ANNUAL REPORT
2021 - 2022

ONTARIO NONPROFIT NETWORK

LOOKING BACK ON 2021-2022

The pandemic experience made it crystal clear that our **network model** serves as a critical foundation for sector-wide action and support. Network-based organizing, advocacy, and collaboration is hard work and takes time, and can often weigh against the demands of our daily mission-focused work as individual organizations. But working together, in common cause, to share resources, insights, and experiences, helps us all serve our communities better, especially these past few years. And ultimately, that is the goal of every nonprofit and charity in Ontario: **to improve the well-being of those in their communities**.

As we reflect upon the last two years, here are some key lessons we've learned:
- Government can act quickly when needed.
- Flexible funding and general operating support are critical to our sector's future.
- Our people are our biggest strength.
- Equity and racial justice must be centred in our work.
- Collective, networked advocacy works.

It has never been more important to advocate for a strong, resilient and impactful nonprofit sector. We believe there is a **transformational opportunity** ahead of us – and that the future of the nonprofit sector is up to us, collectively. Thank you for joining us on this journey, and for all the great work you've led during the past year. **You inspire us.**

CATHY TAYLOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ONN

ANDRE VALLILLEE
BOARD CHAIR, ONN

STRATEGIC PLAN

3 priorities to drive our work and strengthen Ontario's nonprofit sector

PRIORITY 1

Advocate for an enabling public policy environment so nonprofits can thrive

PRIORITY 2

Champion the nonprofit sector's value and influence to strengthen its social and economic impact
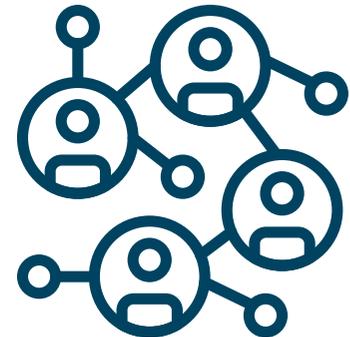
PRIORITY 3

Strengthen ONN's network and increase engagement and skills of the network to positively influence public policy and respond to changing environments

ONN is the independent nonprofit network for the 58,000 nonprofits and charities in Ontario, focused on policy, advocacy, and services to strengthen Ontario's nonprofit sector as a key pillar of our society and economy.

KEY POLICY AREAS

PEOPLE

Strengthen and support the nonprofit sector labour force and its diverse and active volunteer base. This will result in the mobilization of a decent work movement in the sector.

FINANCING

Catalyze improvements in the Ontario nonprofit sector's funding environment by advocating for the reform of the sector's investment relationship with government and for the removal of barriers for nonprofits to earn income.

REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Ensure that the Ontario nonprofit sector's legal frameworks – policy, legislation, and regulation – support and empower the sector's work.

DATA

Lead the development of a Data, Evidence-use, and Learning (DEAL) strategy for the Ontario nonprofit sector, in partnership with other sector leaders. Ensure that data is ethically used and appropriately harnessed to support learning and data-driven decision-making.

WORKING TOWARDS BEING AN EQUITY-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

We continue to embed anti-racism and equity in what we do, and how we work. From policy and special projects, to resources for the sector, ONN is focused on developing and improving our practices and policies

A few highlights from this year:

SECTOR

- We built and deepened partnerships with Black, Indigenous, and racialized leaders and organizations through our events, working groups, partnerships and projects. For example, we have partnered with nonprofits which are Indigenous-led, -benefitting, -informed and partnership (I4), and Black-led, -serving and focused organizations for our decent work and data projects, and we contributed to two equity-focused data projects by the sector.
- We showcased diverse voices, including the 2SLGBTQI+ community, in our new podcast series, Digging in with ONN.
- We facilitated supports, tools, and thought leadership pieces for the sector; for example, through our online Resource Centre, an anti-Black racism workshop for board members, and curated resources for nonprofits for the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

WORKING TOWARDS BEING AN EQUITY-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

NETWORK

- We identified in our 2021 state of the sector survey the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on nonprofits serving equity-deserving communities and recommended to government to ensure specific support for these organizations through COVID-19 and beyond.
- ONN continued to ground equity and showcase a diversity of perspectives throughout Nonprofit Driven, our 2021 conference.
  - Over 50 per cent of speakers identified as Black, Indigenous and racialized.
  - We made available 100 passes for Black and Indigenous workers to attend, whose organizations could not otherwise afford to register.
  - Sessions included unpacking white supremacy in nonprofits, plus a new networking space for Black, Indigenous and racialized workers.

