



YUKON LOTTERY COMMISSION RESPONSE

Lotteries Yukon Funding Programs Evaluation

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101-205 Hawkins Street, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 1X3

Phone: (867) 633-7890 | Toll free in Yukon: 1-800-661-0555

Email: LotteriesYukon@gov.yk.ca

lotteriesyukon.com

Lotteries Yukon Funding Programs Evaluation

In 2016 Lotteries Yukon (LY) contracted with an independent evaluator to complete an evaluation of its three funding programs; the Recreational Projects Program, Travel Assistance Program and Community Lottery Program.

The purpose of the LY Funding Programs Evaluation was to determine:

- 1) if intended immediate and intermediate outcomes of the programs are being met, and
- 2) whether there are gaps in the current LY funding programs design or delivery.

The evaluation was designed to focus on the immediate and intermediate outcomes of the programs over three years of programming (fiscal 2012-13 to 2014-15) due to a number of changes to the programs, primarily the RPP, that were made approximately three years ago.

Evaluation Recommendations and Yukon Lottery Commission Response

The evaluation findings illustrate that the Lotteries Yukon funding programs are impactful, well utilized and appreciated by community organizations delivering arts, sport and recreation activities. The system in place is effective in delivering funding and helping the Commission members make funding decisions. Recipient organizations had high praise for LY staff and their crucial role in facilitating funding access throughout the application and reporting process.

The evaluation has identified potential areas for improvements and future consideration:

1. In collaboration with other funding partners, Lotteries Yukon should develop a more strategic approach to funding for arts, sport and recreation projects and activities in Yukon.

The analysis of evaluation findings suggests that although LY programs are largely complementary with programming support from other funders, there is some overlap in the scope of various programming and potential missed opportunities to support innovative, new programming, and communities and organizations facing capacity challenges. Building on a collaborative approach developed in the Partnership MOU, Lotteries Yukon and funding partners should develop a strategic policy with clear priorities for funding arts, sport and recreation in Yukon. The policy should address the following:

Commission Response: *Agreed*

Lotteries Yukon will continue to advance a more strategic approach to funding arts, sport and recreation sectors in Yukon through the Partnership Memorandum of Understanding between the Yukon Lottery Commission, and the Yukon Departments of Community Services (Sport and Recreation Branch) and Tourism and Culture (Arts Branch). The Commission believes for arts, sport and recreation programming to be sustainable, strategic and better aligned that the parties to the Partnership MOU need to work collaboratively at each stage in the program management continuum including planning, designing, delivery and evaluation of each partner's funding programs.

Implementation Timeline: *Underway*

To date feedback has been sought from the partners on the LY Funding Programs Evaluation. In addition, the partners were engaged in the Commission's program planning through the identification of opportunities as part of an environmental scan. The partners will continue to be engaged throughout the funding programs redesign work that is expected to be completed in 2017/2018.

a) **Allocating an appropriate level of funding for low risk, high impact, on-going events and projects under RPP.**

Most of these types of projects are heavily supported by other funding partners, and are likely to have multiple private sponsors. Such projects are also well-established and have a high impact with respect to sustainability and participation. Lotteries Yukon should set a clear policy for ongoing, future support for such events.

Commission Response: *Agreed*

The Commission will identify an appropriate level of funding for ongoing events and projects under the Recreational Projects Program. Criteria will be developed for funding low risk, high impact, on-going events and projects. Considerations in developing criteria include: the need to remain flexible to accommodate new and emerging organizations and projects; the ability to adapt to changes in the program funding environment; and that the primary mandate for arts, sport and recreation rests with the partners.

Implementation Timeline: 2017

b) **Ensuring the travel assistance funding levels and other barriers to accessing TAP funding are addressed.**

The funding amount and scope of TAP should be increased from the \$200 limit, in particular for rural areas and for more expensive out-of-territory travel. The TAP eligibility requirements should be expanded so that arts organizations traveling to non-adjudicated events are eligible for funding.

Commission Response: *Under Review*

The Commission is looking at ways to increase access and remove barriers to the Travel Assistance Program.

Increasing funding levels for the Travel Assistance Program (TAP) is being reviewed against the broader context and outcomes of the Lotteries Yukon funding programs framework, the impact of increasing funding levels for TAP on other Lotteries Yukon programs, and the sustainability of increasing funding levels.

The evaluation also identifies the need to expand eligibility requirements so that arts organizations have better access to the TAP. Lotteries Yukon will work with the Yukon Department of Tourism and Culture's Arts Branch to determine how best to address this barrier that is consistent with Lotteries Yukon program outcomes.

Lotteries Yukon will increase the mileage rate for eligible participants travelling to and from Yukon communities.

Implementation Timeline: 2017/18 fiscal year

c) **Working collaboratively with revenue sharing partners, and other funders to address issues related to differing capacity of organizations and communities in creating relevant arts, sport and recreation programming, and utilizing LY funding.**

The communities and non-profit organizations accessing funding are diverse geographically, and differ in their capacity and experience in developing and implementing programming and applying for funding. Some communities have difficulty utilizing their allocated CLP funds. There is an opportunity to work collaboratively with other funders to develop a strategy for addressing the capacity issues of various communities and organizations (e.g. sharing best practices, developing innovative projects, encouraging local organizations to develop programming, etc.).

