

# CORPORATE POLICY



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Author: Cari Van Niekerk, Amy Ross and Pam Albrecht  
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H-006 Volunteer Engagement Policy  
A-043 Public Engagement Policy

Key Word(s): respect, acknowledgement, equity

## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

The City of Waterloo is committed to providing honoraria and compensation to community members in equitable ways that balance respectful engagement with fiscal accountability. This policy assists in formalizing a defined and transparent honoraria process.

## **PURPOSE:**

This policy outlines the breadth of honoraria and compensation that the City of Waterloo will provide to community members. It is intended to identify the principles that guide City decision-making regarding honoraria and provide guidance to staff on processes and procedures that will ensure timely provision of honoraria and compensation.

Providing honoraria is one tool to help increase the diversity of input and participation in City initiatives, as it helps to address some of the barriers typically faced by Indigenous communities and equity-denied groups. Having standard processes and procedures in place will ensure that honoraria and compensation are provided in respectful, equitable and consistent ways across the organization regardless of the type of contribution made by the community member.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

**Canadian Artists Representation Le Front Des Artistes Canadiens –  
Regroupement des artistes en arts visuels du Québec (CARFAC-RAAV)  
Minimum Recommended Fee Schedule (CARFAC-RAAV) Minimum  
Recommended Fee Schedule:** is the national standard for remuneration of visual and  
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media artists in Canada. This includes royalties for the exhibition and reproduction of an artist's work, as well as various professional services fees.

**Cash and near cash:** generally cheques, electronic payment and gift cards are considered to be cash or cash equivalent as a method of payment.

**Colonialism:** is the population-wide practice of one group of people forcibly exerting control over another group. This control can include taking over land to exploit resources; making decisions on their behalf; influencing, changing, or eliminating their culture, language, and history; and having power over their economy.

Colonialism involves the continued exertion of perceived power over a subjugated group of people, their territory, and their institutional systems. Colonialism has long lasting, generational impacts on all groups involved.

**Compensation:** providing a financial or non-financial payment in response to expenses incurred by participants, such as parking, travel or childcare.

**Consultation:** a process where the broader community is asked for input on issues of public importance, this might include feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

**Consultant:** is sometimes a person who provides advice as their profession from knowledge gained through education or training. People who share their living/lived experience also provide advice, sometimes as part of their employment and other times outside of their employment capacity.

**Documentation:** documented approval of the expense provided to the Finance team.

**Equity-denied groups:** members of the community who have experienced barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to discrimination and subsequent disadvantage. This acknowledges and reflects that power held by those with social status, both of colonialism and patriarchy, have intentionally and willfully denied access and implemented barriers that impact affected community members. It reflects the harms done and the ownership of responsibilities to change the power dynamics involved.

It is important to note that who is considered an "equity-denied" group can vary depending on the context, location, and time. Certain groups may be equity-denied in some areas but not in others, or may face different types or levels of denial depending on specific social, economic, or political factors. The identification of these groups should be dynamic and context-specific, shaped by an awareness of both historical and contemporary injustices, as well as the current landscape of privilege and oppression.

To engage or uplift equity-denied groups, thoughtful consideration of who is being intentionally invited or included and for what purpose is needed. This should involve

reflection on the specific needs of the group in question, their unique experiences of exclusion, and how the intended intervention can support without reinforcing further inequities or tokenizing individuals within these groups. Inclusion must be deliberate and aligned with goals of true equity and justice, rather than merely symbolic or superficial engagement.

Groups who have experienced barriers to equal access, opportunities, and resources are identified by the Ontario Human Rights Code's specified protected grounds:

- age
- ancestry, colour, race
- citizenship
- ethnic origin
- place of origin
- creed
- disability
- family status
- marital status (including single status)
- gender identity, gender expression
- receipt of public assistance (in housing only)
- record of offences (in employment only)
- sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding)
- sexual orientation

**First Nation:** a recognized community of rights holders living on a reserve that federal, provincial and/or municipal governments engage with as part of any consultation.

**First Nations (People):** individuals or a large group of people connected by language, governance and culture. Individuals can be living either on-reserve or in urban communities. First Nations is one of three recognized groups of Indigenous peoples in Canada, the other two being Métis and Inuit.

**Honorarium or Honoraria:** payment(s) made to an individual for a service that is intended to reflect the time and energy of their participation though may not reflect the value of the input provided. A form of recognition or thanks and a gesture of respect.

**Incentives:** something, especially money, that encourages a person or organization to participate e.g. a draw that a person enters.

