

Reconnect Ontario 2022 Application Guide

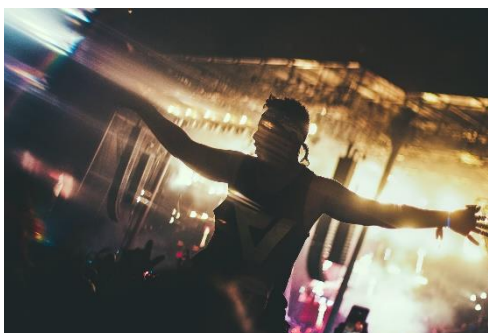
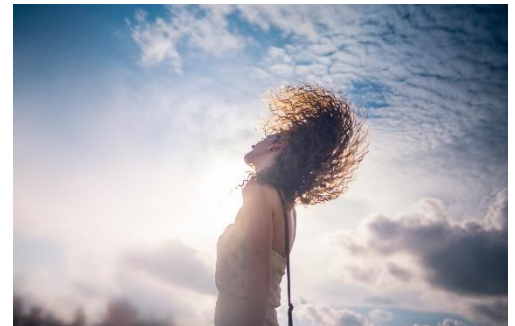


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What You Need to Know Before You Apply

Before Filling Out the Application

1. Read this Reconnect Ontario 2022 Application Guide.
2. Consult with your [Regional Advisor](#) to discuss your event proposal or email ReconnectOntario@ontario.ca with questions.

Program Objectives

The Reconnect Ontario 2022 program supports festivals and events with a tourism economic impact to motivate visitors to rediscover Ontario, reconnect people with local experiences and generate increased tourism spending.

The program aims to support innovative events in Ontario that will:

1. Offer safe experiences and activations that encourage people to travel locally, participate and rediscover the beauty and diversity of all that Ontario communities have to offer
2. Draw tourists and local visitors, whether in-person or virtually, through innovative programming, and generate positive economic impact for the local community, the region and the province
3. Provide job opportunities for Ontarians, particularly in the tourism, culture and entertainment sectors
4. Increase Ontario's profile through media and/or social media exposure to generate interest in future travel to the province.

Application Submission and Deadline

Applications must be submitted through the Transfer Payment Ontario System no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on Wednesday, February 2, 2022.

Applications and materials submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your application has been successfully submitted.

If you do not receive a confirmation notice by email within 24 hours of submitting your application, please contact [Transfer Payment Ontario Client Care](#).

Funding Status Notification

Applicants will be notified in spring 2022.

There is no appeal process for unsuccessful applicants to the Reconnect Ontario 2022 program.

How to Apply

The Transfer Payment Ontario (TPON) system is your one-window access to apply for funding, check the status of your application and submit reports.

The first step is to create a ONE-key account and ID, if you do not already have one. Enter your organization's information to create a profile that is ready for you to access and apply to funding opportunities.

Creating a new ONE-key account **may take up to five days**, so we recommend you begin the process early.

To get started, read more about [How to Submit for Funding](#) located in the Get Help section of the webpage.

For assistance and additional resources, visit the “Get help” section on [Ontario.ca/getfunding](#) and view the e-learning video: [How to submit for funding](#).

NOTE: TPON requires Adobe Acrobat Reader to fill out the PDF application form. Adobe Acrobat Pro is not compatible with TPON.

Transfer Payment Ontario Client Care

Technical questions related to TPON must be directed to Transfer Payment Ontario Client Care.

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (EST, excluding statutory and government holidays)

- Telephone: 416-325-6691 or 1-855-216-3090
- TTY/Teletypewriter (for the hearing impaired): 416-325-3408 / Toll Free: 1-800-268-7095
- Email: TPONCC@ontario.ca

Submission Checklist: Mandatory Documents

For an application to be considered complete and eligible for assessment, all mandatory documents listed below must be attached/uploaded to your file in TPON.

1. **Reconnect Ontario Application Form** — completed, electronically signed, dated and uploaded.
2. **Incorporation documents** for the applicant organization. The name on the incorporation documents must match your organization’s name as registered in Transfer Payment Ontario. (not required from municipalities)
3. **Financial statements** (not required from municipalities):
 - **Applicant organization’s most recent, audited financial statements or review engagement report.** The document must include: the auditor’s opinion, income statement, balance sheet and the notes; for review engagement reports, a professional assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatements. The statements should be final and signed by the Board of Directors.

