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ROADMAP TOWARDS RECONCILIATION



Foundation of Greater Montréal

WHY A RECONCILIATION ROADMAP?

This document is intended to guide the evolution of the Foundation of Greater Montreal's actions in decolonizing its organizational and philanthropic practices, and in building reciprocal and lasting relationships with the Indigenous Nations and communities that have traditionally inhabited and continue to live in communities served by FGM. By using the term “roadmap” (rather than “plan” or “strategy”), we recognize that change is not a linear process, and that it requires not only concrete actions, but also organizational and individual transformation.

HOW IS THIS ROADMAP LINKED TO THE FOUNDATION OF GREATER MONTREAL'S JEDI ACTION PLAN?

In 2022-2023, FGM has drafted a Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) action plan to guide its thinking, decisions and actions in support of the fight against discrimination and its impact on historically excluded or marginalized communities. Drawing on the work of the Data for Equity¹ collaborative group, the Foundation has identified the six priority groups in its JEDI action plan: Indigenous, Black and racialized communities, women and girls, members of the LGBTQ2S+ communities, neurodivergent people, and people living with physical or intellectual limitations.

Among these populations, FGM recognizes that Indigenous peoples occupy the a distinctive place by virtue of their status as the original inhabitants of the territory we now call Canada, their ties to those lands, their Indigenous rights, and international law.

1. Data for Equity was a working collective of five Quebec foundations aimed at advancing their organizational practices around diversity, equity, and inclusion. The group's work, supported by researchers from PhiLab Québec, took place from 2020 until 2022.

This Roadmap towards Reconciliation affirms the commitments already made by FGM through the JEDI Action Plan and reinforces them by proposing concrete measures to decolonize its practices. The motivation, however, is not the inclusion of Indigenous peoples, since the goal of reconciliation is not inclusion, but the recognition and restoration of reciprocal and egalitarian relationships between distinct peoples while respecting their institutions, rights, and traditions.

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Foundation of Greater Montreal would like to acknowledge the ancestral presence of the Kanien'kehá:ka communities of Kahnawà:ke and Kanehsatà:ke, who have historically occupied the territory now known as Greater Montreal. We would also like acknowledge that this territory has also been home to several Indigenous nations who settled here at different times in history. To this day, a diverse Indigenous population including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people resides on this territory, in a variety of socio-economic conditions.

As a community foundation, our goals are to protect these lands, serve the many communities that call them home, and build relationships based on the principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, and shared responsibility with the First Peoples who have called this place home since time immemorial.

We recognize that reconciliation is not a one-time symbolic act, but a lifelong commitment to learning, personal and collective transformation, and reciprocity. We understand reconciliation as a process of repairing relationships between Nations, communities, people, and species, and our fundamental relationship with the Earth.

We approach this process with humility and determination, with respect for ancestral rights and the principle of self-determination, and in recognition of our history and obligations arising from the first treaties of peace and friendship that bound First Peoples and newcomers in an equitable and reciprocal relationship for “as long as the grass is green, the water flows downhill, the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, and as long as Mother Earth lasts.”

The Two Row Wampum Treaty, drawn in 1613 between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch, symbolizes the paths of peaceful and mutually beneficial co-existence between the First and Last Peoples. The two rows of purple beads symbolize a canoe and a European ship: The two rows remain parallel and never cross, as neither side is to impose its laws, traditions, and way of life on the other. The mauve rows are surrounded by three strands of white pearls which, according to Haudenosaunee tradition, symbolize peace, respect, and friendship.

LOCAL CONTEXT

The Foundation of Greater Montreal serves a territory with a significant historical and contemporary Indigenous presence. When referring to the development of relations with Indigenous communities and environments, we are speaking about the Kanienke'hà:ka communities of Kahnawà:ke and Kanehsatà:ke and the Indigenous population of Tiohtià:ke / Moonyang (Montreal), recognizing that the latter represents a great diversity of Peoples, Nations, cultures, and issues. According to the latest statistics, the Indigenous population of Greater Montreal is 46,000 people (1% of the total population) and has one of the highest growth rates in the country. We recognize the importance of intentional approaches to reaching out to each of the communities by respecting their right to self-determination and with attention for their history and for the priorities decided by the communities themselves.

In recent years, FGM has made progress in building trust with organizations in Montreal's urban Indigenous communities and has taken unprecedented steps towards building closer ties with the community of Kahnawà:ke. In the coming years, we will make further efforts to strengthen these connections, expand our network of partners, and increase our support for communities.

MAJOR ACTIONS

ACTION 1

Apply the standards and principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) to all organizational policies and key activities affecting Indigenous peoples, their lands, and resources:

- Apply the principles of UNDRIP intersectionally
- Position ourselves in support of Indigenous sovereignty and institutional strengthening of Indigenous communities through our partnerships and investments in the community

Among the many principles of UNDRIP, the most important are the right to recognition as distinct peoples, self-determination, free and informed consent, the protection of cultural rights, and protection against discrimination.

