




ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024



ONTARIO NONPROFIT NETWORK



REFLECTING ON 2023-2024

Our last fiscal year ended with a heavy heart as we **bid farewell to Cathy Taylor**, ONN's long-time Executive Director. Cathy spent the last twelve years building ONN from a resourceful start-up to a mature, impactful nonprofit sector hub. We will forever remain grateful for her leadership.

The sector continued to struggle during the past year with rising demands for services outpacing the small increases in resources to meet the demands. This is causing a strain on many of our members who are seeking creative ways to balance the tension.

In 2023, we hosted **six different regional gatherings** to build connections, and learn from nonprofits across Ontario. These small, local gatherings give us an opportunity to learn firsthand how our survey data comes to life, and what regional nuances exist. The gatherings were also a space for local nonprofits to build relationships with each other.

We launched our new **strategic framework** to guide our work through the next few years. This guiding document advances ONN's updated mission - to connect, strengthen and advocate with and for the nonprofit sector in Ontario - and vision - that communities are thriving because people are connected, well-resourced and effecting change for the public good. All our work is supported by our two new values of reciprocity and collective action.

In a year of great change, we extend our many thanks to our dedicated members, partners, and entire network for supporting our work.

DANIELLE GRIFFIN
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS
AND INITIATIVES AND INTERIM CO-ED

PAMELA UPPAL-SANDHU
DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND INTERIM
CO-ED

ANGELA CARTER
BOARD CHAIR, ONN

UPDATED MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

VISION

We envision that communities are thriving because people are connected, well-resourced and effecting change for the public good.

MISSION

ONN's mission is to connect, strengthen and advocate with and for the nonprofit sector in Ontario.

VALUES

Reciprocity: All our work is based on relationships. We invest our resources, our time and our energy in building mutually beneficial relationships with our people, our network, partners and stakeholders including governments.

Collective action: We are stronger when we work together. We share as much as we can. We convene and elevate the voices of our network.

BELIEFS THAT ANCHOR OUR WORK

1. We believe in the **power of networks** and take a network approach in all that we do.
2. We believe that **wisdom is in the network**, that ONN is but one node and plays a connecting role.
3. We believe that we have the responsibility to **model the way with humility**, doing our best to lead by example as well as sharing our lessons and learnings along the way.
4. We believe it is our responsibility to **shift power and resources** and be accountable to those whom we serve and support.
5. We believe that we will achieve our mission and vision if we **centre the needs and aspirations of the diverse nonprofit sector** in all we do.
6. We believe **leading with curiosity** and really learning through listening to our network will lead to greater outcomes.
7. We believe **bringing courage** to our work to challenge systems is essential to achieving our outcomes.
8. We believe an **adaptive and emergent approach** will best serve our network so we can be responsive to their needs and aspirations as they arise.

INTENDED IMPACTS

Our new strategic framework, [Strategic thinking - A framework for moving forward](#) will guide our work through the next few years. This guiding document advances ONN's updated mission, vision, and values.

