

**OTF Investment Summary Report  
2021/2022 Resilient Communities Fund**



Prepared for the Board of Directors,  
March 24, 2022  
2021-2022 Resilient Communities Fund Round 3  
Ontario Trillium Foundation Granting Investments

# OTF Investment Summary Report

## 2021/2022 Resilient Communities Fund



### Introduction

COVID-19 continues to have a significant impact on the nonprofit sector and its ability to support and serve communities across Ontario. Over the past 2 years, the sector has had to adapt to a range of operational challenges, including changing public health measures, mandated closures, limits on in-person gatherings, lack of technological infrastructure, and reaching community members where they live, work, and learn. In response, organizations have reimaged ways and means to meet new and changing community needs, including innovative ways of delivering programs and services, and generating revenue, all the while addressing health and safety requirements of volunteers, staff, and those they serve.

As the pandemic has evolved, it has continued to present operational challenges throughout the sector and brought about new socioeconomic pressures to the fore of Ontario communities, including rising costs, mental and physical health challenges, and increased social isolation.

As Ontario emerges from the acute phase of the pandemic, the services and programs provided by the nonprofit sector remain crucial for rebuilding and maintaining the health and vibrancy of this province. The Resilient Communities Fund (RCF) aims to provide support for nonprofits to adapt, plan, and increase their ability to carry out this essential work and secure their viability for the long term.

### **The Resilient Communities Fund (RCF)**

In the Spring of 2020, OTF responded to challenges faced by the Ontario not-for-profit and charitable sector brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic by shifting its funding focus to support community nonprofit organizations, Indigenous communities, small municipalities, and charitable organizations to recover and stabilize from severe disruptions caused by the pandemic.

The RCF awards between \$5,000 and \$150,000 to eligible organizations for up to 1 year to:

- Adapt delivery of programs and services to meet the needs of community, employees, and volunteers
- Create and or adopt new approaches for organizations to work together to meet the needs of communities
- Equip board members and employees with supports to implement new approaches, prepare for change, and build resiliency
- Improve and increase ability to access financial resources and develop new and/or alternative sources of revenues
- Procure equipment or renovate spaces to meet the changing needs of the organization

For many organizations impacted by mandated or voluntary closures and public health guidelines, many are seeking to hire and re-engage staff and volunteers and are reactivating fundraising plans as the province reopens. Others are rethinking how to move forward while keeping elements of

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what worked well during the pandemic; addressing new audiences; and delivering new or revived services that align with their organization's mission. Also, others will continue to deliver emergency services essential to many of the most vulnerable Ontarians.

By investing in projects through the RCF, we expect to see increased capacity for more organizations to build resiliency and adapt the way they work with an eye toward financial viability and long-term sustainability.

### Community Investments 2021-2022

The 2021-2022 fiscal year has been an extraordinary funding year for OTF. Earlier this year, OTF provided \$96M through the Community Building Fund – Operating and Capital, to support organizations in the community arts and culture, heritage, tourism and sports and recreation sectors, to address infrastructure and operational needs of 2 hard-hit sectors essential to community life and vibrancy.

Due to the unprecedented volume of funding administered by OTF to the not-for-profit sector this fiscal year, the current round of the RCF will be the first and only round of funding offered in the 2021-2022 fiscal year. It is the third round of the RCF since March 2020. OTF will be disbursing its full annual granting budget in this one round to meet the high volume of needs in the sector. At \$96M, this is the largest single funding round in OTF's history. While the Community Building Fund streams offered earlier this year supported the Arts, Heritage, Culture, Tourism, Sports and Recreation sectors, RCF funds support organizations whose work aligns with OTF's six Action Areas (they are: Active People, Connected People, Inspired People, Green People, Promising Young People, and Prosperous People).

The following report will provide a summary and analysis of recommendations of the Grant Review Teams for the December 2021 deadline of the Resilient Communities Fund.

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Appendix A: List of Recommended Applications for Board Approval

Appendix B: List of Declined Applications for Board Approval

Appendix C: List of Technically Declined Applications

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### Schedule 1: Executive Summary

