

2017 Reconciliation Fund Report



Compiled by Ariel Melamedoff
Premier (Chairperson)
96th Youth Parliament of Manitoba

Executive Summary

2017 was an incredibly successful year for the Reconciliation Fund. This project's inception was the summer of 2016. Then-Minister of Reconciliation Ronald Gamblin and myself began iterating the possibilities of how to live up to our mandate of 'Indigenizing' Youth Parliament of Manitoba. The idea was pitched that we should start a fund to bring ten Indigenous youth to our event free of charge, with clothing, travel, and food costs covered.

Bringing ten people to our Winter Session for free in 2016 was a purposely unreachable goal. We wanted to shoot high so that we would not settle for less. In its first year, the Reconciliation Fund did not manage to cover even half as many youth as it was intended to. I am happy to say that in 2017, we got a large part of the way there. The registration costs for nine Indigenous youth were covered. Though two were not ultimately able to come to the event, we had seven members that received clothing and food stipends through the Fund, including two who were flown in from Northern Manitoba.

2017 was a successful year for the Reconciliation Fund, and provided learning opportunities. We now have a much better idea of what we need to budget for, we have reliable avenues for Recruitment, and we have a better understanding of the logistical components that need to be put in place for the Reconciliation Fund to be successful. I predict that in 2018, ten members will attend Winter Session through the Reconciliation Fund, as originally pitched. This seemed like an untenable goal, but has become an essential part of our organization in only two years. The rest of this report will outline who the recipients were and how outreach was done, provide a breakdown of our financials and our sponsorships, and make suggestions for logistical arrangements in future years.

Thank you for your continued support of the Reconciliation Fund. We have heard incredibly positive feedback from the recipients of this funding. Two 2016 Reconciliation Fund recipients were a part of our 'Cabinet' (volunteer staff) this past year, and we are certain there will be recipients in our Cabinet this year as well. These young people are serving as role models for the newer generations of Indigenous members in Youth Parliament of Manitoba. With your support, we hope to keep providing these leadership opportunities to young Indigenous Manitobans for years to come.

Sincerely,
Ariel Melamedoff

Financials

Overview

The Reconciliation Fund was well within budget in 2017. Our fundraising efforts raised a total of **\$3,970.14** in 2016. Expenditures for the Fund were **\$4,438.59**, though leftover funds from 2016 were more than sufficient to cover this difference. There is **\$2,331.55** being carried over into the 2018 Reconciliation Fund.

There are, however, some areas that need to be examined more closely for upcoming years. If three more members attended the event through the Fund (filling out the proposed 10 spots), this would put us much closer to being over-budget on this fund. The breakdown of costs also suggests that fundraising for clothes needs to be further prioritized, as these were by far the largest expenditures. Funding for travel will depend on how many applicants are from Northern communities, as these pose some logistical and financial hurdles for the Fund.

All in all, the Reconciliation Fund is in a good financial place heading into 2018. Goals for the new year include diversifying our sponsorship pool, solidifying logistics for rural members, and ensuring better gender representation in 2018.

Our Donors

The Reconciliation Fund could not exist without the help of our donors. We are extremely thankful to the following individuals and organizations who helped make the Reconciliation Fund possible in 2018:

Susan Scott

Aimée Craft

Strini Reddy

The Clothes Closet

Perimeter Aviation LP

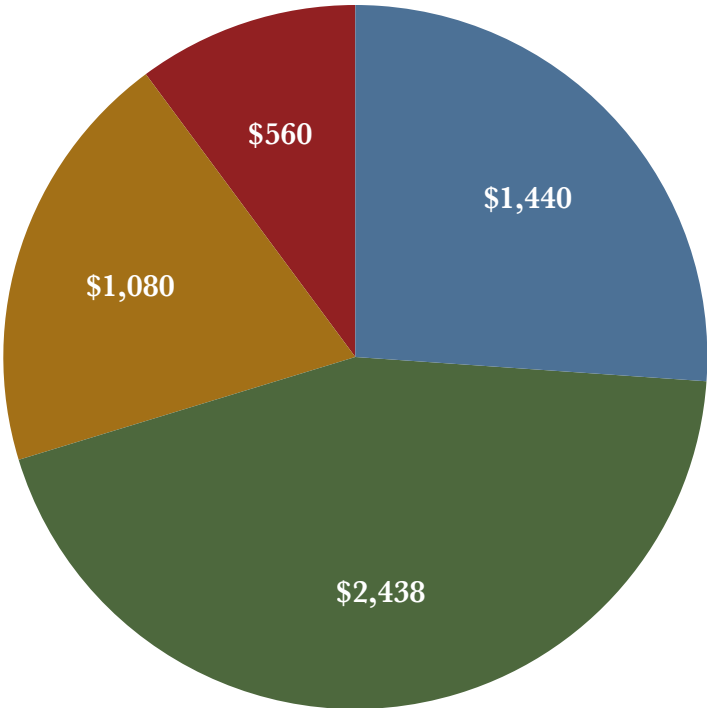
Calm Air International



Members of Youth Parliament of Manitoba, including past and present Reconciliation Fund recipients.

