



Spotlight On | IDEA in Canada

What is IDEA?

IDEA stands for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access. The Association for Fundraising Professionals (AFP) is committed to promoting and providing an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible environment for its chapters and members. By investing in these areas, AFP strives to remove barriers to the fundraising profession and to ensure that the practice of philanthropy is not only diverse, but inclusive and equitable.

In Canada, these values take on added weight and importance as we navigate the Truth and Reconciliation process and seek to address the ongoing and systemic impact of colonialism and institutional racism. As we recognize the truth of our institutions and the history of their practices, IDEA provides us with the opportunity and tools we need to remove the barriers that hold inequality in place and to imagine a future that supports the self-determination of Indigenous, racialized, and immigrant communities.

Why is this relevant to fundraisers?

As Canadians we embrace the diversity of cultures, abilities, orientations, backgrounds and the beliefs that each one of us contributes to our communities. The social fabric that this creates is one that constantly changes and evolves with each new generation, cultural event and idea that we exchange. It impacts the communities we, as fundraisers, support as well as how we engage with them. With change comes renewal, and through IDEA we can identify solutions that will transform our organizations to be more inclusive of the evolving identities of the people in our communities and workplace.

This is not an easy path to take, but it is a vital and important one and nowhere is this more apparent than in our collective engagement with the outcomes of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Sharing the stories of those directly and indirectly affected by the Residential School system that forcibly placed 150,000 Indigenous children in over 80 residential schools across Canada, the TRC has through its [94 calls to action](#) asked us to imagine a new way forward that acknowledges the important place First Nations peoples and traditions play in our community and our future and the role each of us has to play in reconciliation.

In the [Honouring the Truth Final report](#), it states “reconciliation must inspire Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples to transform Canadian society so that our children and grandchildren can live together in dignity, peace, and prosperity on these lands we now share”. As the Philanthropic Sector, we have a responsibility to ask how the wealth held by our donors and foundations, much of which was at some point extracted from the unceded and ancestral lands of First Nations peoples, can be used to achieve this vision of the future and support the social and economic self-determination of Indigenous communities .

Joining us on this journey are new settlers to Canada with more than one-third of Canadians projected to have been born outside of the country by 2036¹, many with their own experiences of colonialism and racism. As we navigate our collective differences and histories together, IDEA can support you with the intercultural skills and tools you will need to build and deepen relationships with colleagues, donors and community partners from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.

Five actions you can take:

1. Learn from Diverse Fundraisers: The Fellowship in Inclusion and Philanthropy is a 100 percent Canadian developed initiative that has supported over 80 diverse fundraisers across Canada with the resources, mentorship and training to support them in their journey to make our sector and workplaces more inclusive. Each Fellow has completed a research project that you can access and implement in your own organization. Visit www.afpinclusivegiving.ca to learn more.
2. Learn more about Indigenous Peoples: As we move forward in our individual and national journeys through Truth and Reconciliation, it is important that we inform ourselves about the truth of our shared past with Indigenous communities so that we might build healthy, informed, and equitable partnerships together with them. To learn about this history, and the steps you and your organization can take to be in right relationships to Indigenous communities, visit <http://www.trc.ca/> and <https://www.the-circle.ca/>
3. Encourage your chapter to apply for the IDEA Champion Designation: The IDEA Champion Mentor Program is an initiative that provides mentorship and support to chapters that are striving to achieve the [IDEA Champion](#) Designation (formally known as Friends of Diversity). The IDEA Champion Designation recognizes chapters that have accomplished the key objectives that promote inclusion, diversity, equity and access strategic goals. If your chapter would like help in this area, please contact chapter.engagement@afpglobal.org.
4. Support Gender Equality: The AFP Women's Impact Initiative (WII) is an initiative to assess, address and highlight the specific issues and challenges that women in the fundraising profession face, including harassment and the wage gap. You can help make a difference in your chapter by implementing and sharing the research, tools and resources found at www.afpidea.org/wii.
5. Support Bursaries and Scholarships: It is important that AFP's biggest events, and the opportunities they provide for networking and education, are accessible to all AFP members. By making a donation to the AFP Foundation for Philanthropy – Canada, you can help remove financial barriers for our members and ensure they can travel to local and international events like ICON, LEAD and Congress. Visit <https://afpglobal.org/afp-foundation-philanthropy-canada> to make your donation today.

Where can I go for trusted information?

<http://www.afpinclusivegiving.ca/>
www.Afpidea.org
<https://afpglobal.org/initiatives/afp-idea-diversity-inclusion>
<http://www.trc.ca/>
<https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/>
<https://www.whose.land/en/>

¹ Statistics Canada (2019), The labour force in Canada and its regions: Projections to 2036. Retrieved from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/75-006-x/2019001/article/00004-eng.pdf?st=Hxt43VeQ>

“In just a few short years IDEA has had a transformational effect on our profession by empowering our members to shape its culture. At the local, national and international levels we are now openly talking about sexual harassment, creating dedicated spaces that celebrate women’s leadership and impact, and seeing and hearing from more diverse speakers than ever. That is the power of IDEA, and it is something that I’m excited to see continue to evolve and make our profession more representative of the communities we serve.”

- Darius Maze, CFRE Chair of the Fellowship in Inclusion and Philanthropy, Vice President IDEA for AFP Greater Vancouver, and a passionate advocate of inclusion.