



Canadian
Race Relations
Foundation

Fondation
canadienne des
relations raciales



Our Canada 2015-2017



Exploring Canadian values
through culture, faith and identity

WELCOME TO OUR CANADA

03	INTRODUCTION
06	RESEARCH: CANADIAN VALUES
08	COMMUNITY NETWORKS: CONNECTING ONLINE
10	SYMPOSIA: LIVING TOGETHER
12	DIVERSITY CHAMPIONS: CROSS-CANADA WORKSHOPS
14	ENGAGE: YOUTH VIDEO CHALLENGE
16	SCHOOLS: IN THE CLASSROOM
18	YOUTH: CAFÉ CANADA
20	CELEBRATE: 150 STORIES
22	CITIZENSHIP: LIVED EXPERIENCE
24	LESSONS LEARNED: HONOURING DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES





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The Canadian Race Relations Foundation is Canada's leading agency dedicated to working toward the elimination of racial discrimination and promoting harmonious race relations. Its mission is to advance Canadian identity in the pursuit of positive race relations, equity, fairness, social harmony and dignity for all Canadians. It accomplishes this by providing independent, outspoken national leadership; informing national policies and public conversations, and acting as a resource and facilitator.

The *Our Canada* project leverages the CRRF's online resource capabilities – enhanced in 2014 with a robust online bibliographic search capacity – and builds on the key achievements of the **Interfaith and Belonging** initiative, particularly the establishment of strong faith and community networks.

Each of the 10 components of the *Our Canada* project provides a platform for Canadians to come together and do the work required to achieve long-term improvement, greater public understanding and viable change. By building awareness and understanding of Canadian values, promoting good citizenship, and deepening a sense of belonging for all Canadians, we can realize the promise of Canada's 150 years as a nation.

– Anita Bromberg, Executive Director



2017: 150 YEARS OF CONFEDERATION

Our Canada is a three-year project designed to heighten awareness and understanding of, and respect for, Canadian values and traditions. Ten cross-Canada initiatives engage people in discussions and activities that recognize diversity as a national asset, and promote core Canadian values and civic engagement as everyone's contribution to building a stronger country.

The *Our Canada* project culminates in the historic opportunity to celebrate these values and traditions as part of Canada's sesquicentennial in 2017.

The project was conceived and developed through the CRRF's ongoing process of research and consultation, and working with key individuals and organizations in the public, private and non-profit sectors.

REFLECTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



As the peoples in this land become more diverse, so, too, does our understanding of what it means for each of us to call this place home.

A land of many peoples carries many perspectives, and yet when we take the time to talk, we discover that we have a lot in common. The 10 initiatives described in this book provide varied means of getting to the heart of the values that we all share, while staying reflective of Canadian diversity, and inclusive of Aboriginal Peoples', francophone and newcomer perspectives.

Each initiative fits into one of four themes: Canadian Values; Civic Engagement; Youth Engagement, and Nation Building – Canada 150.



01

REPORT ON CANADIAN VALUES

When asked to identify their most important value from a list of 10, respondents scored “respect for human rights and freedoms” highest at 21 per cent. When asked specifically about multiculturalism, 60 per cent agreed that it requires reasonable accommodation of cultural practices, including practices about which the respondents might feel uncomfortable.





RESEARCH: CANADIAN VALUES

The **Report on Canadian Values**, based on a survey of over 2,000 adults, provides a timely insight into the societal issues – including multiculturalism and religious accommodation – that are top of mind for many Canadians.

Although respect for human rights and freedoms is noted as a prevailing Canadian value, and the reasonable accommodation of cultural practices is viewed as a core tenet of multiculturalism, responses to other questions concerning multiculturalism reveal a troubling schism between theoretical acceptance and practical application, indicating a pressing need for an ongoing national dialogue led by the CRRF.

To further inform that dialogue, the *Our Canada* research initiative builds on the report by conducting ongoing surveys, expert interviews, panel discussions, community consultations and symposia.



