



Huu-ay-aht First Nations secured \$1.0 Million to study Tribunal

On February 10, 2025, Huu-ay-aht First Nations announced they have secured \$1.0 Million for a Weaving Justice Grant from the Law Foundation of British Columbia. With this funding, Huu-ay-aht will study and review its Tribunal process.

The Weaving Justice Grants opportunity provides financial support for Indigenous communities to use law to restore power to their communities in ways that bring people together. This opportunity will focus on supporting work to heal Indigenous families and communities through Indigenous legal education, legal research, legal services, and law reform.

Huu-ay-aht successfully received one of the available grants, the Cedar Grant, a four-year grant of \$250,000 per year. Huu-ay-aht has appointed Dr Heather Castleden (HEC Lab) as Project Lead. Her team will focus on four phases: 1. Research the Tribunal process, 2. Recommend evidence-informed reforms to the Tribunal Act, 3. Develop community-wide educational resources related to any Huu-ay-aht approved changes, and 4. Implement new trauma-informed protocols to support Tribunal applications in the future.

“If we are to achieve the fusion of our ancient spirit and modern mind, we must continually evaluate our institutions and ensure that they bring together the needs of the present and future with the values and aspirations of our ancestors”, said Huu-ay-aht Chief Councillor Sayaačath, John Jack. “The Tribunal process has been a vital function of our nation that holds governments accountable to formal laws like our Constitution. We should investigate the further integration of our traditional governance practices into the written body of law so that all citizens may know them. I look forward to the work as it will bear fruit that will strengthen our governance and take us into the future in ever-improving ways. On behalf of the Huu-ay-aht, I thank the Law Foundation of British Columbia for their grant, and HEC Lab for their focus, expertise, and responsiveness.”

The study of the Huu-ay-aht Tribunal intends to break the colonial legal traditions and embed Huu-ay-aht Values and the Three Sacred Principles.

ʔiisaak (respect), *ʔuuʔaʔuk* (taking care of), and *hišuk ma cʔawak* (everything is connected) will guide this project and build on the rich history Huu-ay-aht is working to build for a bright future for generations to come.

During this process, Huu-ay-aht Government and Citizens will have the opportunity to participate in this project through invited interviews and community engagement, where input and feedback will be valuable. Please look out for Community Engagement details.

- 30 -

About Huu-ay-aht First Nations - Huu-ay-aht First Nations is an Indigenous community located on the west coast of Vancouver Island in British Columbia. It is a part of the

Office: Anacle Government Office, 170 Nookemus Road, Anacle, B.C., V0R 1B0

Phone: 1.888.644.4555 | 250.728.3414 | Fax: 250.728.1222

Mail: Port Alberni Government Office, 4644 Adelaide Street, Port Alberni, B.C., V9Y 6N4 | Phone: 250.723.0100 | Fax: 250.723.4646



Nuu-chah-nulth Nation, formerly called the Nootka. Huu-ay-aht is a party to the Maa-nulth Final Agreement, a modern treaty that grants its five member-nations constitutionally protected self-government as well as ownership, control, and law-making authority over their lands and resources. For more information, visit: www.huuayaht.org

About HEC Lab

The HEC Lab is a hub for meaningful research and transformative action. At the HEC Lab, we recognize that everything is connected, and we commit to research that honours Indigenous knowledge systems and addresses our most pressing governance, health, and environmental challenges. We focus on research that fosters reconciliation and challenges colonial practices, bridging diverse cultures and disciplines to create impactful change. For more information, visit: [The HEC Lab](#)

About Law Foundation of British Columbia - The Law Foundation of British Columbia (the Foundation) is an independent non-profit foundation established in 1969 under the *Legal Profession Act*. The Foundation receives the interest on funds held in lawyers' pooled trust accounts maintained in the banks and credit unions of the province. The Foundation in turn distributes these funds by way of grants. For more information, visit: <https://www.lawfoundationbc.org/>

Contact:

Amanda-Lee Cunningham, Communications Manager
Huu-ay-aht First Nations
250-720-7776 | amanda.c@huuayaht.org

Heather Castleden, Project Lead
Director, HEC Lab
902-489-2412 | castleden@uvic.ca

Office: Anacle Government Office, 170 Nookemus Road, Anacle, B.C., V0R 1B0

Phone: 1.888.644.4555 | 250.728.3414 | Fax: 250.728.1222

Mail: Port Alberni Government Office, 4644 Adelaide Street, Port Alberni, B.C., V9Y 6N4 | Phone: 250.723.0100 | Fax: 250.723.4646