



2017 Community Excellence Awards

Application Form - Partnerships

Please complete and return the application form by **Friday, June 23, 2017**. If you have any questions, contact UBCM at awards@ubcm.ca or (250) 356-5193.

SECTION 1: Applicant Information

Local Government: City of Abbotsford

Complete Mailing Address: 32315 South Fraser Way

Contact Person: Heidi Enns

Position: General Manager Parks, Recreation and Culture

Phone: 604-859-4195

E-mail: henns@abbotsford.ca

SECTION 2: Staff Contact

An invitation to attend the UBCM Community Excellence Awards Breakfast Reception will be sent out via e-mail in early September. Winners will not be named before the ceremony.

Please provide the contact information for the person in your office who should receive and reply to the invitation, on behalf of the elected officials/staff who will be in attendance at the UBCM Convention.

Staff Contact Person: Heidi Enns

Position: General Manager Parks, Recreation and Culture

Phone: 604-8759-4195

E-mail: henns@abbotsford.ca

SECTION 3: Project/Program Information

1. Name of the Project/Program:

Involve Abbotsford

2. Project/Program Summary. Please provide a summary of your project/program in 150 words or less

Involve Abbotsford is a City-staff driven volunteer program that supports and fosters success for local arts, sports and non-profit organizations by providing relevant information and training to help them build on their existing services and support for community

of Abbotsford.

The program is 100% City staff driven, and is organized and delivered with the support of several community organizations, private businesses including Pita Pit, Connect Now, Abbotsford Community, Abbotsford Cultural Centre Board and Tourism Abbotsford.

Now in its fourth year, the program is extremely successful and widely acknowledged by the community as an example of how community partnerships can serve as an example for all types of organizations to follow.

This is a full day of collaboration between the City staff, Community organizations and our citizens. We have the opportunity to learn together, converse together, ask questions, and explore answers. It provides an ideal venue to address and alleviate challenges. Staff select and deliver workshop topics directly related to those challenges. Past City-staff led workshops include:

- City Council 101: So, You Wish to Speak to City Council?
- How to Plan a Special Event within the City
- Budgeting 101
- Continuous Improvement – out with the waste

Past workshops led by organizations/business owners include:

- Grant Writing For Success
- Creating a Community Using Social Media
- Positioning Your Organization For Success Effective Market Research
- Business and the Arts
- Creating a Culture of Engagement
- The Intergenerational Workplace
- Sharing your Message with Video
- How Tourism can Help Local Businesses

3. Partners.

A) Please list all the partners involved in this initiative. (no word limit)

City of Abbotsford, Abbotsford Pita Pitt (local small business), Connect Now, Abbotsford Community Services, Abbotsford Community Foundation, Abbotsford School District, United Way of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford Cultural Board, the Abbotsford Arts Council and the Tourism Abbotsford Society

B) Why did you choose to work with this/these particular partner(s)?

The foundation of this project is collaboration between municipal government, non-profit organizations and local businesses. It is a strong example of how having a planning team

that includes a variety of staff who are connected to the community, can really bring a community together to create something that benefits everyone. From securing volunteer workshop facilitators, to securing a food and beverage sponsor, the whole project is about working together through all levels of the community to break down barriers, identify and promote common goals, and develop innovative solutions to shared challenges and visions. By focussing on creating an inclusive, district and engaged community, we strengthen relationships and support partnerships and collaboration across the City.

SECTION 4: Project Details

Please answer each question in 250 words or less (our judges value directness and brevity). If you experience difficulty answering a particular question, consider the aspects of your program that may relate to the question and show us how they are linked. Remember to include measurable results whenever possible.

- 4. Objective.** Please explain the decision-making and thought process behind your decision to take on this initiative.

We believe that it's important to leverage and highlight our existing, local partnerships. In this way, Involve Abbotsford becomes a platform to showcase our local experts and connect them to our local community groups, organizations and businesses. It becomes a marketing platform for those workshop facilitators who have services to offer.

By bringing together city staff, local organizations/businesses and residents, in an environment dedicated to inspiring, informing and invigorating, we have a unique opportunity to connect in a more meaningful way. Through these direct, face-to-face connections we are able to look for synergies, collaborations, learn best practices and share resources.

By creating a platform that also promotes our local businesses, we are supporting their growth which in turn contributes to the economic development of our community.

- 5. Challenges.** Please provide examples of challenges you faced in taking on this program/project and how you overcame them.

Every local government has a wealth of professional experts who are eager to be part of something that has a mission of making a difference in their community. However, the community is not always open to hearing from City staff. At the City of Abbotsford we understand that meaningful collaboration between local government and community organizations is facilitated through the development of relationships. One of the challenges we faced in our community was generating opportunities for those relationships to develop. The Involve Abbotsford program became an ideal platform for bringing local government and community together and to this day, provides an excellent opportunity for staff to learn firsthand what services the community needs most. It is a unique example of bringing together local government, organizations and businesses to create something that is truly open to everyone in the community.

