

**HAMILTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
DECLARATION OF ACTION ON TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION**

**Preamble**

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Final Report (2015)<sup>i</sup> affirms that colonialism remains an ongoing process in Canada. Canada has, and continues to, perpetrate harm and violence against Indigenous people through historical and contemporary policies attempting to eliminate and assimilate Indigenous people from/into white settler culture and society, particularly through the Indian Act and the legacy of Canada's residential school system. Colonialism is not a singular event in the past, but a process that persists and continues to (re)traumatize and oppress Indigenous people, including through Canada's child protection practices and systemic racism that denies Indigenous people access to health care, education, a safe and healthy environment, basic needs, safety, and self-determination. Further, Canadian settler-colonialism has specifically and intentionally sought to displace and erase Indigenous Peoples and cultures by disrupting Indigenous people's kinship and connection with their land and territories through forced relocation and dispossession, as well as the historical banning of cultural practices, ceremonies, and languages. These lands and territories are governed through colonial agreements and paternalistic legislation that continues to displace Indigenous people and their central role as caretakers of their lands and territories.

Hamilton Community Foundation (HCF) is a settler colonial organization complicit in, and beneficiary of, the historical and ongoing colonialism and systemic racism against Indigenous peoples. Moreover, HCF recognizes the philanthropic sector's complicity and acknowledges that the sector's wealth is directly tied to the displacement and economic exploitation of Indigenous people across Turtle Island (North America). The Foundation recognizes that we have assets under management that are directly tied to the Indian Hospital and Sanatoria System which forcibly displaced and relocated Indigenous people.<sup>ii</sup>

The Foundation recognizes that it continues to benefit from, and live in, the contradictions of broken treaties and persistent inaction on Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous people. Beyond recognizing these injustices, we commit to continuously learning and deepening alignment of our hearts, minds, intentions, words and actions with Indigenous rights and self-determination. We understand that this work is complex and ongoing. More importantly, this work requires humility and courage to continuously act in ways that meaningfully advance the self-determination of Indigenous peoples through the Foundation's relinquishment of power over people, land and culture.

**HCF Declaration of Action on Truth and Reconciliation**

***Guiding Principles***

HCF has developed a set of guiding principles to govern our work and commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.

- Cultural awareness and humility
  - An outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in Canada's colonial institutions, systems and services. The Foundation works toward an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe when participating in, navigating through or accessing institutions, systems and services.
- Respecting and understanding the diversity of experiences, interests, and needs of Indigenous peoples and communities.
  - HCF recognizes that Indigenous is a term that includes First Nations, Métis and Inuit, and further recognizes the diversity between and within these groups, including cultural, social, economic, political, linguistic and geographical differences.
  - HCF recognizes the racist and colonial essence of the Indian Act, its legacy of disenfranchisement, and its continued impact on Indigenous communities today.
- Reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities and organizations based on mutual respect, understanding that relationship-building is an ongoing and intentional practice.
- Work with Indigenous communities must be either Indigenous-led and/or directed by Indigenous communities.

As a member of the Circle on Philanthropy,<sup>iii</sup> HCF has committed to work with peers to leverage its resources, power and privilege in service of Reconciliation. Specifically, HCF recognizes its commitment to advancing reconciliation in Hamilton must be informed and guided by local Indigenous leadership as well as local First Nations representatives/leadership. Further, HCF commits to the actions below, to contribute to the progress and implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action<sup>iv</sup> and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People<sup>v</sup>. This declaration is a starting point and has been made public for accountability to the Indigenous community of Hamilton as well as the wider/general public on HCF's progress in the following areas:

### ***Short-term actions***

In relationship with local urban Indigenous-led organizations and Indigenous leaders of Hamilton:

- Develop an Indigenous engagement and granting strategy that is separate and distinct from granting policies for settler equity-deserving groups.
- Apply the Circle on Philanthropy's I4DM Definitional Matrix<sup>vi</sup> to HCF, towards becoming an Indigenous Partnerships-aligned organization.
- Apply the Circle on Philanthropy's I4DM Definitional Matrix to community organizations and groups to inform funding decisions that will have an impact on Indigenous-led organizations and communities.
- Use HCF's influence through proxy voting and ownership on its investment portfolios in ways that respond to the needs and priorities of the urban Indigenous community of Hamilton.

- Pursue Indigenous-led and/or focused impact investments, and support Reconciliation-focused investment initiatives, including NATOA<sup>vii</sup> (National Aboriginal Trust Officers Association) and RRII (Reconciliation and Responsible Investment Initiative)<sup>viii</sup>,
- Require disclosure from current and prospective HCF service providers about where they are with their reconciliation and EDI journey.
- Review and amend HCF process for sourcing service providers (this is an opportunity for HCF to support Indigenous service providers in a more equitable bidding process).
- Develop a recruitment and retention process for staff and volunteers at HCF that is equitable to Indigenous communities, for instance that job postings are shared on culturally accessible platforms (e.g., Turtle Island News, Grand River Training and Employment) and nurture Indigenous talent.
- Work with peers and advocate for additional investments for Indigenous communities, including educating donors to attract additional funding (e.g., to direct donor funds to specific Indigenous agencies or to address specific issues identified by the Indigenous communities both on and off reserve).
- Support Indigenous data sovereignty by applying First Nations Principles of OCAP (ownership, control, access, and possession) and Information Governance<sup>ix</sup> in all data collection, research and evaluation work at HCF.