**Living/Lived Expertise:** direct knowledge gained from someone's perspective, personal identities, and history outside of their professional or educational experience. This is sometimes referred to as living or lived experience.

**Recognition:** appreciation for an achievement, service, knowledge, ability or skill.

**T4A:** a document required by the Government of Canada that identifies amounts paid to an individual during the calendar year for numerous types of income.

**Tracking:** the amounts paid to an individual which may be reported to Canada Revenue Agency when a T4A is required.

**Marginalization:** when certain groups of people are denied access to aspects of everyday life. Many factors can lead to this denial of access to institutions and opportunities, including historical bias and lack of funding.

**Urban Indigenous People and Communities:** refers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit people living in urban areas, with acknowledgement that there is a diversity between and within Indigenous communities.

**Volunteer:** for this policy is defined as a person who performs a service without being on the payroll of an organization.

The Volunteer Engagement Policy further defines a **City Volunteer** as: anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation, performs a task at the direction of an on behalf of the City of Waterloo. A volunteer must be officially accepted and registered by the City of Waterloo, Volunteer Services for placement in approved City of Waterloo direct programs, services, festivals or events with a dedicated city staff supervisor.

### **SCOPE:**

This policy applies to:

- All community members receiving honoraria and compensation
- All Staff and Council members at the City of Waterloo including full, part-time and contract staff.

While this policy cannot directly address every situation that honoraria would be paid, it is intended to provide decision-making guidance for staff. This tool was developed with the understanding that providing honoraria is the best practice, not the exception.

This policy does not apply to:

- City volunteers serving in approved volunteer positions. Appropriate forms of recognition in these situations are outlined in the Volunteer Engagement Policy.
- Any consultation with a First Nation or another Indigenous governing body. Appropriate compensation will be determined as part of the consultation process.

### **POLICY COMMUNICATION:**

This policy will be communicated by:

- Posting on the City of Waterloo website,

- Staff responsible for providing honoraria to community members
- Posting on the City of Waterloo intranet available to staff
- Ongoing information sharing for new staff to become familiar with this policy and the accompanying procedures.

**POLICY:****1.0 Background**

1.1. The need to be more responsive to Indigenous communities and equity-denied groups led to the creation of this policy to provide clarity, consistency and fairness across the organization. Some perspectives, including those of Indigenous communities and equity-denied groups, have been under-represented in municipal staff teams and in engagement processes due to historic and ongoing marginalization.

1.2. Community members contribute to City initiatives in a variety of ways, including but not limited to, the following:

- Providing resident input on strategies, policies, programs and services,
- Providing advice and feedback grounded in living/lived and/or professional experience,
- Delivering legislated short-term or time-limited initiatives.

1.3. City initiatives are improved when people with a broad range of perspectives are included.

1.4. Municipalities routinely seek out and compensate for professional advice in the form of external consultants to complement and/or enhance the information and knowledge available from staff.

1.5. When municipalities directly seek input from Indigenous communities and equity-denied groups based on their living/lived experience, that input should be understood and valued as advice and compensated accordingly.

1.6. Not providing compensation in the form of honoraria could result in decreased diversity of input.

**2.0 Further defining honorarium**

2.1. The City defines an honorarium as payment(s) made to an individual for a service that is intended to reflect the time and energy of their participation though may not reflect the value of the input provided. A form of recognition or thanks and a gesture of respect.

2.2. Indigenous communities understand honoraria in specific ways:

- An honorarium is not payment for a service, rather it is an expression of appreciation and reciprocity for work completed and knowledge shared.

- Historically, Elders and Knowledge Keepers were given gifts or other essentials for their help. In today's context, money is acceptable.
- An offering of tobacco is made as a first step when asking for help.

2.3. The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) allows for certain payments to individuals that are not taxed like regular employment or business income. Additional CRA criteria for these payments include:

- Payments that total less than \$500 in a calendar year,
- Not reflective of the value of the work done,
- Made on a non-routine basis to an individual as a "thank you."

2.4. If an individual receives \$500 or more in honorarium payments from the City in a calendar year, the City will issue a T4A in accordance with CRA requirements.

### **3.0 When to provide honoraria**

3.1. Honoraria should be provided in the following situations:

- Individuals are providing knowledge or living/lived expertise that the City is directly seeking. This knowledge or living/lived expertise may be sought by way of invitations or calls to Indigenous or equity-denied communities where:
  - There is no limit to the number of respondents or participants, such as focus groups or community engagement sessions,
  - There is a fixed number of roles or opportunities such as interview panels.
- Individuals perform tasks that support City initiatives,
- The City follows guidelines set out in another policy, practice or procedure, including but not limited to the CARFAC-RAAV Minimum Recommended Fee Schedule.

