

Transcript: RISE Fund Application Walkthrough

Hello, everyone. Welcome and thank you for your interest in the City of Kitchener's RISE Fund grant. My name is Symone. I am one of the advisors in the City's Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Division and one of the supports for the RISE Fund.

This fund is intended to support events and projects that address identified community needs, reduce barriers to participation, and enhance opportunities for the well-being of Black, Indigenous and racialized communities in Kitchener.

The purpose of this video is to walk you through an overview of the application form and supporting documents available to you for this granting process. Our goal is to help you feel more confident as you complete the form and understand how to clearly describe your project, your community impact, and your funding request.

To begin, I'd like to take you through the RISE Fund web page just so you can get a full sense of the information and tips available to you.

If we reference my shared screen, you'll see a navigation menu right at the top of the page which will allow you to jump to various areas of information, including categories and grant amounts, eligibility, the assessment process, tips and tricks, and other information you may be interested in.

To guide you in filling out the application, I suggest you make use of sections 3, Apply for the RISE Fund and 9, Grant Writing and Application Tips and Tricks.

If we go to Section 3, this is where you will actually access the application, be directed to the tips and tricks section, in case you missed it at the top, and will find this video and the Before You Apply Quick Start Guide and transcript.

If you click on the guide, your page will open to a new tab.

This guide is intended to help you decide whether the RISE Fund may be a fit for your group or organization before you begin the application. We also encourage you to use this guide for support as you fill out your application.

Within the guide, you'll get a bit of an overview about the fund and what is included, such as the amount of funding available and some key dates.

A checklist to determine if this fund is right for your group or organization, and you can always find more information on the RISE Fund web page.

An overview of how the applications are reviewed and what the selection committee considers during their evaluation.

As well as the information you need to prepare so that you can fully complete the application. The application form itself is divided into 5 major sections, including asking for information about your group or organization, your primary contact information, your event or project, your funding request, and your application confirmation.

On the last page of this guide, you will also find another checklist to help you review your information before you submit your application, and some contact information in case you require any accessibility or translation support or have general questions about the RISE Fund.

So now that we've determined this fund is the right fit for your organization, it's time to move on to the application itself. And throughout this section, we're going to take you through what answers to the application questions might look like based on a fictional organization and project we've created.

A copy of this sample application is also available on the RISE Fund web page under the Grant Writing and Application Tips and Tricks.

The first thing you'll see when you open up the application, is an overview of what this grant is intended for, the opening and closing dates for application

submitted submission, some contact information an overview of the eligibility requirements, maximum and minimum amounts available.

And the privacy and collection notice.

The very first thing we will ask you for is confirmation that your organization or group does not participate in conversion practices.

Once I check that box, we can move into the application questions. And you'll notice for the purposes of this video, I've prefilled the application with the answers, but please check out the sample provided on the RISE Fund web page if you'd like to read them in more detail.

Now moving into the application questions, we'll start with the first section, which is your group or organization. And the section is asking for basic information about your group or organization, including your name, address and primary location of operations. So, for our organization, our name is RISE Above. This is what we've put in the box here and it's located in Kitchener.

This section helps confirm who is applying and whether your group or organization is connected to the Kitchener community, which is part of the eligibility requirements for the fund. We do encourage you to complete this section as accurately as possible, and if your group doesn't have a formal office or address, just use the location where your group primarily operates. You can also put in the location your project will take place at.

Next, question 4 is going to ask you to tell us about your group or organization. This is where you introduce us to who you are, what you do, who you support, and what experience or relationships you bring to the project. So, for us, we explained that we're a community led group focused on advancing equity, inclusion, leadership development and capacity building among Black, Indigenous and racialized communities in Kitchener.

A strong response doesn't need to be as long as this or overly complicated, but it should clearly show your connection to the community, the work you already do, and your ability to carry out the project you're proposing.