02

STAYING CONNECTED

In a country as geographically vast as Canada, the internet is an essential tool for building a collective awareness and understanding of Canadian values and identity. *Our Canada* plays a key role in establishing and supporting online community networks for diversity and inclusion leaders from all sectors.





COMMUNITY NETWORKS: CONNECTING ONLINE

Online networks create opportunities to reach into, and between, workplaces and communities that otherwise might never connect. These networks create a virtual space where we can promote Canadian values by sharing messages of kindness to others and building bridges for peace, harmony and good citizenship.

Following three years of work with the CRRF and a dedicated group of community and faith advisors, the *Our Canada* project is furthering the ideal of a national network of diversity and inclusion champions who are committed to Canadian values, social cohesion and belonging, as well as the promotion of a culture of civility and mutual respect that honours the principles and realities of Canadian multiculturalism.



03

FAITH, BELONGING AND CANADIAN VALUES

The **Living Together** symposia are cross-country discussions and knowledge-sharing events devoted to building a deeper understanding and awareness of Canadian values. They are facilitated and promoted in partnership with regional partners and community representatives.





November 2014 to March 2016



SYMPOSLIA: LIVING TOGETHER

The *Our Canada* project is connecting people across Canada in an important national conversation about citizenship, inclusion and multiculturalism/interculturalism.

Living Together: Faith, Belonging and Canadian Values is a series of nine symposia, organized in partnership with regional and community representatives, for the purpose of bringing everyone into the conversation about Canadian values. Symposia delegates expand their network of colleagues and explore contemporary research and best practices through presentations, panel discussions and workshops.

Living Together connects regional faith and community leaders, academics and diversity champions, and is open to anyone engaged in activities committed to deepening our collective awareness and understanding of Canadian values and identity.



04

BRINGING YOUR WHOLE SELF

Regional **Cross-Canada Workshops** are an opportunity to have an open and productive conversation about faith and faith-based issues and to discuss new situations that have emerged with the growth of Canadian multiculturalism.





DIVERSITY CHAMPIONS: CROSS-CANADA WORKSHOPS

Cross-Canada Workshops are full-day sessions for management-level professionals who are leading diversity and inclusion initiatives. They are designed to build knowledge about cultural and faith-related situations in the workplace or community, and increase the capacity to manage situations arising out of conflicting religious practices or cultural values.

The workshops are geared toward executives, managers, human resources professionals, communications specialists, counsellors and mediators working in businesses, schools and community settings. Participants talk about faith in Canada with local faith leaders and discuss new situations that have emerged with the growth of Canada's multi-faith and multicultural population.

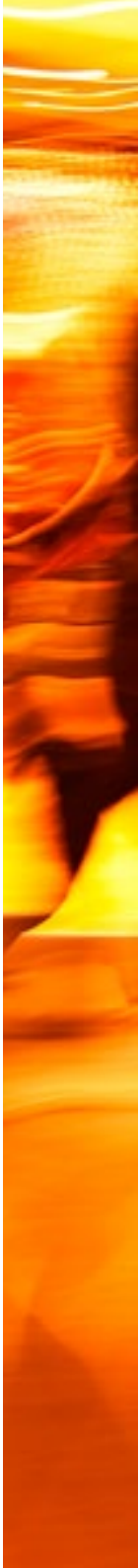
The CRRF's **Faith and Belonging** Toolkit includes resources that can be added to existing diversity training initiatives. Related resources are maintained and updated by the CRRF and available on the CRRF website.



05

CANADIAN VALUES AND IDENTITY

The top four entries selected from the **Youth Video Challenge** become *Our Canada* public service announcements for national television broadcast.





ENGAGE: YOUTH VIDEO CHALLENGE

The positive response to the CRRF's 2012 Youth Video Awards confirmed that young people respond to a national forum on faith, Canadian values and identity.

