



ONTARIO CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS FUND
LE FONDS POUR MANIFESTATION
CULTURELLES DE L'ONTARIO

Information Presentation 2012

A Unique Investment Program for Extraordinary Events

OCAF was established in 1999 with two aims:

- Increase cultural tourism to and across Ontario
- Increase the earned revenue capacity of the applicant organization



OCAF at a Glance

- Since 1999 the government of Ontario has invested \$32 million into the Fund
- program expected to last to 2014-15
- We expect to fund another 150 events and double the government investment
- Attendance at OCAF funded events is almost at 30 million people
- We fund, on average, 35 events and approve investments of \$3 million annually

How does OCAF work?

- Provides up front working capital for marketing and promotional costs of a festival or event
- The investment takes the form of a partially repayable loan



Eligible Organizations

- OCAF is open to large and small organizations and municipalities in all parts of Ontario
- Must be incorporated, Ontario-based, not-for-profit and/or charitable professional arts, heritage or cultural organization, or
- An Ontario municipality or municipal agency that is undertaking a major project in the arts or heritage sector
- The organization must have been in existence for one year

Eligible Projects

- An eligible “project” can be a new festival, event or exhibition, or
- An established festival, event or exhibition adding a significant new programming component
- The project must be distinct from ongoing programming
- It should represent the single largest new programming initiative that year

Eligible projects continued...

- The project must run for a fixed or limited period
- There must be a marketing plan targeting new tourists and visitors to the community
- The project budget must show that at least 10% of the total revenues are from the private sector; and

Eligible projects continued...

- At least 40% of total revenues from earned revenue
- The project should demonstrate the capability of repayment to OCAF with an aim to generate a surplus for the applicant



Free or low-cost events

- OCAF understands that not every festival or event is driven by earned revenue
- In the case of free or low-cost events that have the potential to attract large attendance OCAF will consider a combined earned and private sector revenue of 50% of total revenue and repayment will be fixed at the maximum, rather than on a sliding scale

Examples of OCAF supported events

- Major exhibitions with cultural tourism potential
- New music and theatre festivals
- New components of existing festivals like the Ottawa Jazz Festival or the Fergus Scottish Festival
- Pow wows and major municipal anniversary celebrations

Repayment

- OCAF is a unique program that offers support through a combination loan and grant approach
- The repayable portion supplements the Fund for the use of other cultural tourism projects
- The repayment maximums are a standard formula with consideration for urban, rural and the special needs of the north (more info available in the brochure)

Important Information

- Applicants may only receive support once every two years
- OCAF support is directed towards the enhanced marketing program
- OCAF typically considers projects with attendance figures of over 1,000 in rural areas and 10,000 in urban centres. There is some flexibility on those figures depending on the long-term potential of the event

How do I apply?

- Applications are on the OCAF website:
www.ocaf.on.ca
- OCAF has a two-stage application process
- Stage one applications can be downloaded from the website
- Staff at OCAF and Ministry staff in your region can provide you with advice on eligibility and how to apply

Applying to OCAF continued...

- Applicants should try to apply at least six months before their event
- Stage one applications are reviewed by staff and if the project is eligible and the budget figures are solid the organization will move to Stage two.
- OCAF board meets six times a year so there is always an opportunity to come to the program
- All Stage two applications are reviewed by the OCAF board after staff has done an initial assessment

Keys to Successful Applications

- Planning and research are evident
- Budget is based on fact rather than optimistic projections
- Solid and well researched Marketing Plan
- Support from the community
- Active and supportive board members
- Achievable objectives

And finally...

- “Our OCAF-funded project achieved a goal of establishing the Varley Art Gallery of Markham and Main Street, Unionville as a significant tourism attraction with broad name recognition. The following year we experienced significant growth in participation at each of our eleven community events.”

John Ryerson, Town of Markham



www.ocaf.on.ca



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