

# Community investment policy



**Desjardins**

Caisse du Haut-Saint-François

# Background

The caisse receives many requests from community organizations for donations and sponsorships. It has provided essential funding for a variety of community initiatives.

Sponsorships, donations and the Community Development Fund (CDF) are some ways that Desjardins can fulfil its mission. In this respect, sponsorships, donations and the CDF must help educate, inform and improve community well-being.

This community investment policy outlines how the caisse handles funding applications for community projects and events, while simultaneously considering its profits and cooperative difference. It is based on strategic planning for the caisses and the priorities of Desjardins Group ("Desjardins").

Community investments also help drive the region's economy while supporting community organizations and partners. They complement the investment and financing granted by Desjardins components.

Community investments are managed in accordance with the values, principles and rules of the Desjardins Code of Professional Conduct. By contributing to community development, the caisse promotes its cooperative values such as:

- Money serving human development
- Personal commitment
- Democratic action
- Integrity and rigour in the cooperative enterprise
- Solidarity with the community
- Intercooperation.

# Goals

This community investment policy is designed to:

**Ensure equal funding access to members who meet the eligibility criteria**

**Establish eligibility criteria**

**Ensure applications are rigorously assessed so they are easier to process**

**Set clear priorities**

**Support caisse business objectives**

# Definitions

## Donations

Donations are financial, material or service support provided to non-profit organizations (associations, institutions and cooperatives) to support their development activities while boosting caisse visibility. These donations provide direct support to the causes that the organizations support. Donations aren't necessarily renewed but are meant to serve as a springboard to help organizations become self-sufficient over time.

## Sponsorships

Sponsorships are financial, material or service support provided to build business partnerships, support activities, events and projects, and boost caisse business development and visibility among specific members of the public. With sponsorships, we use advertising, promotions and public, media and business relations to communicate with a target audience. Sponsorships are contributions used to help hold events. Sponsorships aren't necessarily renewed.

## Community Development Funds (CDF)

Contributions to the Community Development Fund are approved by members at the annual general meeting (AGM), as an investment in the community from surplus earnings set aside for collective member dividends.

Through the CDF, the caisse invests in key projects intended to:

- significantly contribute to community sustainability
- create jobs
- set up or maintain local services
- bring new socioeconomic activity to the region

The CDF can also help drive the region's economy by supporting major events that have a significant economic impact. The caisse can implement projects or be a partner. Presentations on each project can be posted on the caisse website or Facebook page. The Fund is managed by the caisse's board of directors (or cooperation committee, as the case may be). It alone is responsible for determining how the money in the fund is used.

But the caisse requires a certain amount of visibility so it's contribution can be recognized.

The funding granted to the CDF's projects decrease over a maximum of three (3) consecutive years. We recommend that funding decrease in this way to encourage organizations to become financially self-sufficient. Specific programs created or approved by the caisse also receive CDF funding.

# Guiding principles

Sponsorships, donations and funds are granted by the CDF in accordance with the following guiding principles:

- We offer equal access to members. Three-year agreements can be signed with partners to ensure this. Once the agreement is up, the needs of these projects are re-assessed, but are given lower priority than applicants that haven't already received support.
- All applications are analyzed in light of business needs, caisse strategic planning and Desjardins priorities.
- The caisse will involve other caisses from the Eastern townships as needed.
- Applications for provincial projects are sent to Desjardins.
- The caisses are not meant to replace public bodies.

# Priority areas

At the AGM, members decided to prioritize sponsorships, donations and funds allocated through the CDF to the following areas:



## Economic development, jobs and entrepreneurship

We contribute to projects that enhance and maintain our leadership in community socio-economic development, helping people find their first job or encouraging them to become entrepreneurs and start their own businesses.



## Youth and families

We support and partner with organizations and businesses that help young people and their families thrive through social, cultural and athletic activities.



## Education

We support organizations that promote student life and financial education, encourage young people to stay in school and help them access higher education.



