



**CATHERINE  
DONNELLY  
FOUNDATION**

*Annual Report for 2019/2020 and 2020/21*

# Bold action for critical times





Roots to Harvest, The SHOW program. Credit: Roots to Harvest



Youth charter challenge, Ecojustice. Credit: Emily Chan



Drawing Water. Credit: Multifaith Housing Initiative



The Existence Project Credit: Gillian Mansonhng Staples

## OUR MISSION

Committed to Gospel values, the Foundation strives to transform the lives of those most in need by proactively supporting creative initiatives in the areas of housing, adult education and the environment.

## OUR VISION

The Catherine Donnelly Foundation’s vision is to collaborate with others to create a world that respects and reverences creation; a world where all have a voice and can live with dignity to realize their full potential, a world that is open to transformation and one that seeks justice, peace and respect for all.

The Catherine Donnelly Foundation acknowledges the land on which we are located. It has been a site of human activity since time immemorial. This land has been a Haudenosaunee-speaking territory for centuries, as well as Huron-Wendat, Petun, and Seneca; most recently the Mississaugas of the Credit. Our work extends to regions across Canada and we also acknowledge the treaty rights and the unceded rights and title of Indigenous peoples throughout Turtle Island.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Executive Director and the Chair of the Board.....	2
Granting facts .....	5
Adult Education .....	6
Reconciliation and support for Indigenous solutions .....	9
Righting Relations; granting deeper to propel systems change.....	9
Environment.....	10
Ecojustice; guarantee every Canadian’s right to a healthy environment.....	13
Housing and Homelessness .....	14
A Way Home Canada; preventing youth homelessness with transformative solutions.....	17
Impact Investing .....	18
Board and Staff .....	21

# Letter from the Executive Director and the Chair of the Board

The past two years have been a period of hardship and hope. Hardship amidst a pandemic that accelerated the impact of the climate emergency and global economic turmoil on our most vulnerable community members. Hope arriving from the urgent and collaborative response to those threats as marginalized communities mobilize and we recognize change comes more quickly - and at a scale greater than imagined - when sharing a common purpose.

For our partners and allies who protect the environment or work in affordable housing, homelessness and adult education, the pandemic has increased the intensity and complexity of their work, while in many cases reducing financial and operating resources. We listened when partners said they needed flexibility in how and when programs were delivered, and we marveled at how quickly and creatively they responded.

Between fiscal 2019 and 2021, the Catherine Donnelly Foundation granted over \$4.5 million to more than 80 organizations and surpassed \$20 million in total giving since first granting in 2005. But more important is who we funded and how they are working to effect change. We strive to respect and trust our partners, open ourselves up to their wisdom and work proactively with them to cede and redistribute power and embrace a more equitable nonprofit-funder ecosystem.

The pandemic has encouraged the Foundation to be more intentional about collaborating with Black communities and communities of Colour and in 2022 we have made targeted capacity-strengthening grants to BIPOC-led and BIPOC-serving organizations.

We are funding projects like the *Equitable Planning Toolbox* of the Jane/Finch Community

and Family Centre, that develops leaders and helps underserved communities take control over land-use and development decisions in their neighbourhoods as well as the *Black Leadership Institute on Social Action for Change*, at Skills for Change, a leadership development program that provides participants with the skills required to reduce barriers faced by Black people and drive local transformation.

The Foundation's ongoing work promoting justice and equity extends to a commitment to reconciliation and reciprocity with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The continuing authentication of residential school gravesites has renewed anguish in those communities who have long-known of the burial locations. Most of these unmarked graves contain the remains of children.

As the legacy of the Sisters of Service, a progressive community of Catholic religious sisters, the Foundation acknowledges the histories between the Christian churches and Indigenous peoples in Canada and as part of our own journey to righting relations we recently gifted \$1 million to organizations working with Residential School Survivors and their families from sea to sea to sea. Among them is Ilitaqsiniq Nunavut Literacy Council

which addresses the economic, social and systemic issues Inuit face in their territory by providing innovative and culturally meaningful programming (For more information on this topic read about our support for Indigenous-led solutions here and later in this report.)