#### 1.1 Cycle highlights:

- **2029 applications** were received this cycle, **requesting \$182M** for organizational recovery and rebuilding initiatives. This represents a 20% decrease in dollars requested from Round 2 in March 2021, and a 20% increase in dollars requested from Round 1 in November 2020.
- This round, **an historically high amount of \$96M is available to be disbursed**, more than double the amount available in previous rounds (\$42M in RCF Round 2 and \$41M in RCF Round 1).
- The Grant Review Teams are **recommending 1146 projects for approval, totalling \$96M**. This is double the number of grants awarded last round.
- The **demand rate is \$1.90** requested for every dollar recommended for approval (56% of all dollars requested are being recommended for funding). This lower demand rate is due to the increased disbursement available, while dollars requested has remained typical for OTF.
- **83% of organizations met organizational assessment requirements this round, up from 67% in RCF Round 2**. Staff piloted a process of offering organizations with missing documentation, required for a full assessment, an opportunity to submit the information in a timely manner. This process likely contributed to the increase of 16 percentage points in eligible organizations from RCF Round 2.
- **38% of applications by Black-serving organizations were declined at the organization assessment stage**, compared to 14% for organizations serving the general population. Applications were mostly declined for having missing or incomplete financial statements. This still represents a reduction from previous rounds where the decline rate at the organization assessment stage was 54% and 47% in RCF Round 2 and RCF Round 1, respectively.
- Compared to previous rounds, more **organizations are reporting higher operating capacities. 66% of recommended funds are going to organizations operating at 70% or higher capacity**, compared to 45% in RCF Round 2 and 49% in RC Round 1.
- **80% of grant dollars being recommended to organizations serving the LBTTQ+ population are going to urban populations**, up from 75% and 46% in RCF Round 2 and RCF Round 1, respectively. The percentage of dollars recommended for organizations serving mid-size communities has decreased to 14%, more in line with the percentage of dollars requested.
- Grant Review Team members continue to demonstrate high levels of engagement with the assessment process. This round, **90% of GRT members completed scoring of all files assigned to them**. In some cases, GRT members scored as many as 46 applications.

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### 1.2 Noteworthy Grants

Below, we highlight some of the initiatives that are being recommended:

#### **Adapt methods of delivering cultural programming in Grand River**

\$77,000 over 12 months from OTF to support the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation in recovering from the impacts of COVID-19 on their cultural programming, by facilitating a pivot to online delivery of their Moccasin Identifier project. The Moccasin Identifier work engages elders and volunteers in raising public awareness of the ancestral presence of First Nations, Metis and Indigenous communities in contemporary urban spaces across Ontario. The grant will allow the creation of videos and culturally appropriate training that will be used to create virtual options for in-school delivery of the program, allowing treaty teachings to reach a wider audience and reducing health risks for the elders delivering the program. Expanding the reach of Moccasin Identifier project provides a unique opportunity to support reconciliation and meet the demand for Indigenous-led cultural programming.

#### **Increase fundraising capacity for Helping Hands to serve Black and Newcomer youth in Mississauga**

With OTF support, Helping Hands Platform will work with a fundraising consultant to improve and increase their ability to access financial resources. Over twelve months, a \$11,700 grant will strengthen the organization's fundraising capabilities, allowing them to continue to support low-income, newcomer, and racialized high school students in Peel-Halton to find volunteer opportunities and meet their graduation requirements while developing employable skills and starting their own community initiatives.

#### **Invest in strategic planning to better serve adults with autism and their families in Bowmanville in the long-term**

With an aim to build capacity and engagement at all levels of the organization, Autism Home Base Durham will use \$126,000 over 12 months to complete strategic planning and succession plans, develop and roll out a new suite of programs. These enhancements are expected to increase membership and revenue by 20%, engage 25 volunteers to implement a new revenue generation stream, and replace outdated technology hardware to better meet virtual program demands.

#### **Purchase equipment to deliver programming for Francophone and racialized community members in Ottawa**

The Centre de ressources communautaires de la Basse-Ville's (CRCBV) \$5,600 RCF grant will, over the span of three months, purchase audio-visual equipment (projectors, removable screens, and laptops) to host online events and activities to reduce social isolation among individuals and families residing in Lowertown. CRCBV is a pillar in the community of Lowertown since 1970 serving a diverse population (African, Asian, South Asian, Caribbean, and Lebanese to name a few).

#### **Invest in staff and increase internal capacity to deepen community impact in Bracebridge**

With OTF support of \$85,400 over 12 months, YWCA Muskoka will rebuild and recover from COVID-19 by supporting staff experiencing burnout and increasing the organization's ability to work more effectively virtually through training and new technological equipment. They will also invest in enhanced communication

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and engagement strategies to increase their community impact through volunteer opportunities and serving new clients, particularly women and girls with low income.

### **Re-imagine delivery of programming to support Niagara families facing grief and food insecurity, and re-engage volunteers**

With OTF support, Project SHARE will rebuild and recover from impacts of COVID-19 by developing an online Circle of Friends program to help individuals facing challenges with grief. The \$147,800 grant over 12 months will enable the continuation of quality service delivery by adapting quality programming to meet the needs of the community in Niagara, including purchasing a new truck and necessary supplies to accept and distribute emergency food to families facing food insecurity. In addition, it will give the organization the tools needed to re-engage their volunteers, providing them with ways to participate virtually in their supportive roles.

### **Build staff capacity to identify and support refugees experiencing mental health distress in Toronto**

This 12-month \$82,400 grant will strengthen the capacity of the Toronto-based Christie Refugee Welcome Centre to respond to the mental health support needs of homeless and recently housed refugee claimant families. Due to their statuses, the communities this organization serves are largely ineligible to access public mental health support, with COVID-19 having exacerbated already complex referral processes and wait times. With OTF support, this organization will now be equipped with staff capable of identifying and supporting the unique mental health needs of these communities. In doing so, they will help homeless and refugee claimant families get much needed support otherwise unavailable through more fully integrated program delivery and services.

