

OAKTREE 6

Improve Life... Together

In partnership with the Community Engaged Scholarship Institute (CESI) and ICON program at the University of Guelph, we are excited to announce the sixth installment of The Oak Tree Project.

Charity Information Package

June 2020

#RecoverTogether
oaktreeguelph.ca



the **OAKTREE** project 
The Mactaggart Hryn Family

UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH

IMPROVE LIFE.

Founding
partners



OAKTREE 6

Improve Life... Together

At a Glance



May 26/20

Donation to the #COVID19 fund at the Guelph Community Foundation

May 31/20

Online Launch at oaktreeguelph.ca

July 15/20

Deadline for Wellington-Guelph charities to submit their idea

Aug 17/20

Three semi-finalist winners announced

Sep/20

Semi-finalist charities start working with U of G ICON students

event **Late Nov/20**

Facebook Live event and one day public voting

Mid Dec/20

Grand prize winner awarded \$7,500

The Oak Tree Project 2020

After five years of helping build organizational capacity with Wellington and Guelph based charities, Oak Tree 6 and our partners at the University of Guelph are going to build community capacity – for now, and for what comes next.

The Oak Tree Project recognizes the immense pressure charities are facing in the spring of 2020. Since our beginning, Oak Tree has helped charities meet short- and long-term needs. We know that local charities are working hard to meet the increased demands placed on them today. We also know they are not losing vision for what their role could be in our new collective future. As we reflect on the impact of the COVID pandemic, we want to make the best use of the Oak Tree resources to help today and in the future.

With that in mind, we are evolving our 2020 plans to support charities with both immediate and medium-term Oak Tree support for your good work.

Focused on The Now

Oak Tree recognizes that charities need help now to meet our community's immediate needs. To that end, we are working with our partners to raise immediate funds and direct them to the Guelph Community Foundation (GCF) to help support the GCF/United Way COVID relief effort.

With the help of our generous partners, Oak Tree is proudly committing \$30,000 for immediate COVID relief. Charities can learn more about applying for these funds at guelphcf.ca.

Focused on The Next

Oak Tree is also interested in working with charities to finance innovative ideas that will help our community regain our strength as we recover from this crisis.

New this year is our partnership with the University of Guelph through its Community Engaged Scholarship Institute (CESI) and ICON academic program. CESI brings together faculty, students and community through collaborative research partnerships focused on putting knowledge into action. Through CESI, we were able to connect with the ICON course, one of the University's most hands-on and innovative teaching programs. ICON is a full-semester course credit program for students in all years and disciplines. The program harnesses the power of collaboration and knowledge-sharing in a problem-solving and project-based learning environment. Through workshops, team building activities, and the fostering of knowledge translation and transfer, ICON teaches students valuable interpersonal, team, and communication skills, while fostering innovative ideas for today's most pressing challenges.

Three Oak Tree 6 semi-finalists will be paired with students from ICON to build on their original submission, strengthening ideas and exploring new angles to prepare a pitch that will be graded for the students and voted on by the public to select our Grand Prize winner before Christmas 2020.

The Grand Prize winner of The Oak Tree Project 2020 will be awarded \$7,500. Additional cash prizes will be awarded to all charities that apply.

Applying

We'd like to hear proposals from charities that will strengthen the Wellington and Guelph community in a post-COVID world over the next 12-36 months. We have designed this application process to not be a burden for charities while providing enough information to help judges evaluate submissions. We are asking charities to share some basic information and answer three questions in 600-words or less.

The #OTP6 application process is online this year. Charities can submit ideas at oaktreeguelph.ca before midnight on July 15, 2020. (Handwritten submissions can also be dropped off at the Richardson GMP offices at 193 Woolwich Street in Guelph.)

In addition to their contact info and vision and mission, charities will be asked to answer three questions:

- 1. Tell us about the need.** What will your project accomplish and how will it help your organization and community recover from the COVID pandemic?
- 2. Tell us about partnership opportunities with ICON students.** What benefits do you see your organization and our community gaining from access to a partnership with the students from ICON at the University of Guelph?
- 3. Tell us about measuring success.** How will a successful outcome move the needle towards helping the community recover from the COVID pandemic? Discuss both qualitative and quantitative benefits.

Choosing the Winner and Working with ICON

All applications will be reviewed by a judging panel of community leaders and university leadership. As with past Oak Tree events, we will recognize all charities that have contributed a submission with a small gift to acknowledge the time invested in the process.

By August 15, three semi-finalists will be selected to further develop their ideas in a collaborative and engaging process with student teams from ICON. An additional financial contribution from Oak Tree will help the charities and student teams develop their pitch together.

