

TriCALA Tri-Community Adult Learning & Literacy Association

Submitted by

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Title of submission

Creating a Region of Lifelong Learners

Purpose

Within our communities' learners are searching for further education, but they face many challenges and barriers to access this. TriCALA exists to serve those who struggle to further their education, whether it's for their current employment, looking for work, wanting to attend post-secondary or simply be able to read a bedtime story to their children.

We support the newcomers who struggle with the English language and therefore are not successful finding work in a field they are passionate about.

We support the learner who is financially hindered to participate in educational opportunities with subsidized programming.

We support the learner who hides their literacy challenges; the learner who pretends they have poor eyesight, when in fact they can't read the menu, etc.

The Tri-Community Adult Learning and Literacy Association (TriCALA) is one of 120 community adult learning councils throughout the province who serve mostly rural populations. TriCALA coordinates the part-time non-credit learning needs of adults in Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, and all of Parkland County. We are supported by a grant from Advanced Education.

Members of TriCALA work cooperatively to identify adult learning needs in the area, encourage development and implementation of quality programs, and work towards creating a region of lifelong learners.

Description of project

TriCALA also utilizes the principles of DIEB and is proud of being a leader for over 40 years in this space. We're working towards expanding from being seen as only an adult literacy organization to an organization that supports all community members in their journey to be lifelong learners. Using this holistic community development approach, we hope to take some of the stigma and fear out of people coming to TriCALA and assist in eliminating literacy barriers while seeing us as a welcoming space that wants to share the joy of learning in the community. Our project will be launched in January 2023 and run 2 years. We are planning a variety of events running throughout the year in the region that encourage residents to be lifelong learners. There are no limits to learning. Whether it's a resident that wants to learn to read better to enjoy story time with their children, learn how to make an amazing powerpoint to be better at their job, learn a second language, retail workers learning sign language to be part of systems change in the community or people simply sharing skills with others. The project will have in person learning events, a marketing campaign, pop ups at other community events and prizes. Everything will be done through the DIEB lens, recognizing whether you're coming to a community study

night while you work on your masters or learning the ukulele everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate.

Financial impact

The funding requested is \$7800 a year for two years (2023/2024). How it will be utilized:

36 learning events throughout the Tri Region per year above the learning opportunities already offered by TriCALA. 12 of these will be hosted in Spruce Grove.

Events are estimated to run at \$400 an event. These fees will vary from event to event on how they are utilized. They may be instructor costs, materials costs etc. Some events will have participant fees attached and the proposed amount will be used to subsidize those that can't afford to attend to ensure that we are creating a barrier free space of belonging for anyone that wishes to participate.

\$1000 annually will be utilized for marketing. Whether it be print materials, signage, attending public events the goal is to increase public participation and have them guide what they want to see for lifelong learning in the community.

\$500 for prizes and rewards to be distributed throughout the year

\$1500 for an annual event on Sept 8th, International Literacy Day

The total is \$7800 annually for two years.

Stony Plain already has TriCALA in their budget with us applying every 3 years for funding to utilize however we need and Parkland County FCSS is also now funding TriCALA. We will also be forming partnerships wherever possible to increase capacity with this project, as well as seeking out additional grants and private sponsorship to scale it and continue beyond 2024.

Community benefit

Our proposed program aligns with Council's 2022-25 Strategic Plan:

Goal 1: The City has an inclusive approach to community development that values community knowledge, diversity, and wisdom.

Our goal of creating an inclusive community that gives everyone a sense of belonging is in alignment with the City's core values. We are already an established organization with a history of creating barrier free opportunities and our proposed project will expand past enhancing literacy and numeracy competencies. COVID-19 showed us that we had issues with isolation within our close-knit community that need to be addressed. By creating a variety of community events across the region we can connect with people that may have never participated before. By having a broad spectrum of learning sessions, from highly educational to fun and capturing interests we open up learning as a community and make it fun and interactive. The pandemic taught us that people were craving to explore new things. We saw friends and family enroll in online learning opportunities, discover a love for sour dough and grew gardens. Learning wasn't limited to a book or a screen and everyone sharing it on their social media shows they were craving connection as well as being proud of the things they were discovering. We want to take that new love of sharing into the real world and help people explore, build community and make the Tri-region the place that people think of when they think of lifelong learners.