



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: June 10, 2005
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TO: Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets
FROM: Managing Director of Cultural Services
SUBJECT: 2005 Opportunity Initiatives Grant Allocation

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve 2005 Opportunity Initiatives grants totalling \$325,000 to:

PuSh International Performing Arts Festival Society: \$200,000 for the PuSh Festival; and

Judith Marcuse Projects Society: \$125,000 for the Earth Festival.

Funding for both grants shall be SUBJECT TO the respective conditions as described in **Appendix A**. Source of funds to be the 2005 Opportunity Initiatives grants budget.

- B. THAT Council direct staff to undertake a program review of the Opportunity Initiatives program which is at the end of a three-year trial period, and to report back with options for future support mechanisms and funding in the context of the City Creative Task Force strategic planning process.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of A and B, noting that A requires eight affirmative votes.

COUNCIL POLICY

On October 10, 2002, Council approved a policy mechanism for providing up to three Opportunity Initiatives grants per year, not exceeding a total of \$400,000 per year, for three types of festival and celebration initiatives:

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

Approval of grant recommendations requires eight affirmative votes.

PURPOSE

This report presents staff recommendations based on an Advisory Committee's independent analysis regarding requests for Opportunity Initiatives grants received from The Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale, PuSh International Performing Arts Festival Society and Judith Marcuse Projects Society.

BACKGROUND

Council established Opportunity Initiatives grants to support new large-scale initiatives that expand the scope and profile of festivals in Vancouver. The number of grants in any given year is limited to three, total grants approved are not to exceed \$400,000 per annum, and grants are only provided SUBJECT TO leveraging funding from other sources. Funding over a maximum of three years may be available for the Opportunity Initiatives grant category (including initial support in two instalments for the development and implementation phases of an event).

A five-member Advisory Committee reviewed three applications, each under a different program category, according to the guidelines detailed in **Appendix B**. The Committee members were:

John Alleyne, Artistic Director, Ballet British Columbia
Grant Arnold: Audain Curator of British Columbia Art, Vancouver Art Gallery
Bob Eberle: Associate Professor, UBC Theatre Dept
Duncan Low: Executive Director, Vancouver East Cultural Centre
Mark Ostry: Partner, Acton Ostry Architects

DISCUSSION

The Advisory Committee reviewed the three submissions against the Council-approved guidelines. Each of the applicants submitted under differing categories (**Table 1**).

Table 1

Category	Organization	Festival Name
A - New annual/biennial festivals or celebrations	Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale	Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale
B - One-time opportunities for Vancouver as the site of a festival or celebration	Judith Marcuse Projects Society	The Earth Festival
C - Joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations	PuSh International Performing Arts Festival Society (joint venture: Rumble Productions Society & Touchstone Theatre Society)	PuSh Festival

The Advisory Committee recommendations are listed in Table 2, and discussed in more detail under individual headings in Appendix A.

Table 2
Recommendations: 2005 Opportunity Initiatives grants

Organization	Festival Name	Requested	Recommended
Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale	Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale	\$200,000	\$0
Judith Marcuse Projects Society	The Earth Festival	\$150,000	\$125,000
PuSh International Performing Arts Festival Society	PuSh International Performing Arts Festival Society	\$200,000	\$200,000
Total		\$550,000	\$325,000

When the Opportunity Initiatives grant program was established in 2002, it was for a three-year trial term (2003-2005). In recognition of the planning process and investment requirements to launch large-scale festivals and celebrations, funding can be awarded for a maximum of three years. Because the Opportunity Initiatives program is at the end of a three-year pilot period, future sources of funding have not yet been secured, but will be considered in the context of a program review.

Despite this, the Advisory Committee reviewed and evaluated the requests for 2006 funding received (Table 3) for subsequent years from two organizations. The Committee recommended the following grants for 2006, subject to Council approval of Recommendation B (a source of funds arising from a program review and recommendations arising from the City Creative Task Force) and approval of the 2006 Operating Budget.

**Table 3
Recommendations: 2006 Opportunity Grants**

Organization	Festival Name	Requested	Recommended*
The Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale	The Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale	\$200,000	\$0
PuSh International Performing Arts Festival Society	PuSh International Performing Arts Festival Society	\$100,000	\$100,000
Total		\$300,000	\$100,000

*subject to Council approval of a source of funds arising from program review, recommendations arising from the City Creative Task Force, and the 2006 Operating Budget.

