

April 1, 2019

Dear Grantees and Stakeholders,

## **RE: ANNUAL FUNDING GUIDELINE**

The Alberta Law Foundation appreciates all of our grantees' contributions to legal research and law reform and to supporting Albertans in learning about, understanding and exercising their legal rights and responsibilities. The Foundation regularly reviews its current and projected financial position with a view to providing guidance to grantees and potential grant applicants about the availability of funds to make grants in the coming year. We also take this opportunity to communicate the Foundation's current funding priorities.

### **Financial Position**

At this time last year, we were seeing signs of economic recovery after several difficult years. Some of the uncertainties that we saw potentially impacting the rate and extent of the recovery have been settled, such as the NAFTA negotiations, while others persist, such as the timeframe for new pipeline construction and the impact of new mortgage lending rules on the housing market.

Despite the relatively slow rate of economic growth in 2018, two interest rate increases over the last year have contributed to an increase in Foundation revenues from interest on lawyers' trust accounts, enhancing our capacity to fund programs and projects addressing the Foundation's statutory objects over the coming years.

### **Funding Priorities**

#### *Bridging the Gaps Initiative*

Anticipating the improvement in our grant-making capacity, in 2018 the Foundation embarked on a needs assessment initiative called *Bridging the Gaps*. Through this initiative, we aim to identify current services and priority legal needs in Alberta, identify gaps in service, and explore solutions that may be implemented to bridge those gaps. From our research and the feedback received during the 2018 *Bridging the Gaps* sessions, the most significant gaps and opportunities for further work were identified in five main areas:

1. **Legal Services for Newcomers** – especially services that are culturally and linguistically accessible;
2. **Legal Services for Indigenous people** – services that are also culturally appropriate;
3. **Immigration Law and Family Law** – especially legal advice and representation in these areas of law.
4. **Legal advice, representation, coaching and assistance with court forms and procedures** – in all areas of law, for all types of clients.
5. **Communication and referrals** among service providers.

The Foundation invites grantees and new applicants to submit proposals that address one or more of these identified areas of need+.

### *Cultural Competence*

In response to the justice-related calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Foundation invites organizations to consider projects that will increase their staff, volunteer and board member awareness, knowledge and cultural competency of the local Indigenous context in which they work. Likewise, organizations that serve the legal needs of newcomers are also invited to consider ways to expand their cultural competence. In both cases, proposals should be specific to the clients you serve or intend to serve.

### **Application Process**

Non-profit organizations in Alberta are encouraged to contact one of the Foundation's grant coordinators if you have ideas for a new project or enhanced program that would help to bridge these gaps or otherwise meet one of the Foundation's four statutory mandated areas:

- (i) research and reform of the law or the administration of justice;
- (ii) law libraries;
- (iii) public legal education and information;
- (iv) Indigenous people's legal programs; student and community legal clinics and other like programs.

Grant Coordinators can be reached at 403-264-4701 or by email as follows:

Janet Kerrigan – [jkerrigan@albertalawfoundation.org](mailto:jkerrigan@albertalawfoundation.org)  
Carmen Wyatt – [cwyatt@albertalawfoundation.org](mailto:cwyatt@albertalawfoundation.org)

The Foundation board will next consider grant applications for new initiatives on October 7, 2019. Draft applications must be submitted by August 22, with final applications due by September 9, 2019.

Potential applicants are strongly urged to contact the Foundation as early as possible about proposal ideas. This is an opportunity to discuss the application process and obtain feedback from staff about how a proposal may fit into the Foundation's overall mandate and current funding strategy.

Yours truly,



Darlene W. Scott, Q.C., Chair