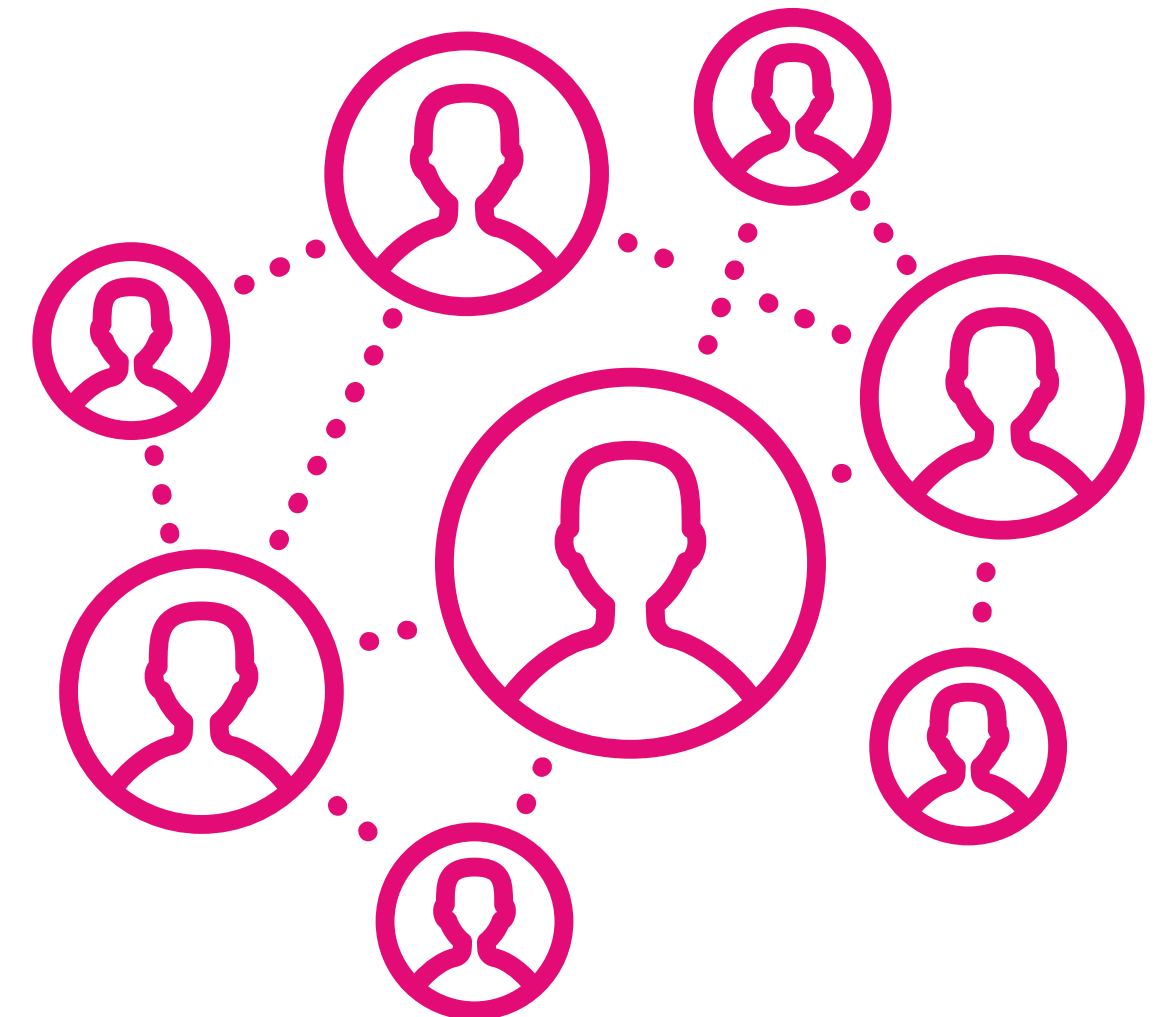
CONNECTED NETWORKS

SHARED SOLUTIONS

COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY

NONPROFIT DRIVEN PUBLIC POLICY

PUBLIC CHAMPIONS



ONN'S POLICY AGENDA (2024-2026)

ONN advances bold and comprehensive public policy that reflects the needs and aspirations of Ontario's nonprofit sector. Our policy agenda has **nine focus areas** consisting of various policy files that we advance through either legislative, regulatory, budget, and/or implementation initiatives.



DECENT WORK



VOLUNTEERISM



SUSTAINABILITY



REAL ESTATE



DATA & PRIVACY



REGULATION



COMMUNITY WEALTH



ANTI-PRIVATIZATION



DEMOCRACY

CONNECTED NETWORKS

REGIONAL GATHERINGS

In 2023, for the first time since pre-pandemic, ONN's team was able to gather with nonprofits in their regions to think about collective solutions to shared issues. These events offered diverse nonprofits working in the same region an opportunity to come together, and share ideas and resources.

