



Ottawa's Community Cup : How to Replicate

The Community Cup is already spreading to other communities. A comprehensive toolkit has been developed to provide step-by-step guidance on how to organize and implement a Community Cup. The electronic copy of the toolkit can be obtained by contacting Dan@cic.ca. Some general tips and suggestions for setting up your own event are also provided below. It should be recognized that each community is different and has its own assets and challenges to be considered.

The Toolkit:

This guide for establishing and running a Community Cup is based on Ottawa's experience. The toolkit was intended for settlement agencies in Ontario, but anyone interested can obtain it by contacting Dan@cic.ca. It is an easy to use, scalable, 'plug and play' approach to putting together the event. It incorporates brief overall activity descriptions, ready to use templates and forms and samples from the Ottawa Community Cup. It is based on a volunteer-intense operation.

General Suggestions for hosting a fun, safe, and inclusive event:

- **Recreational:** If soccer tournaments happen frequently in your town, don't compete with them. Instead, you have a chance to provide a unique and fun-focused major soccer event that will attract those with talent, and those without.
- **Unique rules and focus on Spirit:** Our 7-on-7, co-ed, recreational tournament is played on half fields with no goalies and is rigorously judged by official Spirit Judges - where spirit points count. This may not attract the diehard soccer player, but it does make it less intimidating to join in and be engaged in the game; it also reduces injuries and aggressive play.
- **Communicate to reinforce the recreational aspect of the game.** We assign honorary community coaches to teams, promote "spirit" during the registration process, host a players/captains meeting, and remind everyone at the event. Soccer inspires passion; our players need to appreciate this is the Community Cup, not the World Cup.
- **Accessibility and All Abilities Welcome:** Work with and invite community partners that can help you ensure the event is welcoming to everyone.

Suggested organizational Process:

- **Start off small.** Our first event in 2005 was just 8 soccer teams and we ordered pizza.
- **Recruit a supportive team.** This includes volunteers and colleagues, as well as the community. Support from community partners such as the City, Police, other festivals, schools, restaurants, media, clubs and associations (including the soccer experts) are key to success.
- **Promote sponsorship as an opportunity to step up and support newcomers – the fastest growing demographic in many areas in Canada.** Sponsors benefit from their involvement with this event. Finding sponsors early is crucial for planning your free event.
- **Recruit diverse planning team volunteers – engage newcomers, non-newcomers, experts and students.** Volunteers are not only *how* events happen; they are *why*. Engaging and cultivating volunteers encourages welcoming communities. Ensure volunteers have and feel ownership of the event. The Community Cup becomes a community itself, one that gathers and focuses a wide variety of other communities in a common cause.