

**Alberta Human Rights,  
Citizenship and Multiculturalism  
Education Fund and  
Ethical Leadership**



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## Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund and Ethical Leadership



The Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund is a roughly \$1.4 million annual fund designed to foster equality and encourage inclusiveness. Operated by the Alberta Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture, the fund “provides grants to community organisations and public institutions in Alberta and develops educational resources and programs regarding human rights, women’s issues, and diversity topics.”<sup>1</sup>

The fund is the only one of its kind in Canada – a unique contribution. Establishment of the Fund demonstrated **vision and leadership** in human rights education. Has this vision been achieved in practice? A review with an eye to ethical leadership follows.

### The Education Fund at a Glance

#### GOALS:

- to foster equality
- to promote fairness
- to encourage creation of inclusive workplaces and communities

FUNDING:     2005-06:     \$1.4 million  
                  2006-07:     \$1.7 million

- roughly 80% from Alberta Lottery Fund

INCEPTION: 1996

#### RESPONSIBLE TO:

- Minister, Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture
- supported by an Advisory Committee, chaired by an MLA
- managed by Human Rights and Citizenship Branch
- complements the work of the Human Rights and Citizenship Commission

#### PROJECT ALLOCATIONS:

- activities must advance the mandate
- grants awarded on a competitive basis
- focus: educational resources & programs

#### ELIGIBILITY:

- community organisations
- public institutions

#### TARGET AUDIENCE/INTEREST AREA:

1. Aboriginal
2. Anti-racism, diversity, multiculturalism
3. Children, youth and families
4. Educators
5. Inclusive organisations
6. Persons with disabilities
7. Women’s issues

### 1.0 Fund Objectives

The goal of the fund is to foster equality, to promote fairness, and to encourage creation of inclusive workplaces and communities through promoting human rights and diversity education.

The mandate of the Education Fund is directly linked to the Alberta Government Vision for 2025, *Today’s Advantage, Tomorrow’s Promise: Alberta’s Vision for the Future*.<sup>2</sup> The Education Fund directly supports several of the key vision statements:

- ❖ Its people are free to realize their full potential, and personal choice is the only limit to opportunity.
- ❖ The potentially vulnerable in society, including seniors, children and the disabled, have the support they need to live in dignity, achieve personal satisfaction and independence, and continue to contribute to the betterment of the province.

<sup>1</sup> As outlined at: [http://www.cd.gov.ab.ca/helping\\_albertans/human\\_rights/education\\_fund/index.asp](http://www.cd.gov.ab.ca/helping_albertans/human_rights/education_fund/index.asp) April 17, 2006

<sup>2</sup> Found at: <http://www.finance.gov.ab.ca/publications/budget/budget2005/govbp.html#12>

And to some extent:

- ❖ People feel safe in their homes, on their streets, at work and in their communities
- ❖ Aboriginal Albertans have achieved a socio-economic status equivalent to that of other Albertans

The priority areas and target audiences for the fund as outlined above are: aboriginal, anti-racism, diversity, multiculturalism, children, youth and families, educators, inclusive organisations, persons with disabilities, and women’s issues.

A stakeholder consultation was held February – March 2006 to solicit community input on the Human Rights, Citizenship and Multicultural Education Fund.

*We expect the discussions to provide us with insights about how the Education Fund can best support positive change resulting in full participation of all citizens in Alberta. These insights will guide policy about educational programming and spending priorities over the next five years.*

“Creating Inclusive Communities – A Conversation”  
Background Document<sup>3</sup>

The background document proposed reorientation of the Fund toward more institutional change and policy-level interventions and fewer civic participation and community mobilisation projects. This may lead to changes in fund objectives and programming, and possibly structure and financing.

### *1.1 Analysis of Fund Objectives*

Overall, the **fund objectives** contain a strong orientation toward human rights but are not exclusively targeted. There is no distinction drawn between multiculturalism, citizenship, and human rights in the programming goals, links to the 2025 vision, or the target areas. To some extent this is valid as many issues overlap, such as diversity education which teaches newcomers about their human rights in Alberta and Canada. Within the **reporting structure** for the Fund there is a clearer distinction made around types of projects funded but there is still considerable cross-over in project classification.