This pitch process and interaction will be finalized as the ICON team have a better idea of what their fall programming on campus will look like. Much of this work will likely be a virtual collaboration between the charity and the students. The goal of this time will be to build a strong and robust pitch to be presented to ICON professors in late November. Students will receive an academic mark for their work and the community will have the chance to vote on the idea they like best.

Each semi-finalist will need one contact person and project lead. ICON instructors and teaching assistants will facilitate conversation between students and charity partners so that they aren't overwhelmed with questions or requests. We will work with the charities to identify what communication works best for them.

This is how we anticipate the three semi-finalists will connect with the ICON students in the fall of 2020:

- In early September, each charity will share their original idea so that students have an understanding of the challenges faced and can self-select which issue they wish to work on.
- Once paired with their charity, students will have a mix of online discussions, face-to-face meetings, in-class sessions or perhaps video engagement with the charities. In the past, ICON classes have been late Friday afternoon, and we will try to arrange other meeting times that better suit charity partners. Exact methods for engagement will be focused on appropriate social distancing and accessibility for everyone involved.
- Throughout the fall there will also likely be breakout sessions so students and charities can explore potential solutions.
- In mid-October ICON will host a question and discussion session with the students and the charities. This will take place during class (online or face-to-face). This will be an opportunity for students to clarify needs and pain points with the charities.
- In late November, ICON faculty will hear final presentations by the students. Depending on the timing, these might be online or video format. If face-to-face, charities will be invited to view the final presentations.

As social distancing allows, Oak Tree will create a video of each idea and development process throughout September and October. In a late November 2020 Facebook Live event, the videos will kick-off a pitch by the student/charity teams to a judging panel of community and university leaders. Online viewers will be encouraged to leave comments about each pitch.

Viewers will also have the opportunity to support the charities that evening with a vote in the form of a donation of any size. Matching funds will help spur these donation votes! A combination of judges scores and community donations will determine which of the three finalists is chosen to receive the Grand Prize of \$7,500. The winner will be announced before Christmas 2020.

Once the winner is announced the funds will flow right away. The winning charity will follow the reporting mechanisms and structures they outlined in their pitch. We hope to have an in-person event in 2021 to celebrate all charities and learn more about their ideas and impact.

Financial Supporters

While many hands are at work bringing the Oak Tree Project to life, financial support has also been a community effort from the very beginning. Again this year, our founding funding partner, The Beingessner Family has not only donated through The Corine Beingessner Fund at The Guelph Community Foundation, but they've helped spread the word at this time of great need. We thank them and the following contributors for multiplying our collective impact: The Miles Family, The Pollard Family, The Wilson Family, CI investments, Bridgehouse Asset Management, PictonMahoney, Polar Asset Management, RosmarDrywall, Trez Capital, and Vantage Asset Management.

Our Partners



The Mactaggart Hryn Family

As community leaders and local professionals, brothers Will Mactaggart and Mike Hryn share a passionate commitment to strengthen the local Guelph-Wellington community. It is a family legacy they proudly honour, gaining personal benefit and growth from volunteering work and the financial donations they make to support the good work of the charities around the community.



University of Guelph

University of Guelph is proud to partner for the 6th Oak Tree Project. Sharing a commitment to improve life together, the University is participating through its Community Engaged Scholarship Institute (CESI) and ICON academic program that helps students solve real-world problems through collaboration and knowledge sharing.



The Guelph Community Foundation

As a founding partner and experts in charitable giving The Guelph Community Foundation has contributed in-depth knowledge of the community, its organizations, needs and opportunities. The Foundation leads Guelph and Wellington County Vital Signs, an in-depth analysis and report card of strengths and challenges in Guelph and Wellington County.



Pearl Street Communications

Pearl Street is a marketing and training company based in Elora. As a proud B Corp they believe that more voices and better communications are the foundation to improving how business, community groups and governments lead real change. Chief Listening Officer Curt Hammond has been part of the Oak Tree leadership team since OTP's founding and their team contributes essential communications and social media support.



The Letter M Marketing

The Letter M is a Guelph-based branding and communications agency that focuses on creating brand identities and marketing strategies that strengthen communities. Agency owner Doug MacMillan has been part of The Oak Tree Project's leadership team since day one, and with Pearl Street, leads branding and communications efforts for the project.



Insignis Design

Insignis Design is a Guelph-based website development and graphic design company that builds and hosts The Oak Tree Project website.



Ward 1 Studios

Ward 1 Studios is Guelph-Wellington's premiere video production studio with a focus on impactful storytelling through video and animation. Ward 1 produces all videos used for public voting.