### [1.3 Sign-Offs](#)

Sign-Off from Chairs: Each GRT Chair has signed off on the recommendations of their GRT.

Compliance with OTF Policy: The Vice-President, Community Investments has reviewed granting policy compliance. The Vice-President, Community Investments confirms that all recommended grants are within the granting policies of the Foundation. Schedule 2: Resilient Communities Fund Investments

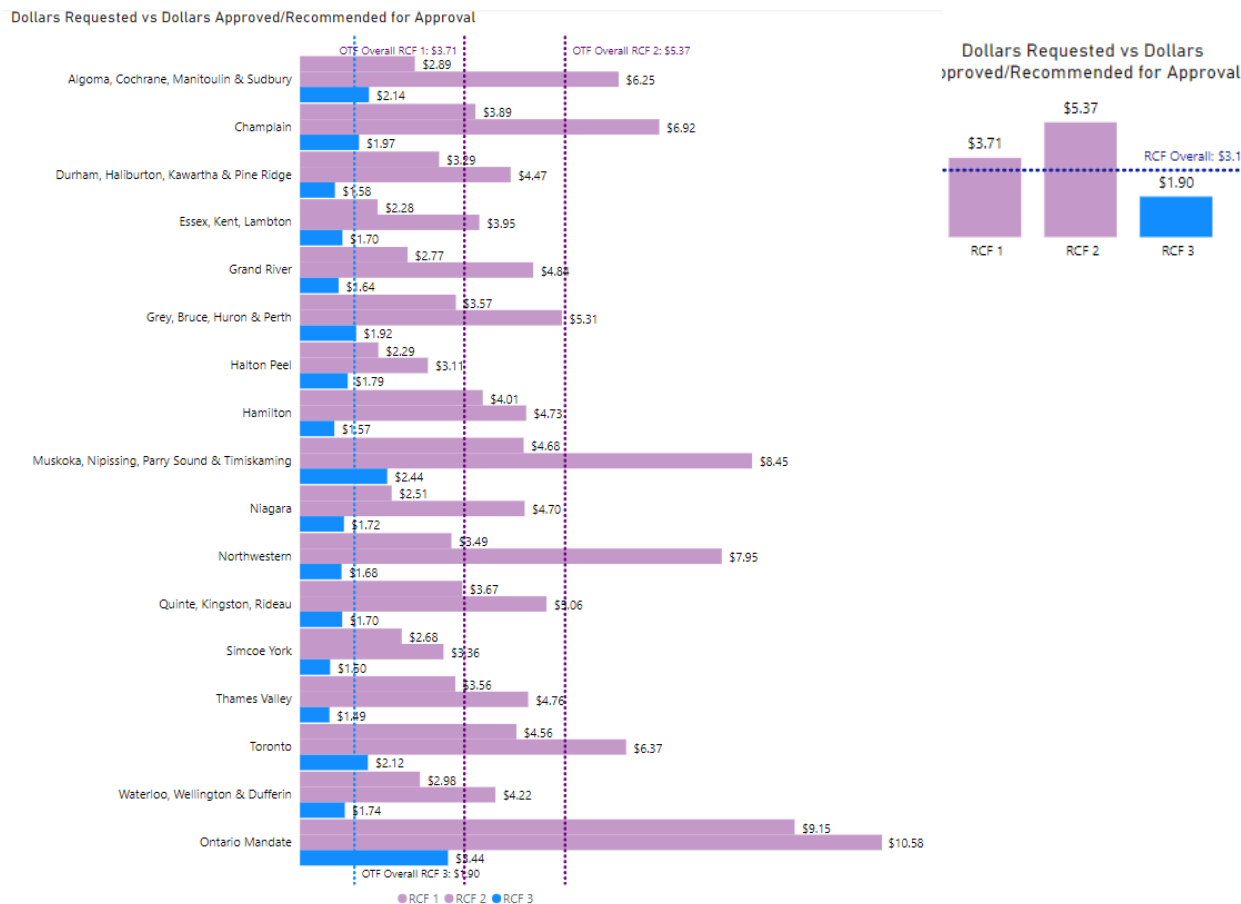
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### Schedule 2: Resilient Community Fund Investments

#### 2.1 Demand Overview

The demand ratio has dropped significantly for all catchments in RCF Round 3 compared to RCF Round 2 due to the increase in available funding. The average demand ratio is \$1.90, down from \$5.37 in the previous round. As in RCF Round 2, the Ontario Mandate catchment has the highest demand ratio at \$3.44 in RCF Round 3. MNPST and ACMS have the second and third highest demand ratios, respectively, although still lower than in previous rounds. Top budget line requests for the Ontario Mandate, MNSPT, and ACMS catchments were focused on salaries and purchased services. Unlike previous rounds, a lower percentage of dollars requested and awarded were for capital expenditures. Part of this decrease may be attributed to the previous Community Building Fund – Capital round, which funded sports and recreation capital projects. The remainder of the decrease can be attributed to a shift towards increasing staffing levels to meet demand.



