

Call for Proposals for LEVEL Grants

Advancing Racial Equity in the Charitable Non-Profit Sector

Vancouver Foundation is pleased to announce the availability of 2019 Youth Granting under our LEVEL initiative. This new initiative seeks to level the playing field by empowering young Indigenous and racialized immigrant and refugee leaders to amplify their voices in matters important to them and to bring new ideas and fresh perspectives to shape policy and systems.

[LEVEL Youth Granting](#) will allow charities and other qualified donees across the province to engage Indigenous and racialized immigrant and refugee young people in staff leadership and board governance.

The deadline for Letters of Intent is August 9th, 2019.

Background

Through our work in Fostering Change and Fresh Voices, Vancouver Foundation has learned that our fastest growing youth populations—Indigenous, immigrant, and refugee youth and young adults—face disproportionate barriers to influencing change within our social, civic and public systems. They have far fewer opportunities to access the kind of support that would allow them to advocate for public policy change, participate in civic engagement activities, and/or become leaders in the non-profit sector.

The LEVEL Initiative will build on these learnings and address the racial inequity experienced by Indigenous, immigrant, and refugee youth and young adults by investing in their leadership capacity and supporting their future work on issues that affect them.

Our Approach

The LEVEL initiative consists of three strategic pillars:

LEVEL Youth Public Policy Program: Investing in the capacity of young people to understand and influence policy change

The LEVEL Youth Policy Program (YPP) brings together young people between the ages of 19 and 29 from across British Columbia who identify as being Indigenous or racialized immigrants or refugees, to provide equitable training and leadership opportunities to navigate the public policy landscape, and develop new tools and skills to influence, shape, and advocate for policy changes that are relevant in their own communities.

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LEVEL Youth Organizing: Investing in the capacity and civic engagement of grassroots youth groups

The LEVEL Youth Organizing pillar is a response to the need of a robust youth social infrastructure. A deepened commitment and investment in youth social infrastructure requires strategic funder leadership and partnerships; sustainable support and working collaboratively with grassroots groups of young people, particularly young people of colour, to increase access to civic engagement opportunities and invest in their community mobilizing efforts to affect systemic change on issues of equity and justice. More details to emerge in late 2019/early 2020.

LEVEL Youth Granting: Investing in the capacity of the charitable non-profit sector to engage youth in staff and board governance leadership

LEVEL's granting stream is available to charities and other qualified donees across British Columbia to engage Indigenous and racialized immigrant and refugee young people in pathways to staff leadership and board governance.

We will consider two types of requests:

1) Develop Grants (up to \$10,000)

These are short-term grants that generate ideas and build capacity and common ground for shared action and learning by community stakeholders. Grants may support work such as determining organizational readiness or convening stakeholders as a cohort (geographic region, sector-specific i.e. the arts; social services) in development of practice and/or policy changes. For example, organizations could explore what decolonizing their board structure or recruitment and retention strategies might look like. Activities are typically completed within six months. We encourage organizations to work together through a cohort model that is place or sector based. Matching funds are not required for this grant application.

2) Test Grants (up to \$50,000)

These grants help project teams test ideas and learn what works. Grants may support work such as piloting an initiative at the staff or board level. For example, a board mentorship program could be used to recruit young leaders as board members or funds could go towards addressing current inequities by increasing job security for Indigenous or racialized immigrant or refugee young adults (through paying a living wage, providing benefits, full-time employment, etc.). Activities are typically completed within 12–18 months. Applicants can request up to 75% of their project's overall costs, showing 25% funding from other sources, be it cash or in-kind.