Commission Response: *Agreed*

Lotteries Yukon will work with Sport and Recreation Branch, and the Arts Branch to identify and prioritize short, medium and long term plans for providing capacity support to communities and organizations.

The Partnership MOU acknowledges the Commission's funding programs as complementary to other funding programs with the Arts Branch having the primary mandate for arts and Sport and Recreation Branch having the primary mandate for sport and recreation. Opportunities to identify strategic initiatives through the Partnership MOU that provide capacity support will be pursued in 2017/18.

Lotteries Yukon will also review and streamline the application and reporting processes for each funding program. This work will follow a risk based approach that considers applicant capacity and balances accountability in the use of public funds.

Implementation Timeline: *2017/18*

- d) Working collaboratively with revenue sharing partners, and other organizations, to set clear priorities for funding programs and ensure that new and emerging arts, sport and recreation organizations and programs can access the support they need.

Newly established organizations typically have greater difficulties in accessing funding and meeting funding requirements. Some organizations are not accessing LY funding because they don't meet the program requirements (e.g. not incorporated or registered NGO in the last two years) while others are concerned about how their programming, as it evolves, fits with the eligibility requirements for funding or whether they can apply every year. Setting clear priorities for funding programs will help reduce overlap in the scope of the LY programs and other funding programs available, and set clear guidelines and more easily differentiate LY programs from other funders in Yukon. For example, a portion of the funding could be dedicated, with clear priorities, to support smaller and more innovative projects and targeted programming.

Commission Response: *Agreed*

The Commission is examining a variety of approaches to program delivery that are strategic and facilitate the setting of priorities. For the Recreational Projects Program priority setting will be done through a collaborative process with funding recipients, revenue sharing partners, and other internal government stakeholders and sectoral umbrella organizations. The Recreational Projects Program redesign will have specific provisions for new and emerging organizations and projects.

Implementation Timeline: *Fall of 2017*

2. Develop an online application and reporting system.

Providing an online platform for applicants could help reduce paperwork and administrative burden for organizations applying for funding. This would allow applicants to enter information about their organizations once, and only update that information in subsequent applications when necessary. An online system would provide organizations with easier access to information. For example, if privacy concerns were addressed appropriately, it could allow organizations applying for TAP to access information about level of travel assistance an athlete has received in a given year. Experienced organizations will be able to apply with minimal staff involvement, while others could continue using paper format until sufficient capacities are built. An online application system would also help Lotteries Yukon staff in tracking information, producing reports and ensuring accountability. In addition to reducing the burden for applicants, online applications could help generate better data and improve monitoring of programming and activities.

Commission Response / Plan: *Under Review*

Lotteries Yukon has and will continue to pursue within Yukon government a more effective online funding program platform. To be cost effective an online system with the capabilities identified in the evaluation must be centrally developed and managed within Yukon government.

The RPP redesign includes considerable streamlining of the application and reporting requirements by changing from two application driven intakes/year to a three year plan. Recipient report templates will be designed to enable tracking of and aggregation of outcomes.

Implementation Timeline: *2017 for RPP redesign. Pursuing access to an online application system is ongoing.*

3. The application forms for returning clients could include data on outcomes, which over time would streamline reporting and allow for more comprehensive understanding of both project and program impacts.

For example, returning clients could be required to provide relevant outcome data on the previous year's programming (e.g. new activities developed, estimated number of participants, number of artists engaged, funding leveraged etc.). This approach will help ensure accountability while improving understanding on outcomes generated over time. It is worth noting that the Recreation and Parks Association of Yukon (RPAY) has a mandatory online evaluation tool that funding recipients are required to complete with each funded project. Establishing a similar process could help build a valuable core set of data on which to strengthen and improve funding decisions, bolster collaboration and information sharing with revenue-sharing partners, and facilitate future evaluations.

Commission Response: *Agreed*

The new programs policy framework will include a more consistent way for clients to report on outcomes. Further, as part of the revenue sharing accountability framework the Commission will pursue through the Partnership MOU reporting on outcomes for revenue shared with Yukon government. This will provide information on the outcomes (impacts) of all Lotteries Yukon revenue on the arts, sport and recreation sectors in Yukon.

Implementation Timeline: *2017 for RPP redesign. For the Partnership MOU by 2018/19.*

4 . Work with funding partners to share information and enhance understanding of the longer term impact of all Lotteries Yukon investments.

Efforts should be made to build on recent initiatives, such as the Partnership MOU with the Yukon government Departments of Tourism & Culture and Community Services, to establish more formal channels of communication and information sharing processes. This is particularly important given that the funding partners serve, directly or indirectly, many of the same organizations, and it is very difficult to isolate the impacts and attribute them to one particular funding program. Some key informants have called for a review of the whole funding system for arts, sport, and recreation. It would be useful if a more holistic approach to assessment of long-term impacts could be initiated in the future. This approach could include joint evaluations or shared long-term outcome reporting systems.

Commission Response: *Agreed*

As part of the revenue sharing accountability framework the Commission will pursue through the Partnership MOU reporting on outcomes for revenue shared with Yukon government. This will provide information on the outcomes (impacts) of all Lotteries Yukon revenue on the arts, sport and recreation sectors in Yukon.

Implementation Timeline: *2018/19*