

2023 Enhancement Fund Guidelines

Background

Tourism Simcoe County (TSC) provides strategic and collaborative leadership to build, sustain and grow tourism in Simcoe County. TSC focuses on destination marketing and management by working closely with operators and tourism stakeholders in the region.

TSC has grouped work to respond to the needs of its stakeholders into five pillars:

1. **Leadership** and **Representation**
2. **Partnership** and **Collaboration**
3. **Product Development** and **Innovation**
4. **Marketing** and **Promotion**
5. **Research** and **Learning**

Fund Objective

The objective of the County of Simcoe Tourism, Culture and Sport Enhancement Fund is to support and enhance tourism, culture, and sport in Simcoe County through:

- Investing in initiatives that promote awareness, access, participation and appreciation of the diverse tourism, culture, and sport offerings within the County of Simcoe
- Encouraging industry collaboration and partnerships
- Enhancing the visitor experience by supporting innovative and accessible programming
- Contributing to the County of Simcoe's overall economic health and sense of place

Available Funding

The funding envelope for the 2023 program is \$400,000

- Applicant organizations may submit one or multiple applications, with a combined maximum financial request of \$10,000

**Exception: Signage stream - eligible for a maximum of \$20,000*

Timing Overview

Monday, February 6 th	Fund applications open
Monday, March 6 th	Fund applications close
Mid- April	Funds flow to applicants

Applicant Eligibility

This program is available to municipal corporations and not-for-profit organizations in the County of Simcoe. The applicant organization must be based in or provide services in one or more of the County of Simcoe's 16 member municipalities.

Applicants based in Barrie and Orillia are eligible to apply; however, only those applications which clearly demonstrate a direct economic benefit to tourism, culture and sport operators located in one or more of the County of Simcoe's member municipalities will be evaluated.

Applicant Contribution Requirements

The applicant is required to contribute a minimum of 20% to eligible project costs. In-kind products and services do not qualify. The 20% contribution is based on the total project cost.

- If the applicant has \$1,000 of their own budget allocated to the project, they may request up to 4,000 from this fund, for a total project budget of \$5,000
- If the applicant has \$2,000 of their own budget allocated to the project, they may request up to \$8,000 from this fund, for a total project budget of \$10,000
- If the applicant has \$2,500 of their own budget allocated to a project, they may request the maximum of \$10,000 for a total project cost of \$12,500

To verify this amount, use this formula: total project cost x 0.2 = Applicant Contribution

Reporting Requirements

A financial report for the project and copies of receipts for items paid for with this funding must be submitted within 30 days of completion of the initiative.

Eligibility Criteria

<i>Eligible Applicants</i>	<i>Ineligible Applicants</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All applicants must be based within or offer services within the County of Simcoe ✓ Municipal corporations ✓ Not-for-profit organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Individuals ✗ For-profit organizations and businesses ✗ Political parties, initiatives, and candidates ✗ Charitable, grant-making, and fundraising organizations ✗ Faith-based organizations where activities require adherence to faith
<p>*NOTE: For an applicant from the separated cities of Barrie and Orillia to be eligible for funding, the application must clearly demonstrate direct economic benefit to businesses located in one or more member municipalities of the County of Simcoe.</p>	

Funding Streams

A star* indicates streams that may be eligible for additional funding from Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RTO7). Refer to [Additional Funding Opportunities](#) for details.

