

Guide to the Collaborative Granting Process

Addressing Edmonton's Urban Aboriginal Initiatives

The goals of the Collaborative Granting Process (CGP) are to bring community expertise to:

1. Identify areas of high priority and/or unmet need;
2. Identify barriers to build community capacity and identified gaps in service;
3. Inform the development and prioritization of the programs necessary to respond to service gaps and to overcome barriers to timely, fair and culturally appropriate services to the Aboriginal community; and,
4. Provide funders with community-driven project recommendations that will serve to assure them of the community's support for projects that meet its needs.

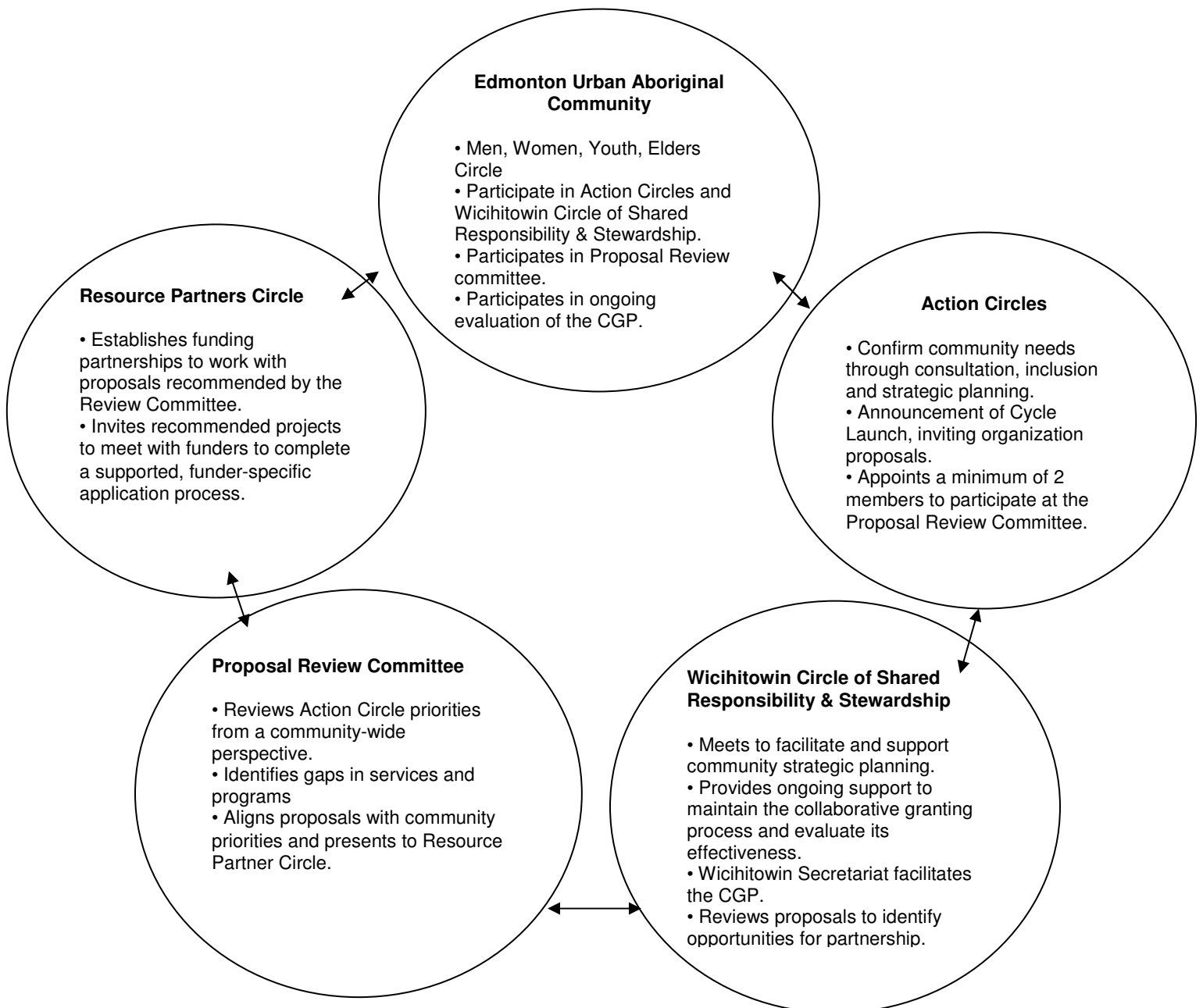
There are many benefits associated with the collaborative granting process, including the following:

1. Attracting additional funds to support community projects;
2. Providing strategic planning opportunities to assist the community in establishing and monitoring its priorities;
3. Improving opportunities for collaborations;
4. Increasing exposure of project proposals to multiple funders without increasing resource demands;
5. Provide partners and other funders opportunities to learn about the needs and priorities of the Aboriginal community in Edmonton;
6. Provides funders the opportunity to maximize funding resources through funding partnerships.

