CITY OF VANCOUVER

COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: October 8, 2024
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Meeting Date: October 22, 2024
Submit comments to Council

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Arts, Culture, and Community Services

SUBJECT: Municipal Grants Jurisdictional Review and Arts, Culture and Social Grant Program Refinements

Recommendations

A.   THAT Council receive this report for information, including Appendix A: Mutatio Report, Comparative Review of Municipal Granting Models ('The Municipal Grants Jurisdictional Review').

B.   THAT Council direct staff to engage Council in setting annual priorities for the Social and Cultural grant programs.

C.   THAT Council direct staff to establish a grant stream to respond to emerging Council priorities, beyond those addressed as part of ongoing granting programs, and to be managed within existing grant budgets.

D.   THAT Council direct staff to deliver an annual report back to Council to accompany the Arts, Culture and Community Services Annual Grant Impact Report.

Purpose and Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the consultant findings from the Municipal Grants Jurisdictional Review along with a summary of planned work and recommendations for Council direction to staff based on the review. The recommendations include directing staff to engage Council in setting annual priorities for the overall grant programs, increasing flexibility to respond to evolving grant program priorities, and improving grant impact reporting to Council.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

On July 25, 2023, Council directed staff to conduct a jurisdictional review of different municipal granting models for the delivery of the Arts and Cultural Grants Program (RTS 15658 Clause C)

and the Social Policy Grants Program (RTS 15718 Clauses C and D) in jurisdictions comparable in size to Vancouver, and report back with options to improve the City's granting programs. In addition, Council directed staff to report back on the potential for expanding delegated authorities within the context of granting. See Appendix B for a full list of previous Council decisions.

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

Background

The City of Vancouver has a long history of supporting the social, community, arts and culture sectors through operating and capital grants to local non-profit organizations (NPOs) with various grant streams. These grants are aligned with Council priorities and cover costs related to operations, projects, capacity-building, social and cultural infrastructure, and/or access to the civic theatres. The City's investment in social serving organizations is an opportunity to support the delivery of services that enhance community wellbeing and address inequities, and leverage community expertise and investment by other levels of government. It is also an opportunity to provide services without having to operate those services directly. The City's investment in arts and culture supports local production and the ability of Vancouver residents to experience and explore the arts through individual and shared experiences. These investments also provide a local government injection into the city's diverse and robust cultural and creative economy.

Social development granting programs are guided by the City's long-range social development plan, the *Healthy City Strategy*. Cultural granting programs are guided by the City's 10-year culture plan, *Culture|Shift: Blanketing the City in Arts and Cultur*e. Both social and cultural grants are also grounded by the City's other strategies and frameworks including *Vibrant Vancouver* - City Council's Strategic Priorities, *UNDRIP Action Plan*, *Reconciliation Framework*, *Equity Framework* and the *Accessibility Strategy*.

The goals and administration of the grant programs are routinely updated to further align with Council priorities, to reflect current needs and opportunities of Vancouver's social, arts and culture sectors, and to create efficiencies in the process.

In 2023, Council approved $27.1m in operating and $14.5m in capital grants to NPOs to drive impact in arts and culture, social, childcare and housing & homelessness. Of that, $13.9m was approved in arts and culture operating grants supporting 22,856 public activities, which over 3 million people attended, and $7.7m was approved in social operating grants, supporting 367,104 people to access a diverse range of social and community services.

Context

On July 25, 2023, Council directed staff to conduct a jurisdictional review of different municipal granting models related to the delivery of social and cultural services grants. Council defined the following areas to be considered in the jurisdictional review:

   a.   accelerating the inclusion of multi-year grants;

b. recognizing the diverse needs of neighbourhoods across the City regarding the distribution of grants;
c. consulting with the non-profit sector, arts and culture organizations on opportunities for improvement with grant processes and reducing administrative burdens;
d. providing outcomes-based metrics, appropriate to the size and scope of the organization and grant, to help demonstrate the reach and impacts of grant funding; and,
e. considering opportunities to support greater community services, arts and culture sector involvement in grant processes and allocation.

Through the City's procurement process, staff appointed consultant Mutatio to undertake the jurisdictional review. Based on a scan of six jurisdictions, Mutatio identified common practices for consideration by the City of Vancouver, with an indication of how ACCS compares to the other jurisdictions and opportunities for improvement. See Appendix A for the full report.

In the same July 2023 motion, Council also directed staff to report back on the potential for expanding delegated authorities within the context of granting. Legal Services submitted a Council Memo on September 24, 2024, outlining that delegated authorities for grants are not permissible under the Vancouver Charter.

Discussion

Jurisdictional Review

The jurisdictional review highlighted how ACCS social and culture grant programs compare to those in Seattle, Calgary, Edmonton, Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto in terms of governance, policy, structure, equity and reconciliation, programs, processes, data and reporting.

A summary of the consultant's findings, related work planned by staff and recommendations for Council direction are outlined below.

General findings

The consultant's review found that overall, administration of the ACCS grant programs is largely aligned to peers, with common challenges around data collection and outcome reporting, amidst a backdrop of grantees collectively reporting increased financial hardship.

The review found that ACCS's policy landscape aligns generally with the other major cities. Montreal prioritizes systemic change through its Strategic Plan 2030, as does Ottawa, with its equity-centred framework. Similarly, Vancouver's Vibrant Vancouver priorities, Culture|Shift and Healthy City Strategy collectively promote greater accessibility, equity, reconciliation, vibrancy and societal wellbeing. Cities like Montreal and Calgary have set clear strategic goals with measurable targets (including equity), which connect high-level city-wide strategies to more specific granting-focused plans linking actions to outcomes.

The review also found that several cities have pursued delegated authorities for grant allocation, but notes that the Vancouver Charter does not authorize Council to delegate authority for grant allocation to City staff. Some cities like Calgary and Montréal utilize arms-length cultural development authorities or municipal partner agencies, which can offer more autonomy and specialized arts and culture expertise, but which also complicate the ability to compare to ACCS's direct granting model.

ACCS's grant programs, particularly for social services, stand out for their expansive range compared to other cities, covering areas like childcare, Indigenous programs, and food security.

ACCS is noted for continuously refining grant processes to improve accessible and equitable access to City funding. The review further noted that organizations, ACCS included, are prioritizing community members for peer adjudication, drawn from representatives for the specific grant program being adjudicated (e.g. youth as peer assessors for youth-focused grant programs).

Findings and responses for the specific areas of focus requested by Council

   a. Accelerating the inclusion of multi-year grants

The jurisdictional review found that municipalities are increasingly adopting multi-year grants to enhance financial stability, support more effective long-term planning and strategic development for grantees as well as reduce administrative requirements. The City of Vancouver is ahead compared to those cities with no or only two-year multi-year funding (31% of those scanned). Some have plans to expand in 2024 and 2025. Other jurisdictions have open applications for multi-year funding and have a larger proportion of their grants dedicated for multi-year allocation.

City staff have made progress in expanding multi-year grants by inviting annual operating grant recipients that align with City priorities, and have a proven track record in delivering programming, into multi-year grant agreements. These efforts are anticipated to result in approximately 35% of all ACCS operating grants being multi-year in 2025. Aligned with the jurisdictional scan findings, this will also have the impact of reducing the administrative requirements for grantees and improving their ability to focus on long-term initiatives.

As observed in the other jurisdictions, ACCS's grant programming is structured so that not all funds are tied into multi-year agreements as that would reduce the ability to distribute funds according to evolving needs and priorities and changes in the NPO sector. Staff have assessed that this proportionate principle-based approach to phasing in expansion is the best way to reap the benefits of multi-year granting whilst retaining flexibility in the overall grant program.

The jurisdictional review highlighted the opportunity to consider annual inflationary increases for multi-year funding grants to address rising costs for grantees; it is anticipated that providing such increases would require cuts to other programs or grantees to operationalize within current budgets. Staff intend to explore the feasibility and trade-offs of providing annual inflationary increases on multi-year funding grant agreements, and the impact on budget and other grant priorities.

   b. Recognizing the diverse needs of neighbourhoods across the City regarding the distribution of grants

The jurisdictional review found that municipalities are increasingly customizing grant programs and processes to address the unique needs of diverse neighbourhoods, ensuring that funding reaches the communities most in need. A key method for measuring impact is analyzing demographic data within geographic areas, and incorporating equity commitments that extend beyond geographic boundaries as applicable.

In Vancouver, staff undertake outreach and respond to Council policies for directing grants to specific city neighbourhoods (e.g., South Vancouver). Community input is now incorporated into the planning and adjudication of grants, like the Cultural Indigenous Grant and the Indigenous Healing and Wellness Grant. In Arts and Culture, dedicated funding is provided to

equity-deserving groups with a relational approach, where staff take on aspects of the administrative process to reduce the burden for those communities.

Further, staff continue to expand reach to various neighbourhoods and ethno-cultural communities through ensuring appropriate language translations related to grants programming. This builds on the progress made in 2023 to translate grant Open/Close periods and key grant program information into five languages. Dedicated funds have also been introduced for specific non-geographically defined communities, such as the Cultural Indigenous Grants and Indigenous Healing and Wellness Grants.

Staff will further refine metrics to provide an improved sense of the impact to specific neighborhoods and community groups. This includes exploring developing an equity index akin to that used by Montreal that identifies areas of high urban vulnerability in order to prioritize municipal investment. To effectively assess neighborhood impact, there would likely need to be increased recipient reporting requirements; staff recognize this may require additional reporting from grantees and will seek to manage the potential impact and ensure it is proportional to the investment.

c.   Consulting with the non-profit sector, arts and culture organizations on opportunities for improvement with grant processes and reducing administrative burdens

The jurisdictional review found that municipalities are enhancing outreach, engagement efforts and reporting requirements to ensure that grant opportunities are accessible and manageable for diverse and underrepresented communities. For ACCS grants, formal assessment of grantee satisfaction has not been conducted but will be included in next year's ACCS Grant Impact Report. Recent informal feedback indicates grantee satisfaction with existing processes.

Staff will continue to consult with non-profit sector partners on program design and the development of applicant supports and resources. Staff will focus on lowering barriers and right-sizing the requirements for intake applications and reporting back, while also keeping in mind objectives of enhance outcome reporting.

d.   Providing outcomes-based metrics, appropriate to the size and scope of the organization and grant, to help demonstrate the reach and impacts of grant funding

The jurisdictional review found that measuring specific outcomes remains a challenge for all jurisdictions. Many are adopting broader societal metrics linked to their strategic goals and tracking them through their respective grant management systems. By offering grantees resources for outcome reporting, the City of Edmonton has successfully aggregated outcome focused metrics across various programs, such as 'increased awareness of social issues in the community' and 'increased positive involvement in the community.' ACCS is in the 46% of organizations scanned that publishes a public annual report collating all granting information, using quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate impact. Metrics reported by ACCS largely align to those reported by other peer municipalities who publish their granting data.

Staff will continue to improve the Annual Grant Impact Report, utilizing qualitative stories to demonstrate impact and increasing focus on tangible results of programs by theme and how programs deliver on policy and priorities. Staff will consider opportunities to use metrics identified through the jurisdictional review that may demonstrate societal impact, in addition to (or in replacement of) those already tracked.

It is challenging to isolate the impact that the ACCS grants have and establish clear outcome measures when grantees have multiple funding streams. Staff will focus on developing a pragmatic and proportionate way to measure outcomes against granting priorities, starting with a pilot of outcome metric collection with a sample of not for profits that receive significant grants from ACCS. Alongside this work, staff will continue to explore how outcome measures can be used to inform future granting priorities and processes.

e. Considering opportunities to support greater community services, arts and culture sector involvement in grant processes and allocation of grants

The jurisdictional review found that municipalities are involving sector experts and community members in the granting processes to ensure that funding decisions are equitable, representative, informed and aligned with community needs. ACCS utilizes peer assessment for many arts and culture grants, has specific targets for diversity in assessors and has additionally started community assessment in key social policy grant streams. There is the opportunity for the City to expand and standardize peer assessment across a broader portfolio of social grants and to standardize training across for all involved.

Recommendations for Council consideration

In addition to the grant program refinements outlined above, staff have identified three recommendations for Council consideration that would further align ACCS with the practices found through the jurisdictional review. Cities like Montreal and Calgary have high-level City-wide policies and strategies that form the basis for clear goals with targets for their granting programs. ACCS's granting is also guided by high-level City-wide policies; however there is opportunity to more formally connect these multi-year policies with near-term grant-focused priorities and enhance public reporting on grant impacts based on these priorities. Three recommendations address this opportunity. Following is a brief explanation for each:

- *Recommendation B: Staff to engage Council in setting annual priorities for the Social and Cultural grant programs.*

Akin to the strategic goals that Montreal and Calgary set, it is proposed that staff develop a mechanism to establish Council-approved annual grant priorities to guide grant adjudication and reporting. These annual priorities would aligned to existing multi-year strategies and enable Council to provide greater clarity on near-term priorities as well as increase the ability to track meaningful outcome metrics aligned to these areas. It will be important to ensure that a good balance of funding is available to address annual priorities which means maintaining a balance between the multi-year grants and annual priority granting.

- *Recommendation C: Staff to establish a grant stream to respond to emerging Council priorities, beyond annual grant priorities or those addressed as part of ongoing granting programs, and to be managed within existing grant budgets.*

Currently, Council considers grant allocation recommendations based on an established cycle of grant intakes over the course of the calendar year. In addition to setting annual grant program priorities, it is recommended that a mechanism is formalized to address evolving priorities that may emerge over the course of the year and that fall outside of the established grant cycle. This would enhance the ability to adapt and respond to changing community needs and support emerging Council priorities. Key considerations in developing this grant stream include determining the extent of funds available based on other grant program needs, as well as ensuring the approach enables ongoing strategic alignment, accountable granting, and

time-sensitive responses. Should Council direct staff to establish this grant stream, staff will report back on the proposed approach in Q1 2025.

- *Recommendation D: Staff to deliver an annual report back to Council to accompany the Arts, Culture and Community Services Annual Grant Impact Report.*

Staff anticipate reporting back to Council by April of each calendar year, on achievement of priorities through grant programs, including key metrics and granting trends captured in the Annual Grant Impact Report. An in-person report back to Council would provide an opportunity for greater transparency, accountability, oversight and Council questions.

Final Remarks

In conclusion, the Municipal Grants Jurisdictional Review affirmed that the City of Vancouver is following common practices to their peers for managing grant programs. That said, there is room for further and ongoing refinements as outlined in this report. Some refinements require balancing trade-offs: for example, an increase in the proportion of multi-year grant agreements may result in a reduction in flexibility to meet evolving priorities.

For additional reference see Appendix A for the full consultant report, Appendix C for a summary profile of key data points from the jurisdictional scan, and Appendix D for a summary of funding distribution.

