



Canadian Public
Relations Society

Foundation

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-26



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The CPRS Foundation acknowledges that its work takes place across the ancestral and traditional territories of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. We recognize the ongoing relationships Indigenous Peoples have with these lands, and we are committed to learning, respect, and reconciliation in the work we support.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the CPRS Foundation Board, I am pleased to share this annual report for 2025–26. This year, the Foundation continued to advance its purpose as the fundraising partner of CPRS National and as a champion for the next generation of Canadian public relations and communications practitioners.

Our work is grounded in a simple but powerful commitment: to invest in people, learning, and community. Through scholarships, bursaries, education, donor engagement, and volunteer leadership, the Foundation helps emerging practitioners access opportunities that can shape their careers and strengthen the profession across Canada.

This past year we've focused on establishing a solid foundation on which to build our future fundraising efforts, including refining our governance processes and refocusing on our core priorities. And, of course we continue to support PR students with scholarships.

This progress is possible because of the generosity of CPRS members, donors, partners, volunteers, and Foundation board members. Thank you for your continued belief in the value of professional communications and in the students and practitioners who will carry our profession forward.

Finally, I would like to extend a personal thank you to Michelle James, MA, APR. Michelle's tireless efforts over the years have ensured the Foundation's ongoing success, as she took on multiple roles—serving as board Chair for three terms—and whose energy and enthusiasm kept the Foundation's work moving forward. We thank her for her many contributions and her service to our profession.

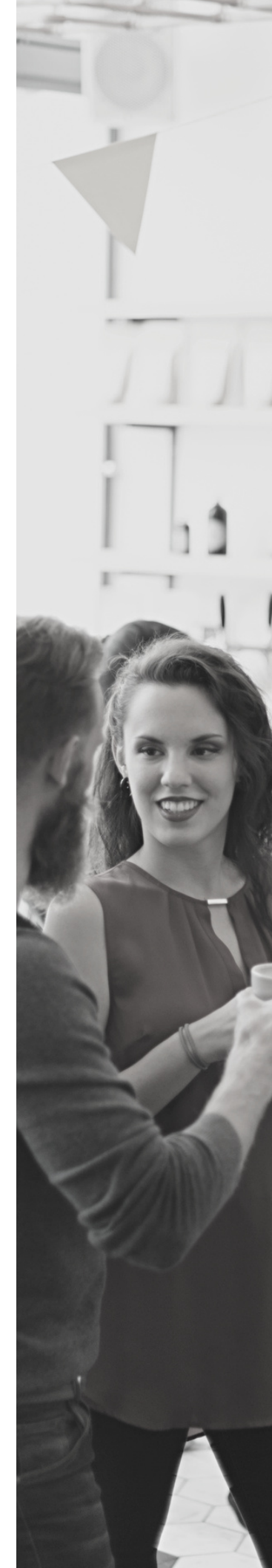
Johanna Ward, MA, APR
Chair, CPRS Foundation

ABOUT THE CPRS FOUNDATION

The CPRS Foundation is the fundraising partner of CPRS National. The Foundation strives to invest in and elevate the work of Canadian communications practitioners through scholarships, education, and community-building initiatives.

By supporting students and emerging professionals, the Foundation contributes to a more connected, inclusive, and sustainable public relations and communications profession in Canada.





OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIC GOALS

The Foundation's objective is to strengthen and sustain the public relations and communications profession in Canada by supporting students, emerging practitioners, learning opportunities, and initiatives that preserve and share the profession's history.

- **Demonstrate value:** Build sustainable fundraising and donor engagement to support scholarships, bursaries, lectures, grants, and other Foundation initiatives.
- **Foster connections:** Expand outreach within CPRS and across the broader profession to increase awareness and participation.
- **Sustain the effort:** Maintain a strong, engaged, and accountable volunteer board with the skills and capacity needed to guide the Foundation's work.
- **Build the brand:** Strengthen the Foundation's identity, visibility, and communications so members and supporters understand its role and impact.