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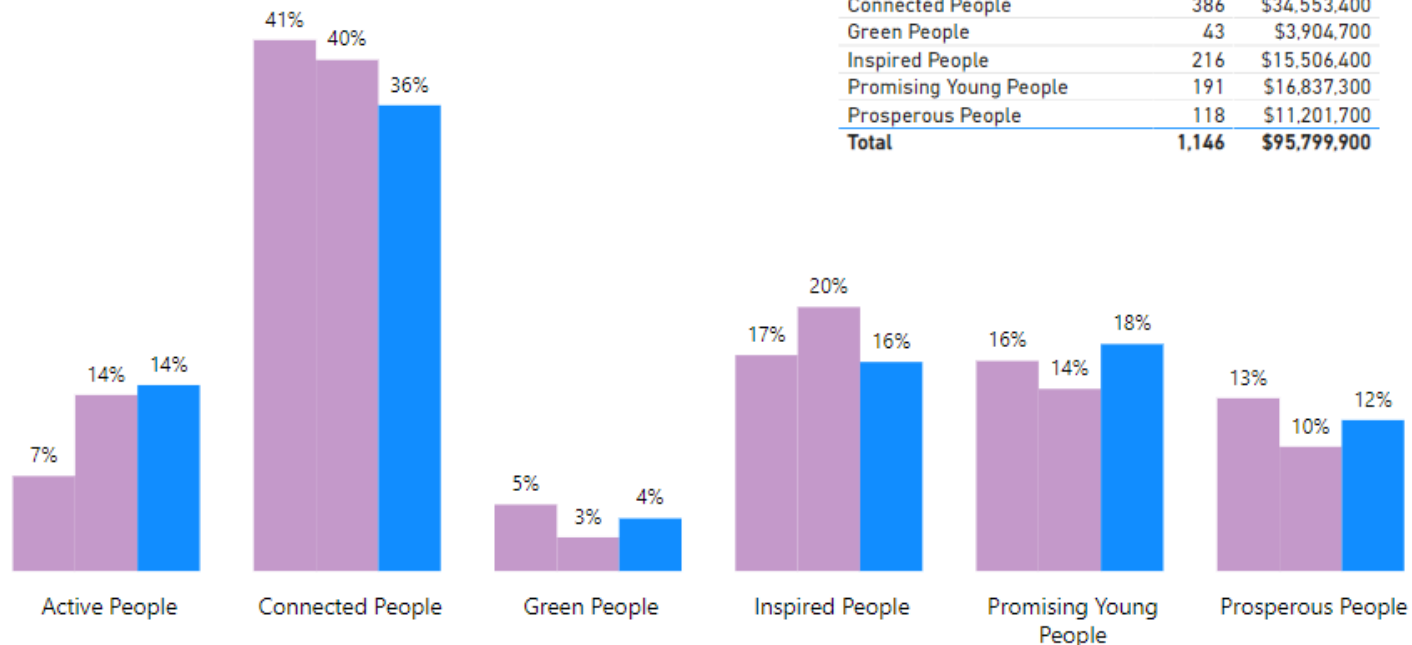
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### 2.2 Action Area Overview

Organizations whose mandate aligned with the Connected People Action Area still received the highest share of recommended investments at 36% in RCF Round 3, matching demand, as 36% of dollars requested came from organizations aligned with this Action Area. This is a slight decrease from RCF Round 2, where 40% of dollars recommended went to organizations aligned with the Connected People Action Area. Promising Young People received the second highest percentage of recommended investments, at 18%, and had the second highest percentage of dollars requested, at 16%. Even though there were 38 fewer applications and 25 fewer grants in the Promising Young People Action Area than in the Inspired People Action Area, the Promising Young People Action Area had both a higher amount requested, and a higher amount recommended. Organizations that align with the Green People mandate remain the smallest share of the Action Area portfolio with the fewest amount of dollars recommended, as well as the fewest amount of dollars requested

Dollars Approved/Recommended for Approval by Action Area

● RCF 1 ● RCF 2 ● RCF 3



Action Area	Grants	Amount Awarded
Active People	192	\$13,796,400
Connected People	386	\$34,553,400
Green People	43	\$3,904,700
Inspired People	216	\$15,506,400
Promising Young People	191	\$16,837,300
Prosperous People	118	\$11,201,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,146</b>	<b>\$95,799,900</b>



