



# The Counselling Foundation of Canada

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

2025–2029

# Contents

- Introduction..... 1
- Vision, Mission, Values, & Guiding Principles .....2
- The Plan.....3
- Goal 1: Focus career development funding to create opportunities for equity in communities and build readiness for the future of work .....4
- Goal 2: Support CERIC to advance the research and learning objectives of the Foundation .....4
- Goal 3: Strengthen the charitable and philanthropic ecosystems in Canada to advance the Foundation’s impact and reputation .....5
- Goal 4: Align investment strategy with the Foundation’s values and principles .....5
- Goal 5: Ensure the governance of the Foundation is future ready and anchored in justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.....6
- Appendix A. Definitions .....7

## Introduction

A good strategic plan should provide a roadmap and offer a vision for what could be accomplished by the time the plan is complete. This plan aims to do just that through our aspirations over the next five years, while building on our experience to incorporate flexibility and a willingness to adapt.

Fortunately, the Foundation has a rich history where flexibility and an openness to change have served the organization well. Since the Foundation's founding in 1959 by Frank Lawson, the work of the Foundation has continued to evolve. While career development has been the through line since those early days, the specific goals, objectives, and tactics have necessarily changed as new things were learned about the career development field, economic contexts shifted, and the work of the Foundation grew to serve communities from coast to coast to coast. Similarly, the composition of the Foundation has changed as younger generations of family members stepped into leadership roles over time and the Foundation opened itself up to more non-family members.

This new strategic plan represents our current best thinking and highlights both what we know to be true as well as what we are curious to explore and learn more about. It's a tool that will help guide us over the coming years and enable future conversations and learning to take place so that we may ultimately move one step closer to achieving our mission.

# Vision, Mission, Values, & Guiding Principles

## Vision

A day when all people in Canada are able to contribute their skills and talents to help build a more prosperous, equitable and inclusive society.

## Mission

The Counselling Foundation of Canada champions life-long learning and career development that empowers people in Canada to develop their skills and talents.

## Values

We believe:

- One person can have a positive impact on many.
- Leaders who inspire action and achieve results can create change in their communities.
- Accessing career counselling and career development opportunities empowers people to make informed decisions.
- When people are able to pursue opportunities to utilize their skills and talents, they contribute to a prosperous, equitable and inclusive Canada.

## Guiding Principles

- Be bold. Take smart risks and provide leadership to address complex and challenging issues.
- Collaborate. Build partnerships on trust and a shared commitment to learning.
- Foster systemic change. Work with and support partners and initiatives that have the potential to deliver significant change.
- Invest in leadership. Encourage and support visionary leaders.
- Be flexible and adaptive. Change takes time; acknowledge and plan for it.
- Demonstrate respect. Embrace traditions, heritages, and lived experiences of people in Canada.

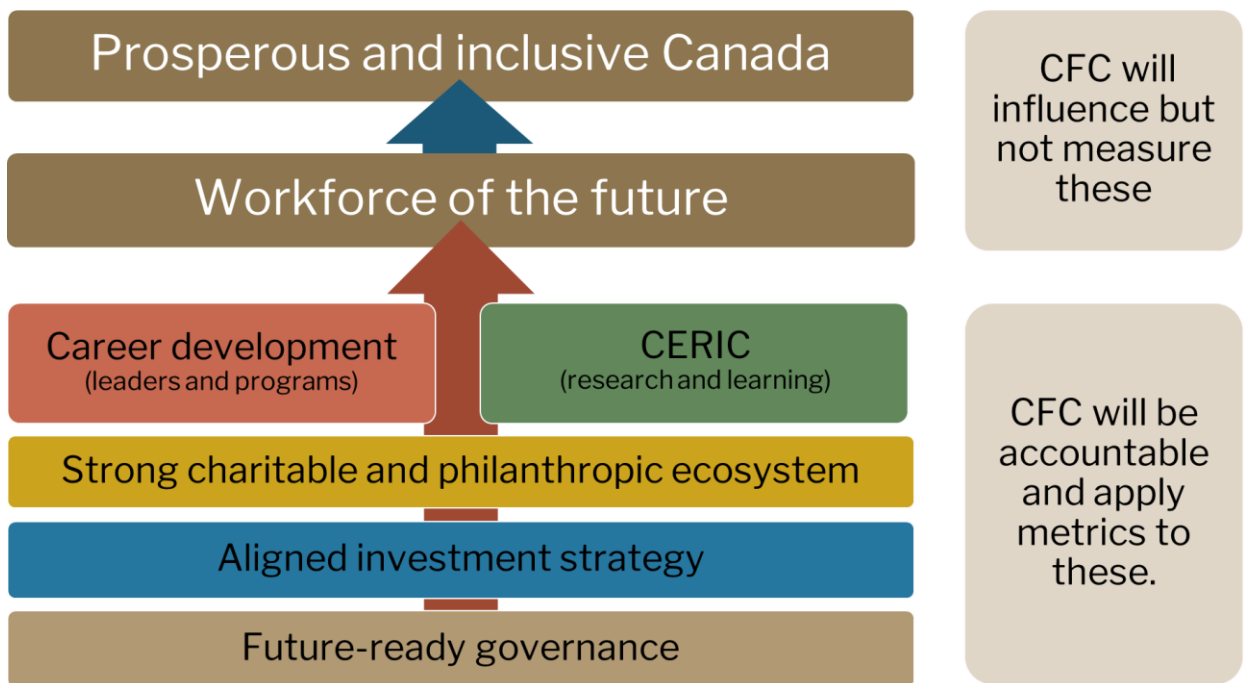


# The Plan

When we look at the broader context in which we exist, we see a fast-changing world that requires flexibility and nimbleness as well as an openness to learning. We see a philanthropic sector that is growing with more resources and opportunities to make positive change, but a nonprofit and charitable sector that is under increasing financial strain and facing more demand for services. Lastly, we see a career development sector that is diverse with lots of opportunity for further connection and sharing of knowledge, but whose work is greatly challenged by deep-rooted systemic issues facing communities, young people, and job seekers.

