Cooksville Community Action Grants 2025 Guidelines
Resident/Grassroots Groups Stream

Overview

The Cooksville neighbourhood stands at the brink of transformation and opportunity. In recent years, residents, community partners, and other stakeholders have collaboratively developed frameworks and plans to guide this change and capitalize on emerging opportunities, all aimed at fostering stronger and more equitable communities.

The Cooksville Community Action Grants (CAG) are designed to support neighbourhood-focused initiatives that advance key community-informed priorities and actions. These priorities and actions are outlined in local plans such as the Cooksville Community Action Plan.

Successful CAG initiatives will:

- Support residents, grassroots groups, agencies, and local partners to take action and drive progress against community identified priorities.
- Increase social cohesion, ensuring that key priority populations (Black, Indigenous residents, youth, etc.) are able to contribute to creating equitable communities.
- Foster and strengthen relationships between residents, partners, and other stakeholders (i.e., government, funders, anchor institutions like hospitals, universities, etc.)
- Mobilize resources and collaborative action to effectively action local priorities.

This Request for Proposal represents the first of three rounds of CAG: Resident/Grassroots Groups stream in Cooksville. The next call for proposals will be announced in 2026.

Grant Focus Areas:

Round 1 of the CAG: Resident/Grassroots Groups stream will support initiatives in Cooksville with outcomes focused on improving one (or more) of the following:
1. Employment and Economic Stability
2. Housing Stability
3. Vibrant Spaces
4. Health and Well-being

Refer to **Appendix A** for eligible projects and project objectives under each Grant Focus Area.

Grant Amount & Cycle:

The CAG Resident/Grassroots groups stream will fund projects or initiatives led by local residents or small groups active in the Cooksville community. **The requested amount may be between $5,000 - $20,000 per project** and is expected to be delivered over a period of 6 months or less and completed by August 31, 2026. The budget and timeline may vary depending on a range of factors i.e., project

scope, scale and intended impact. Project budgets will be required to include a 10% trustee cost as all resident/grassroots group projects will be trusteed by Indus Community Services.

The total funds available in this phase is up to $300,000 between both the resident/grassroots group and agency/collaborative streams. Applicants are welcome to re-apply in future rounds if their projects are not funded in Fall 2025.

Eligibility Criteria:

This targeted application is available to resident/grassroots groups that meet the following criteria:
- Group must operate in Cooksville (within the geographic boundaries of Mavis Road to the west, the CP Railway tracks to the north, Cawthra Road to the east, and QEW to the south).
- Grassroots groups that do not have registered charity status with the Canada Revenue Agency are eligible to apply in this grant stream (Refer to Appendix B: Glossary of Terms for description of 'grassroots group')
- Project duration must be within the allowable timeframe of up to 6 months.
- Project activities must focus on Cooksville.
- Project must have at least 5 resident leaders submitting as a group, with two of those identified as primary leads. All resident applicants are expected to live at different addresses and not be related.
- Project primary leads must meet the following eligibility criteria:
  - Live in the Cooksville neighbourhood
  - Employees of local agencies who live in the community can apply for a project in the resident/grassroots groups stream. However, it must be unrelated to their paid role as an employee of a local agency. Any roles held at local organizations must be disclosed at the time of application.
  - Be willing to work with Indus Community Services as the UWGT identified trustee organization for the project and abide by relevant policies set out by the trustee in relation to fund disbursement, training opportunities, and reporting
- Project must seek to deliver on one (1) of the Grant Focus Areas. (Note: Projects focusing on solely meeting immediate essential needs of individuals or families in the neighbourhood are <u>not</u> eligible).
- A resident can only be listed as the 'primary lead' on one application.

Eligible Expenses:

Types of eligible activities and actions include, but are not limited to:
- Direct project expenses/supplies*
- Honoraria for volunteers and resident leaders (e.g. Facilitators, Speakers, Performers) – to not exceed 30% of the total requested amount
- Outreach costs including promotion, advertising, and communications (e.g. flyers)
- Food for participants at event/activity
- Event space rental costs, permits or approval fees, online platform fees (e.g. Zoom)
- Training or capacity building costs

- Staffing costs
- Evaluation & report creation costs (e.g. consulting support, writing supports)
- Barrier reduction costs (e.g. food, childcare and transit fare)
- Minor capital costs (equipment or materials to support direct project delivery)
- Trustee administrative costs (10% - mandatory)

* The cost of project supplies to purchase materials to be distributed in community cannot be more than 50% of requested grant budget.

