



Fact Sheet

The Real Estate Foundation of BC (REFBC) is a philanthropic organization working to advance sustainable, equitable, and socially just land use and real estate practices across BC. We fund projects, connect people, and share knowledge.

How We Started

In 1985, the Government of British Columbia, in cooperation with the real estate industry, enacted legislation to establish REFBC. In 1988, REFBC began making grants to support projects across the province.

How We Invest

The money that REFBC grants is a benefit from real estate transactions. When a deposit is made on the purchase of a residential property in BC — and placed in a brokerage trust account at a bank or credit union — it earns a little bit of interest. Financial institutions are required to remit this interest to REFBC. We pool this money, and invest it in funds screened through an environmental, social, and governance (ESG) framework, as well as impact investments, to generate additional revenue. In turn, REFBC uses its revenue to fund projects and lead initiatives that benefit communities across BC.

Who We Are

REFBC is overseen by a seven-member Board of Governors. The Governors are appointed by the Province of BC (3), Union of BC Municipalities (1), BC Real Estate

Association (1), Real Estate Institute of BC (1), and BC Non-Profit Housing Association (1). Our staff manages day-to-day operations, implements our strategic plan, and delivers grants and special programs.

Our Commitment to Reconciliation

While the existence of REFBC provides a community benefit linked to the purchase of a home, our money story is rooted in displacement and theft of lands from First Nations. We recognize that colonial approaches to land use and property continue to infringe upon the rights, responsibilities, and relationships of First Nations to lands and waters. REFBC is committed to supporting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and working in partnership with First Nations. REFBC supports the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Calls to Action as a signatory to The Philanthropic Community's Declaration of Action. We are on a journey of learning, supporting land-based projects led by First Nations and Indigenous organizations, and committing to uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Photo: Alex Harris, Raincoast Conservation Foundation



\$100M+

granted to projects
since 1988

\$6.8M

granted to
80+ projects in
2022-23

\$3.1M

invested in funds
for environmental
and social impact




What We Fund

REFBC makes grants to non-profit projects that advance sustainability, equity, and social justice in relation to land use and real estate practices in BC. Our mandate is to support projects that involve law and policy reform, applied research, community engagement, and professional and public education.

Our Priorities

REFBC grants support work in five areas.

Land Use	Fresh Water	Built Environments	Food Sovereignty	Real Estate Profession
				

Funding Opportunities

We have two main streams of grant funding. Each stream accepts applications through an open intake once per year. We also consider some smaller or time-sensitive requests throughout the year.

General Grants can fund projects led by any non-profit organization or community-contribution company (C3) working on projects relating to land use or real estate in BC. In this case, non-profits include First Nations, charities and societies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities and colleges, trade associations, and local and regional governments. We encourage and prioritize applications from Indigenous-led organizations. We usually accept applications in February.

Real Estate Industry Grants can fund projects led by non-profits serving real estate professionals in BC. We usually accept applications in December.

Learn more: refbc.ca/grants

Photo: Aaron Hill, Watershed Watch Salmon Society



Meet Our Grantees

Our grants support many projects across BC that strengthen communities and protect our shared land and water. Here are five examples.



Land Use

T̓silhqot̓in National Government

To conduct collaborative n̓en (land) planning processes in six communities and at the T̓silhqot̓in Nation level, provide skills training for n̓en planners, and strengthen T̓silhqot̓in governance throughout the territory.



Fresh Water

Cowichan Watershed Board

To support formalizing the decision-making authority of Cowichan Tribes in the Cowichan and Koksilah watersheds through the development of a water sustainability plan and co-ownership of a replacement weir.



Built Environments

Small Housing BC Society

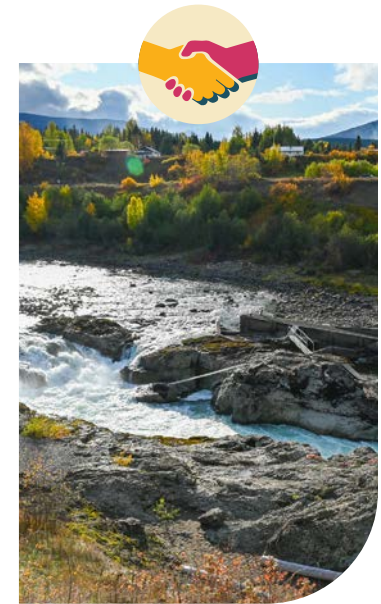
To collaborate with Indigenous communities on the creation of culturally appropriate solutions for gentle density housing (e.g. houseplexes, laneway homes, lock-off suites, pocket neighborhoods, etc.).



Food Sovereignty

Nawalakw Culture Project

To promote food security and sovereignty in Kwakw̓ak̓'wakw communities through mentorship for youth on traditional harvesting, gardening and cooking workshops, building knowledge-sharing partnerships, and growing food on a demonstration farm.



Real Estate Profession

BC Northern Real Estate Board

For a series of webinars about land and water sustainability issues for realtors and the public.

View more projects
refbc.ca/projects



Our Work

From time to time, REFBC undertakes its own initiatives, either in partnership with other organizations or independently, to achieve outcomes that further our mission.



Indigenous Grants Stream

With guidance from a diverse group of First Nations leaders, REFBC created a funding stream to support Indigenous-led, land-based projects. REFBC's Indigenous Community Leaders Circle determined that funding should go to projects that support Indigenous people in getting out on the land and water, build Indigenous community leadership (especially among youth), centre Indigenous culture and knowledge, advance Indigenous governance, and contribute to the exercise of Indigenous rights and title.



Land Awards

Every two years, REFBC hosts the Land Awards Gala to recognize outstanding leadership in sustainable, equitable, and socially just land use and real estate across BC. The Land Awards feature five project categories (Land Use and Conservation, Built Environment, Fresh Water, Food Sovereignty, and Real Estate) and two individual awards (Land Champion and Emerging Leader). The next Land Awards Gala takes place in June 2024. **Learn more:** landawards.com

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Stay in Touch

Want updates on grant funding, events, and research from REFBC?

Subscribe to our newsletter
refbc.ca/newsletter



We recognize and acknowledge the x^wməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwəta4 (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, as well as First Nations across BC, on whose territories we live, work, and learn.

