



## **Forever Funds Background and Grant Information**

### **Why the Forever Funds?**

To celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to address vital emerging issues and needs in Calgary and area, The Calgary Foundation has established five new Field of Interest funds, collectively called The Forever Funds.

The Forever Funds will address future needs in the sectors of Environment, Arts and Heritage, Seniors, Diversity and Inclusion, and Mental Health.

### **What prompted The Calgary Foundation to undertake this initiative?**

Through five decades of granting to charities in all parts of the charitable sector in Calgary and area, The Calgary Foundation observed the need for these new Field of Interest Funds to support particular issues that require increased leadership and funding. The five Forever Funds will add to more than 60 other Field of Interest Funds that are the primary financial resource for the Foundation's Community and Neighbourhood Grants programs, both of which promote a vibrant Calgary future.

### **How will the Forever Funds be used to make an impact?**

Through the Forever Funds, the Foundation will increase its capacity to make proactive and responsive grants across these five important issue areas. Granting through the Forever Funds will have two main objectives:

- to identify and support a signature project – a significant project of permanence that makes a lasting impact on the community
- identify and support projects that provide innovative solutions to sector wide issues, that engage more Calgarians in community activities and that strengthen our charities

The Calgary Foundation is continually improving its range of granting programs, and as the Forever Funds grow, there may be new granting programs in place designed exclusively for the Forever Funds. However, at this time grants from the Forever Funds will be made through The Calgary Foundation's existing Community Grants program. Also for the future, in addition to responding to applications from registered charities in Calgary and area, The Calgary Foundation intends to make periodic proactive grants from the Forever Funds to promote broad community initiatives.

## Calgary Foundation Forever Fund for Seniors

### Fund Purpose

The Seniors Fund supports projects and activities that benefit seniors in Calgary and area

### The Need for a Seniors Fund

- The seniors population is growing at a faster rate than the general population. Currently seniors comprise 10% of our population, and by 2016 there will be an estimated 492,800 seniors in Alberta, comprising 14% of the total population. By 2026, Albertans age 65 or older will comprise one in five of the population
- In 2001, approximately 18% of the total Alberta immigrant population was comprised of seniors, and 44% of seniors reported that they had a disability, that is, their everyday activities were limited because of a health related condition or problem
- The generation approaching their senior years may have needs and expectations different from previous generations, expecting to continue to use their skills and knowledge and have active roles in the community

### Grants from the Seniors Fund

Grants from this fund will support initiatives that focus on connecting and reconnecting seniors to their various communities. Examples of our grantmaking initiatives include:

- “Snow and mow” projects that help seniors stay in their own homes, often through engaging youth and other community members with seniors
- Cooperative projects such as Senior Connect, which enlists the help of letter carriers and others whose work brings them into ongoing contact with seniors in their homes – to watch out for vulnerable seniors and to notify appropriate authorities if something seems wrong at the senior’s home
- Projects that acknowledge seniors as keepers of knowledge and history from whom succeeding generations can learn
- A range of grants to different charities that work with seniors to counteract and reduce isolation, to help seniors become more computer literate, to support seniors’ theatre groups that provide ongoing opportunities to connect and contribute, or to support projects that enable seniors to learn, enjoy themselves, to increase opportunities for social interaction and improve their overall quality of life

## **Calgary Foundation Forever Fund for Mental Health**

### **Fund Purpose**

The Mental Health Fund supports projects and activities that study, research or treat mental, nervous and emotional disorders

### **The Need for a Mental Health Fund**

The personal and economic costs of mental illness are staggering.

- One in five Canadians will suffer from a mental illness in their lifetime. Six hundred thousand of them will be from Alberta
- In 2000, up to sixty percent of Calgary's homeless suffered from mental illness or substance abuse
- Twenty percent of the population is addicted to drugs or alcohol
- One in five children are dealing with a mental health problem; one in ten Canadians suffers from depression or bipolar disorder; one in one hundred Canadians will develop schizophrenia
- More than 4000 Canadians die by suicide each year, and over 450 of these people will be from Alberta. Suicide is second only to accidents as a cause of death for people under 35 years
- The economic cost of mental illness in Canada is estimated to be more than \$14 billion annually, second only to cancer

### **Grants from the Mental Health Fund**

Grants from this fund will support initiatives that improve social interaction for mental health consumers and improve public awareness of mental health issues. Examples of our grantmaking initiatives include:

- Programs for current mental health consumers to address issues of employment access, housing, and general wellness
- Public awareness and education programs geared to the general public, family members, and workplaces
- Programs focused on suicide information and prevention
- Other projects to reduce the stigma associated with mental health

## **Calgary Foundation Forever Fund for the Environment**

### **Fund Purpose**

The Environment Fund supports projects that protect, preserve, enhance or restore the physical environment. This includes projects that protect or enhance the land, wildlife, natural flora, waterways, water quality and air quality.

