



2026 Paint It Up! Funding Program Process Guidelines

The purpose of this funding is to support murals led by eligible not-for-profit community organizations through the Paint It Up! Funding Program approved by Ottawa City Council on September 9, 2009 (ACS2009-COS-PWS-0013)

DEADLINE: April 3, 2026

Contact:

Submit questions to: Ahmad Luqman (he/him) -
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**Community and Social Services Department
City of Ottawa**

2026 Paint It Up Funding Program Process Guidelines

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PART ONE: KEY INFORMATION ABOUT THIS FUNDING PROCESS

1.1 General Information

Title: Paint It Up! Funding Program

Issued by: Community and Social Services, City of Ottawa

Available Funding: \$70,000

Purpose of Funding: To engage youth in the creation of new, outdoor murals, under the Council approved Community Funding Framework. Murals are large-scale artworks done on permanent structures, with permission of the property owner, either directly on the wall or attached to it.

Funding Terms: One application per organization, except for organizations that sponsor another project/s.

Eligible Maximum Amount: \$13,000

1.2 2026 Timelines

Table 1: Program dates*

DATE	ACTIVITY
January 7, 2026	Funding application opens at ottawa.ca/paintitup
February 3 and 5, 2026	Information Sessions (virtual)
March 3, 2026, 5pm	Deadline to submit proposed mural location to Mural application form City of Ottawa for approval
April 3, 2026	Deadline to submit funding application
May 1, 2026	Applicants are advised if application is successful
May 5 - July 15, 2026	Deadline to submit final mural designs to muraleottawamural@ottawa.ca for approval and the required Permit
September 29, 2026	Deadline to complete and install murals
November 10, 2026	Deadline to submit Activity reports

*Note: Dates are subject to change at the discretion of the City of Ottawa.

Questions and Inquires: All questions and inquiries must be sent to Ahmad Luqman (he/him) at Ahmad.Luqman@ottawa.ca.

1.3 Paint It Up! Funding Program Objectives

The Paint It Up! Funding Program aims to support vandalism prevention, community safety and the beautification of Ottawa neighbourhoods through youth empowerment, youth employment and community arts, through the Council approved Community Funding Framework.

Paint It Up! contributes to an inclusive, clean, safe, and beautiful city by funding projects that engage neighbourhoods and youth in a learning process to create murals.

The program does this through a strategy of working with community-based organizations that provide recreation, employment, pre-employment and/or soft-skills training for youth from ages of ~12 to 25 as described in Section 1.4 to work in partnership with the arts community and local property owners to develop murals.

1.4 Priority Populations

Youth (roughly between the ages of 12 – 25 years old), including:

- Youth living in poverty
- Indigenous youth
- Racialized youth
- Newcomer youth
- Homeless youth
- 2SLGBTQQIA+ youth
- Rural youth

The guidelines focus on pre-employment and employment skills for youth.

1.5 Contact information

For mural permit questions, you may contact By-Law and Regulatory Services at muraleottawamural@ottawa.ca.

For other questions, please contact Ahmad.Lugman@ottawa.ca

PART TWO: ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

2.1 Definitions

For the administration of the Paint It Up! Funding, eligibility criteria and funding process, “Board of Directors”, “Good Standing” and “Not-for-profit” shall have the following meanings:

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- **Board of Directors:** A democratically elected board of a minimum of three (3) persons who are responsible for the management and operations of the organization, each is eighteen or more years of age and is a member of the organization. The majority of the directors must be residents of the City of Ottawa and shall not be related. The board shall have a constitution that clearly outlines responsibility in relation to the delivery of activities, events, programs, projects, and services; holds regular meetings with a minimum of four per year or two per operating season; holds an annual general meeting which is open to the public and has an election component; and provides annual financial statements that are available to the public and the City.
- **Good Standing:** The applicant has fulfilled all the terms and conditions of all previous and current agreements with the City and is in good financial standing with the City (i.e., no arrears).
- **Not-for-profit:** The organization is operated for a collective, public, or social benefit and not as a business aiming to generate profits.

2.2 Eligibility Criteria

Each project will involve a partnership, which must include:

- a lead organization (or “applicant”) – a non-profit organization with expertise in working with youth (as defined in 2.2.1)
- an artist or arts organization from the National Capital Region, which includes Kitigan Zibi and Pikwakanagan, with expertise in creating murals
- youth, as described in 1.4; and
- a property owner who has agreed to host the mural. (All proposals must receive location approval prior to a funding application being considered.)

The lead partner/applicant does not have to be affiliated with the City to do a mural on a City-owned wall.

Please also note that a single organization may constitute two parts of this partnership – for example, the lead organization may also be the property owner.

2.2.1 Lead organization/applicant eligibility

The **lead organization (“applicant”)** who receives the Paint It Up! funding is responsible for expenditures and reporting.