From a human rights perspective, however, this **cross-over approach** is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, it is difficult to differentiate the total amount of funds committed to human rights education, the extent of human rights programming, and its impact. Secondly, without a specific human rights education focus, the programming emphasis in this area may be diminished. This concern appears to be validated when looking at types of projects funded (see *The Fund in Practice* below). Thirdly, it gives the mistaken impression that multiculturalism and citizenship education promote human rights – they may, or they may not.

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<sup>3</sup> Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund, Stakeholder Consultation, February – March 2006: Background Document.

While the fund nominally contributes only to education-related activities, the view of **education is broad** – curriculum and materials development, training, public education, and awareness-raising. This is a positive feature of the fund mandate.

### *1.2 Ethical Leadership Recommendations on Fund Objectives*

- Demonstrate a clear commitment to human rights by providing dedicated money for human rights projects. Options include targets or quotas within the existing Education Fund, and/or formal separation of human rights education funds from multiculturalism and citizenship education funds.
- Link fund objectives to the Alberta 2025 vision. One option is to highlight the vulnerable and distinct groups mentioned in Alberta Vision 2025 – children, seniors, the disabled, and Aboriginal Albertans.
- Enable the Education Fund to be responsive to changes in the human rights context in the province, for example to high claim areas like disability and gender, to address anti-Arab bias post 9-11, and to address labour rights concerns after the Brooks meatpackers strike and in the context of in-migration for the oil boom.
- Consider how to use the Education Fund in relation to emerging areas of human rights where there is an opportunity to show proactive leadership – economic, social and cultural rights, sexual orientation protections, age discrimination (especially seniors and children), and inter-sectionality of rights.

## **2.0 Organisational Structure**

The Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission, the Human Rights and Citizenship Branch of Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture, and the Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund share the function of promoting human rights and diversity education.<sup>4</sup>

The Education Fund falls under the Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture. The Fund has no direct staff; staff of the Human Rights and Citizenship Branch of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture administers the Education Fund. Employees also carry out educational work on behalf of the Commission through a secondment-type relationship. Structurally the office tries to maintain separation between the Branch and the Commission according to the *Human Rights Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act (HRCMA)* and for confidentiality. Staff salaries are paid by the department for the most part, with a small percentage of administration supported by the Education Fund.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/fund/>

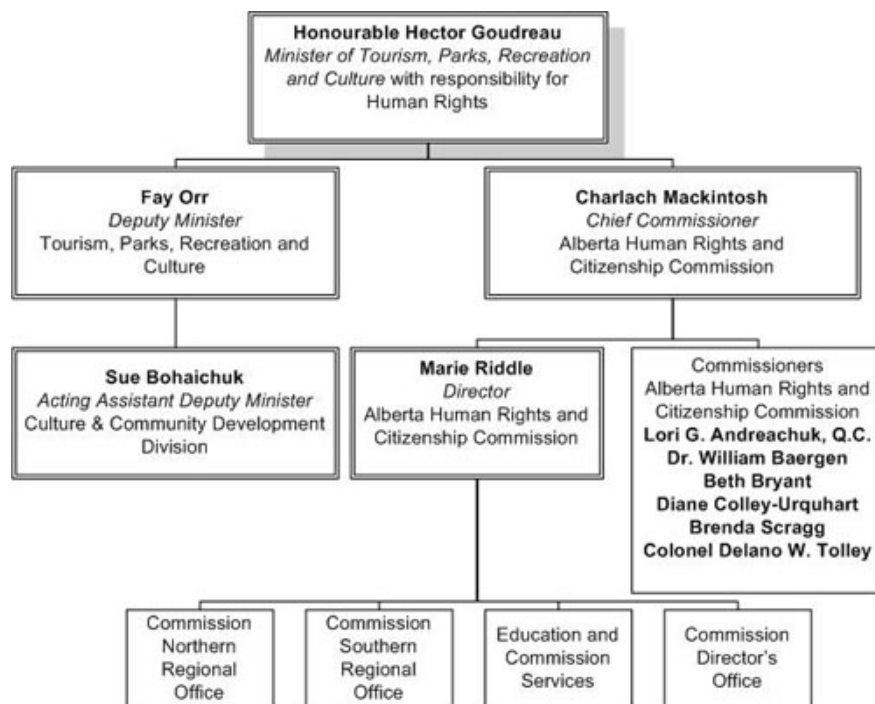
<sup>5</sup> Telephone discussion with Susan Coombes, Human Rights and Multiculturalism Education Fund, September 2006.

