



LONDON
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

Community Vitality Grant Program

2024 Applicant Guide



Contents

1. Overview & Updates	3
2. About London Community Foundation	3
3. Who Can Apply	4
3.1 Eligible Applicants	4
3.2 Non-Qualified Donees	4
3.3 Ineligible Applicants	4
3.4 Subsequent applications from past recipients	4
4. London's Vital Signs 2022: Be the Change	5
4.1 Issue Areas	5
4.2 Arts	5
5. Funding Requests	5
6. Expenditures	6
6.1 Eligible	6
6.2 Ineligible	6
7. Geographic Catchment Area	6
8. Criteria & Evaluation	6
8.1 Eligibility Criteria	6
8.2 Evaluation Criteria	7
9. How to Apply	8
9.1 Letter of Intent (LOI)	8
9.2 Application Stage	8
9.3 Interview Stage	9
10. Notification of Decision	9
11. Requirements of Supported Applicants	9
12. Program Dates	9
13. Application Assistance	10
Appendix A - Organization Profile & Stage One Letter of Intent Questions	11

1. Overview & Updates

Thank you for your interest in applying to the London Community Foundation's (LCF) COMMUNITY VITALITY GRANT program – a response to London's Vital Signs Report.

"Change requires action. Though the importance of listening and learning cannot be understated, meaningful, systemic change can only occur by coming together to participate in collective action."

bethechangelondon.ca

In 2024, the program will provide funding to local projects contributing to systems-change and long-term solutions and changes that:

- Are substantively new;
- Demonstrate potential for significant change to the current state of affairs;
- Are innovative while still accountable and measurable;
- Improve or leverage resources/investments to increase impact;
- Act on the concept of "nothing about us, without us"; and
- Involve collaboration or strategic partnership

The Community Vitality program has granted over \$10M since 2011. When considering a proposal submission, it will be helpful to review past recipients ([listed on this page](#)) to see the types of projects supported.

2. About London Community Foundation

OUR MISSION: We create a vibrant, smart and caring community through strategic investing that drives innovative community-based projects.

OUR VISION: A community working together to enrich the quality of life for all.

OUR VALUE PRINCIPLES:

- Emphasize prevention rather than remediation
- Encourage networking and collaboration among organizations
- Demonstrate innovative or interdisciplinary approaches
- Develop local leadership capacity
- Reflect diversity and inclusivity
- Provide leveraging possibilities

3. Who Can Apply

3.1 Eligible Applicants

[Qualified donees](#) are eligible to apply to the Community Vitality program. Qualified donees are specific kinds of organizations registered with the Canada Revenue Agency (registered charities, municipal governments, Indigenous governing body, etc.).

3.2 Non-Qualified Donees

Many community service organizations (CSO), such as non profits, are not qualified donees. These CSO's may partner with a qualified donee who serves as the applicant.

If the non-qualified donee, for its role with the project, will require a portion of the grant that amounts to more than \$25,000, an agreement between the qualified donee/non-qualified donee is required. A copy of the agreement must be submitted to the Foundation at the application stage.

Refer to "[Better Together – A Guide for Charity/Non-Charity Partnerships](#)" for guidance on agreements.

3.3 Ineligible Applicants

An applicant organization may not include, as part of its senior administration, a London Community Foundation employee and their immediate family.

Members of the London Community Foundation Grants Committee and Board of Directors are eligible to apply. However, they are recused from reviewing, scoring, and commenting on their own applications. They may not discuss their own application with other committee or board members.

3.4 Subsequent applications from past recipients

Past recipients are eligible to apply with a project distinct from the one for which it received a Community Vitality grant.

4. London's Vital Signs 2022: Be the Change

4.1 Issue Areas

The proposal must primarily address one of the seven issue areas (below) from the [Vital Signs report](#) – a report that takes the pulse of our community and creates awareness of our most pressing issues.

- Education
- Gender Equality
- Racial Equality
- Food Security
- Housing
- Well-Being
- Environment

4.2 Arts

Proposals for arts-based projects are encouraged consisting of innovation and impact beyond the art discipline and/or arts organization itself.

5. Funding Requests

- Applicants are welcome to request a grant of any amount between \$50,000 minimum and \$350,000 maximum. This is a general guideline and does not preclude consideration of proposals requesting more than the maximum.
- The request may consist of up to 50% for capital expense if those costs are directly related to the proposal's project or objective (see 5.1 eligible expenditures).
- Disbursement may be requested over one, two, or three years.
- The Foundation reserves the right to provide full or partial funding.
- There is no pre-determined number of projects to be funded.
- LCF prefers not to be the only monetary funder. The Foundation can be the first, second or last source of funding for a proposal; order is not important. There is no matching formula requirement; only the required intent to leverage.