We also believe promoting joint action and networking between organizations will bring lasting systems change. Transformation of our world will only come about if we work together - across communities, sectors and philosophies - to identify common problems and find solutions that benefit everyone. Our long-time work with Ecojustice and A Way Home exemplifies these efforts.

On the governance front, efforts to renew and diversify our Board and committees continue. We welcomed Sucheta Rajagopal, Gladys Yam and Sherry Yano to our Board as well as Rejwan Karim, Gerald Mak, Harry Wilmott, Lindsey Hepburn and Adrienne Van Veggel to committees. These talented individuals will deepen our human resource, governance, finance and investment expertise and bring a proven record of proactively impacting the organizations they are involved with. We are thrilled to work with them.

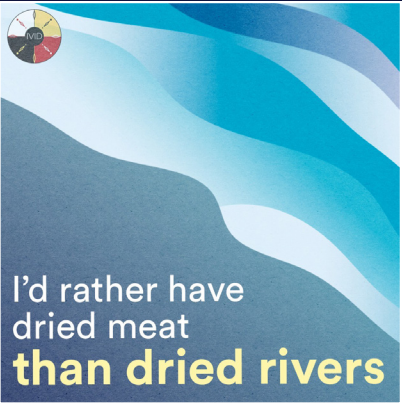


The Foundation also created the new staff position of Director of Programs. Anne Mark, previously Program Officer, is now responsible for overseeing our granting streams and supporting the development of new partnerships and funding opportunities. We were also very pleased to announce Yousuf Najmee as Director of Finance and Investment, Cindy Alexander as Finance Administrator and Hamshaa Sivaruban as Grants and Logistics Coordinator.

Last August, we were thrilled to launch the Foundation's new website and a bold new logo and branding. Their introduction to our partners, peers and friends is the culmination of a year of conceptualization, consultation and revision that incorporated nearly 40 individual stages all guided by Loop Design for Social Good. And in Spring 2022, we introduced our first ever public-facing newsletter to amplify the good work of CDF's partners and grantees.

We know the future will bring unexpected challenges and we are poised to work toward creative complex solutions for long-term change with innovative programs, partners and allies.

Anne-Marie Jackson, Chair  
Claire Barcik, Executive Director



Oskiniwak Askiy: Future World, VIDEA  
Credit: Oskiniwak Askiy

## Granting

- 80+ organizations received \$4.5M in funding, 2019-2021
- 16 years  
\$20 million in grants  
Over 400 projects and partners
- We allocate equally to each core funding area.

## Program Areas

The Catherine Donnelly Foundation is committed to promoting positive social change by funding and financing initiatives related to the environment, housing and homelessness as well as adult education. We are also committed to investing ten per cent of our assets in impact investment. All of our efforts are intended to promote joint action and networking by helping organizations work together and build on one another's strengths to pursue radical systems change.



# Adult Education

Working to embrace diversity and intentional collaboration with Indigenous and Black communities and communities of Colour

## \$683,652

20 organizations

“Mixed Company Theatre engages communities in theatre for social change and our projects need support from people who understand the complex, deep-rooted work we do with communities. The Catherine Donnelly Foundation provided us just that – their approach to project support and funding takes a bottom-up approach, is grounded in reality, and puts community learning and growth above all else! Ever since our first collaboration in 2018, CDF has supported our projects not only with funds, but with the patience, flexibility, and nuanced understanding of impact that community development work needs.”

Swetha Ranaganathan, General Manager, Mixed Company Theatre



Future Majority, Movement Capacity Building with Suburban and Rural Youth. Credit: Future Majority



## ADVANCING PERSONAL AND CIVIC TRANSFORMATION

The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified inequities, but also encouraged collective organization and action among communities most impacted by injustice and discrimination. Movements seeking true equity, such as Black Lives Matter, have gained mass recognition, while holistic and earth-first solutions to human impact, such as those voiced by Indigenous land and water stewards, are taking root.

Our Adult Education funding encourages personal and social transformation by developing critical consciousness and skills, so we are heartened that direct action by often ignored and underserved populations is motivating greater awareness of crucial issues and inspiring change.

These advances have prompted the Foundation to broaden our long-standing commitment to diversity and intentional collaboration with Indigenous and Black communities and communities of Colour.

