

CELEBRATE ONTARIO — FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CELEBRATE ONTARIO

What's new for the Celebrate Ontario 2017 program?

- Existing large events with cash operating expenses of at least \$1 million may apply for multi-year (two-year) funding (fiscal year 2017-18 and fiscal year 2018-19) under the Celebrate Ontario 2017 Multi-Year category. Only one application needs to be submitted for both years, but it must include details for the first year's and second year's: enhancements, performance metrics, and financial activities.
- Applicants may include a request for marketing as an eligible expense for the Celebrate Ontario 2017 program. Applicants may apply for marketing costs associated with their enhancement project (if the enhancement project lends itself to marketing), the event itself, or both. The marketing request must remain consistent with the organization's overall marketing plan.
 - Celebrate Ontario 2017 program funding support for eligible marketing expenses cannot exceed 15 percent of the total eligible Celebrate Ontario 2017 program funding request.
 - Marketing funding will only be provided for marketing initiatives targeting tourists staying overnight who are in-province (Ontario overnight audiences at least 100 kilometres from the event), or out-of-province overnight audiences beyond Ontario (e.g., other parts of Canada, the United States, international).
- Applicants are invited to consider Canada's 150th in their planning. For events occurring between April 1, 2017 and December 31, 2017, organizers might consider an enhancement activity that celebrates or commemorates Canada's 150th — the anniversary of Canada's Constitution Act, 1867, which established the Confederation of Canada.
- Applicants are asked to identify the target sector of their event. New this year is the opportunity to identify rural or northern events, given their significance to local economies.

How does the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport define an event?

For the purposes of the Celebrate Ontario program, the ministry defines an event as a tourism festival, event or public celebration that:

- is organized as a series of activities over a set period of time;
- demonstrates a capacity and intention to develop itself as a tourism driver over the long term; and



- is promoted to and marketed to tourists.

The ministry expects that events that receive Celebrate Ontario program funding will stimulate incremental tourist visitation and expenditures.

How does the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport define a tourist?

For the purposes of Celebrate Ontario, the ministry defines a tourist as an individual (including an Ontario resident) who travels 40 kilometres or more (one-way) or crosses the Ontario border to attend an event.

Participants/competitors in events who travel 40 kilometres or more (one-way) or cross the Ontario border to attend an event are not considered tourists.

How are rural and northern defined?

- Northern Ontario includes the districts of Algoma, Cochrane, Kenora, Manitoulin, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Rainy River, Sudbury, Thunder Bay or Timiskaming (see the following [map](#)).
- Rural communities are those which meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - Have a population of less than 100,000 people.
 - Have a population density of 100 people or less per square kilometer.

What is the difference between the main “Celebrate Ontario” and “Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster” category?

Celebrate Ontario provides project-based program funding to new or existing Ontario events to enhance programs, activities, and services. It also supports innovations that will lead to long-term improvements, sustainability, and the attraction of additional tourists. This includes Celebrate Ontario Multi-Year applications.

Celebrate Ontario applicants must demonstrate how their event will:

- increase attendance and geographic reach.
- increase tourist visitation and expenditures.
- improve quality and sustainability.
- strengthen Ontario's tourism brand image throughout Canadian and international markets.
- facilitate overnight stays by visitors to a community through the development and marketing of overnight packages (e.g., theatre/hotel/restaurant discounts) and incentives.
- attract in-province overnight and out-of-province visitation in Ontario.

Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster consists of two streams. The Event Bid stream and the Event Hosting stream support bidding costs and hosting costs, respectively, for major one-time events or events that do not recur annually in Ontario, but travel nationally or internationally to host destinations.

Blockbuster events must be of a size and scope sufficient to draw tourists to Ontario's communities, attract significant media exposure, and profile Ontario's destinations nationally and globally. Blockbuster events must have cash operating expenses of at least \$1 million.

For the Event Bid stream, the ministry will determine funding on a case-by-case basis when evaluating applications. Requests will require a solid rationale for bid requirements to support the requested amount.

For the Event Hosting stream, funding is available up to a maximum of 20 percent of eligible cash expenses as outlined in the Blockbuster event operating budget.

Refer to the last page of this document for more information on the Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster category.

Are new events eligible for funding?

Yes. New events are eligible to apply if the sponsoring organization or applicant has been in existence and has had legal status for one year or longer in Ontario. However, new events may not apply to the Celebrate Ontario Multi-Year category.

Are biennial (occurring every two years) events eligible for funding?

Yes.

Are one-time events eligible for funding?

Yes, one-time events may apply to the Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster program, provided that all requirements are met. However, one-time events cannot apply for the main Celebrate Ontario program.

Can I apply for multi-year funding?

Existing large events with cash operating expenses of \$1 million or more may apply for multi-year funding (fiscal year 2017-18 and fiscal year 2018-19) under the Celebrate Ontario 2017 Multi-Year category. New large events and events with cash operating expenses of less than \$1 million may not apply for multi-year funding.

Existing large events may still apply to the Celebrate Ontario 2017 program for single-year funding in fiscal year 2017-18. However, applicants may only apply to one category (the single-year category or the Multi-Year category).

To apply for multi-year funding you must complete the Celebrate Ontario 2017 Multi-Year application and the Additional Information Package providing details about your organization, event and plans for the next two years, including projected outcomes and performance metrics. These projections must be substantiated with detailed rationale, research, dependable performance measure methodologies, and economic impact assessments.

Are events that celebrate Canada Day eligible for funding?

Events with a sole focus on anniversaries (e.g., civic or national holidays and municipal anniversaries, including the national days of other countries or nations) are not eligible for Celebrate Ontario program funding.

However, for the Celebrate Ontario 2017 program applicants have an opportunity to consider Canada's or Ontario's 150th anniversary in their planning.

Also, for events occurring between April 1, 2017 and December 31, 2017, event organizers may choose to theme enhancements or add a one-time enhancement that celebrates or commemorates Canada's or Ontario's 150th.

My organization oversees the production of more than one event throughout the calendar year. Can my organization submit an application for each event?

Organizations may only apply to receive Celebrate Ontario funding for two events each fiscal year. Each application must meet all eligibility and mandatory requirements.

If my organization is applying for two events, will one application affect the other in terms of the distribution of funds?

No. All applications will be evaluated against Celebrate Ontario program eligibility, mandatory, and technical requirements, and on their own individual merit.

If I have applied for Celebrate Ontario funding in the past, and have not been successful, may I still apply?

Yes. Celebrate Ontario is open to all eligible applicants that meet the eligibility criteria as set out in the [Celebrate Ontario 2017 Application Guide](#).

My event is applying for/receiving grants from other sources. Are we still eligible for Celebrate Ontario funding?

Festivals and events with multiple revenue sources may apply for funding if they meet all the eligibility requirements.

Do festivals and events funded through Celebrate Ontario have to meet accessibility criteria?

Festivals and events funded through Celebrate Ontario must carry out their projects in compliance with all federal and provincial laws and regulations, all municipal by-laws, and any other orders, rules and by-laws related to any aspect of the project.

Applicants are encouraged to better understand their obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The AODA makes it possible for people of all

abilities to be a part of their communities every day.

The Government of Ontario has published a [Guide to Accessible Festivals & Outdoor Events](#) for organizers of festivals and outdoor events to improve accessibility and to better understand their obligations under the AODA.

Expenses related to improved accessibility and services are eligible under the 2017 Celebrate Ontario program.

As announced last year, the Celebrate Ontario 2017 program will consider how applicants have met their obligations under the AODA as part of the scoring criteria.

How much funding may I receive for my enhancement project or new event?

Existing events are eligible for enhancement project support of either 50 percent of their enhancement project cash operating expenses or 25 percent of their base event cash operating expenses, whichever is the lesser amount, to a maximum threshold, depending on their funding category as follows:

- Existing events with cash operating expenses of less than \$250,000 are eligible for a maximum of \$50,000.
- Existing events with cash operating expenses of \$250,000 or more but less than \$1 million are eligible for a maximum of \$100,000.
- Existing events with cash operating expenses of \$1 million or more are eligible for a maximum of \$300,000 for single-year funding or \$275,000 annually for multi-year (two-year) funding.

New events are eligible for up to 25 percent of their projected total cash operating expenses to a maximum threshold depending on their funding category as follows:

- New events with cash operating expenses of less than \$250,000 are eligible for a maximum of \$25,000.
- New events with cash operating expenses of \$250,000 or more but less than \$1 million are eligible for a maximum of \$50,000.
- New events with cash operating expenses of \$1 million or more are eligible for a maximum of \$150,000.
- New events are not eligible for multi-year funding.

May I apply for marketing funding?

Applicants may not apply solely for marketing funding through the Celebrate Ontario 2017 program without an enhancement project.

However, applicants may include marketing as an eligible expense in their

enhancement project request. Applicants can apply for marketing costs for their enhancement project (if the enhancement project lends itself to marketing), the event itself, or both. The marketing request must remain consistent with the event's marketing plan.

