

Communities Focus Area Webinar

November 28, 2022
2pm EST/11am PST

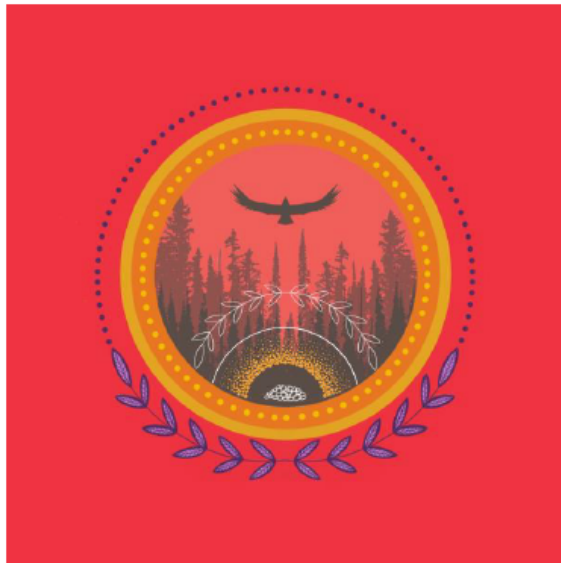
McConnell





Welcome

Land Acknowledgement | Reconnaissance territoriale



Eruoma Awashish

The McConnell Foundation office sits on ancestral and unceded Indigenous territory, a place known as Tiohtiá:ke in Kanien'kéha and Mooniyang in Anishinaabemowin. We recognize that the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation are stewards of the lands and waters of this territory, which has long been a place where meetings and exchanges among nations have occurred.

Les bureaux de la Fondation McConnell sont situés en territoire ancestral autochtone non-cédé, un lieu connu sous le nom de Tiohtiá:ke en Kanien'kéha et Mooniyang en Anishinaabemowin. Nous reconnaissons la Nation Kanien'kehá:ka comme gardienne des terres et des eaux de ce territoire, qui a longtemps été un lieu d'échanges et de rencontres entre diverses nations.



Agenda

1. Welcome & Technical information
2. Communities Focus Area overview
3. Key terms
4. Funding Strategies
 - Collaboration & Collective Action
 - Policy Change
5. What we do not fund
6. Application Process
7. Resources
8. Questions & Answers

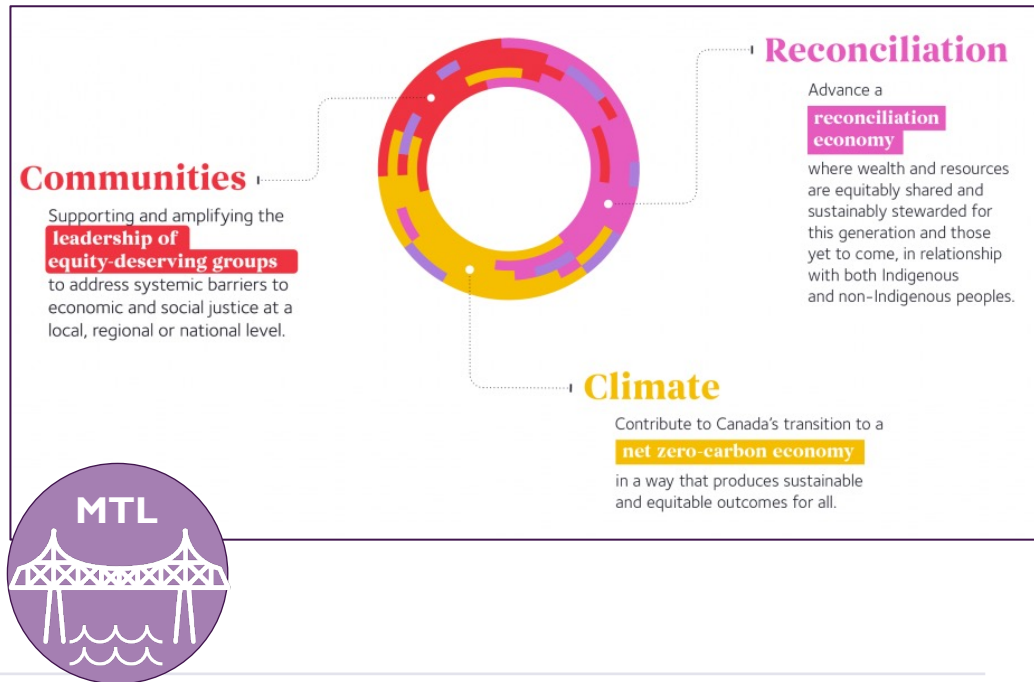
The McConnell Foundation

About the Foundation:

Founded in 1937 by J.W. McConnell, we are a private Canadian foundation that contributes to diverse and innovative approaches to address community resilience, reconciliation, and climate change. We do so through funding and investment partnerships, strengthening capabilities, convening, and collaborating with the public, private and non-profit sectors.

