

Doors Open Ontario 2008 Information and Guidelines



An agency of the Government of Ontario



The information contained in this document provides communities that are considering participating in Doors Open Ontario 2008 with a comprehensive summary of the entry criteria, program requirements and timelines. It also highlights the role the Ontario Heritage Trust plays in coordinating the province-wide program and supporting the participating communities. Before deciding to participate in Doors Open Ontario and completing the [Organizer Registration Form](#), please read this document in its entirety. This document serves as the agreement to register with the program.

Doors Open Ontario is a province-wide celebration of community heritage. Designed to create access, awareness and excitement about our heritage, Doors Open Ontario provides residents and visitors with a unique opportunity to explore and enjoy sometimes hidden and always interesting places and spaces in Ontario cities, towns and villages – and all free of charge!

I. Doors Open Overview

Successful Doors Open events have charmed crowds since the first Doors Open Day (La Journée Portes Ouvertes) took place in France in 1984. The idea soon spread to neighbouring European countries and all 48 signatory states of the European Cultural Convention now participate in European Heritage Days.

The City of Toronto launched the first Doors Open program in North America in 2000. The success of Doors Open Toronto motivated the Ontario Heritage Trust to launch a province-wide initiative – the first of its kind in Canada – in 2002. In the first six years of the program, community participation has increased dramatically from 17 individual events in 2002 to 44 events in 2007. In total, heritage enthusiasts have made well over 2 million visits to participating Doors Open Ontario sites! Similar province-wide programs can now be found across Canada – including Doors Open Alberta and Doors Open Newfoundland and Labrador.

Entering its seventh year, Doors Open Ontario continues to be a cultural phenomenon. It has helped communities to redefine and celebrate their heritage, strengthen and encourage local partnerships, bolster local volunteer bases and stimulate tourism and local economies. Doors Open Ontario has matured into a vibrant, significant program that continues to support communities and build civic pride.

2. Registration criteria

The following criteria must be met for a community to register an event in the Doors Open Ontario 2008 program:

- an organizing committee must be formed; the committee should consist of a range of community partners, including (but not limited to) the heritage sector, cultural sector, tourism sector, municipal sector, corporate sector and community volunteers
- one lead contact must be appointed by the local Doors Open organizing committee to co-ordinate, manage and act as liaison between the Ontario Heritage Trust and the participating community/community cluster

- sites included in Doors Open events must be of historic, architectural, natural or cultural significance
- events must take place between April 12, 2008 and October 26, 2008
- communities must have the ability to open a minimum of 12 sites of historic, architectural, natural and/or cultural significance for public access during a specified time period
- admission to the main attraction at each participating property must be free to the public; sites that are normally open should consider opening an additional part of the property or arranging a special event or activity
- the organizing committee agrees to acknowledge Doors Open Ontario and the Ontario Heritage Trust in all promotion and publicity materials produced for their local event
- participating communities/community clusters are required to complete the Organizer Registration Form and submit it with payment of the \$1,500 registration fee by December 14, 2007

Q: What does your \$1,500 registration fee pay for?

A: Registration fees offset approximately 20 percent of the costs incurred by the Trust to deliver Doors Open Ontario. These costs include:

- Producing over 500,000 copies of the Doors Open Ontario Guide
- Province-wide distribution of the Doors Open Ontario Guide
- Listing events on the Doors Open website
- Doors Open Ontario site banners
- Promoting Doors Open Ontario events in advertisements
- Doors Open Ontario media releases (which result in more than 500 news articles each year)

3. Where to start

Your community's Doors Open Ontario event can be as simple or ambitious as you wish. Whether your community features 12 properties or over 100, your event should:

- promote pride in your community's heritage
- draw visitors from other areas of Ontario, Canada and abroad
- build a legacy by integrating heritage and culture into community planning and events
- generate economic and business opportunities at the community level through programming and heritage tourism packages, and in some cases, the development and sale of related merchandise
- foster strategic alliances among a range of community partners
- create opportunities for sustainable community tourism development and partnerships

In many cases, Doors Open events can be linked with existing festivals, attractions and tours in the region to maximize tourism opportunities. Linking to an existing festival or event also allows organizers to utilize the expertise and skills of the existing volunteer base.