Standing for progressive change is only meaningful if that change is enjoyed by all. That's why we fund organizations striving for their own empowerment. Last year, our Adult Education stream provided funding to Tatamagouche's *Reducing Racism and Divisiveness in the Maritimes* program which aims to address the impacts of systemic oppression and colonization.

We have also created a \$225,000 grant pool specifically for Black, Indigenous and racialized-led and BIPOC-serving organizations designed with low-barrier application and reporting requirements.

Our pledge to strengthen communities includes encouraging reciprocal relationships that spark greater understanding, trust and mutual benefit. The Oskin'kiwak Askîy: Future World project of Victoria, BC's VIDEA, engaged Indigenous female, male and 2-Spirited youth from communities from across Canada to create a mass media campaign that highlighted Indigenous-led initiatives and teachings on the intersecting themes of environmental sustainability and gender equality.

## RECONCILIATION AND SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS SOLUTIONS

The Catherine Donnelly Foundation acknowledges the histories between the Catholic Church and Indigenous peoples in Canada and the impacts of colonialism that continue to this day. As a Foundation, we recognize the need to redress these genocidal acts and to act in solidarity with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples to change the underlying systemic political, economic and judicial structures.

In the spring and summer of 2021 more than 1,300 unmarked gravesites were confirmed on the grounds of five former residential schools. These

and other purposeful acts of colonialism are historic truths that impact Indigenous peoples to this day, but these strong, resilient communities are also environmental guardians and stewards and supporters of ways of living that build a sustainable and collective approach to trade, economics and resource use. In recognition of the impacts of residential schools on individuals and communities, the Foundation gifted \$1 million to support Indigenous Peoples and communities as they respond and heal from the intergenerational trauma.

The Foundation consulted Indigenous partners and allies to choose nine organizations across the country. Groups did not apply and will be able to use funds as they wish with only the expectation of a short oral or written report.

Our commitment to advocate for creative initiatives includes funding for a pan-Canadian, Indigenous-led fund to address climate change and climate justice with a focus on healing through land-based initiatives. Started in 2017, Healing Through the Land is now granting to Indigenous communities.

Between 2019 and 2021, the Foundation committed nearly \$600,000 to Indigenous organizations and causes in addition to the recent \$1million gift. Most recently, we provided \$50,000 to Clan Mothers Healing Village, a Winnipeg-based organization that will provide support to Indigenous women who have been victims of multi-generational trauma, sexual violence and exploitation.

### RIGHTING RELATIONS; GRANTING DEEPER TO PROPEL SYSTEMS CHANGE

Righting Relations is a community-based and community-led network that works collectively to strengthen individuals' and organizational capacity to work for radical social change with Indigenous, immigrant, refugee and low-income communities. The Foundation does not lead the program and is one participant among many.

The Foundation's decision in 2008 to shift from only providing one-year project grants to building longer-term relationships with partners was made to encourage community-driven efforts to propel systems change. Funding

Righting Relations for five years reflected our first major effort to 'grant deeper' and disrupt the traditional power imbalance between Foundations and the organizations we fund.

Now entering its seventh year, CDF has renewed our support with a five-year commitment that extends funding to 2025. By the end of that funding cycle Righting Relations plans to have an independent governance structure. (Learn more about Righting Relations at [rightingrelations.org](https://rightingrelations.org))



Credit: Righting Relations



# Environment



Prioritizing climate justice mobilizations that focus on communities and voices traditionally excluded from the work of building a new, low-carbon economy

**\$750,237**

**17 organizations**

“The application process has been straightforward and easy to understand. CDF staff has been incredibly helpful in navigating the entire process and as a busy organization, we appreciate that the application itself is split into two parts out of consideration for busy schedules and deadlines.”

Participants of Oskiniwak Askî, Futures for Youth program, VIDEA, Victoria, BC



BUILDING A JUST, GREEN AND EQUITABLE ECONOMY

Responding to the climate crisis in a time of pandemic has emphasized the necessity of addressing equity and justice when seeking solutions.

That’s why we prioritize climate justice mobilizations that focus on communities and voices traditionally excluded from the work of building a new low-carbon economy. It is also why we support initiatives encouraging public opinion to build up emerging ‘just’ industries and economies to generate green jobs.