Nonprofit sustainability and funding, labour recruitment and retention, volunteerism, and staying better connected with each other emerged as top-of-mind issues for nonprofit workers, echoing findings of our 2023 sector survey. The **six events, with over 300 registrations**, were hosted all across Ontario (Thunder Bay, Ottawa, Niagara, Timmins, Waterloo, Prince Edward County/Hastings) and helped ONN build meaningful relationships, highlight our work to new audiences, and connect with local government officials.



COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY

ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS:

ONN's public policy work supported and sparked various nonprofit collective advocacy efforts across the province. For example:

- Our [Creating wage parity in community care paper](#) catalyzed the formation of the Shelter and Support Board Advocacy Coalition where board chairs and directors are advocating collectively on wage parity to their local municipality.
- ONN's [briefing note](#) on the impact of Peel region's dissolution on nonprofits supported initial advocacy efforts which morphed into the Metamorphosis Network, which is now a collective of 100+ nonprofits advocating for better funding for the sector in the region.

We continue to seize opportunities to bring together various nonprofits and advocates across the sector to share information and build relationships where collective advocacy can be a byproduct of it. This includes bringing together human services associations, chairing the Federation of Nonprofit Networks, and hosting our first ever Ontario Care Economy Summit to seed an Ontario Care Economy Network.

NONPROFIT DRIVEN PUBLIC POLICY

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

- We met with ten ministers' offices and one agency.
- We met with four ministries and departments.
- We continued to build relationships with Members of Provincial Parliament from the official opposition (NDP), Liberal Party, and the Green Party, raising the profile of the sector and interest in ONN public policy files such as "home in government". Ministers' offices and ministries are reaching out to ONN on various topics for the nonprofit perspective or to access our networks, signalling ONN is a key intermediary for government.
- After meeting with us in Thunder Bay, NDP MPP Vaugeois spoke about the nonprofit sector in the Legislature using ONN state of the sector survey results.



NONPROFIT DRIVEN PUBLIC POLICY

DECENT WORK SYSTEMS

ONN was invited by the Ministry of Labour, minister David Piccini's office, to speak at a consultation on Bill 149, Working for Workers Four Act (2023) after submitting [proposed amendments](#) to the Employment Standards Act, 2000 (ESA) - "We believe that your organization's perspective would be invaluable to this process, and we are keen to hear your insights on certain aspects that directly concern your organization. Therefore, we would like to extend an invitation to set up a meeting to discuss these items in more detail." (Via email from ministry)

VOLUNTEERISM

We were invited by the Ministry of the Solicitor General to share feedback for the legislative review of the Police Record Checks Reform Act, 2015 - "As a network for non-profit organizations in Ontario, we are interested in hearing back about your members experiences with police records checks processes." (Via email from ministry). In addition to meeting with the ministry and submitting to the consultation, ONN also conducted a mini-survey on nonprofits' experience with police record checks and received 127 survey responses.

SOCIAL PURPOSE REAL ESTATE (SPRE)

In addition to participating in the SPRE reference group, ONN attended a SPRE conference in Detroit, and shared our learnings in a [blog post](#). ONN was also invited to sit on the [steering committee](#) of the Community Spaces Network.

NONPROFIT DRIVEN PUBLIC POLICY

DATA & PRIVACY

The first phase of our DEAL (Data, Evidence-use and Learning) project culminated with the release of the foundational report, [A framework for nonprofit data strategies](#). The report provides an overview of the complexities, challenges, and opportunities on how the nonprofit sector – bolstered by investment and support from other stakeholders – can make the best use of its data, to develop better outcomes for communities across Ontario. The intention is to encourage nonprofit leaders to advocate for data practices and standards that are meaningful to their work.