The ***Our Canada Youth Video Challenge*** encourages young people to produce 30-second videos depicting their understanding of Canadian values and identity. Awards are presented in four categories: Aboriginal Peoples, English Language, French Language and Newcomer Youth.

The videos are made available through social media and broader media, as well as the CRRF's growing resource of visual media representing the perspectives, creativity and collaborative efforts of young people.

Videos are judged on their representation of Canadian values and Canadian identity.

The top four videos are broadcast on national television. Videos are featured in the CRRF's print and social media campaigns.



06

CANADIAN VALUES AND CITIZENSHIP

In the Classroom provides teachers with engagement activities that initiate discussions about topics such as faith, values and Canadian identity. Schools that complete **In the Classroom** activities are recognized by the CRRF with a citation and identified in media and online communications.



SCHOOLS: IN THE CLASSROOM

Building on the CRRF's **Interfaith and Belonging** project, the **In the Classroom** study guides and activities help teachers and students to lead discussions and activities centred around Canadian values and good citizenship.

The study guides, activities and related resources support Canadian Grades 7 to 12 curriculum outcomes. The activities are creative ways to contribute to Canada's sesquicentennial year celebrations through writing, video, photographs and more.

Teachers and young change-makers are also invited to submit relevant best practices to the CRRF's Clearinghouse and Awards of Excellence program.

All participating schools are recognized by the CRRF with a citation and named in media and online communications.

Young people have the opportunity to be published, have their video broadcast on national television, and their photographs featured on a printed poster.

In 2016, award recipients will be invited as special guests of the CRRF's biennial Symposium and Awards of Excellence event.



07

SEE PEOPLE FOR WHO THEY REALLY ARE

Young people and youth leaders meet at **Café Canada** events, where they learn about each other and discuss topics such as multiculturalism, life in Canada and the importance of shared Canadian values.





YOUTH: CAFÉ CANADA

Café Canada is made up of four regional events that bring young people together with youth leaders from their communities to participate in activities that facilitate discussion and action on civic engagement, Canadian values, integration and belonging.

The event incorporates the World Café method, which brings together groups of people who circulate around a series of table stations, with discussions facilitated by a table host who stays at the station. At each table, there is a question designed to encourage discussion.

The gatherings are highly participatory and a visual recorder (note taker) creates a graphic record of each session.

Delegates participate in small group training to support their efforts to promote Canadian values and citizenship within their home, school and work communities. The CRRF supports young Canadians in their efforts to follow up with local activities.



08

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

150 Stories – one per week through 2017 – about remarkable Canadians, and Canadian ideas, initiatives and experiences. Open call for submissions begins January 2015 and extends for 150 weeks.





Begins January 2015 for 150 Weeks



CELEBRATE: 150 STORIES

150 Stories is an ongoing initiative of the *Our Canada* project in which the CRRF publishes one story per week for 150 weeks. Inspired by Canada's upcoming sesquicentennial, **150 Stories** pays tribute to Canada's diversity, democratic principles and multiculturalism by telling the stories of remarkable Canadian individuals, organizations, initiatives and historic events.

Story themes – including democracy, respect for human rights and freedom, multiculturalism, equity, bilingualism, compassion, civility and coexistence – build on the findings of the **Report on Canadian Values**.

The **150 Stories** initiative represents the values, vision, social responsibility and passion of the *Our Canada* project.



09

EXPERIENCES OF IMMIGRATION AND BELONGING

Lived Experience is a video resource that celebrates Canadian diversity through stories of immigration and belonging.





CITIZENSHIP: LIVED EXPERIENCE

Lived Experience is a curated video channel featuring short video sequences created by and about newcomers; first-generation Canadians; the children and grandchildren of immigrants, and Canadian immigrants notable for their contributions to this country. It includes Aboriginal perspectives on settlement.

The videos comprise a vital resource that can be used to stimulate workshops and discussions about the responsibilities of Canadian citizenship, identity, belonging and values.

