RETHINK WASTE GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Zero-Waste Event Grant

Statement of Purpose

The Zero-Waste Event Grant Program supports efforts to reduce waste generated at public events within the capital region. It provides funding to organizations that are planning or hosting events to help them minimize event waste through the use of reusable products and zero-waste practices, such as proper waste sorting and responsible procurement. By promoting these approaches, the program contributes to the region's transition toward a circular economy—one that keeps materials in use for as long as possible and seeks to eliminate waste.

Maximum Funding

Up to **$10,000** in funding per event.

General Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- **Eligible Organizations**: Non-profit societies, local governments, First Nations governments, or for-profit businesses in British Columbia, committed to implementing waste reduction and circular economy practices through zero-waste events.
- **Project Focus**: Any type of public event (music festivals, farmer's markets, fairs, food festivals, including ticketed events, etc.) is eligible, but projects must focus on implementing waste reduction and proper sorting strategies, with specific emphasis on increasing diversion from the landfill, using reusable products, and/or minimizing the distribution of single-use or disposable items.
- **Location**: The project must be based within the capital region or demonstrate a measurable impact on reducing waste within the capital region.
- **Impact**: Projects must demonstrate significant material diversion from landfills, primarily through waste-reduction strategies such as increasing proper waste sorting and recycling, adopting reusable food service wares, etc.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Contribution to Circular Economy and 3Rs [Reduce, Reuse, Recycle] (30%)**
   How does the project contribute to the circular economy? Does it extend the life cycle of materials (e.g., through reusable products)? How does it encourage sustainable systems like material reuse or circular business models (reuse, rental, repair, etc.)? How will your project ensure multiple uses for reusable products, beyond a single event?
2. **Measurable Environmental Impact (25%)**
   What is the measurable environmental benefit of the project? Specifically, how much waste will be diverted from the landfill through reusable products, reusable food and beverage container programs,

staffed waste sorting stations, and other zero-waste measures? Is there a plan for establishing baseline data, or improving upon existing baseline data?

3. **Commitment to Continual Improvement (20%)**
   How will the organization build on previous experience to reduce waste even further? How will the project improve on previous year's results, such as increasing diversion rates, reducing overall waste volumes or reducing single-use items? What strategies will be introduced, especially to shift from disposable to reusable containers or products? How will lessons learned from previous events be applied to make the project more effective this year?

4. **Feasibility and Viability (15%)**
   Is the project logistically and financially feasible? Does the applicant have the necessary timeline, budget, and staffing or volunteer capacity to successfully execute the project, including time and equipment for weighing waste streams post-event? Has the applicant identified appropriate ways of diverting organics, recyclables, or other waste streams from the landfill?

5. **Community Benefit and Engagement (10%)**
   How will the project engage the local community in zero-waste practices? Does it include educational opportunities, awareness campaigns, or local collaborations that encourage community participation in waste reduction? Does the project include appropriate community partners?

You can refer to the *What Scores Well* document included on our website to understand how to submit a successful application.

Examples of Eligible Expenses

- **Reusable Products Program Development**: Costs related to sourcing, renting, managing, and providing reusable containers and other products (e.g., plates, cups, cutlery, water stations).
- **Pilot Projects**: Testing new reusable food service ware systems or innovative waste reduction technologies within the context of the event.
- **Hiring a Third-party to Manage Event Waste Reduction and Diversion:** Event coordinators can choose to hire a third-party to manage event waste sorting, coordinate a reusable product program, collect and report on baseline waste data.
- **Vendor Engagement:** Costs for ensuring vendor compliance with waste reduction strategies (e.g. acceptable packaging, reuse strategies)
- **Event Infrastructure**: Costs for infrastructure that retrofit venues to accommodate zero-waste practices, such as setting up organics collection or recycling stations, and providing waste diversion signage.
- **Educational Materials and Outreach**: Materials, signage printing, or communication strategies that promote zero-waste behavior before, during, and after the event.

Ineligible Expenses

- Expenses related to hauling or disposal of landfill waste (diverted streams, such as organics, mixed containers, and paper/cardboard are considered eligible expenses).
- Operational costs unrelated to the specific waste reduction activities of the event.
- Staff salaries or general administrative expenses not directly related to waste reduction at the event.
- Costs for activities already funded by other grants or programs.
- General venue rental or catering costs unrelated to sustainability or waste reduction.
- Expenses for private events that are not open to the public.
- Expenses incurred prior to funding approval

Payments of Grant Funds

- Funds will be released upon receipt of a final report outlining project outcomes and how the funds were used.
- Advanced Payment: Release of partial funds in advance of the event will be considered if a need is shown.

Note: Funds can only be released based on budget items outlined in the approved application. If there are any changes to the event plan, please reach out as soon as possible.

Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants must adhere to the following reporting guidelines:

1. **Final Report**: A comprehensive report is required within 60 days of the event completion. Please review the Zero-Waste Event Grant Report Template provided on our website.
   Note: Grant recipients will be required to provide weights of various waste streams collected and diverted from landfill. Please plan ahead and allow staff time and a method for how you will collect this data.
   The final report template includes:
   - Overview of the event and its outcomes
   - Details of waste reduction metrics (e.g., how much waste was diverted, how many reusable products were used, etc.)
   - Financial report outlining how the grant funds were spent
   - Recommendations for future event improvements or scaling to other events
   - Photos or videos documenting the event and the zero waste systems in action
   - Samples of educational materials created or distributed during the event
2. **Supporting Documentation**: Organizations must retain invoices and receipts for two years after the grant application has been approved for auditing purposes.

How to Apply

- **Application Process**: Application can be found online and should include a clear outline of the event's waste reduction strategies, budget, timeline and measurable goals for diverting waste.
- **Information or Questions**: New applicants are encouraged to reach out in advance of completing an application to learn more about zero-waste practices and get advice on their proposed activities.

Note: Preference is given to events or organizations that can show baseline data from previous similar events and a commitment to continual improvement.

Key Dates

- **Deadline**: Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis with funding available on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- **Grant Cycle**: Events must be completed within 8 months of the date of funding approval.

By applying to the Zero-Waste Event Grant Program, you are contributing to a growing movement of sustainable, circular economy practices that benefit the environment, the community, and future generations. Thank you

Regional Resources for Event Organizers

- **Reusable Food and Beverage Container Services**[1]: the following reuse companies are active in the events sector currently: Friendlier, Nulla Project, Reusables and Alpha Sharewares
- **Packaging Guides for Vendors**:
  - Sustainable Takeout Guide
  - Food Service Accessories Factsheet
  - Compostable Plastics
- **Volunteer Training:**
  - What Goes Where tool: use for training volunteers (they can even have this on their phones at the ready throughout the day) or creating a top 10 items people have trouble sorting properly and making sure volunteers know where those things go. We always recommend checking with your waste/recycling collector to see what they will take, especially when it comes to packaging that vendors will bring.
- **Event Waste Signage** (ready-to-print): crd.ca/businesswaste
- **Reuse Information** (for those exploring owning their own systems): TEA - Reuse at FIFA report - 2025
- **CRD Water Stations** (check availability): Book a Water Station | Capital Regional District
- **CRD Event Outreach**: Environmental Workshops & Events | Capital Regional District
- **Guide and Services**:
  - Zero Waste Event Guide
  - Sustainable Events Directory

[1] If you represent an active reusable food and beverage container service provider in the capital region and would like to be included in this list, please contact rethinkwaste@crd.bc.ca