Financial Implications

All recommendations contemplated in this report are expected to be managed by reallocation within the Council approved grant operating budget. Any future items that require additional funding would need to be considered as part of the annual budget process.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report's recommendations.

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APPENDIX A
MUTATIO REPORT

Note: The authors of this report acknowledge that significant differences in municipal characteristics, such as population, density, and income inequality, make direct comparisons across jurisdictions challenging. Additionally, variations in organizational models, the scope of responsibilities assigned to granting teams, and the size of budgets they manage further complicate such comparisons.

Comparative Review of Municipal Granting Models
Final Report

September 2024
Prepared for the City of Vancouver by Mutatio

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the City of Vancouver is situated on the unceded, traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

Unceded means that these territories were never surrendered or relinquished to the Crown, highlighting the historical and ongoing dispossession and displacement of Indigenous peoples from their traditional lands by governments. This legacy of colonization continues to contribute to the disparities faced by Indigenous peoples today, including inequitable access to social services, healthcare, and education, as well as cultural and economic opportunities – many areas of which the City of Vancouver's granting programs seek to address.

We equally acknowledge the rich cultural identities, traditions, and practices that are connected to these lands and are committed to supporting the ongoing resilience, autonomy, and cultural continuity of Indigenous communities through our work. This commitment involves actively listening to and collaborating with Indigenous communities and, in the context of this project, ensuring that funding strategies continue to advance towards more inclusive and equitable practices to uphold Indigenous wellbeing, self-determination and cultural preservation.

Appreciation

Investing in comparative reviews allows municipalities to refine their granting practices by learning from diverse approaches and identifying areas for improvement. We are grateful that the City of Vancouver and the City Council are committed to continually enhancing their practices, demonstrating a dedication to fostering a more equitable and impactful social and cultural landscape.

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Executive Summary

This report offers a comprehensive jurisdictional scan comparing the City of Vancouver's social and cultural granting practices with those of seven major municipalities. The analysis identifies key trends, challenges, and opportunities across five critical areas: Model, Policy, Granting Programs, Granting Processes, and Reporting.

Each section leverages data from the jurisdictional review to highlight emerging practices and benchmarks from other cities, followed by an in-depth comparison with Vancouver. This approach reveals that the City of Vancouver is largely on par with other municipalities. Gaps and areas of strength were identified, showing areas where Vancouver is leading while also uncovering opportunities for Vancouver could consider enhancing its granting.

Key Findings from Jurisdictions

- **Economic Strain on Organizations:** All municipalities report that those they fund are struggling with the financial strain due to wider economic trends, ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, increased demand for services, and reduced funding and rising costs.

- **Challenges in Direct Comparisons:** Significant differences in municipal characteristics, such as population, density, and income inequality, make direct comparisons across jurisdictions challenging. Additionally, variations in organizational models, the scope of responsibilities assigned to granting teams, and the size of budgets they manage further complicate such comparisons.

- **Organizational Structure and Flexibility:** Organizational structure significantly influences the way each granting team operates, from strategic direction, to grant portfolio scope and processes, with arms-length arts councils and development authorities having more flexibility to set specific strategic directions, whereas municipal departments benefit from interconnected teams across the organization and in-depth knowledge of wider municipal priorities.

- **Delegated Authority Trends:** There is an increasing trend towards delegated authority across municipal departments, with only Vancouver Arts Culture and Community Services Department alongside Ville de Montréal Division Réduction des inégalités et milieux de vie inclusifs requiring Council approval for full granting portfolios. The Vancouver Charter does not authorize the Council to delegate authority to City staff. An amendment to the Charter by the Provincial Government would be required to expand delegated authorities in this area.

- **Funding Sources and Budgets:** Budget sources and totals differ across jurisdictions, with most funds coming from municipal operating budgets. Supplementary funding sources included provincial and federal collaborations for specific programs; for arts councils, philanthropic funds supplemented budgets. The City of Vancouver has capital funding, small grants in other departments, and several external responsibility funds and funding programs from other levels of government (e.g., the Building Safer Communities Project).

- **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Reconciliation Commitments:** Most organizations have or are in the process of integrating deeper commitments to addressing equity, diversity and inclusion, and reconciliation with Indigenous communities. This is in the form of dedicated financial funds and grant programs, community-developed programming that is more inclusive of diverse communities, and processes to improve accessibility for those who may not have had access to funds. Open applications are seen as an essential part of this process. Organizations vary in terms of progress toward deeper equity, diversity and inclusion, but few have set public targets related to their granting programs.

- **Streamlining Grant Processes:** Several organizations are moving towards streamlining multiple grant streams into various single programs to reduce the complexity of grant applications and simplify processes for non-profits. In most cases, these grants are streamlined into their multi-year operating grants.

- **Adoption of Multi-Year Grants:** Municipalities are increasingly adopting multi-year grants to enhance financial stability, reduce administrative burdens for grantees, and support more effective long-term planning and strategic development for funded organizations.

- **Outreach and Engagement**: Municipalities are enhancing outreach and engagement efforts to ensure grant opportunities are accessible to diverse and underrepresented communities. There are also efforts to reduce the administrative burdens of applications and reporting requirements, which impact established and emerging non-profits.

- **Geographic and Eligibility Variations:** Eligibility and assessment criteria, particularly concerning geography and funding individuals, vary significantly across municipalities. As seen in Calgary and Ottawa, many cities are expanding geographic eligibility to include Indigenous nations and broader regions beyond municipal boundaries.

- **Community Involvement in Grant Processes:** Municipalities are involving sector experts and community members in the granting processes to ensure that funding decisions are equitable, representative, and aligned with community needs. This is done through community engagement for strategic planning, outreach, peer review processes, and outcome reporting.

- **Outcome Measurement Challenges:** Measuring specific outcomes remains a challenge for all jurisdictions. Many are adopting broader societal metrics linked to their strategic goals and tracking them through Grant Management Systems (GMS). Some have taken this further by publishing annual impact reports to promote transparency and accountability as part of public reporting on outcomes. More advanced reporting is by arts councils, who link back reporting to strategic objectives using both quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate organizational impacts. Still, these are commonly limited to the funding and award distribution rather than the quantitative effect of grants themselves. For municipal departments, high-level metrics across portfolios help to demonstrate impact.

- **Support for Outcome Reporting:** Some organizations support their community by creating outcome-reporting resources that contain a range of instructions and examples of tools that non-profits can use to collect data from participants to fulfill reporting requirements. These help grantees with reporting needs whilst also supporting municipalities in consistent reporting methodologies and impact measurement. For example, the City of Edmonton provides outcome-reporting support and aggregates this reporting to demonstrate impact.

Summary Tables of Jurisdictional Review

This summary chart summarizes some of the quantitative comparison data presented throughout the report. For details on data sources and additional information necessary for comparison, please see the tables within the full report. As this scan was initiated before the 2023 reporting had been published for all organizations, data is based on 2022 figures throughout.

ARTS AND CULTURE GRANTING	City of Vancouver Cultural Services Grants	Calgary Arts Development Authority	Toronto Arts Council	City of Ottawa Culture Funding	Conseil des arts Montréal	Ville de Montréal Cultural Services	Seattle Office of Arts & Culture
Population	662,248	1,306,784	2,794,356	1,017,449	1,762,949	1,762,949	737,015
Structure	Municipal department	Development Authority	Municipal partner agency	Municipal department	Municipal partner agency	Municipal department	Municipal department
Team size	9	8	16	6	14	Not available	8
Delegated authority (municipal departments only)	No	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes
Total grants and awards distributed (operating and capital)	$16,177,401	$13,627,378	$23,586,808	$11,763,375	$18,718,995	Not available	~$20,000,000
Number of grantees	495	676	883	368	1,103	Not available	Not available
Number of programs	13	11	32	17	66	12	12
Multi-year operating grant duration	3-years	2-year	3-year	3-year	4-year	No	3-year
Discretionary funding	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Funding for Individuals	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Annual impact report	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY GRANTING	City of Vancouver Social Services Grants	City of Calgary Community Funding	City of Edmonton Community Funding	City of Toronto Community Funding	City of Ottawa Community Funding	Montréal – Division for the reduction of inequalities and inclusive living environments
Population	662,248	1,306,784	1,010,899	2,794,356	1,017,449	1,762,949
Structure	Municipal department	Municipal department	Municipal department	Municipal department	Municipal department	Municipal department
Team size	7	8	7	Not available	8	15
Delegated authority (municipal departments only)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Total grants and awards distributed (operating and capital)	$10,718,269	Not available	Not available	$ 25,742,700	~$27,009,000	$26 million
Number of grantees	341	260	Not available	285	Not available	Not available
Number of programs	23	16	8-10	7	6	13
Multi-year operating grant duration	3-year	No	2-year	3-year	5-year	2-3 year
Discretionary funding	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not available
Annual impact report (across all programs)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

Considerations for the Future

Twelve considerations, presented as potential recommendations, have been developed to align with the directives outlined in the Council Motion. Each is explored in detail within the relevant sections, evaluating both the advantages and possible trade-offs for Council's consideration.

1	Expand the Proportion of Multi-Year Grants across the ACCS Portfolio
2	Explore Open Application Processes for all Multi-Year Grants
3	Include Cost-of-Living Adjustments in Multi-Year Grants
4	Identify Community Liaisons to Increase Understanding and Community Engagement
5	Develop a Neighbourhood Equity Index
6	Continue to Leverage City Networks for Enhanced Outreach and Engagement
7	Use Open Data Dashboard Metrics to Report Societal Changes Linked to ACCS
8	Development of a Strategic Framework with Targets and Intermediate Outcomes
9	Community-Led Guide to Support Outcome Reporting
10	Dedicated Expertise in Data Collection and Reporting
11	Expand Peer Assessment and Unconscious Bias Training for Social Granting
12	Standardize and Track Peer Assessor Feedback for Continuous Improvement

1. Introduction

Municipal funding plays a crucial role in supporting cultural and social services, enabling cities to address diverse community needs while advancing civic priorities. Driven by a set of Council Motions in July of 2023, this report provides a comparative analysis of the City of Vancouver's social and cultural granting practices, set against six other major municipalities. The study examines how Vancouver's grant-making framework aligns with or diverges from practices in different cities, offering insights into areas for potential enhancement.

1.1 Methodology

The methodology for this research study involved multiple stages, aiming to thoroughly understand municipal granting programs across Canada. The research focused on six key cities: Vancouver, Seattle, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa and Montréal. Edmonton was also included to supplement the data, as the Community Services team in Seattle was unavailable to support the research. The following steps summarize the methodology outlined in detail in Appendix 1:

1. Comprehensive literature review of relevant studies, grant reports, and policies for each municipality and similar municipalities or broader trends across Canada.
2. Developing a research framework was to inform interviews with representatives for each jurisdiction.
3. Obtaining contacts and connections across the municipalities and partner organizations for interviews.
4. Analysis of interview data and literature.
5. Regular guidance and updates from senior-level City of Vancouver staff.

As this jurisdictional scan was initiated before the 2023 reporting had been published across jurisdictions, data is based on 2022 figures throughout or indicated otherwise.

1.2 Municipal Overview

An overview of the geographic, economic and social characteristics of the municipalities selected by the ACCS Team—Vancouver, Seattle, Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, Ottawa and Montréal—serve as the foundation for a comparative analysis before delving into the importance of arts and culture and social granting in cities and by municipalities. The table highlights the challenges in directly comparing the grant strategies, programs and processes between municipalities due to the distinct variation in population size, density and distribution as well as income levels and income inequality. More details on the potential influence of municipal characteristics on granting portfolios is explored in Appendix 2.

Table 1 Municipal population and income characteristics

		City of Vancouver	City of Calgary	City of Edmonton	City of Toronto	City of Ottawa	Ville de Montréal	City of Seattle
Population Characteristics	City Population (2021 census)	662,248	1,306,784	1,010,899	2,794,356	1,017,449	1,762,949	737,015[1]
	City Population density (/km2)	5,749.90	1,592.40	1,320.40	4,427.80	364.9	4,833.50	3,429.6
	Average age of population	42.2	38.8	38.4	41.5	40.7	40.6	35.9[2]
Income Characteristics	Median total income of household in 2020 ($CAD)[3]	82,000	98,000	90,000	84,000	102,000	63,600	150,031[4]
	Gini index[5] on adjusted household pre-tax income	0.413	0.376	0.334	0.437	0.345	0.374	0.4549*
	Prevalence of low income based on the Low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT) (%) in City	13.2	9	10	13.2	8.9	17.4	Not available.
	Average Rents for a 1-bedroom apartment[6]	$2,761	$1,751	$1,389	$2,443	$2,015	$1,756	$2,509

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[1] Data is based on 2020 Decennial Census data for Seattle.
[2] This is the median age for Seattle based on table S0101 Age and Sex Summary for the City of Washington.
[3] Data for Canadian provinces is from Statistics Canada - Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population table of City Subdivisions, available here.
[4] Data is from United States Census Bureau Table S1901 – Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2022 Inflation-Adjusted USD) available here – US.$ $115,409. It is converted to CAD using the Bank of Canada average annual currency conversion of 1.3 for 2022.
[5] The Gini coefficient is another indicator of income inequality. Values of the Gini coefficient can range from 0 to 1. Smaller numbers indicate lower inequality, while higher numbers represent greater inequality. Adjusted income refers to pre-tax income of the household that is adjusted for economies of scale. This is not the case for the US Census Bureau which is not adjusted but these were the only figures available for calculation. As the US Bureau calculates pre-tax, pre-tax numbers were also used for Canadian subdivisions.
[6] Rental Prices for Canada are from Rentals.ca National Rent Report – 2024 data for one-bedroom apartments. Data for Seattle is from Statistica Median Monthly Rent table (2023) – US$1,930 for a one-bedroom apartment. It is converted to CAD using the Bank of Canada average annual currency conversion of 1.3 for 2022.

1.3 Societal Context: Key Environmental Influences

Municipal grant-making is deeply influenced by external societal factors, with both the arts and social sectors facing significant challenges. Economic downturns, ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and rising operational costs create financial instability and increasing demand for services, all while resources remain constrained. These environmental shifts underscore the importance of adaptable and resilient grant-making frameworks that can respond to evolving community needs.

