APPLICATION

Please review guidelines before submitting an application. Applications must be received at info@bia.bc.ca no later than 5:00 pm PST on April 20, 2026.

No extensions will be given.

Applicant Information

Organization: Downtown Van

Contact: Sofia Laratta

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Project Information

Project Title: Hey, Downtown Van! Podcast

Project Timeframe: June 2024 - June 2025

Category:

- [ ] Community Leadership
- [x] Events and Marketing
- [ ] External Relations / Public Relations
- [ ] Organizational (Operational) Excellence

Values:

- [x] Innovative
- [x] Sustainability
- [x] Relationship Building

Project Overview

Brief Description (maximum 500 words):

The Hey, Downtown Van Podcast is Downtown Van's storytelling platform highlighting the people, businesses, and ideas shaping the heart of Vancouver. Through engaging conversations with entrepreneurs, cultural leaders, city-builders, and policymakers, the podcast showcases the energy, resilience, and innovation across Downtown Van's 90 blocks.

More than promotion, the podcast creates space for honest dialogue about the opportunities and challenges facing downtown — from economic recovery and public safety to culture, development, and community-building. It humanizes local business owners, increases transparency around city-building conversations, and strengthens collaboration among stakeholders.

For Downtown Van BIA members, the podcast provides meaningful visibility and amplifies the voices driving change in the district. For the broader community, it fosters connection, civic pride, and a deeper understanding of downtown as a vibrant, evolving neighbourhood.

Ultimately, Hey, Downtown Van supports Downtown Van's mission to build a safe, inclusive, and thriving downtown by bringing people together — one conversation at a time.

Top Three Measurable Outcomes (maximum 200 words each):

Remember to include your Key Performance Indicators and how they were met.

1. Listens:

We increased total listens by 30% from last year and made it into the top 15% of video podcasts on Spotify.

The listens KPI was met through consistent episode releases, strategic guest selection, and cross-promotion across Downtown Van channels. Featuring well-known local business leaders, community builders, and city influencers helped expand reach beyond existing audiences. Episodes were also promoted through email newsletters, partner amplification, and organic social media content, driving steady listenership growth.

2. Subscribers:

We increased our total audience by 1.15x and total new audience by 10x. Our growth outpaced 82% of other shows on Spotify.

Subscriber growth was driven by consistent publishing, clear calls-to-action within each episode, and promotion across platforms. Encouraging guests to share episodes with their networks significantly increased visibility and attracted new subscribers. The podcast's focus on relevant downtown issues and local storytelling helped convert casual listeners into regular subscribers.

3. Social Media Followers:

This was a new channel for us this year, so we started from 0 followers. We now have 1,192 followers on Instagram, and 240 on TikTok.

Follower growth was supported through short-form video clips, quote graphics, behind-the-scenes content, and collaborative posts with featured guests. Tagging guests and partner organizations expanded reach to new audiences, while consistent branding and messaging strengthened engagement. Social content tied to timely downtown topics also increased visibility and shareability.

Project Budget

	Category	Dollars
REVENUES:		
	TOTAL REVENUES	N/A
EXPENSES:	Professional Editing	58,590
	Social Media Ads	1,200
	Equipment	5,000
	TOTAL EXPENSES	64,790
	PROFIT/LOSS	

Budget Notes (Maximum 100 words):

Editing and social media promotion are ongoing, annual expenses, while equipment is a one-time investment. Depending on the BIA's budget, these costs can be minimal or even avoided entirely. A podcast can be recorded on a smartphone and edited in-house, eliminating the need for professional equipment or services. If a BIA chooses to hire an editor, focusing on audio-only episodes can keep costs lower. This project is flexible and scalable, making it feasible for BIAs of any size or budget.

Along with your application, you can upload any marketing or other project materials to a maximum of 10 MBs. Formats can include Word, Excel, PDF. JPG and PNG.