected goals and targets), final revenues and expenditures against projected budget, a financial statement (if available), copies of media coverage or critical reviews, copies of published material (brochures, pamphlets, dvd's, cd's, etc.).
7. All Opportunity Initiatives recipients will be expected to acknowledge the City's contribution.

Grants are subject to availability of funds. Please note that a maximum total of \$150,000 is available to address all requests for Opportunity grants in 2006.

Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Evaluation Criteria

- How the proposed initiative addresses the Opportunity Initiatives guidelines and objectives.
- Overall quality of the proposed initiative and completeness of the delivery plan.
- Does the initiative provide unique opportunities for the public?
- Budget feasibility (revenue and expenses) including demonstrated need for civic assistance and potential for leveraging / securing matching funds.
- What is the quality of the programming / project? Does it demonstrate creativity?
- Organizational capacity of the applicant to execute the plan.
- Does the initiative involve a team of people with appropriate expertise?
- How complete are the marketing plans, resources and capabilities of the applicant for reaching a city-wide public, including diverse communities?
- Does the event have the capacity to attract and engage an audience and/or develop a new audience?
- Is there adequate administrative and financial accountability?
- Is there an active and functional Board of Directors?
- How does this event contribute to the development of Vancouver's arts and cultural community?
- How will funds support the growth and sustainability of the event? (for components A and C)
- What is the expected community impact?
- Have impacts on the surrounding neighbourhood been considered and addressed?
- What plans are in place to assess and address the need for City services?
- The extent of the plan for measuring outcomes.

Definitions

Festival: *An annual or biennial event lasting two or more days, actively programmed around a theme, and encompassing multiple performances, exhibitions and other cultural activities.*

Celebration: *An event which is held during a specific period of time, actively programmed around a theme, anniversary or other occasion, with a significant cultural component in the broadest sense.*

Cultural Tourism: *Initiatives directed towards attracting travellers motivated by an interest in arts, heritage and the special character of a place.*

Community Development: *Initiatives designed to build active and sustainable communities by involving people in the issues that affect their lives, using strategies to encourage participation, learning, co-operation, mutual respect and social justice.*

Significant Impact: *Being of visible and tangible value, artistically and economically, to the City of Vancouver.*

Contact Information

For more information about Opportunity Initiatives funding please contact:

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