ORGANIZATION

ONN staff and Board continued their work, with the support of experts, in anti-Black racism professional development and commitments to supporting Indigenous sovereignty, including staff participation in initiatives for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

SUPPORTS THROUGH COVID-19

Throughout 2021- 2022, ONN continued to support nonprofits and charities through the successive waves of the pandemic. We provided policy analysis of government programs and wind-downs and transitions of federal and provincial COVID-19 supports, along with resources and tools to support operations. To address the significant challenges of contracting and expanding services in reaction to changing public restrictions, ONN advocated to the provincial government for clarity and better communication, financial support, and flexible transfer payment agreements.

Advocacy for pandemic supports

ONN leveraged our network model to be able to respond to and rapidly mobilize advocacy on a variety of urgent issues. ONN advocated for the provincial government to include nonprofits and charities in the last iteration of the Ontario COVID-19 Small Business Relief Grant and the Ontario Business Costs Rebate Program. The province amended public-facing material to ensure nonprofit eligibility was clear.

POLICY HIGHLIGHTS: OUR PEOPLE

Canada-wide child care agreement

Ontario and the Government of Canada signed a childcare agreement to reduce average parental fees to $10 a day by 2025. Although it's not exclusively nonprofit, there are significant safeguards in the funding guidelines against excessive profit. ONN advocated alongside childcare nonprofits for the conclusion of this agreement.

The Globe and Mail

Opinion: Child care will be the defining issue of the election

Do we want a publicly funded child-care system that will support both children's development and boost the economy? Or will tax credits in a patchwork market suffice?

Aug 21st, 2021 (200 kB) ▾

In collaboration with care sector advocates, ONN's policy director contributed to an op-ed for The Globe and Mail

POLICY HIGHLIGHTS: OUR PEOPLE

Decent Work: Phase Four

This past year, we launched the fourth phase of Decent Work that focuses on racial justice, Indigenous sovereignty and reconciliation. We engaged sector leaders and organizations in conversations and capacity-building sessions to identify current best practices of Decent Work, sharing through a new podcast series, interactive webinars and blog posts. With the support of the advisory and partnership tables, we engaged in sessions to popularize and update the decent work charter and checklist with an emphasis on intersectionality, racial justice and Indigenous sovereignty.

Reimagining Governance launches Learning Labs

Reimagining Governance hosted a number of Learning Labs alongside diverse nonprofits to pilot a number of prompts, tools, and resources. We shared thought leadership pieces shared widely in the sector about the complexity of innovation, as well as the impact of governance culture on decision-making, and inspired other nonprofits and charities to begin experimenting with their own governance work. Work is in progress for a new interactive, online hub for the sector.

POLICY HIGHLIGHTS: OUR FINANCES

Community Wealth Building

There is growing interest in community wealth building, such as community benefit networks, community land trusts, employee ownership, and social procurement. ONN has played an ongoing role in supporting the development of a stronger ecosystem for social finance. This past year, ONN launched a report identifying gaps in community wealth building, commissioned a webinar series and case studies, and participated in the Catalyst Community Finance Initiative.

POLICY HIGHLIGHTS: OUR DATA

Data, Evidence-use and Learning (DEAL) Strategy

ONN launched its DEAL Strategy building on our long history of advocating for open and inclusive data practices. A new collection of data resources was created, including a Data Glossary to better support nonprofits navigating the data ecosystem.