If audited financial statements or review engagement reports are not available, please submit:

- **Applicant organization’s most recent financial statements (balance sheet and income statement)** accompanied by a dated and signed board-endorsed or treasurer-certified statement that verifies the accuracy and approval of all information contained therein.

If successful, the applicant organization will enter into a transfer-payment agreement (TPA) with the Province as the recipient organization that will incur and pay the event expenses, and report back to the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (the ministry) on use of the funds.

All Reconnect Ontario program funding recipient organizations must carry at least \$2 million commercial general liability insurance coverage under the legal name of the recipient organization for the duration of the TPA. (See Appendix 1)

Program Overview

Program Priorities

Applicants are expected to demonstrate the following in their application:

- Strong organizational and leadership capacity, including a track record of producing successful events;
- A solid rationale for the event's capacity to draw attendees and reconnect Ontarians with their communities, virtually or in person;
- Tourism/hospitality, business and community partnerships that encourage increased spending in Ontario;
- How the event supports jobs for Ontarians, particularly in the tourism, culture and entertainment sectors; and
- Potential for wider media exposure for Ontario, including nationally and internationally.

The ministry understands that in light of COVID-19, impacts on the festival and events sector have been unprecedented. Applicants are encouraged to develop their events in consideration of the constraints of the pandemic and must provide evidence of contingency plans in the Reconnect Ontario 2022 program application.

Eligibility Requirements

Applications that fail to meet any of the eligibility requirements following will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered. Consult with your [Regional Advisor](#) or email ReconnectOntario@ontario.ca to confirm applicant organization, event and expense eligibility.

Eligible Organizations

Eligible organizations must:

- Be Ontario-based entities in existence since January 1, 2021 or before, including those that are established by or under legislation; are federally or provincially incorporated; or are band councils as defined under the [Indian Act](#)
- Not be in default of the terms and conditions of any grant or loan agreement with any ministry or agency of the Government of Ontario

Ineligible Organizations

- Federal or provincial governments and/or their agencies
- Sole proprietorships, limited partnerships, limited liability partnerships and general partnerships

Eligible Events

Events must meet all the following eligibility requirements:

- Take place between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023
- Occur in the province of Ontario, if an in-person event, or be produced in Ontario, if a broadcast or virtual event

- Be open to the public at large without membership in a club or group
- Follow all municipal and provincial guidelines, including health and safety guidelines.

Ineligible Events

Ineligible events include:

- Events that are receiving funding through the Ontario Sport Hosting Program, the Celebrate Ontario Blockbuster program or the Ontario Music Investment Fund (OMIF)
(Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria for OMIF as well as the Reconnect Ontario program may not receive funding from both programs for the same event in the same activity window)
- Sporting events offering programming that is of primary benefit to event participants only (e.g., local hockey tournaments), and is not marketed to, or does not attract, additional visitors
- Events that seek to attract only a special interest audience, restrict audiences (e.g. students only), or recruit new members (e.g., religious or political gatherings and workshops)
- Events of a primarily commercial nature, where the main intent of the event is to sell or promote one or multiple products, services or sponsorships (e.g., trade fairs and shows, business events, consumer shows, artisan and craft fairs)
- Fundraising events or events with a primarily charitable purpose
- Symposia, conventions, meetings, conferences, seminars, clinics, workshops, contests and events that solely consist of an award show.

One Application per Event

The ministry will consider only one application per event through the Reconnect Ontario 2022 program.

A Maximum of Two Applications per Organization

The ministry will consider a maximum of two applications for different events per organization to the Reconnect Ontario 2022 program and Blockbuster program.

