2025 City Enrichment Fund Administrative Updates

The City Enrichment Fund (CEF) program is operated with a continuous improvement lens. Each year staff assess CEF to apply administrative improvements across all areas of the program. The following table outline the incoming CEF program updates to better serve applicants, staff, and reflect the community/tech/expectations.

Update	Rational and Impact
New application intake period. October 1- November 15	To accommodate community engagement, the 2024 intake period was moved to Nov.1-Dec 15. Staff received unexpected positive feedback about the pushed intake period from many applicants. A Oct.1 – Nov. 15 intake period accommodates applicants during the demanding September and December months and shortens the overall CEF timeline. Agriculture applicants commented that a moved intake period would interfere less with harvest season, and for many arts and cultural organizations a later intake period is preferred, avoiding the busy September schedules. *Status: In progress*
CEF Funding Agreement	Modernizing the CEF Funding Agreement to better outline the roles and responsibilities of both the City of Hamilton and grant recipient, to reduce risk, and improve clarity of obligations for both parties. Phase 1 included extensive revisions to the funding agreement through the City Solicitors office. Phase 2 will be continued improvement of these agreements including signatures from Director of Government Relations & Community Engagement on behalf of the City, and varied levels of agreement dependent on applicant funding levels. *Status: Phase 1 Complete; Phase 2 In progress*
Grant Portal	The grant portal currently consists of a single online submission form that was designed with generalized language and included questions not applicable to each program area. Following a successful pilot period, the grant portal is being updated to offer submission options specific to each program area, using accessible language and prompts. *Status: In progress*
Guidelines and Handbooks Information	Update guidelines and handbooks to provide clearer and consistent language overall including: • Provide additional definitions within the glossary, including clarification of new vs returning applicants, resident of Hamilton

	and others where applicable • Provide clearer policy language – particularly on number of applications per program an applicant is eligible to submit. *Status: In progress*
IDEA Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility data questions updates	Current IDEA data collection pre-dates City's IDEA as terminology City wide. Working with internal performance and evaluation specialists to ensure data is both comparable to previous years, and collects more nuanced information regarding who is reflected on the governing bodies of grantees, who they serve, and who is present within their audiences/clients. *Status: In progress*
Budget Form and applicant program	Improve user friendliness of budget form and update question language to seek clarity on applicants' ability to scale programs depending on grant levels received. *Status: In progress*

Program Area Updates	• Digital, updated to Digital Equity -
	   o Updates to Digital Program if approved as permanent component of CEF, including potentially revised streams for one-time versus ongoing projects.
	
	• Communities Culture and Heritage
	   o Events & Established Activities – Small Requests- increase maximum request from $5,000 to $15,000
	       ▪ Enable events which are performing poorly in Events & Established Activities -Large to be more successful in smaller request category, many applicants apply within the large category due to funding maximums, not understanding that differing set of criteria.
	   o New Projects- Lower request from $35,000 to $15,000
	       ▪ Set expectations for groups approaching CEF for the first time to have reasonable requests for new events or projects. This lower request amount will then provide a straightforward path as they become eligible to apply from New Projects to Events & Established Activities -Small
	   o One application per organization to CCH-New Projects and E&EA- Large
	       ▪ To manage increasing requests to the Communities, Culture & Heritage Stream
	
	Status: In progress