

Melvin Jones Fellowship Eligibility

Last week, an email was sent out to LCIF Coordinators explaining the expansion of the Melvin Jones Fellowship program. In response to questions from the coordinators, we would like to clarify which donations are eligible for MJF credit and which are not.

As explained previously, there will be four special areas of giving and one general funding area:

- Disaster
- Sight
- Youth
- Humanitarian Needs
- Area of Greatest Need (general)

Donors can donate to each of these four special areas as well as a general area of funds called 'Area of Greatest Need' and receive MJF credit. Below is a chart with examples of donations that are eligible and are not eligible for Melvin Jones Fellowship credit.

MJF Eligible Donation (Donations to the special areas of funding)	Non-MJF Eligible Donation (Donations to specific programs or events)
Youth focused fund	Flood relief in Nova Scotia
Sight focused fund	Diabetes Awareness program
Disaster focused fund	Lions Quest program
Humanitarian focused fund	Sight for Kids program
Measles Initiative	UNICEF School in a Box program
Area of Greatest Need (general donation to LCIF)	Donation to a specific country or club
	Haiti earthquake relief
	Affordable Hearing Aid Program (AHAP)
	Special Olympics Opening Eyes program
	Pediatric Cataract Initiative

Most donors want to designate how their donations are used, so these areas of funding provide an opportunity for donors to express their wishes. Furthermore, it is important to encourage donations to these general funds to ensure there will be money available for all LCIF programs. Donations can still be designated towards a specific disaster or program such as the Pediatric Cataract Initiative, but would not receive MJF credit. All the donations to the special areas of giving (Disaster, Sight, Youth, Humanitarian) would be eligible.

In the past, MJF exceptions were given to donations to a specific program or event, such as the tsunami in Japan last year. MJF recognition was primarily approved only for large scale disasters, such the Japan tsunami, the Marakot Typhoon in Taiwan, and the Sichuan earthquake. But there were times when the LCIF Trustees decided not to

provide MJFs for large disaster donations, such as for the earthquake in Haiti. The Trustees made these decisions based on the scope of the emergency and the capacity of Lions Clubs in that country to effectively utilize the funds raised. Because the old policy resulted in different rules for which disasters were eligible for MJF donations, it caused some misunderstandings and perceived inequities among the Lions.

In addition, when LCIF set up disaster funds for every disaster large or small, we found that some disasters received too much money, and others too little. For example, over US\$20 million was raised for Japan, which will take years to effectively spend. In the meantime, we have new disasters taking place almost every month that do not receive adequate attention.

In order to address Lions requests as well as the needs of Lions communities, LCIF hopes to simplify the donation designation process and bring clarity to the four central missions of the Foundation: **providing disaster relief, supporting youth, restoring and protecting vision**, and **meeting humanitarian needs** such as combating global health issues and assisting those with disabilities. This change to the long standing Melvin Jones Fellowship program supports LCIF's efforts to have the largest impact on those in need. Thank you for your continued support of LCIF. Lions' communities recognize and appreciate every donation made to LCIF that helps to improve lives.

If there is any question or clarification needed, please contact your staff counterpart.