Program Definitions

For the purposes of the program, the ministry defines:

A festival or event as a public celebration (in person and/or virtual/broadcast) that connects Ontarians to their communities, supports local businesses, performers and artists, and has a broader tourism economic impact involving local sponsors, suppliers and services

A Francophone event as an event that delivers programming celebrating Francophone culture at the local, regional or provincial level. The applicant organization must have a clear mandate to develop initiatives benefiting Francophones in Ontario

An Indigenous event as an event that delivers programming celebrating Indigenous culture at the local, regional or provincial level. The applicant organization must be a band council established under the *Indian Act*, or an incorporated Indigenous organization

A northern event as an event located in the Northern Ontario districts of Algoma, Cochrane, Kenora, Manitoulin, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Rainy River, Sudbury, Thunder Bay or Timiskaming

A rural event as an event located in a community that meets either of the following criteria:

- has a population of fewer than 100,000 people
- has a population density of 100 people or fewer per square kilometre

Ontario's urban municipalities comprise Ajax, Barrie, Brampton, Burlington, Cambridge, Guelph, Hamilton, Kingston, Kitchener, London, Markham, Milton, Mississauga, Oakville, Oshawa, Ottawa, Richmond Hill, St. Catharines, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Vaughan, Waterloo, Whitby and Windsor

A Tourist as an individual (including an Ontario resident) who travels 40 kilometres or more (one-way) or crosses a border into Ontario to attend an event

Partnerships as tourism organizations, hospitality or local businesses, and sponsors with whom the applicant is collaborating to develop tourism offers, incentives, packages or marketing/promotional collaborations, that contribute to the community economic impacts or financial success of the event. Partners do not include paid supplier relationships

A Canadian artist as an artist who lives in and/or pays income taxes in Canada

Fiscal year as the period from April 1 of one calendar year to March 31 of the next calendar year

Funding Formula and Maximum Funding Amount

Applicants are eligible to apply **for up to a maximum of 50% of total eligible expenses, to a maximum funding request of \$250,000**. See the Eligible Expense list in this Guide.

The expenses described must be for the event itself and not the operating expenses of the applicant organization.

The value of in-kind expenses is not included in the determination of the event's cash operating expenses.

Applicants who apply for marketing funding only will not be considered.

The ministry reserves the right to fund or not fund a project submitted to the program. The decision to fund all or part of an applicant request will depend on its fit to the program objectives and priorities, assessment criteria and the availability of funds in the program.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses only include expenses incurred for the delivery of the event and must not include costs that would have otherwise been incurred by the applicant (e.g., operational costs to run the host organization).

Eligible expenses must be incurred between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023.

Expenses must be linked to programming activities and other services accessible to the public (i.e., not for expenses benefiting VIPs or invitation-only guests).

Examples of eligible expenses include but are not limited to the following:

Programming and Production

- Performance and appearance fees paid to Canadian artists, musicians, other entertainers and presenters, including travel, accommodation and booking costs
- Programming costs, including interactive, experiential and/or accessible programming
- For eligible sporting events, programming costs related to attracting and engaging spectators
- Ontario-based production costs, including audio and visual support (e.g., rental of sound and lighting equipment and rental of event venue)

Media Buys (for promoting the event)

- Placement of targeted paid advertising (e.g., broadcast, digital, print, social)
- Purchase of out-of-home advertising space (e.g., billboard, transit shelter)
- Geo-targeted digital and social media advertising buys
- Distribution costs for printed materials (printing costs are ineligible)

Other

- Costs related to strengthening health and safety measures at the event (e.g., technology for digital contactless payment and admission, PPE necessary for the event operation and for employees to safely carry out their duties, installation of temporary health and safety equipment such as plexiglass and barriers to ensure physical distancing)
- Wages for temporary/contract event staff directly related to programming and marketing of the event. Wages for contract staff employed on a year-round basis are not eligible
- Translation costs directly related to the programming or marketing of the event
- Costs related to volunteer training
- Site/visitor services for the duration of the event
- Event security
- Mobile application and website development and upgrades if promoting or supporting the event
- Accessibility services and improvements to comply with the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#) directly associated with the event programming (e.g., ramping, accessible viewing areas)
- Economic impact studies
- Other costs deemed reasonable

Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses are those not directly related to event programming or marketing, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Expenses incurred outside of the eligibility period of April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023

Programming and Production

- Performance fees for international artists
- Production costs incurred outside of Ontario