### **The Need for an Environment Fund**

Calgary has a give-and-take relationship to the prairie, foothills, and mountains that surround our city. While Calgarians depend on this magnificent ecosystem for our water supply, agriculture, recreational opportunities and more, as primary users we also have enormous impact upon the overall health of this environment. Calgary must engage its huge population base in the stewardship of this delicate and complex environment, both up- and downstream. High quality water supply, clean air and outstanding recreation opportunities cannot be taken for granted.

An October 2004 study undertaken by Alberta Ecotrust identified Alberta's priority environmental issues as Water (quantity and quality), Wilderness and Wildlife Protection, Climate Change, and Urban Land Management. A few facts that illustrate the need to address these issues include:

- In the last 40 years the habitat of Alberta's wolves, elk and grizzly bears has declined substantially due to human interests
- Since settlement began in Alberta, our wetlands have been slowly disappearing. It is vital to support these fertile, productive ecosystems
- Aquatic ecosystems are very susceptible to small changes in water quality and quantity. It is estimated that 80% of Alberta's wildlife use these systems for all or some of their life cycle requirements

### **Grants from the Environment Fund**

Grants from this fund will support a range of projects and initiatives to protect our environment, including:

- Public awareness and education initiatives and solutions to help individuals and organizations steward our diminishing wild and semi-wild areas
- Projects that further the message to protect and nurture our wild and urban ecosystems; however, the more significant challenge is to institute action and solutions for positive change by individuals and groups
- Assistance to help environmental and other organizations to work together to reach common goals to protect our healthy ecosystems

## **Calgary Foundation Forever Fund for Arts and Heritage**

### **Fund Purpose**

The Arts and Heritage Fund supports projects and activities that celebrate the creativity and history of Calgary and area people and organizations.

### **The Need for an Arts and Heritage Fund**

Provincial studies tell us that almost 90% of Albertans feel the arts are important in contributing to the overall quality of life in their communities, and that almost 70% of Albertans consider themselves supporters of the arts. They also feel that government should continue to fund the arts; however, the arts will in all likelihood continue to be chronically under-funded by governments at all levels.

This under-funding of the arts will have important consequences for our city. Alberta students will not have as much exposure to the arts as students in other parts of the country. Research has shown that arts and cultural programs have a positive impact on a community's citizens through enhancing identity and social cohesion, which is an area we will also lag in with inadequate arts funding.

Finally, much research is proving that a link exists between the cultural reputation of cities and their ability to attract and retain skilled workers and industries.

### **Grants from the Arts and Heritage Fund**

Grants from this fund will support initiatives that explore and celebrate our history and culture including:

- To encourage individual and collective reflection on the roots of our community and where we are headed
- To strengthen the core capacity of arts organizations to create, produce, and present in Calgary and area, particularly on themes about Calgary and area
- To preserve, document, and raise awareness of historically important events, people, and places
- To increase access to the arts

## **Calgary Foundation Forever Fund for Diversity and Inclusion**

### **Fund Purpose**

The Diversity and Inclusion Fund assists Calgary and area to promote and benefit from the diversity of its people and communities.

### **The Need for a Diversity and Inclusion Fund**

Calgary's population is changing rapidly and will continue to do so.

- Alberta has the highest migration and immigration rates in Canada.
- The 2001 census lists the visible minority population in Calgary as 17.5%, and Aboriginal Calgarians as 2.5%
- Many youth and seniors do not speak one of Canada's two official languages, which significantly impacts education, workplace integration, social and recreational opportunities. Within the context of Alberta's diverse settlement history, official language policies that focus on English and French create huge gaps.

Diversity in Calgary touches not only ethnic or cultural differences, but also focuses on gender, age, physical or mental challenges, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, and much more. Diversity Calgary states that "In a broad sense, diversity is about all the ways that people are different and ensuring that people are valued and respected both for and despite their differences."

### **Grants from the Diversity and Inclusion Fund**

Grants from this fund will support initiatives that give all Calgarians the opportunity to participate fully, both as contributors to and beneficiaries of the Canadian society. Grants for the next several years will focus on Calgary's changing cultures and on increased participation opportunities for the disabled.

- For recent immigrants, examples include grants to eliminate barriers to full participation including training in English as a Second Language, assisting immigrants to have internationally earned credentials recognized in Canada, and helping them gain work experience in a Canadian setting
- Helping our social institutions to be more responsive to the growing diversity of our population
- Inclusion projects to help everyone understand how we are alike as human beings and what binds us together