Description & Requirements	Eligible Items	Ineligible Items
<p>Trails Infrastructure* Funding to support the fabrication and installation of trails and cycling infrastructure.</p> <p>APPLY HERE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Bike racks ✓ Bike repair stations ✓ Benches ✓ Trail gates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Purchase of bicycles ✗ Items not adhering to Cycle Simcoe specifications <i>(found on page 8 of this document, schedule 1)</i>
<p>Signage* Funding to support the fabrication and installation of permanent tourism-oriented signage.</p> <p>Signage projects are large-scale capital projects, typically undertaken by municipalities.</p> <p>APPLY HERE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Vehicular or pedestrian tourism wayfinding signage ✓ Trailhead and trail signage ✓ Interpretive and educational signage <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Signage design must adhere to RTO7 design specifications.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Annual fees for 'TODS' Tourism Oriented Directional Signage (blue highway signs) ✗ Business signage ✗ Rental of light-up or Curbex signage ✗ Temporary lawn signage
<p>Digital Advertising & Social Media Advertising*</p> <p>APPLY HERE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Digital advertising campaigns (google display, google search ads, banner advertising, etc.) ✓ Social media campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Consulting fees for strategies ✗ Graphic design
<p>Marketing Funding to support marketing campaigns, to encourage visitation and participation.</p> <p>APPLY HERE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Radio advertising ✓ Television advertising ✓ Print advertising ✓ Influencers or bloggers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Printing or distribution of visitor guides ✗ Website development or enhancements ✗ Consulting fees for strategies ✗ Graphic design

<i>Description & Requirements</i>	<i>Eligible Items</i>	<i>Ineligible Items</i>
<p>Photo & Video Development* Funding to support the development of photo and video collateral of tourism, culture and/or sport assets.</p> <p>APPLY HERE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Professional photography ✓ Professional videography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Amateur photography ✗ Amateur videography <p><i>*must be a registered business</i></p>
<p>Research Funding to support fees related to Environics Analytics consumer profile studies.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Projects will be managed by Tourism Simcoe County staff, with support from the applicant organization.</i></p> <p>APPLY HERE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Environics Analytics consumer research study ✓ Visitor intercept surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Staff costs ✗ Equipment costs
<p>Workforce Development Funding to support <u>hosting</u> programs to engage and/or educate tourism, culture, or sport operators, which in turn will enhance the overall visitor experience</p> <p>APPLY HERE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Speaker or venue fees, which would increase the exposure, reach, value, desirability, or attractiveness of the program/event ✓ Partnership Product Tours (Familiarization Tours) 	
<p>Sports Tourism Funding to attract significant sporting events, which attract participants and/or spectators to travel to the host community with the intention of being involved in a sporting event, and generate the potential for overnight stays in Simcoe County</p> <p>APPLY HERE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cost to bid on hosting a sporting competition 	

Process

All documentation related to the administration of this program other than the submitted application should be submitted via email to tourism@simcoe.ca

Submission

Applications for the 2023 Tourism, Culture and Sport Enhancement Fund will open on **Monday, February 6th** and close at end of day (5 pm), **Monday, March 6th**. A separate online application form has been created for each funding stream, using Google Forms.

Projects must be completed and reported on no later than **April 15, 2024**.

Assessment

- All applications received by the application deadline will be evaluated by staff, using the criteria detailed in this document.
- The Grant Program Task Force will review the funding recommendations provided by staff and adjust as appropriate.
- These recommendations will be presented to Simcoe County Council for final approval.
- All applicants will be informed of their results via email.

Payment

Where funds are awarded, 90% of the funding amount will be forwarded to the applicant upon receipt of the signed Award Letter and required banking information. The remaining 10% will be withheld and will be forwarded to the applicant upon receipt of the completed Post Report.

Funding recipients will be required to submit banking information for direct deposit of funds and may be required to submit additional supporting materials such as a marketing plan or insurance certificate before funds are released.

Reporting

It is the funding recipient's responsibility to submit their Post Report on time. There are three layers to the reporting deadline:

- 1) The Post Report must be submitted within 30 days of project completion and no later than April 15, 2024 (whichever comes first).
- 2) For the balance payment to be issued by year end, the Post Report and corresponding invoice must be submitted no later than December 15, 2023.
- 3) To be eligible for future funding, the Post Report must be received before a new application for funds is submitted.

In the absence of a post report, it is assumed that the awarded funds have gone unspent, and the organization will be ineligible for future funding until the reporting requirements have been fulfilled, confirming that the funds were spent on eligible project costs.

Branding Requirements

NOTE: Funding will be compromised if these branding requirements are not followed.