3.I Establishing an Organizing Committee

Each community must form a Doors Open organizing committee, usually consisting of representatives from municipal or regional heritage, tourism, arts and culture units, Municipal Heritage Advisory

Committees (formerly called LACACs), Architectural Conservancy of Ontario branches, heritage/historical organizations, tourism organizations, arts councils, chambers of commerce and business associations.

Event co-ordination will vary depending on the size and scope of the community event. In some communities, an event coordinator may need to be appointed, while in other communities the role may be assumed by a volunteer, by a volunteer committee or staff from one of the participating organizations.

Most communities have opted to co-ordinate events by committee. Specific people are charged with the tasks of identifying properties, interpretive/educational programming, marketing/ promotion, event management and volunteer recruitment.

One lead contact must be appointed by the local Doors Open organizing committee to co-ordinate, manage and act as liaison between the Ontario Heritage Trust and the participating community/community cluster. The name and contact information of the lead contact may be made available by the Trust to other organizers, stakeholders or members of media for the purposes of supporting or promoting Doors Open Ontario.

The committee determines the date(s) of their community Doors Open event, and the hours sites will be open. Most events are held over two days during a weekend, with sites open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Events must be held between April 12, 2008 and October 26, 2008. Spreading Doors Open Ontario events over a six-month season allows your community to choose the most appropriate date for your region.

3.2 Selecting properties

The range of suitable Doors Open Ontario heritage sites includes: commercial buildings, places of worship, cemeteries, inns, schools, factories, theatres, boats, museums, fire halls, railway stations, lighthouses, sports complexes, observation towers, private galleries, civic buildings, lookouts, jails, industrial sites and private homes. Heritage gardens and natural heritage sites of significance are also eligible.

Local organizing committees will be required to identify appropriate properties and establish contacts with property owners to facilitate participation.

Whenever possible, three or more sites should be clustered together within walking or a short driving distance. A property may have a disappointing visitor turnout if it is difficult to find, is secluded from other sites, or is a long distance from most of the other participating sites.

3.3 Developing events/activities/exhibits

Doors Open Ontario is an ideal vehicle for organizing special events or activities in your community. Organizers might want to consider guided walks and tours, concerts, exhibitions, book readings, craft displays, lectures or talks, re-enactments and special children's activities.

Guided walks and tours are popular. Organizers may use them to illustrate the work of an architect, special period in time or history of a district. Properties can also be used as the setting for a historical lecture, art exhibition or musical concert. Re-enactments also attract crowds – consider recreating a famous battle, event or court case that occurred at a property.

3.4 Interpreting properties

Visitors must receive information about the historic, cultural, natural or architectural significance of all participating Doors Open Ontario properties. Information may be provided by any convenient means such as flyers, interpretive panels, multimedia shows, lectures, exhibitions and informal tours or through discussions with the volunteers. Photocopies of existing information brochures or handouts may be sufficient.

The Trust provides a template for a basic *Property Interpretation Flyer* as part of the resource materials available to participating communities.

4. Managing your event

4.1 Staff/volunteers

Community organizing committees are responsible for ensuring that each property provides sufficient volunteers and/or staff at each open site to adequately manage visitors. Volunteers and/or staff:

- ensure public safety (crowd and queue control)
- provide information to the public (direct visitors to entryways, exits and washrooms; answer questions; provide directions to other Doors Open sites in the community, etc.)
- guide tours and provide interpretive materials/experiences
- protect the site (act as security attendants – security attendants should not be responsible for providing public information as it distracts their attention)
- ensure each site is identifiable from the street through highly visible signs

The Trust provides a detailed tip sheet offering suggestions for *Recruiting and Managing Volunteers* as part of the resource materials available to participating communities.

4.2 Visitors

The number of visitors each property attracts varies greatly. Properties/events near other Doors Open activities will attract more visitors than isolated properties. Weather and other unforeseen circumstances can also have an impact on visitor turnout.

