



GRITTY TO PRETTY PLACEMAKING PROGRAM

OPEN GRANT 2025 Eligibility, Criteria, and Application Form

Gritty to Pretty consists of five (5) grants, which includes the Mural Grant, the Façade Lighting Grant, the Open Grant and the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) Mural and Open Grants. These projects contribute to DHBC's strategic placemaking goals.

The Open Grant offers support towards the costs involved to beautify Downtown Halifax and provide aesthetic, artistic, and/or interactive benefits, which enhance the pedestrian experience to the area for its visitors, the businesses, and the community. The Open Grant is an initiative that supports quick-win, transformative projects through activation of leftover and/or underutilized spaces; streetscape improvements; and/or art and placemaking efforts.

Since part of the intent of the program is to add colour to the Downtown and enhance the pedestrian experience, priority will be given to proposals that are playful, fun, and take into consideration the element of surprise and unexpectedness in an urban environment.

GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARY

The Downtown Halifax district is defined as: the geographic area between the waterside of Brunswick Street to the Halifax Waterfront and from the south side of the Cogswell interchange to the south end of Barrington Street.

TO BE CONSIDERED FOR DHBC FUNDING, A COMPLETED OPEN GRANT APPLICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED TO DHBC. THIS INCLUDES:

1. **Application Form** – Complete and sign the application form attached to this document.
2. **Project Description** – Include comprehensive descriptions, details, and logistics of the proposed project.
3. **Visual Representation** – Include coloured sketches/renderings of proposed project demonstrating quality and detail in design plans.
4. **Budget** – Submit a detailed budget for the project.
5. **Schedule** – Include a schedule for proposed work, including a start and end date and detail on all key stages, including development, implementation, and delivery.
6. **Site Photos** – Provide photos of proposed project site and physical surroundings.

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

- June 15:** Completed application proposal and supporting materials submission to DHBC by email: jonathan@downtownhalifax.ca or by mail: Jonathan Goldson, Placemaking Manager, Downtown Halifax Business Commission, 1546 Barrington Street, Suite 104, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3X7.
- June 27:** DHBC notification to applicant of acceptance or decline.
- July 11:** Project implementation including final design, permissions, implementation, and installation timeline.
- August 11:** Mid-project status report to DHBC.
- August 26:** Completion of placemaking project and notification to DHBC. Completion may happen before this date.
- September 21:** Submission of final report and receipts to DHBC.

ELIGIBILITY

This opportunity is open to anyone including but not limited to individuals, organizations, art professionals, community groups, art collectives, art galleries, artist-led community groups, artist teams, curators, designers, and visual artists.

THE SUBMISSION MUST ALSO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS BELOW:

Originality: Unique expression – original artwork or design is preferred.

Accessibility: The installation is located in a place that is viewable by the public and meets city accessibility codes.

Feasibility: Reasonable budget, timeline, and qualifications of participants.

Permanence: Uses high-quality materials that will last the minimum time that the artist specifies, and are resistant to vandalism, weather, and ultraviolet deterioration.

Engagement: The installation provides an interactive experience – visually, hands-on, or through motion.

Effectiveness: The installation is visually appealing, eye-catching, and conveys the intended artistic message.

Structure: Proposed project area should be structurally sound and safe for public interaction.

ADDITIONALLY, THE PROPOSED PROJECT WILL BE REVIEWED FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- Artistic integrity:
 - Ideas that are compelling and clearly articulated.
 - Ideas that aim to activate the city in interesting, engaging, and interactive ways.
 - Ideas that contain a consideration of the intended site, community, and the public realm.
 - Ideas that enhance the pedestrian experience and consider the experience during both the day and night.
- Must be durable (if applicable) and easily maintained.
- Does not advertise for a business, advocacy movement, religion, or political party. Cannot include text that advertises a specific business or product, advocacy, religious, or political message. Additionally, trademark symbols, text, and business or artist names are not permitted on the installation. One exception is the 10% up to one-square meter at the bottom of a project where artist names as well as sponsors may be listed, including, “DHBC Gritty to Pretty Mural Grant Program.”
- No tags or acronyms are permitted on the project, only wording meaningful to the public at large.
- Must not include any inappropriate or controversial wording or images on the installation.
- Must be suitable for public of all ages.
- Artists are encouraged to consider mixed media proposals.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Grant recipients are responsible for all materials and equipment on site.
- Grant recipients may require \$2 million (\$2,000,000) general liability insurance, depending on the project.
- Grant recipients are required to always maintain a clean and safe working environment.
- Grant recipients are responsible for all required permits.
- If the proposed location is on a Registered Heritage Building, HRM Heritage Staff must be contacted prior to submission of proposal.
- Grant recipients are responsible for ongoing maintenance of the project to maintain the original artistic standards, the original permit standards, as well as maintaining a structurally sound and safe area.
- Grant recipients are responsible to produce the project as described in the application and must not alter the project without written consent and agreement from DHBC.

SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

1. Should demonstrate the ability to address the vision of the program.
2. All submissions will be evaluated based on applicant's experiences and qualifications, the creativity of their previous work, as well as evidence of ability to meet design criteria.
3. The clarity of purpose behind the submission and reasons for applying.
4. The quality of the materials/images supplied.
5. Ability for the project to be completed.

COPYRIGHT AND MORAL RIGHTS

Copyright including any and all designs, drawings, maquette, and final works of art shall remain the property of the grant recipient. Moral rights remain with the grant recipient. DHBC has permission to reproduce images of the installation for non-profit publicity purposes. DHBC does not own any project or project assets made possible through the Open Grant program. The grant recipient will retain ownership, unless arrangements are made with other partners, e.g., developer/property owner, HRM (if on public land), or other funders.

The final installation must be the same as the concept submitted in the application, and not changed without prior written consent and agreement of DHBC.

ACTIVITIES NOT FUNDED

- Travel and accommodation.
- Projects outside of the DHBC boundary.
- Projects that include political messages or parties or sectarian or religious facility or activity.
- Capital works, facility maintenance, and improvements.
- Parking or other infringement fines.
- Illegal activities.
- Projects that do not have prior written permission from the landowner/developer.
- Ongoing running costs.
- Items of equipment or clothing of a personal nature.
- Purchased and/or maintenance of vehicles, such as cars, vans, minibuses, etc.
- Provision of meals and snacks.
- Social events and parties.
- Retrospective proposals, e.g., installations that have already begun or where equipment has been bought or ordered.

FUNDING

Grant funding is limited, and each grant is subject to a maximum amount. Successful applications can receive up to 100% of the grant request. The exact amount depends on the project and is at the sole discretion of the selection committee. General grants awarded are usually between a few hundred dollars and up to \$10,000. Funding for larger grant requests may be considered. Funding can be used to cover costs such as artist fees, infrastructure and equipment, collaborator or consultant fees, and support for securing permits. Other funding partners are allowed and encouraged to increase the quality and feasibility level of the project. All other funding partners and contributing dollar amounts should be included in the budget submitted to DHBC.

WHO MAKES THE DECISIONS

Your application will be considered by DHBC's Gritty to Pretty Jury. This jury is composed of the project management team (DHBC staff) and a diverse collection of individuals from different professional and community art backgrounds that possess expertise in managing and producing murals within Downtown Halifax.

PAYMENT

DHBC will issue the grant money in installments by cheque. Vendor/supplier invoices will be required before grant cheques are issued. Receipts and an expense report with HST breakdown will be required within 30 days of completion of the project.

OPEN GRANT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **My project is in the planning stages, how detailed does my application/proposal need to be?**
Provide as much detail as possible. The selection committee will need enough information and supporting material to make an informed decision. This may include, but is not limited to design plans, sketches/renderings, photos, examples from other cities, timelines, full budget, detailed descriptions, letters of support, etc.
2. **Can I apply to paint or make other improvements to the façade of a building?**
No, unless the improvements include creative and artistic elements. The Open Grant is intended to beautify Downtown Halifax and provide aesthetic, artistic, and/or interactive benefits to the area, its visitors, the businesses, and the community. For examples of the types of projects that would be accepted, please see question #11. For façade lighting projects, please refer to the Façade Lighting Grant application form, or for mural projects, please refer to the Mural Grant application form. Both application forms can be found at: www.downtownhalifax.ca/grittytopretty.
3. **What kind of permissions would I need – other than from the developer/property owner?**
If the project is located on public property, permissions will be required by either the Halifax Regional Municipality and/or the provincial government, or other organizations. Please be aware that this can be a lengthy process. It is suggested that you start the permission process as soon as possible, even before grant acceptance notification. It is not DHBC's responsibility to acquire or coordinate permissions.
4. **Can I add other funding partners?**
Yes, other funding partners are allowed and encouraged in order to increase the quality and feasibility level of the project. All other funding partners and contributing dollar amounts should be included in the budget submitted to DHBC.