Assessment Criteria

Assessment criteria for applications will include:

- **Meaningful Youth Engagement:** To the greatest extent possible, young people affected by the initiative must be involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the project.
- **Builds on Community Assets:** Projects should use, enhance, or expand the skills, capacities, and assets of existing local organizations and their communities.
- **Organizational Stability:** The applicant organization must demonstrate fiscal responsibility and effective management, as well as commitment to the project through a meaningful contribution of human and/or financial resources.
- **Evidence-Informed Practice:** Proposals should describe practice informed by both existing evidence (“what we know to be true”) as well as interest in collective gaps in knowledge (“what we don’t know”).
- **A Commitment to Structural and Systemic Change:** Proposals should demonstrate a willingness to rethink current policies and practices and address the root causes of the barriers that Indigenous, immigrant, and refugee youth face within the non-profit and charitable sectors.
- **Intercultural Fluency:** The applicant organization should demonstrate culturally responsive and appropriate principles, practices, and policies in working alongside diverse cultural communities or a willingness to develop them as a result of this project. This may be expressed through governance, employee hiring and retention, community engagement and partnership, development strategies, among others. When supporting Indigenous young people, organizations should work with relevant First Nations, Metis and/or urban Indigenous community partners.

Definitions

For the purpose of this call for proposals, the following definitions will be used:

Racialized

We recognize race as a social construct, not a biological one. We understand racialized immigrants and refugees as belonging to a “racial minority”, “visible minority” or as seen as “people of colour” or “non-white” ([adapted from OHRC](#)).

Racial Equity

Racial equity is both an outcome and a process. As an outcome, racial equity is achieved when racial identity no longer determines one’s life trajectory, experiences, and socioeconomic

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outcomes. It includes the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce and perpetuate differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them. It also includes the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures. As a process, racial equity is applied when those most impacted by structural racial inequity are meaningfully involved in the creation and implementation of the policies and practices that impact their lives (Adapted from the Centre for Social Inclusion and the Centre for Assessment and Policy Development).

Youth

Based on our previous youth engagement experience, for the purposes of this initiative youth and young adults will be defined as those between the ages of 18–29.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include registered charities and [qualified donees](#) under the Income Tax Act as well as some First Nations bands that may be considered a public body performing a function of a government body. All these organizations must demonstrate fiscal responsibility and effective management. Grants are not made to individuals or to businesses.

LEVEL Youth Granting does not fund:

- Projects that take place primarily outside of BC
- An organization's core operational expenses
- Project expenses that have been incurred prior to the application date or that we feel should be covered by other funding sources
- Event sponsorships
- Bridge funding, debt retirement, reserves, or mortgage pay-downs
- Endowment matching grants
- Capital and public infrastructure projects (e.g. libraries, schools, health care facilities)
- Travel to and/or attendance at conferences, competitions, symposia, or annual events
- Bursaries, scholarships, and awards

Application Process

Vancouver Foundation has a two-stage online application process.

Stage 1: Letter of Intent

The Letter Intent consists of a brief proposal to determine basic suitability. **The deadline for the 2019 Youth Granting is August 9th, 2019.**

Once a fit has been established by Vancouver Foundation staff, a short-list of organizations will be invited to submit a full proposal due September 23rd, 2019.

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Stage 2: Full Proposal Application

Applications will be selected for funding after being reviewed by a volunteer Advisory Committee, whose membership offers depth of community knowledge and experience.

Vancouver Foundation has a conflict of interest policy for advisory committee review, which is available upon request, and will be followed in the event that one or more of the organizations with which Advisory Committee members are affiliated submits a proposal.

In this granting cycle, Vancouver Foundation's LEVEL Advisory Committee will invest a total of approximately \$500,000.

Applicants who are invited forward to Stage 2 to submit a full proposal will be notified of funding decisions by early December 2019.

Contact

For more information about the 2019 Youth Granting, please contact:

Abeer Yusuf, Grants Coordinator

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604.630.5021

Contact Abeer for information about the application process, or to discuss the priorities of racial equity and youth engagement and/or general funding policies of the LEVEL youth granting.

Joey Cheung, Grant Administrator

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604.688.2204

Contact Joey if you have questions about or need help with our online application system, or if you are a current grantee and have general questions regarding payments and reporting requirements.