2025-26 AT A GLANCE

Supported the next generation of Canadian public relations and communications practitioners through scholarships and bursaries.

Awarded the CPRS Indigenous Scholarship to Colby Holwell of Memorial University of Newfoundland and Dallas Blacksmith of the University of Ottawa.

Continued regional bursary support, including the CPRS Vancouver Island Denis Racine Bursary.

Promoted scholarships and donor awareness to strengthen the Foundation's long-term sustainability.

Began planning the re-launch of the Charles and Diana Tisdall Lecture Series.

Worked with the CPRS College of Fellows on the Yocom profiles historical project.

OUR IMPACT

In 2025–26, the CPRS Foundation continued to create impact by helping students and emerging practitioners access recognition, financial support, and professional connection. The Foundation's work also helped strengthen the profession by supporting learning, preserving history, and encouraging members to invest in the next generation.

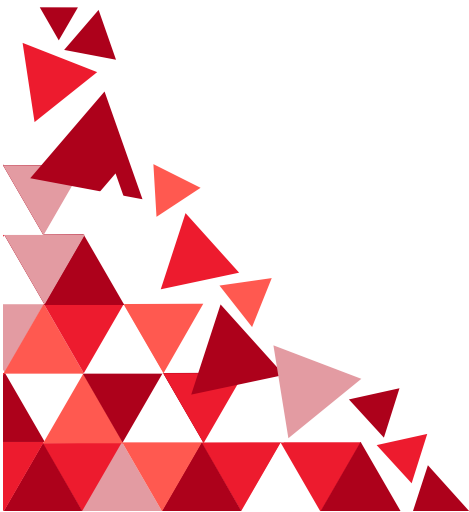
The Foundation's impact is reflected not only in individual awards, but also in the relationships and opportunities those awards make possible. Each scholarship, bursary, lecture, grant, and donation contributes to a stronger and more inclusive communications community.

SCHOLARSHIPS & BURSARIES

Scholarships and bursaries remain central to the Foundation's work. In 2025–26, the Foundation continued to support students and emerging practitioners by helping reduce barriers to education, professional development, and participation in the communications profession.

CPRS Indigenous Scholarship

The CPRS Indigenous Scholarship was awarded to two recipients: Colby Holwell of Memorial University of Newfoundland and Dallas Blacksmith of the University of Ottawa. This scholarship reflects the Foundation's commitment to supporting Indigenous students and strengthening representation in public relations and communications.



2025 RECIPIENT OF THE INDIGENOUS STUDENT PR SCHOLARSHIP: COLBY HOLWELL

From Nain to new narratives: Colby Holwell, a recent Memorial University of Newfoundland graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications and Media Studies, received the 2025 CPRS Indigenous PR Student Scholarship. His story reflects the Foundation's commitment to supporting Indigenous students as they build careers in communications, media, and storytelling.



Colby first imagined a future in journalism, particularly sports journalism, but his studies helped broaden that vision. Through communications theory and media-focused coursework, he became increasingly interested in screenwriting and filmmaking as ways to tell stories that connect with people in deeper and more lasting ways.

One course, Frontiers of Synthetic Media, left a particular impression. In exploring artificial intelligence and media, Colby examined what widely used AI systems appeared to "know" about Indigenous histories, landmarks, cultural knowledge, and traditional Inuit objects. The experience reinforced for him how much is still missing when Indigenous perspectives are absent from the systems that shape public knowledge.

"You start to notice things you didn't notice before."

For the Foundation, Colby's path is a reminder that scholarships do more than recognize achievement. They help create space for emerging communicators to explore their voice, develop confidence, and bring more Indigenous and Inuit stories into the broader media landscape.

Read more about Colby's journey [on our website](#).

BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY AND VISIBILITY

Over the past year, the Foundation focused on strengthening its long-term sustainability and visibility. This included continuing fundraising and donor awareness efforts, promoting the value of scholarships for emerging practitioners, and reinforcing the Foundation's role as a meaningful way for CPRS members to give back to the profession.