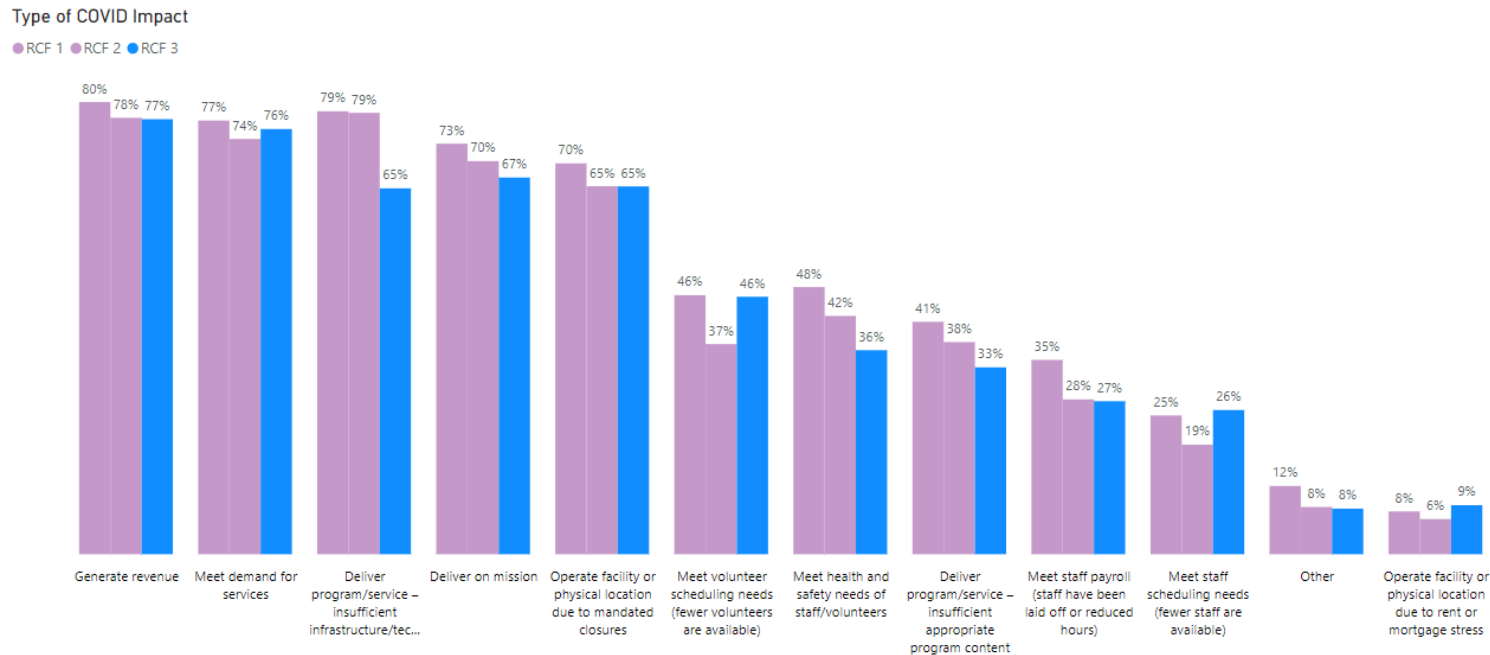
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### 2.3 COVID-19 Impacts on Organizations

COVID-19 impacts on organizations recommended for funding have remained generally consistent across the 3 rounds of the Resilient Communities Fund. A larger share of organizations identified challenges meeting volunteer and staff scheduling needs (fewer volunteers and staff available), likely as most programs and services ramp up and are needing to hire staff and re-engage volunteers to support increased program and service delivery. This is consistent with an increase in Salaries as a budget line, from 31% of dollars awarded in RCF Round 2 to 38% this round. A smaller proportion of organizations identified impacts on delivery of programs and services due to insufficient infrastructure and technology compared to past rounds (65% compared to close to 80% of organizations recommended for approval).

Impacts also vary by sector: 93% of Prosperous People-aligned organizations and 83% of Connected People-aligned organizations identified “Meet demand for services” as an ongoing and top COVID impact. In contrast, 92% of Inspired People-aligned organizations identified “Generate Revenue” as a top impact, followed by “Deliver on mission” at 81% of organizations. Active People and Green People-aligned organizations follow a similar pattern as Inspired People, with Generate Revenue and Deliver on Mission being top impacts. Additionally, 74% of Active People-aligned organizations identified “Operate facility or physical location due to mandated closures” as being a key impact. At 38% of funds requested, Capital was also the top budget line for Active People-aligned organizations, in contrast to organizations aligned to all other Action Areas where Salaries were the top budget item. These disparities underscore the different impacts COVID-19 has had on the nonprofit and charitable sectors, and different paths they will take to recovery.