Breakdown of Expenditures

● Travel ● Clothing ● Registration ● Food Stipends



Breakdown of Expenditures

Clothing

Clothing costs were budgeted to be 40% of the original budget. This was due to our experiences in 2016, in which most of the recipients had some formal clothing, and only needed assistance filling out their repertoire. In addition, we had assistance in 2016 from Youth Employment Services, who provided men's formal clothes.

Recipients in 2017 did not all have some amount of formal clothing, with several needing all of their attire purchased for them through the Reconciliation Fund. In addition, due to budgetary issues, YES was not able to renew this sponsorship in 2017, and the costs of clothes fell on the Reconciliation Fund itself.

In future years, we hope to increase fundraising to ensure that all Reconciliation Fund recipients can be promised clothes without breaking our budget. 2018's Reconciliation Fund budget will raise the percentage dedicated to clothing. If ten youth attend the event, and none of them have access to any formal clothes, it is important that the Reconciliation Fund is able to provide them appropriate and comfortable clothes for the event. In addition, recruiting members earlier in the year will allow us to create efficiencies by shopping for deals prior to the event.

Travel

2016's Reconciliation Fund recipients all lived in Winnipeg. In 2017, two of our recipients needed to be flown in, from St. Theresa Point and Thompson. Other forms of transportation were considered, but as the roads to St. Theresa Point were not yet open, and the drive from Thompson would have required the member to spend the Holidays away from family, it was determined that flying was the best option. Though travel was originally budgeted at less than 20% of the total cost, ultimately the cost of flights raised it to over a quarter.

Although originally seen to be prohibitive, airfare costs were manageable within the Reconciliation Fund budget due to generous donations from Perimeter Aviation and Calm Air. In the future, these partnerships can help YPM be more confident in doing outreach with Indigenous youth in remote communities.

Food Stipends

Budgeted at \$60 per recipient, this amount is intended to cover three meals that the recipients must purchase during the event. This number may need to be raised due to the rising cost of food in the area near the legislature. In addition, due to cold weather, it may be necessary to order food rather than walk to restaurants, which may also raise the cost per meal.

Registration

This cost was budgeted at 25% of the total, though due to increased costs in other areas such as travel and clothing, ultimately made up only 20% of the total cost. In order to preserve accessibility, our membership fees are not likely to rise, so this percentage is likely to stay the same or become lower in the future. This cost was calculated with nine members attending. Although two did not come to the event at the last minute, food and buses had already been booked with those two included. In the future, when we can ensure that all ten recipients will be in attendance, this number should make up an even smaller percentage of the total expenditures



Elder Garry McLean's teaching and prayer during our Opening Ceremonies

Logistics

It was determined in 2017 that the Minister of Reconciliation's responsibility should be exclusively to recruit and contact Reconciliation Fund recipients. In 2016, the Minister also dealt with sponsors and donations to the Fund. After some review, this was deemed too large a task for one person. The 2017 Reconciliation Fund planning was thus a joint effort, with Minister of Reconciliation Shania Pruden in charge of recruitment, and Premier Ariel Melamedoff in charge of fundraising.

This model was superior to the previous, and the Reconciliation Fund will continue to be spearheaded by two people into the future. As the Premier has many tasks, fundraising for the Reconciliation Fund will likely be in the portfolio of a member of Youth Parliament's Cabinet in the future, so that full attention can be paid to expanding and solidifying funding channels for the Fund.

In addition, it is important for the Reconciliation Fund recruitment to occur earlier in the year. As many of the recipients sent in their applications in early December, the purchasing of clothes was done within two weeks of the event. More time for planning will lead to further efficiencies in this area. In the future, all Reconciliation Fund recipients should be confirmed by mid-November, so that there can be a month of time to procure appropriate clothing and make travel arrangements.

Conclusion

The increased number of Reconciliation Fund recipients will make logistical planning more efficient. With more youth in more communities who have a connection to Youth Parliament of Manitoba, recruitment will be easier and more inclusive. The positive effects of the Reconciliation Fund will reverberate into the future, with more Indigenous youth in leadership positions in YPM serving to expand our membership into new communities.

The Reconciliation Fund has gone from a seed of an idea, to an essential part of Youth Parliament of Manitoba, in only two years. The effects of this project can be felt in our debates, in our social interactions, and in the ranks of our organizing committee. Though some details need to be ironed out, the Reconciliation Fund project remains one of the most exciting activities of Youth Parliament of Manitoba, and shows positive signs of growth for the years to come.