

Notes from the Hamilton Future Fund Grant Process Review Working Group

Meeting Date: November 27, 2019

In Attendance: John Kirkpatrick,
Tara Crugnale,
Gerry Davis,
Sonja Macdonald,
Anthony Macaluso

Several key issues were discussed during the meeting relating to the review of the grant process. Two overarching points were:

- The working group needs more direction from the Board of Governors in terms of scope for the review.
- The working group requires more time to ensure that the review and recommendations are useful for a better process in the future.

Some more specific items were discussed, as follows:

- **Application related items:**
 - Introducing fixed dates for the application process – if funds are not available, then the process won't be opened.
 - Idea of introducing word limits to application responses was raised – could this lead to more consistency between applications?
 - Questions arose about the inclusion of a Maximum and Minimum amount on the current application – should this be continued? If so, should applicants be required to provide more detail?
 - Complete/incomplete applications – How best to deal with incomplete applications?
 - Discussion is required by the full Board to assess decisions around completeness of applications, for example should applicants be asked to complete applications by a specific time, or should the applications be immediately disqualified? Who should make this decision (i.e. Clerk or Board of Governors)?
 - Idea of introducing a checklist as applications come in to determine which are or are not complete.
- **Application evaluation:**
 - Creating a clearer and more transparent method of evaluation applications - e.g. introducing a points system like those used by other funding bodies (i.e. City Enrichment Fund).
 - More accurately aligning the evaluation of applications with the mission and principles of the Future Fund.

Notes from the Hamilton Future Fund Grant Process Review Working Group

- **Funding reporting:**
 - Desire to establish a template for those who receive funding to report back, including fixed timelines, e.g. report back at 6 months, and/or 1 year.
 - Questions arose about how funds are distributed – as a one-time fund transfer? In segments based on steps to completion?
 - Idea of a hold back for funding tied to reporting was also mentioned?

- **Staff Resources:**
 - The clerk is the only staff assigned to the Future Fund for application intake/organization, coordinating the Board activities, and following up on funding and reporting from successful applicants.
 - Is there a way to access additional staff resources to assist? If not, in what ways can the Future Fund process make use of opportunities from other staff activities, e.g. Enrichment Fund
 - One example included exploring if information about the Future Fund could be included when the Enrichment Fund host information events in the community to better represent the difference between the two funds.