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BIA Name:

Downtown Surrey BIA

Q2

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Q4

Project Title:

Summer Students

Q5

Category:

Partnerships & Advocacy

Q6

Project Description:

Every year, we apply for summer students through Canada Summer Interns. We sent in our application at the end of January based on our plans for the summer. Then COVID-19 hit. With all the funds being spent for a variety of programs, we were concerned that CSJ funding would be cut.

Q7

Audience:

MP, Federal government

Q8

Implementation:

At the end of March we began advocating with our MP and his office to insure we would be able to get funding. By mid-April, we were pitching ideas to "pivot" from what we had originally planned, to what we could do especially to assist our struggling businesses. We advised them that with the number of restrictions that would be in place (event numbers decreased, physical distancing), we asked that the program be more flexible - for example, extend some positions into the fall. By the end of April both Service Canada and our MPs office asked us to provide them with new job descriptions.

Q9

Results:

We received funding for 19 interns. We had 11 in the summer and we have 8 starting in September. In the summer, they assisted businesses get on social media, highlighted businesses that were "Open with Care" through newsletters and social media, did a safety survey and a Covid-19 recovery survey, did small scale events, area enhancement projects and community engagement through an art project. They also started "Community Conversations" regarding racism which will be continued in through the fall. At our summer end presentation, our MP Randeep Sarai spoke and was extremely pleased with what they had accomplished. Our MLA Bruce Ralston also spoke and afterwards told us he was impressed with what we had managed to accomplish in a short time with limited funds. Both Ralston and MLA Garry Begg who was also attending, made comments about how important BIAs are to small business and how " ... BIAs know how to get things done." They are looking forward to getting the results of the students who will be working in the fall - one team (including 2 website designers, 2 social media, 1 marketing) will be working with small businesses - building websites, doing marketing plans and running social media campaigns. The MLAs are interested in results they can take to Caucus to get more funding for small businesses within BIAs - specifically for Digital Mainstreet.

The other team will be focusing on events, communications (for the DSBIA) and Diversity outreach and research.

The advocacy with our MP to get the CSJ funding was successful. We usually get funding but this year was the most we had ever received. The advocacy with our MLAs helped build on the relationship we had with them and showed them the various areas BIAs are involved in and where needs currently exist.

Q10

Cost:

staff time