Staffing and Administrative

- Administrative and overhead costs (e.g., rent, telephone and communication lines/services, insurance, computers, utilities, maintenance costs) and any other operational expenses related to an organization's ongoing activities
- Salaries, travel costs and expenses (meals, etc.) for permanent staff or for full-time year-round contract staff
- Labour costs not directly related to the event
- Travel costs and expenses (meals, etc.) for temporary event/project staff (including contractors)
- Hospitality costs, excluding those for Canadian artists, performers and presenters
- Volunteer costs, other than those specifically for training for the event
- Event hosting licensing fees/bid fees
- Municipal permit and licensing fees
- Membership and subscription fees
- Credit/debit card fees
- Insurance costs
- Legal, audit or interest fees
- Budget deficits
- Merchandise (e.g., for inclusion in takeaways for attendees)

Marketing

- Marketing creative, production or staff costs
- Printing of publications, DVDs, USB keys
- Promotion-based activities, press releases and related events, booking/packaging costs, media/influencer familiarization tours or paid promotional sponsorship.

Other

- Any costs related to transactions by organizations directly affiliated with the applicant or between enterprises under common ownership or control
- Cost of alcohol or cannabis-related products
- Capital costs (e.g., construction materials, motorized vehicles, land acquisition, purchase of equipment, stages, fixed or portable seating, computers/notebooks, depreciable assets)
- Costs related to the creation of permanent creative assets (i.e., sculptures, light exhibits, displays)
- Competition prizes, prize money, and monies paid to competition participants, as well as awards, trophies and medals

- Costs related to participants in eligible sporting events (i.e., uniforms, travel, hospitality)
- Any costs for gifts, gratuities, honoraria or other items of personal benefit
- Harmonized Sales Tax or refundable expenses (e.g., security deposits)
- Any costs incurred for events held outside Ontario
- Any expenses that will be covered by in-kind revenues or in-kind services or funded by another source
- Any expenses not directly paid by the recipient organization (i.e., by the organization directly receiving the funding under this program)
- Charitable donations
- Fees relating to grant writers procured for preparing government funding applications
- Fees related to audit or engagement review financial statements
- Capital repayments
- Repayments to other funding programs

Evaluation Process and Assessment Criteria

Each complete application will be evaluated according to how well it demonstrates alignment with program objectives and priorities, and will be scored in accordance with the following assessment criteria:

Assessment Criteria	Application Form Section	Scoring Weight
Organizational Capacity	E + Financial Statements	20%
Event Description, Alignment with Program Objectives, Risk Management and Contingency Plans	G	30%
Marketing Plan	H	15%
Partnerships	I	20%
Impact: Performance Measures + Tracking of Results	J, K	10%
Event Budget	L	5%
Total		100%

An additional five (5) bonus points will be allocated in the evaluation for priority events, including rural, Northern, Francophone, Indigenous or LGBTQ (See the Definitions section of this guide).

To be considered for funding, applicants must obtain a minimum score of 50%.

The ministry cannot guarantee funding to all applicants. In addition, the total amount of funds requested by successful applicants is not guaranteed if the funding formula is not applied correctly or if ineligible expenses are included in the request. Past funding does not guarantee program funding.

There is no appeal process for unsuccessful applicants to the Reconnect Ontario program.

Recipient Obligations

Acknowledgement

Applicants are expected to comply with the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) (the “Code”) and all other applicable laws. Failure to comply with the letter and spirit of the Code will render the applicant ineligible for a grant and, in the event a grant is made, liable to repay the grant in its entirety at the request of the ministry.

Applicants should be aware that Government of Ontario institutions are bound by the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), R.S.O. 1990, c.F.31, as amended from time to time, and that any information provided to them in connection with your Reconnect Ontario 2022 application may be subject to disclosure in accordance with that Act. Applicants are advised that the names and addresses of organizations receiving grants, the amount of the grant awards and the purpose for which grants are awarded is information made available to the public.

