



VITAL YOUTH 2011 GRANT GUIDELINES

[DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: Wednesday, March 30, 2011](#)

The Toronto Community Foundation's Vital Youth grant program supports charitable organizations in the City of Toronto that are working to increase access to high quality recreation activities for youth aged 12-18 years. Funding of up to \$15,000 is available for programs that meet the Vital Youth priorities, are offered to youth over the course of the year, and start in September 2011.

Vital Youth grants support high-quality recreation activities including structured sports, fitness, outdoor education, arts and cultural activities. Priority is given to those programs which increase access, encourage diversity, and develop youth leadership.

Each year, the Toronto Community Foundation reports on our city's quality of life through our Toronto's Vital Signs® Report¹. In the 2010 Report, we noted the following interconnected issues that impact on the well-being of our youth:

- About one-quarter of Toronto high school students (24.5%) reported being overweight or obese (slightly below the 25.2% provincial average);
- One-quarter of Toronto's youth lack a sense of belonging to their local community, a feeling that increases significantly as they reach young adulthood;
- Unemployment in Toronto is directly related to age, education and immigrant status; for young recently arrived immigrants in the city, the rate doubled between 2008 and 2009;
- Lower levels of feelings of belonging among Canadian-born minorities are being reported. The greater the discrimination faced, the more someone was likely not to identify themselves as Canadian;
- Life-long habits of daily physical activity aren't being cultivated in the majority of Toronto's youth. This is reflected among Toronto's 20 - 34 year-olds, 58% of who reported leisure time inactivity in 2009.

Recreation activities for youth have multiple positive impacts beyond health, resulting in a greater sense of belonging and safer communities.

In order to ensure that young people in Toronto can benefit from recreation opportunities regardless of income level, the Toronto Community Foundation, with support from the Province of Ontario, has built a \$2 million endowment as part of our Vital Toronto Fund to help our city become a place where youth are able to participate in recreation activities as part of their development. Funds generated from the Vital Toronto Fund support our Vital Youth grants.

¹ Toronto's Vital Signs® is a Report which measures quality of life in 11 different issue areas. Published each fall by the Toronto Community Foundation, the Report informs our granting and strengthens our ability to connect issues, convene partners, and address Toronto's most pressing challenges. The 2010 Report can be accessed on our website at www.tcf.ca. The 2011 Report will be released on October 4, 2011.

VITAL YOUTH GRANTING PRIORITIES:

Vital Youth grants invest in high-quality recreational programs for young people that help them connect to their community, interact with their peers, and develop their skills and leadership abilities.

1. **Increasing Access:** Recreation programs that are long-term and enable participation by youth aged 12-18 years who otherwise might not have access due to cost or other barriers;
2. **Encouraging Diversity:** Organizations that provide inclusive recreation programs and engage different ethno-cultural communities to interact, play, and learn together;
3. **Developing Leadership:** Programs that encourage leadership and mentoring of youth by engaging them in program development and/or implementation, and/or provide opportunities for young people to gain paid employment.

WHO CAN APPLY?

The Vital Youth program is open to any registered charitable organization located in the City of Toronto offering year-long programs that directly benefit youth aged 12 to 18 who are residents of the City (to view a map please go to www.toronto.ca). Not-for-profit organizations that are not registered charities that wish to submit an application should refer to the "Who Can Apply?" page on our website for additional application requirements (<http://www.tcf.ca/communityorganizations/eligibility.html>).

WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

The initial submission consists of submitting one signed copy (by your Executive Director or Chair of the Board) of a completed Vital Youth Application Form plus required attachments. Short-listed organizations will be asked to submit further information in late April.

WHAT IS THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

Staff will review all initial applications. Staff will contact, by phone and e-mail, those applications that best fit the Vital Youth program priorities by late April, and help each organization to put their 'best foot forward' through a second-stage submission. All other applicants who did not make the short-list will receive email notification that their request for grant funds has been declined. A volunteer Selection Committee (that includes previous grant recipients) will deliberate on the short-listed applications in June and final granting decisions will be made by the Community Foundation's Board of Directors at the end of June. Grants to Vital Youth 2011 grantees will be mailed out in July.

Confirmation of the status of declined applications and feedback on proposals will be available in July once all final decisions are made.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE APPLICATION?

The Vital Youth 2011 Application Form that accompanies these Guidelines must be complete for consideration along with the attachments as described below. One copy of the complete submission should be delivered in person or by mail to the Community Foundation at the address below.

HOW TO FILL IN THE VITAL YOUTH APPLICATION FORM

The **Vital Youth Grant 2011 Guidelines** are intended for use with the **Vital Youth 2011 Grant Application Form**, to help you populate your application with information on your group's activities.

We encourage you to be as clear (no jargon) and concise as possible. Brevity is key. You know your work better than anyone, and we rely on you to articulate your successes in plain language so that people who have little or no knowledge about you can learn about the potential impact of the program, your organization's history working with youth, and your credibility in the neighbourhood or with other groups.

Below is information on the four sections in the Application Form you will need to complete before submitting your application for review. Please aim to populate each section with concise information and within the word limits requested.

COVER SHEET - CONTACT INFORMATION

Please complete and have signed by your organization's Executive Director or Chair of the Board, authorizing the application submission.