Mission: We strive for a resilient, inclusive and sustainable society that can successfully address its complex challenges.

Our Focus Areas





Communities Focus Area Overview

We want to support and amplify the leadership of equity-deserving groups to address systemic barriers to economic and social justice at a local, regional or national level.

Strategy Development Process:

**Internal funding
and program
review**

Community consultation step 2
(Apr-Aug 2022)

What should McConnell be doing?

**Community consultation
step 1**

(Jan-Apr 2022)

What does the sector need?



Our approach

- Our intention is to support the leadership of communities impacted by systemic barriers.
- Grounded in our experience that communities know what is best for them, our intention is to focus on the “**how**” and the “**who**” and not the “what”.
- This means instead of prioritizing specific issue areas (e.g.: food security or youth), we are prioritizing work that rebalances power to equity-deserving groups and supports community-driven solutions.



What do we mean by.....

Communities

We take a broad view of community:

Any group that shares common needs and goals, whether defined by geography, identity, interest, purpose, practice, or other commonalities.

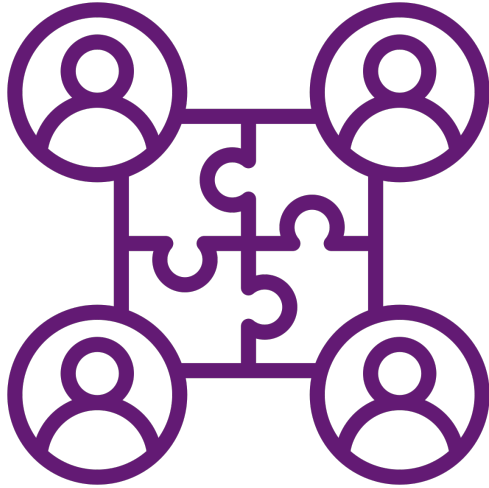
Prioritizing Equity-Deserving Groups

We seek to understand and serve the needs of communities with a priority placed on listening to and responding to the needs of equity-deserving groups. We will prioritize partnering with and strengthening organizations led-by and representing equity-deserving groups that experience significant collective barriers to economic and social justice. These barriers could include attitudinal, historic, social and economic barriers based on age, ethnicity, ability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation and transgender status.

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Funding Strategies

Communities Funding Strategies



**Collaboration &
Collective Action**



Policy Change



Funding Strategy: Collaboration & Collective Action

We want to support organizations led by and serving equity deserving groups to **collaborate and achieve shared outcomes that might otherwise be out of reach**. We seek to work with organizations and collaboratives that have a history of working together to advance a common agenda.

What we want to understand:

- **Impact:** How will the proposed work advance social and economic inclusion, equity and justice? Why are you proposing a collaboration or collective response?
- **Inclusion:** How will your work include individuals or communities that are the intended beneficiaries of the proposed activities?
- **Collaboration:** How are you creating shared outcomes that couldn't be achieved independently? What brought you together? What has changed as a result of your work together?
- **Support:** What support do you and your partners need?



Funding Strategy: Policy Change

We want to support organizations to advance policies or policy changes that favour economic and social justice and reduce barriers for equity-deserving groups. We will support policy change efforts at all stages: from advocacy to engagement, to communication, consultation, priority setting and equitable implementation.

What we want to understand:

- Impact: How will the proposed work advance social and economic inclusion, equity and justice?
- Strategy: Why are you proposing a policy response?
- Inclusion: How will your work include individuals or communities that are the intended beneficiaries of the proposed activities?
- Support: What support do you and your partners need?



What we do not fund

We do not consider requests:

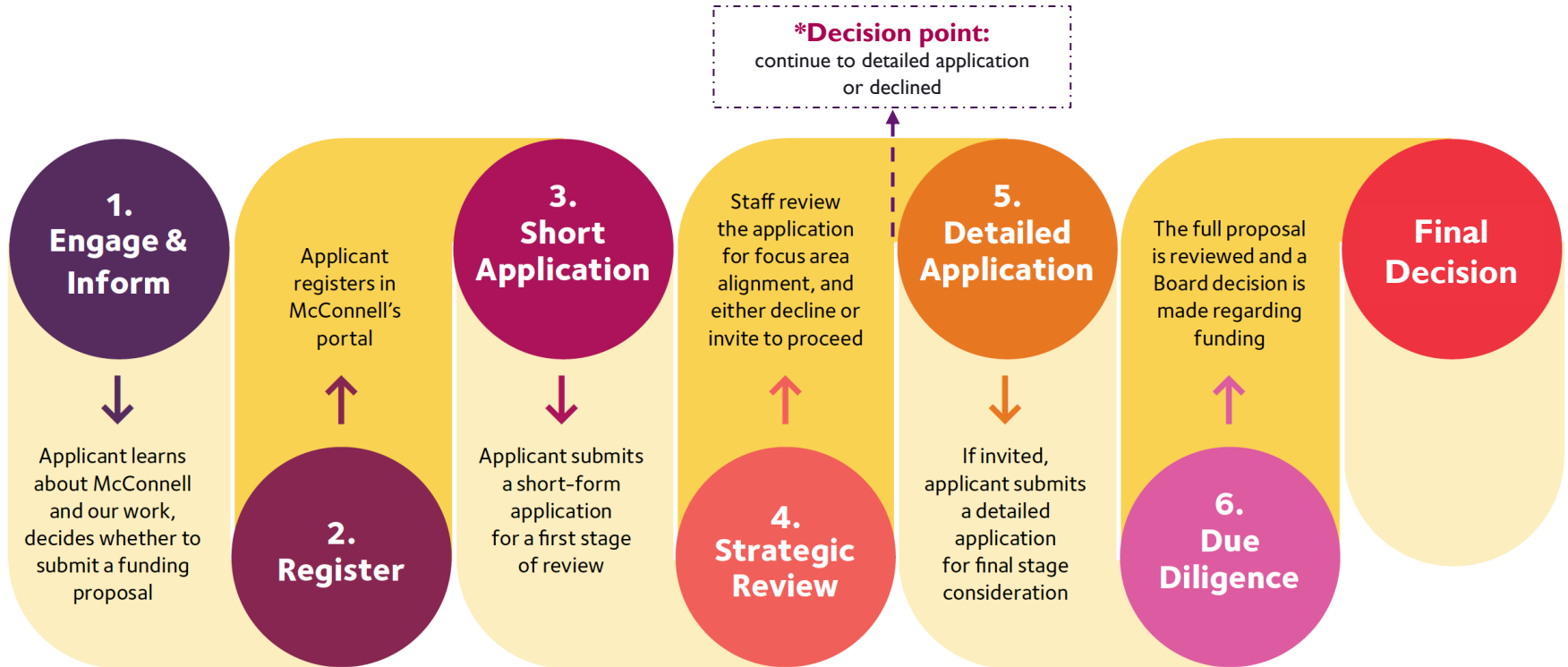
- that are part of a general fundraising campaign
- to reduce accumulated capital or operating deficits
- for endowments
- for annual operating funds or other recurring costs, *unless directly linked to one of our focus areas and the success of the proposed project*
- involving partisan political activities
- involving strictly religious purposes or activities
- for purely academic research
- for organizations or projects outside of Canada
- for international cooperation
- for projects advancing nature-based solutions such as: reforestation and tree planting, nature conservation or biodiversity preservation
- for organizational emergency needs
- **for ongoing delivery of front-line services (e.g. foodbanks, shelters, etc.)**

Generally we do not consider requests:

- in which the primary activity is the production of a podcast, video, or publication (*although they can be part of a larger project or program*)
- in which the primary activity is a conference, workshop, or seminar (*although they can be part of a larger project or program*)
- in which the primary activity involves training, scholarships, or subsidies (*although they can be part of a larger project or program*).

Applying for funding

Thinking of submitting an application?



Application Resources

1



Funding & Partnerships Guide:

This guide provides information on types of funding partnerships, and what guidelines and assessment criteria we apply in reviewing proposals.

2



Sample Application:

Preview the instructions and all of the questions for both stages of the application process.

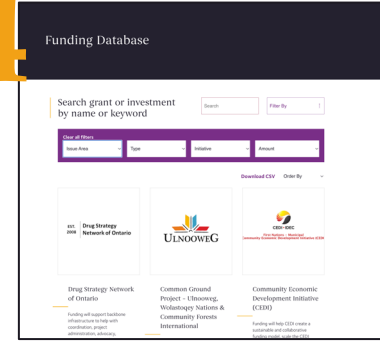
3



Virtual Office Hours:

15-minute office hours are an opportunity to check the eligibility of your project or idea and to explore how it may be a fit with McConnell's Focus Areas. *Note: we do not review or provide feedback on draft applications during these meetings.*

4



Funding database:

The funding database is a repository of McConnell funded projects. It provides information on the organizations and projects supported, amounts funded, and project length.