6. Expenditures

6.1 Eligible

The Foundation will consider supporting reasonable and essential expenditures required to implement the proposal with two limitations:

- Staffing expenses must be directly attributable to the project that is the proposal's basis; and
- Capital expenses can consist of up to only 50% of the total amount requested and can be used toward the acquisition of fixed assets (equipment) and/or space renovation, and must be directly attributable to the project that is the proposal's basis.

6.2 Ineligible

The following expenditures are ineligible and will not be supported by the Community Vitality Program:

- Land acquisition;
- Building purchases; and
- New construction.¹

LCF's [Social Impact Fund](#) supports affordable housing by providing loans to builders and provides financing to all types of social enterprise projects and organizations that are looking to improve the community, and can demonstrate a social return or value. Check out our website for more details.

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7. Geographic Catchment Area

The proposal must have a priority impact on some, or all, of LCF's catchment area which includes:

- City of London
- County of Middlesex
- Oneida Nation of the Thames
- Chippewas of the Thames First Nation; and
- Munsee-Delaware Nation.

Projects that impact areas outside of LCF's catchment are eligible as long as the Community Vitality grant is fully used within LCF's catchment.

8. Criteria & Evaluation

8.1 Eligibility Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated for eligibility according to this criteria:

- Applicant organization is a qualified donee
- Involves individuals, organizations, or partnerships with the capacity to deliver the project;
- Responds to an issue area highlighted in the most recent Vital Signs report
- Implemented within and impacts the Foundation's catchment area
- Contributes to systems-change and long-term solutions and changes
- Involves collaboration or strategic partnership between at least two parties;
- Involves contributions, monetary or in-kind, from other sources
- Is requesting a minimum of \$50,000 over a one, two, or three year period
- Funding request consists only of eligible expenditures.

8.2 Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by LCF's Grants committee based on the extent that the project:

- **Is substantively new, meaning it:**
 - Is a new approach to an issue
 - Is a different way of framing/conceiving an old issue
 - Brings together different partners in new strategic ways who are fully committed
 - **Proposes significant change to the current state of affairs, as follows:**
 - Alters the current system
 - Takes an undesirable trend and turns it around
 - Substantially improves results of current methods
 - Fills an important, unaddressed gap in the community
- TIP:** Transformative impact versus transactional or adaptive change!

- **Is innovative while still accountable and measurable, by:**
 - Grounding the proposal's assumptions in evidence or a credible change theory; What makes the approach plausible?
 - Articulating a plan to achieve demonstrable outcomes
 - Providing evidence of capacity to deliver on the proposal's progress and outcomes; is there the necessary experience & expertise? Is the proposal realistically scaled; and is the plan feasible?

TIP: Demonstrate capacity, competence and commitment!

- **Improves, or leverages resources/investments to increase impact by:**
 - Attracting funding contributions from other sources
 - Sharing and using local resources and expertise more effectively
 - Finding innovative efficiencies in systems or services
 - Having a way to sustain it - if applicable - beyond the Community Vitality grant term; detailed a clear plan to secure other funding sources particularly with consideration to, if applicable, staffing and programmatic costs

- **Acts on the concept of “nothing about us, without us;” meaning proposals that:**
 - Are led by and/or meaningfully engage those who are directly affected by the issue being addressed by the project;
 - Are inclusive of community members with diverse lived experiences, including ethnicity, language, gender, sexual diversity and orientation, socio-economic status, age, and physical abilities;
 - Identify the relationships established - or the plan to establish - with those intended to benefit from this project (including equity-seeking groups and those with specific socioeconomic needs).

- **Involves collaboration or strategic partnerships that demonstrate:**
 - Collective understanding of the issue;
 - A clear and detailed understanding by all partners of their individual roles;
 - Agreement of financial input and/or sharing of the Foundation's contribution;
 - The right skills, knowledge, behaviours, and support structures in place; and
 - Appropriate governance arrangements alongside senior leadership commitment and support.

9. How to Apply

The Community Vitality Grant Program is administered as a three-stage process.

9.1 Letter of Intent (LOI)

The purpose of the LOI is to convey your unique proposal within two pages and in your own words. It should demonstrate serious plans around accountability, capacity, collaboration, and leveraging; plans must be 'doable.' Clarity and conciseness are key – less is more. Plain language is preferred rather than acronyms, technical or professional terminology. Citations for data/statistics are not required in the LOI, or if provided, can be listed on a third page.