Arts and Culture Sector	Social Sector
Financial Strain Due to Economic Downturn The economic downturn has led to a loss of private investment (e.g., festival sponsorships), and increasing competition for grants. Inflation and rising operating costs have further strained arts organizations, while individual artists face financial instability due to high living and housing costs. **Ongoing COVID-19 Impacts** The pandemic significantly accelerated the shift to digital engagement, altering audience behaviours and creating challenges in monetizing content and sustaining revenues. These difficulties are further compounded by the economic downturn, which intensifies financial strain and necessitates additional resources and innovative strategies to maintain stability.	**Increase Demand for Services** Social non-profits are struggling to keep up with the escalating need for support in areas such as homelessness, mental health, and poverty alleviation. **Reduced Funding and Rising Costs** Social non-profits are grappling with reduced funding availability amidst rising operational costs, further straining their ability to meet the growing demand for essential services. **Ongoing COVID-19 Impacts** Social non-profits faced an unprecedented surge in service demand during the pandemic, requiring rapid adaptation to virtual programming and remote work, which was especially challenging for those with limited resources.

2. Model

This section focuses on the mandates of the municipal cultural and social services granting streams, their organizational structure, governance model, guiding policies and strategies, decision-making authority, level of influence of the City and Council, accountability measures and team structure.

2.1 Structure

The following outlines the Municipal Departments, Partner Agencies/Arts Councils and Cultural Development Authorities included in this jurisdictional review.

Table 2 Municipal Departments

Social Services	Cultural Services
City of Vancouver Social Policy Department	City of Vancouver Arts, Culture & Tourism Department
City of Calgary Community Funding Team	City of Ottawa Cultural Funding Department
City of Edmonton Community Services Team	Seattle Office of Arts & Culture
City of Toronto Community Funding Team	
City of Ottawa Community and Social Services Team	
City of Montréal Division Réduction des Inégalités et Milieux de Vie Inclusifs	

Table 3 Municipal Partner Agencies/Arts Councils & Cultural Development Authorities

Municipal Partner Agencies/Arts Councils	**Cultural Development Authorities**

Cultural Services	Cultural Services
Toronto Arts Council	Calgary Arts Development Authority (CADA)
Conseil des arts de Montréal	

Jurisdictional Trends and Examples	How Vancouver Compares
Municipal Departments: Cities like Vancouver, Ottawa, and Toronto primarily manage cultural and social services through dedicated municipal departments. This structure ensures direct municipal control over grant programs. A number of cities have social services spread across multiple departments. For example, the City of Calgary has a Community Funding department that manages community social grant funding for community organizations, including prevention and crisis response programs, and a separate Partnerships Department that manages civic partnerships of over $500,000/year. **Cultural Development Authorities:** Calgary's Arts Development Authority (CADA) operates as an independent nonprofit with a mandate to manage all cultural activities, reporting directly to the City Council but with operational independence. **Municipal Partner Agencies:** Toronto and Montréal operate a hybrid model for arts and culture with a municipal department responsible for some cultural services (e.g. public art, festivals for Montréal) and the Toronto Arts Council and Conseil des Arts de Montréal functioning as an arms-length agency responsible for arts grants and production funding. Organizations reflected the benefit of autonomy, innovation, specialized expertise, and flexibility provided by arms-length organizations.	Vancouver's Arts, Culture, and Tourism and Social Policy teams both fall under the Arts, Culture & Community Services (ACCS) department, a direct municipal department structure. Vancouver does not use a cultural authority or an arts council model like Calgary or Montréal. The management of grants and services for both social and cultural services, in addition to broader supports such as non-market leases, remain within the City's internal teams, directly reporting to the City Council. While it can limit flexibility and autonomy compared to arms-length models used in other cities, this municipal structure allows for cohesive policy alignment with other municipal strategies, facilitates integrated service delivery and enables a cohesive approach to community development.

2.2 Governance
In municipal departments, the level of authority that makes decisions on policy, strategy, budget, departmental plans, and funding allocations varies by municipality, as does the level of involvement by the City Council in departmental activities.

Jurisdictional Trends and Examples	How Vancouver Compares
In most jurisdictions, delegated authority is critical in streamlining grant-making, with senior staff or department heads empowered to approve grants without requiring City Council involvement. This can allow for quicker decision-making[7] and	In Vancouver, all grant decisions require the Council's approval through a report and adoption of staff recommendations at a public meeting. Due to

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[7] Noted anecdotally by interviewees that had experienced both Council approval and delegated authority in their municipality.

responsive distribution of funds. For example, in Ottawa, the Community and Social Services department operates under delegated authority, where the Manager of Partner and Stakeholder Initiatives can approve funding allocations within the framework established by the Council. This allows for flexible responses to emerging community needs without further Council involvement. Similarly, in Edmonton, the Community Funding team can approve most social services grants independently. In Toronto, the Community Funding Unit has delegated authority for grants up to $500,000, which allows the Executive Director to make timely funding decisions. In Calgary, smaller grants are approved by the department's Director. In contrast, grants over $500,000 or those tied to provincial partnerships, such as the Family & Community Support Services (FCSS) program, still require additional approval.	the restrictions under the Vancouver Charter, no practice of delegated authority is currently possible.

2.3 Staff Structure

Due to the significant differences in the organizational structure and the portfolios managed by each granting team, it is difficult to compare teams. For example, the City of Vancouver Social Services team also manages social responsibility funds and funding programs from other levels of government. Other similar municipal departments, like Calgary, do not. While in the same overarching social and programs services local department, Calgary Social programs funding is separate to services for youth (including childcare) and seniors services. Additionally, the City of Calgary has a partnerships department that funds and manages contracts. Tables 4 and 5 consider a more holistic comparison of teams, budgets and overheads.

Jurisdictional Trends and Examples	How Vancouver Compares
Cities typically staff grant-making teams with grant managers, planners, and administrative staff. The team size often correlates with the scope of the grant portfolios they manage. Examples include: Small, Specialized Teams: In cities like Edmonton, the Community Services team manages over $70 million in grant funding annually with just four grant coordinators. This results in significant workload challenges, particularly around monitoring and evaluation. Larger, Multi-Faceted Teams: In Toronto and Ottawa, the size of grant teams is	Vancouver's Arts, Culture & Community Services (ACCS) department operates with a mid-sized, specialized team compared to other cities. Based on 2023 data, the Arts & Culture staff supporting grant delivery includes nine staff members: one manager, six planners, a planning assistant, and one administrative support staff. The Social Services Grants team is slightly smaller, with around eight staff members, some of these part-time: one manager, four additional planners, one

larger, with specialized roles across departments. Ottawa's community funding team consists of 8 staff members with specific portfolios, allowing more targeted support for different grant streams.

Arm's length organizations: In cultural development authorities, like Calgary Arts Development, staffing tends to focus on strategic leadership, with a 14-member Board of Directors and a clear division between board oversight and the day-to-day operations led by an Executive Director.

planning analyst, and one administrative support.

Certain members are assigned to specific grant programs like the federal Building Safer Communities initiative. While Vancouver's staff size is larger than cities like Edmonton, it falls below cities like Ottawa and Toronto, which have more specialized and segmented teams.

Vancouver's structure provides moderate capacity, but could face challenges managing further expanded grant portfolios, particularly when addressing equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives that require additional staff resources and community engagement.

Table 4 Funding, overhead and teams for cultural granting in municipalities and partner agencies

	City of Vancouver Cultural Services Grants	Calgary Arts Development Authority	Toronto Arts Council	City of Ottawa Culture Funding	Conseil des arts Montréal	Seattle Office of Arts & Culture
Total budget	$17,309,917[8]	$18,082,417[9] (2022)	$25,855,758 (2022)	$12,563,375 (2022)	$22,183,612 (2022)	Not available
Budget change from previous Fiscal	0.6% increase in 2022 and 0% in 2023	16% increase	0.4%	~2%	2%	Not available
Total grants and awards distributed	$16,177,401 (2022)[10]	$13,627,378 (2022)	$23,586,808 (2022)	$11,763,375 (2022)	$18,718,995 (2022)	~$20,000,000[11]
Overhead	7%[12]	10% overhead cap and 15% towards events and engagement	9%[13]	6-7%	14%	Not available
Team size[14]	9[15] 1 Manager 6 Planners 1 Planning assistant 1 Administrative Staff	8 1 Manager 5 Grant Program, Specialists 2 Grants Coordinator	16[16] 1 Directors 2 Senior Managers 3 Grants Administrators 6 x Program Managers 1 Director 3 Program Manager 1 Grant system specialist	6 1 Cultural Funding Portfolio Manager (lead), 4 Cultural Funding Officers, 1 Cultural Funding Program Coordinator	14 1 Director, 7 Cultural Advisors (including Touring), 1 Project Manager, Program Assistants/ Coordinators and Philanthropic Development	8[17] 1 Manager, 5 Grant program managers and educational initiative staff

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[8] This figure was provided directly from the City of Vancouver ACCS team for the purpose of this report. This is calculated as grants distributed in addition to annual staff costs of $1,132,516.

[9] This includes public art which has a budget of $1,136,941 in 2022

[10] Includes approved operating and capital grants for 2022 from the ACCS Annual Grant Report 2022. The 2023 budget was $16,247,551, which includes $2,024,900 from the City of Vancouver's Capital Grant budget.

[11] Seattle Office of Arts & Culture has had no budget reports online since 2017 and did not share any documents. Through conversation the budget for 2023-2024 is $20 million.

[12] This is based on 2022 overhead of $1,132,516. For these purposes, overhead includes FTE budget only, calculated based on positions.Overhead presented as a % of total grants paid (i.e., Operating and Capital).

[13] Administration includes adjudication costs of $164,605.

[14] Team size is full time equivalents (FTEs)..

[15] Not all positions are currently filled. This does not include the Assistant Director or Managing Director but is specifically the grants team.

[16] Estimated based on personnel page.

[17] This does not include Public Art.

Table 5 Funding, overhead and teams for social granting in municipalities

	City of Vancouver Social Services Grants	City of Calgary Community Funding	City of Edmonton Community Funding	City of Toronto Community Funding	City of Ottawa Community Funding	Montréal – Division for the reduction of inequalities and inclusive living environments
Total budget	$11,439,310[18]	Not available	Not available	$30,000,000[19] (2024)	$28,623,000[20] (2022)	Not available
Budget change from previous fiscal	0.6% increase in 2022 and 0% in 2023	Not available	Not available	8%[21]	6%	Not available.
Total grants and awards distributed	$10,718,269[22] (2022)	Not available[23]	Not available	$ 25,742,700 (2023)	~$27,009,000 (2022)[24]	$26 million[25] (2023)
Overhead	7%[26]	Not available	0.9%[27]	Not available	Not available	5-6%[28]
Team size (with full time - FT, and part time - PT as notes)	7[29] Planner Manager (FT) 2 FT Planners 2 PT Planners 1 Planning Analyst 1 Admin Assistant	8[30]	7	Not available	8	15

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[18] This figure was provided directly from the team for the purpose of this report and includes Operating, Capital, Childcare and External Funding in addition to the $721,041 annual staff salaries. Additional grants and associated budget reported under the ACCS portfolio in the ACCS Annual Grant Report 2022 including federal funding and Housing and Homelessness services are not included in this number.

[19] The City of Toronto's Community Funding team's core budget is around $30 million per year (from informational interview), which is the main source of funding for the granting programs. Additional funding that the department receives through the city's budget process, such as for new grant programs or enhancements. This additional funding is sometimes earmarked by the City Council. Funds from other city departments that the department administers on their behalf, expanding the total granting budget to around $43 million. However, as the numbers do not correspond for the same year, overhead calculations could not be made.

[20] This is the 2022 adopted budget for Community Funding Team (page 55 of the 2022 Budget), and outlined in page 53.

[21] This is estimated based on the actual 2022 numbers and 2023 budget for Community Partnerships Investment Program in the 2024 Operating Budget Overview – Table 1 - Expenditures. This number is meant to serve as an estimation only.

[22] This figure was provided directly from the team for the purpose of this report and includes Operating, Capital, Childcare and External Funding. Additional grants are reported under the ACCS portfolio in the ACCS Annual Grant Report 2022 including federal funding and Housing and Homelessness services that have been included in other budgets from other jurisdictions. If all grants were to be included this total would be $13,445,269 for 2022.

[23] Budgets only have figures for available social programs as a whole, which includes program delivery. Figures are not broken down into the granting team portfolio. Community Funding Strategy portfolio documents shared have figures across multiple years and thus any kind of accurate estimation is not possible.

[24] This is the Transfers/Grants/Financial Charges for the Community Services team in the 2022 adopted budget for Community Funding Team (page 55 of the 2022 Budget), and outlined in page 53. This is an estimate for comparison purposes as it may contain other financial charges that are not distributed to non-profit organizations and other eligible grant recipients of their community funding program.

[25] Based on documentation sent by interviewee.

[26] Based on 2022 figures of $721,041 costs for staff budget only based on positions. Overhead is presented as a % of total grants paid (i.e. Operating and Capital).

[27] The City of Edmonton team did an exercise to estimate their overhead. This was their finding but the calculation method was not defined.

[28] This is estimated at approximately $1.5 million as data was only available for one of the three teams under this division ($500k for urban security team).

[29] Based on 2022 figures. 2023 figures include one additional FTE.

[30] This does not include large funders $500k+ that are organized through the partnerships department.

2.4 Funding Sources and Budgets

Jurisdictional Trends and Examples	How Vancouver Compares
Across jurisdictions, funding for social and cultural services is primarily derived from municipal operating budgets, supplemented by capital budgets where available. In some cases, additional support is provided through provincial or federal contributions, such as funding for social programs or cultural initiatives. Calgary's Family and Community Support Services (FCSS), for example, operates as a joint provincial-municipal program, where 80% of the funding comes from the province and 20% from the city. This blend of funding sources allows for a broader reach in community services and enables cities to leverage outside contributions to meet local needs. This is similar for other provincial FCSS initiatives. In Montréal, cultural services receive significant provincial support through a 2021-2024 agreement with the Government of Québec, which dedicates $158 million to support cultural development in the city. A portion of this is distributed to the Conseil des Arts Montréal, which oversees arts and culture grants. This structure allows Montréal to benefit from both municipal and provincial funding, ensuring sustainable cultural programs. In Toronto, the arts and culture sector benefits from a partnership between the Toronto Arts Council and the Toronto Arts Foundation, which offers in-kind operational support for programs such as the Animating Toronto Parks initiative. These complementary services enhance the city's ability to execute large-scale cultural projects without drawing heavily on the municipal budget. The Toronto Arts Council also receives funding from the city's operating budget. Cities like Seattle utilize dedicated revenue sources to support their cultural programs. The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture is primarily funded through an admissions tax on movie tickets, concerts, and other commercial arts activities, alongside 1% for public art contributions from city construction projects. While this revenue model allows for a reliable funding stream, it can be subject to economic fluctuations, making it a challenge to maintain consistent funding levels during downturns.	Vancouver's grant programs rely heavily on municipal operating budgets. Limited budget increases over recent years, combined with rising demand, challenge the ability of its granting programs to meet the needs it is meant to serve. Vancouver also manages two responsibility funds amounting to approximately $440,000 annually, sourced from gambling revenues. These funds are reinvested into the community through grants. Furthermore, Vancouver has secured a $4.2 million federal grant for the Building Safer Communities program, with $3.2 million distributed as grants directly to the community. Vancouver faces challenges similar to other cities, where the reliance on municipal budgets places limitations on expanding grant programs, particularly in light of rising inflation and the need for more community engagement initiatives.