The Foundation also supported initiatives that connect the profession's past, present, and future. This included supporting the re-launch of the Charles and Diana Tisdall Lecture Series and working with the CPRS College of Fellows on the Yocom profiles historical project.



GIFTS AND DONATIONS

The Foundation was honoured this year to receive a generous donation from Bruce MacLellan and Karen Girling, which will support work to re-launch the Charles and Diana Tisdall Lecture Series, as well as future events supporting CPRS members' professional development. We also received several donations in memory of Janet Lee Wile, a longtime leader and champion of excellence in public relations and communications.

Gifts and donations make the Foundation's work possible. In 2025–26, donors helped sustain scholarships, bursaries, educational initiatives, and projects that support the future of public relations and communications in Canada.

The Foundation encourages CPRS members and supporters to consider one-time or monthly gifts. Every contribution helps create opportunities for students and emerging practitioners and strengthens the Foundation's ability to plan for long-term impact.

2025-26 DONORS



Clay Adams
Jane Antoniak
Robert Ellis
Elizabeth Hirst
Michelle James
Wayne Knorr
Pierrette Leonard
Bruce MacLellan & Karen Girling
Blair Peberdy
Vincent Power
Sara Rafuse
Louise Rousseau
Claire Ryan
Deb Trouten
Johanna Ward
Anita Wasiuta
Julia White

Thank you to our donors for their continued support in the future of public relations.

LOOKING AHEAD

Looking ahead, the CPRS Foundation will continue to build its sustainability and profile so it can expand its impact for future practitioners. The Foundation will remain focused on promoting scholarships and bursaries, strengthening donor engagement, supporting educational opportunities, and celebrating the people and history that shape public relations and communications in Canada.

As the profession evolves, the Foundation has an important role to play in helping students and emerging practitioners find connection, confidence, and opportunity. With continued support from CPRS members and donors, the Foundation is well positioned to carry this work forward.



FOUNDATION BOARD

The CPRS Foundation is guided by a volunteer board that provides leadership, stewardship, and oversight for the Foundation's work.

2025 board members:

Johanna Ward, MA, APR, Chair

Roy Marra, Vice-Chair

Stephanie Fung, Secretary

Lilie (Lili) Sidharta, Treasurer

Michelle James, MA, APR, Director

Wayne Knorr, APR, FCPRS, MCPRS, Director

Jessica Ryan, Director

Richard Tea, Director

Julia White, Director

Simon Yackulic, Director, APR

Fionn Yaxley, MA, Director

SUPPORT THE CPRS FOUNDATION

The CPRS Foundation is a registered charity. CPRS members and supporters are encouraged to contribute through one-time or monthly donations. Every gift helps the Foundation invest in scholarships, education, and community for the next generation of Canadian communications practitioners.

[Click here to donate today!](#)

Follow us on social media.



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Canadian Public
Relations Society

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Financial Statements

March 31, 2026

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Statement of Financial Position

March 31, 2026

(Unaudited)

	2026 \$
Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash	35,221
Total Assets	35,221
 Net Assets	
Unrestricted Funds	(27,522)
Externally Restricted Net Assets	62,742
Total Net Assets	35,221
 Liabilities	-
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	35,221

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Board

Director

Chair of the Board

Director

Secretary - Treasurer

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

March 31, 2026

(Unaudited)

	Unrestricted Funds	Externally Restricted Funds	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance, beginning of year (2025)	(28,649)	55,615	26,967
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	1,127	-	1,127
Donations received during the year	-	9,649	9,649
Disbursements paid	-	(2,521)	(2,521)
Transfer to Unrestricted funds	-	-	-
Balance, end of year (2026)	(27,522)	62,742	35,221

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Statement of Operations

March 31, 2026

(Unaudited)

