

# Our People, Our City Fund

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## BACKGROUND

March 15 is etched in all our memories. One of the primary reasons The Christchurch Foundation was established was to respond in times of disaster. No one dreamt that The Foundation would be called upon so soon to fulfil this role. Within hours of the attacks the Mayor and the Prime Minister asked us to act on their behalf to collect funds for the victims. The Our People, Our City Fund was launched on March 16th. We have worked hard to make it easier for generous people, businesses and countries from around the world to support those impacted by the attacks.

Over \$11 million has been received in pledges and cash. It is important to understand that these funds are not compensation, reparation or restitution. They are a gift that represents love and support.

In the immediate response to the shootings The Christchurch Foundation made the following commitments to our donors and the victims:

1. We would honour the wishes of our donors
2. We would focus on providing medium to long-term support to the victims
3. We would seek guidance from the victims about how the funds could be used to deliver the greatest benefit.

This document outlines how the funds will be distributed, as approved by the Trustees of The Christchurch Foundation, our process for making that decision and what will happen now.

Of the \$11 million, \$2 million has been distributed (two ambulances for St John, next of kin distributions from Prince Alwaleed), leaving \$9 million. Of this \$9 million, \$1.5 million is allocated by donors to an Education Fund, \$1 million to the Abrahamic Fund and \$0.4 million to a Medical Support Fund for the severely injured.

## LISTENING PROJECT

It was important that the Muslim community helped to determine how the remaining \$6 million was to be distributed. To facilitate this, the original plan was to establish an advisory group formed of members of the community who would provide recommendations, but consultation made it clear that the preference of the community was for a more direct approach. Former Christchurch City Councillor Raf Manji acted as The Foundation's independent advisor to collect community feedback and to provide recommendations about how the funds were to be distributed.

## ADVISORY TERMS OF REFERENCE

- › Make recommendations as to the best distribution of the funds to address the identified needs of the victims, and the wider communities.
- › Ensure that the longer-term needs (with an emphasis on education and training) of the children of those who were killed or severely injured (with lifelong impact), are met.
- › Ensure that any distribution covers costs not already covered by The Crown.
- › That the Muslim communities' views are acknowledged and factored into any recommendations.

Note: A range of experts and advisers also provided valuable additional support to Raf to inform and support the consideration of specific allocation recommendations. See page two for more information.

## CONVERSATIONS HELD

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| › Next of kin                      | › An-Mur Childcare Centre                   |
| › Bullet injured                   | › Christchurch Victims Organising Committee |
| › Witnesses                        | › Navigate Your Way                         |
| › Wider Muslim community           | › EMDR therapy group                        |
| › Canterbury District Health Board | › Expert professional advisors              |
| › Muslim Association of Canterbury | › Nawawi Centre                             |
| › Linwood Islamic Centre           | › 51 Lives project                          |
| › FIANZ                            | › Business recovery (MBIE)                  |
| › Department Internal Affairs      | › Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet  |
| › Ministry of Social Development   | › Immigration New Zealand                   |
| › Victim Support                   | › Abrahamic Fund individuals                |
| › New Zealand Police               | › Mental Health and Nutrition Lab           |
| › ACC                              |   |

## International Meetings

- |                                 |                                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| › National Zakat Foundation, UK | › Kensington and Chelsea Foundation |
| › London Emergencies Trust      | › UK National Emergencies Trust     |

## TIMELINE



## Basis for Recommendations

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- › The recommendations outlined in this document meet the requirements of the Project's terms of reference, take into account the needs of the victims and are reflective of the many conversations held with the community over a three-month period.
  - › These recommendations were adopted at a special meeting held of the Christchurch Foundation's Trustees on November 20, 2019. The chief executive was also asked to begin acting on the recommendations immediately.
  - › The project's process for determining distributions and developing recommendations was iterative. This meant meetings were held with the same people and groups more than once (more than 160 conversations in total), the issues were examined from different angles, and assumptions and beliefs were constantly tested and challenged. This approach allowed for all issues to be raised, openly discussed and debated.
  - › The Listening Project's process, distributions and recommendations were also informed by international research and lessons learned, including fund distribution learnings from the 2017 Manchester Arena bombing, the 2017 Grenfell Tower fire and the 2018 Toronto van attack<sup>1</sup>. All research showed that organisations all followed a similar path of trying to identify victims, then trying to categorise victims according to impact.
  - › All research and learnings talk about the challenges of defining or categorising victims and the need to be flexible with this definition. The goal is always how best to help victims, while acknowledging that each individual may be impacted in different ways. What was clear was that the priority needs were still with the widows with dependent children and those with major and severe injuries, with both groups facing a challenging recovery pathway.
  - › Public distributions provide transparency for donors and the general public, allowing them to see funds are going to the right places, but can also create tensions within different recipient groups. For this reason, base payments to each person in each category will be public and targeted support will be private. This recognises and acknowledges the delicate balance between transparency and privacy.
  - › Targeted support will provide funding assistance to the following groups of victims:
    - Widows and widowers with children under 18 at the time of the attacks
    - Severely injured, for those recognised as having long-term impairment and/or ongoing challenges
    - Financial support for a broader group of victims still suffering financial hardship as a result of the attacks
    - Education Fund for children of the bereaved and bullet injured under 18 at the time of the attacks
  - › A Community Support Fund will provide short-term funding for events and initiatives which help build community capability and cohesion, contribute to youth development and help establish trust and collaboration between community organisations and networks. It is expected that central and local government, along with other funding organisations, will provide longer term support to the wider community.
- While these funds will help victims to start planning for their future, challenges still exist. Immigration, employment, income support, housing and mental health support are likely to be ongoing, pressing concerns.