Well-timed dissemination of promotional information to area residents and media is also critical to raising local/regional awareness of your event. During your event, it is also important to post street signs that indicate the locations of Doors Open properties to visitors. Highly visible directional signs are key to ensuring visitors know how to get to the properties.

The organizer at each property should develop a method of tracking the number of visitors to the site. Attendance figures will need to be recorded for submission to the organizing committee. The organizing committee is required to include these numbers in the evaluation form that must be submitted to the Trust within six weeks of the end of their event. Providing final visitor numbers to the Trust is an essential step in validating the success of the program and demonstrating the need for future funding.

The Trust tip sheets – *Developing a Promotion and Publicity Plan* and *Participating in Doors Open Ontario – A Site Organizer’s Guide* – provide suggestions to boost visitor turnout. These tip sheets are included in the resource materials provided to participating communities.

4.3 Finances and funding

4.3.1 Budgeting

Doors Open Ontario communities will require their own event management plan and strategy. Organizing committees should set a budget, identify required resources and secure funding or sponsors to cover community costs. Event management strategies will vary depending on the size of the community event, but some basic budget components to consider are outlined below.

Participating communities/community clusters are required to pay a registration fee of **\$1,500** to demonstrate their commitment to the Doors Open Ontario initiative. Registered communities will be able to take advantage of the Trust’s province-wide promotional campaign, including: advertising, representation in the English and French versions of the *Doors Open Ontario Guide* and on the Doors Open Ontario website, media coverage and Doors Open Ontario property identification banners. (See *Section 6* for specifics.) The deadline for registration and payment of the fee is **December 14, 2007**.

The organizing committee assumes responsibility for all community event-related expenses – although costs may be shared between partners and sites. Expenses might be incurred for items such as: brochures and maps listing all sites, interpretive materials, local launch events, volunteer/staffing, cleaning, local marketing and promotion and the rental of portable washrooms or access barriers.

Admission to the main attraction at each participating property must be free to the public. Sites that normally open free of charge should either open an additional part of the property or arrange a special activity. Additional programming components can be offered for a fee. This might include special lectures or readings, sale of merchandise and refreshments or fundraising events for the restoration of a building.

4.3.2 Sponsorship

Participating communities may seek sponsorship to assist with the coordination, promotion or implementation of their community event. Sponsorship of community Doors Open Ontario events could include services-in-kind, media coverage, financial support, or other resources as required.

Local sponsors of community Doors Open Ontario events may be recognized in community materials/events/products, including:

- community launch event
- community map/brochure listing sites
- interpretive flyers/brochures
- local site signage
- promotional items or products (T-shirts, posters, tote-bags)
- community website or page on other regional/community website
- advertising in community newspapers and other print media

- advertising in community broadcast media (radio/television)
- acknowledgment in releases to area media outlets

The Ontario Heritage Trust secures sponsorship for the provincial program. Provincial sponsors will be acknowledged in the Trust's province-wide marketing and promotional materials, including the *Doors Open Ontario Guide* and Doors Open Ontario website. Local community sponsors will be recognized only in local community marketing material.

4.3.3 Funding opportunities

Given the growing public interest in architecture, culture and heritage, Doors Open Ontario is designed to maximize regional tourism opportunities and encourage Ontarians and visitors to travel and experience heritage tours and events throughout the province. Doors Open Ontario events provide opportunities to build new community cultural and heritage tourism opportunities, products and packages. It also assists participating communities in attracting visitors. Because of this, some community events might qualify for funding support from government agencies or departments. Organizing committees might want to consider applying to one or more of these granting bodies for funding support.

The Trust provides a tip sheet listing *Potential Funding Sources for Community Doors Open Ontario Events* as part of the resource materials available to participating communities.

4.4 Promotion and publicity

Organizing committees should develop a Promotion and Publicity Plan for their community event. It should facilitate decisions and ensure that everyone in your organization is working together to achieve the same goals. In addition, a good plan will ensure that your Doors Open event reflects a positive community image.

