



COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS
OF CANADA FONDATIONS
COMMUNAUTAIRES
DU CANADA

NEWS RELEASE

Community Foundations exploring responsible investment to leverage assets
CFC launches first phase of www.responsible-investment.ca

OTTAWA (Nov. 2, 2009) – Community Foundations of Canada is today launching www.responsible-investment.ca, the first phase of its new website devoted to sharing its growing collection of Responsible Investment (RI) resources with foundations and other funders.

The website is part of CFC's Responsible Investing Pilot Project, which is assisting community foundations across the country to: start or advance their journey along the path of mission-based investing; adopt appropriate investment policies and programs; and increase the percentage of their assets that are aligned with their mission. The pilot project is supported by the U.S.-based Ford Foundation and The Co-operators Group Ltd.

“Responsible Investment offers community foundations and other funders many opportunities to leverage our assets. We're just beginning our journey but we're eager to share what we've learned to date with others,” said Monica Patten, President and CEO of Community Foundations of Canada (CFC), the membership association for more than 160 community foundations from coast to coast.

Interest in responsible investing (also known as mission-based investing or socially responsible investing) is growing as community foundations consider ways to have an even greater impact on the issues that matter most to their communities. Community foundations collectively hold more than \$2.4 billion in assets and provided \$169 million in grants in 2008.

“The market turmoil of the past year has underscored the importance of finding the most effective ways to use foundation assets. Many long-term investors – including foundations – are also re-examining their investment beliefs and philosophies to take into account environmental, social and governance factors,” said Patten.

CFC's pilot project is guided by an advisory group of experts in the RI field, including Michael Jantzi (Jantzi-Sustainability), Robert Walker (Northwest & Ethical Investments LP), Peter Chapman, (Shareholder Association for Research and Education), Derek Gent (VanCity Community Foundation), and

Tim Draimin, Social Innovation Generation, and Eugene Ellmen (The Social Investment Organization). CFC is also working with other funders such as Philanthropic Foundations of Canada on developing and sharing specific RI resources.

"It's important for foundations to invest their assets in a way that respects their work in social responsibility and sustainability," said Eugene Ellmen, Executive Director of the Social Investment Organization. "Donors count on it, and local communities expect it. This new resource is the first step in a long-term process to align the investment and granting of foundation assets."

Community Foundations & Responsible Investment

Although community foundations are relatively new to the field of responsible investing, several foundations have stories to tell about their growing commitment.

Edmonton Community Foundation: The foundation's \$5-million Social Enterprise Fund, launched in partnership with the City of Edmonton and the United Way, is supporting new social enterprises and affordable housing. Its initial loans are all current, returning 5% to 6.5%, or paid in full so the foundation is now adding other financing products to its mix.

Osprey Community Foundation: Serving the community of Nelson, British Columbia, the Osprey Community Foundation currently has 15% of its capital placed in a Socially Responsible Investment Fund, held by Vancouver Foundation. In addition, all of the foundation's new donations will be invested in this fund. The foundation says on its home page that its plans to "gradually move all of the foundation's endowment capital into socially responsible investments."

Community Foundation of Ottawa: The foundation has established a task force to review their investment policy and incorporate responsible investing. The foundation is interested in adding ESG factors as well as the potential for community investments. This process will include web-based policy development with a wider group including other community foundations and Canadian RI experts.

Vancouver Foundation: The largest community foundation in Canada, and one of the oldest, currently has a \$12-million Socially Responsible Investment Fund in which donors can opt to place their donation. The foundation is also exploring potential options around community investment funds with economic and social returns.

Available at www.responsible-investment.ca

CFC's RI website currently offers visitors an overview of RI approaches and a comprehensive list of RI resources including:

- Primers on responsible investment
- Reports on research and trends
- Information on financial performance and fiduciary issues
- A directory of consultants and asset managers as well as organizations and websites to follow

This is the first phase of the site's development and CFC plans to add to it over time.

About Community Foundations

Canada's 168 community foundations are local charitable foundations that help Canadians invest in building strong and resilient places to live, work, and play. They are one of the largest supporters of Canadian charities, providing \$169 million to local organizations in 2008. Find out more at www.cfc-fcc.ca.

-30-

Contacts

Anne-Marie McElrone

Director of Communications and Marketing

902.461.8284 (w)

902.223.0674 (c)

amcelrone@cfc-fcc.ca