Ineligible Expenses:

Types of ineligible activities and actions include, but are not limited to:
- Funds for partisan political activity that includes the direct or indirect promotion of a political candidate or party
- Funds for religious activities, except for Indigenous cultural and/or spiritual activities
- Gift cards or honoraria for project leaders or participants in total of more than 50% of the requested budget
- Cost of procuring services (e.g., – food, supplies, etc.) from one particular business cannot exceed 50% of the program budget
- Major capital costs (building construction, retrofitting, or expansion, large scale appliance or vehicle purchases)
- Fines and penalties
- Alcoholic beverages
- Membership fees in clubs and organizations
- Maintaining existing services
- Existing salary or office rental costs
- Support to ongoing already funded programs or activities where this funding would duplicate other funding currently/previously received
- Fundraising Activities
- Costs related to activities or purchases that occurs before the CAG contract start date

Assessment Criteria:

Each project proposal submitted for funding will be reviewed and assessed with the following considerations:
- Compelling case for project based on identified community need or opportunity
- Identified opportunities to engage residents in leadership roles
- Ability to increase residents' skills to collaborate effectively and engage in community organizing and local revitalization efforts
- Alignment with Grant Focus Areas
- Clear impact and benefit for structurally disadvantaged individuals/groups in Cooksville
- Project design with demonstrated knowledge of community and activities that can drive proposed impact

- Clear indicators of project impact with strong evaluation plan to measure them
- Alignment of proposed workplan with intended project objectives
- Strong justification for requested budget

Priority will be given to projects that incorporate the following:
- Clear alignment with actions highlighted in local plans (e.g. Cooksville Community Action Plan) and emerging opportunities in Cooksville, associated with one the of four Grant Focus Areas and corresponding objectives. (Refer to Appendix A for a table of the four focus areas for this grant opportunity, including examples of eligible projects).
- Demonstrated engagement and/or connection with local residents, organizational partners, and local networks, including those connected to the Cooksville component of the Community Action Plan and implementation processes.
- Demonstrated support from diverse residents, grassroots groups, and agencies in Cooksville. with opportunities for partnerships and shared resourcing.
- Connection to any emerging or ongoing redevelopment opportunities in the neighbourhood
- Initiatives that centre priority populations such as Indigenous, Black, or structurally disadvantaged groups, embedding the principles of Indigenous reconciliation, Anti-Black racism and equity.

Selection Process:

The Review Committee for Round 1 CAG will be led by United Way Greater Toronto and comprised of up to ten (10) members with a minimum of five Cooksville residents as well as other key stakeholders. The Review Committee members will provide the slate of recommended projects to UWGT for final approval. Successful grantees will be confirmed by November 2025, taking into consideration the applicant's organizational health, eligibility, and project use of funds. Successful projects can expect to commence funded activities from December 2025.

Expectations of Grantees:

The primary resident leads must have a consistent, leadership role in the project's design and implementation, and be available to meet with the trustee for check-ins as required during the course of the project. Grantees are expected to submit a report highlighting project results upon project completion. They may also need to provide additional information on their project based on media and donor interest and participate in evaluation processes.

Information Sessions & Office Hours:

We strongly recommend consulting with UWGT staff prior to, and during the completion of the application. Grant Information Sessions and Office Hours will be offered on the dates and times indicated under the 'Important Dates' section.

Registration is required for the Grant Information sessions during which UWGT staff will provide an overview of the grants and application process. **Please click here to register** for an information session. For those unable to attend the information session, a recording of the session will be uploaded here by the end of June 2025.

To discuss your project, or for support completing your application, you can drop-in at any of the virtual or in-person Office Hours sessions.

Application Process:

CAG applications will be available in a downloadable Microsoft Word format on United Way website (https://uwgt.org/cooksville) and can be completed on a computer, or by hand and submitted electronically to CAG@uwgt.org with subject line 'Cooksville CAG Application' by 5pm on September 12th, 2025. You can refer to United Way website for any information updates.

Important Dates:

Activity	Date
Launch of Application	**Monday June 9**
Information Sessions (online) Click here to register	**Thursday June 12,** 11:00 AM
Office Hours (in-person)	**Wednesday June 25**, 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM Indus Community Services 3038 Hurontario St, Suite 206, Mississauga ON L5B 3B9 Second Floor, Board Room **Thursday July 10,** 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM Halo Café & Expresso Bar 3024 Hurontario St, Mississauga, ON L5B 4M4 **Thursday August 21**, 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM Indus Community Services 3038 Hurontario St, Suite 206, Mississauga ON L5B 3B9 Second Floor, Board Room
Office Hours (drop-in online) - *Use this Zoom Link to join*	**Friday July 11**, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM **Wednesday July 23**, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM **Thursday August 14**, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM **Monday August 25**, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Application Due	Friday September 12th at 5pm
Application Reviews	October 2025
Applicants notified	Mid- November 2025
Contracts Begin	December 2025

Final Report Due	A month after project completion or September 30, 2026 - whichever is earlier

If you have any questions about the sessions, the application, or how to submit please contact Community Action Grants at Email: CAG@uwgt.org
*Please indicate "Cooksville Community Action Grants' in the subject line.