Actions carried out by the FGM to date:

Governance & management	Adoption of a Land Acknowledgement Statement	2021
Governance & management	Inclusion of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the FGM's investment policy	2021
Community engagement	Creation of a \$100,000 per year Indigenous Initiatives Support Fund that provides mission-based grants to organizations by and for Indigenous peoples	Since 2021
Community engagement	Contribution of a total amount of \$150,000 distributed over three years to Resilience Montreal	2021 to 2023
Community engagement	Financial support for the creation of the Educational Pathway – Decolonial Toolkit developed by Mikana	2021

Our goals - where we want to go:

Community engagement Philanthropic development	Increase our support for Indigenous organizations and communities through the Indigenous Initiatives Fund and create a shared governance strategy and structure	Short-to medium-term actions (2023-2026)
Governance & management	Create conditions for the successful participation of Indigenous representatives in the governance structures of FGM: recruitment, honouring expertise, culturally appropriate and safe structures and processes	Medium- to long-term actions
Community engagement	Create an accommodating consultation process for working with Indigenous actors and communities within our community engagement strategies and priorities	Medium-term actions
Governance & management	Together, with Indigenous partners, identify influence available within FGM's network that can help combat racism and advance reconciliation	Medium-term actions
Governance & management	Examine the direct and indirect impacts of our investments and grants on Indigenous rights, resources, and lands	Medium- to long-term actions
Community engagement	Support for the Kahnawà:ke Cultural Centre Project – major project funding over three years	Short-term actions (2024 – 2026)
Governance & management	In collaboration with partners, develop and implement a framework for the implementation of UNDRIP's principles in grants, communications, internal policies, partnerships, and fund development	Medium-term actions (2024-2026)

ACTION 2

Establish lasting relationships based on the principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, and shared responsibility with the Indigenous Nations and Indigenous communities in the Greater Montreal area.

Actions carried out by the FGM to date:

Governance & management	Membership in <i>The Circle on Philanthropy</i> and Indigenous Peoples in Canada (The Circle)	2021
Community engagement	Developing relationships with Indigenous organizations in Montreal and organizations in Kahnawà:ke	Since 2021
Community engagement	Organization of the first visit to Kahnawà:ke by representatives of major philanthropic foundations in Montreal	2022
Governance & management	Board member training on the Principles of Indigenous Philanthropy by Kris Archie, CEO of the Circle on Philanthropy and meeting with Kahnawà:ke Grand Chief, Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer	2023

Our goals - where we want to go:

Governance & management	Strengthen the relationship with the Kanien'kehà:ka (Mohawk) Nation through representatives of the Kahnawà:ke and Kanehsatà:ke communities: support (financial, political and other) for community and cultural initiatives, participation in community events, invitation of community representatives as guests of honour at the major events organized by FGM	Actions already underway, ongoing
Philanthropic development		
Community engagement		
Community engagement	Strengthen relations with the Indigenous communities of Tiohtiá:ke/Moonyang (Montreal) (community organizations, citizen initiatives, and consultation networks): support, consultation, participation in events, invitations	Actions already underway, ongoing
Communications	Strengthen our communications as a tool to deepen relationships with Indigenous partners, support advocacy, and position ourselves in support of the right to self-determination, cultural rights, and protection from discrimination	Short-term and ongoing actions
Community engagement	Mobilize other foundations active in Greater Montreal to mobilize resources, promote shared learning, and build relationships based on principles of reciprocity and respect for Indigenous sovereignty	Actions already underway, ongoing

ACTION 3

Learn about the history, culture, and rights of Indigenous peoples – including the history and legacy of residential schools – based on the principles in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, current best practices, and cultural practices.

- Deepening our knowledge of history Learn
- Learning about spiritual values, Indigenous practices, and relational approaches
- Breaking down colonial approaches and Indigenizing our practices

Actions carried out by FGM to date:

Governance & management	16-hour training for FGM staff on the history, culture and current issues facing Indigenous peoples in Canada, delivered by Mikana	2022
Governance & management	Training for the Board of Directors on the principles of Indigenous philanthropy by Kris Archie, CEO of The Circle on Philanthropy and meeting with Kahnawà:ke Grand Chief Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer	2023

Our goals - where we want to go:

Governance & management	Support and strengthen meaningful land acknowledgement practice within the team, Board, and committees	Short-term actions (2023 ongoing)
Governance & management	Intention to participate in the Circle of Philanthropy's Partners in Reciprocity training in Canada	Forthcoming
Governance & management	Continue to educate ourselves on the history, realities, rights, and relationships of Indigenous peoples through group and individual training, webinars, cultural visits, readings, discussion groups, and commemorating the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and National History Month	Annual training for staff, Board, and committee members
Communications		
Governance & management	Deepen our understanding of the territory where we work through learning about the history of its first inhabitants, the colonization of what is now Greater Montreal, the historical treaties, and the contemporary land claims of Indigenous peoples on the territory	Starting in 2023 and then ongoing aiming for a profound transformation
Community engagement		
Governance & management	Creating and nurturing relationships with Elders and Knowledge Keepers	Starting in 2023 and then ongoing aiming for a profound transformation
Governance & management	Include Indigenous teachings and ways of thinking into our institutional knowledge	Profound shift

Governance & management	Questioning our knowledge and ways of working, deconstructing colonial approaches	Profound shift
Governance & management	Explore opportunities for partnerships with Indigenous and decolonial research and educational stakeholders	Long-term actions (3-10 years)
Community engagement		
Philanthropic development		
Governance & management	Share our learnings and the stages of our transformation with our partners: other foundations, organizations, donors, etc.	Short- and long-term actions
Community engagement		

SOURCES

The positioning and actions proposed in the Roadmap are inspired and sometimes directly drawn from documents affirming Indigenous rights and the actions necessary to respect these rights:

- Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996)
- Final Report and Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015)
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)
- Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador – Action Plan on Racism and Discrimination (2020)
- Joyce’s Principle (2020)
- Commission d’enquête sur les relations entre les Autochtones et certains services publics : écoute, réconciliation et progrès - Rapport synthèse (in French) (2019)
- 150 Acts of Reconciliation for the Last 150 Days of Canada’s 150
- Philanthropic Community’s Declaration of Action by the Circle on Philanthropy
- Wampum belts by Tehanetorens
- Basic Call to Consciousness – Akwesasne Notes