Moving on to the next few questions, these are used to help determine your eligibility and alignment with the RISE Fund criteria. You're going to be asked what type of group or organization you are, how long you've been active, whether your group or organization is Indigenous led, whether you support Black, Indigenous or racialized communities, and whether your work is connected to Kitchener. And you'll notice that for some of these questions, if you were to select no, you would get a response that says you aren't eligible for the RISE Fund because you must support Black, Indigenous and or racialized communities to apply.

So, you'll have little messages like that throughout just to remind you of your eligibility.

I will also note that for a few questions, once you hit yes, you will receive a drop down for the next question. And for these questions we do encourage you to answer honestly based on your group structure, leadership and the communities your work is intended to support so that the selection committee is able to evaluate you effectively.

Questions 11 and 12 ask you to describe your key leadership team and how they reflect the communities you support. So, for us, we explain that our leaders include Black, Indigenous, and racialized community members with lived experience, community connections, and professional experience in areas like advocacy, facilitation, education, and equity work.

Here, we really want to know about lived experience, even past formal titles or roles. We're really focused on trust, relationships, and connections to the community. You're also going to see that at the end of each major section, I'm highlighting right here, you're going to get a prompt that asks you to save your work. That button is available at the bottom of your screen.

Once you hit Save Progress, as noted here, you'll see a message that says your form will now save automatically. If you do ever need to leave the application, please just make sure you bookmark the page so that you're

able to come back to the application as you've left it. Or you could click on this button right here where it says click here to e-mail the link to yourself.

And at the bottom you're going to get a pop out that asks you to put your e-mail address in so that you don't need to start the application all over again. It'll send you a link.

Moving on to the next major section, this area is asking about your information for the primary contact person for this application. This should be the person who can answer questions about the application and receive updates about the funding process. For the purposes of our application, that contact would be my colleague, Neisa. Be sure to include the correct name, pronouns if you choose to provide them, but they are completely optional, your phone number, email address, and your preferred contact method.

You'll then be asked to choose the funding type that best describes your event or project. So, for our project, we've selected Education and Programming because our project focuses on a video walkthrough and workshops to support grant writing and applicant capacity building. But choose the category that best matches your project's main purpose.

Next, we are asking you to tell us about your event or project, and this is arguably one of the most important sections of the application. Here you should clearly describe what your project is, who it's for, what activities will take place, and what you hope the project will achieve. Our project is a grant application video walkthrough and workshop series that's designed to help Black, Indigenous, and racialized community groups better understand the RISE Fund application process.

When completing the section, also try to make sure your project is easy to understand. We want someone who's reading your application to be able to quickly identify the purpose of your project and why it matters.

Moving to Question 20, you will be asked to explain the need your project is responding to. So, we've identified a need for many Black, Indigenous, and racialized community groups.

Noting that they have strong ideas and community connections but may face barriers when accessing municipal funding. So, for us, these barriers include limited grant writing experience, uncertainty about eligibility, difficulty creating budgets, and not knowing how applications are evaluated. For your own application, please try to be specific. Explain what issue or opportunity your project addresses, who is affected, and how you know this need exists. This could come from conversations with community members, your own experience, previous programming, feedback from participants, or many other forms of community knowledge.

You will then be asked if you have ever run this event or project before. If you have, you can describe what you've learned and how this version may build on that experience. But if you haven't run this project before, that's okay. You can describe related experience that shows your group is prepared. For us, we explained that we've provided informal grant writing support in the past, and that feedback from participants have helped shape the proposed video and workshop series.

This next section is all about your project plan, so you should include when the project will happen, where it will take place, how people will participate, and how the project will benefit Kitchener residents. The more clearly you can explain your plan, the easier it will be for our reviewers to understand how the project will be delivered.

We then move into describing the impact of your project and how you will measure success. For this, think about what will be different because your project happened. What do you expect the outcomes to be? For us, our expected outcomes include 50 workshop participants, more than 300 video views, increased understanding of the RISE Fund application process, and increased confidence in preparing grant applications.

