

To:	Warden Hicks and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	March 25, 2021
Subject / Report No:	EDTC-CW-09-21
Title:	Grey Roots Digital Funding
Prepared by:	Jill Paterson, Manager of Museum & Archives
Reviewed by:	Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Culture
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All
Status:	Adopted as presented by Committee through Resolution CW62-21;

Recommendation

1. **That Report EDTC-CW-09-21 regarding the Grey Roots Digital Funding be received for information.**

Executive Summary

During the first pandemic lockdown in 2020, Grey Roots staff took the opportunity to re-evaluate current offerings and explore digital enhancements to programs and services. Staff further committed through the 2021 budget to place a new emphasis on visitor experience both on and off-site by reaching new and under-represented markets through more accessible programming. On March 15, 2021 staff received notification from the Province that Community Museum Digital Funding up to \$40,000 would be received to support a broad range of digital expenses incurred between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021.

Background and Discussion

When staff returned to Grey Roots in the summer of 2020, work began to pivot museum operations and programming to virtual experiences. Staff started by developing an online timed ticketing system through Shopify, partnered with Rogers TV to produce 14 [Voices of Grey](#) episodes available online; launched [Grey Roots @ Home](#), a series of online education activities and videos for various age groups, and adapted, [Surviving the Unthinkable: Citizen-Soldiers of Grey](#) into a virtual exhibit. Grey Roots invested in upgrades to the Wi-Fi capacity in Moreston Heritage Village to develop seamless live

streamed programs and allow visitors to explore supplementary online information accessed through QR codes. The popular Fall [Archives Lectures](#) were delivered through Zoom and YouTube and had great success in attracting over 500 viewers, many more than pre-COVID in-person lectures.

Through re-deployment, staff realized the connections that could be made with our vulnerable populations in Grey County Housing and Long-Term Care. Since returning to Grey Roots, staff are now working with neighbouring department colleagues to enable and ensure families and residents have ready access to Grey Roots programming and exhibits regardless of their location across the County.

Through 2021, staff continue to develop digital programs with plans to create an augmented reality experience in Moreston Heritage Village, continued offering of lectures and education program online, digital exhibits, as well as, presenting public programming through online tutorials and activity kits.

The commitment to digital programming now and in the future allows Grey Roots to grow its audience base, strengthening the museum community. The result is more accessible programming and an increased visitor population to draw on for future experiences and offerings both on and off-site. This funding will support the incurred expenses to date and be leveraged to further develop Grey Roots' digital museum experiences.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

There are no legal or legislated requirements with this report.

Financial and Resource Implications

On March 15, 2021 notice was received that Grey Roots Museum would receive up to \$40,000 to support a broad range of digital expenses incurred between April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021. The 2020-21 Community Museum Digital Funding will offset incurred expenses already included in the approved 2020 and 2021 budgets.

Staff seek the maximum grant of \$40,000 given the combined eligible expenses from equipment and hardware, software, marketing and staff wages necessary to build Grey Roots digital footprint.

Relevant Consultation

- Internal – Grey Roots, Finance, Clerks
- External – Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries

Appendices and Attachments

None.