REGULATION

Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) published a final version of its guidance on the new rules governing charities' ability to grant to non-charities (non-qualifying donees). ONN was part of the network of nonprofits that advocated for these changes in the Income Tax Act in the first place, and made several submissions on the draft guidance to ensure CRA's interpretation of the new rules provided the most enabling environment possible for grassroots groups and shared platforms. We were pleased to see that several of our most crucial inputs were adopted by the CRA.

NONPROFIT DRIVEN PUBLIC POLICY

COMMUNITY WEALTH

ONN hosted a series of five regional convenings across the province on various elements of community wealth building to weave a stronger and more connected ecosystem. In total, 179 individuals in Toronto, Kitchener, and Prince Edward County came together. As a result of the convenings, organizations across the ecosystem made meaningful connections and shared deeper understanding and learnings of community wealth building, setting the stage for transforming localized practices and creating opportunities for collective impact. A new community benefits network in [Prince Edward County](#) was also formed and funded.

ANTI-PRIVATIZATION

We convened nonprofit child care networks consisting of providers and advocates across Indigenous-led, Francophone, co-operatives, and those supporting children with disabilities to collectively advocate for an enabling policy environment for nonprofit-led capital expansion. For the first time last year, we saw the Ontario government affirm that expansion cannot happen without better recruitment and retention of childcare workers and that pay is a leading factor in accomplishing this.

STRATEGIC PROJECTS

LAUNCHED: LABOUR FORCE STRATEGY PROJECT

With funding from the Community Services Recovery Fund, ONN started a new [Labour Force Strategy project](#) focused on:

- Creating pathways to recruit and retain workers in Ontario's nonprofit sector.
- Supporting sector-led Human Resources (HR) initiatives to grow and implement sector-driven HR solutions.
- Building partnerships with post-secondary institutions alongside regional and municipal economic development and labour boards in Ontario.
- Seeding solutions for nonprofits to strategize and prototype HR solutions relevant to their needs.

REIMAGINING GOVERNANCE LAB CONTINUING TO MAKE WAVES

A year into the launch of the Reimagining Governance Lab, several gatherings were hosted to engage new people in the work, and to spread the word about available resources and tools. Specific gatherings for funders, capacity-builders and consultants, and nonprofit leaders and board members were hosted, bringing together 200+ people from within and outside of Ontario. We've received many anecdotes and stories of people using the Lab's contents within their own organizations to advance discussions on reimagining governance. We also hosted two working sessions to re-examine two of our more complex tools, aiming to launch 2.0 versions in the future.

STRATEGIC PROJECTS

ONN LAUNCHES SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

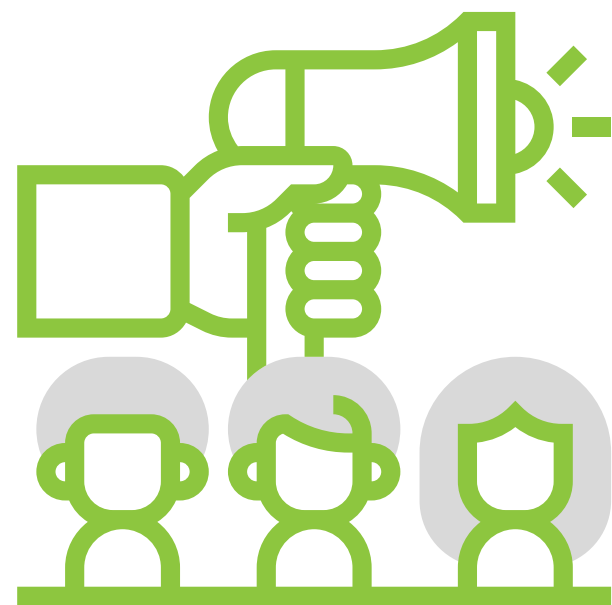
In February, ONN officially announced the transfer of the [Nonprofit Law Ontario](#) (NPLO) project from our partner Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO) to ONN in its first quarter. In its first quarter, NPLO started strong, delivering 18 workshops to 677 participants on Ontario's Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, governance, incorporation, and other topics. NPLO's staff lawyer also answered 130 enquiries from the public.



