



# Civic Innovation Awards



Awards ranging between \$10,000 - \$50,000  
Innovative Citizenship and Service  
Enhancing the Civic Commons

Contact Rosemarie Iapalucci at [riapalucci@mcconnellfoundation.ca](mailto:riapalucci@mcconnellfoundation.ca)

# Background and Intent

*See end of document for lexicon.*

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Cities offer the scale needed for transformative change — large enough to matter, but small enough to manage. Universities and colleges are also civic actors in their own right. They are “cities within cities,” where the principles of pluralism create communities of diversity, open to the world. The relationship between post-secondary institutions and city can serve as an engine of social and environmental sustainability.

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As part of its pursuit of a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient society, the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation has created **RECODE**, an initiative dedicated to catalyzing social innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education; and **Cities for People**, which contributes to more resilient, livable and inclusive cities.

The **RECODE / Cities for People** Civic Innovation Awards program provides grants to initiatives that position post-secondary institutions as civic actors catalyzing positive change in cities. These grants will support innovative collaborations between post-secondary institutions and community organizations or businesses that strengthen their communities.

This is a call for existing initiatives, products, processes, or programs that contribute to the knowledge and resources in our post-secondary campuses, community organizations, businesses and local governments. We are looking to challenge and evolve the defining routines, resources, and authority flows of our cities for the greater good.

Applicants must ensure that the project they propose will be complete within 18 months of receiving the grant and will be asked to submit a final report.

# Awards

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Up to \$100,000 will be awarded in amounts ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000 to exemplary initiatives that meet the criteria outlined in either of the two themes.

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- **Theme 1. Innovative Citizenship and Service:**  
Enhancing capacity to engage and take action on community and city issues.

Examples include:

- Partnerships between post-secondary institutions and municipal governments or agencies that improve civic engagement.
- Initiatives that support civic action by students.
- Multisectoral collaborations that apply our collective capacity (or civic intelligence - see lexicon) to improve social and economic outcomes for marginalized populations.

- **Theme 2. Enhancing the Civic Commons:**  
Re-purposing our shared city assets through innovative approaches to increase the social, cultural, economic or educational value of the civic commons.

Examples include:

- Initiatives that re-design and re-purpose buildings, grounds and other assets in service to the community.
- Participatory planning and budgeting initiatives that involves municipalities, post-secondary institutions and public input.
- Technological innovations to make for a more engaging and connected civic commons.

Along with your application, please indicate clearly and completely how you would use the money if awarded to you. For example, if you plan to spend \$2000 on an event, please indicate this item in your complete list of expenses.

*\*Note, however, that you are not expected to break down the sub costs to any major line item, i.e., in the above example, the catering and room rental costs for your event.*

# Jury

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▶ **Diane Berard**

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Business Columnist  
Les Affaires

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▶ **Brock Carlton**

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Chief Executive Officer  
Federation of Canadian Municipalities

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▶ **Paul Davidson**

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President  
Universities Canada

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▶ **Stephen Huddart**

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President and Chief Executive Officer  
The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

# Eligibility

[Click here to apply](#)

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**Lead applicants are invited to jointly submit an application with one or more collaborators by Monday, February 29th, 2016 at 9:00 am EST.**

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*Please note that activities currently funded by the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation do not qualify. Institutions currently being funded by the Foundation are eligible to apply.*

▶ **Eligible Applicants:**

- Lead applicants must apply with one or more collaborators.\*
- Lead applicants can be either post-secondary partners (faculty, students or administrators) or local governments.
- Collaborators can be community organizations, social enterprises, businesses, post-secondary partners and/or local governments.

*\*All applications must include at least one faculty member and one student.*

▶ **Selection Criteria:**

Initiatives must:

- Demonstrate that the proposed initiative has the potential to be applied or adapted for other Canadian communities.
- Demonstrate that the initiative has the potential to enhance the role of the university or college to become a key civic actor to transform cities for the better.
- Enhance civic intelligence (see lexicon).
- Demonstrate multi-stakeholder and cross-sector collaboration, knowledge sharing and learning with others.

We encourage applications from initiatives that:

- Advance environmental sustainability and / or social inclusion.
- Are transdisciplinary.
- Have the potential to catalyze further change.

**Please note that the deadline to apply is Monday, February 29th at 9:00 am EST.**

If you have questions about submitting an application, please contact Rosemarie Iapalucci at [riapalucci@mccconnellfoundation.ca](mailto:riapalucci@mccconnellfoundation.ca).

*Award recipients will be announced in April, 2016.  
Good luck and thanks in advance for your application.*

# Lexicon

- ▶ **Civic Action:** A spectrum of activities that foster active citizenship. Examples of civic action range from enabling people to make sure legislators hear their voices; to building knowledge on important issues and taking action through campaigns to change the behaviour of public and private institutions; to residents or the public becoming more engaged.
- ▶ **Civic Commons:** The public “backbone” of a city -- the mix of shared places, accessible to a diverse range of people, that promote social interaction and cohesion. Throughout history, governments, philanthropic organizations, private companies and others have created and maintained shared civic assets - parks, libraries, post offices, community centers, markets, and public squares - that anchor neighborhoods and provide shared services and resources. These assets have served as sites for social, cultural, economic and educational activities for generations. Collectively, these spaces make up a city or neighborhood’s civic commons.
- ▶ **Civic Intelligence:** The ability of groups, organizations and society as a whole to solve problems for the common good. Civic Intelligence is a collective, participatory activity that uses approaches that are in themselves inclusive, equitable and non-coercive.
- ▶ **Social enterprise:** A non-profit, for-profit, or hybrid venture that addresses a social, cultural or environmental need. Rather than simply measuring performance in profit and return, a social enterprise must measure its positive impact on society. Social enterprises are commonly associated with the voluntary and not-for profit sectors but this need not preclude making a profit.
- ▶ **Social Innovation:** Initiatives, products, processes, or programs that profoundly change the defining routines, resources, and authority flows or beliefs of any social system.
- ▶ **Cities For People:** Cities for People is an urban innovation network housed at the J.W. McConnell Foundation. It aims to contribute to more resilient, livable, and inclusive cities. It has carried out dozens of decentralized projects across Canada supports urban innovation networks. To learn more, visit <http://www.citiesforpeople.ca/en/>.
- ▶ **RECODE:** RECODE is a partnership among the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and post-secondary institutions that provides social innovation and entrepreneurship opportunities for college and university students to become drivers of social progress. RECODE is a call to social innovation—to redesign public institutions from the inside out; to disrupt business as usual; to found and grow new social enterprises; to create partnerships across institutional and sectoral boundaries - in short, to ‘recode’ our culture’s operating systems in order to achieve a more just, sustainable and beautiful world. To learn more, visit [www.re-code.ca](http://www.re-code.ca).