The *Human Rights Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act* details the administrative set up of the Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission (s.15) and the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund (s.13). Under the Act, the Minister has authority to administer the fund. The *HRCMA*, s. 44(1(i) defines “minister” as “the Minister determined under section 16 of the *Government Organization Act* as the Minister responsible for this Act”. The only provision referring to staffing states that “there may be appointed a director and any other employees required for the purpose of the administration of this Act.” (s.18)

Non profit-organisations and public institutions apply for funds for education projects. Proposals are reviewed by an Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee reviews applications for grants and makes recommendations to the Minister on use of the funds. The Minister makes a final determination on grant allocations and is responsible to the Legislative Assembly for use of the funds.

The Advisory Committee consists of eight members plus a Secretary, appointed for three years. The Committee is chaired by an MLA and the Chief Commissioner of the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission is the Vice Chair. The remaining five members are appointed by the Minister “...based on their knowledge and expertise in the areas of human rights, citizenship and multiculturalism. The Committee has membership from throughout the province and from a diversity of backgrounds and experience.” (Ministry website, April 2006) The Terms of Reference do allow for the Committee to directly undertake specific projects as identified by the Minister.

## 2.1 Organisational Chart



## 2.2 *Analysis of Organisational Structure*

**Human rights education appears to be well provided for** as it is promoted through three mechanisms: the Education Fund, the Commission, and the Branch. Among these, the Education Fund appears to be the primary route for educating the public about human rights, and certainly the best funded. There are several constraints within this model. As stated, the Fund does not differentiate much between human rights initiatives and others within the mandate. Secondly, the Fund does not include targets or quotas for human rights related work. In some years, there may be no applications for human rights related projects. This is exacerbated by the external application process as the Fund has no control over types of grant requests. On the other hand, the Advisory Committee can carry out projects directed by the Minister, and this does provide some scope for government to redress any imbalances in the types of project proposals received.

The awarding of **grants to community organisations** on a competitive basis is consistent with the overall orientation of the government in recent years toward contracting out and smaller government. This emphasis can lead to greater innovation, creativity, and varied programming approaches. It can also, however, lead to gaps in programming, uneven geographic coverage, imbalance among target audiences, and lack of an overall government vision in human rights education for the province. Community grants may buy political *good will* with multicultural communities but this is a political issue not relevant to an ethical leadership perspective on human rights.

As well, **decision-making** structures have some positive and negative features. The involvement of the Chief Commissioner of the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission as Vice-Chair is an indication that there is strong support for human rights education activities. Having an MLA chair provides for an additional governmental voice, which is also positive. The generalised terms of reference for Advisory Committee members gives flexibility to the Ministry, but leaves room for partisan appointments. Currently, the committee composition emphasis is on content expertise in diversity, human rights and multiculturalism. Operationally, the 2006 Advisory Committee includes a member from the Calgary Board of Education, which is a positive feature. Final selection of projects by the Minister indicates a high degree of political involvement. This is fairly standard for funds of this nature. Lack of opposition MLA involvement on the committee decreases the level of transparency and increases the chance of, *and the appearance of*, partisan funding. Reporting through the Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture is consistent with the community emphasis within the Fund, though the formal name of the Ministry does not mention community.

The arrangement for **secondment of Branch staff** to the Fund and to the Commission is vague in the legislation and in the explanation from Fund personnel. The secondment arrangements appear to be practical, but could be made more transparent. This would demonstrate greater independence of the Commission, in particular.

It is unclear what, if any, relationship exists between the human rights bodies and **other ministries** undertaking human rights education work, such as Alberta Education, Human Resources and Employment, and others. While organisational links are not apparent,

there appear to be some operational level linkages, like the 2004 *Becoming a Parent in Alberta* cross-ministry document. Given the large number of projects focused on education for youth, a formal link to Alberta Education seems beneficial.

### 2.3 *Ethical Leadership Recommendations on Organisational Structure*

- In addition to supporting community projects, consider how best to structure the Education Fund to also provide government-led human rights prevention, promotion and education programs to reach all Albertans and communicate an overall vision of human rights for our society.
- Make structures more transparent, in particular the Advisory Committee and staff secondment arrangements.
- Demonstrate a government-wide commitment to human rights through fostering transparent linkages between the Education Fund and other departments and government bodies.