Successful Applications

If an application is successful, the recipient organization will be required to:

- Sign a TPA with the ministry, outlining the terms and conditions for receiving funding
- Carry at least \$2 million commercial general liability insurance coverage for the recipient organization for the duration of the TPA and add “Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario, her ministers, agents, appointees and employees” as the additional insured on this coverage before the TPA can be executed (refer to the Certificate of Insurance requirements in **Appendix 1**)
- Report back to the ministry within 90 days following the event on the use of funds, service deliverables and outcomes achieved using the final report form
- Permit the province to verify/audit information submitted (at the discretion of the province) to ensure that it is complete and accurate and that funds were used for the purpose(s) intended
- Agree that if the funds were not used or will not be used for the intended purpose(s), or if specified services were not delivered, or if the intended outcomes were not achieved, the province has the right at a future date to recover parts or all of the funds transferred
- Obtain prior written consent from the ministry for any change to the event once funding is approved
- Acknowledge Ontario's support in electronic and print media as part of a visibility campaign, and in a form and manner directed by the province

The ministry expects all grant recipients to comply with all federal, provincial and municipal laws and regulations (e.g., health and safety, environmental approvals, zoning by-laws, human rights, animal welfare, accessibility).

Reporting Requirements and Accounting

In addition to completing the final report form, recipients will be expected to provide the following materials as part of the mandatory post-event reporting process:

1. A confirmation of actual event expenses. A template will be provided by the ministry
2. A summary of all invoices for funded costs associated with your event. The summary should include the invoice date and expense amount (not including tax), the payee and a specific description of each expense
3. Any other reports and publications produced as part of your event, including media summaries, visitor surveys and event results presentation that support the actual performance metrics reported in your final report
4. Financial Statements as follows:
 - a. In the case of a recipient receiving funding of less than \$100,000:
 - A board-endorsed or treasurer-certified financial statement confirming the revenues and expenses for the Reconnect Ontario funded project. The document must also clearly outline, in a Note or Schedule, the amount of the Reconnect Ontario program grant and the expenses funded.
 - A representation letter from the recipient's Chief Financial Officer or most senior official confirming that the funding was used only for eligible expenses.
 - b. In the case of a recipient receiving funding of \$100,000 or more:
 - Audited statements of revenues and expenditures for the funded expenses prepared by a third-party Licensed Public Chartered Professional Accountant. The statement must clearly outline, in a Note or Schedule, the amount of the Reconnect Ontario grant and the expenses funded and include the auditor's opinion of assurance.
 - A review engagement report providing the same information as above may also be accepted.
5. Any other details that may be requested by the Province.

Failure to provide a complete final report may result in the retention of the final grant payment, and recovery of all or a portion of funding may be requested. Failure to meet any reporting requirements may impact an organization's ability to receive future funding.

APPENDIX 1

Certificate of Insurance Instructions (Not required at time of application)

- All grant recipient **organizations** are required to carry at least \$2 million commercial general liability (CGL) insurance coverage before the legal grant agreement can be executed.
- The insurance must be in the name of the recipient organization.
- The required insurance coverage limit can be made up of a primary CGL policy with a limit of \$1 million and an umbrella liability policy (commercial) with a limit of \$1 million for a combined limit of \$2 million.
- It is mandatory that “Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario, her ministers, agents, appointees and employees” be added as an additional insured.
- The insurer must have a secure A.M. Best rating of B+ or greater, or the equivalent.

A certificate of insurance must:

1. State that the insured party is the recipient organization with whom the ministry has contracted. This is important since a policy will only respond to cover the Named Insured on the policy.
2. Identify the dates of coverage. Recipients must carry the required insurance for the duration of the TPA (the date of signing to 150 days post event) and will be required to provide a renewed certificate if it expires before the TPA’s expiration date.
3. Identify the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries as an additional insured, represented in the following language, “**Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario, her ministers, agents, appointees and employees.**” This phrase should appear on the certificate face under a memo heading or special note box.
4. The Certificate of Insurance must evidence (show on the certificate) CGL insurance on an occurrence basis with a limit of no less than \$2 million dollars and shall include:
 - i. “Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario, her ministers, agents, appointees and employees” be added as an additional insured; and
 - ii. Third-party bodily injury; and
 - iii. Personal injury; and
 - iv. Property damage; and
 - v. A cross-liability clause; and
 - vi. Contractual liability coverage.
5. List the ministry as the Certificate Holder and include the ministry’s mailing address in this section of the policy:

Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries
Heritage, Tourism and Culture Division
Investment and Development Office
400 University Avenue, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2R9
6. Include a statement that the certificate holder (the ministry) will be notified of any cancellation or material change within 30 days.
7. Include the signature of an authorized insurance representative.