



STRATFORD DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT FUND RETURNS WITH A FOCUS ON FUNDING SHOULDER AND WINTER SEASON CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

For Immediate Release: April 11, 2023

(STRATFORD, ON) Now entering its eighth year, the 2023/24 Stratford Destination Development Fund (DDF) will provide \$35,000 to focus on shoulder and winter season destination development projects that are highly shareable and aligned with Stratford’s cultural DNA. Projects must occur within the months of October, 2023 and May, 2024.

The Stratford Destination Development Fund was established with investment from [Regional Tourism Organization 4](#) (RT04), [Downtown Stratford BIA](#) and [Destination Stratford](#) to enable and support experiential projects that are highly shareable and have high impact on the destination. The selected projects directly align with Stratford’s cultural DNA and will strengthen the experiences and storytelling opportunities for both residents and visitors. DDF partners are delighted with the passionate and creative applications received in previous years and look forward to reviewing upcoming 2023/24 applications.

“Stratford’s innovative and creative spirit are always on full display with DDF applications, and we’re excited to bring the focus to shoulder seasons and winter to showcase amazing cultural experiences throughout the year as well as during Lights On Stratford.” – Zac Gribble, Executive Director, Destination Stratford.

“These funds offer creative minds a chance to shine, and the BIA loves to be part of fresh new ideas!” – Jamie Pritchard, General Manager, Downtown Stratford BIA.

The goals of the Stratford DDF include:

- Increasing the number of sustainable and high-quality visitor-focused experiences during the shoulder and winter seasons (including creative displays during Lights On Stratford).
- Providing opportunities for destination storytelling and visitor generated content creation.
- Strengthening the network of destination stakeholders taking an active role in our tourism future.

Organizations eligible for funding include:

- Tourism enterprises and businesses (as individual organizations or as a consortium) with interests in arts & culture, heritage, agri-culinary, sports, meetings & conventions, etc.
- Festivals and Events.
- For-profit or non-profit organizations.

Applicants can apply for a range of support for new tourism-related experiences, enhancements to existing tourism-related experiences (in-person or digital, projects that improve the visitor experience), and/or storytelling (capturing of content – photo/video and/or social media).

Projects must be implemented during a shoulder season or winter (occurs at any point within October 1, 2023 – May 31, 2024).

Individual applications can apply for funding from \$500 to \$10,000. Applicants are welcome to submit multiple applications for different projects. Applications will be open April 14, 2023 until May 26, 2023.

APPLICATION FORM LAUNCHING APRIL 14, 2023

Last year's 2022 DDF received a positive response with 13 applications of which 6 cultural projects were selected. The successful 2022 applications included:

- Stratford Writers Festival – **Poetry is Music**
- Stratford Summer Music – **World in a Weekend – Concerts**
- Stratford Perth Museum – **Walt Wingfield – The Last Waltz**
- Playmakers! – **Stratford Lantern Parade 360 Photobooth**
- Kim McCarthy Studios – **Emergence**
- Gallery Stratford – **ARTscreen**

For more DDF details and to apply, please see visitstratford.ca/ddf. In addition to DDF, other programs that may be of interest to applicants are: [2023 Ontario Provincial Grants](#).

- 30 -

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