In advance of the program review, staff sought advice and recommendations on the Opportunities Initiatives grants program from the 2005 Advisory Committee. The Committee made the following recommendations:

- Given that sustainable funding is critical for the development of new initiatives, the Opportunity Initiatives program should be ongoing and multi-year requests should continue to be considered
- The program should clearly articulate eligibility and evaluation criteria and set annual deadlines which could achieve increased transparency and community understanding of the program
- Due to the program's unique objectives, it should continue to be separate from other grant programs which support festivals, celebrations and special events
- The program should continue to support non-profit societies that are clearly distinct from commercial enterprises
- There should be no minimum number of applications received and supported

The above recommendations will be taken into consideration during a program review, where staff will report back to Council with options for future funding sources, in the context of the City Creative Task Force strategic planning process, (as per recommendation B in this report).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2005 Opportunity Initiatives grants budget is \$400,000. A previous allocation of \$75,000 to the Vancouver Arts Awards in 2005 leaves \$325,000 available. The proposed grant allocations in this report total \$325,000 leaving no unallocated balance in the 2005 Opportunity Grants fund.

CONCLUSION

This report contains recommendations from an independent Advisory Committee for funding of new opportunities, festival and celebrations in 2005 as well as a recommendation for funding in principle for 2006. Further, staff recommend a review of the Opportunity Initiatives grants pilot-program and report back with mechanisms for the City's continued support for large-scale celebrations and events.

The Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale

The Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale has requested funds to present an eighteen-month bi-annual festival of international sculpture. Up to 30 large-scale sculptures by artists from several different countries are proposed to be installed in the summer of 2005 in Vancouver's parks and public spaces. As well, the Biennale's proposal presented a broad outline for both a Festival of Nations in spring 2006 (including visual arts, performing arts and culinary events of the participating nations), an on-going educational component as well as a Gala art auction.

Inaugurated in 1998, an outdoor sculpture exhibit has been produced biannually by either the Buschlen Mowatt Foundation (a private foundation) or the Bushlen Mowatt Gallery (a private art gallery). In 2002 a non-profit corporation was formed, the Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale although the 2002 and 2004 events were produced by the gallery. Each bi-annual event, including the proposed 2005/2006 event has received a significant level of support from the City of Vancouver through the Park Board for the use of the City's public spaces.

The Advisory Committee considered the proposed International Sculpture Biennale to be a popular and accessible event for Vancouver's citizens. However, they also expressed concern that the not-for-profit corporation was not an arms-length entity separate in its leadership, governance and administration from the commercial gallery. Further, the Advisory Committee members noted that, although the Biennale's proposal presented a broad outline for both a Festival of Nations and an educational component, the application lacked specific programme and budget details. In the context of a competitive grant round, the Committee did not recommend support.

Judith Marcuse Projects Society

Judith Marcuse Projects Society requested funds to present the one-time Earth Festival on June 18-25, 2006. Linked to the World Urban Forum and the World Peace Forum scheduled to take place in Vancouver during and after the festival, the event will take place at the Great Northern Way Campus. The festival would bring together issues about youth, the arts, environmental sustainability and social justice in a week of performances, workshops, exhibitions and dialogue. The festival would present performances of organizations from around the world (including Colombia, Brazil, Mexico, the Philippines, India, South Africa, Japan, Italy and the UK) as well as performances by the Judith Marcuse Projects Society.

The Advisory Committee considered the Earth Festival to be an ambitious undertaking, providing sustained engagement with youth. The Committee recommended support, SUBJECT TO the following conditions, to the satisfaction of the Managing Director, Cultural Services:

- confirmation of the venue, site and logistical requirements
- confirmation of matching sources of funding, and partnerships
- confirmation of the festival program participants and schedule including international performances, workshops and other events

PuSh International Performing Arts Festival Society

The PuSh International Performing Arts Festival Society, requested funds to present the PuSh International Performing Arts Festival, January 10-February 5, 2006, in various venues throughout Vancouver. First initiated in 2003 as a partnership between Rumble Productions Society and Touchstone Theatre as a series of curated performances, a new society is now poised to create a large, high-profile winter festival celebrating the best in contemporary performing arts. The multidisciplinary festival will feature international, Canadian and local performances, along with post-presentation talk-backs, round table discussions, workshops and an international conference component. Local productions, in both satellite and mainstage venues, will be presented alongside national and international performances. Vancouver audiences will be exposed to a range of possibilities, Vancouver artists will connect with an international network of collaborators, presenters and producers, and Vancouver will be showcased as a cultural tourist destination to a broader audience.