## 3.0 **Financing Arrangements**

The Education Fund is one of five lottery funded agencies in the province under the Ministry of Community Development (now Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture as of December 2006). The Fund has remained at around \$1.4 million over the past five years.

### 3.1 *Financial Statements, 2001-02 to 2005-06*

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>					
Education Fund Revenues from <b>Lottery</b>	\$ 1,062,000	\$ 1,062,000	\$ 1,265,000	\$ 1,265,000	\$ 1,265,000
Revenues from <b>other</b> sources	\$ 1,433,005	\$ 182,194	\$ 144,110	\$ 201,000	\$ 175,000
<b>TOTAL</b> Revenues	<b>\$ 2,495,005</b>	<b>\$ 1,244,194</b>	<b>\$ 1,409,110</b>	<b>\$ 1,466,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,440,000</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Support to <b>Community</b> Groups	\$ 2,003,184	\$ 745,173	\$ 797,695	\$ 1,014,000	\$ 875,000
<b>Education, Queen's Jubilee and Administration</b>	\$ 489,826	\$ 497,144	\$ 604,090	\$ 455,000	\$ 562,000
<b>TOTAL</b> Direct Expenses	<b>\$ 2,493,010 (see note)</b>	<b>\$ 1,242,287</b>	<b>\$ 1,401,785</b>	<b>\$ 1,469,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,437,000</b>

Source: Annual Financial Statements, Alberta Community Development (now Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture) and Alberta Gaming

Notes: Staff costs are not included in direct expenditures. For 2001-02, over \$1 million in flow-through funds were added for the Queen's Golden Jubilee, but not available for regular Fund programming.

In a March, 2006 press release, the Government of Alberta announced that the Fund will receive an additional \$200,000 from Lottery Funds for 2006-07 bringing the total Fund budget to \$1.710 million (the 2005-06 budget was \$1.5 million, although revenues came in slightly lower than anticipated, as indicated in the above chart). The Fund is managed by the Human Rights and Citizenship Branch of Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture. Fund levels are outlined in the annual budget, which is reviewed and approved in the Legislative Assembly.

The Education Fund has no staff, and is managed by Community Development staff, which is paid largely by the department with a small percentage of administration paid out of the Fund itself. The Advisory Committee Chair receives an annual stipend, the Vice-Chair does not, and all committee members receive an honoraria for meetings attended, at rates set by Ministerial Order.

### 3.2 *Analysis of Financing Arrangements*

Availability of financial statements, budgets, and project expenditure information is very good, on-line, and relatively easily accessible.

Human Rights and Multiculturalism Education Fund is funded primarily by **lottery monies**. This prevents groups who disagree in principle with gambling from applying. The Education Fund staff noted that this is a concern in their presentation in Calgary on February 22, 2006 during the Education Fund Stakeholder Consultations. Education Fund staff have noted that about 15% of the budget comes from sources outside the lottery fund, though no plans to advertise this option have been announced.<sup>6</sup>

**Transparency** around source of revenues in the budget could be improved. Education Fund financial statements record the bulk of revenues as *Transfers from the Department of Community Development*, while it appears that these are actually lottery funds, as reported by Alberta Gaming. This likely reflects accounting practice around source of transfer, but with lottery funding a contentious issue, greater transparency would be valuable. On a positive note, lottery funds are explicitly mentioned in other Education Fund materials.

As well in 2000-01, additional revenues of \$1.4 million over budget are not indicated as flow-through funds for the Queen's Golden Jubilee. Figures for support to communities in the Annual Review 2004-05 do not match 2004-05 Financial Statements. The flow-through funds and discrepancies with the Annual Review documents and website project data are confusing, and greater transparency on the financial statement seems needed.

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<sup>6</sup> E-mail response from Susan Coombes, Education Fund, December 1, 2006.

### 3.3 Ethical Leadership Recommendations on Financing Arrangements

- Address the ethical objection some community groups have with lottery money. For example, consider financing promising projects through an alternative route. Advertise this option.
- Increase transparency around lottery funding in financial statements.
- Increase transparency around variances between financial statements and other Education Fund documents, like the Annual Reviews.

