



SENIORS LIVING

ACTIVE FAIR

FUNDING GUIDELINES

2025 – 2026

Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario
Association des centres pour aînés de l'Ontario

Est. 1973

OACAO

The Voice of Older Adult Centres
La voix des centres pour aînés



Funding provided by:

Ontario



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PROJECT OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

The Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario (OACAO) has been gratefully partnering with the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility (MSAA) on a contractual basis, for over nineteen years, to coordinate the development and operation of Seniors Active Living Fairs (hereafter referred to as "Fairs") throughout Ontario. We are launching the 2025 - 2026 Seniors Active Living Fairs Funding Program and acknowledge funding from the Government of Ontario.

As we focus on reengaging seniors in their community, adaptability in programming approaches has become essential. Many centres have mastered the virtual program delivery model with strong participation from seniors in their communities; others have shifted towards safe in-person program delivery, or a hybrid model, incorporating necessary health measures as required. With this variety of program delivery in mind, and with funding support from MSAA, we are offering the Seniors Active Living Fairs Funding Program in three formats for 2025 – 2026:

- In-Person Single-Site Funding
- In-Person Multi-Site Funding
- Virtual Fairs Funding

There is limited funding available to fund a set number of projects in each funding formats.

In-person and Virtual Fairs, supported by MSAA and OACAO will provide a great public education forum to connect seniors to local Seniors Active Living Centres, which are vibrant community hubs. The fairs will showcase programs and service delivery models that the centres have planned to strengthen their communities. In-person Fairs include a Trade Show as an educational component, highlighting local community services to support seniors as well as the government programs available to them.

Ontario's seniors have made life-long contributions to Ontario. We know that most seniors want to live healthy, independent lives in their own homes and communities. Seniors also want to remain active and be safe and secure, no matter where they call home. In light of this, Fairs will provide opportunities to support the Government of Ontario's cross-governmental priorities noted below that will improve the lives of seniors and provide the supports and resources to help them:

1. Continue to live at home and in communities
 - Supporting seniors with services and care to enable them to continue to live at home and in their communities.
2. Remain healthy, active and socially engaged
 - Remaining active and socially engaged is one of the most important things seniors can do to maintain their independence and quality of life as they age.

3. Be safe and secure

- Promoting the rights of seniors and helping them protect themselves from abuse, including scams (for example, telemarketing, Internet scams) and financial exploitation (for example, misuse of a Power of Attorney, fraud).

4. Participate in the labour market and in the economy as they wish

- Seniors have extensive knowledge, experience and skills, and seniors who are active in the labour force, or as a leader or who volunteers in their communities, make important contributions to the economy and society.

The government also recently reiterated their commitment to seniors through the introduction of the [Support for Seniors and Caregivers Act, 2024](#), including a three-year, \$114-million suite of initiatives to enhance the quality of life and care for the province’s seniors. Fairs can play a key role in helping seniors across Ontario learn more about financial security and local health and social services and provide opportunities to stay engaged in their community.

WHAT ARE SENIORS ACTIVE LIVING FAIRS?

A Seniors Active Living Fair is a public education initiative, developed in partnership between the OACAO and MSAA. Its objective is to increase awareness about available programs and services for seniors and share knowledge about healthy aging and active lifestyles. This reduces seniors’ social isolation, improves their overall health and wellbeing and helps them maintain their independence. The funding provided by MSAA will help inform Ontario’s diverse seniors, their families and care partners, about the benefits of healthy living and the importance of exercise, nutrition, safety and security.

FUNDING SUPPORT AND TIMELINE

- Virtual Seniors Active Living Fair Funding – up to \$1,000 for eligible individual organizations
- In-Person Single-Site Seniors Active Living Fair Funding – up to \$2,500 for eligible individual organizations
- In-Person Multi-Site (under one administration with more than one older adult program site, with each eligible site located at a different physical address) Seniors Active Living Fairs Funding – up to \$2,000 for each eligible site, maximum 2 sites

All fairs must be completed by March 16, 2026.

Restricted Dates: No Fairs to be held October 29 – November 5, 2025, due to the OACAO’s Annual Aging Well Conference

APPLICATION, ASSESSMENT AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Application Deadlines:

In-Person Single-Site & Virtual Fairs:

Application Deadline #1: Monday, March 3, 2025, at 5:00 pm EST (For June - Sept 2025 Fairs only)

Application Deadline #2: *REVISED DEADLINE DATE*: Thursday, May 1, 2025, at 5:00 pm EDT (For Oct 2025 - March 16, 2026 Fairs only)

In-Person Multi-Site Fairs:

Application Deadline: Thursday, May 1, 2025 at 5:00 pm EDT (*REVISED*: For June 2025 - March 16, 2026 Fairs)

Online applications using link below. Each applicant is encouraged to complete an online application On-line Application: www.surveymonkey.com/r/Fair2025Grant.

Emailed applications using fillable PDF application form are also acceptable. **Applications can be found at:** <https://www.oacao.org/events/seniors-active-living-fairs/>. **Email Application to:** info@oacao.org.

Assessment: Applications will be reviewed by the Seniors Active Living Fairs Selection Committee following an established assessment process and criteria review including Organizational Capacity; Fair Details; and Financial Feasibility. Refer to the “Eligibility Criteria for Applicants” for additional information. Applicants must choose between funding for Virtual Fairs or In-Person Fairs. They cannot receive funding for both streams. Funding decisions will be made in a timely fashion.

Approval: Subject to confirmation of funding amount received by OACAO from Government of Ontario.

Letter of Agreement: Once the funding for the Fair project has been confirmed, the recipient will be required to sign a Letter of Agreement (LOA) which legally binds the organization with the Older Adult Centres’ Association of Ontario to receive the funding.

Payment Process: Successful recipients will receive a cheque for 75% of the Grant approximately one month prior to the Fair date, and 25% upon satisfactory submission of the final report and relevant receipts (due 30 days after Fair completion or by March 31, 2026 for March Fairs). All unused funds must be returned to the OACAO within 30 days of Fair completion, or by March 31, 2026 for March Fairs.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR APPLICANTS

To be eligible for Fair funding, your organization must:

1. Have been in operation for at least one year at the time of application

AND

2. Be a current member of OACAO in good standing OR a Government of Ontario funded Seniors Active Living Centre (SALC) Program operator. [Please visit: www.oacao.org/membership/become-a-member/?tab=categories for OACAO membership categories and fees.]

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STANDARDS

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is intended to reduce and remove barriers for people with disabilities so that Ontario can become more accessible and inclusive for everyone. Learn more about Ontario's accessibility standards: www.ontario.ca/page/about-accessibility-laws#section-2. To ensure that the event is as accessible as possible for all, consider asking attendees to let Fair Hosts know in advance of any specific accessibility accommodation requests. This will allow the Fair Hosts time to make the necessary arrangements in advance. This could include procuring live ASL (American Sign Language) interpreters during events as well as a live captioning service, if needed, for virtual events.

HEALTHY MEAL OR SNACKS

It's important to provide a healthy meal or snack for all participants and exhibitors at our Fairs. We have allocated a budget of up to \$12.50 per person, inclusive of tax and gratuities, to ensure that everyone has access to nutritious options that keep them energized and focused throughout the event.

PRESENTATIONS / SEMINARS

Fair Hosts are encouraged to consider the following presentation topics: technology training, digital literacy and cyber security awareness, health and wellness topics, falls prevention, seniors' safety, elder abuse awareness including frauds and scams, reducing ageism, social inclusion, mental health resources for seniors, Aging at home and community engagement, participation of older adults in the labour market or volunteerism. Requirement: 2-4 presentations/seminars.

DEMONSTRATIONS / HEALTH CLINICS

We encourage Fair Hosts to hold demonstrations highlighting active living opportunities for seniors. These may be programs from the Host Centre/Organization or other demonstration topics such as healthy eating, active living or fitness programs.