All funding recipients must adhere to the following four requirements:

- 1) Follow @experiencesimcoecounty on Facebook and Instagram.
- 2) Tag @experiencesimcoecounty in all social media posts related to the funded initiative.
- 3) Use #experiencesimcoecounty on all social media posts related to the funded initiative.
- 4) Add the Tourism Simcoe County logo on the website for the funded initiative, with a direct link to experience.simcoe.ca

Those in receipt of funding for marketing or media development must also adhere to the following two requirements:

- 1) Incorporate the Experience Simcoe County logo or tagline into all forms of media funded by this program. See examples in the chart below.
- 2) Obtain approval by a Tourism Simcoe County staff member prior to publishing.

The Experience Simcoe County logo can be downloaded from our website at:

<https://experience.simcoe.ca/resources>

MEDIA		MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
EXAMPLES	Digital Marketing	Use #experiencesimcoecounty in organic and paid ads AND Tag @experiencesimcoecounty in organic posts
	Print Advertising	Include the Experience Simcoe County logo OR Include printed tagline "... another reason to visit Simcoe County"
	Radio Advertising	Include "... another reason to visit Simcoe County" OR Include verbal mention of Tourism Simcoe County's financial support
	Television Advertising	Include the Experience Simcoe County logo OR Include tagline "... another reason to visit Simcoe County"
	Video Development	Include the Experience Simcoe County logo

Schedule 1 | Trails Infrastructure Criteria

For support with Trails Infrastructure projects and applications, contact Brendan Matheson at cyclesimcoe@simcoe.ca

Purpose

Tourism Simcoe County promotes Simcoe County as a first-class destination with the goal of encouraging visitors to stay longer and spend more while here. By adding bike racks and repair stations along trails and at cycling-friendly businesses, we continue to develop Simcoe County as a cycling destination of choice.

Eligible Items	Supplier Details	Pricing *Subject to change **Installation is not included
Bike Racks	Blue Imp www.blueimp.com	\$567.00 for each 5-bike Z rack \$870.00 for each 8-bike Z rack
Bike Repair Stations Each features the station, repair tools and pump	Orders are placed by the applicant, through the Barrie Cycling Club	\$2,200.00 each
Benches	Orders are placed by the applicant	Three quotes required
Gates	Orders are placed by the applicant	Three quotes required



Schedule 2 | Age-Friendly and Accessibility Criteria

The County of Simcoe endeavors to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities to ensure that everyone has access to the County's goods, services, and facilities.

We respectfully request that recipients of the Tourism, Culture and Sport Enhancement Fund consider that their initiative or facility be designed with accessibility in mind.

The following accessible features should be considered:

ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES – placed close to venue entries and exits, accessible toilets, pay stations and lifts/ramps.

PATHS OF TRAVEL – provide wide, even, slip-resistant paths, without steps or barriers.

STAGES AND SEATING – provide a ramp for your stage, and ensure it is visible for someone watching from accessible seating or from a wheelchair.

FOOD SERVICES AND PUBLIC EATING AREAS – design food areas so that someone who needs mobility support can easily navigate them. Provide options for people using wheeled mobility devices.

WASHROOMS AND TEMPORARY TOILETS – provide accessible toilets or washrooms at level ground level, away from crowds and sound systems.

REST AREAS AND WEATHER SHELTERS – offer quiet areas and shelter from wind, rain, sun, etc.

SIGNAGE – provide high-contrast signs in high and low positions, and make sure signs use sans serif fonts that are readable in all lighting conditions.

SUPPORT STAFF – are permitted wherever the person they support goes. Post admission fees in the same place where general admission information is found.

SERVICE ANIMALS – are permitted to accompany a person with a disability, to all areas available to the public.

TRAINING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS – ensure staff and volunteers are trained on your accessibility features.

PROMOTE ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES – Inform people about your accessibility features in the same places that you promote your event or initiative.

ASK FOR FEEDBACK – Collect feedback before, during and after the event or initiative.

Additional resources: [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#)

[Festival & Events Accessibility Guide](#)

[CNIB Clear print Accessibility Guidelines](#)