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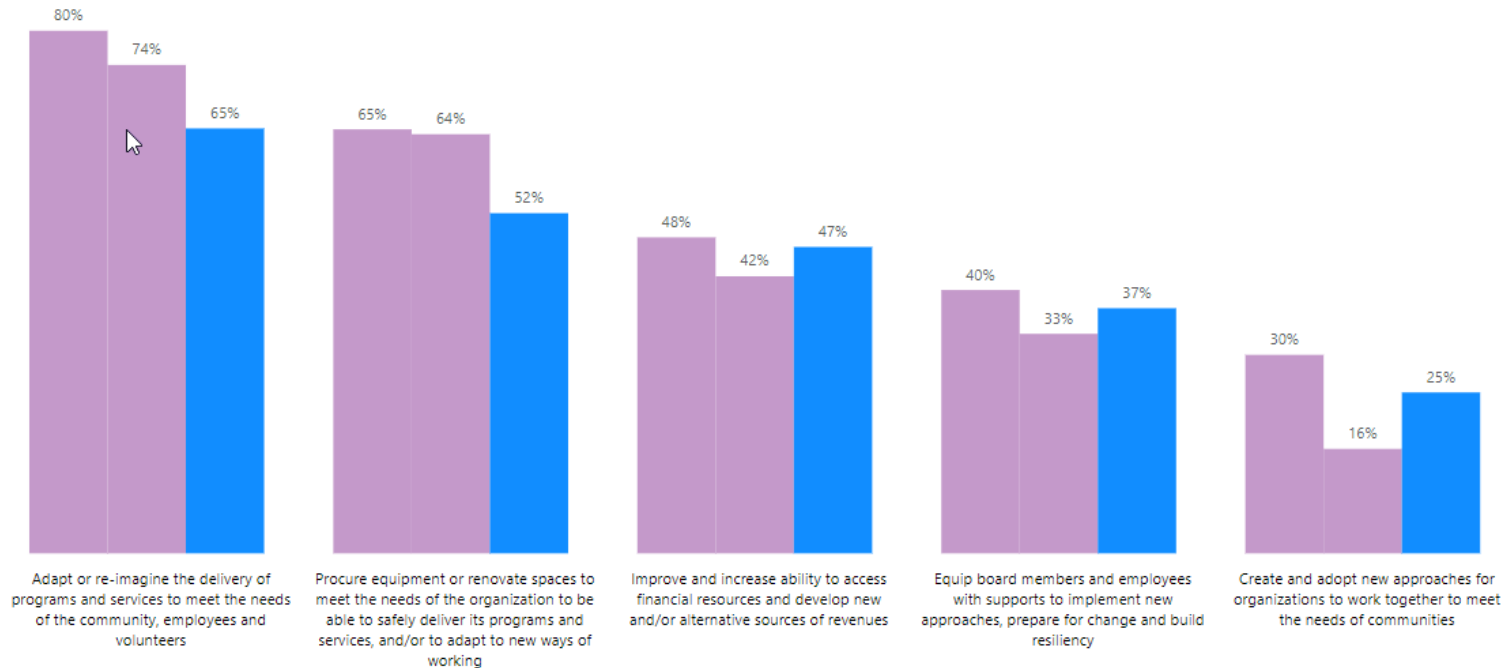
## 2021/2022 Resilient Communities Fund

### 2.4 Project Outcomes

There appears to be a gradual shift in the intended outcomes of projects recommended for funding across the 3 rounds of RCF. As we close out a second year of the pandemic, more organizations have had opportunities to address the acute needs of pivoting programming and adapting spaces to safely deliver services. Accordingly, a smaller proportion of recommended projects identified “Adapt or re-imagine the delivery of programs and services to meet the needs of communities” (65% this round, compared to 80% and 74% in rounds 1 and 2) and “Procure equipment or renovate spaces to meet the needs of the organizations to safely deliver programs and services” (52% this round, compared to 65% and 64% in rounds 1 and 2). The previous CBF – Capital funding round may explain part of the decreased demand for capital expenditures among organizations that align with the Active People Action Area, however, decreases in capital requests are also evident in projects outside of the Sports and Recreation sector. Budget line requests suggest a shift in sector needs as organizations focus on staffing needs instead of capital purchases. Salaries made up 38% of dollar requests approved for funding this round, a 31% increase from Round 2. There was a 30% decline in requests for capital line items recommended for funding this round, to 21%, down from 30% of requests in Round 2.

Type of Outcomes

● RCF 1 ● RCF 2 ● RCF 3



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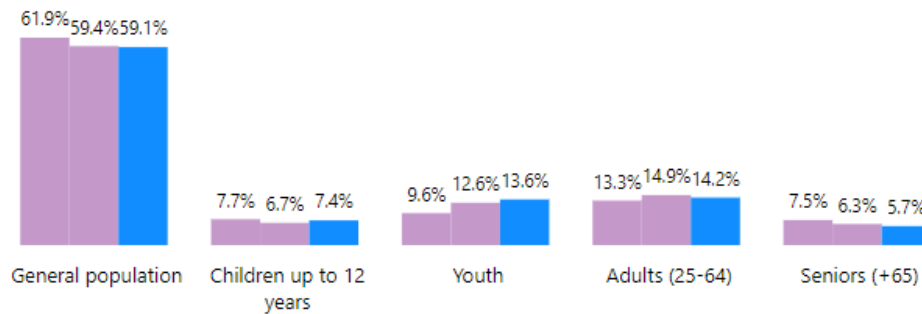
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### 2.5 Populations Served and Community Size

Similar to previous rounds, the largest share of recommended dollars went to organizations who serve the general population. However, in this round, there was a higher percentage of dollars recommended to these organizations than the amount requested by them (75% recommended vs 70% requested). Black-serving organizations saw an increase in the percentage of dollars awarded from previous rounds up from 2% to 5%. Even with this increase, the percentage of dollars recommended to Black-serving organizations was still below the percentage of dollars requested (9%). Indigenous-serving groups saw a slight reduction in the percentage of recommended dollars, from 4% to 3% in this round. For the remaining identity groups, the percentage of dollars recommended was proportional to demand. 63% of recommended funds are going to organizations supporting populations in urban centres this round and 20% are being recommended to organizations supporting mid-sized communities, consistent with previous rounds.