	2026
	\$
Revenue	
Donations	4,051
Interest Income	205
Total Revenue	4,256
Expenses	
Canada Helps Fees	1,068
Bank Charges	604
Promotional	123
Office expenses	849
Website Costs	122
Merchant fees	363
Total Expenses	3,129
Excess (Deficit) of Revenue over Expenses	1,127

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Statement of Cash Flows

March 31, 2026

(Unaudited)

	2026
	\$
Cash provided from	
Operating Activities	
Cash receipts from donations	13,700
Cash paid to suppliers	(5,651)
Interest received	205
Total cash flows from operating activities	8,254
Increase (decrease) in cash	8,254
Cash, beginning of year	26,967
Cash, end of year	35,221

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

March 31, 2026

(Unaudited)

1. Purpose of the Organization

The Canadian Public Relations Society Foundation, (the "Foundation") formerly known as Communications + Public Relations Foundation, established in 1979, is a recognized, not-for-profit, charitable organization that is committed to increasing public knowledge and awareness of the role of public relations and communications through support to educational initiatives and conduct of original communications research; promotes the advancement of public relations and communications as a vital function in society; and is dedicated to the public interest.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of presentation

These financial statements have been prepared on a cash basis and are presented in Canadian dollars.

Financial instruments

It is management's opinion that the Foundation is not exposed to significant interest, currency, credit, liquidity or other price risks arising from these financial instruments.

Financial assets measured at amortized cost include cash and investment.

It is management's opinion that the Foundation is not exposed to significant interest, currency, credit, liquidity or other price risks arising from these financial instruments.

Revenue recognition

Donation revenue is recorded when received.

Donated services

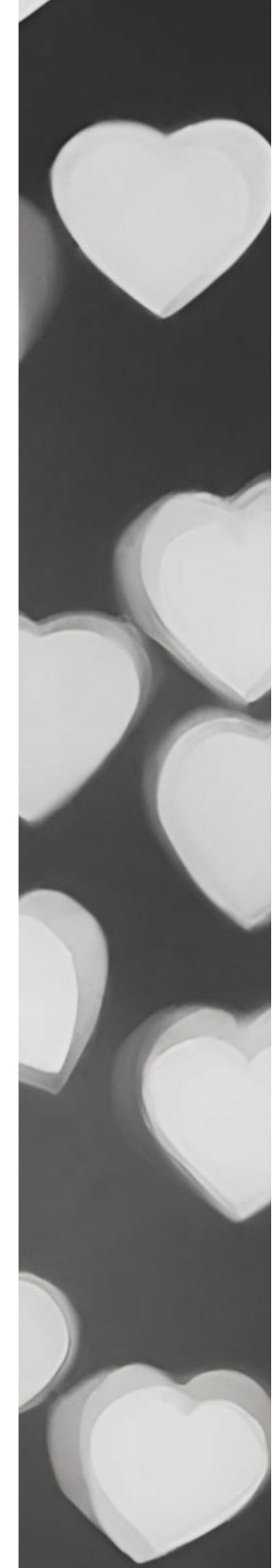
The Foundation does not recognize donated services.

3. Fund Balances

Externally restricted funds consist of amounts received from Donors which have been restricted for a specific purpose.

As of March 31, 2026, the Foundation had the following externally restricted fund balances:

	Balance, beginning of year	Donation received	Disbursements paid	Total 2026
Calgary Legacy Scholarships	1,272	-	-	1,272
Victoria Foundation	8,555	4,001	(2,521)	10,035
Indigenous Scholarships	10,525	215	-	10,740
Jack Yocom Profile Collection	2,241	-	-	2,241
Tisdall Lecture	-	5,003	-	5,003
Torchia Scholarships	533	143	-	676
Susan Francis	5,789	-	-	5,789
BPOC Scholarships	26,700	287	-	26,986
	55,615	9,649	(2,521)	62,742



THANK YOU

Thank you to the committed members of the CPRS Foundation Board and to the volunteers who contributed their time, expertise, and energy over the past year. Your work continues to strengthen the Foundation's capacity and its contribution to the profession.