An outline of each of the components of the CGP is provided in the following diagram:

Objective: To prioritize investment in community-driven projects that build on existing strengths or address high-priority needs and service gaps in the urban Aboriginal community.

Participants and Their Roles



Participants and their Roles

Wicihitowin Circle of Shared Responsibility and Stewardship

The Wicihitowin Circle

The Wicihitowin Circle provides guidance support to the Wicihitowin Secretariat, the Action Circles and community groups (men, women, youth, elders).

Membership – The Wicihitowin Circle includes up to 26 members:

- a community Elder;
- 10 Action Circle Chairs;
- and one seat for a representative(s) from Treaty 6, 7 and 8;
- the Metis Settlements General Council;
- Congress of Aboriginal People;
- Edmonton Inuit Cultural Society;
- Metis Nation of Alberta;
- Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Aboriginal Committee (EAUAC)
- the federal, provincial and municipal governments, and;
- one seat for a representative(s) from Aboriginal Youth, women, men and elder community circle.

Care is taken to encourage Aboriginal representation wherever possible in Wicihitowin Circle membership. Each Wicihitowin Circle Committee member will have an alternate designated to ensure that his/her Action Circle or organization will be represented at all meetings of the Committee. The Wicihitowin Circle operates on a consensus model of decision-making. Each Action Circle or organization will cast only one vote regardless of the number of members it may have at the table.

Role in the collaborative granting process

The Wicihitowin Circle of Shared Responsibility and Stewardship works together to:

1. Develop and maintain a strategic planning process that creates and renews the overall Community Plan. The Wicihitowin Plan and the Action Circle plans provide the structure for identifying priorities for investment by the Resource Partner Circle;
2. Provide resources through the Wicihitowin Secretariat as needed to support and evaluate the effectiveness of the collaborative granting process (e.g., assistance with proposal development or costs for meetings, management of a debrief phase after each funding cycle to identify any necessary changes to the CGP, etc.);
3. Provide a home for ongoing discussion, coordinated action and support of Edmonton's Urban Aboriginal community issues and initiatives;
4. Undertake advocacy initiatives to seek solutions to systemic issues identified by the Action Circle, the Proposal Review Committee, and/or the Wicihitowin Circle.
5. Provides guidance to the Wicihitowin Secretariat who acts as a coordinating body and supports the administration of the collaborative granting process.

The Wicahitowin Secretariat

The Wicahitowin Secretariat's Executive Director will ensure the delivery of CGP.

Role in the collaborative granting process

The Secretariat will provide administrative, coordinating, and logistical support to the Wicahitowin Circle, the Action Circles, the Review Committee and the Resource Partners Circle in the collaborative granting process.

The Secretariat will:

1. Coordinate the community launch of the collaborative granting process to facilitate broad consultation and awareness.
2. Develop and communicate the *Wicahitowin Plan* and the *Guide to the Collaborative granting process* to the community.
3. Train Proposal Review Committee in the review process and facilitate the agreement of conflict of interest guidelines.
4. Receive proposals from the community and send email acknowledgement of receipt of complete proposals or notifying them of missing components.
5. Compile proposals and prepare packages for the Proposal Review Committee.
6. Coordinate Proposal Review Committee meetings and record recommendations to the Resource Partners Circle.
7. Prepare proposals packages for the Resource Partners Circle.
8. Coordinate Resource Partners Circle meeting.
9. Collect information on projects recommended for funding.
10. Send letters to applicants informing them of the results of the Resource Partners Circle review of proposals.
11. Report back to the community on results after each Cycle.
12. Identify barriers to building community capacity.

Reporting Process - The Wicahitowin Secretariat will produce a report for each granting cycle, which includes:

1. Identification of community concerns where action is required by the Wicahitowin Circle to deal with systemic barriers.
2. Report on Approved Projects to be shared with Action Circle members for the purpose of aligning work initiated in the Action Circles, identifying gaps for the Action Circle and enacting the process to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the next cycle.
3. Once the cycle is complete, a final report is drafted by the Wicahitowin Secretariat and is distributed widely as an update of progress for that cycle.

Action Circles

The Action Circles are year-round planning and networking groups that improve coordination of services within their areas of expertise, develop new projects to serve unmet community needs, reduce unnecessary duplication of services, and prioritize community investment.

The 10 current Action Circles consist of: Education; Employment & Training; Health & Wellbeing; Housing; Histories, Languages and Culture; Justice; Economic Development; Tawow Connections; Child & Family; and Research. The Action Circles are working to bring together individuals and groups who have a shared interest and expertise to develop the Action Circle.

Membership - Action Circles are made up of service providers, service leaders and members of the urban Aboriginal community who have special interest and expertise in a mutual area of concern that is central to the health of the community. It is the responsibility of each Action Circle to ensure that its membership appropriately reflects the diversity of the community it represents. This goal is met by inviting participation from the four Community Circles (Men, Women, Youth and Elders). This ensures that their work is informed by engaging Aboriginal community members in the planning process.

