

METCALF LEADING AND LEARNING PROGRAM

Network Learning Fund

2020 Application Guidelines

METCALF FOUNDATION

The George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation's mission is to enhance the effectiveness of people and organizations working together to help Canadians imagine and build a just, healthy, and creative society.

We focus our efforts on three areas:

- supporting long-term strategies that create sustainable economic opportunities for low-income people and communities in Toronto;
- working at the intersection of climate, biodiversity, and sustainable livelihoods; and
- supporting leadership and innovation in the performing arts.

Our work is grounded in the belief that change happens when we share hopeful visions of the future, work and learn collectively, think broadly in pursuit of comprehensive solutions, and take a meaningful role in the decisions that affect our lives.

We believe that non-profit organizations play a critical role as catalysts that animate and facilitate lasting change. They create space for people to connect, communicate, and participate. We are interested in organizations that are deliberately engaging communities in their work and developing new strategies and collaborations.

We encourage success by:

- supporting dynamic leadership — celebrating, developing, and strengthening leaders who are contributing to positive change;
- nurturing new ideas and practices — exploring and developing innovative approaches to tackling tough problems and seizing opportunities; and
- fostering integrated thinking — creating opportunities for ongoing dialogue, collaborative learning, and reflection to build new knowledge and inform action.

In our work, we aim to be clear, open, reflective, and responsive. We actively seek to learn from our experiences with funded projects and from our ongoing exploration of issues and ideas. We expect our grant-making practices to evolve as we strive to realize the full potential of our commitment and resources.

METCALF LEADING AND LEARNING PROGRAM

The Metcalf Foundation has a long history of investing in the professional development of leaders working in the non-profit sector. Non-profit leaders are the bedrock of their organizations. They catalyze or accelerate change within organizations and nurture spaces for people to connect, communicate, and engage on a range of pressing social, cultural, and environmental issues. Non-profit leaders harness creative ideas and develop collaborative partnerships to champion compelling visions of a hopeful future. Such capacity and commitment should not be taken for granted.

We believe that it is important to support non-profit leadership to: build and strengthen relationships among peers working on the frontlines of social change; learn about promising practices, models, and initiatives; and continue to hone their leadership skills.

The Leading and Learning Program has two funding streams.

- **The Network Learning Fund** supports a group of organizations, led by a charitable partner, in exploring a shared concern, challenge, or area of common interest. Although we encourage groups to travel to another jurisdiction to learn about promising practices, models, and initiatives, it is not a requirement.
- **The Individual Leadership Fund** supports senior non-profit management individuals in their pursuit of professional leadership development with recognized teaching or training institutions.

These two funds constitute a multi-layered approach that builds individual leadership capacity, strengthens ties between talented peers working in common cause across a sector, and exposes networks of peers to new ideas.

Below, you will find additional information and application guidelines for the **Network Learning Fund**.

NETWORK LEARNING FUND

The Metcalf Network Learning Fund supports a group of organizations, led by a charitable partner, to travel to another jurisdiction to learn about promising practices, models, and initiatives related to a shared concern, challenge, or area of common interest. Our hope is that participants return with innovative ideas and the interest and energy for greater collaboration within Toronto's cultural, economic, or environmental sectors.

To encourage a range of proposals representing a broad spectrum of individual, organizational, and sectoral needs, this program is intentionally flexible. Applications must detail the nature of the curated tour including the mix of events, meetings, and learning opportunities identified and to be organized by the applicant. Examples include: a study tour, peer shadowing at a specific organization engaging in innovative practices and initiatives, or attending a conference, festival, or symposium, coupled with pre- and post-event meetings.

The Fund has five goals: deeper understanding about a subject matter; professional leadership growth; shared learning; strengthened sector relationships; and an informal community of peers who are motivated to pursue collaborative work.

Partners are expected to organize at least one pre- and post-event activity. This could include convening participants pre-event to prepare for a group process, and a debrief, training, or public event upon the group's return to provoke reflections on lessons learned and to share knowledge within the community.

Eligibility

Applications must include representatives from at least three partnering non-profits, one of which must be the lead charitable organization. Each non-profit may have more than one leader participate in the program.

Applicants must work in one of Metcalf's three program areas.

- Environment – Organizations must be working at the intersection of climate, biodiversity, and sustainable livelihoods.
- Performing Arts – Professional theatre, dance, music, or opera companies working to support leadership and innovation in the performing arts. All organizations must be based in the City of Toronto.
- Inclusive Local Economies – Organizations must be working on long-term strategies that create sustainable economic opportunities for low-income people and communities in Toronto. All organizations must be based in the City of Toronto.

We encourage organizations with a significant track record of accomplishments and a history of collaboration in the charitable sector to partner with newer and/or smaller-scale non-profits working on similar issues or areas of focus.

Funding Limits

Applicants can apply for grants up to \$16,000. Funding can be used to cover travel and accommodation expenses, conference fees, festival passes, and/or honorariums for local organizations that are engaged as part of the learning opportunity (eg: to lead a site tour).

Application Deadlines

The deadline for 2020 applications is **2:00pm** on **May 5** and **November 10**.

Funding Decisions

Applications will be reviewed by the Foundation's Board and staff. Funding decisions will be announced in June and December. Applicants may be asked to provide more detail on their proposal, outlining the learning agenda, project timelines, evaluation measures, and budget. We will assess applications according to the following criteria:

- the proposed learning agenda, rationale for the curated events and, if relevant, the level of engagement with host organizations;
- the cumulative leadership and experience of the collaboration, and rationale for their involvement;

- the alignment between the group’s learning goals, the proposed agenda, and Metcalf program areas;
- commitment to and creativity of pre- and post-events to explore implications and share learning; and
- the potential of the learning to contribute to the charitable sector, both within organizations and the sector as a whole.

Network Learning Fund 2020 Application Requirements

PART A: General Information – maximum 1 page

Lead Charitable Organization:

Primary Contact Name and Position:

Mailing Address:

Telephone, Email, and Website:

Charitable Registration Number:

Additional Project Partners (must list a minimum of two):

Amount Requested:

Project Duration:

Projected Completion Date:

Please provide a summary of the proposed work (maximum 200 words):

PART B: Project Details – maximum 5 pages

Organizations must submit a joint application. Applications must not exceed **five pages** and should address the following items.

1. Give a very brief description of each organization’s work.
2. What is the challenge or issue that your partnership is trying to address or solve? Why is this timely? How is your initiative connected to Metcalf’s work?
3. Who will be involved in this initiative? Why these partners? How are the partners connected?
4. What is the design of your network learning trip? When would the proposed trip take place? Have host organizations been contacted to gauge interest? Please be specific. Give a strong rationale for why you are proposing these activities and why you plan to meet with specific people and/or organizations.
5. How will this experience inform the work of those involved in the collaborative? Identify specific goals and desired learning outcomes.
6. What are your pre- and post-event activities? How will you share your collective learning?
7. Please provide a budget with the expected costs and contributions of the initiative. Be specific and include any investments from the partner organizations or other sources.

PART C: Additional Information

In addition to your 5-page proposal, applications must include the following materials.

1. Biographies or résumés of each member of the group.
2. Two one-page letters of reference from professional colleagues who can comment on the value of the proposed outline of activities in relation to the sector.
3. If applicable, one-page letters from at least two external contacts that confirm their engagement in the planning and participation of a collaborative learning trip.

Applications are to be submitted in **electronic form only**. Please email **one pdf file** with all three parts to hdunford@metcalffoundation.com by the date and time listed above.