

OTF Investment Summary Report 2024/2025 Seed Cycle

Prepared for the Board of Directors,
September 19, 2024
2024-2025 Seed Cycle (June 26, 2024 deadline)
Ontario Trillium Foundation Community Investments

OTF Investment Summary Report 2024/2025 Seed Cycle

Introduction

OTF's Seed stream will support the best quality services and programs to effectively build healthy and vibrant communities across Ontario. Funded projects will cross six funding priorities and will be focused on four stream objectives. OTF's funding priorities support projects that will foster physically active lifestyles, help people build stronger connections and a deeper sense of belonging in their communities, support participation in the conservation and restoration of the environment, enrich lives through arts, culture and heritage, support youth to develop stronger social, emotional, and leadership skills, and enable economically vulnerable people to meet their basic needs and/or strengthen their financial stability.

The Seed stream is designed to fund projects that help organizations build resilience and enhance their ability to deliver programs and services that directly benefit community members. Eligible organizations can apply for grants between \$10,000 and \$100,000 for up to one year in support of projects that:

- Create or adapt organizational strategy to build resilience and capacity to deliver programs and services.
- Prepare for the future by developing or adapting digital technology to deliver programs and services.
- Enhance staff and/or volunteer skills to deliver programs and services.
- Design and/or pilot an innovative program or service to address a community need

This report will provide an overview of the Seed funding round for the 2024/2025 fiscal year.

Contents

Schedule 1: Executive Summary

Schedule 2: Supporting Figures

Appendix A: List of Recommended Applications for Board Approval

Appendix B: List of Declined Applications for Board Approval

Appendix C: List of Ineligible Applications (Organizational or Project Eligibility)

OTF Investment Summary Report 2024/2025 Seed Cycle

Schedule 1: Executive Summary

1.1 Cycle highlights:

- This round, **1832 applications** were received **requesting \$134.6M** in funding.
 - This represents nearly a 2x increase in applications and 2.5x increase in dollars requested from the previous Seed round in 2020/21 fiscal year when 923 applications were received requesting \$54.2M.
 - The high demand in this round is in line with trends throughout RCF in which the average number of applications received was 1880 requesting \$191.2M.
- Overall, the **demand rate was \$8.29**, nearly 2x that of the previous Seed round in 2020/21 fiscal year which had a demand rate of \$4.83. It is also higher than the average RCF demand rate of \$5.48.
- **246 grants** valued at **\$16.2M are being recommended** for approval by the 16 Grant Review Teams.
 - This represents \$5.0M greater investment than the previous Seed round in 2020/21 fiscal year in which \$11.2M was invested in 193 Seed grants.
 - *NOTE: Within Board approved targets, catchment allocations for each granting stream were set by the individual Grant Review Teams for their catchment.*
- The **approval rate was 13%**, down 8% from Seed 2020/21 fiscal year (21%), due to the comparably high demand of this round. This is also 12% lower than the average RCF round, which had an approval rate of 25%. This is largely due to the relatively small amount available for disbursement that is typical of the Seed stream.
- Of the total applications submitted, 786 applications (43%) were eligible for funding. Of those, 430 (23%) were reviewed by GRT, after which **184 (10%) were below the funding threshold** – representing feasible projects that were not able to be funded. 1046 applications (57%) were declined due to ineligibility.
- Projects serving a community falling into a **Lived-Experience demographic represented 44% of the funds recommended** for approval, while 18% of funds are supporting a particular Identity group, 14% supporting a specific Language group and 7% supporting a specific Gender group.

OTF Investment Summary Report 2024/2025 Seed Cycle

- Nearly **10% of the funding recommended for approval was to very small organizations** with annual budgets <\$100k, while an additional 18% was to small organizations with annual budgets between \$100-500k – this is in line with the most recent round of Seed, and slightly higher than average for RCF.
- 86% of Grant Review Team volunteers scored all their assigned applications, in line with the most recent granting round (Capital – 85%), suggesting a consistently high engagement and commitment from volunteers.

1.2 Sign-Offs

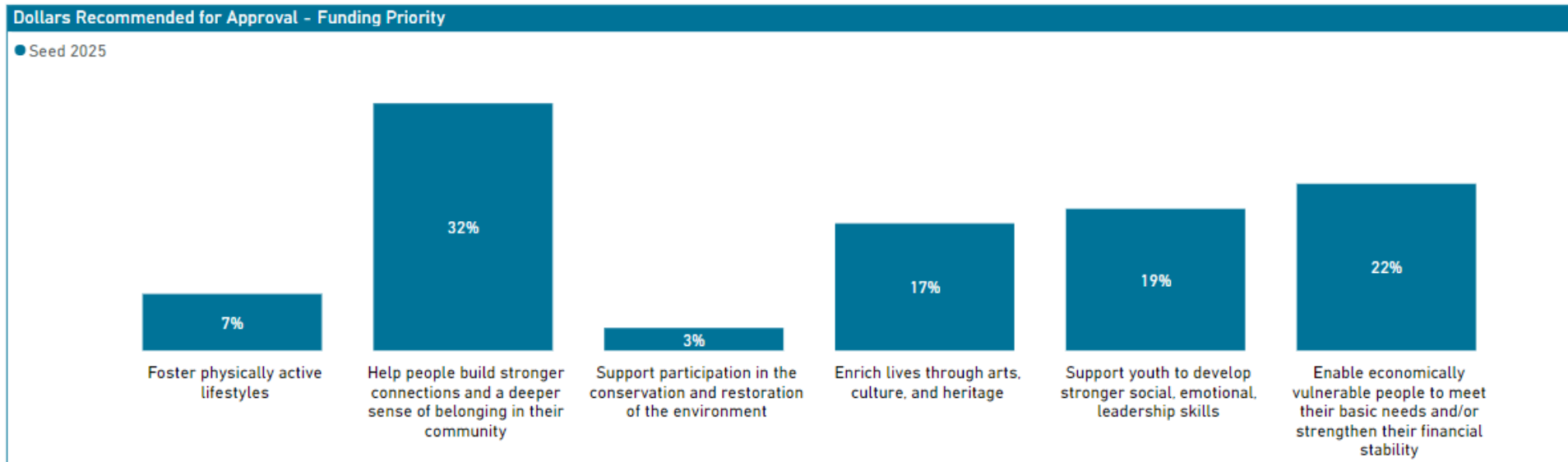
Sign-Off from Chairs: Following each GRT meeting the Chair or Acting Chair signed off on the recommendations of their GRT.

