



## Quality of Life Granting Program Terms of Reference

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Nov 20, 2018

**LAST REVIEWED:** Oct 29, 2018

**SUBJECT TO REVIEW:** July 2020

### **Introduction:**

*This document provides terms of reference for the Quality of Life Grants program. Quality of Life is the Saskatoon community foundations core unrestricted granting program. It is funded each year from a portion of the Foundation's unrestricted grants allocation from all unrestricted endowed funds, including named donor funds and the larger catch-all fund for smaller gifts, the Saskatoon Fund. Quality of Life grants also incorporates grants from field of interest funds which do not currently grant through separate granting processes. (Note: Several of our "community-based" Field of Interest Funds, such as Youth Endowment Saskatoon and the Community Fund for Reconciliation, as of 2018, grant via separate processes.)*

### **History and Background**

Historically, the Quality of Life Grants Program has been broad based, granting to a wide range of projects and programs in many focus areas. For most of SCF history, communications materials have stated that small gifts and unrestricted funds will grant to the areas of greatest need in the Saskatoon community. Focus areas for granting have remained fairly static with small variations for much of the prior 20 years. From 2008 through 2018, the 6 focus areas have been:

- **Social Development:** Creating caring, safe and supportive environments for healthy social development of families and special needs groups.
- **Education:** Enhancing the quality and accessibility of lifelong learning and educational opportunities for all ages.
- **Health:** Promoting and advancing the physical and mental well-being of individuals and families.
- **Arts and Culture:** Fostering and supporting the growth and preservation of arts and cultural activities.
- **Environment:** Supporting and encouraging appreciation of the environment, and resolving or preventing environmental and wildlife issues.
- **Capacity Building:** Establishing foundations for community service, developing or enhancing organizational strategy, or building capacity in our qualified donees, charitable sector, or community.

**Special Areas of Focus:** In order to respond to the evolving needs of the community, the Grants Committee may recommend to the Board from time to time to add one or more special areas of focus for the annual grants program. These areas of focus do not preclude grants to the traditional areas of focus, but allow grants to be directed to areas of current need. However, even when grants to a special

area of focus make up the preponderance of a year's grants, the Foundation will still consider requests from a broad range of organizations and objectives.

**Special Areas of Focus 2018-2020:** As per Strategic Planning session in the fall of 2017, for 2018 through 2020, the Quality of Life grants program will have a special focus on belonging, with preference given to projects that address one or more of the following:

1. **Reconciliation:** addressing the 94 calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report; finding new ways for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians to live together.
2. **Social Inclusion:** Improving inclusiveness among diverse cultures, improving cross-cultural understanding, and celebrating diversity.
3. **Educational Opportunities for Youth:** To ensure youth are able to participate fully in community.

### Criteria

SCF's Quality of Life Grants Program will:

- Consider requests for multi-year funding;
- Consider requests for new and innovative programs;
- Consider requests for ongoing core programs;
- Consider requests for operating funds in cases of emergent need where an applicant has a plan for sustainability;
- Consider requests for capital campaigns in selected cases;
- Make grants of varying sizes with careful consideration of the impact of the amount awarded;
- Make grants up to a maximum size of \$20,000.00;
- Involve a Grants Committee comprised of a diversity of community volunteers (Board and non-Board members) in the grant application review process;
- Rarely provide funding to the same qualified donee for longer than three years in succession.

Preference will be given to projects that:

- Have a direct and meaningful impact on a significant number of people

- Are respectful of program users, and may involve them in planning, execution and evaluation
- Involve community partnerships
- Mobilize financial resources by utilizing such funding strategies as leveraging and partnering
- Avoid duplicating similar services
- Set measurable objectives, which will be evaluated
- Plan for future funding needs

### **Process for Applicants**

SCF is committed to a granting process that is open, ethical and accessible to all qualified donees. The Grants Committee is made up of a diverse group of community volunteers, including Board members and representatives of the greater community, so that the review process is responsive to the needs of the community.

**Online Grants System:** Most applications for funding, materials to be included with funding applications, and follow-up reports are submitted via SCF's online grants system.

- **Letter of Intent (LOI):** The **Quality of Life Granting Program** uses a two-stage process. The first step in the process is to submit a "Letter of Intent" to apply by the February 1<sup>st</sup> deadline each year. This short form allows applicants to briefly describe the project and indicate the grant funds being requested. Letters of Intent are reviewed by the Grants Committee, which will respond to applicants no later than February 15<sup>th</sup> each year. Some of those submitting Letters of Intent are asked to submit a full application no later than the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline each year.
- **Application:** Applications request appropriate information to assist reviewers in making decisions about the funding request. This information will usually include but is not limited to: description of project, description and history of organization, project budget, organizational budget and audited financial statements. All requested information must be submitted by the application deadline for each particular grant program. Late applications will not be considered.
- **Review Process:** All complete applications are reviewed by the Grants Committee. During the review process, the Grants Committee may request additional information not included in the application materials. Failure or refusal to provide this informational may result in the application being denied.
- **Site Visits:** As part of the review process, the committee may request to visit the premises of an applicant or program for which funds are requested. While site visits may require some accommodation on the part of both the applicant and the Grants Committee, refusal to accommodate a site visit may result in the application being denied. This should not include situations in which a visit would violate any law or the rights or privacy of any of the individuals present at the site.

- **Grant Decisions:** Following the review of application materials and after consideration of any other information that may have been gained through site visits, the Grants Committee makes recommendations to the Board of Directors. All decisions of the Board of Directors are final.
  - **Communication:** SCF staff will communicate decisions to both successful and unsuccessful applicants in a timely fashion. Any questions about grant decisions must be directed to staff.
  - **Grant Agreements:** Letters accompanying grant payments state that by accepting the grant and cashing the cheque, recipients affirm that they will deliver the project as described in their application, that they will provide all recognition offered in the application or agreed upon prior to confirmation of the grant, and that they will submit a final report on the grant. If a grant recipient does not meet these terms, SCF may request that the funds be returned.
  - **Recognition:** SCF requires that all grant recipients provide appropriate public recognition for the grant. Appropriate recognition may differ from case to case, depending on the size of the grant and the resources of the recipient. Evidence of recognition must be included in the Final Report for each grant. At its discretion, SCF may publish details of any grants in its communications materials.
  - **Final Report:** All grant recipients are required to submit a final report as a condition of receiving funding. Failure to submit final reports within the required time frame may result in future applications being denied.
1. **Unallocated Funds:** Once the Quality of Life granting cycle has been completed in a given year, if any funds have not yet been allocated, the Executive Director and Grants Chair may recommend to the Grants Committee that funds be granted to other unfunded projects, provided that the projects in question align with the current Areas of Focus.