We hope these efforts will create well-being economies that are sustainable, local and resilient to protect workers’ rights, eradicate poverty, distribute wealth equitably and uphold human rights.

This approach is exemplified by grants provided to Green Jobs Oshawa, in partnership with CSJ Foundation for Research and Education, that link economic restructuring, the environment and employment by converting closed manufacturing facilities to socially useful production, and the Local Power campaign in British Columbia, a project of Dogwood and the Institute for New Economics, which is working with First Nations to build community-driven, clean electricity solutions.

The Catherine Donnelly Foundation prioritizes work with communities of Black, Indigenous and Peoples of Colour to reduce barriers to their participation in the green economy. Among our 2021 grant partners are Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario’s BIPOC Farmer Network which aims to support Black, Indigenous and farmers of Colour through knowledge sharing and the launch of a coalition of stakeholders to improve land access for BIPOC farmers.

ECOJUSTICE; GUARANTEE EVERY CANADIAN’S RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

For ten years CDF has funded Ecojustice in their work to establish environmental rights as part of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms – a legal strategy that could guarantee every Canadian’s right to a healthy environment.

In 2021, those joint efforts were specifically recognized by Canada’s federal Minister of the Environment when he unveiled important legislation to better protect our land, water and air. As our partnership with Ecojustice winds down we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their work and recall their many victories.

“There is a direct link between our youth climate victory and the Catherine Donnelly Foundation’s support of our vision to have Canada recognize the right to a healthy environment. This case reflects one of the most significant investments in Ecojustice’s history [and] the Foundation was for a time the sole backer of that vision, a circumstance that not only helped financially, but also inspired us and affirmed our commitment.”

Ecojustice lawyer and Executive Director Devon Page

TIMELINE

- 2011** CDF commits \$1.25 million over five years to support Ecojustice’s Right to a Healthy Environment campaign
- 2014** An Ecojustice report and cross-Canada tour promote the constitutional right to a healthy environment
- 2016** Ecojustice supports the introduction of environmental bills of rights in B.C, Nova Scotia and Manitoba
- 2016** CDF provides a second five-year commitment of \$1.25 million
- 2020** Ecojustice and seven young climate activists claim victory in their effort to sue the Government of Ontario for weakening climate targets
- 2021** Federal government tables the Strengthening Environmental Protection for a Healthier Canada Act (Bill C-28) to modernize the Canadian Environmental Protection Act after campaigning by Ecojustice and partners



# Housing and Homelessness

Delivering trust-based philanthropy to eliminate homelessness and provide affordable housing solutions

\$788,865

16 organizations

“I can’t even tell you how incredible it has been to have a Housing Support Worker on staff. The pandemic continues to have a disproportionate negative effect on refugee claimants and non-status migrants, and I really don’t know how we would have been able to serve and advocate for our clients otherwise. So, thank you again for the support of CDF!”

Julie Chamagne, Executive Director, Halifax Refugee Clinic



Habitat for Humanity, Indigenous Youth Trade Skills Training. Credit: Habitat for Humanity Grey Bruce



## MOBILIZING AND ADVOCATING FOR EFFECTIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

The Catherine Donnelly Foundation has a mandate to address systemic barriers while eliminating homelessness and creating sustainable and affordable housing solutions. Canada’s ongoing housing supply crisis in our cities as well as rural and remote communities adds urgency to this mission

When COVID-19 arrived, we listened when partners said they needed flexibility in how and when programs were delivered. Placing honesty and trust at the centre of our relationships helps our partners build more of the systemic change we both seek. One Vancouver organization, who is in the midst of a multi-year grant, asked for and received an advance on 2021 funds to cover a budget shortfall due to cash flow issues related to the pandemic.

The Foundation has worked with Vancouver-based Shareholder Association for Research and Education (SHARE) since 2010 and is pleased to deepen that relationship by funding Investors for Affordable Cities, which is delivered with the Columbia Institute. The project encourages institutional investors to implement responsible real estate strategies and enlist policy makers to stop predatory behavior and promote housing investment that supports inclusive communities.

We are particularly pleased that a number of the projects support innovative financial solutions that promote affordable housing. A grant to Winnipeg’s Jubilee Fund will assist in their work offering bridge financing to housing projects who can’t access traditional support, while funds for The Circle Community Land Trust will help them prepare to assume ownership of more than 700 homes currently owned by Toronto Community Housing.