3.2. Honoraria should be provided for services and contributions that are unique to Indigenous people. The following are some examples:

- Opening or closing a meeting or event,
- Offering ceremony,
- Sacred Firekeeper duties,
- Blessing or prayer,
- Serving as an Elder helper.

3.3. Honoraria would not be provided in the following situation:

- Engagement is with the broader community on a voluntary basis and anyone can choose to participate,
- The individual is in an existing contractual agreement or employment period with the City.

3.4. To ensure the ethical delivery of honoraria, all staff involved in inviting and selecting community member participants in City initiatives or in administering honoraria must

disclose any potential conflicts of interest to their supervisor/manager/director. This includes but is not limited to:

- Personal relationships: The staff member has a close personal relationship with an individual community member expressing interest in participating.
- Financial interests: The staff member would receive some financial benefit from the honorarium payment made to the community member.
- Professional relationships: The staff member has a close professional relationship with the community member and would receive some financial benefit from the community member receiving the honorarium.

#### **4.0 Payments to organizations – in place of payments to an individual**

4.1. Generally honoraria are provided to individuals. In some situations, it may be appropriate to make a payment to an organization to recognize the input or service provided by an individual. Examples include:

- The individual has stated this as their preference,
- The individual is providing the input or service as part of their paid work for an organization.

4.2. Payments can be made to registered charities. A charitable receipt would not be provided to the individual.

4.3. Payments to organizations that do not have charitable status will require the approval of the Director responsible for the City initiative, or their delegate. Decision-making will be guided by the following:

- Consider the place the organization holds in the community it primarily serves,
- Goals and objectives of the organization are aligned with those of City's Strategic Plan,
- Governance practices that support financial accountability.

#### **5.0 Determining the appropriate amount of honoraria**

5.1. When determining honoraria amounts, the City will consider:

- The local living wage (City of Waterloo is a certified Living Wage Champion),
- Inflation rates,
- Impact to recipients of assistance programs such as Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- The work of the broader public sector,
- Best practices related to honoraria amounts.

5.2. The City will use recognized fee schedules when they exist such as the CARFAC-RAAV Minimum Recommended Fee Schedule.

#### **6.0 When to provide compensation**

6.1. Childcare and transportation are additional expenses that community members may incur when providing knowledge or living/lived expertise to the City as part of community engagement sessions or focus groups.

6.2. Due to historic and ongoing inequities, these expenses may create more significant barriers for members of Indigenous communities and equity-denied groups.

6.3. Addressing these financial barriers could increase participation in community engagement sessions or focus groups.

6.4. Options for addressing childcare include:

- Providing childcare at the location of the engagement,
- Providing reimbursement for childcare costs at a living wage rate for the time of the meeting plus transit time upon request.

6.5. Options for addressing transportation include:

- Providing passes with two preloaded trips for public transit,
- Providing reimbursement for taxi fare or booking a taxi on account.

## **7.0 Roles and Responsibilities**

7.1. Staff leading the City initiative will:

- Communicate clearly with community members regarding the City's policies, practices and procedures related to providing honoraria and compensation before requesting involvement,
- Provide community members with timely communication regarding the processes they need to follow to receive honoraria,
- Complete appropriate documentation to support Accounting and Payroll processes.

7.2. Accounting and Payroll staff will:

- Process payment requests for honoraria and compensation,
- Issue T4As on an annual basis where required.

7.3. Financial Planning staff will:

- Track payments in compliance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) requirements,
- Advise departments on setting budgeted amounts for honoraria and compensation as part of the budget development process.

7.4. Communications staff will:

- Support staff teams on engagement of Indigenous communities and equity-denied groups.

7.5. Arts and Creative Industries staff will:



- Provide guidance on fee for service or honoraria practices as needed when working with artists or consultants within the creative industries.

**7.6. Reconciliation, Equity, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion (READI) Staff will:**

- Act as a resource towards implementation of the policy.

**8.0. Supporting Procedural Documents**

8.1. The City will develop procedures to implement and maintain the policy.

8.2. Procedures and resources that provide further guidance to staff leading initiatives will be maintained as living documents.

8.3. Given the dynamic nature of municipal work some aspects of honoraria and compensation practices are expected to change over time. Additional guidance on when to provide honoraria and compensation as well as specific amounts to provide will be addressed in the procedural documents.

**COMPLIANCE:**

In cases of policy violation, the City may investigate and determine appropriate corrective action.