

Justice and Reconciliation Fund Committee

The United Church of Canada

Background on the Fund

The Justice and Reconciliation Fund was established in 2000 by the Residential Schools Steering Committee of The United Church of Canada to assist the church to understand and respond to the legacy of harm and broken relationships that have resulted from the Indian Residential School system. The fund supports projects that foster dialogue, reconciliation, and relationship-building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

The Justice and Reconciliation Fund is distinct from the Healing Fund, which provides financial support to healing projects initiated in Indigenous communities by and for former students and their families. Projects supported by the Justice and Reconciliation Fund usually do not qualify for Healing Fund support.

The Justice and Reconciliation Fund will support projects or events with one or more of the following goals:

1. To promote understanding of the United Church's role in the Indian Residential School system and of the impact of this system on former students and their communities
2. To foster direct community-to-community engagement or face-to-face encounters between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in the church and with the larger community
3. To assist nation-to-nation events involving church members that support advocacy in solidarity with Indigenous rights
4. To undertake justice and reconciliation work that supports The United Church of Canada's commitments to implementing the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Projects initiated outside the church but that meet the goals of the fund and involve church members as participants are also considered.

The fund has an annual budget of \$100,000, and does not grant more than \$10,000 to any one project.

A group can apply for a grant to a maximum of three years in a row, and can receive a maximum of \$10,000 each year.

Complete Fund Criteria may be found at: <http://www.united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/justice-and-reconciliation-fund>

Role and Responsibilities of the Fund Committee

A five-member Justice & Reconciliation Fund Committee is responsible for reviewing all applications to the Fund and making decisions on grants. The Committee is supported by a Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice Animator and Program Assistant from the Indigenous Ministries and Justice unit of the General Council Office.

Members of the Fund Committee are United Church members from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities of faith across Canada.

Expectations of Fund Committee Members

- Understand the overall goals and objectives of the Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice programs of The United Church of Canada. Members should have a general knowledge of the history of relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada and especially the role of the churches in residential schools. Members also should be familiar with the kinds of activities that support education of church members on these topics and relationship building.
- Participate in a *minimum* of two annual *conference calls* to make decisions on applications to the Fund. There are two Fund submission deadlines of September 15 and March 15 each year. Committee meetings are called within a minimum of four to a maximum of eight weeks of these dates. Typically the meetings take place in the late afternoon or early evening, Eastern Time, depending on committee availability. Meetings run about two hours, depending on the number of applications received.
- Make decisions on all submissions to the Fund. Applications are distributed to committee members *by email* at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Members are expected to review the submissions carefully and to use a numeric ranking guide to make their own preliminary assessment of each application prior to coming to the meeting. This includes assessment of the application's relevance to the criteria of the fund, suitability of the budget (reasonable costs to implement what is proposed), quality of the project evaluation plan, and overall merit.
- Review project completion reports. Final evaluation reports on each funded project, including actual costs, are required of all grant recipients. These reports are distributed to committee members regularly as they are received for information. Committee members may send in comments on completion reports as they see fit.

The number of applications to the Fund has been rising. Committee members should expect to review 10 to 20 projects in advance of each meeting and be comfortable participating in a decision-making meeting by conference call for up to two hours at a time.