LOI Deadline: January 23, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

- A.** Applicants use the online system to submit the LOI along with an organization profile (**Two page maximum**) at: Logon - Grant Lifecycle Manager (grantinterface.ca)
See Appendix A for the Organization Profile and LOI questions.
- B.** The LOI is due **January 23, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.** Any submission made after the deadline date will be deemed ineligible. Using the online system is preferred, however if you require an alternate submission format, please contact Lindsay Ralph, Grants Officer at Lindsay@lcf.on.ca or 519-667-1600 x106. No other documentation will be accepted after the deadline, unless it is provided in response to an LCF inquiry.
- C.** All LOI's will be reviewed by LCF's Grants Committee. By **February 29, 2024** all applicants will be notified as to whether they are invited to the application stage.

9.2 Application Stage

A selection of applicants from the LOI stage will be invited to submit a comprehensive application using the online application system provided by the Foundation.

Application Deadline: March 26, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

- A.** Applicants use the online system (grantinterface.ca) to complete the application which includes a work plan, budget, qualified donee's financial statements, board of directors listing, and confirmation that key governance policies are in place. If any one or more of the project partners will be receiving a portion of the funding greater than \$25,000 for their role, an agreement is required to be submitted to LCF at this stage. Applicants may provide additional documentation to further convey the proposal's premise.
- B.** The application and required documents must be submitted online by **May 1, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.** Any submission made after the deadline date will be deemed ineligible. Using the online system is preferred, however if you require an alternate submission format, please contact Lindsay Ralph, Grants Officer, Lindsay@lcf.on.ca or 519-667-1600 x106. No other documentation will be accepted after the deadline, unless it is provided in response to an LCF inquiry.
- C.** All applications are reviewed by LCF's Grants Committee to determine which applicants to invite to attend an interview.

9.3 Interview Stage

- A. By **May 19, 2024** applicants will be notified as to whether they are invited for an interview.
- B. The interviews will be held in person on **May 23rd, 2024**. An invitation will include your scheduled time, a location, and questions/points of clarification to address. Applicants can meet with an LCF Grants staff member to discuss the questions/points of clarification.
- C. Upon conclusion of interviews, the Grants Committee will deliberate and select which applications to recommend for support with a Community Vitality grant.

10. Notification of Decision

By **May 31, 2024** applicants will be notified if their proposal has been chosen as a Community Vitality recipient and what the next steps will be.

11. Requirements of Supported Applicants

By **August 31, 2024** applicants approved for funding will be required to review and sign a Memorandum of Understanding outlining the proposal's objective, use of The Foundation's funding, grant period, amount, installments, reporting and publicity guidelines as well as provisions should entire funds not be spent or the project discontinued. If any one or more of the partners will be receiving a portion of the funding greater than \$25,000 for their role, the completed and signed-off agreement is required to be submitted to The Foundation.

12. Program Dates

London Community Foundation reserves the right to extend the dates at any time.

January 23 at 2:00 PM	Letter of Intent due
February 29	All those who submitted a LOI are notified if receiving an invitation to complete a full application
March 26 at 2:00 PM	Application due
May 19	Applicants notified if invited to interview stage
May 23	Interviews conducted
May 31	Recipients notified if Board approval obtained
Aug 31	Memorandum of Understanding completed
October 31	First installment mailed to recipient

13. Application Assistance

Please contact Lindsay Ralph, Grants Officer | Lindsay@lcf.on.ca | 519-667-1600 x 106 who will manage requests for technical and application assistance. Virtual and in person drop in sessions will be offered by LCF staff. Please see the schedule below.