Role in the collaborative granting process

The members of each Action Circle work together to:

1. Establish Action Circle priorities using the *Your City, Your Voice* community consultation recommendations and community consultation with Circles (men, women, youth and elders) for future Cycles.
2. Implement activities to address and/or resolve the identified priorities through communication, board representation, policy change or development of Request for Proposal (RFP).
3. Development of the Action Circle's 1-3-year plan;
4. Selects a minimum of two representatives to participate in the Proposal Review Committee.
5. Appoints a Chair to represent the Action Circle at the Wicahitowin Circle meetings. The Chair acts as a facilitator for communication, planning, and meetings. An Action Circle may also wish to appoint a Co-Chair who can act as an alternate for the Chair. The division of responsibilities between the Chair and Co-Chair is determined by each Action Circle to meet its particular needs. It is recommended that all Action Circle Chairs be Aboriginal persons.
5. Each participant in the Action Circle collaborative granting process is expected to serve the best interests of all Aboriginal people in the Edmonton community. (see appendix A Conflict of Interest Guidelines)

Proposal Review Committee

The Proposal Review Committee is made up of community members selected by the Action Circles. A non-voting Wicahitowin Secretariat staff person will assist in the facilitation of related meetings.

Each Action Circle appoints a minimum of two members of the community or stakeholder who has knowledge and expertise in the Action Circle's area of interest to represent the Action Circle at the Proposal Review Committee meetings. These appointed representatives could be a member of the Action Circle but should not be involved with a proposal. S/he has a strong knowledge base and experience in order to make appropriate recommendations to the Resource Partners Circle. This process ensures that there is no conflict or perceived conflict of interest in the proposal recommendation process.

The objectives of the Ranking Committee are to:

1. Facilitate regular communication with other representatives in order to maximize opportunities for shared initiatives and community planning processes;
2. Using a broad community-wide perspective, prioritize investments that build on community capacity and existing strengths;
3. Review, prioritize and rank project proposals by identifying high need areas and service gaps.
4. Using the Wicahitowin Secretariat, forward these to the Resource Partners Circle for action.

Role of the Ranking Committee in the collaborative granting process

The Ranking Committee will:

1. Rank and prioritize the proposals using the Proposal Review Criteria.
2. If needed, participate in a Question and Answer session with the proponent to ensure information necessary to rank the proposal is obtained.
3. Participate in a holistic discussion to identify the proposals as high, medium and low based on the priorities identified and shared in the Wicahitowin Plan and knowledge of the Action Circle priorities.
4. Facilitate a discussion with the Action Circle after each cycle.

Resource Partners Circle

The objective of the Resource Partners Circle is to provide funding to community initiatives that address the high priority needs identified by the Action Circles and the Review Committee members.

Membership - The Resource Partners Circle membership includes government, foundations, corporate partners and philanthropic organizations. The Funders work collaboratively with the urban Aboriginal community and with each other to invest in community-identified and prioritized projects that build on community strengths, address high priority needs and/or fill gaps in service.

The Resource Partners Circle objectives are to:

1. Provide partners and other funders opportunities to learn about the needs and priorities of the Aboriginal community in Edmonton
2. Participate in and support further development of the CGP as a well-coordinated process for bringing valuable community projects to the attention of partners and other resource holders. This process also serves as the Edmonton allocation process for local federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) funding.
3. Assist proponents whose proposals for funding through the CGP have been identified for further consideration to complete the required funder-specific application requirements.
4. Maximize flexibility in partners' and other funders' internal process requirements (application, funding deadlines, financial reporting, etc.) so as to reduce complexity, and support funding collaborations.

Role in the collaborative granting process:

The Resource Partners Circle seeks to:

1. Increase the funding available to the collaborative granting process by locating matching funds from government, corporate partners and philanthropic organizations;
2. Maximize flexibility in its members' internal process requirements to reduce the complexity of the funding process and support funding partnerships;
3. Review projects that have been identified as priorities by the Review Committee.
4. Assist proponents whose applications to the collaborative granting process have been ranked to complete the required funder-specific applications; and
5. Appoint a Chair and Co-Chair to conduct meetings and provide a liaison function to the Wicihitowin Secretariat.

APPENDIX A

CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES

Purpose: To provide guidance to participants in the collaborative granting process with regards to conflict of interest.

Definition of Conflict of Interest:

“A situation in which a person, such as a public official, an employee, or a professional, has a private or personal interest sufficient to appear to influence the objective exercise of his or her official duties.”

Review Committee participants:

To work with the Wicahitowin Circle on the collaborative granting process to ensure fairness and transparency.

Wicahitowin Circle members:

A situation in which the member has the opportunity to advance or protect one's own interest, or the interest of other with whom the individual has a relationship, in any way.

Wicahitowin Secretariat:

To facilitate and protect the integrity of the community delivery process developed for the Wicahitowin Circle and utilized by The Government of Canada's Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) and other funders.

Declaring Conflict of Interest:

If any participant's relationship with any other organization would significantly affect his/her judgment on an item before the domain group, that member shall be considered to be in Conflict of Interest on that item, and should openly declare the conflict.