



Position Description

Position Title: General Secretary	Creation Date: Feb. 1, 2018
Reports To Position: Executive Committee (or designate)	Revision Date: Feb 24, 2026
Status (% and hours per week): 100%, 35 hours a week. This is a 5-year term, renewable, beginning September 1, 2026.	Executive Committee Review Date: February 24 2026

The Canadian Council of Churches responds to Christ’s call for unity and peace, seeks Christ’s truth with an affection for diversity, and acts in love through prayer, dialogue and witness to the gospel.

Purpose:

The General Secretary functions as the chief executive officer of the Council responsible to the Governing Board through the Executive Committee for the articulation and implementation of the vision, direction and priorities of the Council including its ecumenical operating agency and peace research institute Project Ploughshares, the Commissions, the Reference Groups and other working groups and committees.

Context:

The General Secretary will facilitate the work of the Council as a forum of the member denominations and offer theologically informed and flexible leadership. The General Secretary is responsible for strengthening relationships among the member denominations and with other Christian churches and religious bodies in Canada. The General Secretary is a key leader in the ecumenical movement in Canada and serves as an agent for renewal of the Council’s role in that wider context.

Reporting Relationships:

Presently there are 7 positions filling 12 roles reporting to the General Secretary. These staffing arrangements will change from time to time, in consultation with the Executive Committee through the President.

- Director, Project Ploughshares (50% FTE)
- Associate General Secretary including Faith and Witness, Christian Interfaith, and Corrections and Restorative Justice (100% FTE)
- Associate Secretary, Intercultural Leadership and Learning (100% FTE)
- Associate Secretary, Justice and Peace including Ending Sexual Exploitation (60% FTE)
- Secretary, Faith and Life Sciences Reference Group (40% FTE)
- Communications Coordinator including Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Youth Involvement (80% FTE)
- Operations Manager (80% FTE)

Specific Outcomes and/or Key Position Functions:

- **Governance (25 % of position)**
With the Governing Board, its Executive Committee and Standing Committees, the General Secretary provides direction and executive leadership of the Council including the development of vision and

priorities; strategic planning; change management; fostering partnerships; advancing clear lines of authority, accountability and communications protocols; promoting the long-term sustainability of the Council; and cultivating a learning, adaptive and innovative organizational culture. The General Secretary recommends operating policies and procedures to the Executive Committee and enables the Governing Board and Executive Committee members to meet and surpass their fiduciary responsibilities. The General Secretary regularly reports to the Governing Board and its Executive on the progress of the Council in carrying out its mission and provides an annual report to the Governing Board Spring Meeting. The General Secretary facilitates and supports the effective functioning of the Governing Board's Commissions, Project Ploughshares Management Committee, Reference Groups and Working Groups according to their protocols and terms of reference. The General Secretary coordinates and facilitates reporting and engagement of all staff of the Council including Project Ploughshares to their governing bodies. The General Secretary prepares or enables the preparation of the agenda and dockets for meetings of the Governing Board and its Standing Committees.

- **Program and Operations (25 % of position)**

The General Secretary develops (in collaboration with the tables of the Council) and implements the triennium plans of the Council as determined by the Governing Board. The General Secretary provides oversight to the programs of the Council and determines staffing allocations to accomplish the work of the Council. The General Secretary promotes coherence, cohesion and synergy among the various committees and sub-committees of the Council including Project Ploughshares.

The General Secretary is responsible for the operations of all the bodies of the Council: fundraising, personnel administration, financial management, communications and office management. This includes promoting staff well-being, evaluating employee performance by providing feedback, coaching and formal evaluations. The General Secretary leads in donor development and fundraising initiatives and provides oversight to the financial management of the Council, facilitating the development and implementation of a comprehensive multi-year financial strategy for sustaining the Council's financial health. The General Secretary oversees the coherence and messaging of the Council through its various communications platforms as editor-in-chief. The General Secretary ensures the Council complies with all applicable legal, ethical and best practices regulations, statutes and standards including, but not limited to, those pertaining to: human resources management, Canada Revenue Agency, risk management and safeguarding the Council as an employer and as a responsible not-for-profit organization with Imagine Canada accreditation.

While the day-to-day research and operations of Project Ploughshares are the responsibility of the Director of Project Ploughshares, the General Secretary retains responsibility for high level governance, strategic and management decisions.

- **Member Relations, Canadian and Global Ecumenical Relationships (30 % of position)**

The General Secretary facilitates relations with and among the member denominations by assisting the denominations to meet as a forum of churches for discussion and reflection, assisting the denominations in maintaining an ecumenical presence and action when requested, and raising up the gospel call to unity. The General Secretary represents and promotes the work and goals of the Council to member churches and identifies and encourages the formation of younger generations of Canadian

ecumenical leadership regionally and nationally. With the President, the General Secretary is the principal interpreter and spokesperson of the Council, representing the Council to the Government of Canada and other organizations and movements in Canadian society, and when invited, representing the Council in local and national public ceremonies and events. Assisting in the development of and working within a policy and procedures framework for communications, the General Secretary enables the Council to communicate in the public sphere and take its place in a wider ecumenical movement. The General Secretary ensures that appropriate relationships are maintained with other ecumenical organizations globally, nationally, regionally and locally (including but not exclusive of regional ecumenical bodies and theological colleges). The General Secretary also liaises with Canadian and international participants in the global ecumenical and world Christian communion bodies.

- **Canadian Interfaith Relationships (20 % of position)**

The General Secretary participates and leads in Canadian interfaith initiatives and shared action. This involves cultivating and sustaining relationships with other Canadian religious bodies which align with Council purposes and priorities. Currently this includes significant roles with the Interfaith Committee of the Canadian Military Chaplaincy, Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy in the Correctional Service of Canada, and the Canadian Interfaith Conversation. These relationships facilitate the promotion of Council initiatives, contribute to the Canadian faith and public life conversation, and create relationships of friendship and shared concern.

Education:

Graduate level of theological education, or equivalent, and knowledge of church systems (polity) in Canada.

Skills and Competencies:

- An ability to encourage and articulate vision and give leadership in the Council in the context of accountability to the Governing Board through the Executive Committee.
- Sensitivity to Canadian cultural issues and concerns.
- Well-developed analytical, negotiation, consultative and listening skills.
- Demonstrated communication skills (oral and written) and experience with public and social media.
- Demonstrated financial literacy, financial management skills and fund-raising expertise.
- Competence in learning design and facilitation and healthy group dynamics essential.
- Ability to lead, develop and coordinate dispersed staff team, students and volunteers.
- Proficiency in both official languages is preferred.
- Attentive to detail, demonstrated ability to prioritize amongst and manage numerous demands.
- Proactively engages in self-care practices.

Experience:

- Experience in executive leadership.
- Experience in and knowledge of the breadth of the Canadian ecumenical landscape.
- Understanding of and commitment to The Canadian Council of Churches as a forum of churches and to the goals of ecumenism as lived out through Christian unity, justice, peace and reconciliation.
- A vision and practice for faith and public life in Canada.

- Experience with and understanding of Indigenous and other religious and spiritual communities.
- Experience with and understanding of interculturality.

Other:

- Availability to travel.
- A member in good standing of a Canadian Council of Churches member denomination.

Working Conditions:

The Canadian Council of Churches currently maintains an office in Toronto, Ontario. The position is adaptable to either working in the office, or from home, or both. Attendance at some evening and weekend meetings may be required. Some travel within Canada is required.

Reasonable accommodation will be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.