## 4.0 The Fund in Practice

Since the Education Fund supports projects related to human rights, citizenship and multiculturalism, it is useful to try to look specifically at *human rights* projects.

### 4.1 Human Rights Community Projects, 2003-04 to 2005-06

COMMUNITY PROJECTS	2003-04		2004-05		2005-06	
	#	\$	#	\$	#	\$
Reduce discrimination & racism	34	\$ 699,535	36	\$ 701,890	25	\$ 702,490
Address systemic discrimination	6	\$ 83,160	7	\$ 191,390	3	\$ 102,360
Address access & equity	2	\$ 15,000	4	\$ 99,000	3	\$ 50,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>\$ 797,695</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>\$ 992,280</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>\$ 854,850</b>

Source: Annual Reviews, Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund

The Education Fund review shows 100% projects targeted to human rights and anti-discrimination, and 0% for citizenship and multiculturalism.

A different methodology shows some different results. The review of the list of projects on the Education Fund website shows a good number on multiculturalism and citizenship. These include helping immigrants integrate into Alberta society, supporting Aboriginal culture, and creating positive attitudes toward diversity.

The table below includes activities classified as “human rights and responsibilities” by the Education Fund. Other projects on discrimination, racism, harassment, and hate crimes are about human rights, and have been classified as “anti-discrimination” activities by the Sheldon Chumir Foundation. The Foundation acknowledges that this classification is based on limited project summaries, and may be subject to critique.

## 4.2 Sheldon Chumir Foundation Reclassification of Projects

Type of Activity	2003-04				2004-05				2005-06			
	No. of projects		Value of projects		No. of projects		Value of projects		No. of projects		Value of projects	
	#	%	\$	%	#	%	\$	%	#	%	\$	%
Human Rights	3	7%	\$ 55,000	6%	8	19%	\$199,700	21%	2	8%	\$ 35,000	5%
Racism & Discrimination	13	32%	\$372,230	41%	12	28%	\$262,575	28%	9	36%	\$240,550	34%
<b>SUB-Total HR &amp; Discrimin</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>\$427,230</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>\$462,275</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>\$275,550</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>TOTAL community projects</b>	<b>41</b>		<b>\$906,975</b>		<b>43</b>		<b>\$942,780</b>		<b>25</b>		<b>\$711,750</b>	

Source: Website, Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund

NOTE: Total number of projects and values are taken from the Education Fund website list, and there is some variance from the Annual Reviews and Financial Statements.

## 4.3 Analysis of Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination as a Priority

Of course, projects dealing with racism, discrimination, sexual harassment, and hate crimes are about human rights. Our tally of all these types of projects as well as those classified as ‘human rights and responsibilities’ account for roughly **40 – 50%** of total number of projects and dollar values. This is a far cry from the 100% reported by the Education Fund. We found 50-60% of the projects and funding focused on citizenship and multiculturalism.

The Education Fund appears to make **no distinction between supporting diversity and preventing discrimination**. This demonstrates, in our view, an **oversimplification** of the human rights context. Projects which support diversity through, for example, helping immigrants integrate into Alberta society, *may* or *may not* support their human rights. In our view, diversity work is complimentary to human rights advancement but insufficient to ensure promotion, protection, and prevention.

With the introduction of multi-year funding in 2003-04 and new Multicultural Connections Program in 2004-05, the table above shows a slight increase in number of projects and in dollar value in 2004-05. One would expect to see a decline the year after – but a less substantial one. The focus on human rights remains relatively constant, but the total number of projects has declined in **2005-06**. It is impossible to determine causality from the data available, yet the **decline is a concern** worth noting.

## Types of Projects – Community Groups and The Branch

### Community Group Projects

Education Fund projects vary significantly in scope and scale, from small, local projects of less than \$10,000 to larger, regional projects of \$100,000 or more. The majority of projects are concentrated in Edmonton and Calgary, with some in smaller urban centres. Projects are community driven. Multi-year funding was introduced in 2003-04. A Multicultural Connections Grant Program was introduced in 2004-05. Many projects focus on educating vulnerable groups about their rights and how to respond to discrimination. School-based projects tend to focus on promoting inclusion and preventing discrimination.