- 6. Goals.** What did you set out to accomplish with the program/project? How effectively did you meet your goals?

Through the seminars, the Involve Abbotsford planning committee has had an opportunity

to hear directly from local organizations/businesses and residents so that their challenges and needs can be understood and address through our service delivery.

This direct communication also helps the planning committee better identify what training/resources/tools would help improve the various services in our community.

Involve Abbotsford has evolved into a leadership development platform where we see past delegates transitioning into workshop facilitators, thus connecting delegates directly with the services that facilitator (or their organization) provides.

7. Benefits. Please provide examples of how this program/project benefited the community.

By offering a local, no-cost educational event, we are providing a high-value experience to our community while removing the typical barriers non-profit organizations often face (registration costs, travel, etc).

In order to ensure the cost-effectiveness of this event, the City relies heavily on the involvement of volunteers and in-kind contributions. All workshop facilitators are volunteers (we do pay a fee for the keynote speaker), and city volunteers support the event by running the registration table and by being room hosts.

Lunch is sponsored by a local business, again keeping the costs of the event low while providing another local business with a platform to promote their offerings.

By creating a platform that also promotes our local businesses, we are supporting their growth of those businesses which will then contribute to the economic development of our community.

8. Innovation. What makes this program/project innovative and creative?

To the best of our knowledge, Abbotsford is the only community that provides annual staff-led support to the community in this way. Each year the format of the symposium changes as we continue to find new ways to engage our delegates and provide an exceptional and inspiring learning experience. It is a unique example of bringing together local government, organizations and businesses to create something that is truly open to everyone in the community.

Involve Abbotsford is a low-cost, City led project that engages local organizations and businesses, residents and staff so that we can harness and showcase our local expertise. By having staff on the planning team that are in regular contact with many of our local organizations, we are able to ensure that this event meets their needs.

This project also supports, and is supported by the Abbotsford Speakers Bureau. This bureau is comprised of local experts (in a variety of fields) who are willing to volunteer their time to do community presentations, lunch and learn workshops etc. We are able to draw speakers for the event from this bureau and also promote the bureau to the participants so that they can bring high-quality learning experiences into their own organizations and workplaces.

9. Sustainability. What measures have you put in place to ensure the continued operation of this initiative? (e.g. staff time, resources, financial)

In 2016 Involve Abbotsford had a 50% increase in registrations from 2015. The continued growth that this project shows each year is a testament to the solid processes that are in place. The staff time required to organize and deliver this event is supported through three

positions and their corresponding budgets within the department. For each position, this event assists in expanding the reach of their respective work with the community: community outreach and support, volunteer development, health networking and community capacity building.

With a large team of volunteers (workshop facilitators, registration desk hosts, room hosts) and engaging local businesses for sponsorship, this is a very sustainable event for the City. The rental costs of the host facility are donated by the City.

10. Best Practices. How do the processes behind the program/project, and the subsequent results, serve as an example of best practices?

The foundation of this project is collaboration between municipal government, non-profit organizations and local businesses. It is a strong example of how having a planning team that includes a variety of staff who are connected to the community, can really bring a community together to create something that benefits everyone. From securing volunteer workshop facilitators, to securing a food and beverage sponsor, the whole project is about working together through all levels of the community.

11. Transferability. How is this program/project transferable to other local governments?

This project is a model of designing and delivering a community-based day of learning that could be replicated by any local government. The Abbotsford Team would be happy to assist any municipality looking at replicating this initiative. Some recommended planning areas to focus on include:

- An organization should establish the planning team which encompasses key staff members who currently have strong connections to the community.
- It is recommended that a collaborative session of brainstorming of key issues local community groups and businesses are faced with in order to determine what type of workshops would best inspire, inform and invigorate best organizational practices.
- An outreach and connection with community and staff members to engage local experts who are able and willing to host relevant and meaningful workshops.

12. Knowledge Sharing. What helpful advice would you share with other communities looking to embark on a similar project?

Engage your local volunteers and local businesses and harness the professional knowledge contained within your local government staff team. Every local government has a wealth of professional experts who are eager to be part of something that has a mission of making a difference in their community. Many are just waiting to be asked!

13. Additional Information. Please share any other information you think may help support your submission.

Check out our Website: www.abbotsford.ca/involve

SECTION 5: Signature

Applications are required to be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant.

Name: Heidi Enns	Title: General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture
Signature: 	Date: May 18, 2017

Applications should be submitted as Word or PDF files. If you choose to submit your application by e-mail, hard copies do not need to follow.

Submit applications to Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: awards@ubcm.ca or mail: 525 Government Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 0A8