

STRONGER TOGETHER

Forging a New Relationship between Canada's Charities and the Federal Government

THE CHARITABLE AND NONPROFIT SECTOR MAKES ESSENTIAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS TO CANADA.

Charities and nonprofits enable Canadians to build stronger, more inclusive and more prosperous communities, express who they are, and contribute to the world around us. Canada is richer for the work that charities and nonprofits do in areas like health care and research, education, religious observance, environmental protection and stewardship, arts and culture, amateur sport, services to children and seniors, social assistance, and international development.

<p>MILLIONS OF CANADIANS</p> <p>donate</p> <p>TO THEIR FAVOURITE CAUSES EVERY YEAR</p>	<p>13 million</p> <p>CANADIANS VOLUNTEER IN THEIR COMMUNITIES</p>	<p>2 million</p> <p>CANADIANS ARE EMPLOYED IN THIS SECTOR</p>	<p>8 percent</p> <p>THE SECTOR'S CONTRIBUTION TO GDP ANNUALLY</p>
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Millions of Canadians donate to their favorite causes every year, and almost 13 million of us volunteer in our communities. Canadians want and expect charities and nonprofits to speak out on issues of importance to the country and the world because they know that public policy and decision-making are better when charities and nonprofits are at the table.

Charities and nonprofits are also a significant source of economic activity and jobs. In communities all over Canada, more than two million people work in this sector. The sector contributes more than eight percent to GDP each and every year.

We believe that, in partnership with the federal government, charities and nonprofits can do even more. By working together, the federal government and charities can further strengthen communities and better tackle the challenges facing Canadians. At a time when organizations are responding to growing and changing demand, the federal government can establish policy and regulatory frameworks that will create an enabling environment for charities and nonprofits to maximize their impact.

We invite party platforms to recognize the important role of the charitable and nonprofit sector and address the cross-cutting issues that affect this important sector as a whole.

CHARITIES DAY ON THE HILL PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS



CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

We call on all parties to ensure that the federal government creates an enabling environment for charities and nonprofits to respond to growing and changing community demands.

The charitable and nonprofit sector is one of the fastest growing sectors of our economy because it is responding to the needs of communities. Canada would therefore benefit from having a federal department or minister tasked with overall responsibility for creating an enabling environment for charities and nonprofits. Given the number of lives that our sector touches daily at home and abroad, policies proposed by individual departments should take into consideration their impact on the sector. It would be unthinkable for any other major economic sector to not have a proper home in the federal government.

In order to build a more enabling environment for charities and nonprofits to partner with the federal government, parties should commit to:

- Name a Minister responsible for the charitable and nonprofit sector.
- Designate a federal department to have economic policy responsibility for charities and nonprofits.
- Launch an immediate review of red tape and regulations affecting charities and nonprofits, amending or eliminating those policies that do not effectively advance the public interest.
- Ensure that future policy proposals consider the impact on charities and nonprofits, similar to the lens already used to identify impact on small businesses.
- Institute methods to collect and disseminate up-to-date, comprehensive data about the sector, so that public policy decisions about the sector are evidence-based.
- Facilitate all charities' and nonprofits' efforts to share their knowledge and experience to inform the federal public policy process.
- Launch consultations with the sector about the implications, positive and negative, of replacing the current definition of charity and regulatory regime, with a modern statutory definition (as has been achieved in the United Kingdom and Australia).

MAXIMIZING OUR IMPACT IN COMMUNITIES

We call on all parties to implement policies that contribute to the long term financial health of charities and nonprofits, so that organizations can better serve and engage communities.

Charities and nonprofits obtain the revenue they need to carry out their mission from a variety of sources, including donations, government grants and contributions, service delivery contracts, and the sale of goods and services to the public. While Canadians are incredibly generous people, overall donation levels have been stagnant in recent years, and organizations are relying more and more on a smaller number of large donors. Governments at all levels are constrained in their ability to fund organizations directly. And organizations face regulatory and other challenges in developing their own income streams.

Despite these challenges, governments and communities in Canada and around the world, need and want Canada's charities and nonprofits to do even more.

We therefore call on all parties to:

- Implement the Stretch Tax Credit for Charitable Giving, as recommended by all parties on the House of Commons Finance Committee. This will make it easier for all Canadians to give more to charity and for all charities to further support their communities.
- Reform federal funding agreements to recognize legitimate operating and administrative costs for organizations selected to deliver federal services and programs. This would put procurement of these services on an even footing with private sector providers and help organizations to deliver better services.
- Clarify, and where necessary change, eligibility requirements for federal business development and assistance programs. This will allow more charities and nonprofits to access advice, expertise, and services to develop and expand their income-generating activities and offer more products, services and supports to communities.
- Identify and eliminate regulations that prevent charities and nonprofits from engaging in income-generating activities or accessing new financial instruments.
- Work with the sector to identify barriers to the adoption of new social finance instruments and to ensure that the overall policy framework encourages appropriate investments from non-traditional sources.
- Work with the sector to address human resource issues, particularly the recruitment and retention of staff, by incentivizing young Canadians to take up careers in the sector.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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