The lead organization must sign the application and the subsequent contribution agreement.

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Lead applicants must meet the following conditions to be considered for funding:

- Be one of the following:
 - A Not-for-profit Corporation or a Registered Charity that has been in existence for at least 2 years, OR
 - Sponsored by a Not-for-profit Corporation or a Registered Charity that has been in existence for more than 5 years
- Demonstrate financial viability
- Operate in a non-discriminatory manner as set out by the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Be governed by a democratically elected Board of Directors or Steering Committee
- Be in Good Standing with the City of Ottawa; and
- Be located in Ottawa and serve residents of Ottawa

2.2.2 Lead organization/applicant ineligibility

Lead applicants cannot be:

- Faith-based organizations whose proposed services/activities include the direct promotion and/or required adherence to a faith or religious practice
- Organizations mandated by other levels of government (e.g., schools, hospitals, childcare centres)
- For-profit organizations or ventures
- Organizations which act primarily as a funding source for other groups
- Organizations of political affiliation or which have a mandate to conduct political activities
- Sports clubs
- City of Ottawa elected officials. (Ward Councillors are encouraged to offer their support to applicants and will be consulted on location and design approvals.)
- City of Ottawa Business Improvement Areas (BIAs)

2.2.3 Eligible expenses

Eligible program expenses include but are not limited to:

- artist fees
- honorarium or salary for the youth
- honorarium for Indigenous Elders
- incentives for the youth (such as pizza)

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- Administrative expenses, maximum of 10% (e.g., staff time for accounting /project management or co-ordination)
- equipment rental such as scaffolding, hall rentals, and actual mural supplies such as paint, brushes, tarps, rollers, or boards
- Other expenses to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis

Please note that some surfaces and all heritage buildings will require that a mural be painted on boards and then mounted on the building.

2.2.4 Ineligible expenses

Ineligible costs include, but are not limited to:

- Expenses related to maintenance of existing murals
- Major equipment purchases
- Financing of deficits and/or debts

PART THREE: PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Mural locations and related considerations

This funding is intended to create new, long lasting outdoor, public murals, which helps prevent vandalism and enhance the community. The location should be easily accessible and visible to the public. Paint it Up! will not consider temporary surfaces such as construction hoarding. You are also encouraged to check in with the property owner about any likely changes to the structure soon. The Lead Organization is responsible for completing all research, consultations and negotiations required to design and implement the mural.

All projects will be subject to the Mural Review Process to ensure that the proposed mural location and design meet the requirements of relevant City by-laws and federal and provincial regulations.

3.1.1 Mural maintenance

Ongoing repair and maintenance of murals is the responsibility of the funding recipient and the property owner.

3.1.2 Mural content

Tags, acronyms, registered trademarks, commercial advertising, or public information are not permitted as part of the artwork. Words shall be meaningful to the community at-large.

A business name or logo is allowed as part of the artwork if that business is the mural's sponsor. In this case, up to 10% of the mural may be utilized as an acknowledgement recognizing the sponsor, provided it does not exceed an area of 1 square meter and is located at a bottom corner of the mural. Likewise, the signature of the artist, or any other mark which references the artist, must also be placed in this acknowledgement area and may not form part of the overall design.

PART FOUR: HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

4.1 Apply for location approval

Before submitting an application for Paint it Up! funding, applicants must apply for location approval by **March 3, 2026, by 5pm**, through the City's By-Law and Regulatory Services' [online form](#).

By-Law and Regulatory Services will circulate the application to the City's Mural Review Panel, which includes a ward Councillor. Applicants will be notified within **two weeks** of their submission if their location is approved or not.

If the location is on private property, the applicant submits **a property authorization form** with their application to indicate that the property owner is aware of the intention to install a mural and approves of the mural.

If the location is on a **City of Ottawa facility**, staff responsible for the facility will need to provide their consent for the mural location. By-Law and Regulatory Services will seek this consent on behalf of the applicant.

Please note: If your location is approved and you receive a Paint it Up! grant, you are required to submit the final youth mural design to: muraleottawamural@ottawa.ca between May 5, 2026 and July 15, 2026 to receive **design approval** and a **permit to install your mural**. You cannot start painting the mural until your final mural design is submitted and approved.

4.2 Mandatory documentation

The following supporting documentation must accompany each application:

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1. Proof of incorporation and years in existence of primary applicant**
2. Latest financial statement of primary applicant (unaudited statements will be accepted)
3. Proof of insurance for the primary applicant**
4. Letter(s) confirming the participation of partners
5. Proof of a problem with tagging (should include pictures of tags and their location in relation to the intended mural)
6. Proof of approval of mural location

**Not required for organizations currently in receipt of City of Ottawa Sustainability Funding

4.3 Requesting an application and applying

1. Email Community Safety and Well-Being at (cswb/sbec@ottawa.ca) to receive an application and budget form.
2. Answer the questions in the word application form and fill in a project budget form. Organizations must be able to provide details for each of their budget expenses. If total project budget is more than \$13,000, please demonstrate what the other funding sources are or are anticipated to be.
3. Email your completed Paint It Up! Application, budget form and mandatory documentation to Community Safety and Well-Being at cswb/sbec@ottawa.ca.