Compliance with OTF Policy: During and following the application assessment period and the GRT meeting period, the Vice-President, Granting has reviewed granting policy compliance, compliance with objectives of the funding stream, and granting process compliance with Regional Directors. The VP, Granting and CEO of OTF each also attended three GRT meetings. The VP, Granting confirms that all recommended grants are within the granting policies, stream expectations and grant-making processes of the Foundation. As well, the VP, Granting confirms that to date no new information has surfaced that would suggest the need to alter any of the current recommendations made by the 16 GRTs.

OTF Investment Summary Report 2024/2025 Seed Cycle

Schedule 2: Supporting Figures

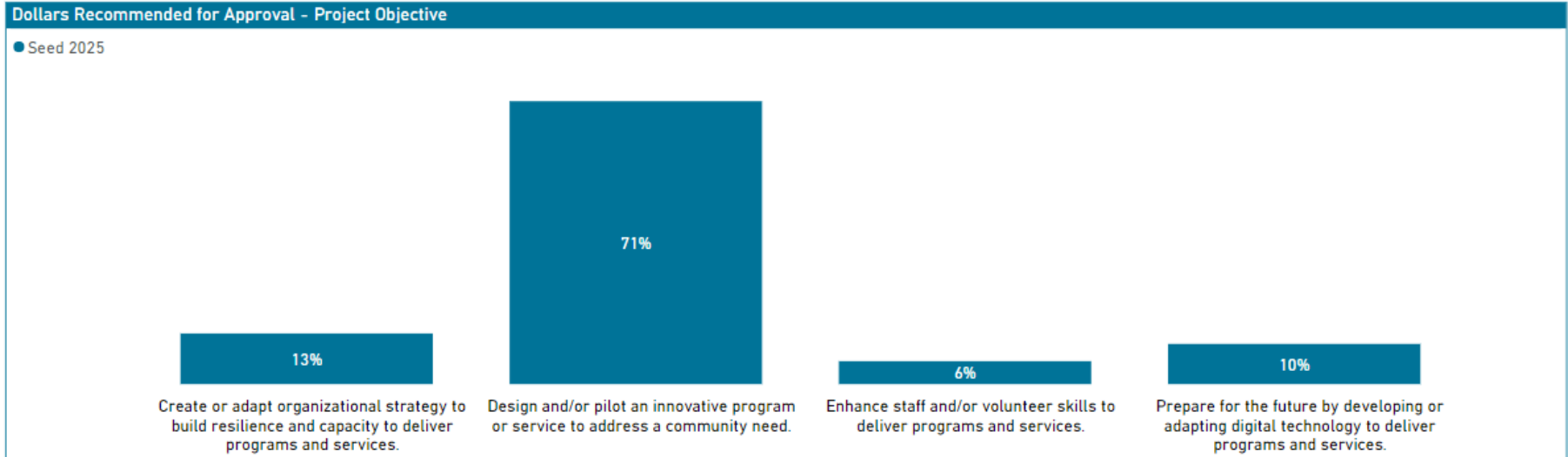
2.1 Funding Priorities



Funding Priority	Applications Recommended for Approval	Amount Recommended for Approval
Foster physically active lifestyles	23	\$1,206,200
Help people build stronger connections and a deeper sense of belonging in their community	74	\$5,266,400
Support participation in the conservation and restoration of the environment	8	\$480,000
Enrich lives through arts, culture, and heritage	50	\$2,707,300
Support youth to develop stronger social, emotional, leadership skills	45	\$3,017,700
Enable economically vulnerable people to meet their basic needs and/or strengthen their financial stability	46	\$3,553,000

OTF Investment Summary Report 2024/2025 Seed Cycle

2.2 Project Objective



Project Objective	Applications Recommended for Approval	Amount Recommended for Approval
Create or adapt organizational strategy to build resilience and capacity to deliver programs and services.	31	\$2,073,600
Design and/or pilot an innovative program or service to address a community need.	170	\$11,576,300
Enhance staff and/or volunteer skills to deliver programs and services.	19	\$936,900
Prepare for the future by developing or adapting digital technology to deliver programs and services.	26	\$1,643,800