

Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning (F.I.L.L.)
A Reference Group of the Canadian Council of Churches
Terms of Reference

1. Preamble

The Constitution of the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) mandates that it:

- engage in ecumenical education, training and action by which God's mission may be served and the life of the Church may be renewed (III A 1)
- bring the member churches into living encounter with one another, and to promote understanding and helpful relationships among them and with other Christian churches and religious bodies in Canada. (III A 4)
- respond creatively to social change and, in the name of Jesus Christ, to influence directly or indirectly the process of change in the movements of Canadian history. (III B 3)
- be a vehicle through which member churches, related agencies and other interested parties can come together to discuss, study and act (III B 5)

Following the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910 several Canadian denominational mission boards and theological colleges came together to form the Canadian School of Missions in 1921. In 1962 The Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) and The Canadian School of Missions formed “The Canadian School of Missions and Ecumenical Institute”, an agency under the aegis of the CCC and given mandate under the by-laws of the CCC. This agency would later be known as “The Ecumenical Forum” and “The Canadian Churches Forum for Global Ministries”. For much of its history its focus was as an ecumenical table for understanding around missions outside Canada with emphasis on ecumenism. The 1973 CCC report, “An Affection for Diversity”, recommended the agency, in addition to its world mission and missiology focus, “help end ethnocentric pride and narcissism, racial bigotry and mono-cultural blindness”. Important to its work throughout its history has been cross-cultural understanding. In today’s Canadian context we recognize that the Church is called to be intercultural both globally and within Canada.

Beginning in 2012, the Canadian Churches’ Forum for Global Ministries focused its work on intercultural ministry and the development of a program called “Deepening Understanding for Intercultural Ministry” which has engaged a growing network of people across Canada.

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In 2017 this agency became the Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning of the Canadian Council of Churches. This reference group will operate in continuing and developing the work of its predecessor institutions and responding faithfully to current Canadian and Global contexts.

The Christian Church's calling to Shalom, Peace, and Right Relationship requires cultural self-awareness as well as intentional understanding across cultures. The recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the apologies for the Indian Residential Schools are a reminder of this calling. The experience of the Faith & Witness and Justice & Peace Commissions has shown that the work of both is informed and affected by issues of culture and difference.

2. Mandate

The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning of the Canadian Council of Churches is an ecumenical Christian partnership through which Canadian Churches work toward intercultural leadership development and ministry learning in Canada and Globally.

Through The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning, Canadian Churches:

- Come together for biblical and theological reflection on issues of contemporary intercultural mission and ministry;
- Provide innovative educational resources and programs for intercultural learning, leadership development and ministry in Canada and globally, with special emphasis on cultural awareness and identity;
- Participate in learning and dialogue with church members and wider communities of faith about a society that fully honours diversity and God's unequivocal welcome; and
- Network and support persons directly engaged in ministry across cultural and other differences

3. Initiatives and Activities

The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning will write, and same as the other Commissions and Reference Groups of the Council report to the Governing Board of the Council for approval, its own three-year plan to coincide with the triennium of the Council.

Acknowledging that across Canada there are many different contexts with emerging applications and challenges, that the learnings and experience of the Global Church must shape

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ministry within Canada, and that there is a need for experimental and innovative prototyping and incubating models for Intercultural Ministry, the activities of The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning will include:

a. Education

- Innovate and provide ecumenical training programs for ministry in diverse contexts.
- Provide or support educational and other events that further dialogue around ministry across difference and diversity.
- Monitor and disseminate research on the Canadian context especially around issues of culture and diversity.

b. Theological Reflection

- Monitor, disseminate, and provide spaces for theological reflection around issues of culture and diversity.
- Encourage theological and other voices that are marginalized due to cultural and other differences.

c. Relationship-building

- Creatively provide spaces (face to face and virtual) to support and network persons in ministry shaped by diversity
- Provide spaces for denominations to share their understandings of ministry across culture, difference, and diversity.
- Work with other agencies, institutions, organizations, and movements that are seeking to faithfully create just relationships across cultural and other differences
- Provide a space for denominations to resource intercultural ministry ecumenically

4. Guiding Principles

- a. The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning's work is rooted in and respectful of Forum as described in the Canadian Council of Churches Constitution (article IV). We look for the ways in which the member denominations can speak and act together.
- b. Education and training are the key components of The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning. This means mutual education about the work and views of member denominations and about ministry across cultural and other differences as they are developing in Canada.

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- c. The work of intercultural ministry is necessary, and it is important to proceed ecumenically and also with an interfaith perspective which is open to insights, work and possible partnerships with other faiths, and the work they are doing which may be in keeping with the mission and approach of the Forum. The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning is a resource to accompany member denominations as they engage in ministry across cultural and other differences.
- d. The scope of the work is Canada-wide and within the broader global context. The context shapes the activities.
- e. Ministry is not limited to the denominational bodies. The work of The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning, as appropriate, will engage and support ministry at both the national and local level. The work of The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning will be shaped by the experiences of denominations and of those in ministry in local contexts.

5. Membership

- a. Each member denomination of the Canadian Council of Churches may appoint at least one representative with attention to maintaining balanced representation of member denominations.
- b. Denominations and faith based organizations that provide direct grants to the work of the Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning may each appoint at least one representative
- c. Members at large may be named to The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning. Members at large will be members of CCC denominations and are named with the approval of their denomination. These are persons who have an interest in intercultural ministry or are in ministry in diverse contexts.
- d. The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning will invite and include a representative from each Commission; Justice & Peace and Faith & Witness.
- e. Other individuals may be called upon by The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning to assist in particular tasks, to augment particular skill sets needed for the work, and to facilitate connections with key organizations and institutions.
- f. The Chair will be selected by the members.

6. Resources

- a. Budget provision, including designated funds, designated grants, fee for service, and charitable donations will be included in the annual budget of the CCC.

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- b. Staff time will be dedicated to The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning.
- c. Previous work of the predecessor institutions including print resources, program designs, resource people and networks, theological reflection and research will be maintained insofar as it supports the ongoing work of The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning.

7. Accountability and Relationships

- a. The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning will report directly to the Governing Board of the Canadian Council of Churches, to which it is accountable.
- b. The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning will work collaboratively with each Commission.
- c. Members of The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning will, within their denominations, advocate for ongoing resourcing, disseminate the work, and encourage participation in programs and activities of The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning. They will also communicate, to The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning, learning and understandings of ministry in the contexts of their denominations.

8. Meetings

- a. At least one meeting will be held each year.
- b. Larger consultations will be held at least once each triennium to describe work within CCC denominations around the mandate of The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning, to share developments in ministry in contexts across Canada related to the mandate, and to shape the activities of The Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning.
- c. Other meetings and ongoing communication will be arranged by the group.
- d. Travel and accommodation expenses of representatives, other than CCC staff, will be borne by the respective member denominations.