As part of the resource materials available to participating communities, the Trust provides a tip sheet for developing a *Promotion and Publicity Plan* as well as a template for writing a *Media Release* for Doors Open Ontario community events. The Trust also provides electronic versions of its own logo and the Doors Open Ontario logo for use in local promotional materials.

As part of the Trust's province-wide Doors Open Ontario Promotion and Publicity Plan, each participating community/community cluster will have their local event promoted in the English and French versions of the *Doors Open Ontario Guide* and on the Doors Open Ontario website. These high-quality marketing tactics are designed to promote the overall program and create brand recognition of Doors Open Ontario across the province. (See *Section 6* for more details about the role of the Ontario Heritage Trust in province-wide promotion, media relations and branding of the Doors Open Ontario program.)

Acknowledgement of Doors Open Ontario and the Ontario Heritage Trust's support must be included in all community marketing and promotional materials, including any Doors Open Ontario-related websites/pages and the community map/brochure of participating sites. The Doors Open Ontario and Ontario Heritage Trust logos must be displayed in a prominent position on all materials produced. The logos must be at a minimum height of $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. Alternatively, you may list Doors Open Ontario and the Ontario Heritage Trust as supporting partners on the main/cover pages of all materials. The Doors

Open Ontario website URL (www.doorsopenontario.on.ca) must also be promoted in all community marketing and promotional materials.

4.5 Health, safety and security

Each participating Doors Open Ontario site must ensure that health, safety and security issues are addressed in accordance with legal requirements. Public safety and security are of utmost importance. Doors Open organizing committees should confirm and discuss this requirement with each site prior to the event.

In opening any property to the public, the possibility that personal injury, safety, theft, loss or damage may occur must be considered. Each site must take measures to protect personal belongings, collections or the property itself from theft or vandalism.

Sites should be equipped to provide the following:

- barrier-free access wherever possible (full or partial access)
- information about nearby parking (either street or lot parking)
- a procedure for crowd control and line-ups (barricades, marked entry/exit, etc.)
- information about washroom availability (on or adjacent to the site)
- security against theft/destruction of property (attendants, cameras, cordoned off areas, etc.)
- health and safety provisions (first aid, fire exits, etc.)

The Ontario Heritage Trust will not assume responsibility for any accidents, injuries, loss or theft of items that occur during community Doors Open Ontario events.

The Trust offers suggestions concerning safety and security issues for Doors Open Ontario community events in the *Site Organizer's Guide* tip sheet provided in the resource materials available to participating communities.

4.6 Public liability and property insurance

Each community organizing committee must ensure that all participating sites and properties have adequate public liability and property insurance. There are, however, no consistent approaches across the province due to the diverse range of organizations, levels of government and volunteers involved in managing Doors Open Ontario community events. For community Doors Open events that are led by a municipality, the public liability insurance held by these bodies may cover the participating sites. In some cases, each community will need to verify the coverage provided by their lead organization, and if none is provided, additional coverage may need to be obtained. Consult your insurance carrier. Some participating sites, such as commercial, federal, provincial and municipal buildings, may have their own public liability insurance if they are normally open to the public.

In addition, each participating site must ensure that they have adequate property insurance to open their site to the public. The onus is on the property owner to verify whether their existing insurance coverage is adequate, or whether they will require additional coverage. As circumstances may vary from carrier to carrier, it is important that each site works directly with their insurance provider to determine whether adequate coverage is in place.

Some Doors Open Ontario committees ask each of the sites participating in their event to sign an agreement confirming that the site is insured for public liability, damage and theft and that committee members will not assume any responsibility for any accidents, injuries, damage or loss that may occur during their Doors Open Ontario community event.

4.7 Building tourism partnerships

Organizing committees from participating communities should be willing to partner over time with community tourism operators to provide new tourism products and packages.

Examples of potential package items include:

- overnight accommodation and meals
- entertainment (shows, concerts, amusement parks, guided tours, etc.)
- transport (cruises, train tours, helicopter rides, etc.)
- outdoor activities (horseback riding, canoeing, hiking, rock climbing, etc.)
- local sites and events (festivals, markets, galleries, museums, etc.)