Date	Time	Location
November 20	10:00 - 11:00 am	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82881054492?pwd=UnZjUS8wU0JORDZjSmlmaW5MckZhdz09
November 21	2:00 - 3:00 pm	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81254139678?pwd=dXpFVmFZY2IRZmtJTm5mMzIKRWREZz09
November 23	11:00 - 12:00 noon	London Community Foundation Boardroom
December 4	10:00 - 11:00 am	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85027471166?pwd=NEI5TWVVSjlpXbGk5WUN5Nnd3VjRZUT09
December 5	2:00 - 3:00 pm	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82256518265?pwd=dy9iMG94VGNjQmZvcE5mVE5GT3NCdz09
December 7	2:00 - 3:00 pm	London Community Foundation Boardroom
December 11	11:00 - 12:00 noon	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81190201010?pwd=SFVGOS9EQWNyTE NjQmkwR1VGMkhRUT09
December 12	2:00 - 3:00 pm	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87663905661?pwd=TIZlaUlVWVpLZ1JtMnBZZXAzUG1Edz09
December 14	11:00 - 12:00 noon	London Community Foundation Boardroom
January 8	11:00 - 12:00 noon	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89057855776?pwd=c3kzUnZVOFdPQTF4R1NyTnJJZGtVZz09
January 9	2:00 - 3:00 pm	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89052833670?pwd=MUtSWVVvZyZyxejk3aVpuOW03WFF5UT09
January 11	11:00 - 12:00 noon	London Community Foundation Boardroom
January 15	11:00 - 12:00 noon	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89665309629?pwd=UXVxQzRNZ2dWb1ZhYnJjSVNXR1Bqdz09
January 16	2:00 - 3:00 pm	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83420206953?pwd=TVh5TVhkSG5xSEFpaVQwUHcyZGhjdz09
January 18	2:00 - 3:00 pm	London Community Foundation Boardroom

Appendix A

Organization Profile & Stage One Letter of Intent Questions

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

London Community Foundation has changed their application intake system for the Community Vitality process. Because of this when you first sign into the online portal you will need to create an organization profile. The information required is similar to what you may have provided in a previous LCF application.

Tell us about your organization's purpose and administration. Be concise.

- Contact Name: *This will be pre-populated using the data in your account for this application.*
- Email: *This will be pre-populated using the data in your account for this application.*
- What is your relationship to the organization?
- Phone Number:
- Name of Canadian Charitable Organization or Qualified Donee:
- Registered Charity Number (if applicable):
- Website (Optional):
- Complete mailing address
- About the Organization (mission, purpose):

This organization serves the population of

- London, Ontario, CANADA
- Middlesex County, Ontario, CANADA
- Oneida Nation of the Thames
- Munsee-Delaware Nation
- Chippewas of the Thames First Nation

Who does your organization serve? Provide the two demographics, the Age group and the Population your organization serves. *Note on Age & Population selections* If you select "All Ages", please **do not select** the separate Age options. If you choose "General Population", please **do not select** the separate Population options.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ■ All ages | ■ LGBT2Q+ |
| ■ Children – up to 11 | ■ Newcomers |
| ■ Youth – 12 to 18 | ■ People with Disabilities |
| ■ Young adults – 19 to 29 | ■ Diverse Cultural Communities |
| ■ Adults – 30 to 64 | ■ Women |
| ■ Seniors – 65 and up | ■ Men |
| ■ General Population | ■ Indigenous |

What is the organizational structure?

Is it completely volunteer-run? Or is there a staff and volunteer mix? Provide approximate numbers and explain reasons for the structure if not self-evident.

How is the organization funded?

Describe how your organization sustains its activities, including major funder names and amounts - be concise.

Community Vitality Stage One Letter Of Intent

VITAL SIGN ALIGNMENT

Your project must align with one or more of the following Vital Signs issue areas. Please choose at least one and up to three Vital Sign issue areas that align with your project.

- Education
- Gender Equality
- Racial Equality
- Food Security
- Housing
- Well-Being
- Environment

PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

- Proposal Name (10-word limit) *This value must be between 1 and 10 words.*
- Short Description of Proposal (25-word limit) *This value must be between 5 and 25 words.*
- Estimated Total Cost of Your Proposal (\$)
- Community Vitality Grant Amount Requested (\$)
- Number of years (up to 3) for Disbursement (#)

LETTER OF INTENT – Two-page maximum

On your organization's letterhead, upload a document (two-page maximum) signed by the organization's leadership including the Executive Director, CEO, President, etc. AND the Board Chair, President, etc.

Explain the proposal in a narrative form and be sure to include all of the following details:

- List the benefits of completing the project,
- Describe how the project will be carried out,
- Who else will be involved and what are their roles; include the community members you serve and how your project has 'nothing about us, without us" in its concept,
- Describe why the applicant and its partners have the capacity to undertake this proposal and achieve the outcomes identified,
- Describe at high-level the project's budget and funding needs including which funders have been secured/will be approached. Be sure to indicate to which specific expenses LCF granting will be allocated.

If you are not able to upload this document, please contact Lindsay Ralph, Grants Officer, for assistance. Lindsay@lcf.on.ca | 519-667-1600 x 106