



ANNUAL REPORT

November 1, 2023 to October 31, 2024

OVERVIEW

The Yukon Law Foundation (Foundation) was established in 1979. The Foundation carries out its mandate under the Yukon *Legal Profession Act* proclaimed into force on April 1, 1985. A new *Legal Profession Act* was finalized by the Government of Yukon in 2017 and it was proclaimed into force on February 16, 2020.

The Law Foundation depends almost entirely on the interest collected from the trust accounts of lawyers practicing law in the Yukon and from interest on the Foundation's investments to provide funding for grants and scholarships to Yukoners and Yukon organizations. The funding available to the Foundation to pursue its objectives therefore varies from year to year depending on the interest rates and the amount of client money held in trust in lawyers' trust accounts.

Since the fall of 2018, the Foundation has also received an annual levy of \$50 per Law Society of Yukon member. The total received for 2023-24 was \$23,350.

For the year ending October 31, 2024, the total amount of interest on lawyers' trust accounts received by the Foundation was \$625,115. The Foundation also received \$58,170 interest in GIC investments.

Individuals or organizations wishing to apply for grant funding from the Foundation should communicate with:

Yukon Law Foundation
Box 31789
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 6L3
Phone: (867) 667-7500
Fax: (867) 393-3904
E-mail: execdir@yukonlawfoundation.com
Web Site: www.yukonlawfoundation.com

The Board has typically met twice per year to review grant applications (generally in April and September). Scholarship applications are considered once a year at the fall meeting. The Board also meets when required to discuss matters within its mandate.

OBJECTIVES

As noted in the Introduction, the Yukon Law Foundation is the recipient of the interest that banks must pay on the trust accounts of lawyers who practise law in the Yukon. The objects of the Foundation are to use these funds for:

- (a) To contribute to the legal education and knowledge of members and the people of Yukon;
- (b) To establish, maintain, and operate law libraries for public use;
- (c) To support research into and recommendations for the reform of law and the administration of justice; and
- (d) To do other things that are incidental or conducive to the objects described in paragraphs (a) to (c).

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The affairs of the Yukon Law Foundation are conducted by a Board of Directors composed of six members, three being appointed by the Commissioner in Executive Council and three being appointed by the Law Society of Yukon. The Board members serve for three-year terms.

The members of the Yukon Law Foundation Board of Directors during the 2023-24 fiscal year were:

Appointed by the Law Society of Yukon

Board Members: Alex Benitah
 James Barsby
 Arthur Mauro

Appointed by Government of Yukon

Board Members: Mike Reynolds
 Jody Woodland
 Erin Gobert

The Board selects its own **Chair** from among its membership. Mike Reynolds is currently serving as Chair.

The Board contracts an Executive Director for the Yukon Law Foundation.

Executive Director: Deana Lemke

The Board of Directors meets to consider applications, management of the Board's funds, and related matters. Decisions are made in accordance with the direction of the majority of the members present at a meeting. The Foundation presents a record of its financial position at each meeting and grants and scholarships are considered in light of the current revenues of the Foundation and the merits of each application. Applicants who receive grants are required to acknowledge in their grant activities the funding contributed by the Foundation.

GRANTS

Grant funding was approved during the fiscal year ending October 31, 2024 for the following projects:

Law Library

- Law Library Society of the Yukon
Satellite legal information and reference collection –
Whitehorse Correctional Centre campus \$ 8,550
- Law Library Society of Yukon
Renew subscription to HeinOnline \$ 5,825
- Law Library Society of the Yukon
Legal research collection \$21,100

Other Organizations

- Canadian Legal Information Institute
Leveraging artificial intelligence to summarize Yukon
primary legal information \$31,521
- Yukon Public Legal Education Association
Self-represented litigants in Yukon Supreme Court family
matters presentation and materials \$17,000
- Supreme Court of Yukon
Self-represented litigants \$43,855
- Feather Walk Inc.
Justice Trauma Conference 2025 \$10,000

Total Grants Approved: \$137,851

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships were awarded to the following two Yukon students, for a combined total amount of \$5,000:

- Austin Shepherd Wipp
- Austin Au

NATIONAL LAW FOUNDATION MEETING

The Association of Canadian Law Foundations (ACLF) is comprised of representatives from each provincial and territorial law foundation and the BC Notaries Society. Under the umbrella of the ACLF, there are opportunities to exchange information about issues of common concern, discuss best practices, and collaborate on national funding initiatives. The exchange of information assists in many ways. For example, when negotiating bank rates for interest on lawyers' trust accounts (IOLTA), it can offer smaller foundations greater leverage knowing the rates that larger foundations have negotiated. Since our Foundation's funding is derived primarily from IOLTA, every percentage point makes a difference when it comes to interest rates. Our Foundation benefits greatly from being a member of this national organization and greatly appreciates this collaborative network.

Every year, a meeting of Chairs, Executive Directors, and Trustees is held for ACLF member foundations. Each province and territory take a turn hosting the annual meeting.

This year, the ACLF meeting was held in Vancouver, BC, from September 19 to 21, 2024. Board Member Jody Woodland and Executive Director Deana Lemke participated in this meeting. In addition to dealing with routine business and discussing matters of common concern, key topics on the agenda related to financial management and proper stewardship of our respective Law Foundations' funds, data collection, and communications.

FINANCIALS

The accounting firm of Estrada & Tan was retained to provide audited Financial Statements for the Yukon Law Foundation for the fiscal year ending October 31, 2024.

The audited financial statements are included in this report.



Chair
Yukon Law Foundation