### ***Longer-term actions***

In relationship with local urban Indigenous-led organizations and Indigenous leaders of Hamilton:

- Build, invest and foster relationships with Indigenous communities, based in reciprocity, listening, and learning.
- Learn about, understand, and engage in and with governing practices, protocols and knowledge systems of local Indigenous communities and organizations.
- Understand, plan for, and take action to decolonize HCF as an organization, applying a decolonizing lens to norms and standards, policies, and operational activities.
- Through granting and relational work, support Indigenous organizations and communities to assert and claim sovereignty.
- Work with urban Indigenous-led organizations and Indigenous leadership of Hamilton to allocate resources equitably and effectively.
- Allocate discretionary funding for Indigenous communities, in perpetuity.
- Increase allocation of HCF's resources towards Indigenous led/directed initiatives that respond to the 94 Calls to Action.

HCF acknowledges that this declaration of action is an iterative and living commitment towards Truth and Reconciliation that will continue to evolve with dialogue and guidance from local Indigenous partners. Further, HCF commits to evaluating and sharing its progress on short- and long-term goals, with measurable targets with local urban Indigenous-led organizations and leadership.

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<sup>i</sup> [https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/telling-the-story-of-hundreds-of-inuit-sick-with-tb-who-were-shipped-to-hamilton-1.3842103>

<sup>iii</sup> [https://www.the-circle.ca/uploads/1/2/5/6/125694502/the\\_declaration\\_english\\_.pdf](https://www.the-circle.ca/uploads/1/2/5/6/125694502/the_declaration_english_.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> [https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

<sup>v</sup> [https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP\\_E\\_web.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf)

<sup>vi</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LoYIY5C-B7RCi-AIvQVWpg8u4McDOtWp/view>

<sup>vii</sup> <https://natoa.ca/>

<sup>viii</sup> <https://natoa.ca/reconciliationandinvestment/>

<sup>ix</sup> <https://fnigc.ca/what-we-do/ocap-and-information-governance/>

**March 1, 2024**

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

Hamilton Community Foundation (HCF) is requesting proposals to develop an implementation plan and evaluation framework for its Declaration of Action on Truth and Reconciliation (The Declaration).

**Submission date is March 22, 2024.**

### **Background**

HCF was established in 1954 as Ontario's first community foundation. Today, it is a member of over 191 community foundations across Canada and a rapidly expanding international network. In a nutshell, community foundations have three roles:

- Working with donors to build funds that support local charities.
- Giving grants across all sectors of the community: arts and culture, education, recreation, health and human services and the environment.
- Community leadership – bringing people together to address issues and opportunities facing their communities.

HCF is driven by its:

- Vision: A vibrant, diverse and inclusive Hamilton
- Mission: To drive positive change by connecting diverse people, ideas and resources
- Values: Equity, Reconciliation, Courage, Relevance, Accountability and Collaboration

### **Declaration of Action on Truth and Reconciliation and Implementation Plan**

In November 2023, HCF's board of directors approved The Declaration to clearly outline the organization's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation through demonstrable and measurable action. The Declaration has been aligned with the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action](#), [the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) and [The Philanthropic Community's Declaration of Action](#).

The Declaration is a publicly facing document that HCF will publicly report on annually to ensure accountability and transparency in its commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. The Declaration is centered in a set of guiding principles with short-and long-term actions. The Declaration has been validated in relationship with the urban Indigenous organizations in what is colonially called the City of 5

Hamilton. The Declaration is an iterative document that will be reviewed and update annually in relationship with local urban Indigenous organizations and Indigenous partners, as HCF recognizes the centrality of reciprocity and relationship, and that the work of Truth and Reconciliation is ongoing and generational.

Adjacently, HCF will develop an implementation plan and evaluation framework with measurable outcomes to build the short- and long-term actions of The Declaration into the work plans of each HCF department and board of directors and ensure the development process is centred in reciprocal relationship with Indigenous partners.

HCF's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation is integrated into its organizational values and it continues to be an organizational priority as outlined in HCF's strategic Plan and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion plan. Further, HCF recognizes the unique rights, self-determination and sovereignty of Indigenous peoples, and the experiences of historical and ongoing colonialism.

### ***Scope of work***

For this work, HCF seeks highly skilled support for HCF board and staff, to develop the implementation plan and evaluation framework and ensure the short- and long-term actions are built into organizational work plans. This process will include ongoing relationship building and validation with Indigenous partners.