In-person Fair Hosts only, are encouraged to hold health clinics, such as blood pressure testing, flu/vaccine clinics, hearing clinics, income tax/benefits and estate planning clinics.

Requirement: 1-2 demonstrations/health clinics.

FOR IN-PERSON FAIRS ONLY: PARTICIPANT BAGS

Fair hosts must supply bags to participants to enable the convenient collection of literature and other materials at the Fair. This allows participants to easily collect and carry information from various exhibitors, making their experience more enjoyable and interactive.

FOR IN-PERSON FAIRS ONLY: TRADE SHOW

Trade shows must have a minimum of 10 - 15 exhibitors and be 3 - 4 hours in length (unless pre-approved by OACAO). Please ensure a balanced representation of both non-profit organizations, government agencies and for-profit agencies (if applicable). Non-profit exhibitors are free to exhibit, and a nominal fee can be charged for for-profit exhibitors. Contact your local Public Health Unit for local public health protocols that hosts might be required to follow. You can find your local Public Health Unit at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/public-health-unit-locations>. Each exhibitor must have access to one table and at least one chair.

PARTICIPANT AND EXHIBITOR SURVEYS

Gathering surveys is essential for obtaining valuable feedback from participants and exhibitors. At in-person events, you can distribute paper surveys to attendees and exhibitors for them to fill out and submit at specific collection points. For added convenience, online surveys can be sent via email, allowing for easy distribution and completion.

FOR VIRTUAL FAIRS ONLY: VIRTUAL VIDEO EVENT PLATFORMS

The virtual video event platform selected must be user-friendly for participants and allow for telephone participation for those who are not tech savvy or do not have access to the internet. “Large Meeting capacity” should be arranged in advance with the video platform host to accommodate the number of expected participants. Fair Hosts are encouraged to use a simple virtual platform and allow seniors and participants to log in through the internet, or call in using a telephone, thereby remaining accessible for all.

Suggestions for video event platforms:

- Zoom: <https://zoom.us/>
- Microsoft Teams: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-ca/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software>
- GoToMeetings: <https://www.gotomeeting.com/>

MARKETING AND OUTREACH

To ensure strong attendance numbers and to reach new and isolated seniors, we ask all Fair Hosts to confirm their marketing and outreach activities and goals in their funding application form, and to outline their marketing strategy and communication plan for their Fair. Communication plans should ensure that any digital promotional components comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) version 2.0 AA: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/>. PDFs, web pages and social media posts need to meet these criteria.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

All receipts and invoices must be submitted with the final report.

Eligible Expenses:

- Advertising/Promotion/Marketing: in print, digital, radio and/or television, etc.
- Audio Visual Equipment Rental: event equipment rental.
- Evaluation Prize: small incentive items (as a draw prize for participant questionnaire completion).
- Honorariums for presenters, demonstrators, clinicians, and volunteers.
- Postage: distribution of information packages/publications to participants and outreach to isolated seniors.
- Printing of flyers, surveys, and event directional signs, etc.
- Translation Services/Language Interpreters/ASL Interpreters: translation, closed captioning services and other accessible services.

For Virtual Fairs:

- Technology: Virtual platform and increased capacity added to accommodate higher participation numbers, toll-free numbers to allow for telephone participation.

For In-Person Fairs:

- Decorations: tablecloths, flowers, etc.
- Facility Rental: Accessible event space rental.
- First Aid: St. John's Ambulance presence, if needed, and recommended for outdoor venues.
- Food Service Supplies: plates, napkins, cutlery, etc.
- Food/Refreshments: Healthy meal or snacks at a maximum cost of \$12.50 per person, including tax and gratuities.
- Participant Bags for majority of the participants.
- Public Health and Safety Measures: suggested protocols from local Public Health Unit.
- Transportation: public transportation tickets, and/or bus rental.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Staff costs for planning and executing the fair.