A number of departments reported notable increases in budgets in recent years, specifically toward equity-focused initiatives. For example, the Toronto Community Services department received an additional $500,000 each to develop and implement new Indigenous and Black-mandated funding frameworks. This supplementary funding enables community engagement in planning and implementation and that these programs are well-resourced and sustainable. Beyond that, the department budget boost of 6.9% two years ago and 3.4% this year was aimed at providing cost-of-living increases to its grantees helping them maintain programs amid rising costs.

3. Policy

3.1 Guiding Policy and Alignment with Other Civic Strategies and Policies
Strategies and policies play a crucial role in shaping the landscape of arts, culture, and social granting in municipalities. They guide the priorities of granting teams and directly contribute to new granting streams. New strategies developed by cities can also come with specified funding. A list of strategies and policies that were articulated as influencing the grant programs and processes of the municipalities and partner agencies interviewed is shown in Appendix 4.

Jurisdictional Trends and Examples	How Vancouver Compares
Across municipalities, policies that guide social and cultural grants are closely aligned with broader civic strategies. In many cases, these strategies include overarching goals like equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), reconciliation, and sustainability. For example, Montréal's 2030 Strategic Plan emphasizes systemic racism, social inclusion, and community engagement, influencing how grants are distributed. The city's focus on vulnerable populations, social resilience, and environmental sustainability is embedded in its cultural grant frameworks. Ottawa similarly aligns its granting programs with the city's Public Health Strategy, which integrates health, equity, and community well-being into its policies. In Toronto, social grant programs are aligned with the city's priorities on anti-racism, youth development, and community safety. Programs like the Indigenous Healing and Wellness Grants are designed in response to these overarching civic policies, reflecting a shift toward equity-focused funding and community-driven priorities.	Vancouver's grant-making is deeply connected to its own Healthy City Strategy and Culture|Shift. The Culture|Shift plan is a key guiding document for Vancouver's cultural grants, with objectives around equity, accessibility, and ensuring that underrepresented communities have a voice in the city's cultural landscape. The City's social grant programs are similarly tied to Healthy City Strategy, its Equity Framework, Reconciliation Strategy, UNDRIP, and the accessibility Strategy which shape funding decisions. New initiatives, such as the Equity and Anti-Black Racism Response, have shifted grant priorities to ensure that marginalized communities receive a greater share of funding.

3.2 Approaches to Equity and Reconciliation

Jurisdictional Trends and Examples	How Vancouver Compares
Incorporating equity, diversity, and reconciliation into grant-making has been a priority across Canadian cities. Toronto, for example, has created dedicated teams for Indigenous, Black, and equity-seeking groups, emphasizing grants for under-resourced neighbourhoods. The Conseil des Arts Montréal aims to direct 25% of its funding to equity-seeking groups by 2025. Similarly, Calgary Arts Development Authority has published an internal EDI audit, committing to transparency and outlining challenges to better serve underrepresented communities. These initiatives are designed to address historical inequities in funding distribution and to provide opportunities for marginalized communities that have traditionally been excluded from funding processes. Montréal's Indice d'équité des milieux de vie is another innovative tool that helps prioritize grant distribution based on social, economic, environmental, local resource access, culture resources access, sports and leisure and urban safety vulnerabilities. This data-driven approach ensures that funding is directed to the most underserved areas, enhancing social equity across the city. Indice d'équité des milieux de vie (or The Living Environment Equity Index) is not intended to be used alone. It must be supplemented with additional data and information necessary for decision-making. More details are found in Appendix 4.	Vancouver has also made significant strides in advancing equity and reconciliation within its grant programs. The City of Reconciliation framework guides many of the social grant decisions, and the city has taken steps to redistribute funding to support equity-deserving groups. However, Vancouver's challenge lies in its relatively fixed budget, which has remained steady with nominal increases since 2018 (with the exception of Culture|Shift), limiting the city's ability to fully address increasing community demand. Within these constraints, refinement and integration of data-driven tools, similar to Montréal's Indice d'équité, could help Vancouver better track and measure its progress in serving underserved communities and ensure that its policies continue to evolve in response to growing social needs.

3.3 Intersection with other Government Jurisdictions

Jurisdictional Trends and Examples	How Vancouver Compares
Collaboration between municipal, provincial, and federal governments is essential for optimizing grant programs. The Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) is an example of a joint provincial-municipal program. In Calgary 80% of FFCS funding comes from the province. Montréal benefits from the 2021-2024 provincial agreement, where $158 million is shared between the city and the Government of Québec to support cultural development. Similarly, federal programs like the Canada Council for the Arts provide supplementary funding across multiple cities, ensuring alignment with national cultural policies. In Toronto, the city's arts grants align with provincial and federal funding bodies, enabling smoother implementation of cultural strategies across multiple levels of government. For example, the Toronto Arts Council regularly collaborates with provincial partners to administer arts programs that span beyond the municipal level, while the Greater Toronto Funders Network enables cross-municipal collaboration. The City of Toronto Community Services department collaborates extensively with other municipal funders in the Greater Toronto Area through the Greater Toronto Funders Network, helping them to understand the work and approaches of other municipalities despite differences in scale and resources. Toronto Arts Council, Conseil des Arts Montréal, Calgary Arts Development Authority and Winnipeg Arts Council have created an unofficial Municipal Art Funders working group that represents a collaborative effort among major Canadian cities to enhance and support the arts sector through shared knowledge, strategies, and resources. The working group aims to facilitate the exchange of ideas, practices, and experiences among the participating cities.	The City of Vancouver's grant program interaction with other government jurisdictions primarily occurs through its federal and provincial grants for social services and cultural projects. For example, Vancouver administers the Building Safer Communities program with federal support, distributing $3.2 million of the $4.2 million grant directly to community groups. New connections across municipalities established as part of this work could open up opportunities to exchange ideas, practices, and experiences among other jurisdictions.

3.4 Other Pertinent Guiding Policies

Jurisdictional Trends and Examples	How Vancouver Compares
Municipalities across Canada have developed granting frameworks that link city policies and strategies to the strategies of programs and processes. For example, Ottawa's Community Funding Framework guides how the city allocates social grants, emphasizing long-term sustainability and alignment with emerging community needs. Edmonton has recently developed a Municipal Funding Arrangement policy to standardize the administration of grants, sponsorships, and subsidies, ensuring that all funding is aligned with the city's broader priorities around healthy communities and urban prosperity. These frameworks help to link wider municipal strategy to granting portfolios and processes. All arts councils and development authorities had Strategic Plans which provided a similar outcome as overarching department wide granting frameworks for municipalities.	Vancouver has developed several guiding policies that influence its grant programs, including its Equity Framework, which sets the direction for equitable grant distribution. The Culture|Shift plan also serves as a blueprint for cultural granting, with its focus on equity, Indigenous reconciliation, and access to arts and culture. Additionally, Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy remains a guiding policy for its social grants, aligning funding with broader community health and well-being objectives. While Vancouver has strong policies in place, considering an overarching strategy that directly links municipal targets outlined in the City dashboard to granting portfolios and processes could support the measurement of outcomes.

4. Granting Programs

This section examines the various grant programs offered by each city for both social and arts and culture initiatives through municipal funds. It delves into the range of programs provided by each organization, highlighting the different types of grants available, with a focus on strategic, discretionary, and legacy grants. Additionally, it explores funding amounts and shifts in demand and eligibility criteria for programs.

4.1 Granting Portfolios

Jurisdictional Trends and Examples	How Vancouver Compares
The grant portfolios of organizations differ depending on their mandate. Toronto has several departments related to the distribution of social grants, for example a team dedicated specifically to funding for Indigenous, black mandated, and equity deserving organizations and communities, particularly around social services. Other departments hold portfolios in youth development, community development, safety and well-being, and housing stability with additional grant responsibilities.	Vancouver's grant portfolios, particularly in social services, are extensive, covering core support for non-profits, Indigenous healing, childcare, housing stability and food security. In 2022, the Social Development team distributed nearly $8 million to non-profits.
Similarly in Calgary, the Community funding team distributes grants the majority of community funding however a separate team manages major grants of >$500,000 annually for individual organizations.	In arts and culture (based on the 2022 annual report), Vancouver focuses on operating grants (58% of the budget), project grants (10%), theatre rentals (18%), and cultural spaces (14%), similar to cities like Montréal and Calgary.
Some organizations streamlined multiple grant streams into a single program, for example Montréal's "Cultural Vitality" program to reduce complexity, while Toronto's larger, consolidated grants aim to simplify processes for non-profits. The City of Ottawa has taken a similar approach for their social portfolio with the majority of grants distributed through a multi-year operating grant.	However, direct comparisons between jurisdictions should be approached with caution. Differences in portfolio scope, departmental mandates, and how grant programs are managed make simple one-to-one comparisons less meaningful. Vancouver's broad portfolio reflects its diverse non-profit landscape, while other cities, such as Toronto and Calgary, may have more specialized approaches or external agencies overseeing specific sectors.

Table 6 Arts and Cultural services: Estimated total number of grant programs, list of grant programs and staff numbers for each organization

	City of Vancouver Cultural Services Grants	Calgary Arts Development Authority	Toronto Arts Council	City of Ottawa Culture Funding	Conseil des arts Montréal	Ville de Montréal Cultural Services	Seattle Office of Arts & Culture
Number of programs	13	11	32	17[31]	66[32]	12	12
Number of Staff[33]	9	8	16	6	14	Not available	8 .
Number of Grantees (2022)	495	676	883	368	724 organizations/ 379 individuals	Not available	Not available
Discretionary Funding	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Multi-Year Funding	3-years	2-year	3-year	3-year	4-year	No	3-year[34]
Funding for Individuals	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

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[31] There are 17 programs according to the representative, but these fall under nine key programs
[32] This includes 31 grants, 12 awards, 19 residencies and 4 internships according to the 2022 Annual Report Allocations.
[33] These numbers mirror those in Section 4.
[34] This is The Centering Art & Racial Equity (C.A.R.E.) grant, which is the renamed version of the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture's previous Civic Partners funding program or operational funding.

Table 7 Social services: Estimated total number of grant programs, list of grant programs and staff numbers for each organization

	City of Vancouver Social Services Grants	City of Calgary Community Funding	City of Edmonton Community Funding	City of Toronto Community Funding	City of Ottawa Community Funding	Montréal – Division for the reduction of inequalities and inclusive living environments
Number of programs	23[35]	16[36]	8-10	7	6	13
Number of Staff[37]	6-7[38]	8	7	Not available	8	15
Number of Grantees	341[39]	260[40]	Not available	285 (2023)	Not available	Not available
Discretionary Funding[41]	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not available
Multi-Year Funding	3-year	No	Operating grants are only 1 year. Building Safer Communities Grant is 2 years as per federal guidelines[42]	3-year	5-year	Some strategic projects have 2 or 3-year funding options – e.g. Prevention Montréal

When comparing the number of granting programs, per-staff funding, and considering per-capita funding across jurisdictions, it is important to note that the number of programs reflects administrative load but does not capture the complexity of each program. Similarly, per-staff funding gives an idea of portfolio size but varies due to differences in grant complexity and applications. Lastly, per-capita funding comparisons may not fully reflect the reach of each portfolio, as some extend beyond city limits, to include particular Indigenous communities.

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[35] This is all grant programs reported in the ACCS annual report for 2022 including homelessness and housing grants, renters services, childcare and capital grants but not including leases.
[36] Not including partnerships or neighbourhood grants which are managed by a different team
[37] These numbers mirror those in Section 4 and are based on FTEs..
[38] Additional staff manage some of these grants like homeless and housing so a direct comparison between number of programs and number of staff may not be accurate.
[39] This is as reported in the 2022 Annual report and includes renter services, housing and homelessness grants. For social grants only, the number would be 240.
[40] Based on calculation of funding allocations for 2023 published online. Including the community sustainability reserve (4), Crime prevention investment (16), Connect the Dots (18), Connect the Dots Pilot (12), Getting Help (13), Family and Community Support Services (152 for 2023-24 and 14 for the rest of 2023), Capacity Building and Emerging Issues (31).
[41] Discretionary funds are those allocated to non-profit organizations or individuals that do not follow the normal application and adjudication procedures. These funds are typically flexible, allowing municipalities to address emerging community needs, support innovative projects, and promote social, cultural, and economic development within the community. By providing discretionary grants, municipalities can respond to unique and immediate challenges faced by nonprofits, fostering a dynamic and resilient local ecosystem.
[42] This is specifically for Building Safer Communities Grant In partnership with the Federal Government to support new community-led prevention and intervention programming specifically targeting gang violence. This is one-time funding that can cover programs of up to 2 years.

4.2 Eligibility and Assessment Criteria

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Eligibility and Assessment Criteria, particularly concerning geography and funding individuals, vary significantly across municipalities. Many cities are expanding geographic eligibility to include Indigenous nations and broader regions beyond municipal boundaries, as seen in Calgary and Ottawa. Additionally, more municipalities are moving towards direct funding for individual artists and creators, like Ottawa and Seattle, recognizing the importance of supporting grassroots, emerging talent. However, challenges remain, including legal constraints and the need for greater oversight when funding individuals.	The City of Vancouver enforces geographic eligibility, requiring that organizations be based within or serve Vancouver residents. However, it does not allow direct grants to individuals due to the constraints of the Vancouver Charter. Instead, Vancouver supports individual artists indirectly through partnerships with nonprofit intermediaries, such as ArtsStarts and Creative BC. Despite exploring alternatives to address these legal limitations, such as considering independent foundations, Vancouver's current inability to directly fund individuals creates barriers for emerging artists.

4.3 Grant Amounts

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Grant amounts vary widely depending on the size and focus of the organization, with larger, well-established organizations typically receiving more significant funding. There is increasing recognition of the need to support smaller, grassroots, and equity-serving organizations, which often struggle to secure substantial funding. Municipalities like Calgary are shifting towards more open, application-based models to enhance accessibility and fairness. Programs such as the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) fund have no set maximums, allowing for tailored funding based on the scale of the project or organization. The portfolio totalled $41.4 million for the 2024 application with $31 million of	The City of Vancouver similarly distributes both large and small grants, balancing support for major institutions with the needs of grassroots organizations. Large cultural institutions like the Vancouver Art Gallery and Museum of Vancouver receive substantial ongoing operational funding, while smaller grants are provided to smaller organizations, and through project-based programs. On the social granting side, the city also provides significant funding to larger entities, such as Neighbourhood Houses, alongside smaller, targeted grants that address specific community needs. This balanced approach ensures that both prominent institutions and grassroots efforts receive support.

contributions from the Government of Alberta, with no set minimum or maximum for funding requests.

