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The victory and the challenges of the Canada Summer Jobs changes

It is Canada Summer Jobs time again in Canada. The application period for the 2019 Canada Summer Jobs program opened in mid-December and closed the end of January. As you know, Christian charities and churches in Canada tap into the funding provided by the government to hire students and offer programs in their communities, often services that help the vulnerable and marginalized. Last year in a broadly criticized move the government added an attestation that left many faith-based groups ineligible or unable to apply in good conscience.

After widespread protest and multiple inputs from faith-based groups, including a major role played by the EFC, the problematic attestation from the 2018 application (which the EFC held to

be tantamount to a values test) was removed from this year's application. We believe the changes will mean that churches and most faith-based organizations will be eligible for 2019.

We are thankful to our partners and donors who heeded our call to interact with MPs and the government on this issue, by way of emails, letters, visits and phone calls. It made a difference.

The new attestation says: "Any funding under the Canada Summer Jobs program will not be used to undermine or restrict the exercise of rights legally protected in Canada." Unlike last year's attestation, this limitation is tied only to the use of the funds, and not to the values or activities of the organization generally.



The ability to check off this attestation, then, should not be impacted by other activities carried out by the employing organization, for example, a church in which the pastor has preached about life issues, marriage or sexuality.

We judge that the positive change here is the government's making of a funding decision based on activities, not on the basis of a values attestation. This revised attestation – although better for most Christian organizations – means that organizations that engage primarily in pro-life advocacy work will likely not be eligible for funding under the program.

Funded projects will also need to be open, without discrimination. For example, a church-run day camp that

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What you can do:

- If you interacted with your MP on the 2018 attestation requirement, thank you. Please consider thanking any politician to whom you might have spoken. It is important to remind government that the Canadian Church does not just complain, but we express gratitude as well.
- Please continue to check back at www.TheEFC.ca/SummerJobs for more updates, insights and clarifications on Canada Summer Jobs 2019.

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benefits from CSJ funding would need to be open to campers and staff without discriminating on the basis of religion, race, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, etc., except as allowed by labour laws.

The application explicitly asks employers to describe their hiring practices and how they are free from discrimination.

The application says that projects are ineligible for CSJ funding if they "advocate intolerance, discrimination and/or prejudice." The Applicant Guide defines "advocate" as "to promote, foster or actively support intolerance, discrimination, and/or prejudice." Since "project" has been defined to include an organization's activities, the EFC has sought clarification from the government on the interpretation of these terms and asked that guidance be provided to applicants.

The EFC affirms life is a gift from God for us to respect and protect in all its stages, from conception to natural death. We know the current government takes a strong pro-abortion approach to law and policy. While we strongly disagree, we recognize the government has the prerogative to determine funding priorities and to decline to fund even lawful activities.

The EFC believes the changes to the 2019 application and guidelines, which happened in a response to the organized outcry, will allow churches and the majority of Christian organizations to apply for Canada Summer Jobs funding and be considered eligible.

With your help, the EFC will closely monitor how these restrictions are applied in 2019 and will continue to work to protect freedom of religion and conscience, and the ability of people of faith to participate in the public square.



SPOTLIGHT:

Reflecting on Canada Summer Jobs



Q&A

with Julia Beazley,
director of public
policy for the EFC

Q: What impact did the outcry by faith groups have on the changes for the 2019 Canada Summer Jobs application?

A: The impact was significant. It is rare to see a government change a policy in the way they have done here. Canadians from across the country, including the EFC and our faith partners, were persistent in communicating our concerns. Eventually the government entered discussion in a meaningful way and made significant changes.

Q: You were a key figure in the discussions. What part of the argument made by faith-based organizations connected most with the government?

A: The government has been very clear that their intention was to avoid funding being used for pro-life advocacy work. The changes indicate the government has understood how they sought to restrict funding was a significant overreach with broader impact. And while they have not said so directly, I think they now understand that the 2018 attestation was an infringement on the *Charter* guaranteed freedoms of religion, conscience, thought, belief, opinion

and expression. We communicated clearly, repeatedly, that we were willing to attest we would comply with applicable laws and human rights codes – but that to require an attestation of beliefs or values was unconstitutional.

Q: The EFC is an organization that always reaches out to work with others. What was that experience like in this case?

A: Working in partnership with faith partners is a rich and meaningful experience, and it often allows us to be more effective and have greater impact together. This was certainly the case here. The EFC worked with the Canadian Council of Christian Charities, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Christian Legal Fellowship, along with other interfaith partners. We strategized, developed coordinated messaging and participated jointly in communications to government, in meetings and conversations. We mobilized our communities and together we were heard.

Q: What encouragement can you share with EFC donors?

A: I was moved to hear from churches and ministries who wanted to continue to serve their communities and offer help to their neighbours. This policy has changed because we all worked together. I am thankful to the EFC affiliates who engaged with us on this, and to the EFC donors who help us to equip the Church to engage gracefully in the contentious area of public policy.



For updates on this issue
www.TheEFC.ca/SummerJobs



Message from the President, Bruce J. Clemenger

A new year with its new challenges is upon us. We start off another 12 months of public engagement and Christian witness standing on slightly more solid ground than we felt in 2018, when the Canada Summer Jobs attestation coupled with the

TWU Supreme Court loss felt like a double blow to the Canadian Church. However, the government's recent adjustment of the Canada Summer Jobs requirements for this year, after our coordinated and consistent communications efforts, is an encouragement. We see the necessity of being present and the value of being a witness in the public square. We see the strength we bring in numbers, literally, when we work together. We could do none if it without you. Thank you.