OACAO RESPONSIBILITIES

- Applications will be reviewed by the Seniors Active Living Fairs Selection Committee.
- Approved applicants will receive their first cheque for 75% of the grant approximately one month prior to the Fair date and 25% upon satisfactory submission of the final report.

- Provide a Seniors Active Living Fairs Handbook to help guide and educate staff and volunteers hosting the Fairs (English and French).
- Provide a Host Handbook Review webinar to guide you through the key points and updates.
- Provide access to the MSAA's [Planning Accessible Events Resource](#), [Age-Friendly Community Remote Events Planning Resource](#), [Creating a More Inclusive Ontario: Age-Friendly Community Planning Toolkit](#), and [Creating a More Inclusive Ontario: Diverse Populations Addendum](#).
- Provide a pre-event telephone check-in to ensure everything is on track and address any last-minute details.
- Promote approved Fairs on OACAO website and Social Media accounts.
- Zoom training resources for Virtual Fair Hosts.
- An OACAO representative will attend the Fair (subject to availability).
- Provide Evaluation Questions (English and French).
- Provide a Final Report package (English and French). The OACAO is responsible for providing a Final Report including statistics, impact, and financial review to the Government of Ontario at the end of the full project. **We therefore require full compliance with the terms and conditions listed in the signed Letter of Agreement.**

HOST CENTRE/ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Establish an Organizing Committee that will be responsible for the development and operation of the Fair.
- Display the Government of Ontario and the OACAO logos on all promotional material. Guidelines and logos will be provided in the Letter of Agreement.
- Provide the OACAO with a digital copy of your Fair Flyer (accessible PDFs), at least 60 days in advance of your Fair.
- Host the Fair in an accessible Event Space/Venue under AODA Standards. Considerations include making the building space accessible, with ramps, accessible washrooms, signage, etc., as well as offering entry to visitors with service dogs. Other considerations for communications materials include making any PDFs AODA compliant and offering visitors multiple ways to contact event organizers.
- Deliver content/programming for a minimum of 4 hours in length. (Both Virtual and In-person Fairs)
- Provide the Fair for FREE for seniors, care partners and the public to attend.
- Organize Presentations/Seminars on important topics for seniors. (2 – 4 minimum)
- Organize Demonstrations and/or Health Clinics on active living or healthy eating. (1 – 2 minimum)
- Invite the Local MPPs, other VIPs such as the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility to participate.
- Submit digital pictures of the Fair, which will be shared with the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility. Provide consent forms for any photos that show faces. MSAA Consent Forms will be provided in the Seniors Active Living Fairs Handbook.
- Complete a Fair Statistical Report within 30 days of the completion date of the Fair (or by March 31, 2026 for Fairs held in March).

- Submit a Summary of Evaluation findings with their final reports within 30 days of the completion date of the Fair. The brief Survey Form will include MSAA provided participant demographic and outcome measures and other brief questions to show the impact of the Fairs.
- **All Fairs Projects must be completed by March 16, 2026.**
- **Restricted Dates: No Fairs from** October 29 – November 5, 2025, due to the OCAO’s Annual Aging Well Conference.

For Virtual Fairs:

- Virtual Events can be scheduled over multiple days within a 7-day period.
- Use a virtual video event platform with teleconference capability.

For In-Person Fairs:

- Secure adequate liability insurance.
- No alcohol to be served.
- Contact the local Public Health Unit for local health protocols.
- Provide a healthy meal or snacks at a maximum cost of \$12.50 per person, including tax and gratuities.
- Organize bags for participants at the registration table or entrance to the Fair for participants to collect literature from trade show exhibitors.
- Organize a Trade Show with a balanced representation of both non-profit organizations, government agencies and for-profit agencies (if applicable) (10 – 15 exhibitors minimum) and a recommended length of 3 - 4 hours (unless pre-approved by OCAO).
- Provide free exhibitor space at the Trade Show for the OCAO.

SENIORS ACTIVE LIVING FAIRS CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions can be directed to the OCAO at info@ocao.org or call 905-584-8125 or toll free 1-866-835-7693.