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1 Foreword

Caisse Desjardins de l'Éducation's mission is to contribute to improving the economic and social well-being of education professionals through its tailored, people-focused approach and involvement in the education sector. **The caisse supports the education community through projects developed alongside local organizations and institutions, without taking the place of government.**

This policy aims to provide information to caisse members and partners on the caisse's contributions to the education community. It provides the caisse's board of directors with guidelines on allocating and managing the financial support provided by the caisse, which includes the Community Development Fund (CDF), donations and sponsorships.

2 Purpose and objectives

This policy is based on Desjardins Group's business reality while considering the specific needs of members and the community, the caisse's strategic planning and Desjardins Group's priorities.

By supporting community development, the caisse promotes Desjardins Group's values:

- Money at the service of human development
- Personal commitment
- Democratic action
- Integrity and rigour in the cooperative enterprise
- Solidarity with the community
- Intercooperation

OBJECTIVES OF THE INVESTMENT POLICY

- Share the framework for the caisse's community involvement.
- Make sure members and the community have the information needed for their understanding.
- Meet the needs of members and the community by supporting meaningful projects in the education sector.
- Promote the cooperative difference and the democratic participation of members.
- Promote members' access to funding by setting clear criteria.

3 Types of contributions

There are many ways the caisse can enrich the lives of people and communities. Along with providing financial support, the caisse can encourage employees and board members to develop strong relationships with members and the community.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF)

The CDF is a way for caisse members to contribute to sustainable development in their communities, alongside other financial support mechanisms provided by local, regional or sector-specific organizations.

CDF investments are a key factor in getting many projects off the ground. **They're designed to support meaningful projects that meet community needs.**

Meaningful projects are projects that:

- Unite different stakeholders around a common goal that will have a lasting impact on the community.
- Have a lot of added value for people and the community, empowering them to take charge of their development and their ability to act.

SPONSORSHIPS

A sponsorship is an amount of money provided to establish a business partnership or carry out an activity, an event or a project in exchange for an institutional or commercial benefit, **with a view to obtaining visibility and business reciprocity so that Desjardins can reach a target clientele.** Because this is a business opportunity, every file is presented with a promotion plan that defines the initial objectives, methods, budget and a way to evaluate the expected benefits.

DONATIONS

Donations include financial assistance, materials or services provided to non-profit organizations (associations, institutions and cooperatives) to support their development activities while boosting caisse visibility. Donations directly support the organization's cause.

VOLUNTEERING

The caisse may occasionally offer the time and expertise of its staff and board members.

4 Use of the Community Development Fund

Contributions to the Community Development Fund are approved by members at the annual general meeting (AGM). The contributions come from the surplus earnings reserved for member dividends. Members who attend the AGM must receive an annual report on the use of the CDF.

The CDF is managed exclusively by the caisse's board of directors. The board alone is responsible for determining how the money in the CDF is used.

The caisse's board of directors is not required to invest the total amount of money contributed to the CDF every year. In addition, the board can only use money from the CDF after it has set aside the funds required to meet earlier multi-year commitments made by the caisse.

Members receive a cooperative difference report every year at the AGM.

5 CDF investment priorities

The caisse always does what's best for its members. Therefore, after consulting members and partners, it has defined the following investment priorities.

Investment priorities	Details
Student success and perseverance	Encourage kids to stay in school or go back to school, reward their efforts and help students work toward graduation.
Promoting careers in education	Support initiatives and projects that promote education professionals.
Mental health of education professionals	Contribute to projects that support education professionals' mental health by working with research chairs and university researchers, for example.

6 Eligibility and selection criteria (CDF, donations and sponsorships)

The caisse will give special attention to project developers and donation and sponsorship applicants **that have taken sustainability into account.**

Associations, groups, organizations, individuals and project developers that apply for funding from the caisse must meet the following criteria.

	CDF	SPONSORSHIP	DONATION
Eligibility criteria	Be a non-profit corporation, cooperative, association, organization or group		
Specific selection or analysis criteria	<p><i>Organizations that are caisse members will be given priority for funding. However, the caisse will consider applications from organizations that are not members, taking into account their contribution to the community.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet 1 of the 3 investment priorities. • Show how the project will benefit the education community. • Include an exclusive relationship in the financial services sector. • Provide the caisse significant visibility or business opportunities through a reciprocal business relationship. • If the project meets the criteria of a Desjardins Foundation program, it must be submitted to the Desjardins Foundation first. The caisse reserves the right to review projects refused by the Desjardins Foundation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a member of the caisse for at least 90 days. • Provide the caisse significant visibility or business opportunities through a reciprocal business relationship. • Fall in line with the caisse's business objectives. • Offer several sponsorship arrangements. • Include an exclusive relationship in the financial services sector for a reasonable period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a member of the caisse for at least 90 days. • Proposed projects must be run primarily by volunteers. • Funding cannot be used to support the regular operations of an organization or eliminate its deficit, with some exceptions.