## Community well-being and vitality (arts, culture and heritage)

We support and partner with organizations to promote the arts, culture and heritage across the caisse's territory.



## Seniors and community life

We support and partner with organizations that help seniors live life to the fullest and enhance community life across the caisse's territory through recreation.



## Jobs

We support and partner with organizations, programs and projects that help maintain or create jobs across the caisse's territory.

## Eligibility criteria

Applicants and projects must:

1. Be a member of a Desjardins caisse and prove that it's been doing most of its banking with Desjardins for at least 90 days.
2. Be a cooperative, government entity or registered not-for-profit organization.
3. Aim to improve the well-being of the community or a specific category of people.
4. Yield specific and measurable results for members and/or the community.
5. Ensure that the project's community, target beneficiaries and number of participants justify a contribution from Desjardins.
6. Ensure that the caisse's commitment will have a positive impact on Desjardins.
7. Ensure that Desjardins is the sole partner from the financial institution\* sector.
8. Show that they have tried to find other partners or raise funds on their own.
9. Submit their application for financial support via the online form at least 60 days before the event.
10. Submit only one application per year. The caisse will only make one contribution per year.\*\*
11. Provide a diversified visibility plan and ensure that Desjardins Group's graphic standards are met at all times.

\* The term "financial institution" refers to banks, trusts, credit unions, caisses, trust companies, insurance companies, securities brokers, payroll services companies, credit card companies and other businesses offering similar products and services.

\*\* Applications for "annual events" that could be a source of business development opportunities may be accepted on a recurring basis.

## Exclusions

Organizations supported by the caisse must never compromise on these five corporate values: self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity.

### Organizations, projects and activities that we cannot fund

12. Lobbying or advocacy work
13. Public relations campaigns
14. Applications for funding to pay salaries or operating expenses
15. Applications that go against the caisse's mission or that could compromise its ethical standards, integrity or brand image
16. Applications submitted as a form letter
17. Feasibility studies
18. Graduation balls
19. Winter carnivals
20. Quebec National Holiday and Canada Day celebrations
21. Private or personal events
22. Lobbyists
23. Individuals or groups that are part of an association that already receives support from the caisse for the same cause

24. Organizations previously convicted of fraud or involved in illegal activity
25. Events or activities promoting political or religious ideology
26. Projects involving a single individual
27. Projects or organizations with questionable financial management

The caisse prefers not to purchase tickets for meals (brunches, dinners etc.). It prefers to contribute financially through donations and sponsorships. The caisse will purchase tickets only if the presence of employees or officers will enhance our visibility.

Funding cannot replace government financial aid programs, but can be part of the community's share or outlay, as required by the program.

## Procedure and processing

### Project submission and deadlines

#### Community Development Funds (CDF)

Applications must be submitted using the form provided.

Applications can be submitted at any time. Once all required documents are accepted, the caisse will let you know when your application will be assessed. After the cooperation committee performs its analysis and makes recommendations, the board of directors approves its recommendations. Applicants are then informed of the caisse's decision.

#### Donations and sponsorships

Applications for donations and sponsorships can be submitted at any time using the form provided. Each complete application will be assessed and processed within 12 weeks of receipt. Any incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant for correction and must be resubmitted.

## Your commitment

### Visibility

Sponsorships and contributions granted through the Community Development Fund should include a detailed visibility plan that publicize the caisse's community engagement. The caisse can also ask for directors and employees to attend the event or project announcement.

Partners that receive financial aid from the caisse for several years must prepare an annual report so that the caisse's participation remains visible and so it can ensure that the terms of the agreement are being met.

The organization must also make sure that it can provide photos of the event, project or participants so that the caisse's annual report can include them.

### Doing business with the caisse

Applicants commit to doing more business with Caisse du Haut-Saint-François. They also undertake to encourage their members to do business with the caisse and with Desjardins in general.

# Thank you for your commitment!



**Desjardins**

Caisse du Haut-Saint-François