



Corporation of the Township of Esquimalt Local Grant Application for 2020

Name of organization: Victoria Rainbow Kitchen Society
Address of organization: 500 Admirals Rd, Esquimalt, BC, V9A 2N4
Phone: 250-384-2069 Email: directorrainbowkitchen@gmail.com

Contact person: Patrick Johnstone
Position: Director
Mobile Phone: [REDACTED]

Amount Requested: \$10,000

Total Project Budget: \$749,354.00 (includes Food Costs, Staffing, Volunteer Hours In-Kind
+ Covid-19 Emergency Needs for March)

Have you applied before? YES

When & Grant received? 2019-2017 - \$5,000; 2016 - \$7,500; 2015-2012 - \$10,000
2011 - \$6,000

Fiscal year: April 1 to March 31

Not currently receiving benefit of a Property Tax Exemption from the Township of Esquimalt

Incorporation number: S-56502 Date of Incorporation: March 26, 2010

Is your organization based in Esquimalt? YES

Is the project for which you are requesting funding based in Esquimalt? YES
Project is located in Wheeley Hall, 500 Admirals Road (rented from Esquimalt United Church)

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Description of the Victoria Rainbow Kitchen Society and its mandate:

The Victoria Rainbow Kitchen Society is a registered charity (CRA Charitable #814504650RR0001) and operates the Rainbow Kitchen located in Wheeley Hall of the Esquimalt United Church, 500 Admirals Road, Esquimalt, BC. V9A 2N4. The Society's Mission Statement (mandate); "Feeding People"

- Provide nutritious meals and a close sense of community throughout the year for those in need.
- Create a safe and comfortable environment which enables the building of relationships, community spirit and support networks.
- Support identified Community Partners & Local Schools through shared meals, allocation of in-kind donated food goods and other resources when available.

Project Description of Rainbow Kitchen:

Rainbow Kitchen is Esquimalt's only and the CRD second largest "soup/community kitchen". Providing nutritious, tasty hot lunch meals to 120-140 people each weekday, 50 weeks a year - no money charged, and no questions asked. Guests are invited to request a second portion of Hot Lunch to take To-Go, helping supplement for dinner or as a meal for a friend or family member.

The mission of Rainbow Kitchen is to "Feed People" which has been happening for over 10 years, mainly with a focus on providing a daily hot lunch. Along with providing meals, in 2019 Rainbow Kitchen identified a need to fill the food security gaps that exist outside of the lunch program. This has become the larger mandate of the kitchen which invites and encourages people of all ages to come to the kitchen. This aids by breaking down the stigma attached to visiting an organization such as Rainbow Kitchen which has resulted in a significant increase in youth visits and partnerships developing with schools and other like-minded organizations. In 2019 Rainbow Kitchen evolved

Our community saw the good work that was being created from Rainbow Kitchen in early 2019, and the donations from local grocery stores tripled. Receiving excess of what would be required for daily lunch programs, Rainbow Kitchen began processing and allocating goods to strategic community partners. Creating a Food Share program in 2019 that supported the distribution of over 73,000 meals equivalents (through raw vegetables, fruit, protein & dairy goods) to our community. Achieving continued success in supporting the distribution of monthly food hampers to approx. 30 of Rainbow Kitchen's guests.

The Kitchen created metrics to further gauge how much support was being provided to Community Partners and to guests outside of well-known daily meal programs (Breakfast & Lunch). Using a calculation of 1.5 pounds of in-kind donations (meat, vegetables, fruit, bread) to equal 1 meal. This allowed for further understanding of how much Rainbow Kitchen processes and allocates to support food security within our own neighbourhood, and through Community Partners how far our assistance could reach throughout Vancouver Island.

Rainbow Kitchen isn't just serving Lunch anymore. Further development in 2019 saw the expansion and creation with the following Community Partners in Food Sharing.

- **PEERS** -is supplied with a weekly meal of 25-30 servings which is picked up and served to outreach program clients
- **Living Edge** -is provided with an average of 1000 pounds of produce per month as well an average of 1000 pounds of produce each month.
- **Sooke Family Resource Society** – Developed a partnership in 2019 to receive weekly bulk donations of protein from RK, averaging about 150 pounds. Supporting isolated, marginalized and Indigenous communities as far away as Port Renfrew.
- **Local Schools in District 61** -
 - **Rock Heights Middle School**; is delivered weekly bread and packaged dry goods of 35 pounds.
 - **Esquimalt High School** receives 120 pounds of goods each week to support the culinary education program.
 - **Apple Tree Pre-school** is delivered 50 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables each week for students & parents to take home.
- **Youth Dinner** – Created in partnership with Esquimalt High School, offers a fun and safe space for youth to gather and share a meal at least once a month. RK provides an average of 40 servings at each event.
- **Local Neighbourhood Houses - Esquimalt Neighbourhood House** – receives approx. 50 pounds of vegetables per week to help offset the costs of the food that they already prepare and serve.
- **Desmond House** – RK was contacted to help support & develop food security by offering produce and protein when required.
- **Free Table** - Helping supplement guests daily grocery needs, RK processes in-kind donations and then providing an average of 3200 pounds of produce, bread, dairy & odds each month.
- **Protein Tuesdays** – Donations in-kind have allowed RK, on every second Tuesday, to have guests and any community member attend our "protein hand-out". Supporting singles, seniors and families requiring assisting is supplementing their need for protein.