5. Do I need insurance for my proposed project?

It would depend on the project. Insurance is the sole responsibility of the project organizer/owner. DHBC is not responsible for acquiring or paying for insurance policy. If you require insurance, options include but are not limited to www.palcanada.com.

6. How much can I receive in grant money?

Successful applications can receive up to 100% of the grant request. The exact amount depends on the project and is at the discretion of the selection committee. General grants awarded are usually from a few hundred dollars up to \$10,000. Funding for larger grant requests may be considered. Grant funding is limited, and each grant is subjected to a maximum.

7. How will the grant funding be issued?

DHBC will issue grant money by cheque in installments. Vendor/supplier invoices will be required before grant cheques are issued. Receipts and an expense report with HST breakdown will be required within 30 days of completion of the project.

8. What if my project goes over budget?

The grant amount awarded at the time of acceptance is fixed. No additional funds will be granted to the applicant by DHBC through the Open Grant within the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Expenses above and beyond the amount awarded by DHBC are the sole responsibility of the applicant or other partners, if applicable.

9. Who owns the project once it is complete?

DHBC does not own any project or project assets made possible through the Open Grant program. The applicant will retain ownership, unless arrangements are made with the other partners, e.g., the developer/property owner, HRM (if on public land), or other funders. Ongoing maintenance or repairs for all aspects of the installation will be the responsibility of the applicant.

10. Who needs to be recognized once the project is complete?

A Gritty to Pretty plaque, provided by DHBC, must be visibly placed on or near the installation. "Downtown Halifax Business Commission" must be recognized as a "Funding Partner through the Gritty to Pretty Open Grant Program" when the project is referred to in print, online, or in the media releases. Other funding partners, if any, will be recognized at the discretion of the project organizer/owner.

11. Can I see examples of past projects?

Yes. Visit www.downtownhalifax.ca/grittytopretty to see examples.

12. What about Sidewalk Access?

Work zones on sidewalks generally fall into one of two categories: a walkway at least 3ft wide is maintained around the work area or the sidewalk is closed, and pedestrians are detoured to the other side of the street. If the sidewalk can stay open then the permit is approximately \$125, but if it needs to be closed then it would be approximately \$200. A request for a Streets & Services permit can be submitted to HRM via their online permitting process. For more information on this process visit the following link: <https://www.halifax.ca/home-property/building-development-permits/streets-services-permits>. If the sidewalk needs to be fully closed, you will require a Safety Plan to be provided by a third party. Absolute Traffic and Sign Solutions can provide a Safety Plan for approximately \$300.

APPLICATION FORM

SECTION 1 – CONTACT INFORMATION

Submission Date:

Project Name:

Project Organizer or Organization Name:

Project Organizer Main Contact Name:

Contact Phone:

Contact Email:

SECTION 2 – PROJECT OVERVIEW

Description of project, including relevant history. (max. 3,000 characters)

Project location/venue(s):

SECTION 3 – GRANT REQUEST DETAILS

Total dollar amount requested (including HST breakdown):

Project budget, including confirmed funding/partners. (max. 2,000 characters)

SECTION 4 – PLACEMAKING PROJECT GRANT CRITERIA

Project Effectiveness:

- a. Describe the conditions of the site and why it requires improvement. Include site photo(s). (max. 2,000 characters)

- b. Describe how the project will beautify the proposed site. Include a sketch or rendering of the proposed project. (max. 2,000 characters)

Project Engagement:

- a. Describe how, if at all, the project will be interactive for/used by the public. (max. 2000 characters)

- b. Describe how the neighbouring businesses are anticipated to participate in the project. (max. 2,000 characters)

Project Feasibility: Discuss the feasibility of the project as proposed, including any ongoing maintenance and how it will be handled and who will be responsible for maintaining the quality of the project. (Please refer to “Frequently Asked Questions” #4 and #10 regarding permissions and ongoing maintenance). (max. 2,000 characters)

a. Describe the extent to which Downtown Halifax and/or its businesses will benefit from the proposed project. (max. 2,000 characters)

- b. Describe the extent to which the project will have short or long-term benefits. If the proposed project has long-term benefits, discuss any plans to ensure the project's longevity. (max. 2,000 characters)