Not eligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Funding cannot be used to support the regular operations of a public sector entity or government body. ✓ Funding cannot replace government financial aid programs, but can be part of the community's share or outlay, as required by the program. ✓ Organizations that receive support from the caisse must not compromise Desjardins Group's values. ✓ Projects cannot be political in nature. ✓ Funding cannot be used to pay back debt or invested in a reserve. ✓ Organizations that have been involved in fraud or whose activities could negatively affect the caisse's reputation will not be considered. ✓ Applications to support an individual, personal project or professional/elite athlete ✓ Social clubs or events. ✓ Unincorporated, unrecognized or for-profit organizations (for donations). ✓ Projects with questionable financial management. ✓ Applications for trips or humanitarian aid outside the country. ✓ Graduation events, yearbooks or organization directories. ✓ Applications submitted as a form letter. ✓ Advertising purchased from a communications agency (for example, brochures, information sheets, bulletin boards).
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7 Submission and analysis procedure

The caisse will ask the applicant for information based on the scope of the application.

All applications for donations, sponsorships or funding for CDF-related projects must be submitted to the caisse using the appropriate form. The form is available on the caisse's website and at its service centres.

Any incomplete applications will not be analyzed and will be returned to the applicant for correction. The application will need to be submitted again and processed only when all required documents have been received.

7.1 Project submission and deadlines

7.1.1 Community Development Fund

Applications must be submitted using the following form:

www.caisseeducationen.ca/commitment

Applications are submitted during an annual call for proposals. Once all the requested documents have been received, the caisse will notify the applicant of when their application will be analyzed.

The board of directors has delegated application analysis to the Cooperation Committee. The Cooperation Committee supervises the caisse's cooperative difference and involvement in the education sector. For the CDF, it analyzes applications and makes recommendations to the board for a final decision. Applicants are then informed of how much funding they will receive from the caisse. All applicants will receive a response, whether their application is accepted or not.

7.1.2 Donations and sponsorships

Applications for donations and sponsorships can be submitted at any time of year using the following form: www.caisseeducationen.ca/commitment. All applications will be reviewed and processed 4–6 weeks after they are received, provided they are complete.

After analysis, applicants will be informed of how much funding they will receive from the caisse.

7.2 Code of Professional Conduct

Anyone called upon by the caisse to complete a task on its behalf related to this policy is bound by Desjardins's Code of Professional Conduct, including the provisions on confidentiality and conflict of interest management.

8 Recipient's commitment

The relationship created when the caisse agrees to provide assistance is similar to the caisse's business relationships. The caisse may require both parties to sign a partnership agreement. The organization must agree in writing to comply with the requirements set out in this policy and in their application, as well as any requirements issued by the caisse, as applicable.

8.1 Respect

The caisse and the organization agree to fully respect each other's missions.

8.2 Transparency

The caisse and the organization agree to be as transparent as possible with respect to the funding provided. In particular, the organization agrees to notify the caisse of any change that could impact the funding provided by the caisse based on the original application.

8.3 Business relationship with the caisse

The organization agrees to further develop its business relationship with the caisse. It also agrees to encourage its members to do business with the caisse, or more generally, with Desjardins Group entities.

8.4 Commitment and relationship with the caisse

The individuals or organizations that receive funding must show that they're committed to using all the resources available to them. All assistance is conditional upon the commitment and investment of applicant individuals and organizations.

8.5 Visibility

Sponsorships and funding provided through the CDF must include a detailed visibility plan that promotes the caisse's community involvement. The caisse can also ask that board members and employees attend the event or project announcement.

Partners that receive funding from the caisse over multiple years must prepare an annual report to ensure continued visibility and ongoing compliance with the terms of the agreement.

The organization must also make sure that it can provide photos of the event, project or participants to be included in the caisse's annual report.

8.6 Activity review and reporting

For the purpose of continuous improvement and reporting, the organization agrees to provide the caisse with an overview presenting the project and its impact on members and the community. The overview is written using a form provided by the caisse.

9 Review of the Investment Policy

The caisse agrees to review this policy as necessary.