Purpose of this project:

We are now a larger community organization that is seen as highly collaborative and which has the ability to be exceptionally adaptable to community needs. With increased staffing levels, Rainbow Kitchen has been able to explore capacity building opportunities, by expanding meal services to include a hot breakfast and reaching out to youth who require improved food security. Rainbow Kitchen identifies as being an expert in food management and food procurement which has organically developed and is now a core strength of the organization.

Guests may not have other places where they can have friendly, safe social interactions. The Rainbow Kitchen provides a safe, non-judgmental, and welcoming place, where everyone is treated with respect. Guests can socialize with each other and with volunteers – sharing a meal together, having

conversations, making music, meeting with friends, making new friends, building community. Guests and volunteers refer to themselves as being part of the "Rainbow Kitchen family". The Rainbow Kitchen is a positive alternative to other meal services in downtown Victoria.

The Rainbow Kitchen feeds people who don't have the ability or capacity to cook for themselves; they may not have the financial resources to buy healthy food, the knowledge/skill to plan and prepare their own meals, or a kitchen space to store food supplies or proper cooking equipment. Meals served are carefully planned to be nutritional, tasty and generous, keeping in mind that sometimes it may be the only meal a person receives that day.

Rainbow Kitchen guests often are isolated with few social contacts or community supports. Some guests struggle with mental health and/or addiction issues. Some guests have experienced physical, verbal and/or sexual abuse. As important, we are seeing a trend towards serving those that are unemployed or underemployed and families whose income isn't stretching as far as it once did. For most Rainbow Kitchen guests, life can be very tough and create feelings of shame, loneliness and helplessness; feelings of isolation and disconnection; living a life of hunger and poor nutrition. Loneliness can be as devastating as hunger. For instance, some guests show up because they "just needed a cup of coffee and someone to talk to". Other guests arrive as a last resort and soon become regulars once they realize that they are within a safe and welcoming environment - particularly significant when that attracts youth who otherwise, may not have a safe place to be.

An estimated 1,100+ individuals were served over 36,000 Hot Lunches during 2019. Historically seeing an average of 120 individuals arrive for Lunch each weekday. An evaluation using newly created metrics in 2019 indicated that Rainbow Kitchen provided an additional 72,000 meal equivalencies to the community, outside of the regular lunch program.

During the current Covid-19 global pandemic, Rainbow Kitchen has seen a doubling in the request for daily Hot Lunch meals. Now producing over 200 Lunch meals each day, along with continued Food Share to guests and Community Partners that remain open and operational. Rainbow Kitchen estimates it will be a record breaking year, providing an estimated 115,200 meal equivalents in 2020. Approximately an additional 15,200 meal equivalents over what was created in 2019.

The names of those involved in carrying out the project:

The current **Board of Directors** of the Victoria Rainbow Kitchen Society includes: Julie Wright (President), Farhan Kanji (Vice-President), Jennifer Hawes, Jasmine Maxwell (Treasurer), Scott Sutherland & Giulia Collins.

Rainbow Kitchen's Board of Directors, functions currently as an "Operational Board" meeting monthly to carry out its governance responsibilities. Two board members also comprise the **Human Resources Committee** that meets regularly with the Director, to deal with HR issues related to volunteers and guests; and two board members, along with the Director meet periodically as a **Fundraising Committee**.

Paid staff positions

- Patrick Johnstone - Director
- Dylan Williams - Front of House Manager

- Ray Oelke - Distribution & Logistics Supervisor

Staff are responsible for all the day to day operations of The Kitchen, including but not limited to meal planning and food inventory control, liaising with food donors, fundraising and grant writing, program and strategic planning, recruiting, orienting and training volunteers, scheduling and managing volunteers, supervising and assisting guests and neighbourhood/community engagement.

Rainbow Kitchen relies heavily on a base of 200 amazing volunteers, who give of their time and energy to make this project a success, with up to 125 actively involved a week. Some of those key volunteers include:

- [REDACTED] 2 of 5 Lead Cooks
- [REDACTED] 2 of 4 Team Leaders
- [REDACTED] Produce Manager & Food Coordinator
- [REDACTED] Van driver – donated food pickup
- [REDACTED] Bookkeeper (effective January 2018)
- [REDACTED] 1 of 2 janitors (job shared part-time paid position) plus regular volunteer on clean up crew as dishwashers.