Most organizations had a breadth of large and small grants to meet the varying needs of non-profit organizations, collaboratives and individuals. For example, for the Large Institutions, the Toronto Arts Council distributed $5,960,000 to eight organizations in 2022 - averaging $750,000 per grant, and at the same time distributed $638,025 to 84 individual writers and playwrights averaging $7,596 per grant. Another example is Edmonton Community Programs which distributed 92 grants through the FCSS fund with a maximum grant of $730,562 and a minimum of $31,366 for 2022, whereas wider grants such as their Seed Grants support grassroots immigrant and refugee community groups or organizations to identify community needs and test innovative and/or experimental approaches to address these need(s) distributed an average of $1,498 across 26 grants in 2022.

However, Vancouver faces similar challenges in ensuring equitable access for smaller, equity-serving organizations, and how to support these groups.

4.4 Type of Funding

Multi-Year Funding

Multi-year grants are committed operational funds that support core operations, providing stability and enabling long-term planning for nonprofits.

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Multi-year funding is increasingly becoming a critical component in grant portfolios, providing non-profits with stability and the ability to plan long-term projects. Cities like Montréal and Ottawa adopt four- and five-year cycles for operating and sustainability grants, which help organizations focus	Vancouver has been offering multi-year grants since 2022, beginning with a $1.8 million-a-year commitment in Social grants on a three-year basis. This approach has since expanded to other granting areas. The Arts, Culture, and Community Services (ACT) department has committed to three-year funding agreements totalling $1.67 million a year from 2022. Looking ahead, the ACCS

on mission-driven work rather than constant fundraising. For example, Ottawa's Community Funding program offers five-year operational support through its Sustainability Fund, accounting for a significant portion of its overall granting budget. Similarly, Montréal's Conseil des Arts shifted its operating grantees to a four-year cycle, reducing growth expectations and easing administrative burdens to better align with mission-driven outcomes.
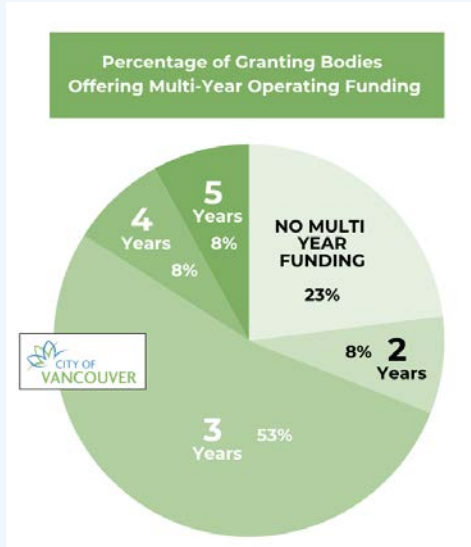
team continues expanding its multi-year commitments to other grant streams, with further expansion planned for 2024 and 2025.

Vancouver's multi-year grant program selects organizations from existing, open-call grant programs. This requires applicants to have been successful in the granting process and delivered on reporting before they can be selected by staff for consideration of a multi-year grant. Expanding to an open application process could help Vancouver align more closely with other cities such as Ottawa and Montréal.

Percentage of Granting Bodies
Offering Multi-Year Operating Funding

- 5 Years 8%
- 4 Years 8%
- NO MULTI YEAR FUNDING 23%
- 2 Years 8%
- 3 Years 53%

CITY OF VANCOUVER

Project Funding

Project funding refers to grants awarded to nonprofits for specific initiatives or programs.

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Project Funding remains essential for smaller initiatives, time-bound projects, or emerging groups. However, the emphasis on one-time funding is decreasing in favor of multi-year commitments, reflecting a sector-wide shift towards sustainability.	Vancouver's project funding mirrors broader municipal trends, particularly in the arts and culture sector. In 2022, Vancouver awarded 144 Culture Project grants totaling $1.68 million, supporting cultural celebrations, exhibitions, and community-driven artistic

Ottawa provides targeted project funding alongside their core multi-year operational grants. In 2022, the demand for project funding was ten times the available budget, leading to increased allocations to accommodate this need.

Calgary Arts Development Authority awarded 38 project grants in 2022, totaling $725,700, highlighting how cities continue to use project funding to support innovation and specific cultural initiatives, even as the sector shifts toward more sustainable, long-term funding models.

initiatives. This is comparable to Toronto and Montréal, where project grants similarly support creative endeavors that enhance community engagement and cultural expression.

Capital Funding

Capital grants are municipal funds given to nonprofits for acquiring, constructing, or improving long-term assets like facilities or equipment. These grants help organizations expand capacity, enhance service delivery, and ensure long-term sustainability by investing in essential infrastructure.

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Capital funding for non-profits varies widely across jurisdictions. Some cities, like Ottawa and Montréal, have partnerships or agreements with provincial or federal entities to support cultural and infrastructure projects. Many cities do not have dedicated capital grant streams. For example, Calgary and Toronto rely more on operating grants or partnerships to support infrastructure needs, with little to no direct municipal capital funding. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a growing recognition in some jurisdictions, such as Toronto, of the need for small capital investments, although dedicated funding streams remain absent.	Vancouver is one of the few cities with a structured, recurring capital funding mechanism, particularly in cultural and social spaces. The city's Cultural Spaces grants provide funding for non-profit cultural societies, Indigenous organizations, and co-ops, with grants ranging from small project support ($25,000) to larger infrastructure matching grants ($250,000). The capital grant budget totalled $2,024,900 for cultural services grants in 2022. The social capital grants, although smaller in scale (totalling $175,200 in 2022, are part of Vancouver's broader 4-year capital plan, demonstrating a strong municipal commitment to building long-term capacity for non-profits.

Discretionary Funding

Discretionary funds are flexible grants given to nonprofits or individuals outside standard procedures, allowing municipalities to address emerging needs, support innovation, and respond to unique challenges.

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Discretionary Funding is increasingly critiqued across municipalities for its potential to introduce bias into the allocation process. However, it can play an important role in responding to emerging priorities or fund strategic initiatives outside of the regular grant cycle. Many cities, including Toronto and Calgary, are moving away from discretionary funds managed by councillors or city leaders, favouring more transparent and structured processes. Calgary does not have dedicated discretionary funds whereas other jurisdictions like Ottawa and Edmonton maintain a flexible pool of unallocated discretionary funds, though with limited formal processes for allocation.	In Vancouver, approximately 16% of the grants distributed by the Social Development team are discretionary, meaning they are awarded without going through the typical open application or adjudication process. While this allows for responsive and flexible funding, it also introduces concerns about fairness and transparency, as seen in other jurisdictions. The existence of discretionary funds in Vancouver, similar to Ottawa and Edmonton, provides flexibility to address emerging community priorities but risks introducing funding biases. Expanding standardized evaluation frameworks or reducing discretionary funds could help align Vancouver more with the broader trend toward greater transparency in grant allocation processes.

Strategic Funding

Strategic grants are aligned with broader municipal or organizational priorities, as outlined in strategic plans and policies, ensuring that funding efforts are both purposeful and impactful.

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Strategic Granting in municipalities is increasingly designed to focus on specific population groups and align with city-wide policies, particularly around equity, reconciliation, and community development. Cities like Montréal and Toronto are implementing multi-year, equity-focused initiatives that target underrepresented communities or address specific social priorities. For example, Montréal's *Prevention Montréal* initiative, a $42.5 million program	Vancouver has a robust set of strategic grants that align with its goals for equity, reconciliation, and food security. The *Cultural Indigenous Grant Program* for example is a pivotal program addressing gaps in Indigenous representation in arts and culture. Social strategic grants like the *Sustainable Food Systems* and *School Food Grant* reflect Vancouver's commitment to addressing

over three years, focuses on youth safety and urban security, while Toronto has dedicated grant programs aimed at Indigenous-led collectives and grassroots initiatives through its Indigenous Affairs Office.

These strategic programs are often in response to community-identified needs or part of broader municipal strategies, ensuring that grants contribute to long-term goals like social inclusion, public safety, or economic development. The move towards embedding grants in city strategies reflects a trend of ensuring that funding directly supports policy priorities.

food insecurity. Similarly, the Indigenous Healing and Wellness Grant reinforces Vancouver's dedication to reconciliation and fostering right relationships with Indigenous peoples, ensuring that grant funding directly aligns with broader social and cultural priorities.

While Vancouver's strategic grants are well-integrated with city priorities, expanding the transparency and tracking of outcomes for these grants—particularly in reconciliation efforts—could further improve their long-term impact and alignment with city-wide targets.

Legacy Funding

Legacy grants are funding programs where certain organizations have consistently received financial support from municipalities for many years, sometimes even decades.

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Legacy Funding, or long-term funding agreements, are a common challenge for municipalities as they try to balance maintaining relationships with established organizations while opening up funding opportunities for newer, equity-serving groups. Many cities, like Calgary and Ottawa, are reviewing their legacy funding models to better align with current priorities, but the transition away from entrenched funding patterns can be slow and politically sensitive. Toronto, for example, is grappling with reallocating long-standing funds to better support marginalized communities, while Ottawa has made gradual adjustments, providing transition funding to organizations that no longer align with evolving priorities.	The City of Vancouver continues to support legacy grants through programs like Cultural Operating Funding, with some organizations receiving core funding despite not fully aligning with the Arts, Culture & Tourism department's current mandate or Culture|Shift. However, similar to other cities, the process of transitioning away from legacy grants remains complex, given the potential impact of altering funding support.

5. Granting Processes

5.1 Engagement and Awareness

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Municipalities are increasingly recognizing the importance of proactive engagement and outreach to ensure diverse organizations are aware of and can access grant opportunities. Traditional methods such as website announcements, email distribution lists, and social media campaigns are widely used, but there is a growing emphasis on more targeted outreach strategies. Many cities, including Ottawa and Calgary, are partnering with community organizations and hosting information sessions in local contexts to increase engagement, especially among equity-seeking groups. Calgary also expands outreach efforts to Indigenous communities beyond city boundaries, visiting reserves in the Treaty 7 area. Additionally, municipalities are making efforts to communicate in multiple languages, hold workshops, and work with established networks to broaden awareness of available funding.	The City of Vancouver uses a mix of traditional and proactive methods to raise awareness of grant opportunities. It promotes calls for applications through online platforms, emails, and social media posts, and hosts public information sessions during open application periods. Vancouver is making strides to improve its outreach, especially for targeted grants like the Cultural Indigenous Grant Program, where it connects with community leaders and provides direct support through planners. However, there is room for improvement in the accessibility and inclusivity of its outreach, particularly in extending engagement to groups that may not yet be well connected to the city's grant programs. Expanding proactive engagement and partnering with community organizations could further increase awareness and equitable access to grants.

5.2 Applications

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Municipalities are increasingly adopting more inclusive grant application processes, offering multiple submission formats—written, oral, video, and online—to meet diverse needs. Many cities also provide support through workshops, office hours, and individual	Vancouver's application process is managed through the VanAPPLY online system, with public information sessions and consultations offered to assist applicants. In addition, Vancouver accepts some oral applications for certain grants and has been

consultations to guide applicants, especially smaller or grassroots organizations.

For the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture provides draft reviews, workshops, and targeted outreach. They even help applicants who struggle to complete their applications, ensuring broader access to funding for underrepresented communities.

doing oral reporting and site visits to help alleviate administrative burden. The Equity and Indigenous grants in particular are very relation-based, with final reports delivered verbally.

Vancouver's efforts, such as targeted outreach for strategic grants, could be improved by adopting more flexible submission options and enhanced applicant support, following examples set by cities like Toronto and Seattle. This would further reduce barriers for smaller organizations and underrepresented groups.

5.3 Staff Adjudication

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Staff adjudication in grant applications mostly follows structured processes designed to ensure fairness and transparency. Most municipalities start with an eligibility review before assessing proposals based on criteria like project feasibility, alignment with municipal priorities, and potential impact. Many use a scoring system, sometimes with a standardized rubric, to guide evaluations. Committees composed of internal staff are often responsible for final evaluations and recommendations. This approach aims to reduce biases and provide a thorough examination of applications. Following adjudication, final recommendations go to senior officials or city councils for approval.	In Vancouver, staff play a central role in adjudicating social grants, using cross-departmental teams for a well-rounded review. For social grants, the Social Policy team leads, with input from departments like Arts, Culture and Community Services, Sustainability, and Homelessness and Housing. This ensures applications are evaluated against Council Priorities and broader municipal policies, such as Vibrant Vancouver, the Healthy City Strategy and others. Staff assess financial capacity, program feasibility, and alignment with city goals, with final recommendations going through multiple internal approvals before the City Council makes the final decision.
In several cities, grant evaluations involve cross-departmental teams or advisory boards, bringing diverse perspectives to the review process. Many municipalities integrate external community members into the adjudication (peer-review) to ensure a broad range of voices are considered in decision-making. For example, Edmonton involves both internal staff and external reviewers, including citizens on their	

Community Services Advisory Board, to assess certain grants, ensuring comprehensive feedback from multiple perspectives. Other cities, like Calgary, involve external subject matter experts for specific grants, combining internal and external knowledge to strengthen the evaluation process.

5.4 Peer Assessment

| Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Peer assessment involves community representatives who help evaluate and recommend funding, ensuring decisions are rooted in local insights and needs. Peer review panels typically consist of individuals with relevant expertise and a deep understanding of the community's challenges. This method enhances transparency and equity, as peers bring diverse perspectives to the adjudication process. Some organizations, like Conseil des Arts Montréal, select assessors for multi-year terms to maintain continuity, while most others convene panels after an initial application review to ensure diverse representation. Peer assessors often review applications independently before panel discussions to reach a consensus on recommendations. While some committees are empowered to make final funding decisions, others only recommend grantees, leaving the final allocation to staff with more experience in financial oversight. To promote fairness, many municipalities provide unconscious bias training for assessors, helping to mitigate potential inequities in decision-making.	In Vancouver, peer assessment, with significant community involvement, is integral to the Arts and Culture grant programs. Over 50% of peer assessors are from priority groups, including racialized and LGBTQ2+ communities, ensuring diverse representation in funding decisions. Assessors review applications independently and participate in group discussions facilitated by staff. The city provides unconscious bias training to these peer assessors, aligning with broader trends toward more equitable adjudication processes. This approach allows for a balanced evaluation of artistic merit and community impact, fostering inclusivity in decision-making. While the team collects feedback from peer assessors on the granting programs and processes during this process, it is not formally integrated into process improvement cycles. For Social Grants, peer assessment is selectively implemented, particularly in specialized programs like the Indigenous Healing and Wellness grants. While peer review is less widespread due to the broad scope of social programs, Vancouver has incorporated community voices in specific initiatives, such as using youth committees for youth-focused grants and involving external partners for violence prevention grants. The city's efforts to integrate peer assessment in targeted programs reflect its commitment to equity,

Number of Granting Bodies Involving the Community in Peer Assessment

Arts and Culture

1

6

Social

1

5
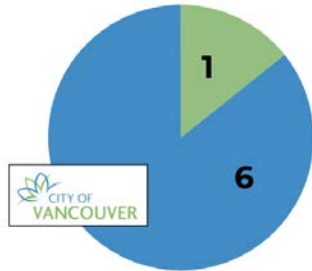
Peer Assessment Across <u>All</u> Grants

Peer Assessment Across <u>Specific</u> Grants

though there is room for expanding this process across the broader social grant portfolio.

