

Grant Making Case Statement

The Atkinson Foundation is committed to achieving lasting change that transform's people's lives. Through our grant making, we support innovative thinkers, leaders and organizations that are working to reduce poverty and promote the values of democracy through the active and engaged participation of the public. When making grants we think about long term strategies. Because our mission is broad and our resources are limited we carefully target our support so that it can be used more effectively and leverage the greatest amount of impact.

To that end we consult with practitioners, researchers, policy makers, current and present grantees and others to identify where our resources are needed most in any given area. We will then pinpoint specific approaches grantees might undertake, key benchmarks for progress and the funding we are able to dedicate. We will then seek partners to deliver projects; we do not take unsolicited applications.

We fund charities registered in Ontario that seek to build new partnerships and work together to address key issues. We want to support organizations to innovate, develop, grow and sustain themselves and we believe that the best way to do this is by working to address problems collaboratively. We will initiate projects, work in partnership with a range of stakeholders, and support innovation through those partnerships.

Distinctive features of our grantmaking philosophy and practice:

- We initiate grant applications and project ideas, the Board and staff are involved in this process.
- To maximize impact, funding is limited to registered charities involved in social and economic justice and networks involved in strategic contributions to the social policy and practice landscape.
- Grantees must have partnerships with a community based organizations, be innovative thinkers with dynamic networks, or leading key social policies to support Canadian children and their families.
- We value organizations involved in grassroots community organizing or organizational partnerships for which community engagement is part of a wider strategy
- We work in partnership with those that we fund to achieve a shared vision of change based on the values of our founder Joseph E. Atkinson.

Those values are articulated in the following principles:

A strong, united and independent Canada: Atkinson argued for a strong central government and the development of distinctive social, economic and cultural policies appropriate to an independent country.

Social Justice: Atkinson was relentless in pressing for social and economic programs to help those less advantaged and showed particular concern for the least advantaged among us.

Individual and Civil Liberties: Atkinson always pressed for equal treatment of all citizens under the law, particularly minorities, and was dedicated to the fundamental freedoms of belief, thought, opinion and expression and the freedom of press.

Community and Civic Engagement: Atkinson continually advocated the importance of proper city planning, the development of strong communities with their vibrant local fabrics and the active involvement of citizens in civic affairs.

The Rights of Working People: The Star was born out of a strike in 1892 and Atkinson was committed to the rights of working people including freedom of association and the safety and dignity of the workplace.

The Necessary Role of Government: When Atkinson believed the public need was not met by the private sector and market forces alone, he argued strongly for government intervention.

We have made the decision to concentrate our funding on solutions that involve a significant level of the engagement and participation of a wide range of stakeholders.

Through the 7 partnerships we have established from January 2012, the Atkinson Foundation will focus on the following priority areas over the next 2 years:

1. Supporting the development of a more sustainable not-for-profit sector that engages the communities it serves and has access to a robust body of evidence in order to inform and support the direction of policy.
2. Championing a publicly managed system for children and families prenatal to 12 through strategic partnerships, research, practice and policy.