Green Event Initiatives:

Rainbow Kitchen makes every effort to do its part in operating as environmentally consciously as possible. RK Chefs are some of the most resourceful by incorporating unique, often donated ingredients that might otherwise go unused; the mandate being that Rainbow Kitchen can accept (and process) donations of any food item as long as it has 60-80% usability remaining. During periods of excess food waste, or when donations arrive past 80% useability, Rainbow Kitchen created excellent practise for composting. Starting with our own Gardens, maintained by volunteer gardeners, compost is maintained and used to add nutrients to our 14 raised garden plots. In addition, we cultivated relationships with local Farmers at Spartanside Farm, as well as individual volunteers of Rainbow Kitchen who privately raise "Urban/Backyard Chickens", so that when RK acquires a surplus of food goods unusable in our daily programing we pass bulk amounts onwards to farmers, thereby reducing the volume going into city provided compost bins and landfills. In addition, we use compostable or recyclable to-go containers and cutlery, sterilize and reuse yogurt and cottage cheese containers for 'second servings', and have an extensive and well organized recycling program.

Benefits to Esquimalt:

Rainbow Kitchen provides essential services to the residents in Esquimalt, who would otherwise find it difficult to provide themselves with healthy, nutritious meals on a regular basis. These citizens also benefit from having a safe place to meet, socialize, and volunteer where they can feel safe while 'breaking bread' together in this community setting. From our most recent Guest Survey conducted in January 2020, results remain consistent with those of 2019, as 54% of guests call Esquimalt home, 11% of guests responded that they were homeless.

The Rainbow Kitchen strives to enhance good physical and mental health for its guests and volunteers, which is a benefit to Esquimalt and the greater community. The food security gaps filled in 2019 with enhanced meal services like breakfast, or working closely with local schools to ensure young people

have has been amazing and is a brilliant reminder about how an organization like Rainbow Kitchen is an integral part of a healthy community.

The Rainbow Kitchen has a reputation of being a safe, non-judgmental, and welcoming place for guests and volunteers alike, where everyone is treated with respect and valued as “part of a family”. We have a positive, friendly relationship with local liaison officers which is an integral part of maintaining a Zero Tolerance Policy of abuse and harassment that applies to everyone at the Rainbow Kitchen.

COVID-19 Global Pandemic

Rainbow Kitchen’s current operations have seen a dramatic uptick since the Provincial and Federal Governments mandated the closure of businesses. March was the busiest month on record. We provided 11,000 meals which is 1,000 meals more than our record-breaking 2019 holiday season. We’ve adapted our traditional plated meal service and our inclusive community space in response to meet the evolving Government regulations. This has meant a substantial shift in our operations. Our staff and volunteers are now responsible for collecting donations from local businesses, receiving, sorting and bagging all donations (approximately 4,000lbs/week), cooking and packaging hot meals daily and facilitating a to-go meal service. In addition, while we forecasted increased partnering with local schools beginning in September 2020, this was fast-tracked to meet the needs of children and families identified through school counsellors.

Given the current COVID-19 climate, we are noticing a significant increase in new guests who are visiting for the first time; in particular young families. We foresee this trend continuing as more members of our community experience financial uncertainty in the coming weeks and months. Knowing that the Federal Government has stated that this ‘new normal’ is set to last until, at minimum July 2020, there is a growing concern that our traditional means of funding may not be enough to cover this high demand. In order to continue providing essential services to members of Esquimalt and other local communities, we seek \$10,000 from the Community Grant fund of the Municipality of Esquimalt. That grant, along with funds provided by emergency monetary measures for those providing services as we do at Rainbow Kitchen, would ensure continuity of service at a time when it is more needed than ever.

With respect and gratitude for all that the municipality has contributed to Rainbow Kitchen in the past,

Patrick Johnsone

**Director,
Victoria Rainbow Kitchen Society**



May 12, 2020

Director of Finance
Corporation of the Township of Esquimalt
1229 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt, BC, V9A 3P1

2020 Grant Application for the Victoria Rainbow Kitchen Society.

Attached is the 2020 Grant Application on behalf of the Victoria Rainbow Kitchen Society. It includes the completed grant application form, along with the Society's 2019/20 Draft Budget and its March 31, 2019 unaudited financial statements.

The Rainbow Kitchen is an integral part of the Esquimalt community, feeding the poor and marginalized throughout the year. To do this the Rainbow Kitchen must be financially sustainable, and we thank the Township of Esquimalt for its past support in making this a reality.