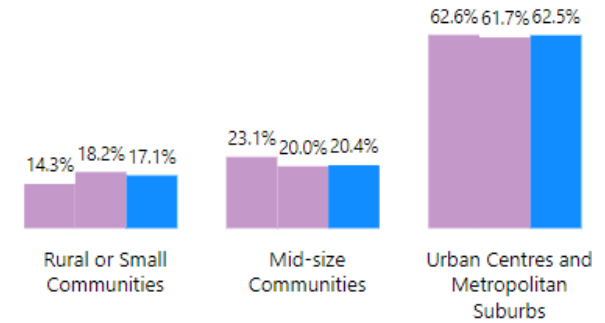
Age Group Served by the Organization

● RCF 1 ● RCF 2 ● RCF 3



Community Size Served by the Organization

● RCF 1 ● RCF 2 ● RCF 3

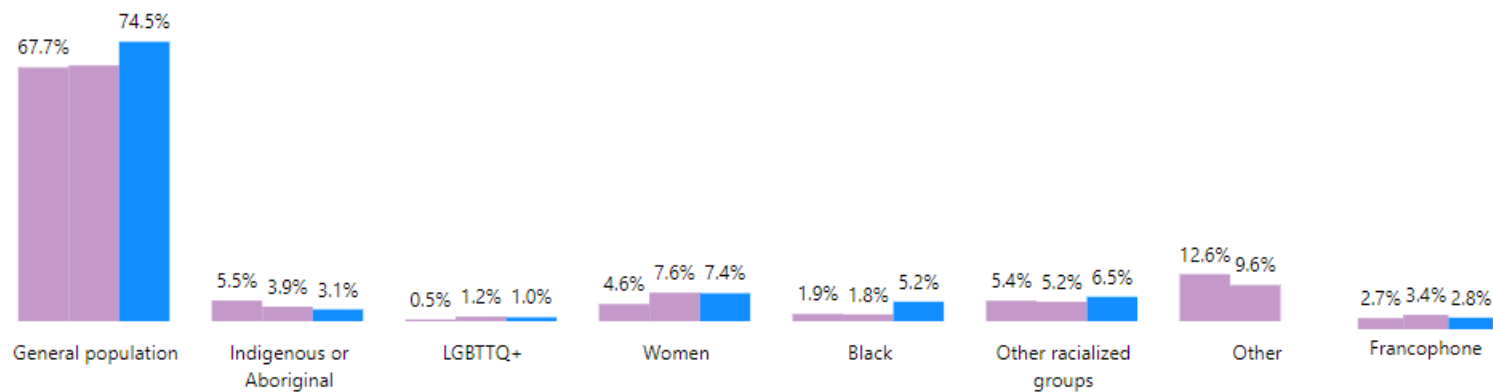


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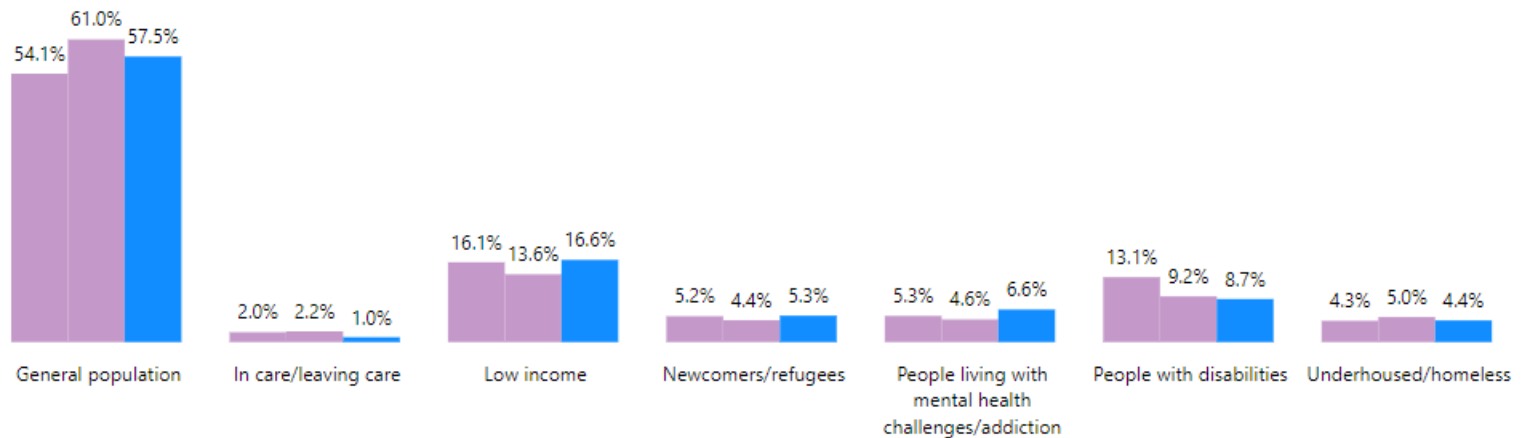
### Identity of the Population Served by the Organization