This strategic plan aims to take into consideration all these elements as well as be cognizant of our role and the resources we have to advance our mission.

Overall, the Strategic Plan identifies five goals and sixteen objectives that will guide the Foundation’s work over the next five years. The graphic below summarizes the intention of this work and what the Foundation will work toward.



In the pages that follow, we outline our goals and objectives that will guide our work over the next five years.

## Goal 1: Focus career development funding to create opportunities for equity in communities and build readiness for the future of work

---

### Rationale

The Foundation can play a role through its funding to support communities who have traditionally had less access to career development, while at the same time supporting promising new initiatives that aim to prepare people for the ever-changing future of work.

### Objectives

- 1.1 Support emergent practices and policies that are based on social, cultural, technological and macro-economic factors and align with a broad understanding of career development
- 1.2 Support the growth of the workforce of the future, with particular emphasis on Indigenous peoples, rural/remote communities, recent newcomers to Canada and youth 12-30
- 1.3 Participate in collaborative philanthropy efforts that align with our mission and advances the workforce of the future

## Goal 2: Support CERIC to advance the research and learning objectives of the Foundation

---

### Rationale

The Foundation continues to value CERIC as a key infrastructure piece in the career development sector that can surface new insights and leverage networks to further the Foundation's objectives. By continuing to prioritize its investment in CERIC, the Foundation seeks to not only ensure CERIC's future success, but its own.

### Objectives

- 2.1 Maintain the Foundation's enduring commitment to CERIC to reinforce CERIC's impact and stability
- 2.2 Encourage continued alignment between the strategic directions of the Foundation and CERIC, including using CERIC research findings to inform and enhance the Foundation's funding and decision-making
- 2.3 Leverage the Foundation's networks to support CERIC's aspirations

## Goal 3: Strengthen the charitable and philanthropic ecosystems in Canada to advance the Foundation’s impact and reputation

---

### Rationale

By investing in the charitable and philanthropic sectors, the Foundation is strengthening all those public benefit organizations that serve and support people in Canada. Reducing silos and encouraging knowledge sharing and collaboration will help both sectors to do their work better. While this goal is a comparatively smaller financial investment, it nonetheless has the potential to have great impact.

### Objectives

- 3.1 Support established and early-stage infrastructure organizations that strengthen Canada’s charitable sector
- 3.2 Demonstrate the Foundation’s ongoing commitment to the Philanthropic Declaration of Action
- 3.3 Participate in collaboratives and networks to support the philanthropic sector
- 3.4 Determine the next iteration of Foundation House as a space for convening, collaboration and capacity building

## Goal 4: Align investment strategy with the Foundation’s values and principles

---

### Rationale

Aligning the investment strategy with the Foundation’s values and principles will ensure that the Foundation is leveraging all its assets to contribute to positive change.

### Objectives

- 4.1 Ensure the Foundation’s revenue and spending support its long-term sustainability
- 4.2 Develop a framework for responsibly allocating up to 10% of assets toward impact investing
- 4.3 Ensure the Foundation’s portfolio investment policies and practices reflect its values and principles

## Goal 5: Ensure the governance of the Foundation is future ready and anchored in justice, equity, diversity and inclusion

---

### **Rationale**

As the Foundation continues to change and evolve, ensuring that the Foundation is a welcoming place and inclusive of diverse experiences and perspectives will ultimately ensure that the Foundation is in a good place to continue its work well into the future.

### **Objectives**

- 5.1 Increase diversity on the Board, staff and committees of the Foundation
- 5.2 Create opportunities for people with diverse perspectives and lived experiences to contribute to the Foundation's success and decision-making
- 5.3 Create pathways for continued family engagement with the Foundation, with an emphasis on fourth generation family members



# Appendix A. Definitions

## **Justice**

A justice approach questions the systemic structures, processes and practices that create inequities. It's about getting to the root of the problem and redesigning the system in a new way.

Justice examines reparations, healing, reconciliation, ownership, power in a systemic way.

A justice approach is a systems change process that requires dismantling barriers to resources and opportunities in society so that all individuals and communities can live full and dignified lives.

## **Equity**

Equity requires increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources.

Equity means allocating resources to ensure that everyone has equality of access to the same opportunities. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

## **Diversity**

Diversity requires understanding all the ways in which people differ, and how those differences create advantages versus barriers to opportunities.

Differences from one individual or group include but may not be limited to: language, ethnicity, culture, indigeneity, race, sex, gender, sexuality, citizenship, education, socioeconomic status, religion, marital status, age, ability, geography, housing, mental health, neurodiversity, physical appearance. These differences can intersect creating multiple barriers (e.g., a disabled, immigrant woman; a bi-polar, gay man in a rural town; an Indigenous, homeless youth)

## **Inclusion**

Inclusion is an active, intentional, and continuous process to address inequities in power and privilege. Inclusion requires the creation of preconditions and processes to build respectful and welcoming environments that ensure opportunities for all to flourish.

An inclusion practice centres values, and amplifies the voices, perspectives and styles of those who experience more barriers based on their identities.