The Rainbow Kitchen can result in reducing costs for other social services in the Township of Esquimalt such as policing and health care, because of the positive impacts it makes in the lives of its guests and volunteers. Rainbow Kitchen guests, for the most part, live on very low-incomes, leaving them very little to buy food and other necessities. In our 2020 survey, 11% of guests identified themselves as homeless. Guests having access to healthy, nutritious and generous noon meals, as well as regular availability each Tuesday to visit the mobile health unit provided by "Dr's of the World", helps result in prolonged good overall health. Having a warm, safe and welcoming space, open 8am – 2pm weekdays, 50 weeks of the year results in healthy social interactions and improved mental health. Having a supportive, respectful and welcoming community helps individuals struggling with addictions to stay clean and sober.

With the financial resources on hand at the end of 2018, Rainbow Kitchen anticipated growth and expansion, and our March 31, 2019 financial statement shows a strategically planned deficit of \$36,299. Anticipating the onboarding of additional staff, our fiscal plan allowed enough reserve funding to ensure essential programs and higher labour would have a comfortable transition period. Rainbow Kitchen understands the vitality of our meal program to our guests who depend on our daily operation. A major decision of adding an Executive Director to the operation required dedicated financial planning to acquire the adjusted overall budget.

2018 allowed Rainbow Kitchen to review its core programming and perform a needs assessment within our community to further understand the needs of local Food Security. Rainbow Kitchen identified gaps outside of our Hot Meal program that to sustain would require further development. With adequate leadership, organization and funding Rainbow Kitchen was prepared to expand an organically developing Food Share program, to reach further geographically and provide greater assistance in filling identified food security needs. This coincided with increased logistics to be able to accept and process greater volumes of in-kind donations (fresh vegetables, fruit, bread and protein) then distributing goods to established and newly sourced Community Partners (ex; Living Edge, PEERS). Without including breakfast and lunch totals, newly created metrics to support our expanded Food Sharing, revealed that in 2019 Rainbow Kitchen was able to provide an additional 73,000 meal equivalents to our community (1.5Lbs of in-kind goods = 1 meal). With the current crisis, it is likely that Rainbow Kitchen will exceed 100,000 meals by December 31, 2020.

Known for nearly a decade of in-house Hot Lunches, Rainbow Kitchen was reaching capacity at current staffing levels. In order to provide additional structure and support to our community, Rainbow Kitchen introduced its first Executive Director in May of 2018, to facilitate new growth while maintaining vital core programs. The 2018 Need Assessment revealed a specific demographic of school age children and youth that in our own neighbourhoods, do not have access to adequate food security. Developing relationships with multiple local schools in District 61 in 2018, Rainbow Kitchen created individual delivery programs with three local schools to offer weekly assistance. Providing over 750 pounds of raw protein and produce each month to assist school counselors support previously identified individuals and ensure they have adequate resources for food. At the suggestion of counselors from Esquimalt High School, the creation of a monthly Youth Dinner began in the new school year of 2019. Students are invited into Rainbow Kitchen one evening each month to learn basic culinary skills, while making a meal for their peers. Students then sit down together and share in a tasty meal as well as some themed activities, organized by leading school administrators. Due to Covid-19's government mandates of social gathering, our March gathering was cancelled. Rainbow Kitchen continues to work closely with School District 61 and even during the current global pandemic, Rainbow Kitchen has made efforts to inform identified families, and our community, that we remain open and able to assist in supplementing any families food security needs during this crisis.

Rainbow Kitchen receives no secured core funding, including no secured government funding. This remains the case in our current financial year. Rainbow Kitchen is very fortunate to continue to receive support from community partners like The Victoria Foundation and the United Way of Greater Victoria. Fall of 2019 will complete our three year grant with The United Way (for \$25,000 per year) and application to request on-going funding will be completed in early 2021 for the next round of available funding. Rainbow Kitchen has completed an application with the Victoria Foundation which will be followed up on in July 2019. Having now facilitated one school year of support with S.D. 61, Rainbow Kitchen understands that the need for consistent, balanced meals is greater than the initial 2018 Needs Assessment revealed, and school counselors are unable to offer anything more than very simple administrative or operational support. Rainbow Kitchen is optimistic that even during current global conditions, with proper planning and additionally acquired funds, further support to youth, school children and their families is a passion of ours and remains very achievable in assisting with in the future as well.

On behalf of the Board, guests and volunteers of the Rainbow Kitchen, thank you for this opportunity to submit this 2020 Local Grant Application for your consideration.

If you have any questions concerning this Grant Application or would like any further information regarding the Rainbow Kitchen and its operations in Esquimalt, please contact me directly by phone at 250-213-5646 or by email at director@rainbowkitchen@gmail.com

Submitted Sincerely,

Patrick Johnstone
Director,
Victoria Rainbow Kitchen Society