## A WAY HOME CANADA; PREVENTING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS WITH TRANSFORMATIVE SOLUTIONS

Our long-term funding model acknowledges it requires time for bold new ideas to take root. In 2012, CDF committed \$1.25 million over five years to a network that imagined the founding of a national coalition committed to preventing youth homelessness. In 2016, A Way Home Canada was launched.

A Way Home is now a global leader in establishing youth homelessness policy priorities, funding mechanisms and best practices. 2021 was the final year of the Foundation’s ten-year funding commitment, but A Way Home has leveraged CDF’s total investment of \$2.5 million to attract public funding of \$32.7 million. We are proud of our role in growing the organization and of their many achievements.

“The Catherine Donnelly Foundation is more than just a funder. CDF is a strategic partner, working alongside us to create systems change. We wouldn’t be where we are today without their support.”

Melanie Redman, President & CEO, A Way Home

## TIMELINE





# Impact Investing

Aligning our investments with our values to drive social and environmental progress

Impact investments since 2014:

**\$2.4 million**

**13 investments**

“My call to foundations is, you need to match your charitable purposes with your investing strategy. There’s a lot of capital in foundations in Canada, it’s not as much as the private markets, but it’s still significant and it has the capacity to be nimble and to lead the economy about where to go.”

Jeff Cyr, Chief Executive Officer at Raven Indigenous Capital Partners



Solar Skills Campaign, Iron and Earth. Credit: Iron and Earth



## INVESTING FOR SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS

The Catherine Donnelly Foundation believes how we make use of our endowment is an extension of our mission to transform the lives of those most in need. The Foundation has pledged to invest ten per cent of our assets in impact investments and since 2014 has made, approved, or committed to 13 investments totaling \$2.4 million.

Those impact investments actively seek positive social and or environmental returns delivered with a financial dividend.

Our most recent commitment is a \$250,000 capital investment in Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust for the acquisition of at-risk affordable rental housing in downtown Toronto. The 2021 capital funding enabled the land trust to preserve and protect this important stock of affordable housing for vulnerable tenants, many of whom are at-risk of becoming homeless.

Last year, we invested \$200,000 in the Saint John Community Loan Fund in New Brunswick to assist in building the capacity of an organization that provides community loans ranging from \$50 to \$50,000 to help individuals grow a business or social enterprise, return to work, go to school, or increase the availability of affordable housing or commercial spaces to rejuvenate neighborhoods in Eastern Canada.

The land trust and the loan fund join a portfolio of impact investments that includes Raven Indigenous Impact Fund, the world's first purpose-driven Indigenous venture capital fund providing financing to early-growth Indigenous businesses who otherwise wouldn't have access to capital.

## STAFF

- Claire Barcik .....Executive Director
- Anne Mark .....Director of Programs
- Yousuf Najmee ..... Director of Finance and Investment
- Steve Brearton ..... Communications and Policy Officer
- Cindy Alexander ..... Finance Administrator
- Hamshaa Sivaruban .... Grants and Logistics Coordinator



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS\*

- Anne-Marie Jackson, Toronto, ON (Chair)
- Ayon Shahed, St John's, NL
- Devika Shah, Toronto, ON (Secretary)
- Gladys Yam, Toronto, ON (Treasurer)
- Jean Gove, CSJ, Toronto, ON
- Kelly Holmes, Winnipeg, MB
- Larry Murray, Toronto, ON
- Mary Halder, SOS, Toronto, ON (Honorary Elder)
- Michael Murphy, Saskatoon, SK
- Peter Hough, Berwick, NS (Past Chair)
- Richard Morgan, Peterborough, ON
- Sara Mainville, Toronto, ON
- Sherry Yano, Vancouver, BC
- Sucheta Rajagopal, Toronto, ON

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Adrienne Van Veggel, Oakville, ON
- Gerald Mak, Toronto, ON
- Harry Wilmott, Ajax, ON
- Lindsey Hepburn, Toronto, ON
- Rejwan Karim, Toronto, ON
- Tessa Hebb, Ottawa, ON

\*As of December 31, 2021



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