5.5 Timelines

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Timelines for processing grants vary significantly across municipalities, with factors such as the complexity of the grants, the number of programs managed, and the involvement of peer adjudication affecting overall duration. The presence of City Council approval often introduces additional time, as final decisions are dependent on scheduling and reports. Peer adjudication can extend timelines, especially if committees are formed after applications are submitted. In contrast, some municipalities delegate authority to specific departments, allowing for more streamlined approval processes. For some project grants, the Conseil des Arts Montréal has grant timelines of as short as ten weeks, reflecting a more efficient process even with peer involvement.	Vancouver's grant process varies from 4 to 6 months from the time of open applications to approval. Time can be attributed to holiday times within grant cycles, as well as capacity and the broad and complex portfolio of social grants, which requires the evaluation of numerous applications simultaneously.
The City of Edmonton's grant funding team aims to make funding decisions within a 6–8-week timeline, though the exact timeline can vary depending on the specific grant program. For simpler, formula-based operating grants, the timeline is typically around six weeks from intake to funding decision. For grant programs that involve more comprehensive review processes, including external reviewers or advisory boards, the timeline can be closer to 8-12 weeks. The team tries to keep the timeline relatively short. Still, they acknowledge that getting the funding agreements finalized and the money distributed can sometimes take longer due to coordination with other departments.	For cultural grants, the process takes approximately four months, including peer adjudication. After an 8-week open application period, peer assessment is completed in 4 weeks, followed by an internal review process that includes legal and financial checks. The final step is City Council approval. To address timeline concerns and ensure accessibility of grants, the teams have adopted numerous cohorts of applications across the year to ensure there are multiple opportunities for applications.

5.6 Delegated Authority

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Many municipalities delegate authority over grant allocation decisions to department leadership, allowing faster decision-making. Cities like Ottawa, Edmonton, and Toronto have implemented delegated authority within specific limits (e.g., Toronto allows delegation for grants under $500,000), which significantly reduces the time needed for approval and streamlines the process. In these models, the City Council oversees strategy and budget but is not involved in day-to-day funding decisions, ensuring quicker fund disbursement. Calgary has a mixed model where certain programs require Council approval, especially for large grants or partnerships, while others operate under delegated authority. Most allocations are approved internally by the department's Director. These approaches generally aim to minimize delays while maintaining accountability through reporting back to the Council on outcomes and grant use.	In Vancouver, the Vancouver Charter restricts delegation for most grant programs, impacting timelines and flexibility as compared to cities with delegated authority. This Council-driven model reflects a traditional governance structure. **With Delegated Authority** City of Calgary Community Services[43] City of Edmonton Community Services City of Toronto Community Funding Unit City of Toronto Cultural Department City of Ottawa Community and Social Services City of Ottawa Cultural Funding Department Seattle Office of Arts and Culture **Without Delegated Authority[44]** City of Vancouver Arts and Culture Team City of Vancouver Community Services Team Ville de Montréal DRIMVI[45] Team (Community)

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[43] Apart from the provincial partnership program.
[44] The majority of the Ville de Montreal Cultural services funding is through joint municipal and provincial partnerships with associated joint committee decisions thus delegated authority for municipal fundings is not applicable.
[45] Division Réduction des Inégalités et Milieux de Vie Inclusifs

5.7 Approaches to Equity and Reconciliation

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Approaches to equity and reconciliation in grant processes are becoming more pronounced. Many cities are revamping their grant-making strategies and frameworks to eliminate biases, improve access for underrepresented groups, and ensure equitable funding distribution. A common trend is proactive outreach to marginalized communities that may not be aware of funding opportunities. For example, Seattle has implemented extensive EDI initiatives, including racial equity training for reviewers and a "trust-based philanthropy" approach, which reduces bureaucratic requirements and focuses on building relationships with grantees. Their "Rainmaker" program actively identifies and funds underrepresented arts and cultural organizations, reducing the reliance on traditional application processes. Cities like Calgary have also made equity central to their funding decisions. Calgary Arts Development Authority prioritizes funding for Indigenous applicants and equity-deserving groups when they are among the last 10% of applicants, ensuring these communities are considered even if their scores aren't the highest. Edmonton takes an additional step by incorporating unconscious bias training for all grant reviewers, both internal and external, ensuring that the evaluation process remains fair and balanced. Another notable approach is the inclusion of diverse representation in peer review panels. Toronto and Montréal have emphasized that their review panels are intentionally composed of individuals from equity-deserving communities to bring diverse perspectives into the evaluation process. This diversity in decision-making is intended to mitigate systemic bias and enhance the cultural relevance of funded projects. The City of Ottawa has an Integrated Neighborhood Services team, with community liaisons aiming to enhance the effectiveness of grants by leveraging local insights and ensuring funding is responsive to the needs of individual neighbourhoods.	Vancouver's Cultural Equity Grant Program is a strong example of a trust-based, equity-driven model. Launched in 2020 as part of the Culture|Shift initiative, it focuses on lowering barriers for underrepresented organizations by providing core operating support through an invitation-based process. The Cultural Equity Grant fosters direct relationships with communities and offers flexible, renewable funding. This aligns Vancouver with leading cities like Seattle in prioritizing trust and relational grant-making. The Cultural Indigenous Grants is another strong example, with half of the funds going to the local Nations for self-directed projects. Peer review panels for arts and culture grants in Vancouver require 50% representation from priority groups, including racialized and LGBTQ2+ communities. Vancouver's model demonstrates a strong commitment to equity, with substantial progress in cultural and social granting streams. The city compares favourably with leading municipalities like Seattle and Calgary, particularly in its cultural grants. At the same time, it continues to expand its inclusive engagement strategies across the broader social grant portfolio. Additional methods to incorporate the community in decision-making could be extended to social

granting portfolios, and continuous methods of input and feedback from the community could be incorporated.

6. Reporting

6.1 Requirements for Grantees

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Municipalities generally require grantees to provide a range of data points related to program performance, financial accountability, and beneficiary demographics. Grantees are often required to submit data quarterly or annually, with a mix of qualitative and quantitative metrics. For example, cities like Toronto and Ottawa require organizations to report on their budget, the number of participants, geographic reach, and program outcomes. Data collection methods typically include online systems like Survey Monkey Apply or custom grant management systems, with flexibility in formats such as written reports, interviews, or even video submissions to accommodate grantee needs. Some jurisdictions, such as Ottawa and Toronto, provide tools and resources to help grantees meet these data collection requirements. The City of Edmonton has an Outcome Reporting resource that contains a range of instructions and examples of tools that non-profits can use to help collect data from participants to fulfill Community Investment Operating Grant reporting requirements, including paper Surveys, online surveys, comment cards, and patient change stories. It includes specific instructions on how organizations might want to adapt these tools to meet their own	Vancouver's requirements for social and cultural grant recipients include financial reports, board documentation, and detailed program evaluations. Vancouver integrates an equity lens in its reporting for social grants, where grantees must estimate demographic data on service users, though this has proven challenging due to estimation errors. Reporting requirements are fairly comprehensive, covering both program and organizational data, but may not be as flexible as some other cities like Edmonton, which offer multiple reporting formats. Additional resources to support community organizations in reporting outcomes would reduce the administrative burden on organizations and enhance data collection and reporting for the city.

needs and the reporting requirements of the grant. It also provides sections on demographic reporting to support organizations in collecting and measuring this data.

6.2 Impact Measurement Frameworks

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Municipalities are increasingly adopting impact measurement frameworks that balance quantitative metrics (such as the number of participants or events) with qualitative assessments of community impact. Cities like Calgary and Toronto have begun incorporating immediate program results and longer-term impacts into their frameworks. CADA, for example, has a well-established system that tracks the artistic and community outcomes of its grants, including longitudinal studies to measure the sustainability of its programs. Data collection methods often involve surveys, focus groups, and public feedback mechanisms. Challenges arise when trying to standardize impact measures across diverse projects, especially in sectors like arts and social services, where traditional metrics may not capture the full value of the programs. By offering grantees resources for outcome reporting, the City of Edmonton has successfully aggregated outcome-focused metrics across various programs, allowing for reporting on areas such as the percentage of respondents who indicated: ● Improved skills to address identified issues ● Improved family functioning ● Increased knowledge of positive parenting skills ● Improved positive parenting skills ● Increased awareness of social issues in the community ● Increased positive involvement in the community	Vancouver's impact measurement primarily focuses on program outcomes (money distributed, number of organizations supported, communities supported). Like other granting bodies, it struggles with linking grant funding directly to specific long-term community impacts. For social grants, Vancouver requires demographic estimates and program outputs (e.g., the number of people served). Still, these tend to be focused on tracking resource distribution rather than evaluating broader community outcomes. Vancouver maintains a broader Open Data Dashboard that tracks key statistics aligned with strategies like Healthy City, though these metrics operate at a higher level and are not directly attributable to specific grant programs. Setting intermediate strategies for the granting portfolio, including a theory of change/impact with associated targets for outcomes, could help define outcome metrics. This could be supplemented with outcome-reporting resources to support impact data aggregation.

- Increased knowledge of community resources
- Accessing community resources that met individuals' needs
- Improved networks of social support
- Strengthened individual skills within organizations
- More effective community organizations

6.3 Reporting on Equity and Reconciliation

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Equity and reconciliation are increasingly integrated into reporting and evaluation mechanisms to ensure accountability. These mechanisms often involve collecting detailed demographic data, tracking how funds are distributed, and evaluating the impact of grants on underserved communities. For example, Conseil des Arts Montréal has set public targets for funding equity, using these as benchmarks to report progress and ensure transparency. Calgary Arts Development Authority collects demographic data through regular surveys to better understand how well their grants support equity-deserving communities. Ville de Montréal uses a geographic equity indicator to track and prioritize grant distribution in vulnerable neighbourhoods and populations. However, many cities still face challenges with accurately reporting and measuring EDI impacts, such as relying on self-reported data and the complexities of defining success in equity terms. Despite these efforts, most municipalities acknowledge the evolving nature of EDI reporting. Establishing clear, actionable metrics and refining data collection methods remain ongoing priorities to ensure grant funds are reaching the intended communities and driving meaningful change.	In Vancouver, the social grants team has made equity a central focus of its reporting and evaluation processes. Since 2022, grant applicants are required to estimate the demographic breakdown of their service users, with these estimates used to track funding distribution across 18 demographic categories. While the process faces challenges, such as incomplete data and estimation errors, it marks a crucial step toward more inclusive evaluation practices. Additionally, Vancouver has incorporated community input into evaluating grants aimed at specific groups, like the Cultural Indigenous Grant and the Indigenous Healing and Wellness Grant. Compared to other cities, Vancouver's focus on demographic data collection positions it as a leader in integrating EDI into its internal reporting and evaluation frameworks. However, like its counterparts, the city faces challenges in refining data accuracy and fully leveraging these insights to evaluate impact and inform future funding decisions. It also doesn't report the comprehensive data or place targets as demonstrated by Conseil des Arts Montréal.

6.4 Annual Public Reports

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Many municipalities, including Calgary and Ottawa, publish annual reports to communicate the outcomes and impacts of their grant programs. Public reports are often complemented by digital platforms and dashboards, such as Calgary's Power BI dashboard, which provides real-time updates on the performance of various grant programs. Social media is also commonly used to engage the public and promote transparency. Communication plans typically focus on ensuring that grant data and results are accessible to the public and policymakers, often involving a mix of annual reports, press releases, and community events.	Vancouver publishes annual impact reports on its cultural and social grant programs, providing insights into grant distribution, resource allocation, and general program outcomes. These reports, similar to those of other municipalities, focus on financial data rather than outcomes of funded projects. This is more than the majority of granting organizations. Vancouver's communication strategy includes updates via City Council reports but lacks the real-time digital dashboards. Social media and other public engagement channels are less prominently used in Vancouver than in other cities, though the city remains committed to transparency in its grant reporting through traditional reports and the annual impact review.

Organizations Releasing Public Annual Reports Collating All Granting Information

*not including Council meetings

46% 54%

CITY OF VANCOUVER

Jurisdictional Trends	How Vancouver Compares
Formal research frameworks are rare but growing in prominence across municipalities. Cities like Calgary have developed dedicated research teams within their arts councils to gather data on sector trends, evaluate program effectiveness, and inform policy decisions. CADA, for instance, collaborates with external research partners and engages in longitudinal studies to track the sustainability and long-term impact of arts funding. In contrast, cities like Ottawa and Toronto engage in more ad-hoc research projects, often responding to immediate needs rather than establishing continuous research practices.	Vancouver has not developed a formal research framework akin to Calgary's ongoing research initiatives. Instead, the city relies more on internal data collection and feedback from its peer assessment committees. While this approach gathers valuable insights into sector trends and program effectiveness, it lacks the depth of research in other cities. Vancouver's research activities focus on compliance and short-term feedback without the extensive longitudinal studies or dedicated research teams in places like Calgary. This represents an area of opportunity for Vancouver to enhance its data-driven decision-making.

7. Future Considerations

This report highlights the multifaceted nature of municipal grant-making, analyzing Vancouver's approaches compared to other major cities across Canada and the U.S. The findings emphasize how structure, governance, equity, and policy considerations all influence the effectiveness and inclusivity of grant programs. While Vancouver is well-positioned and demonstrates a strong commitment to equity, reconciliation, and community engagement, there remain opportunities for further improvement. By building on its strengths, Vancouver can optimize its grant-making framework to serve its diverse communities better. The following considerations outline potential pathways for enhancing the city's grant-making efforts.

Twelve considerations, presented as potential recommendations, have been developed to align with the directives outlined in the Council Motion and related to content in the Full Report. Each is explored in detail, evaluating the advantages and possible trade-offs for further consideration.

