

## For immediate release

### **\$1.1 million Fund to Address Needs of Vulnerable English-speaking Youth and Seniors**

**Montreal – November 12, 2019** – Quebec’s English-speaking youth and seniors will benefit from \$1.1 million to learn new skills, find jobs, and fight isolation thanks to the renewal of the Community Innovation Fund (CIF). This second round of financing will help community organizations across the province pilot socially innovative projects supporting youth and seniors between 2020 and 2023.

“The first round of CIF funding, which ran from 2016 to 2019, injected a total of \$1 million into 10 innovative projects that truly transformed the lives of many individual English-speaking Quebecers,” said John Buck, Project Advisory Committee Chair and CEO of the Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (CEDEC). “Targeting the particular priorities of our community’s youth, seniors, and caregivers as well as newcomers, the Fund empowered community groups to tackle pressing social issues more effectively.”

“Thanks to those investments, almost 2,000 vulnerable seniors, youth and newcomers benefited from new, hands-on services that helped them find jobs, fight isolation, or learn new skills,” said QCGN President Geoffrey Chambers. “By this measure alone, the Fund generated a tremendous return. Furthermore, a core goal of the Community Innovation Fund – that all these projects be sustained into the future – was realized.”

The Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) “is thrilled that a second round of Community Innovation Fund assistance will address the ongoing challenges that diminish the vitality of our most vulnerable English-speaking seniors and youth, both in our urban centres and our regions,” added Sylvia Martin-Laforge, QCGN Director General. “The pilot projects funded during the first round of CIF have demonstrated that with a little financial help, short term social initiatives can get off the ground and provide sustainable projects to improve the vitality of English-speaking minority communities across Quebec.”

“We hope this fresh round of CIF funding will significantly enhance educational and practical opportunities for our younger generation – enabling and encouraging more of us to remain in our native province and regions, thus strengthening the vitality of our minority English-speaking communities for the years to come,” added Chad Bean. At 24, he is QCGN’s youngest board member.

“We also look forward to employability initiatives to directly address the unique challenges facing unemployed and underemployed English-speaking seniors,” said Walter Duszara of Seniors Action Quebec. “Mature workers already must surmount greater barriers to finding gainful and appropriate employment. Add language barriers to this already challenging equation – and the requirement for us to develop and furnish additional tools and training becomes unmistakable.”

First-round recipients of CIF funding included The Depot Community Food Centre, Youth Employment Services (YES), Park-Extension Youth Organization (PEYO), Coasters Association, Phelps Helps, the Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders (CAMI), DESTA Black Youth Network, NDG Seniors Citizen’s Council, New Hope Senior Citizen’s Centre, and Voice of English-speaking Québec (VEQ). Their success stories are documented at <https://qcgnc.ca/community-innovation-fund-2019/>.

Recipient organizations of the “CIF 2.0” will be eligible for 12, 24, or 36 months of project funding. Sustainability is a key objective of the program. Organizations will have flexibility to respond to opportunities and challenges while cultivating the partnerships necessary for long term success.

The deadline for project applications is **January 15**. Funded projects will be launched next April.

Applications for funding as well as the guidelines and information governing project eligibility can be found on the QCGN website at [qcgnc.ca/community-innovation-fund-2019/](https://qcgnc.ca/community-innovation-fund-2019/).

The Community Innovation Fund is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program - Children and Families Component. It is part of Canada’s Action Plan for Official Languages – 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future. The fund is managed by the Quebec Community Groups Network.

The Quebec Community Groups Network (qcgnc.ca) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together English-language community organizations across Quebec. As a centre of evidence-based expertise and collective action, it identifies, explores and addresses strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec and encourages dialogue and collaboration among its member organizations, individuals, community groups, institutions and leaders.

**Source:**

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