Nonprofit Law Ontario

Rules and tools for organizations

BROADENING AND ENGAGING THE NETWORK



450+ members
and **eight regional
nonprofit networks**
dedicated to advancing the
advocacy efforts of
Ontario's nonprofit sector.



Digital engagement
of our policy analysis,
resources and tools, and
social media content
resulted in over **one million
views**.



Online events
saw nearly **1,600 people registered**
for webinars, learning circles, and
other online events to engage in
capacity-building, preparing for
ONCA, and more.

NEW SECTOR SUPPORTS & RESOURCES



DATA AND DECENT WORK

[This resource](#) was created to highlight the connections between equitable data collection and decent work practices. It is intended for use by nonprofits, researchers, and funders – those working in human resources, policy, and evaluation may be particularly interested in it.



EIGHT PATHWAYS TO DECENT WORK

Beyond a checklist, [pathways to decent work](#) can help make equity a reality for Black, Indigenous, and racialized workers. Organizations in the nonprofit sector (and beyond) can use the pathways as a starting point for implementing decent work practices.



AODA FAQ

This [FAQ document](#) provides answers to commonly asked questions about AODA legislation, compliance, and reporting from a nonprofit perspective. It also highlights key resources to help nonprofits become more accessible.

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.



LYLE S. HALLMAN
FOUNDATION



Strong Charities. Strong Communities.



Funded by the
Government of Canada's
Community Services Recovery Fund



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



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, 2024)



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



THANK YOU ONN'S VOLUNTEER LEADERS

(AS OF MARCH 31, 2024)

Board of Directors

Angela Carter (Chair), Margaret Hancock (Vice Chair), Greg Prior (Treasurer), Andre Vallillee (Secretary), Maureen Fair, Peter Honeywell, Devika Shah, JP Bervoets

Policy Committee

Amanda Colella-King, Chelsea Combot, James Janeiro, Janet McCrimmon, Jasmine Rezaee (Committee Chair), Jin Huh, Margaret McGuffin, Marie-Lauren Gregoire Drummond, Paul Bubelis, Jennifer Ross, Rosalind Lockyer, Parinita (Pari) Rajagopalan

Advisory Committees and Working Groups

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

STAFF TEAM FOR 2023-2024



Benjamin Miller, Candice Zhang, Ebony Davitt, Erin Kang, Kavita Dogra, Laura Benglian, Lynn Eakin, Neemarie Alam, Nicole Farrell, Oveesh Mian, Pamela Uppal-Sandhu, Danielle Griffin, Herleen Arora, and Taashi Gupta.

A heartfelt thank you to team members who moved on in 2023-2024: Yamikani Msosa and Cathy Taylor.

IN LOVING MEMORY



MYNA KOTA

Our team was deeply saddened by the passing of Myna Kota, our beloved ONN board member. Myna was suddenly and unexpectedly diagnosed with Stage 4 primary lung cancer in April 2023, which was driven by a rare genetic mutation found in young, healthy, non-smokers. After a difficult 10-month battle, Myna passed away at the young age of 44 at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto.

Devoted to the nonprofit sector, Myna served Girl Guides of Canada for ten years in senior advocacy roles, and most recently with Casey House for three years as the Public Policy and Stakeholder Affairs Lead. Myna served on ONN's board for four years, including two years as vice-chair.



ELDER PAULINE SHIRT

Our team was deeply saddened to learn that Grandmother Pauline Shirt, passed away at the age of 80. Elder Shirt was Plains Cree from the Red-Tail Hawk Clan, and amongst many things is known for founding Canada's first Indigenous-run and focused school, Wandering Spirit School.

Elder Shirt referenced ONN's current home at Yonge at St Clair, Foundation House, as "SitoSKATsewin", or balancing one another.

Thank
you!

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