1	Expand the Proportion of Multi-Year Grants across the ACCS Portfolio

Advantages: As per current plans to expand across portfolios, this would reduce the administrative burden on organizations applying for grant funding, may increase their ability to focus on long-term

Potential Trade-offs: There are financial risks if City budgets change. This may reduce the ability of the city to respond to emerging needs and risk displacing non-multi-year grantees by constraining the year-

initiatives (e.g. Ottawa), and may reduce burdens of annual adjudication for ACCS staff and Council.

on-year budget. Need for dedicated resources for oversight and evaluations. Processes needed to ensure well-established organizations are not always favoured over grassroots.

2 Explore Open Application Processes for all Multi-Year Grants

Advantages: It might promote greater equity, inclusivity, and transparency and offer opportunities for newer or smaller organizations to compete fairly. This could lead to more diverse and innovative projects receiving support.

Potential Trade-offs: Opening the application process may require either increasing the overall budget to fund new recipients or reducing funding from legacy recipients to accommodate them. This could create tensions with long-standing grantees who have come to rely on consistent funding and limit the city's ability to allocate resources to emerging priorities.

3 Include Cost-of-Living Adjustments in Multi-Year Grants

Advantages: Incorporating cost-of-living adjustments into multi-year grants can help organizations maintain their services despite rising operational costs, fostering long-term sustainability.

Potential Trade-offs: While cost-of-living adjustments provide essential support to grantees, they could necessitate larger budget allocations over time. This may require annual budget increases or force difficult decisions, such as reducing funding for other programs, to accommodate the rising financial demands.

4 Identify Community Liaisons to Increase Understanding and Community Engagement

Advantages: Stronger partnership with the community, funding is closely aligned with community needs, and the potential for more responsive and impactful outcomes.

Potential Trade-offs: Additional and sustained resources, particularly in establishing and maintaining trust and collaboration with diverse community stakeholders.

5 Develop a Neighbourhood Equity Index

Advantages: Provides a data-driven approach to identifying and prioritizing underserved neighbourhoods, ensuring that resources are allocated equitably. It also reduces the burden on reporting for neighbourhoods that can refer to the index for impact evaluation.

Potential Trade-offs: This could require significant time and resources, with the added need for continuous updates to stay aligned with shifting needs and demographics. It also risks duplicating efforts with existing initiatives, such as the open dashboard, unless carefully coordinated.

6 Continue to Leverage City Networks for Enhanced Outreach and Engagement

Advantages: Expanding the reach of grant programs maximizes the use of existing resources, potentially leading to more efficient and

Potential Trade-offs: This may rely heavily on the effectiveness and willingness of other departments to actively participate, which could

cost-effective outreach efforts. It also fosters stronger collaboration across city departments, aligning grant initiatives with broader City of Vancouver goals and strategies.

vary and affect the consistency of outreach efforts. Also, a risk that the specific needs of the grant programs could be absorbed by broader city initiatives and less focused on community needs.

| 7 | Use Open Data Dashboard Metrics to Report Societal Changes Linked to ACCS |

Advantages: Reduces additional data collection and would link the work of ACCS directly with City strategies and societal impact.

Potential Trade-offs: High-level metrics that may not change significantly from year-to-year.

| 8 | Development of a Strategic Framework with Targets and Intermediate Outcomes |

Advantages: Clear outcome metrics against which to track & demonstrate progress and accountability annually. Translates City priorities and strategies into reporting goals (1-3 years).

Potential Trade-offs: Time and resources to develop.

| 9 | Community-Led Guide to Support Outcome Reporting |

Advantages: Will ease burdens and increase efficiencies and can increase engagement. (i.e. City of Edmonton)

Potential Trade-offs: Time-consuming and may be challenging due to diversity of perspectives.

| 10 | Dedicated Expertise for Data Collection and Reporting |

Advantages: Enhanced data accuracy, management, reporting processes, utilization of the GMS, informed decision-making.

Potential Trade-offs: Potentially straining existing financial capacities.

| 11 | Expand Peer Assessment and Unconscious Bias Training for Social Granting |

Advantages: Ensure that funding decisions are consistently informed by sector experts and community members, potentially leading to more equitable and representative outcomes and increasing transparency.

Potential Trade-offs: The expansion might require additional resources for training and managing a larger pool of peer reviewers, as well as efforts to standardize the process across diverse programs.

| 12 | Standardize and Track Peer Assessor Feedback for Continuous Improvement |

Advantages: Formalizing and reporting on processes already taking place requires little extra effort in initial stages but can be an additional avenue of sector involvement in processes and programs.

Potential Trade-offs: Developing methods to integrate feedback into continuous improvement may take additional capacity. Consideration also needs to be given to the relative weighting of feedback. Important to ensure formalized processes do not undermine the trusting environment that is essential for open and honest community feedback.

Appendix 1 - Methodology

The methodology for this research study involved multiple stages, aiming to thoroughly understand municipal granting programs across Canada. The research focused on six key cities: Vancouver, Seattle, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa and Montréal. Edmonton was also included to supplement the data, as the Community Services team in Seattle was unavailable to support the research. Below is an outline of the methodology and the aim of each research method.

Literature Review of Relevant Studies, Grant Reports, and Policies

The initial stage of the research involved a comprehensive literature review. Existing studies, grant reports, and policy documents relevant to selected jurisdictions were examined with the aim to identify leading practices by understanding successful grant frameworks and initiatives in other municipalities. Additionally, it sought to highlight gaps and opportunities where Vancouver's grant programs could be improved by learning from other cities.

Develop Frameworks

Based upon discussions with the City of Vancouver ACCS team, data from the literature review and initial searches, a research framework was built for comparative analysis across the jurisdictions. The Framework guided lines of inquiry for secondary data collection and interview questions. It also determined the data types and analysis options. The framework was iterated upon throughout the data collection phase as new areas of inquiry emerged. Not all elements of the framework were available for every municipality but using it ensured the most fulsome and comparable dataset possible within data collection parameters.

Informational Interviews with Representatives

To gain deeper insights, the research team conducted informational interviews (Table 1) with leaders within the social and arts and culture departments and corresponding organizations in each of the cities. Establishing connections with representatives in different municipalities was a substantial effort and a crucial part of the research. These interviews aimed to gather first-hand insights directly from individuals involved in administering and implementing grant programs. These interviews helped the team understand local contexts, learn about each city's specific challenges and successes in supporting arts and culture through grants, and identify innovative approaches that could be adapted or implemented in Vancouver. Additionally, the interviews aimed to build professional networks and establish ongoing connections with key personnel in various municipalities, which can facilitate future collaboration and information exchange. In some instances, the team was able to validate information with interviewees after their interview, but this was not always possible. As such all data should be used for comparison purposes and validation should be pursued should data be used for final decision-making.

Interviewees for Municipal Comparative Research Project

City	Organization	Job Title	Social or Cultural Services
Vancouver	City of Vancouver	Senior Social Planner, Social Policy & Projects Division	Social
Vancouver	City of Vancouver	Senior Planner, Cultural Services	Cultural
Seattle	Seattle Office of Arts & Culture	Cultural Investments Strategist	Cultural
Seattle	Seattle Office of Arts & Culture	Supervising Grants Team	Cultural
Calgary	City of Calgary	Team Lead, Community Funding Strategies	Social
Calgary	City of Calgary	Civic Partnership Consultant, Major Partners, Community Services	Social
Calgary	Calgary Arts Development	Director of Community Investment & Impact	Cultural
Edmonton	City of Edmonton	Community Grants Team Lead	Social/Cultural
Medicine Hat	City of Medicine Hat	Corporate Strategic Analyst	Social
Toronto	City of Toronto	Manager, Community Funding Unit	Social
Toronto	Toronto Arts Council	Director, Policy & Programs	Cultural
Ottawa	Ottawa	Program Manager, Social Development and Funding	Social
Ottawa	City of Ottawa	Cultural Funding Portfolio Manager	Cultural
Montréal	City of Montréal	Cheffe de section - Division Réduction des inégalités et milieux de vie inclusifs (DRIMI)	Social
Montréal	City of Montréal	Cheffe de division - Soutien au développement culturel	Cultural
Montréal	Conseil des arts de Montréal	Director of Support and Philanthropy	Cultural

Supplementary Research to Support Qualitative Findings

In addition to the literature review and interviews, supplementary research was conducted to validate and enrich the qualitative findings. This supplementary research included reviewing recent comparative studies such as the Nordicity report on arts and culture investment across six local governments in 2019 and researching wider granting trends across the philanthropic granting sector. The team also analyzed grant frameworks for community and cultural

services provided by senior-level city staff. It assessed recent grant reports, such as the 2024 Grants Reports, to ensure the findings were up-to-date and relevant.

Guidance and Updates from Senior-Level City Staff

Senior-level City staff (Table 2) provided guidance and relevant information throughout the research process. The ACCS team received regular updates to support the process. This collaboration aimed to ensure the relevance and accuracy of the research, aligning it with current City priorities and grant frameworks. Additionally, it facilitated practical recommendations, ensuring that the suggestions would be feasible for implementation within the city's existing structures.

City of Vancouver Staff Team Supporting Report Development

Role	Name	Job Title
Project Lead	Eleena Marley	Managing Director, Arts and Culture, ACCS
Project Oversight	Margaret Wittgens	General Manager, ACCS
Project Oversight	Branislav Henselmann	Deputy General Manager, Arts, Culture and Tourism
Project Oversight	Laura Weigold	Senior Manager, Strategic Business Advisory
Project Oversight	Jody Sydor Jones	Managing Director, Social Policy Projects
Subject Matter Expert	Navida Nuraney	Assistant Director, Arts and Culture
Subject Matter Expert	Marta Filipski	Assistant Director, Social Policy and Projects
Grant Lead	Cherryl Masters / Brenda Grunau	Social Planner III – Arts and Culture Grants
Grant Lead	Sonia Bianchi	Social Planner III – Social Policy Grants

Appendix 2 - Municipal Characteristics

Table 1 presents an overview of key population and income data to provide context for comparing arts, culture, and social granting across different cities. The data, sourced from Statistics Canada and the United States Census Bureau, reflects the subdivision data for each city rather than the greater metropolitan areas. Subdivision data focuses on the specific areas within a city's official boundaries, which often align more closely with where municipal governments have direct control and responsibility for social and arts and cultural programs and grants. This allows for a more accurate comparison of policies and outcomes that are directly managed at the city level. It also helps in understanding the unique socio-economic conditions within the core urban area, which may differ significantly from the broader metropolitan region. However, relying solely on subdivision data can overlook important aspects of the surrounding areas that may be socio-economically integrated with the city and not reflect the wider population that some of the arts and cultural programs service. Metropolitan areas often include suburbs and neighbouring municipalities where residents may work, access services, or participate in cultural activities within the core city. For the purpose of providing a high-level picture of the different municipalities and considering the majority of programs specified in eligibility and the need to serve populations within these city subdivisions, subdivision data is only displayed in Table 1.

The table highlights distinct differences among the cities: while the average age of the populations is similar, there are significant variations in population densities and income levels, with Montréal and Seattle having the highest incomes. Income inequality metrics also vary considerably, with Edmonton's P90/P10 ratio at 3.8 and Vancouver at 5.0. For Vancouver, this metric reveals that households in the 90th percentile have an income five times greater than those in the 10th percentile. This metric is crucial for considering social granting programs, as it helps ensure that resources are effectively targeted to those most in need, programs are designed for maximum impact, and initiatives are assessed for their effectiveness in reducing income disparities.

Population size has a significant impact on the budgets of municipalities, which in turn affects the resources available for social and cultural granting. Larger cities generally have bigger tax bases, as they collect revenue from a greater number of residents, businesses, and property owners. This typically translates into more substantial municipal budgets, allowing these cities to allocate more funds to social and cultural programs. However, larger populations also bring increased demands for services, infrastructure, and public amenities. This means that even though a large city may have a bigger budget, it also faces higher costs in maintaining its services and meeting the diverse needs of its population. The allocation of funds to social and cultural grants may still be limited by these competing priorities.

For example, Toronto noted the significance of their budgets compared to other nearby municipalities like Milton or Halton Hills. They emphasized the high cost of living in Toronto, particularly around affordable space for nonprofit organizations, is a significant challenge that the department is grappling with. This may not be as pressing an issue in other municipalities. This is also affected by population density as residential and commercial buildings compete for space.

Calgary stands out as one of the few major metropolitan centres without suburbs, with 99% of residents living within the city boundaries, which can also affect per capita funding allocations.