POLICY HIGHLIGHTS: OUR REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

ONCA win

We saw proclamation of the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, over 10 years in the making. Our founding issue, ONN was a key voice in the development of the ONCA and advocated for proclamation through governments. Accompanying the legislation was the launch of the Ontario Business Registry (OBR) to be used by nonprofits and businesses. ONN contributed to user testing of the OBR and supported Community Legal Education Ontario in delivering nearly 50 workshops to over 2,000 participants across dozens of subsectors and municipalities in Ontario.

Income Tax Act

Charities were given a framework within the Income Tax Act to work less paternalistically with nonprofits. Although it's unclear yet what this will mean in practice for shared platforms, it will create some new flexibility for nonprofits and do away in many cases with the need for the language of "direction and control".

Police record checks

The Government of Ontario waived fees on certain levels of police record checks. Our work continues to ensure this includes vulnerable sector screenings.

BROADENING AND ENGAGING THE NETWORK
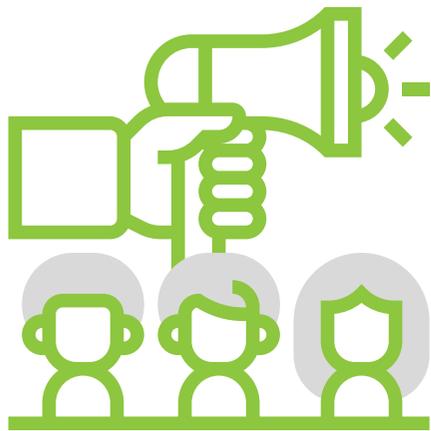
450+ members
and six regional nonprofit networks dedicated to advancing the advocacy efforts of Ontario's nonprofit sector

Over 1.8 million views
of our policy analysis, resources and tools, and social media content.

Resource Centre
Nearly 30,000 visits last year. The site hosted about 400 resources contributed by nonprofits, and saw the introduction of discussion forums to further engage the sector.

SURVEYS AND RESOURCES
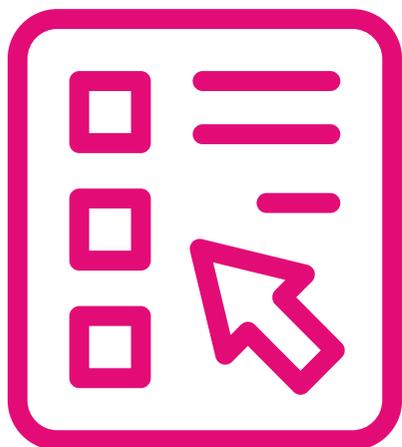
State of the sector survey

Conducted a sector-wide survey with l'Assemblée de la Francophonie de l'Ontario to gather critical data needed to help the sector build back from COVID-19. Nearly 3,000 nonprofits responded.

## Capacity-building webinars

13 webinars with nearly 3,000 registrants. Topics ranged from how to reopen your nonprofit space to fundraising lessons from 2021, advocacy, anti-Black racism and more.

Racial justice resources

Curated a collection of ongoing resources, available on the Resource Centre, for the sector to use as organizations begin or extend their anti-racism, equity and inclusion journeys.

CONVENING SECTOR LEADERS ACROSS THE PROVINCE
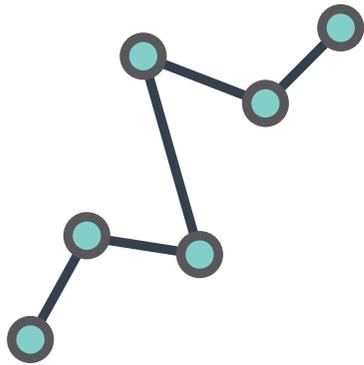
95 provincial associations and our human services-focused group connected the dots on intersecting policy issues for collective advocacy.

**Network convenor and mentor** We co-chaired the Canadian Federation of Nonprofit Networks, and we are mentoring a number of emerging nonprofit networks across Canada, and even internationally.

500+ sector leaders at virtual Nonprofit Driven Almost 500 connected and shared knowledge at our annual conference. Attendees and supporters engaged virtually in sessions and workshops, accessing a library of resources.