Existing videos and new submissions are accepted. Videos are included in the CRRF's searchable online Clearinghouse.

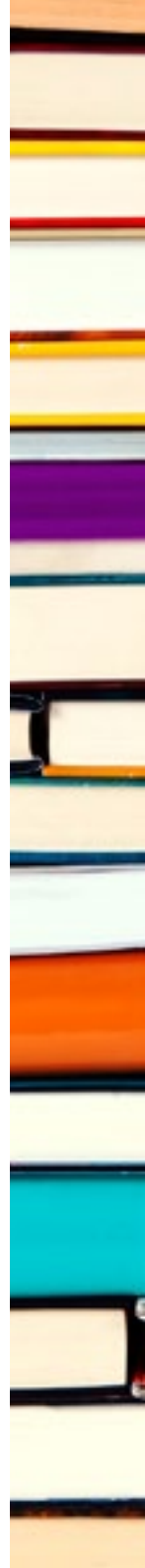
The CRRF encourages new video production reflective of the energy and purpose behind Canada's sesquicentennial celebrations.



10

OUR COLLECTIVE HISTORY

Canada is a land of many peoples and many histories. The CRRF's monograph (published online and in print), and its complementary online resource centre containing additional materials, support education and dialogue about our collective history.





LESSONS LEARNED: HONOURING DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

While there is much to admire about Canada, it has throughout its history faced challenges that represent a valuable opportunity to learn and share stories.

Lessons Learned consists of a monograph and complementary resources that examine Canadian history from a variety of perspectives, and reflect on the process of engaging in Canadian life.

Lessons Learned encourages dialogue about Canadian identity and values. This initiative supports the work that is taking place in settlement agencies, community organizations and cultural institutions, and throughout the Canadian educational system.

OUR EXTRAORDINARY DIVERSITY



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“ Most Canadians agree that multiculturalism contributes to social cohesion, has a positive impact on ethnic and religious minorities, and makes it easier for newcomers to adapt to, and adopt, shared Canadian values. Yet when it comes to religious expression in the public sphere, there is still a question of how far Canadians are willing to accede to meet multiculturalism’s promise of integration and inclusion.

– Anita Bromberg, Executive Director
Canadian Race Relations Foundation

“ The results of the CRRF survey provide grounds for optimism about Canada’s future. We will almost certainly continue to disagree about how best to address the distinctive challenges arising from our extraordinary diversity, including issues of federalism, bilingualism and multiculturalism. But these disagreements are framed and contained within two overarching areas of mutual commitment: civility at the level of everyday interactions and core liberal democratic values at the level of the Constitution.

– Dr. William Kymlicka, Queen’s University

A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR DIALOGUE



“ The Canadian Race Relations Foundation is uniquely positioned to build a national framework for dialogue on Canadian values and identity, and the **Our Canada** project is dedicated to laying the groundwork for building a harmonious society made up of multiple cultures, faiths and ethnicities, working and living side by side, as we commemorate Canada’s sesquicentennial and look toward the next 150 years.

– Albert C. Lo, Chairperson
Canadian Race Relations Foundation

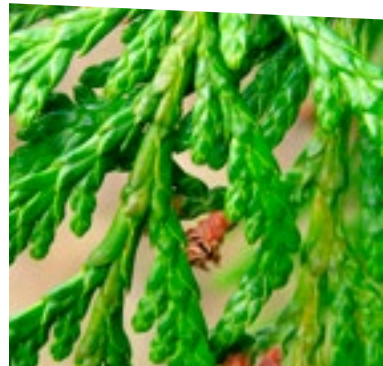
STAY IN TOUCH

The Canadian Race Relations Foundation
6 Garamond Court, Suite 225
Toronto, Ontario
M3C 1Z5

416-441-1900 | 1-888-240-4936

info@crrf-fcrr.ca

WWW.CRRF-FCRR.CA



A national framework for dialogue on Canadian values