

## **Mission, Vision, Values**

### **Overview**

#### **History of the Foundation**

The Acts of Grace Foundation was established in 2006 as a Canadian private foundation, in response to God's blessing in the lives of the founders, Alan and Donna Lambshead. Realizing that these resources were not given just for their own personal benefit, the Foundation was established to provide grants to Canadian charitable organizations whose programs meet needs of people locally and around the world.

The name "Acts of Grace" comes out of the biblical principle that God calls us to mirror His grace in our lives through acts of love and generosity to others. As 1 John 3:17-18 says, "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth."

From its inception, the Acts of Grace Foundation has relied on its Granting Committee to make granting decisions. In 2015, an Administrative Director was hired to further enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Foundation as it pursues its mission.

In all of this, the founders' hearts' desire is that, by tangibly pouring out God's abundant grace on others, organizations will be empowered to transform lives and God will be glorified.

#### **Purpose of This Document**

The purpose of this document is to outline the mission, vision and values of the Acts of Grace Foundation ("the Foundation"). This document serves as one of the core founding documents of the Foundation and although it may be modified as determined appropriate by its Trustees, the mission, vision and values will remain as prescribed by the Settlers. Scripture passages noted in this document are provided in full text in the Guiding Scripture References document.

The other core founding document of the Foundation is the Deed of Trust that governs the Foundation. The Deed of Trust is the defining legal document for the Foundation that sets out the legal requirements, scope and operation of the Foundation. Where this document is in conflict with the Deed of Trust, the Deed of Trust shall govern.

In addition to this document, a Strategic Plan will be developed every 3-5 years. The strategic plan is set by its Trustees and may be determined with input from the Granting Committee. These strategies are set specifically to enable the Foundation to pursue its vision and deliver on its mission.

## **Mission, Vision and Values**

### **Mission Statement**

The Foundation's mission statement explains what the Foundation does.

The Acts of Grace Foundation brings glory to God through Grants that empower Canadian charities and the individuals they serve to eradicate underlying systems and conditions that entrench physical, material and spiritual poverty.

The Acts of Grace Foundation believes that poverty exists as a direct result of sin entering the world through the Fall of Man in the Garden of Eden and is manifested through the resulting brokenness of humanity's four primary relationships:

- With God (poverty of spirit);
- With self (poverty of being);
- With others (poverty of relationships); and,
- With the rest of creation (poverty of stewardship).<sup>1</sup>

Although sin is the ultimate root cause of poverty, the brokenness created by sin generates other, secondary systems and conditions that facilitate poverty's continued existence or proliferation. Poverty, therefore, cannot be eradicated without directly addressing these underlying systems and conditions, and, also, ultimately sin.

Therefore, the Acts of Grace Foundation makes grants to projects of registered Canadian charities that seek to eradicate physical, material or spiritual poverty by directly addressing the basic needs of food, water, shelter, sanitation and hygiene, health, security, education, skills training, employment, salvation and spiritual growth in a culturally and geographically relevant manner. Acts of Grace also makes grants that directly increase the capacity of registered Canadian charities to serve marginalized people in these areas or directly increase the capacity and capability of individuals and communities to transform their own lives through sustained physical well-being, economic self-sufficiency or spiritual growth.

In this way, the Foundation's purpose mirrors the experience of the early Christian church. In 2 Corinthians, Paul highlights the grace God had bestowed on other churches through their generous giving and service to the apostles. He urged them to do the same. (2 Corinthians 8:6b, 7) Similarly, James and John also challenged believers to put their faith into action by meeting the needs of others. (James 2:14-17; 1 John 3:17-18)

### **Vision**

The Foundation's vision statement explains what change the Foundation hopes to see as a result of their activity.

The Acts of Grace Foundation envisions a world in which people are reconciled to God and restored towards the wholeness He originally intended for humanity.

Poverty causes all people to suffer and is in direct opposition to the wholeness God originally intended for humanity. When we seek to restore this wholeness, we glorify Him. When we walk alongside others in their brokenness, we bring glory to God because that is what He does for us, especially in our spiritual brokenness. Experiencing God's goodness in providing for our physical well-being and material necessities is a powerful tool for understanding God's grace in redeeming us to Himself, the only way to be fully restored to Him.

The Foundation's vision is highlighted by several passages in the New Testament that encourage Christians to work together to draw attention to and point others towards Christ. (Matt 5:14-16; Col 2:2)

---

<sup>1</sup> [When Helping Hurts](#), Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert

## Core Principles and Values

The core principles of the Acts of Grace Foundation define how the Foundation operates. In everything we do, the Acts of Grace Foundation seeks to:

- Empower organizations;
- Transform lives; and,
- Glorify God.



Within this context, the core values of the Acts of Grace Foundation express what is important to the Foundation. These values prioritize how the organization pursues its mission and vision, makes decisions, relates to others and operates the Foundation. These values cannot be compromised.

The Acts of Grace Foundation values:

### 1. Giving to the under-resourced

**We value granting to organizations that may be less likely to receive funding from larger or public sources.** Grant recipients are characterized by organizational health and a proven record of successfully delivering impactful, culturally and geographically relevant projects. The Acts of Grace Foundation does not fund individuals, government departments or agencies nor membership-based organizations such as political parties, lobbyist organizations, service clubs or special interest groups. Generally, the Foundation does not fund places of worship, churches, denominations or dioceses especially where the purpose of these organizations is inwardly focused at serving their own members or constituents. Although the Foundation will consider applications to fund innovative, unproven ideas or projects in their infancy, Acts of Grace does not generally fund start-up organizations.