APPENDIX A: Cooksville Community Action Grant Focus Areas & Eligible Project Objectives

Focus Area	Project Eligibility
1. Employment and Economic Stability	Eligible projects under this priority should focus on one or more of the following project objectives: • Increasing local hiring, education and/or training opportunities (through workforce development, new employer partnerships, targeted job placements, bridging programs and/or skills development initiatives) • Strengthening and leveraging partnerships with local businesses, business associations and other stakeholders to support a vibrant local economy • Strengthening opportunities for social entrepreneurship
2. Housing Stability	Eligible projects under this priority should focus on one or more of the following project objectives: • Building knowledge, awareness and capacity of residents and local stakeholders to advance housing and community-based housing models such as through community ownership or management of land • Enabling innovative models to expand affordable housing options • Increasing education related to tenant rights, and support for tenant led groups, eviction prevention, and creation of tenant unions. • Increasing opportunities for community agencies and residents to engage in housing-related conversations and participate in government policies around affordable housing
3. Vibrant spaces	Eligible projects under this priority should focus on one or more of the following project objectives: • Leveraging local developments and existing underutilized spaces to improve community access and sense of belonging to outdoor and indoor spaces • Activating local community spaces through community initiatives that advance local collaboration and encourage resident leadership • Increasing opportunities for service coordination and collaboration in local spaces
4. Health and Well-being	Eligible projects under this priority should focus on one or more of the following project objectives: • Creating or strengthening collaborations and culturally relevant supports that address mental health concerns related to safety • Strengthening peer-based models to support accessibility of resources and service navigation for residents

	- Enhancing coordination of services (i.e. combination of housing supports, newcomer services, food supports, mental health, overdose supports, etc.) between local partners - Increasing availability and accessibility of food programs related to, but not limited to, healthy food access, culturally relevant cooking, community gardening or urban agriculture - Equipping community with the awareness, tools and resources to build community resilience and respond to any future crisis

APPENDIX B: Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
Anti-Black Racism	Engagement with Afro-Caribbean and Black communities is a crucial step toward promoting racial justice and driving systemic change to address the impacts of structural anti-Black racism. There is significant potential to support transformative approaches to safety and well-being, combat gentrification and displacement, uplift Black arts and culture, and promote food sovereignty within Black communities.
Equity	The principle of recognizing and honouring people's distinct lived experiences and circumstances, ensuring they have access to the resources and opportunities necessary to achieve equitable outcomes. Equity strives to dismantle the disparities and imbalances rooted in historical and ongoing injustices and oppression. It fosters a society where individuals' unique identities, experiences, and voices are valued, celebrated, and protected, and where everyone has the resources and social capital to thrive and prosper.
Grassroots Group	Organizations that contribute to charitable activities but do not have registered charity status with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Considered also as 'Non-qualified Donees'. Grassroots group, in the context of this grant call, will be based in the Cooksville community with a number of participating local residents in leadership roles.
Indigenous Reconciliation	Engagement with Indigenous communities is an essential step towards reconciliation and honouring Indigenous sovereignty. There is great potential for the Cooksville area to support Indigenous communities; restore Indigenous identity within the landscape and in public spaces; connect people to arts and culture and build community resources and programs in the future.
Resident Leadership	Ensuring residents hold key project delivery, coordination, and ownership roles to implement an initiative in Cooksville is critical. Resident leadership opportunities are intended to go beyond including residents as project participants or beneficiaries (e.g. – attendees, recipients) and should ensure that residents are reflected at the core of how the project gets delivered locally.
Shared Resourcing	The Community Action Grants call invites diverse funding and resource partners to align resources to advance the work of submitted projects. This could include shared space, human capital, monetary resources &/or in-kind (donated) resources.
Social Cohesion	Relates to a sense of belonging and connection for all individuals and groups within society. It aims to ensure that everyone within society has equitable opportunities to participate, to feel socially included and recognized, and legitimate. Social cohesion involves creating opportunities for members of neighbourhood to work cooperatively and collaboratively despite cultural, ethnic, regional, and socioeconomic status. It respects and thrives from the diversity of its members and harnesses opportunities which appreciate the divergence of ideas, opinions, and skills.