

## The Quebec charter of values and the need for embracing differences

*Inspirit Foundation awards \$250,000 to 15 projects that bring young people together to learn about differences and lead positive change in communities across Canada*

Toronto, November 20, 2013 - The Parti Québécois' charter of values proposes a ban on public servants wearing religious adornments. Considered by many as discriminatory, the charter is a reminder of the importance of creating opportunities to embrace differences in an increasingly diverse society.

Young people of different spiritual, religious and secular backgrounds in 15 communities nationwide will now have opportunities to interact, dialogue and embrace differences through the Inspirit Foundation Pluralism Grants. They will engage in projects to expand their knowledge of the growing and rich diversity in our communities, while increasing leadership skills and creating initiatives for the common good. The 15 projects selected will receive a total of \$250,000 in grants.

"We believe that young people can drive the social changes needed to ensure everyone feels included and our differences are valued, rather than feared," said Andrea Nemtin, President and CEO of the Inspirit Foundation. "The launch of the 15 projects is an important step forward in Inspirit's efforts to strengthen youth leadership in our communities and build a more inclusive and pluralist Canada."

In Greater Montreal, Quebec, young people aged 18 to 30 will explore pluralism through the creation of videos featuring people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs. They will use the videos to engage the community in discussions about pluralism, spirituality and identity. Called *Pluralism: Tell it; See it; Hear it*, the project is led by the Atwater Library and Computer Centre in partnership with Innovation Youth, the As-Salam Mosque/IQRA Foundation, and faithblender.com.

The United Nations Association in Canada will also receive an Inspirit Foundation Pluralism Grant for the *Crowdmapping Pluralism in YEG project*. The initiative is a partnership with the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action and the Somali Canadian Education & Rural Development Organization (SCERDO). Through this initiative, young people and communities in Edmonton, Alberta, will use multimedia, social media and web technologies to enhance the sharing, understanding and inclusion of different spiritual, religious and secular beliefs through storytelling, photography, videos, and crowdmapping. These media pieces will then be geotagged on an online crowdmap platform and shared with the public.

The organizations that will receive an Inspirit Foundation Pluralism Grant are:

1. Abbotsford Community Services - Abbotsford, BC
2. Atwater Library and Computer Centre/Bibliothèque et centre d'informatique Atwater - Greater Montreal, QC
3. Canadian Red Cross Society - Regina, SK
4. Community Sector Council Newfoundland and Labrador - St. John's, NL
5. Fraser Basin Council Society - Williams Lake, BC
6. imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival - Toronto, ON

7. Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver - BC
8. John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights - Edmonton, AB
9. Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties - Winnipeg, MB
10. Powell River Diversity Initiative Society - Powell River, BC
11. South Shore District Health Authority - Bridgewater, NS
12. Sri Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara Association - Lower Mainland, BC
13. Tangled Art + Disability - Toronto, ON
14. The Catalyst Centre/Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre - Toronto, ON
15. United Nations Association in Canada - Edmonton, AB

### **About Inspirit**

The Inspirit Foundation is a national, grant-making organization that supports young people aged 18 to 30 in building a more inclusive and pluralist Canada. One way we do this is by funding projects that foster engagement and exchange between young people of different spiritual, religious and secular backgrounds. To receive updates on our Pluralism Grants, including information about the next call for applications, please subscribe to our mailing list at [www.inspiritfoundation.org](http://www.inspiritfoundation.org) or connect with us on Twitter [@InspiritFdn](https://twitter.com/InspiritFdn) and [facebook.com/InspiritFoundation](https://facebook.com/InspiritFoundation).

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