Materials produced by projects are not available on the Education Fund website, and require considerable effort to access. The Branch Staff are working on a bibliography of resources and materials developed by the Fund to make them more available, and also redesigning the website to increase publicity and accessibility of Education Fund materials.<sup>7</sup>

### Branch Projects

The Branch does develop some independent education resources and carries out public education workshops on human rights – an impressive total of 94 workshops in 2004-05. Of 94 workshops, 90 were customized and not aimed at the general public. There were 3 public workshops addressing duty to accommodate, harassment and employment. Six public service announcements – focused on cultural diversity, inclusion of people with disabilities and women – were produced and shown on Global TV in 2004-05. As well, the Branch has recently produced a series of interpretive bulletins on the *Duty to Accommodate*. In late 2005 the Branch prepared *Human Rights in the Hospitality Industry*, not long after allegations of racism at Calgary nightclubs.

## **4.4 Analysis of Project Types and Implementers**

### Community Projects

The majority of community projects appear to **focus on those who are discriminated against rather than on those who are doing the discriminating**. This is good in terms of human rights education and empowerment for marginalised groups (promotion) but weak in changing public attitudes (prevention). Prevention appears strongest among youth-oriented initiatives.

Lack of information on project target groups is concerning. To what extent are the considerable resources of the **projects reaching Albertans?** Very few projects appear to have a province-wide roll out.

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<sup>7</sup> Telephone discussion with Susan Coombes, Human Rights and Multiculturalism Education Fund, September 2006.

The **responsive mechanism** for community group projects has several **positive features**:

- On-the-ground impact
- Effective local targeting
- Responsiveness to community needs and priorities (or at least to priorities of the NGO or community group itself)

There are several **shortcomings** in operations using an almost exclusively community-driven approach, which diminishes provincial leadership in human rights:

- Lack of province-wide coverage, with particularly poor rural coverage, in the majority of projects
- Disproportionate targeting toward vulnerable groups with little programming targeted toward the public at large
- Materials not widely available

The initiatives by Branch staff to make **materials available to the public** and to include a list of materials on the Education Fund website are excellent and should increase reach, impact, and transparency of projects.

It is notable that the **same organisations** are receiving Education Fund grants numerous times over several years, for a range of projects. This may indicate strong support for the Fund among those groups. It may also indicate limited outreach or publicity to other community groups and organisations not yet familiar with the Fund. Unfortunately, there is no information on grant applications which were rejected. In the interests of transparency, it might be useful to provide this in future.

#### *Branch Projects*

Public workshops appear to be **focused on employers** and employment-related human rights protections. Education workshop **rural coverage** appears weak. The **Public Service Announcements** are a positive initiative as they reach all Albertans, including those in rural areas, and focus on prevention. More generalised human rights education that includes rural areas and smaller centres seems called for.

#### *4.5 Ethical Leadership Recommendations on Operations*

- Develop government programs to supplement gaps in community projects in terms of:
  - content and coverage of the full range of human rights
  - target groups including missing vulnerable groups such as seniors
  - geographic coverage and particularly rural outreach
  - prevention initiatives targeted at the majority.
- Use the Education Fund to communicate an Alberta vision of human rights to all citizens. Continue to ensure that operations match the vision.
- Consider how Education Fund programming could address distinctions between diversity and human rights in a substantive way.

## 5.0 National Context

As mentioned before, the Education Fund is unique in Canada – no other province or territory has a similar fund. All, however, do carry out human rights education in some form. It is useful to briefly look at how Alberta compares with other jurisdictions.

Under the new B.C. human rights tri-partite system, the B.C. Human Rights Coalition is charged with carrying out public education on human rights. Having a discrete education mandate clearly demonstrates ethical leadership on this front, however in practice staff noted that budget constraints and a prescribed number of annual workshops are limiting their educational outreach. BC Human Rights Tribunal employees stated that they find the Alberta human rights Branch materials to be superior and very useful to their work.<sup>8</sup>

### 5.1 CASHRA Human Rights Awareness and Education Survey

The Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA) survey undertaken in 2003 provides information about human rights awareness and education initiatives as self-reported by member Commissions and Fair Practice offices. Members are: Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. It is a good basis for comparison of materials, approaches, and relative content emphasis, though it is three years old.<sup>9</sup>

The survey shows that Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission (AHRCC) publications and public workshops have focused on education of employers, unions and employees. Collaborations with other community organizations or government agencies are also workplace-oriented. Employment-related human rights education is dominant in all provincial Human Rights Commissions and the Canadian Human Rights Commission as well.