5. Evaluating your event

The first step toward building on the success of the Doors Open Ontario program at both the provincial and community level is to evaluate it. Good information on performance is important to any program, particularly new ones in a developing area – such as heritage tourism. In the Community Resource materials, the Trust provides each participating community with a series of evaluation forms to facilitate analysis of local events. These include:

- Visitor Survey – an evaluation of a visitor's Doors Open Ontario experience
- Site Organizer's Evaluation Form – an evaluation of a site organizer's experience of participating in a Doors Open Ontario event
- Community Organizer's Evaluation Form – an evaluation of a community organizing committee's experience of participating in Doors Open Ontario and working with the Ontario Heritage Trust

The Trust provides templates for the evaluation forms as part of the resource materials available to participating communities. Organizing committees are responsible for submitting the *Community Organizer's Evaluation Form* to the Trust within six weeks of the conclusion of their event.

6. Role of the Ontario Heritage Trust

The Ontario Heritage Trust co-ordinates the province-wide program and works with corporate sponsors, heritage and tourism groups, the media (print, television and radio) and other funding organizations to provide participating Doors Open Ontario communities with the following:

- overall program co-ordination and administration
- province-wide promotion, media relations and branding (see details in Section 6.I below)
- community resource materials, including tip sheets on topics such as recruiting and managing volunteers, securing sponsorship and funding, developing a promotion and publicity plan, and managing health, safety and security issues; as well as templates for property interpretation materials, media releases, visitor surveys and site organizer's evaluation forms
- colourful bilingual Doors Open Ontario property identification banners for each participating site

- regional information sessions across the province involving key regional/community stakeholders, property owners and partners (as required)
- French translation of community event information for the *Doors Open Ontario Guide*, website and other provincial marketing materials

6.I Province-wide promotion, media relations and branding

Promotion in *Doors Open Ontario Guide*

Each participating community/community cluster will have their local event promoted in the *Doors Open Ontario Guide*. The guide, produced in English and French, is designed as a tourism “lure” brochure to raise the profile of the program through a variety of province-wide and regional distribution outlets. Each participating community must submit written descriptions and images for 10 of the most intriguing sites confirmed to participate in their local event.

In 2008, the Trust estimates 500,000 copies of the Guide will be distributed throughout Ontario, Canada and abroad. Distribution outlets will include: an insert in a major daily newspaper, 1-800-ONTARIO call centre, Ontario Travel Information Centres, libraries, community outlets, as well as sponsor/partner venues.

The Ontario Heritage Trust reserves the right to select which sites will be featured in the Guide and to edit the submitted information for style, content and length. The Trust may restrict the number of listings/images featured in the Guide due to space availability and design considerations. The Trust assumes no liability for errors or omissions.

Community organizers must submit a *Site Listing Form* and digital images (meeting the print quality specifications outlined in the Community Resource Materials) for each of the 10 sites they would like to have considered for inclusion in the *Doors Open Ontario Guide*. This information must be submitted to the Trust by **January 18, 2008**. In addition, original colour photography may be submitted, but will not be returned.

Site Listing Forms can only be completed online and submitted via the Doors Open Ontario website. Organizing committees will be given access to the *Site Listing Form* as part of the resource materials provided to participating communities.

Doors Open Ontario website (www.doorsopenontario.on.ca)

The Doors Open Ontario website (English and French) promotes the program across Ontario, Canada and abroad. Each community event will be publicized on the site, including a listing of all participating sites with images. It is the responsibility of the organizing committee to provide these listings to the Ontario Heritage Trust. Communities that submit photos to the Trust will also receive post-event coverage of their event with a photo gallery. The Doors Open Ontario website will also post links to other websites created to promote Doors Open Ontario community events.

The Ontario Heritage Trust reserves the right to edit the submitted information for content and length. The Trust assumes no liability for errors or omissions.

Community organizers may submit a *Site Listing Form* with digital images (meeting the web quality specifications outlined in the Community Resource Materials), for each additional site to be featured on

the Doors Open Ontario website up to one month prior to their event. This information will be compiled to create a comprehensive website listing of all participating sites.