The Advisory Committee considered the PuSh Festival to be unique contribution to the cultural sector in Vancouver in its approach to foster ideas and talent locally and in dialogue with a larger national and international network. They recommended support for the 2006 festival and, noting the importance of sustaining this growing event, highly recommended support in 2006 for the 2007 festival (if funds had been available). Support towards the 2006 festival is SUBJECT TO the following conditions, to the satisfaction of the Managing Director, Cultural Services:

- confirmation of matching sources of funding
- confirmation of venues

Opportunity Initiatives Guidelines

Description

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

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

Category Guidelines

In any given year an organization(s) may apply for support for one of the following types of initiatives:

A. New annual / biennial festivals or celebrations

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

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

Funding over a maximum of three years may be available for this Opportunity Initiative category (including initial support in two instalments for the development and implementation phases of an event).

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

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

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

Funding is to be one-time support only, which may be provided in two instalments, for the development and implementation phase of an event.

C. Joint ventures involving existing festivals and other cultural organizations

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

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

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

Funding over a maximum three years may be available for this Opportunity Initiative category (including initial support in two instalments for the development and implementation phases of an event).

Ineligible Activities

- regular and ongoing activities of applicants
- activities that are already funded through Celebration or Cultural grant programs
- sports and athletic events, runs or walks
- competitions or events with either commercial or fund-raising purposes
- block parties, garden shows, street markets and fairs with amusement rides
- religious rites and ceremonies
- event with a budget of \$400,000 or less (sections A and B)
- initiative with a budget of \$250,000 or less (section C)

Levering Requirement

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

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

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

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

Process

- 1) Opportunity Initiatives have no application deadline. Applicants should allow adequate planning time for their project and should note that the process involves several steps:
 - a) A two page *letter of inquiry* providing a summary of the proposed initiative plus the projected budget.
 - b) The new initiative outlined in the two page *letter of inquiry* will be reviewed by City Staff to determine eligibility and technical feasibility.
 - c) If the project is determined both eligible and technically feasible, applicants will then be asked to make a *formal request*.
 - d) A *formal request*. There is no application form, but requests for funding should include:
 - society name of applicant, society number, and contact information of organizers and all board members
 - names, contact information and description of other participating organizations
 - full description of proposed activity, including time frame, complete budget (expenses and revenues, including the amount requested from the City), site and venue information
 - detailed explanation of what the initiative is intended to accomplish and how this relates to the Opportunity Initiatives guidelines and objectives
 - an explanation of how the anticipated outcomes of the initiative will be measured
 - audited financial statements of the society submitting the request
 - a cover letter signed by the society's senior staff person and board chair
- 2) After an advisory committee (including community members and people with event expertise) has reviewed the application, staff will submit a report for City Council's approval.
- 3) The evaluation and approval process following receipt of the formal application is expected to take between five to seven weeks, depending on City Council's schedule.
- 4) All Opportunity Initiatives recipients will be expected to provide an annual report back on their project. A report on outcomes is a condition of applying for further support through Opportunity Initiatives, but does not guarantee approval of future funds.

Grants are subject to availability of funds. Please note that a maximum total of \$400,000 is available to address all requests for Opportunity grants in any given year. Applicants are advised to begin discussions with staff and to submit letters of inquiry well in advance of proposed activities.

Evaluation Criteria

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

Definitions

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

Celebration: A one-day event generally held outdoors, programmed around a theme, anniversary or other occasion, which features cultural expression in the broadest sense.

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

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

Significant Impact: Initiatives to be of visible and tangible value, either artistically or economically, to the City of Vancouver.

Contact Information

For more information about Opportunity Initiatives funding please contact:

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