Q&A

Note: For questions regarding the eligibility of your organization's project and its alignment with the Communities funding strategy, we encourage you read our [Funding and Partnerships Guide](#) and to book an [Office Hours appointment](#).




General Questions About the Communities Focus Area

Question	Answer
What do you mean by equity-deserving groups?	Equity-deserving groups are people that experience significant collective barriers to economic and social justice. These could include attitudinal, historic, social and economic barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation and transgender status.
Are organizations that serve equity-deserving groups eligible for funding? Or must they be led by equity-deserving groups?	Both are eligible, however we will prioritize funding organizations led by members of the equity-deserving communities they serve. All projects should include individuals that represent equity-deserving groups in project decision-making and/or leadership. The make-up of the project and organizational leadership, as well as the organizational governance will be evaluated during due diligence.
How do you define social justice?	<p>We are not experts in the field and for the moment, we will rely on the expertise and experience of our partners to define what social justice means to them. For the purposes of our strategy, we aim to support work that enhances equity for communities facing systemic barriers or injustices.</p> <p>Coming from a place of power and privilege, we acknowledge that we have much to learn and we look forward to refining both our understanding and our approach as we roll out the Communities strategy.</p>
What do you mean by supporting shifts in power?	This is in reference to both our internal practice and external impact. Internally, we will work to de-centre our own requirements and processes and looking for ways to be more accountable to our partners. With regards to external impact, we hope to contribute to work that enhances the agency of people most impacted by systemic barriers.



General Questions About the Communities Focus Area

Question	Answer
Are local projects eligible?	Yes, local projects are eligible for funding. However, as a pan-Canadian funder, we look to fund work that can be applied to other places across the country and/or tackles the root causes of complex problems.
Will you fund local government offices if the proposed work aligns with the Communities funding strategies?	No, we do not fund government work.
Is partnership with multiple organizations a requirement for both funding streams?	No. We only require partnerships for the Collaboration and Collective Action funding stream. However, we do review how your organization partners to achieve your intended impact as part of our assessment process.
How do you assess community need?	We trust that organizations working on the ground have the best understanding of the need, and we may focus more at looking at an organization's capacity and how the proposed project will address the need. As part of the due diligence process, we would also do some background research to better understand issue areas where we have less information or expertise.





Questions About the Collaboration & Collective Action Funding Stream

Question	Answer
How long must organizations have worked together to receive funding? Will you support new partnerships?	There isn't a set requirement for the duration of a partnership. The key component of the collaboration strategy is that we would like to support organizations to collaborate and achieve shared outcomes that might otherwise be out of reach.
Do all of the partnering organizations applying for Collaboration and Collective Action funding need to be led by equity-deserving groups?	No, not all the partnering organizations need to be led by equity-deserving groups, but the work would need to be community-driven.
Do all of the organizations participating in the project need to submit an application together, or should one organization submit on behalf of the collective?	One organization should submit the proposal on behalf of the collective.

Questions About the Collaboration & Collective Action Funding Stream

Question	Answer
How formalized to partnerships need to be?	We do not require documentation or formalized agreements (contracts, memorandums of understanding, etc.) to consider an application under the Collaboration and Collective Action stream. However, in the due diligence process we will want to understand the history of working together and why you are currently looking to increase the impact of the work you are doing together. And if there are formalized agreements in place, this is helpful for us to know.
How many organizations need to partner to be considered eligible?	There isn't a set number of organizations required. Overall, the key emphasis of the Collaboration & Collective action strategy is about achieving something together between partners, a shared outcome to support a community need that would not otherwise be accomplished.
Can partnerships include public entities (i.e., governments and hospitals)?	Yes. Partnerships can be comprised of multiple organization types, including charities, non-qualified donees, as well as public and private entities such as governments, hospitals and private sector organizations. However, the work and leadership need to be community-driven.

Questions About the Policy Change Funding Stream

Question	Answer
Changing policy is complex and can take a long time. How do you evaluate if a policy response is eligible?	There is an expectation of a plan to do work that will affect policy in a positive direction, however, we understand that external factors can influence the outcome of a project.
Do applications under the policy change funding stream need to be partnership-based?	No. We only require partnerships or collaborations for the Collaboration and Collective Action funding stream. However, we do evaluate how your organization partners with others to achieve your intended impact as a general part of our evaluation process.
Will you fund community advocacy?	We will consider applications that fund advocacy that works towards removing barriers affecting equity deserving groups.
What do you mean by “Policy”? Will you prioritize “public policy”?	We are open to all policy work. This includes public policy at local, municipal, provincial/territorial or national levels. We are also open to work on policies connected to organizations or associations that have a social, cultural or economic impact on communities facing systemic barriers. We will generally not fund organizations to work on their own policies (eg developing an EDIA policy).



