

Peers Employment & Encouraging Resiliency (PEER) Criteria and Eligibility Guidelines

Introduction

The City of Prince George has collaborated with partner agencies to develop a pilot granting program (December 2021 – October 2022) that financially assists non-profit agencies to hire persons with lived/living experience. A UBCM 2021 Strengthening Communities' Services Grant is funding this short-term project.

Grant Purpose

This short-term grant program is seeking non-profit applicants that will value the lived experience of Peers and create employment that is barrier-free, safe, welcoming and inclusive. It will provide greater opportunity to a population that is generally marginalized and has not received equitable learning and/or employment opportunities.

Timelines

Applications will be accepted starting the first week in December 2021 and will remain on-going until funding is committed. Adjudication and grants approval will take place on an on-going basis and as applications are submitted.

People with Lived/Living Experience (PWLE/PEERS)

For the purposes of this grant, Peers are individuals that have lived/living experience of unsheltered homelessness or at risk of homelessness and experience multi-barriers. Some of these barriers may include:

- experience with addictions or substance use in the past or present,
- living with mental health challenges,
- being street entrenched,
- prior criminal justice involvement,
- lack of social networks and connections,
- low income, or
- facing stigma associated with the above barriers

These individuals can apply their unique understandings to help inform decision and policy makers or directly assist others that are experiencing similar challenges. They may also have skills/experience acquired in previous employment that can benefit non-profit organizations.

Grant Criteria

1. The grant is limited to registered not-for-profits (NFP) or charities. Local businesses can partner with a non-profit (financial sponsorship) but the NFP/charity must remain the lead organization. Businesses without a NFP partner may qualify for other community Peer Employment programs. *Please see Appendix A for additional Peers employment/supports funding programs as well as organizations that may be able to assist in matching Peers to organizations.*
2. The non-profit applicant must engage/hire an individual(s) that identifies as a Peer as defined above.
3. The applicant is responsible for all aspect of the employment relationship (e.g. recruitment, training, on-going support, supervision, payroll etc.)
4. Access to the employment/work/contract must be low barrier and address barriers and challenges experienced by some Peers. This may include but is not limited to:
 - a. **Flexible payment options** - Some individuals may prefer to be paid by way of cash honorarium. Others may choose to have direct deposit. Flexibility is key and non-profits should ensure this is discussed/agreed upon with the peer employee.
 - b. **Guidance and/or assistance** – Assistance with acquiring proper identification, setting up a bank account etc. if required. Multiple service providers in the community are available to assist with these things such as Connective and the Ministry of Poverty Reduction and Social Development.
 - c. **Consideration of a Peer’s maximum earning** - Exemption for disability or income assistance. Find out more about the BC Income Assistance Earning Exemption at this [website](#). Information on BC’s Disability Assistance earning exemptions are on this
 - d. **Compensation** – At a minimum, the non-profit **MUST** compensate according to the BC Centre for Disease Control’s [Peer Payment Standards](#).
 - Paying a living wage Task-oriented work - In Prince George that is a minimum of \$16.51/hour (or equivalent to current paid employees at the workplace, whichever is higher).
 - Meeting or advisory role - \$25/hour
 - Peer Support Worker - \$30/hour
 - Presentation/Facilitation - \$50/hour

- e. **Understanding and Support for Peer Success** - Non-profits must be prepared to support peers in meeting workplace expectations and supporting them to be successful. An on-boarding/orientation meeting with a Peer Advisor will be arranged upon confirmation of your organization receiving a grant (see associated question in the application form).

Additionally, [Peer Connect BC](#) has created a learning module to help employers understand the foundational elements of a Peer Employment project. Although the module is geared towards Peer Support Workers, many of the concepts and components are applicable to a Peer Delivered Service, which this grant is encouraging. Non-profits agencies receiving a grant, should complete the Employer's Guide Module (takes about 30 minutes to complete) – [Employer's Guide to Peer Worker Support and Engagement](#)

5. Peers must be appropriately compensated for all time and expenses while on the job (including training).
6. Any duties assigned to a Peer must meet all Provincial Health and Work-Safe BC regulations.

Short Term Employment

Although continued employment is encouraged, this grant cannot fund any work past October 31, 2022. If you are contemplating a long-term employment opportunity, you could use this program as a pilot project or you might consider other community Peer Employment programs available (Appendix A).

Eligible Costs

Maximum grant allocation is \$4000 per Peer. Minimum grant is \$200 per Peer. Applicants may apply for more than one Peer position.

Eligible costs are:

- Wages/honourarium/contract including MERCS (80%-100% of the funding)
- Incidental supplies (max 10%)
- Administration (max 10%)

Adjudication Timelines

Applications to this grant program will be accepted on an ongoing basis until October 1, 2022. Applicants can expect to receive the results of adjudication within 10 working days of submission.

Assistance with Recruiting a Peer Employee

We encourage groups to look within their own organization or work with community partner agencies (that support peers and/or provide peers programming). Community partners identified in Appendix A can be contacted to assist with recruitment of individuals for work opportunities.

Examples of Employment Opportunities

This is not an exhaustive list of jobs and the grant is not limited to these. It acts only as a generator of ideas. The grant adjudication committee may consider other unique work opportunities.

- Art projects- murals, beautification etc.
- Advisor to non-profit's board of directors
- Mentor/Support for Youth @ Risk
- Art & Craft items for sale
- Labour duties (painting, etc.)
- General maintenance/handy-person assistance
- Music
- Trades
- Facilitate Groups (mentorship or teach skills)
- Education/Advocacy
- Food services (food prep & cleaning)
- Peer Support
- Office/Clerical assistance
- Outreach Worker/Advocacy
- Taking Care of Animals
- Addictions peer support
- Woodworking or Metal work
- Cultural Education
- Caretaking positions
- Transportation
- Life skills Training
- Mental Health Education & Awareness
- Refurbishing
- Snow shoveling and/or other seasonal work (i.e. cleanup activities)
- Sharps collection
- Community projects
- Outdoor cleaning (garbage collection/debris clean-up)
- Indoor cleaning services/maintenance

Questions

Applicants can e-mail questions to communitygrants@princegeorge.ca

General Information

Organizations may apply for more than one Peer position. If the work is the same for multiple Peers, only one application is required. If the work is different for multiple Peers, a separate application is required for each different job description.

Funding is limited and intended to introduce the Peer model by encouraging multiple organizations to participate. As such, the City reserves the right to limit the funding to organizations with multiple applications. Please contact us if you have any questions.

APPENDIX A

Peers Employment & Supports Program

CONNECTIVE (formerly John Howard Society Pacific).

Danielle Goodwin – Community Services Manager

Email: danielle.goodwin@connective.ca

Phone: 250-640-2668.

Local organizations that can support Peers recruitment

POUNDS Project Society

Jordan Stewart, Executive Director

Email: jordan@thepoundsproject.com

Phone: 778-349-3349

Central Interior Native Health Society

Jen Hoy, High Acuity Support Program Coordinator

Email: jennifer.hoy@cinhs.org

Phone: 250-614-2035

YMCA Youth Works & Foundry Works

Debra Hennig, CCDP -Employment Programs Manager

Email: debra.hennig@nbc.ymca.ca

Phone: 250-640-4574