Site Listing Forms can only be completed online and submitted via the Doors Open Ontario website. Organizing committees will be given access to the *Site Listing Form* as part of the resource materials provided to participating communities.

In 2007, nearly 180,000 visitors logged onto the Doors Open Ontario website.

Media relations

The Trust will develop and implement an integrated media plan promoting Doors Open Ontario events.

Over the past six years, Doors Open Ontario has garnered extensive media coverage (print, internet and broadcast) throughout the province. In a typical year, over 500 news articles – with a converted advertising value of close to \$1 million dollars – will be published and numerous broadcast pieces will appear on high-profile outlets.

Cross-marketing opportunities

Doors Open Ontario events will be promoted in tourism and heritage publications and at Trust and partner events. The website will be linked to related sites.

In past years, Doors Open Ontario advertisements have appeared in *The Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Star*, *Niagara Falls New York Gazette*, *Port Perry Star*, *Belleville Intelligencer*, *Ontario's Travel Discoveries*, *Ontario's More to Discover Fun Pass* and the Canadian Automobile Association's *Leisureways* magazine. We welcome suggestions of other opportunities.

Banners

Colourful bilingual property identification banners in both English and French will be provided to each community. These banners will draw attention to each site's participation in the program and aid in brand recognition of Doors Open Ontario.

The Trust would be pleased to discuss with communities the estimated financial value of its Doors Open Ontario program coordination, marketing and related services that support each community event.

7. Submission requirements and deadlines

Organizer Registration Form and 2008 Registration Fee
A completed Organizer Registration Form must be received by the Trust with payment of the \$1,500 registration fee by December 14, 2007 . (<i>Mail-in Form – Signature required.</i>)
2008 Site Listing Form – Doors Open Ontario Guide (Featured sites)
One Site Listing Form for <u>each of 10 sites</u> your community would like to have considered for inclusion in the <i>Doors Open Ontario Guide</i> must be completed and submitted by January 18, 2008 . (<i>Online forms submitted via the Doors Open Ontario website only.</i>)
2008 Site Listing Form – Site listings for Doors Open Ontario website
One Site Listing Form for <u>each additional site</u> to be featured on the Doors Open Ontario website may be submitted up to one month prior to the event. This information will be compiled to create a comprehensive website listing of each participating site. (<i>Online forms submitted via the Doors Open Ontario website only.</i>)
Image submission requirements – Doors Open Ontario Guide (Featured sites)
Digital images (meeting the print quality specifications outlined in the Community Resource Materials) of the 10 sites your community would like to have considered for inclusion in the Doors Open Ontario Guide must be received by the Trust no later than January 18, 2008 . Additionally, original colour photography may be submitted, but will not be returned. (Mail in CD-ROM)
Image submission requirements – Site listings for Doors Open Ontario website
One digital image (meeting the web quality specifications outlined in the Community Resource Materials) for each additional site to be featured on the Doors Open Ontario website should be submitted as soon as possible. These images will be used to enhance community event website listings. Note: Organizing committees may continue to send images to support newly submitted site listings throughout the event season. (Mail in CD-ROM)
Community Organizer’s Evaluation Form
A completed Community Organizer’s Evaluation Form must be submitted to the Trust within <u>six weeks</u> of the conclusion of your event. Additional information, such as media clippings, photographs, copies of promotional material and copies of visitor or site organizer’s surveys may be included with the evaluation form. (Mail-in Form)
Banner Order Form
Orders for Doors Open Ontario banners must be submitted no later than six weeks prior to your event to allow time for shipping. (Fax-in Form)

8. Contact information

Doors Open Ontario
Ontario Heritage Trust
10 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, Ontario M5C 1J3
Telephone: 416-325-5000
Fax: 416-325-5071
E-mail: doorsopenontario@heritagetrust.on.ca
Website: www.doorsopenontario.on.ca

Please note:

Information provided in the online Community Resource Materials is password protected. To obtain a password, communities must complete an **Organizer Registration Form** and submit it with payment of the \$1,500 registration fee by December 14, 2007. Registered participants will be able to access the Community Resource Materials online at www.doorsopenontario.on.ca in November 2007.