General Questions about Eligibility & Funding Processes

Question	Answer
Do you partner with grassroots organizations and non-profits (non-qualified donees)? Do you only fund entities with a legal status (i.e. charities and non-profits)? Will you also fund individuals/groups and movements?	We use several types of agreements to disburse funds – including partnering with charities, entering agreements with charitable fiduciaries, or agreements with non-qualified donees (NQDs). To partner with an NQD, we usually sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a Contract for Services/Letter of Agreement that can be issued if the donee is aligned with the objectives of the Foundation and is well-suited to carry out the activities. This is done in accordance with CRA guidelines. We do not fund individuals or non-incorporated groups. Learn more in our Funding and Partnerships Guide.
We have more than one project that might align with your focus areas. Can we apply for multiple projects?	We very rarely fund multiple projects from the same organization. Please submit an application for the project that most closely aligns with the Foundation's focus areas and funding streams.
Do you fund research that supports equity-deserving groups to solve challenges?	Generally, we do not fund research projects. However, every project is different and context matters. We encourage organizations considering applying for research funding to book an office hours appointment before submitting an application.
Do you have application deadlines?	There are no application deadlines. We review applications on an ongoing basis. Application deadlines are used only when the Foundation requests proposals for specific projects. In this case, we'll list the application deadline on our website.



General Questions about Eligibility & Funding Processes

Question	Answer
Can post-secondary institutions apply for funding under the Communities focus area, or any other funding stream?	We have recently updated our guidelines for post-secondary institutions that wish to apply for funding. Through our new focus areas of climate, reconciliation and communities, we aim to engage directly with communities and, as a result, to target our support primarily towards community-led organizations. However, in certain circumstances, funding an academic partner may be necessary to achieve community objectives. You can learn more about the specific eligibility requirements in our Funding & Partnership Guide .
How long does the application and due diligence process normally take?	<p>Proposals are submitted in two phases: 1) a preliminary application containing five questions about your work and three budget questions and, if approved, 2) a detailed application form with questions related to your selected focus area. In general, applicants will be notified regarding their eligibility for a Phase 2 application within a month.</p> <p>The complete review process, from application to approval, can be up to four – six months. Sometimes a proposed project might benefit from being linked with other partners, complementary projects or investment strategies. In these cases the process can take considerably longer.</p>
Does the Foundation fund ongoing services, or must we apply for a specific program or project?	We do not typically fund ongoing services. We encourage organizations to apply for specific programs or projects that align with our focus areas.



General Questions about Eligibility & Funding Processes

Question	Answer
What is the typical length and size of funding for McConnell's funding partnerships?	<p>Funding partnerships typically range from two to five years. Generally, multi-year funding of around \$200K-300K is considered a modest partnership, \$500K- \$600K is a medium partnership, and \$800K+ is considered a larger partnership.</p> <p>Please refer to our Funding & Partnership Guide for more information. You may also see a list of recent partnerships in our funding database.</p>
Does McConnell fund projects outside of Canada?	<p>No. The McConnell Foundation only funds work in Canada.</p>
Do you fund administrative costs?	<p>The McConnell Foundation expects administrative costs to be part of every proposal we receive. We do not have fixed percentages for administration or maximum allowable core or operating costs.</p> <p>Every project is different. Context matters and an organization's staff are best placed to build the budget that best serves their initiative. Operating costs or other recurring costs (e.g., staffing, overhead, IT and digital tools) are eligible if they are directly linked to the success of a project that falls within our focus areas.</p>
If our application is refused, can we book office hours to discuss why?	<p>Given the volume of proposals and applications that come through, staff won't be able to meet to discuss all declined proposals over calls, but may make time for applications that have gone through due diligence (i.e., Stage 2 applications). We also don't offer individual coaching on writing proposals/ review them for edits to ensure that we are being equitable in the process.</p>

General Questions about Eligibility & Funding Processes

Question	Answer
Do you fund strategic planning or capacity-building for charities and non-profits?	We encourage organizations seeking capacity-building support to reach out to our partner Innoweave. Innoweave provides coaching support to help organizations learn about and implement new ways of working with the goal of enhancing their impact. Learn more about Innoweave's offering here: https://innoweave.ca/
If my organization has already received funding, can we resubmit for additional funding?	Funding is generally granted to specific projects rather than broadly to an organization. Given that the Foundation only renews funding on an exceptional basis, we encourage partners to diversify their funding, or plan carefully for project termination, from the beginning of a particular project or initiative.

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Thank you!