● RCF 1 ● RCF 2 ● RCF 3



### Lived Experience of the Population Served by the Organization

● RCF 1 ● RCF 2 ● RCF 3



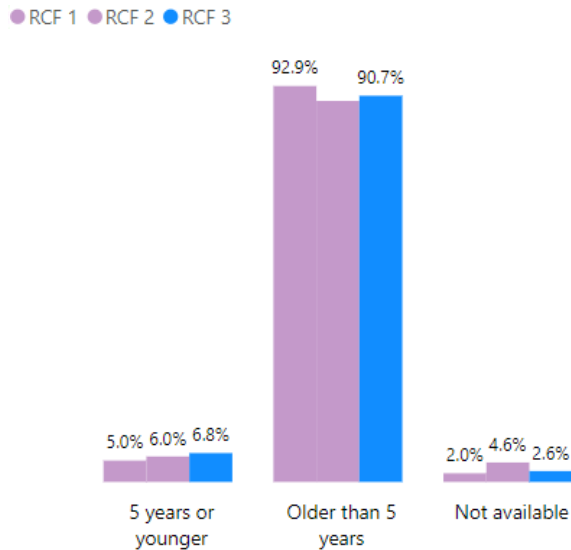
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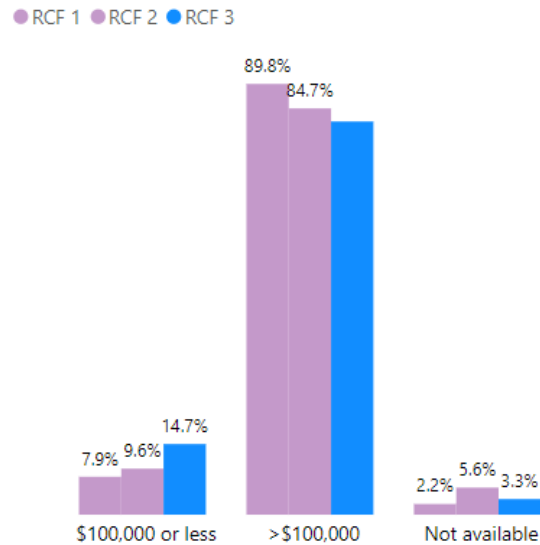
### 2.6 Organizational Characteristics

Organizations younger than 5 years were half as likely to be recommended for funding as their more established peers this round, making up 12% of requests and 7% of recommended projects. This is a continuation of a trend observed across all 3 rounds of the Resilient Communities Fund, with younger organizations making up 11% of requests and 6% of recommended projects in RCF Round 2, and 12% of requests and 5% of recommended projects in RCF Round 1. Projects submitted by organizations with annual revenues less than \$100,000 were also less likely to be recommended for approval than their larger peers. This round, they submitted 20% of requests and are receiving 15% of recommendations for approval. This is an increase from the previous RCF rounds where small organizations (revenue < \$100k) received 8% and 10% of dollars awarded.

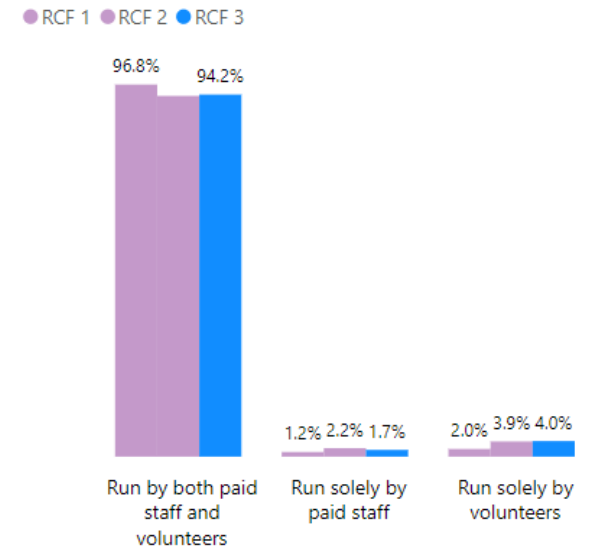
Dollars Approved/Recommended for Approval by Age of Organization



Dollars Approved/Recommended for Approval by Organization Size



Dollars Approved/Recommended for Approval by Type of Staff Running the Organization



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### Schedule 3: Concluding remarks

OTF's entire granting allocation for 2021/22 is being delivered through this third round of the Resilient Communities Fund. 2029 applications requesting \$182M were received for the December 2021 deadline. While the volume of requests tells of a sector still working on adaptation and recovery, there are indications that more applicants are operating at a higher capacity to deliver on their mission and serve their communities in new, adaptive, and creative ways. Grant Review Teams are recommending 1146 projects totalling \$96M for approval, accommodating nearly 56% of requests.