<sup>1</sup> See reports relating to the Grenfell Fire, Manchester Arena, London Bombings, Toronto Attack available at [www.christchurchfoundation.org/news](http://www.christchurchfoundation.org/news)

## Funds for Distribution

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### Victims' Fund \$7 million

- › Cash support for directly impacted victims of the attacks
- › Split into five funds:
  1. **Shaheed Fund** \$3.57 million: \$70,000 for each next of kin of the Shaheed (deceased). To be distributed as soon as possible
  2. **Bullet Injured Fund** \$1 million: \$25,000 for each bullet injured victim. To be distributed as soon as possible
  3. **Children and Widow Support Fund**: \$1.375 million to be distributed
  4. **Medical Support Fund**: \$400,000 available as needed for those with severe injuries. Distributions will be made based on injury categorisation
  5. **Hardship Fund**: \$500,000 available as needed for those experiencing continuing financial hardship due to the mosque attacks. Distributions will be made based on being present at the mosques and on proof of financial hardship.



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### Education Fund \$1.5 million

- › Support for higher education and post-school training
  - › For children of the Shaheed and bullet injured aged <18 at the time of the attacks
  - › Will remain open for donations and targeted scholarships if others wish to contribute
- Distributions will be made based on application.



### Community Support Fund \$500,000

- › To help build community capacity and engagement
- › Support youth development
- › Support long-term community recovery and wellbeing
- › Will remain open for donations, if others wish to contribute.



# Insights and Suggestions from the Listening Project

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The Listening Project became an opportunity for all manner of issues to be raised, often not to do with the distribution of funds but general challenges within the community. It created a safe place for people to raise concerns.

It is clear from this engagement that there is still much to do to properly support this community, and they will need further help over the next 12-15 months, particularly noting the possible negative impact of the trial next year.

One always has to view the response through a magnified and correctly calibrated lens: namely the reality of a terror attack on a specific community and a targeted mass slaughter of innocent people in a place of worship.

Issues around integration and assimilation have come to the fore, as have the more confronting problems of racism, discrimination and prejudice. However challenging, these issues will need to be discussed openly and considerably, as part of the long-term recovery.

The following are some of the key insights and recommendations those in both the public, private and voluntary/community sector might consider as we as a nation consider how best to support the survivors of this attack and the wider community into the future:

- › Culturally competent workers should be on the frontline across all agencies. This has been an ongoing refrain from the community for many years. As part of that, there should be relevant language speakers available, not just in ad hoc interpreting roles, but as part of the wider response.
- › There should be a recognition that a specific, community-centred and tailored response is required, particularly noting the collective approach to decision-making and family requirements, and extreme vulnerability of this community. This more collective approach also needs to be applied to mental health and trauma support. Such a bespoke and multi-disciplinary, whānau-centric approach already exists in the Whānau Ora model.
- › Many victims, outside the bereaved and bullet injured, have reported the effects of ongoing trauma. This is recognised as being a challenging issue to treat, but a real long-term risk in the wider community. Some thought should be given to a more structured and long-term approach to manage the mental health impacts of the attacks.
- › A bespoke approach to income support, such as a minimum weekly income for 12-24 months for the victims, should be considered. Removing income stress is a significant part of the recovery process, when there are so many different impacts to peoples' lives.
- › Social cohesion will also be critical to the long-term recovery of victim and community wellbeing. Recent reports show that dislocated, fractured and unwell communities are at high risk for negative outcomes. Promoting a strong resilience

and wellbeing focused community framework would be an appropriate response.

- › Accurate information is critical when dealing with such a vulnerable community. In an event such as a terror attack, appropriate and bespoke processes should be created. A single case file on each victim and their family connections should be created and be accessed by any relevant agency or approved organisation, such as The Christchurch Foundation, with approval from the Privacy Commissioner.
- › There is an opportunity now for all sectors of society to seriously promote diversity and inclusion by training and recruiting from this community. There is a lot of visible talent and energy and it is important to enable that to flourish. This could include targeted and intensive language training for talented refugees, and integration within the public sector.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

### Fund Distributions

**Shaheed Fund:** we already have contact information for the next of kin of the Shaheed. Distributions for the Shaheed Fund should be made by mid-December.

**Bullet Injured Fund:** we already have contact information for the bullet injured. Distributions will be made as soon as possible.

### Continuing Support and Advocacy

The Christchurch Foundation recognises that through his work on the Listening Project, Raf Manji has established strong, trusted relationships with the community on The Foundation's behalf. We therefore recognise there is a continuing role for The Christchurch Foundation to advocate for and support victims and the wider community for the foreseeable future. Work on what this looks like is now underway. We would also like to thank Raf for his outstanding work.

### Raf Manji

Raf Manji was a two term Christchurch City Councillor and served as Chair of the Finance Committee. He is currently a Trustee of the AsiaNZ Foundation and Chair of the UN Association of New Zealand Canterbury Charitable Trust. He has served as Chair of the Volunteer Army Foundation, Vice-Chair of Pillars Inc and has volunteered at Christchurch Budget Services and Refugee Resettlement Services.