The scope of the work includes:

- Discovery phase, including review of relevant materials and meeting with HCF staff leads regarding work-to-date
- Consulting with each HCF department and reviewing The Declaration's relevant short- and long-term actions and their incorporation into work plans
- Consulting with HCF board and reviewing short- and long-term actions and their incorporation into work plan
- Drafting implementation plan based on consultation with HCF departments and board
- Creating an evaluation framework to assess HCF's progress on The Declaration
- Creating a validation process of the implementation plan with Indigenous partners, incorporating feedback and creating a communications plan
- Supporting HCF's senior management and Community Relations team to build annual public communications process and reporting on progress
- Meeting with HCF a minimum of every two weeks, unless otherwise agreed, to achieve objectives collaboratively
- Producing a written report and presenting to board of directors

To provide context to the work, HCF staff will advise the successful consultant on existing work-to-date, provide relevant background materials and foundational documents, and facilitate both internal and

external relevant connections. Most importantly, HCF will advise on all past and existing relationships with all of HCF's Indigenous partners.

Outputs and proposed timeline should include a final project report within two months of the completion of the implementation plan and evaluation framework.

Contract length will be up to 12 months, unless mutually agreed upon by both HCF and the consultant(s) to renew the contract for an additional period of time.

HCF's average rate of compensation for evaluation activities is \$900.00 per day, up to a maximum of \$50,000. Proposals must include a cost-per-year in line with this rate and the scope of activities.

### **Experience and qualifications**

The successful consultant will have in-depth knowledge of organizational culture change specific to alignment with the TRC's Calls to Action and UNDRIP, project planning and design, and creating evaluation frameworks. Experience working with Indigenous communities and organizations is essential; experience working with local urban Indigenous groups is considered an asset. Consultants who are Indigenous and/or Indigenous-led firms will be prioritized.

### **Proposal content**

If your firm is interested in bidding on this work, please provide a proposal to Rudi Wallace, Vice-President, Grants and Community Initiatives, at [r.wallace@hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca](mailto:r.wallace@hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca)

The proposal must include the following:

- Your understanding of the project and the scope of work to be accomplished
- Brief bios of team members who would be involved in the work, and the roles they would play
- Examples of your work that demonstrate your experience in conducting similar projects; in particular we are interested in work conducted with Indigenous community and organizations, and non-profits/charities
- Project plan and critical path/timeline. It is anticipated the work would commence April 1, 2024. Project plans should include a breakdown of tasks and timelines (e.g. number of days)
- Your expectations from the HCF team through each phase of work outlined in the project plan
- At minimum, expected project deliverables would include:
  - Implementation plan
  - Evaluation framework

- Bi-weekly meetings with senior management team or representative to share updates (may be more frequent as needed)
- Validation process with Indigenous community and partners
- Final report for year 1 including, at a minimum, executive summary, methods, and findings
- Summary slide deck
- Fee proposal broken down by person days, plus hourly and per diem rates for any additional services relevant to this proposal
- The names and contact information for two organizations for whom you have completed similar work in the past five years that we may contact

**Evaluation**

Proposals will be evaluated on:

- The consultant(s) experience working with Indigenous communities and organizations
- The consultant(s) experience in organizational culture change, specifically supporting alignment with TRC Calls to Action and UNDRIP
- The proposed approach to achieving the goals of the project
- Past performance – demonstrated expertise in providing similar projects, in particular working as a collaborative partner and resource to staff in completing the work -- plus references.
- Fees

Short-listed firms may have an opportunity to expand on their proposal via zoom. This will consist of a 30-minute zoom meeting to ask and answer questions about the proposal.

**Process**

<i>Task</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>Submission deadline</b>	<b>12:00 noon, March 22, 2024</b>
Shortlisted candidates meet with staff	Week of March 25, 2024
Successful candidate informed	April 1, 2024
Contract begins	April 8, 2024 (subject to change as needed)

**RFP Terms**

1. The proponent firm shall bear all costs associated with responding to this RFP.
2. HCF is not bound to explain its decision regarding submitted proposal.
3. By accepting a proposal, HCF does not intend to bind itself legally in any way.



HCF intends solely to begin negotiating a contract on the subject matter of the proposal. Unless HCF states otherwise in writing at the time, oral or written communications between the firm and HCF on the subject matter of the proposal are always to be considered as subject to the execution of a formal written agreement. In addition, the execution of this contract in no way binds HCF to an ongoing relationship with the vendor. This contract should be considered as a standalone.

4. Prior to the closing date of this RFP, respondents should not establish contact with anyone (staff or board) inside the organization regarding this RFP, other than the representative identified. Failure to abide by this requirement could be grounds for rejection of your proposal.

**Background materials**

A fact sheet is attached; our website is [hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca](http://hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca); Twitter: @HamCommFdn, Facebook: @HamCommFdn. A copy of our annual report is available [here](#).

**HCF contact**

Please direct all questions to:  
Rudi Wallace, VP Grants and Community Initiatives  
Phone: 905-523-5600 x 249  
Email: [r.wallace@hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca](mailto:r.wallace@hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca)