

## Program Objective

The Celebrate Ontario program helps New or Existing Tourism Events to enhance programs, activities and services and support innovations that lead to long-term improvements, sustainability and the attraction of additional tourists.

Only Tourism Events that feature Enhancement Projects may receive funding.

## Definitions

A **Tourism Event** is an event, festival or series of public activities organized annually or biennially within a set period of time, with specific programming and developed with the intention of becoming a tourism driver over the long-term that is marketed to tourists.

A **Tourist** is an individual (including an Ontario resident) who travels 40 kilometres or more (one-way), or crosses the Ontario border to attend a Tourism Event. Contributors to a Tourism Event (e.g., performers, suppliers, vendors, etc.) are not considered tourists.

An **Enhancement Project** is an initiative that provides improvements to a Tourism Event's programming and services or that enhances the tourist experience.

An Enhancement Project is designed to increase tourism attendance, tourist expenditures and overnight stays during a Tourism Event.

An Enhancement Project should improve the quality and long-term sustainability of a Tourism Event, and may be promoted and marketed to tourists as a stand-alone initiative.

## Celebrate Ontario Categories

### 1. Celebrate Ontario 2018 Single-Year Category

Supports New or Existing Tourism Events with programming enhancements and marketing campaigns that increase tourist visitation and spending, and lead to improved festival sustainability.

### 2. Celebrate Ontario 2018 Multi-Year (Two-Year) Category

Supports **Existing** Tourism Events with programming enhancements and marketing campaigns that increase tourist visitation and spending, and lead to improved festival sustainability.

Existing **Large** Tourism Events with cash operating expenses of at least \$1 million can apply for Multi-Year funding for fiscal years 2018-19 and 2019-20.

### 3. Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster Category

Supports bidding and hosting costs 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 have a cash operating budget of at least \$1 million. Refer to the [Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster Application Guide](#) for more information.

## Is Celebrate Ontario Right for You?

- Review program priorities and requirements in context of your Tourism Event plans.
- Review the (1) [Celebrate Ontario Application Guide](#), (2) Online Grants Ontario Application Form, and (3) Celebrate Ontario Project Application Form (Single- or Multi-Year).

- One application per Tourism Event.
- Maximum of two applications per organization.

## Eligibility

### Eligible Organization:

- Has legal status for one year or longer as of January 1, 2018 (e.g., organizations established by or under legislation; are federally or provincially incorporated; are band councils established under the *Indian Act*, Canada; or are other Indigenous organizations that are incorporated).
- Is not in default of the terms and conditions of any grant or loan agreement with any ministry or agency of the Government of Ontario.

### Eligible Tourism Event:

- Occurs in the Province of Ontario.
- Is annual or biennial (in the case of New Tourism Events, have the intention of repeating).
- Occurs between April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019 (For Multi-Year applicants, the second year Tourism Event must occur between April 1, 2019 and March 31, 2020).
- Is open to the public at large, without membership in a club or group.
- Is not primarily commercial in nature (e.g., trade fairs and consumer shows).
- Is not a symposium, convention, meeting, conference, seminar, clinic or award show.

- Does not have a sole focus on anniversaries (e.g., civic or national holidays and municipal anniversaries, including the national days of other countries or nations).
- Does not seek to attract only a special interest audience or recruit new members (e.g., religious or political gatherings and workshops).

### Funding Principles:

Enhancements are assessed on their ability to demonstrate:

- Increased attendance and geographic reach.
- Increased tourist visitation and expenditures.
- Improvements in quality of Tourism Events and improved sustainability.
- Attraction of overnight and out-of-province tourists and visitors to a community through the development and marketing of overnight packages (e.g., theatre/hotel/restaurant discounts) and incentives.
- Strengthening of Ontario's tourism brand image throughout Canadian and international markets.

### Tourism Marketing Expenses Eligibility:

Marketing funding will be provided **only** for Media Buys targeting tourists making overnight stays who are:

- In-province (Ontario) overnight audiences from at least 100 kilometres from the Tourism Event.
- Out-of-province overnight audiences beyond Ontario (i.e., other Canada, United States, other international).

## Examples of Eligible Marketing Expenses:

- Family Fun Packages for children's festival including tickets and overnight stay at a waterpark hotel: promoted through a radio campaign and a free standing insert distributed to targeted neighbourhoods in Buffalo.
- Kayak Festival and Camping: digital ad campaign on selected outdoor sites and The Weather Network geo-targeted to 100 km + Ontario markets.
- Northern Music Festival: paid and partnered radio advertising, promotions and contesting, plus Facebook ads targeted to 18- 30 year olds in Sudbury and the Greater Toronto Area.

## What's New for 2018?

A simplified and streamlined Celebrate Ontario Project Application Form.

## Application Deadline

November 9, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. (EST).

## How do I Apply?

### Applicants apply using the Grants Ontario Portal

- Provides one-window access for online grant information, applications, submission and reporting.
- New applicants: Go to [How to Apply?](#)
- Previous Applicants: [Log In.](#)

## Contacts

Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with their [Regional Advisor](#) prior to submitting an application.

- Tourism Events with cash operating expenses **under** \$1 million: [Regional Advisor](#).
- Tourism Events with cash operating expenses **over** \$1 million: [Céline Pagnoud](#) or 416-314-3435.
- Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster: [Robert Sweeting](#) or 416-325-7426.
- Service in French: [Renée Ruel](#) or 416-325-9554.

## Technical Support

Please contact the Grants Ontario Customer Service:

- Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Toronto: **416-325-6691** / Toll Free: 1-855-216-3090
- E-mail - [GrantsOntarioCS@Ontario.ca](mailto:GrantsOntarioCS@Ontario.ca)

## Tips for Applicants

- Start early and submit early.
- Demonstrate how your Enhancement Project will increase tourism visitation and organizational sustainability.
- Use statistics, economic impact calculators and industry best practices to support your answers.
- Don't over promise – be realistic about results.
- Review the submission checklist to ensure all requirements have been addressed.

# The Application Process

## 1. Review

Review the [Celebrate Ontario Application Guide](#).

## 2. Discuss

Discuss your plans with your [Regional Advisor](#).

## 3. Gather Materials

Gather materials required to complete your application (e.g., Tourism Event plan, budgets, previous financials, performance metrics, tourism data, rationale for enhancement).

## 4. Download and Complete

Download the (1) Grants Ontario Application Form and the (2) Celebrate Ontario Project Application Form from the [Grants Ontario web portal](#) (do not fill in documents in the browser window) and frequently save each document to your desktop.

## 5. Submit

Submit your application including all mandatory documents through the [Grants Ontario web portal](#) prior to the program's deadline.

## 6. Confirmation

A confirmation email will be sent to the main application contact confirming receipt within 24 hours. If you have not received a confirmation notice, please contact Grants Ontario Customer Service.

## 7. Announcements

Applicants will be notified of their application status by Spring 2018. Ensure that your organization's contacts are up-to-date in your Grants Ontario User Profile.