The above funding thresholds are inclusive of marketing expenses. The maximum funding amount allocated for marketing expenses cannot exceed 15 percent of the total Celebrate Ontario grant amount.

Marketing funding will only be provided for marketing initiatives targeting tourists staying overnight who are:

- In-province (Ontario) overnight audiences at least 100 kilometres from the event, or
- Out-of-province overnight audiences beyond Ontario (e.g., Quebec, other parts of Canada, the United States, international).

Applicants may seek support for eligible marketing costs as outlined in the Application Guide (please refer to the "Funding Priority, Category, Formula and Maximum, and Marketing Expenses" section).

May I apply for both enhancement project funding and marketing funding?

Yes, provided that all requirements are met.

May I apply for marketing funding only?

No, organizations may only apply for marketing funding in conjunction with an enhancement project for their event.

May I apply for enhancement project funding only?

Yes.

Is on-site signage eligible for funding?

Yes, as long as the on-site signage costs are linked to the proposed enhancement project or to improving programs, activities, or services. In all cases, applicants must identify a relationship between proposed expenses and project outcomes.

How do I apply for a Celebrate Ontario grant?

The Government of Ontario's online [Grants Ontario System](#) provides one-window access for users to draft and submit Celebrate Ontario applications, check an application's status, and manage reports.

The ministry will not accept Celebrate Ontario applications in any format other than the

application form on the Grants Ontario System.

All applicants must register as users with the Government of Ontario's encrypted ONE key log-in system at [Grants Ontario](#) and apply online.

Online modules and quick reference guides are available to provide support as you move through the site, and technical support is available during regular business hours.

Your [Regional Tourism Advisor](#) can also help you with any questions you may have about Celebrate Ontario applications.

I am having problems accessing the Grants Ontario System. What should I do?

For all technical support questions related to the Grants Ontario System, please contact Grants Ontario Customer Service, which is available Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (EST):

In Toronto: 416-325-6691 Toll Free: 1-855-216-3090 Email: GrantsOntarioCS@Ontario.ca

When is the Celebrate Ontario deadline?

The deadline to apply for the Celebrate Ontario 2017 category or Celebrate Ontario 2017 Multi-Year category was Tuesday, November 8, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) via the Grants Ontario System.

Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster applications are accepted on an ongoing basis, and must be submitted a minimum of four months prior to an event for Event Hosting applications and a minimum of two months prior to a bid deadline for Event Bid applications.

When will I be notified if my application to Celebrate Ontario 2017 is successful?

Applicants will be notified of their funding status by early March 2017.

After my project is over do I have to submit reports to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport?

Yes. Successful applicants must provide a report on the outcome of their project within 90 days of their event end date. Also they must use the Celebrate Ontario final report form available on the Grants Ontario website to provide this information.

Can you recommend a professional grant writer to assist in preparing my application?

We cannot direct you to a grant writer to assist you with your application, but your [Regional Tourism Advisor](#) is a great resource for answers to your specific questions regarding the Celebrate Ontario program.

CELEBRATE ONTARIO BLOCKBUSTER

How does the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport define a Blockbuster Event?

For the purposes of the Blockbuster category, the ministry defines a Blockbuster event as an event:

- with a national or international reputation that attracts significant media exposure;
- with sufficient national or international prominence to draw tourists to Ontario;
- with cash operating expenses of at least \$1 million; and
- that does not recur annually in Ontario, but travels nationally or internationally to host destinations or is a one-time event.

The [Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster Application Guide](#) defines this and other key terms.

How much funding is available?

The Blockbuster Event Bid stream has no predetermined limit on the amount of funding assistance available. However, your request requires a solid rationale to support the amount you're requesting.

For the Blockbuster Event Hosting stream, support is available up to 20 percent of eligible Blockbuster Event cash operating expenses.

The allocation of funding for Blockbuster Event Bid and Blockbuster Event Hosting projects will be determined by the number of applications received and the amount of funding approved in each stream.

What types of expenses are eligible for Blockbuster funding?

For the Blockbuster Event Bid stream, eligible expenses include only costs that you will incur as part of the event bidding process.

For the Blockbuster Event Hosting stream, eligible expenses include costs for delivering the proposed event, excluding any costs that you would have otherwise incurred (e.g., costs for the host organization to operate day-to-day).

For examples of eligible and ineligible expenses and for more information on program requirements, please review the [Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster Application Guide](#).

Is marketing an eligible expense under the Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster program?

No, marketing support is only available under the regular Celebrate Ontario program for those who qualify.