NEW SECTOR SUPPORTS
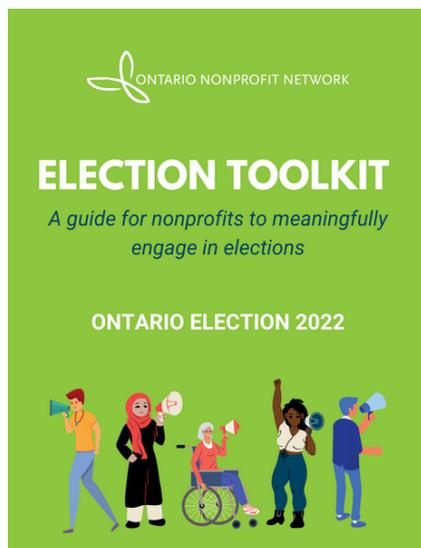
Election Advocacy toolkit

ONN released a new bilingual resource to our suite of advocacy tools, which included a detailed section on election rules so nonprofits had the information they needed needed to move ahead with advocacy. Also included in the toolkit were ways to engage communities, and a list of resources from the sector and beyond.

Digging in with ONN

ONN launched a podcast, Digging in with ONN, a series of episodes focused on decent work. Nine episodes were released, during which the hosts and guests discussed the varying realities faced by individuals and organizations in Ontario's nonprofit sector. The podcast series used an intersectional lens that centered truth and reconciliation, racial justice and equity practices.

ONN FUNDERS

Thank you to our funders who help us mobilize policy and advocacy action to connect the sector, government, and the communities we serve.

United Way Greater Toronto

TORONTO

METCALF FOUNDATION

ATKINSON
For social and economic justice

SUNCOR

Ignite NPS
Turning Insights into Action

Ontario Trillium Foundation / Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

Status of Women Canada

Condition féminine Canada

LAWSON FOUNDATION

TORONTO FOUNDATION

ONN CONNECTORS

Thank you to our ONN Connectors, a special group of forward-thinking leaders committed to a strong and resilient nonprofit sector in Ontario.
(AS OF MARCH 31, 2022)

SickKids FOUNDATION

alterna savings

Peter Gilgan Foundation

Vancity Community Investment Bank

IMAGINE CANADA
Strong Charities. Strong Communities.

LAWSON FOUNDATION

CIBC CIBC Wood Gundy | Hobson Chahal Advisory Group

ATKINSON
For social and economic justice

Ontario Trillium Foundation | Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario
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United Way Toronto & York Region

LYLE S. HALLMAN FOUNDATION

CATHERINE DONNELLY FOUNDATION

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TORONTO FOUNDATION

The Counselling Foundation of Canada

METCALF FOUNDATION

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LAIDLAW FOUNDATION

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COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF CANADA
all for community

KPMG

CANADIAN WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

THANK YOU ONN'S VOLUNTEER LEADERS

(AS OF MARCH 31, 2022)

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Policy Committee

Sané Dube (Chair), Alyssa Brierly, Bill Sinclair, Carla Leon, Deborah Simon, Diane Davy, Helen Harris, James Janeiro, Jasmine Rezaee, Jin Huh, Juliette Nicolet, Kat Hamilton, Kathleen Sharpe, Marie-Lauren Gregoire Drummond, Michelle Baldwin (Ex-officio), Norm Ragtelie, Paul Bubelis, Peter Cameron, Ryan Noble, Shauna Bookal.

Advisory Committees and Working Groups

Decent Work Advisory Council, Data, Evidence-use and Learning (DEAL) Strategy Steering Committee, Resource Centre Advisory Committee, Finance & Audit Committee

STAFF TEAM FOR 2021-2022

Cathy Taylor, Yamikani Msosa, Pamela Uppal, John Saunders, Kavita Dogra, Candice Zhang, Benjamin Miller, Neemarie Alam, Sarah Matsushita, Erin Kang, Lynn Eakin, Brooke Downey, Rishit Shah, Ebony Davitt, Liz Sutherland and Melanie Rodriguez.

Thank you

Thank you for your ongoing support! Our work would not be possible without you.