Some of the other provincial Human Rights Commissions have shown themselves to be broader in their approach to human rights education and promotion than Alberta. Targeted education about rights of the elderly, street youth, and ethnic communities has been a focus in Québec, for example. The Commission in Québec undertakes some international work in providing teacher training and capacity building opportunities in Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia. New Brunswick reports to the United Nations on provincial progress in implementing international human rights instruments. Saskatchewan and Manitoba have cultivated community partnerships to develop meaningful and accessible information for aboriginal communities. In Nunavut, the Fair Practices Office engaged community organizations and land claims groups to create a Human Rights Act for the territory. The Ontario Commission has conducted public consultations regarding racial profiling, and has created a human rights film festival. The National Human Rights Commission specifically addresses HIV/AIDS related human rights issues, poverty and human rights, and hate crimes/propaganda, to name just a few.

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<sup>8</sup> Conference call with Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership, May 10, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Staff of the Alberta Branch noted that the education work is much different now than was the case in 2003, when the CASHRA survey was done, in an e-mail communication, October 17, 2006.

Areas in which the AHRCC has been active where other Commissions are not include the area of human rights issues related to pregnancy and employment, and maternity leave. The AHRCC has also researched and compiled a human rights bibliography of literature and references for youth and children.

## **5.2 Analysis of Comparative Education Activities**

The dedicated monies and organisation of the Education Fund in Alberta is highly valuable in ensuring a **strong education orientation**. No other commission puts as many resources into education and promotion, a fact which is lamented by B.C. and Saskatchewan staff and most likely others as well. Human rights education in Alberta has not been relegated to the bottom of the priority list, as in other jurisdictions in Canada. This is a key strength of this approach, in our view.

Education work in Alberta is **employment-focused**, to the apparent exclusion of other areas. This is not unique to Alberta and seems to be a challenge for all jurisdictions surveyed, except for Québec which has a more varied program.

Alberta appears to be a **leader** in human rights education regarding pregnancy and maternity leave, and workplace sexual harassment.

Alberta seems to be **lagging** in other areas, notably attention to human rights of the elderly and street youth, establishing partnerships between the Branch and AHRCC with ethnic and Aboriginal communities, educating citizens about international human rights protection, educating about the link between poverty and human rights abuses, and addressing racial profiling, land claims, HIV/AIDS, hate crimes and propaganda.

Perhaps it is fair to say, however, that much of the **innovative** public awareness and education efforts in Alberta have come out of **community projects** which have been financially supported by the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund, rather than directly from the AHRCC itself. One example is an interesting project for schools on body image and reducing ‘weightism’ even though weight is not a protected ground in the province. We applaud this proactive approach.

## **5.3 Ethical Leadership Recommendations on Education in the National Context**

- Broaden the scope of government-led education beyond the workplace.
- Share leading edge work around pregnancy, sexual harassment and maternity leave with counterparts, and continue to advance this work.
- Explore areas of human rights education where Alberta is weak:
  - Elderly
  - Street youth
  - Ethnic and Aboriginal community partnerships with the Branch and AHRCC, not only the Education Fund

- International human rights instruments and engagement with the global community
- Racial profiling
- Land claims
- HIV/AIDS
- Hate crimes and propaganda
- Poverty

Demonstrate ethical leadership by advancing human rights education in these underrepresented areas.

- Build on Education Fund experience in community partnerships to extend this collaboration to the AHRCC itself, as in other provinces and territories

## **6.0 Big Picture Considerations**

Impact analysis is notoriously difficult to undertake, and is already being looked at by the staff who manage the Fund.

It is useful to ask some questions around effectiveness from a leadership angle:

Is the Education Fund achieving our human rights objectives? More specifically, is it preventing human rights violations and promoting adherence?

How well is the Education Fund educating Albertans about human rights? What evidence do we have?

Is the link between diversity and human rights working well in programming?

Is the money well spent, in comparison with education work of other provinces?

Ethical leadership requires reflection on the goals and vision of human rights education in Alberta, analysis of the current human rights situation and education programming efforts, and attention to the impact that actions and oversights today may have on future generations, and the most vulnerable in our society. The Education Fund is a unique contribution in Canada – it serves all our interests to ensure that it reaches its full potential.