SECTION A: ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION

To help us understand how your program fits with the Vital Youth grant priorities and your organization's mission, please provide us with some information on your organization as a whole.

1. **Organization's mission**
2. **Toronto's Vital Signs® issue area(s) addressed by your organization**
(select two from list provided on the Application Form)
 - Our annual Toronto's Vital Signs® Report is a consolidated snapshot of the trends in our city, highlighting progress we should be proud of and challenges that need to be addressed. The Report is compiled from current statistics and special studies which look at eleven different, yet interconnected, issue areas that are critical to the well-being of our city and its residents. The goals of the Toronto's Vital Signs® Report include inspiring civic engagement, providing focus for public debate, and guiding donors and stakeholders who want to direct their resources to areas of greatest need.
 - For more information, and to view electronic copies of the latest Report highlights and Full Report with citations and links to original sources, [please visit the Toronto's Vital Signs® page on our website \(www.tcf.ca\)](http://www.tcf.ca).
 - It is quite likely that your organization as a whole works to address more than one of Toronto's Vital Signs® issue areas.
3. **History of organization**
4. **Accolades and accomplishments**
 - Provide information on any awards and successes, including how long your organization has been working on these issues and any relevant impact statistics.
5. **Organization's programs and activities**
 - Please provide a brief description of your organization's programs and activities.

SECTION B: VITAL YOUTH PROGRAM IMPACT AND QUALITY

6. **Vital Youth program description:** Please provide the name of the program; a brief description (including how long it has been running, how often it is offered and for how long, where it will take place, how many staff/volunteers currently run the program, how many youth are currently in the program, and how long on average the same youth stay in the program). Please describe how you are addressing gaps in service/needs in your neighbourhood; and how your program uses best practices working with youth. If the proposed program is new, please provide as much information as possible so that it can be fairly compared with those proposals that are offering programs with a track record. Funded activities should take place between September 2011 and August 2012.
7. **Target population:** Give us a snap-shot of who you serve in the Vital Youth program:
 - Youth who participate in the program
 - Communities (cultural, ethnic, demographic, etc.), and
 - Specific neighbourhoods served (e.g. Jane/Finch; Malvern; Parkdale; etc.)
8. **Vital Youth program benefits:** Demonstrate how youth in your program benefit. Provide a description of the program's impact and past successes (use statistics, quotes, and anecdotes to back up your statements).
9. **Vital Youth program results:** Provide information on the measurable targets reached in the past (if your program is currently running) or will reach if it is a new program (e.g. number of activities offered, number of youth served, number of youth involved as volunteers/advisors/mentors or employees, etc.).
10. **Youth engagement:** Tell us about how your program engages youth beyond program participation (e.g. in program design, program implementation, mentorship roles, leadership roles, etc.). Tell us about other best practices you use.
11. **Diversity and increasing access:** Tell us about the scope of diversity in your community. Demonstrate how you increase access to young people reflective of your community so they are included in your program?
12. **Belonging:** Demonstrate how you are currently reaching or plan to reach young people in your community who do not necessarily participate in your programs?
13. **Participant vignette:** Please supply a story or simple description of one person's experience with your program, identifying the issue/challenge they face and how your program has made an impact on their quality of life. Incorporating quotes and the words of those impacted makes your story stronger.

SECTION C: GIVING OPPORTUNITY

14. **Amount requested** and a brief description of how the funding will be used.
15. **Vital Youth impact statement**
 - A one sentence description of the impact the potential funding will have on the program (e.g.: "With funding to hire a coordinator, organization XYZ will be able to increase access to ABC program to x number of youth in 2011.")
16. **Telling your story of impact**
 - To support your organization's capacity to tell the story of the impact of your program to your donors and stakeholders as well as the Community Foundation, we request that you earmark 10%-15% of the grant to communications. Please identify a plan that encompasses any of the following: documenting the funded program, collecting and sharing stories of impact (quotes, photos, video, etc.), and increasing your organization's capacity to use these stories to engage in enhanced fundraising or communications activities.
17. **Brief budget** for the Vital Youth grant (how you propose to use the amount requested).

SECTION D: FINANCIAL HEALTH AND GOVERNANCE

Organization's operating budget for 2011

- Provide the total operating budget for your organization for the current year.

Attachments:

Please provide one hard copy of the following:

1. Financials

- Your charity's most recent audited financial statements. If the lead applicant is a not-for-profit organization, please provide financial statements for both the not-for-profit organization and the charitable partner.

2. Board of Directors

- Provide a an addendum that includes the names of your Board of Directors, the terms for each, and the total number required according to your organization's by-laws.

HOW TO SUBMIT THE APPLICATION:

The application must be received by 5:00 PM on Wednesday, March 30, 2011 at the Toronto Community Foundation office in hard copy. Submissions will not be accepted by fax.

All applications received by the deadline will be acknowledged by e-mail within two weeks.

One copy of the Application Form in hard-copy must include all the attachments. Please mail or drop off at:

**Vital Youth 2011
Toronto Community Foundation
33 Bloor Street East, Suite 1603
Toronto ON M4W 3H1**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

If you have any questions about the Vital Youth grant program or need advice before applying, please contact:

Mini Alakkatusery at 416.921.2035 x 205 or
Nadien Godkewitsch at 416.921.2035 x 204 or
Daniela Kortan at 416.921.2035 x 231

DEADLINE IS 5:00 PM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2011