Our ways to measure impact will include attendance records, participant surveys, post workshop evaluations, video analytics, and participant feedback. I do also want to note that your measurements don't need to be

complex, but they do need to help show whether your project will achieve what it sets out to do.

Next, we will ask you whether your participants will have to pay to take part. So essentially will your project be free? We ask this to determine how low barrier your project or event will be for community. If your project is free, please explain how that supports access and reduces barriers. For us, we've decided that the workshops and video resources will be free and have identified accessibility supports such as captioning, interpretation, and accessible materials where possible.

We would also like to know what will happen after your funded project is complete, so the selection committee will want to understand whether the benefits of the project will continue beyond the grant period. For RISE Above, that means the video walkthrough remains available online and workshop materials, templates, budget examples and grant writing tips are compiled into a digital resource package for future use.

For your own project, explain what knowledge, resources, will continue after the project ends.

Lastly, we're going to get into funding and budget. This section is asking you to identify your funding category and explain how your request fits within the RISE Fund criteria. You may be asked to select how your project decreases barriers to participation, increases opportunities, and or increases well-being for Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities in Kitchener. When answering this question, try your best to make the connection clear. Explain how your activities will lead to greater access, participation, opportunity and well-being.

You'll also be asked whether or not you've applied for the RISE Fund before and how much funding you're requesting. So, for us, our organization has not previously applied so we've selected no, and we're requesting \$9850. You will also be asked whether or not you have other funding or in-kind support. In-kind support could include things like donated space, volunteer time, donated materials, partner contributions, or other supports that help make

your project or event possible. If you do have support, please briefly describe it. If you don't, you can just put no, as we've done here.

We would also like to know what happens if you receive less funding than requested, and this is really your opportunity to explain which parts of your project are the most essential and how you would adjust if needed. One aspect of the RISE Fund is that you can receive partial funding, so for us this really helps the selection committee determine whether or not we would be able to allocate funding to you based on that.

For us, we would prioritize the core pieces of the project. So, for RISE Above, this includes the video, walkthrough and at least one community workshop. And then other items such as outreach, accessibility supports or additional workshops may be adjusted depending on the funding that's made available to us.

The final section of this application really is your budget. Your budget should clearly show what you're asking for and how the funds will be used. There is a sample budget template available here, so when you click on it, you'll get a pop-up that shows you what your budget should look like. For the purposes of this video, I have uploaded a budget here.

A strong budget is realistic and connected to the activities you described earlier in your application, and before submitting, please double check that your numbers add up and that each expense supports the project that you've outlined above.

Just before submitting your application, there are a few statements that you'll need to check off so that we know you understand and align with these requirements. Then you're going to get a bit of an optional mini survey at the end simply to let us know how the application process was for you, if you have any suggestions for areas we could improve, and whether or not you'd like to be contacted for future updates, communications or opportunities.

Please make sure to press the Submit Application button at the bottom left of the application page, otherwise your application will not be fully submitted.

Once you hit Submit Application, you'll be taken to a page that gives you an overview of the answers you've submitted. And if you'd like to keep this information for your records, you can select the E-mail Copy to Me button at the bottom of the page.

And it will ask you to put in the e-mail you'd like this record sent to, and that will be provided to you through e-mail.

That does bring us to the end of the application walkthrough.

As you complete your application, please remember to be as clear and specific as possible. We're looking to see what your community focus looks like and really how your work is supported through the information you give us in the application.

It's really important that you're able to explain who you are, what it is you want to do, why it matters, how it will benefit Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities in Kitchener, and how the funding will support your work.

We hope this video helps you to feel more prepared and confident as you complete your RISE Fund application. But if you do have any further questions, please reach out to the REDI team. That is REDI@kitchener.ca and we would be more than happy to help you with the general questions about your RISE Fund application. I want to thank you all for watching and we look forward to learning more about your project. Good luck with your application.