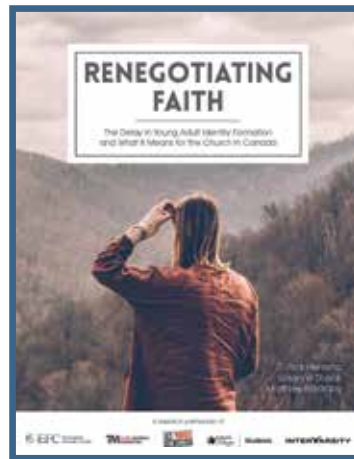
Youth research makes its way across Canada

It has been a whirlwind of activity for the team that produced *Renegotiating faith*. This Canadian research report, released in fall 2018, helps churches, parents, pastors, camp leaders, campus chaplains and other youth workers consider how they can better help youth maintain and grow in their faith during the turbulent period known as emerging adulthood.

Rick Hiemstra, the EFC's director of research, led the team that carried out the original research, wrote the report and is now instrumental in sharing its practical and vital findings. Rick has spoken at dozens of churches, conferences and events across Canada to audiences hungry to hear how they can better work together to feed and protect the faith of Canadian youth as they transition out of high school and into university, college and work life.

In the coming months Rick will present the research and its findings at the Capitalize conference in Ottawa, Canadian Youth Workers Conference in Saskatoon, at Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford, and at various other churches and events from coast to coast.

EFC Ambassadors, those strategically placed representatives who speak in churches and at events about the work of the EFC (inviting Canadians in as partners), are also speaking about *Renegotiating Faith* whenever possible.



Would you like Rick or another team member to come speak at your church?
Call us: 1-866-302-3362



Updating you on Canada's most immediate issues

■ **Conscience Protection:** The Ontario Court of Appeal heard a court challenge Jan. 22-23, 2019 of policies that require doctors to participate in euthanasia or assisted suicide by providing an effective referral against their conscientious objection. In this *CMDS v. College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario* case, the EFC argued in support of freedom of religion and conscience with co-interveners the Christian Legal Fellowship and Ontario Assembly of Catholic Bishops.
www.TheEFC.ca/CMDS

■ **Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide:** Parliament received three reports in December on expanding access to medical assistance in dying. For this process, the EFC outlined research on the problems and risks to vulnerable Canadians of expanded access to assisted death in our submission.
www.TheEFC.ca/ExpandingAccess

■ **Religious Freedom:** The EFC intervened in an Alberta Court of Appeal hearing on the Alberta law known as *Bill 24: An Act to Protect Gay-Straight Alliances*. The 2017 law requires the creation and operation

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of Gay-Straight Alliance clubs and prohibits schools from communicating to parents about their children's involvement. Faith-based schools in Alberta are asking the court for an injunction so that parts of Bill 24 will not apply to them until the court rules on a challenge of the legislation. www.TheEFC.ca/Bill24

■ **Human Trafficking:** The EFC welcomed the unanimous Justice Committee report on human trafficking, *Moving Forward in the Fight Against Human Trafficking in Canada*. The report's recommendations include steps to increase education and public awareness, develop a consistent definition of human trafficking and move towards better data collection, including some of the actions recommended in the EFC's April 2018 brief to the Committee. The EFC's full response with commentary on the report is online at www.TheEFC.ca/Human-Trafficking The EFC has participated in consultations on a new national strategy expected this winter, and asked the government to maintain the current prostitution laws and to increase support for those who wish to exit prostitution. The EFC's full response on the report is online at www.TheEFC.ca/TraffickingReport2018.

The EFC launches Church-in-Community Initiative

The EFC has a long history of gathering together leaders in a particular ministry sector – for example global missions or youth ministry – who want to discuss the current challenges of working out their common calling in changing ministry landscapes.

This desire to partner with others to break down ministry silos – and do better together what we would otherwise be doing alone – ultimately builds up all our Kingdom ministry in Canada.



We are happy to announce the launch of the Church-in-Community (CinC) Initiative which will continue this theme of working together – in this case among ministries equipping congregations to engage effectively with their communities, whether local, regional or global.

The CinC Initiative will emphasize networking for mutual encouragement and sharing resources, hosting conversations where questions can be raised, and sharing possible solutions about ways to refocus the mission of churches and organizations and then to restructure for greater impact.

We anticipate ongoing ministry collaboration that shares biblically based, theologically sound approaches to ministry. We anticipate sharing resources and developing shared directories and calendars of ministry events. If your church or ministry is interested in hearing more about CinC, please contact EFC Vice-President Aileen van Ginkel at vanginkela@theEFC.ca.

Warm words from donors


We highly value hearing from donors and partners in mission who pray for the work of the EFC. We pray for you too! When you send in a prayer request, we pray for you at our weekly staff devotions. Thank you for these kinds words, sent in by EFC donors.

"Thank you for standing weary but faithful and strong for God's truth. We appreciate you. Press on upheld by our prayers."

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The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (*Alliance évangélique du Canada*) is the national association "uniting Evangelicals to bless Canada in the name of Jesus." Since 1964 the EFC has provided a national forum for Evangelicals, fostered ministry partnerships, conducted research on religious and social trends and provided a constructive voice for biblical principles in life and society.