**We prioritize projects that serve marginalized people in all corners of the globe.**

Emphasizing “the least, the last and the lost”, these individuals and communities represent some of the world’s most vulnerable populations, often facing one or more forms of poverty. This includes those in crisis, the disadvantaged, the oppressed, those living in conflict zones, those facing addiction, the homeless or street-involved, the sick or disabled, widows, orphans, unreached peoples without access to the Gospel or a church in their native language, those who have not yet made a salvation commitment to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and those with limited or no access to spiritual discipleship or Bible training. (Prov 31:8-9; Matt 25:35-36, 40; Luke 10:27, 29b, 36b)

### 2. Empowerment

**We strive to make grants that will directly increase the capacity of charities to serve marginalized individuals.** Acts of Grace prioritizes funding projects that provide new or enhanced capital resources, infrastructure and skills necessary for directly increasing efficiency, effectiveness and impact in delivering front line programs and services. **Acts of Grace also prefers to make grants that will propel organizations’ projects (or significant portions of) forward with a reduced burden of fundraising.** We would rather fund less projects with more dollars ultimately resulting in greater impact than the reverse with lesser effects. It is hoped that this momentum will have a catalytic effect enabling the charity to attract more donors and funding with reduced effort.

**We focus on funding projects that enable individuals and communities to achieve, for themselves, long-lasting economic self-sufficiency, physical well-being and spiritual**

**growth.** Acts of Grace gives preference to projects that directly empower individuals to affect and sustain change rather than rely on continuous long-term support from others. Ideally, the catalytic effect of these outcomes also creates momentum for individuals to further satisfy other needs/achieve other aspirations. To that end, Acts of Grace prioritizes funding projects that enable long-term development or foster system-wide transformation. In rare cases, Acts of Grace may consider funding projects that provide relief of suffering (aid) or re-establish previously existing conditions (rehabilitation).

The Acts of Grace Foundation does not fund organizations and projects focused on any of the following:

- Culture and the arts;
- Environmental and resource protection and conservation, climate action or clean energy;
- Industry and infrastructure development;
- Legislation and policy reform;
- Scholarships and bursaries; and,
- Community recreation such as community halls and recreation facilities, libraries, zoos, parks and public spaces

### 3. Tangibility

**We give preference to projects that are tangible in nature, with observable activities, outputs and outcomes.** Therefore, Acts of Grace only funds specific, time-limited initiatives in which the Foundation's funds will be applied towards direct project costs. The Foundation does not:

- Contribute to a charity's unrestricted funds or general/annual fundraising campaigns;
- Underwrite fundraising/promotional events;
- Support lobbying efforts;
- Pay for advertising and publicity costs; or,
- Fund inwardly focused projects aimed at serving an organization's own members/constituents.

In general, unless directly tied to a project or core to the charity's mission, the Foundation also does not fund operational or administrative expenses such as rent, utilities and salaries.

### 4. Measurable outcomes

**We prioritize funding projects that will result in measurable improvement in the factors that gave rise to the need for the project.** Most often this includes enhancements in the capacity of an organization to deliver its programs and services, increased impact of a charity's programs and services, increased capacity or capability of individuals to increase their quality of life or direct improvement in quality of life or spiritual life for those who benefit from the project. **To measure this change, we place emphasis on charities meeting the proposed specific measurable outcomes that demonstrate the intended end result and impact of the project.**

The Foundation requires all grant recipients to submit regular Grant Follow-up Reports to communicate project progress and outcomes. Charities are not eligible to apply for new grants until all Follow-up Reports for active grants have been submitted and approved by the Granting Committee.

### 5. Sustainability

**We prioritize funding initiatives that will result in long-term tangible and measurable change.** We recognize that sustainability and the timeline to achieve sustainability will be

different for each project. The Foundation values projects that have clearly defined plans for managing ongoing costs and considerations for how the beneficiaries will achieve physical well-being, economic self-sufficiency or spiritual growth without needing the charity to maintain a continuous presence. To that end, Acts of Grace gives preference to projects that increase the long-term capacity of individuals to affect and sustain change for themselves rather than rely on continuous support from others or initiatives that directly increase the long-term efficiency, effectiveness and impact of charities in serving marginalized people.

#### **6. Canadian commitment**

**We are committed to funding projects that focus on providing ongoing care and concern for needs within the Canadian community.** Although we live in one of the most affluent countries in the world, we are burdened by the needs of the marginalized population in Canada. We realize that it often appears as though a greater impact can be achieved by giving outside of Canada. However, we want to ensure that Canadian needs are not overlooked and that a portion of the Foundation's funds are available to help others locally. (Lev 25:35; Deut 15:7, 10-11)

#### **7. Biblical approach**

**We will conduct ourselves in a God honouring manner with practices and approaches that are characterized by a Biblically-based management style.** (Eph 6:7; Phil 1:27a; Col 3:23-24)

We believe that God has commanded us to live life and manage our organization with each of the following qualities. We prefer that all grant recipients manage their organizations and projects similarly. Specifically:

- a. Integrity, honesty and accountability (Prov 20:23; Prov 21:3)
- b. Humility and loving servitude (Eph 4:2-3; Phil 2:3-8)
- c. Active stewardship and diligence (Matt 25:14-27; John 9:4)
- d. Wise discernment and a learning approach (Prov 4:13; Prov 8:11-12, 14; Prov 27:17)
- e. Prayerful decision making (Matt 18:19-20; Phil 4:5-7)

#### **8. Christian partnership**

**We prefer granting to Christian organizations.** We believe that true transformation comes through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Many non-Christian organizations are doing good work, meeting real needs. However, we place value on supporting our fellow believers who will have the opportunity to share the Gospel with the individuals they serve. (Gal 6:9-10; 1 Cor 12: 12, 14, 18-20, 25-27; Phil 4:10a, 14, 16b, 18b)