

For immediate release

10 Innovative Projects to Assist Vulnerable English-speaking Youth and Seniors

Montreal – July 3, 2020 – As the economic recovery from COVID-19 begins, the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) has announced 10 innovative projects that will help vulnerable English-speaking youth and seniors find employment and fight isolation. A total of \$1.1 million of fresh funding has been committed, via the renewal of the Community Innovation Fund (CIF) financed through the Government of Canada and managed by the QCGN.

“With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the QCGN has been adapting to an ever-changing environment while maintaining services and continuity for our members and CIF recipients,” said QCGN Director General Sylvia Martin-Laforge. “Most of our selected organizations were forced to close their doors in mid-March to slow the spread of novel coronavirus. They pivoted their programming and services to address the immediate needs of their clientele.”

“With the support of the CIF Advisory and Selection Committees as well as officials at funder Employment and Social Development Canada, the QCGN promptly developed and adopted a flexible and adaptive response plan,” added Martin-Laforge.

As the pandemic evolved, CIF Project Manager Bonnie Zehavi worked closely with recipient organizations to assist them in making necessary adjustments to respond and adapt to the emerging and ongoing challenges that COVID-19 presents.

The organizations selected to share in the \$1.1 million funding are: [Camp Weredale](#), the [Committee for Anglophone Social Action](#) (CASA), the [Côte-des-Neiges Black Community Association](#) (CDNBCA), [DESTA Black Youth Network](#), [Gay and Grey Montreal](#), the [Museum of Jewish Montreal](#), the [Press Start](#) Youth Coop, [Project 10](#), [Suspicious Fish](#), and [The Depot](#). (Full details for each project are posted on the [CIF page](#) of the QCGN website.)

“During these particularly difficult economic circumstances, these 10 outstanding projects will improve employability, help advance basic socioeconomic security, and reduce isolation for vulnerable youth and seniors across Quebec’s English-language communities,” said John Buck. He is CIF Project Advisory Committee Chair as well as CEO of the Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (CEDEC).

“Sustainability is a core objective of the CIF program,” Buck explained: “Over and above the funding these community groups will receive, CIF will empower them through knowledge-sharing activities. Our focus is on providing these organizations with the skills needed to build collaborative, enduring, and

productive partnerships across the non-profit and private sectors. We embrace this approach as essential for long term success. Simultaneously, it enhances the social impact of our CIF projects as they strengthen the vitality of our communities.”

“I was particularly impressed with the thoughtful two-step selection process and the equity framework that guided our review of the applications,” said Jillian Witt, a member of the independent selection committee that chose the recipient organizations: "It was quite a challenge to narrow down to our final 10. But the process and the outcome proved remarkably successful. We are very excited to see what these organizations will accomplish with this CIF support.”

Witt is Community Engagement Lead for The Philanthropist, a journal focused on the non-profit sector in Canada. She is also Strategic Implementation Lead for Openly, a strategy, research and design firm committed to elevating the impact of social change makers. The other CIF Selection Committee members were: Xiomara Sandino, Credit and Operations Advisor at Microcrédit Montréal; Karine-Myrghanie Jean-François, Director of Operations and Projects at the DisAbled Women's Network of Canada; Chad Lubelsky, Program Director at the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation; and Dave McKenzie, Founder and Coordinator of the Community Service Initiative at John Molson School of Business.

Recipient organizations have been committed 12, 24, or 36 months of project funding, for disbursement between 2020 and 2023. Details are included with the list of recipients and project descriptions. The success stories achieved by our first-round CIF recipients are documented [here](#).

The Community Innovation Fund is financed through the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program - Children and Families Component. This is, in turn, an important component of Canada's Action Plan for Official Languages – 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future.

Management and administration of the CIF is the responsibility of the Quebec Community Groups Network.

The Quebec Community Groups Network (qcgn.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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