

Growing Roots in the Neighbourhood (GRIN)

Grant Program Terms of Reference (updated 2022)



Background/Context

An annual project funding program for a maximum of \$1,000 is offered by the Regina Horticultural Society (RHS). The Growing Roots in the Neighbourhood initiative was launched in March 2014.

Regina Horticultural Society Mission: to encourage gardening for the enhancement of the local environment and the quality of life of its members and the general public.

Regina Horticultural Society Mandate: to educate, through its various programs, its members and the general public about gardening, and to promote and support gardening in Regina and surrounding area.

Function of the Committee

This Committee, consisting of members from the Regina Horticultural Society and at least one RHS Board member, will work together to provide the necessary documentation supporting the RHS' funding initiative. The Terms of Reference for GRIN will be presented to the Board annually before the Annual General Meeting, following the results and evaluation of the preceding year. Based on that assessment, the funding program may be amended for the subsequent year.

The Terms of Reference provide:

- A clear description of the funding program's objectives and intended outcomes which support the RHS' mission and mandate.
- A straightforward application process and form.
- Well-defined eligibility criteria according to the guidelines provided by the RHS Board.
- Candid and easy evaluation and review criteria.
- A concise message to promote the initiative and one to endorse the ultimate selection of funding recipient(s) and to publicize the success of the program at the end of the project.

Key Points

Name of fund: Growing Roots in the Neighbourhood – GRIN

Intended audience:

- New gardeners in Regina (for example, immigrant families, children, newcomers to the city, community/neighbourhood revitalization initiatives)
- Practiced gardeners (for example, including a garden as part of a community revitalization project)
- Partnerships (organisations, not-for-profits, groups supporting access to healthy food and a healthy environment)

Eligible applicants:

- Regina community-based and partnerships, but not restricting an individual from applying (scoring will favour partnerships)
- Examples: Regina Community Food Assessment, community associations, schools, service co-operatives, etc.
- GRIN applications will be accepted from members of the general public

Ineligible applicants:

- RHS Directors
- GRIN Review Committee members and their family
- Businesses, government agencies and departments (however, they can be partners)
- Previous GRIN recipients if < 5 years or not a new project

Publicity:

- Working with the appointed RHS GRIN Liaison, the Publicity Director will ensure communications via:
 - o Media (radio, television and print) via public service announcements
 - o 'Sister' organisations and forums (Saskatchewan Horticultural Association, garden clubs, greenhouses, community centres, community associations)
 - o Event such as Education events, Seedy Saturday
 - o Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
 - o RHS media (website, newsletter, workshops, presentations)
 - o Educational media (Regina Public Library, U of R, post-secondary institutions)

Application process

Form and Application Guidelines

Screening Criteria based on the following:

- Fit RHS mandate and mission = education and promotion of gardening
- Preference given to grassroots-type projects
- Preference given to community-based projects
- Must address a gap
- Must demonstrate potential for being sustainable
 - o project can stand alone afterwards and does not rely on ongoing support from RHS
 - o project contributes to environmental sustainability
- GRIN awards are made on an annual basis
- Each year's application will be assessed on its individual merits
- No core funding (no salaries, no administrative overhead)
- Must demonstrate community benefit and/or impact of project
- NOT dependant on RHS volunteers for labour
- Willingness to liaise with RHS Project Liaison (ie. questions, access to expertise, promotion of outcomes)
- **Possible examples of projects:**
 - o demonstration gardens
 - o immigrant/newcomers gardens
 - o youth and/or seniors' gardens
 - o increase / improve access to existing garden space(s)
 - o development of new garden space
 - o matching of potential gardeners to garden spaces

- education/training: perhaps for new Canadians; persons in poverty?
- activities targeting specific group, community, organisation or partnership

Scoring: more to community-based partnership with an organisation than to a single individual (more prudent approach, and supports community-based partnerships). Rubric listed on application guidelines, and point allocation indicated on application, for a total of 100 points.

Eligible costs:

- start-up costs: materials, supplies, equipment rental
- NO salary
- NO administrative overhead
- NOT funded by other sources (double-funding of same costs)

Nota: RHS is not in competition with other funders or not-for-profits (not undercutting another organisation's funding objective). Must tie-in with RHS Mandate.

Administration of program:

- Announce invitation for applications and deadline dates within press release
- Provide access to the application and the guide
- Review of applications by members of the GRIN committee with recommendations to the RHS Board
- RHS Board President to contact successful applicant(s)
- Approve funding which will be awarded at the April Education Event
- Ensure signing of liability disclaimer by successful applicant
- Announce GRIN recipient by mid-April
- Appoint RHS Project Liaison(s) to project lead(s) who will, through regular contact:
 - Provide mentorship, support and guidance to recipient including but not limited to timelines, expectations, follow-up, reporting, disbursements
 - Ensure understanding of project outcomes and deadlines to applicant(s)
 - Ensure all GRIN monies are expended by August 31, of the project year
 - Contribute to the assessment of the criteria at the end of the project, including obtaining feedback from the proponent about the GRIN initiative (application, processes and outcome)
 - Co-ordinate a presentation post-project to RHS – eg, AGM, Education event or Christmas potluck dinner.
- If there is no successful applicant, no funds will be dispersed
- Contribute to review and evaluation of GRIN program
- Review and evaluate successful outcome of GRIN and its administration
- Recommend program amendments, as may deemed necessary

Review/adjudication process:

- One board representative(s) + two volunteer member representatives: GRIN Committee
- Scoring grid of 100 points; each category given a numerical value
- Last page of the application will have score and assessment results (internal to GRIN Committee)

Communication with applicants:

- Transparency and fairness will be used by the Review Committee to answer submission inquiries;
- RHS President will contact successful applicant(s) no later than mid-April
- RHS President will meet with successful applicant(s) to explain the administration of the program
- Project Liaison will ensure regular contacts with project lead through email, telephone calls and in person, on site.

Assessment of results at the end of the project by Review Committee:

- Review of communication pieces:
 - Press releases
 - Application form and guidelines
- Review of administration of program:
 - Intake and review processes
 - Project monitoring: liaison role, financial transactions, start and end dates
 - Feedback from GRIN funding recipient
 - Post-project presentation by GRIN recipient to membership
 - Recommendations by Review Committee to RHS Board

In order to assess if the GRIN funding initiative contributed to the Regina Horticultural Society's mission and education mandate of RHS, the following questions are presented:

- Did the GRIN initiative help to increase the profile of the RHS?
- Did this initiative validate the RHS's activities in terms of its mandate and organisational credibility?
- Did the project achieve the desired project outcomes as originally identified? Why?
- Was the process clear for the applicant(s)?
- Was the project framework supportive and encouraging the project outcomes?
- Did the project leader promote the success of the project?

Proposed GRIN timelines

January: amendments to GRIN application and guidelines, amendments to GRIN Terms and Conditions

February: publicity in various media for program announcement

March: program announcement, distribution of applications, Q&A, deadline

April: review and assessment of received applications

April 21: recommendation by GRIN review committee to RHS Board

April 25 and 28 respectively: contact and announcement of GRIN recipient

April 21: appointment of RHS Liaison

April 28: announcement and grant event at RHS Education event

May, June, July, August: project activities recorded and reported to RHS Liaison (and Publicity Director)

August 26: deadline to remit all project expenses receipts

September: project summary to be submitted for AGM by Liaison

November/December: presentation by project leader to RHS membership at Christmas Potluck

December: review, assessment of project as well as recommend any amendments to GRIN program to Board; selection of GRIN Committee members