Appendix 3 - Strategies and Policies Guiding Granting Across Jurisdictions

List of Strategies or Policies that Guide the Social Granting of Municipalities

City of Vancouver Social Services Grants	City of Calgary Community Funding	City of Edmonton Community Funding	City of Toronto Community Funding	City of Ottawa Community Funding	Montréal – Division for the reduction of inequalities and inclusive living environments
• Vibrant Vancouver 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities • Healthy City Strategy • Equity Framework • City of Vancouver Reconciliation & UNDRIP Action Plan • Accessibility Strategy • Uplifting Chinatown • Spaces to Thrive • Vancouver Food Strategy (2013/2017) • Making Strides: Vancouver's Approach to Childcare • Member Motions - e.g. South Van, Restorative Justice, MMIWG	• Anti-Racism Strategic Plan • Family and Community Support Services Policy • Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy • Investing in Partnerships Policy • Social wellbeing Policy • White Goose Flying report • Resilient Calgary 2023-2026	•ConnectEdmonton The City Plan • Responding to Homelessness in our Communities • Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy • Anti-Racism Strategy	• City of Toronto Corporate Strategic Plan • TO Prosperity: Poverty Reduction Strategy • Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism • SafeTO: Toronto's Ten-Year Community Safety and Well-Being Plan • Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy • Downtown East Action Plan • Framework for Working with Community-based Not-for-profit Organizations • Reconciliation Action Plan	• City of Ottawa Strategic Plan 2023–2026 • City of Ottawa Anti-Racism Strategy 2023-2028 • Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook - 2018 • Community Safety and Well-Being Plan 2021-2031	• Montréal 2030 Strategic Plan • Plan d'action solidarité, équité et inclusion 2021-2025 • Living Environment Equity Index • Social development policy, Montréal of all possibilities • Social Development Action Plan, Rassembler Montréal • Municipal Strategy for Seniors 2023-2030 • Stratégie d'interventions en accessibilité universelle

List of Strategies or Policies that Guide the Arts and Cultural Granting of Municipalities

City of Vancouver Cultural Services Grants	Calgary Arts Development Authority	Toronto Arts Council	City of Ottawa Culture Funding	Conseil des arts Montréal	Ville de Montréal Cultural Services	Seattle Office of Arts & Culture
• Vibrant Vancouver 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities • Culture|Shift: Blanketing the City in Arts and Culture 2019–2029, along with the City's • Making Space for Arts and CultureEquity Framework • City of Vancouver Reconciliation & UNDRIP Action Plan • Accessibility Strategy	• Creative CITY: Prosperity through the Creative Economy Strategic Guidebook • CADA Strategic Framework 2023-2026	• Toronto Arts Council Equity Framework • TAC Strategic Plan: Arts-Making 2025	• Grants and Contributions Policy • Community Funding • Healthy and Inclusive Communities • Equity and Inclusion Policies • Renewed Action Plan for Arts, Heritage and Culture in Ottawa (2013 – 2018)	• VISION 2025 - Strategic Plan for Conseil des arts de Montréal • Montréal 2030: A First Strategic Plan • Calls to Action from Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: A Call to Action • Viens Commision: A Call to Action • City of Montréal's Cultural Development Policy	• Montréal 2030: A First Strategic Plan	• Racial Equity - Arts | seattle.gov • Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan

Appendix 4 - Ville de Montréal's Living Environment Equity Index

The City of Montréal's strategic plan for 2030 has been a driving force behind the cultural department's shift towards a stronger focus on equity, inclusion, and addressing systemic racism and discrimination. The strategic plan placed these priorities as key goals for the City, which then required the cultural department to adapt its approach and programs accordingly. Specifically, this led the department to place a much greater emphasis on social issues, community engagement, and prioritizing vulnerable and underserved populations in its work – rather than just focusing on traditional cultural programming. The cultural department has had to evolve its grant programs, decision-making processes, and overall strategy to better align with these equity-focused priorities. They have adapted their grant criteria, are collaborating more closely with the city's boroughs and community organizations, and are taking a more holistic, community-driven approach to cultural development and investment. For example, the Montréal Cultural Department has started to implement a process to prioritize funding for projects and organizations serving the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the city. The department uses an indicator - Indice d'équité des milieux de vie or residential area equity index that maps different layers of social and economic vulnerability across the city's neighbourhoods. Using this data, the cultural department now reserves special funding amounts to support activities and initiatives in the neighbourhoods that are identified as having the highest cumulative vulnerabilities. When evaluating grant applications, the department does an additional analysis using the indicator to prioritize projects that are of equal quality but located in the most underserved areas. This helps ensure the cultural department's funding is directed towards increasing access and participation in the communities that face the greatest barriers

APPENDIX B
Council Authority / Previous Decisions

Grant recommendations in this report are guided by a range of Council authority and previous decisions:

- **Vibrant Vancouver:** City Council's Strategic Priorities, 2023-2026: On October 31, 2023, Council approved a framework designed to outline Council's key priorities from 2023-2026. The document conveys Council's priorities to the public, as well and supporting staff in making recommendations to Council resource allocation decisions.

- **City of Vancouver's Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Strategy**: On November 14, 2023, Council adopted this youth focused strategy which outlines a comprehensive approach to enhancing the safety and wellbeing of youth in Vancouver. The adoption of the Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Strategy and the approval of the Building Safer Communities Granting Program provides the framework required to fulfill the City's obligations under the contribution agreement with Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada to support community-based violence prevention programming in the City. The policy and funding framework focus primarily on early violence prevention efforts that promote individual and community wellbeing, safety and belonging in the City. The strategy sets out a plan to create safe spaces and empowers young people and communities to develop and implement solutions.

- **City of Vancouver's UNDRIP Strategy**: On October 25, 2022, the UNDRIP Task Force provided its final recommendations to Council. In March 2021, the Council of the City of Vancouver ("Council") unanimously adopted a motion to create an UNDRIP Task Force that would recommend actions to implement UNDRIP at the City.

- **Accessibility Strategy:** On July 19, 2022, Council adopted the City's first Accessibility Strategy. The Accessibility Strategy reflects the City's commitment to support the full participation of persons with disabilities by establishing and maintaining inclusive services, programs, and infrastructure, and by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers. The strategy reinforces the recognition of the rights, dignity, and independence of people with disabilities within Vancouver and strengthens the ability to foster a culture of equity and inclusion that values and includes all residents, visitors, and employees.

- **Implementation of Recommendations from the National Inquiry Into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls:** On July 19, 2022, Council approved MMIWG2S Response Report: Response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice and Red Women Rising Report Recommendations. The report's Financial Implications sections notes that in the 2022 Budget Council approved $300,000 in funding to support this work, half of it onetime and half of it ongoing. Staff are reviewing the needs of the project moving forward to determine future allocation of the $150,000 ongoing.

- **Capital Plan**: On June 29, 2022, Council approved the 2023-2026 Capital Plan, a $3.5 billion capital investment in in-kind infrastructure, amenities, programs, and projects to be delivered by the City and/or its community partners.

- **Making Strides: Vancouver's Childcare Strategy and Early Actions:** On June 8, 2022 Council approved Making Strides: Vancouver's Childcare Strategy and Early Actions, including directions to expand equitable access to quality childcare and build partnerships toward a universal system through support for non-profit partners.

- **Working Collaboratively to Become a Restorative City:** On January 26, 2022, Council passed a motion to make Vancouver a Restorative City. The motion committed the City to creating a restorative justice lens, with specific Restorative Collective work to develop a Restorative City Framework. The Framework would support the development and delivery of restorative justice training for City staff and Council.

- **Spaces to Thrive - Vancouver Social Infrastructure Strategy:** On December 9, 2021, Council adopted the Spaces to Thrive, Vancouver's first strategic 10-year policy and partnership framework for City-owned and City-supported social infrastructure.

- **Equity Framework**: On July 20, 2021, Council approved the Equity Framework that lays the foundation for departmental action planning and for culture change within the City of Vancouver by centering on four notions: Indigenous rights, racial justice, intersectionality, and systems approach to change.

- **Indigenous Healing and Wellness Grants:** On July 25, 2017, Council adopted the Aboriginal Health, Healing and Wellness in the DTES Study and approved the creation of the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Grants initiative.

- **Streetohome Foundation**: On May 17, 2017 Council approved in principle the Housing Vancouver Emerging Directions. At the end of 2017, the final Vancouver Housing Strategy and Three-Year Action Plan were adopted by City Council. On July 28, 2011, Council endorsed the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2012-2021, which includes three strategic directions: 1) Increase the supply of affordable housing; 2) Encourage a housing mix across all neighbourhoods that enhances quality of life; and 3) Provide strong leadership and support partners to enhance housing stability.

- **Healthy City Strategy:** On October 29, 2014 Council approved goals, targets and indicators of the Healthy City Strategy 2014-2025 Phase I. On July 8, 2015, Council approved the first four-year action plan for the Healthy City Strategy. Council has approved the refresh of the strategy, which is underway.

- **City of Reconciliation:** On July 8, 2014 Council adopted the framework which has three foundational components that further strengthen our services and ongoing relationships with the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, and the urban Indigenous community: cultural competency, strengthening relations, and, effective decision-making. On January 19, 2016, Council approved the City's review of the Truth and Reconciliation "Calls to Action" report, which identified 27 of the 94 calls where the City has the jurisdiction and ability to implement action. City actions are aligned under 3 themes: Healthy Communities and Wellness; Achieving Indigenous Human Rights and Recognition; and Advancing Awareness, Knowledge, and Capacity.

- **Vancouver Food Strategy**: In January 2013, Council adopted the Vancouver Food Strategy with goals to improve access to healthy, affordable, and culturally diverse food for all residents, advocate for a just and sustainable food system with partners and at all levels of government, and to support food-friendly neighbourhoods.

- **Greenest City Grants**: Adopted in 2012 and revised in 2020 the Greenest City Grant program offers grants for place-based, community-driven initiatives that help advance sustainability, including the City of Vancouver's Climate Emergency Action Plan, while

supporting equity in our city. The grants support projects that foster sustainability leadership and collaboration, create opportunities for innovation, and mobilize community to take collective action on climate throughout Vancouver with a focus on addressing inequity. Council also authorized the City to enter into an agreement with the Vancouver Foundation to govern the administration of the Greenest City Neighbourhood Small Grant program from 2017-2020 and again from 2021- 2025.
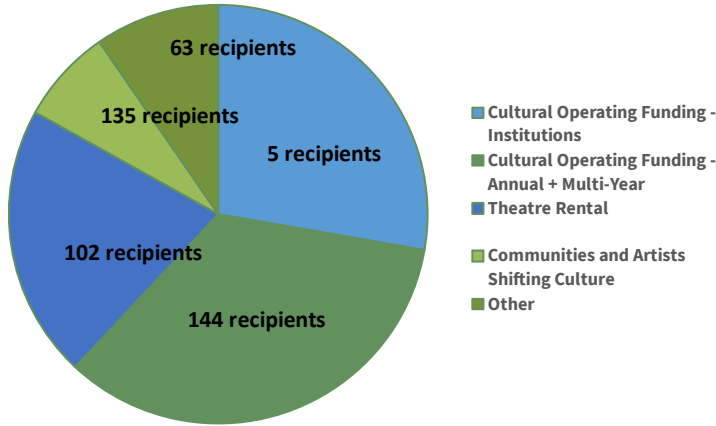
- **Community Services (CS) Grants:** On March 7, 1978, City Council established the Community Services Grants program. On October 9, 2003, City Council approved revisions to the Community Services Grants program, including the creation of three funding streams: Neighbourhood Organizations, Direct Social Services (renamed Core Support Grants), and Organizational Capacity Building.

APPENDIX C
SUMMARY PROFILE OF KEY DATA POINTS FROM JURISDICTIONAL SCAN

ARTS AND CULTURE GRANTING	City of Vancouver Cultural Services Grants	Calgary Arts Development Authority	Toronto Arts Council	City of Ottawa Culture Funding	Conseil des arts Montréal	Ville de Montréal Cultural Services	Seattle Office of Arts & Culture
Population	662,248	1,306,784	2,794,356	1,017,449	1,762,949	1,762,949	737,015
Structure	Municipal department	Development authority	Municipal partner	Municipal department	Municipal partner agency	Municipal department	Municipal department
Team size	9	8	16	6	14	Not available	8
Delegated authority (municipal departments only)	No	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes
Total grants and awards distributed (operating and capital)	$16,177,401	$13,627,378	$23,586,808	$11,763,375	$18,718,995	Not available	~$20,000,000
Number of grantees	495	676	883	368	1,103	Not available	Not available
Number of programs	13	11	32	17	66	12	12
Multi-year operating grant duration	3-years	2-year	3-year	3-year	4-year	No	3-year
Discretionary funding	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Funding for individuals	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Annual impact report	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY GRANTING	City of Vancouver Social Services Grants	City of Calgary Community Funding	City of Edmonton Community Funding	City of Toronto Community Funding	City of Ottawa Community Funding	Division for the reduction of inequalities and inclusive living environments
Population	662,248	1,306,784	1,010,899	2,794,356	1,017,449	1,762,949
Structure	Municipal department	Municipal department	Municipal department	Municipal department	Municipal department	Municipal department
Team size	7	8	7	Not available	8	15
Delegated authority (municipal departments only)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Total grants and awards distributed (operating and capital)	$10,718,269	Not available	Not available	$25,742,700	~$27,009,000	$26 million
Number of grantees	341	260	Not available	285	Not available	Not available
Number of programs	23	16	8-10	7	6	13
Multi-year operating grant duration	3-year	No	2-year	3-year	5-year	2-3 year
Discretionary funding	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not available
Annual impact report	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

APPENDIX D
FUNDING DISTRIBUTION

Analysis by Size (Arts and Culture)

CITY OF VANCOUVER

Grant Distribution by $

- 63 recipients
- 135 recipients
- 5 recipients
- 102 recipients
- 144 recipients

- Cultural Operating Funding - Institutions
- Cultural Operating Funding - Annual + Multi-Year
- Theatre Rental
- Communities and Artists Shifting Culture
- Other

Grant Distribution by Size of Recipient

- 39%
- 61%

- Large organizations - operational budgets > $1M
- Smaller organizations - operational budgets < $1M
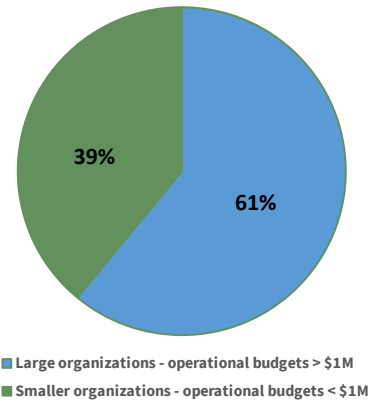
Note: 2024 allocations are still in progress, data is approximate

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Analysis by Size (Community Services)

CITY OF VANCOUVER

Percentage of funding distributed in 2024 by size of organization operating budgets

- 4%
- 8%
- 16%
- 4%
- 5%
- 18%
- 6%
- 39%

- <$100,000
- $100,000-250,000
- $250,000-500,000
- $500,000-750,000
- $750,000-1M
- $1M-5M
- $5M-10M
- >$10M
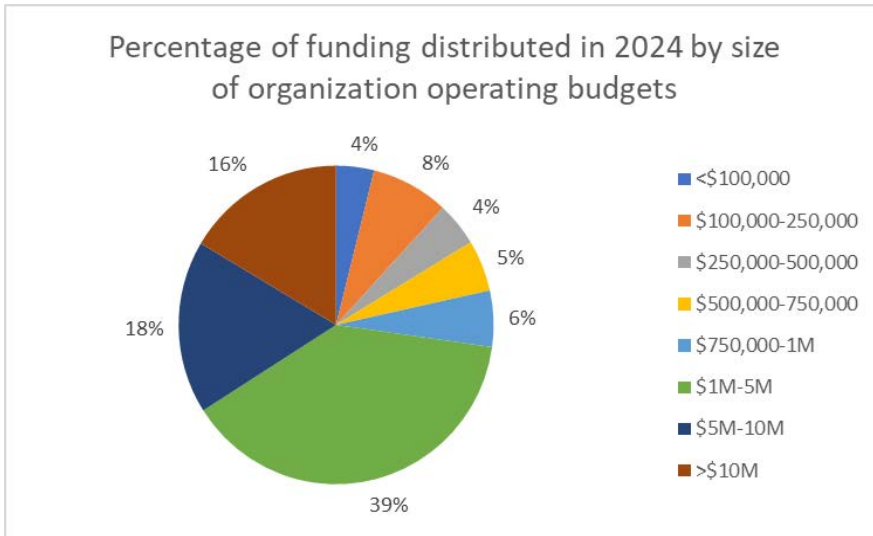
From Canada Helps' "The Giving Report 2024", just under half of all Canadian charitable organizations in 2021 had revenues of under $100k.

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