Completed funding applications (including supporting documents listed at the bottom of the Application Form) must be emailed to cswb/sbec@ottawa.ca by **Friday April 3, 2026**, to be considered.

PART FIVE: ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS AND FUNDING ALLOCATION PROCESS

5.1 Criteria for assessment of eligible proposals

Preference will be given to organizations that did not receive funding in 2025, and 10 points will be deducted from the overall score of organizations that **did** receive funding in 2025.

If the organization had a Paint It Up grant in 2025, while it will not be excluded, preference will be given to organizations that did not.

Table 2: Eligibility and assessment criteria

Eligibility	
Is the lead organization eligible per Guideline 2.2.1?	YES/NO
Does the organization and its partners have the capacity to fulfill the project requirements?	YES/NO
Is the lead organization in good standing with any current Mural Maintenance Agreements (Guideline 3.1)?	YES/NO
Does the proposal represent a new, outdoor mural to be painted or installed on a wall or permanent structure?	YES/NO
Assessment Criteria	Weight
Is the location of the mural in place that is easily accessible/visible to the public? Is it geographically dispersed in relation to other existing projects?	10
Does the project address a tagging problem?	10
Are the youth involved in the project a) from the priority groups listed in section 1.4 of the Guidelines b) ~12 y/o and older and c) connected to the mural location?	10
Does the project have a clear plan to recruit the youth?	5
Does the project provide the youth recreation, employment, pre-employment and/or soft-skills training?	10
Does the project demonstrate youth involvement with the design and painting of the mural?	10
Does the proposal demonstrate community engagement/consultation using a community development approach and involving the youth in this process?	5
Is the budget and timeline of the project realistic?	10
What is the value for money on this project (\$ / sq-ft)?	5
Will youth be paid a wage or receive an honorarium for their participation in the project?	5
TOTAL	100%

5.2 Allocation process

Stage 1: Screening for completeness and eligibility

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A City of Ottawa staff member will review all applications to ensure that they:

- Comply with all requirements for submission
- Have been received with all required sections completed
- Provide all information and documents, or a reason for not providing it that is acceptable to the City; and
- Satisfy all eligibility criteria

Stage 2: Allocation committee review

All eligible applications will be assessed through an Allocation Committee process. The Allocation Committee members will review all proposals and score them in relation to the evaluation criteria.

As part of the evaluation, applicants may be asked to provide clarification on certain aspects of the proposal. Clarifications and information given by applicants may be included and scored with the criteria above.

The Allocation Committee will discuss and rank each application and has the right to adjust the scoring based upon the discussion. They will recommend an amount of funding to be awarded to each successful applicant.

The Allocation Committee will include one representative from each of the following groups:

- The arts community
- Neighbourhood associations e.g., community association
- Ottawa Police Service
- City of Ottawa:
 - Public Works Department, Public Outreach and Communications
 - Community and Social Services Department, Community Safety and Well-Being Branch
 - By-law and Regulatory Services Branch
 - Recreation, Cultural and Facilities Services Branch, Cultural Services Division

Stage 3: Management allocation review and approval

The Director, Community Safety, Well-Being, Policy, and Analytics (CSWBPA) will review the recommendations from the Allocation Committee to ensure there is an

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equitable distribution of funding based on priority populations and that funding is being aligned to areas of the city facing the greatest needs or inequities. The Director, CSWBPA, can adjust funding amounts based on this review.

They will provide final approval of the applicants for a Paint It Up! allocation and allocation amounts.

All decisions are final and not subject to any right of appeal.

PART SIX: AFTER ALLOCATION DECISIONS HAVE BEEN MADE

6.1 Reporting and recognition of funding – important dates

6.1.1 Design approval and Mural Permit

All organizations that receive Paint it Up! Grant funding are required to submit **the final youth mural design to: muraleottawamural@ottawa.ca** between **May 5, 2026, and July 15, 2026**, to receive **design approval** and a **permit to install the mural**. You cannot start painting the mural until your final mural design is submitted and approved.

6.1.2 Project completion

The projects are intended to be summer projects and must be completed before **September 29, 2026**.

6.1.3 Final Summary Report

All organizations that receive funds under Paint It Up! are required to submit a final summary report by **November 10, 2026**. The report must include:

- participant surveys
- a project evaluation
- a financial report
- photographs

Please ensure you have completed a consent form for each person present in the photographs.

6.2 Recognition Event

All successful participants must agree to organize a **recognition event** and invite their ward Councillor.