

01 / 2023



# MONTHLY REPORT

Charity Insights Canada Project -  
Projet Canada Perspectives des Organismes de Bienfaisance  
[CICP-PCPOB]

#1 / 10

PROJECT YEAR 1





## A WORD FROM OUR PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR



The Charity Insights Canada Project (CICP) and Carleton University recognize and acknowledge the location of our campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin nation. We embrace our responsibility to create, share, and learn about knowledge in a respectful, empowering, and positive way.

We are delighted to present the first monthly report of the CICP-PCPOB. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the first six weeks of this year's panel. Themes explored during weeks 1-6 included: Current Issues, Strengths, and Challenges (Weeks 1-2); Looking Ahead/Planning for the Future (Week 3); HR & Staffing (Week 4); Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) (Week 5); and Relationships with Donors (Week 6). Future reports will revisit some of these themes and explore new ones.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have made this project and this monthly report possible. Our panellists deserve a special mention for their unwavering participation, engagement, and feedback. Without their time, efforts, and support, this initiative would not be possible.

We are also thankful to our funders - the Muttart Foundation, the Lawson Foundation, the Metcalf Foundation, and the Vancouver Foundation - for their support and vision in building a national knowledge infrastructure for the charitable sector. We appreciate the backing of our followers and friends across the country, who continue to inspire us with their insightful questions and feedback. Lastly, we acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the CICP-PCPOB and Master of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership teams, and our colleagues at Carleton University, who have worked tirelessly since March 2022 to bring this project to life.



This report is divided into four main sections:

- **Section 1** includes a short introduction to the CICP-PCPOB, our goals, and processes for those who may be unfamiliar with the initiative.
- **Section 2** presents initial results, organized by theme, along with some preliminary observations from our team.
- **Section 3** discusses plans for the coming year and what to expect in the months ahead.
- **Section 4** provides a brief overview of our methodology, sampling rationale, and limitations.

This project is a dynamic and evolving initiative and we are continuously striving to improve and refine our methods. We welcome your feedback and would be happy to answer any questions or comments you may have. You can reach out to us at [CICP.PCPOB@Carleton.ca](mailto:CICP.PCPOB@Carleton.ca).

Don't forget to share our results with your network and [subscribe to our newsletter](#) to receive weekly updates.

Warmly,

Paloma Raggo, PhD.

On behalf of the CICP-PCPOB Team

## PROJECT MEMBERS

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## **SECTION 1: THE CHARITY INSIGHTS CANADA PROJECT – AN OVERVIEW**

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The Canadian charitable sector employs more than 10% of the country's full-time workforce and accounts for 8.3% of the country's GDP.[1] However, there is a lack of accurate and up-to-date information about the sector. This knowledge gap became more apparent during the COVID pandemic when quick policy decisions were needed. The CICP-PCPOB aims to support ongoing data efforts across the country, amplify the voices of practitioners, and serve as a valuable resource for researchers, educators, nonprofit advocates, policymakers, and other stakeholders. Through a range of tools, including short weekly surveys, reports, an online data literacy hub, and a yearly data summit (November 9th, 2023), we aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the trends, challenges, and opportunities currently facing the sector.

### ***The CICP-PCPOB has three fundamental goals:***

- To **inform** sector stakeholders and researchers by regularly surveying a representative sample of registered charities - collecting longitudinal data on critical aspects of the charitable sector.
- To **build** a lasting and flexible infrastructure to promote access to and understanding of the data collected about the sector.
- To **strengthen** relationships between the sector and policymakers in designing evidence-based policies on issues impacting the charitable sector.

We are committed to a systems-oriented and purposeful approach to closing the information gap about registered charities in Canada. We seek to amplify voices from the sector, particularly those from underserved communities throughout the country. We aim to listen, learn, and improve data practices, including our own, while acknowledging our biases and limitations.

Each week, we send a ~3-minute survey to a panel of more than a thousand registered charities nationwide. Panel participants were randomly selected from the CRA registry and recruited via phone, email, and mail. Panellists from organizations differing in size and scope, sectors of activity, and geographic locations have

1 CanadaHelps. (2022). The Giving Report 2022: Giving at a Crossroads.



graciously agreed to remain, anonymously, on the panel for a year. Survey results are published 48 hours after their initial distribution. We publish weekly reports on our [website](https://carleton.ca/cicp-pcpob) (<https://carleton.ca/cicp-pcpob>) and send a weekly newsletter with the latest survey report. We delve more deeply into our findings when preparing our monthly and quarterly reports. In addition, we are developing a data literacy course which we hope to launch later this year.

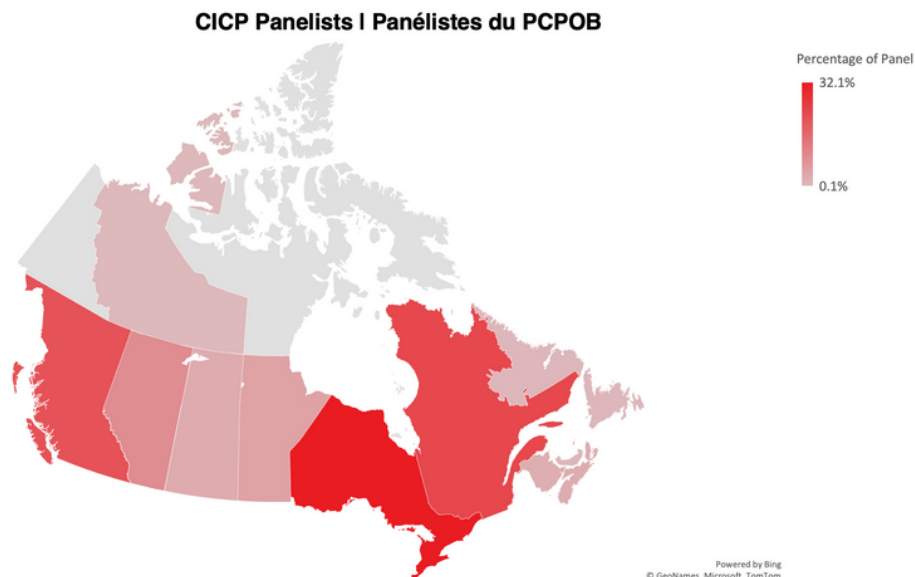
The transformational investment by the Alberta-based Muttart Foundation, the Lawson Foundation and Metcalf Foundation in Ontario, the Vancouver Foundation in British Columbia, an anonymous donor, and Carleton University has made the CICP-PCPOB project possible.

## **SECTION 2: MONTHLY THEMES**

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We introduced the CICP study in two phases during December 2022 and January 2023. During the preliminary phase, we distributed two rounds of questionnaires before the winter holidays to test our data collection and reporting systems. After the holidays, we officially launched the full-scale study.

Themes explored during weeks 1-6 included: Current Issues, Strengths, and Challenges (Weeks 1-2), Looking Ahead/Planning for the Future (Week 3); HR & Staffing (Week 4); Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) (Week 5); and Relationships with Donors (Week 6).





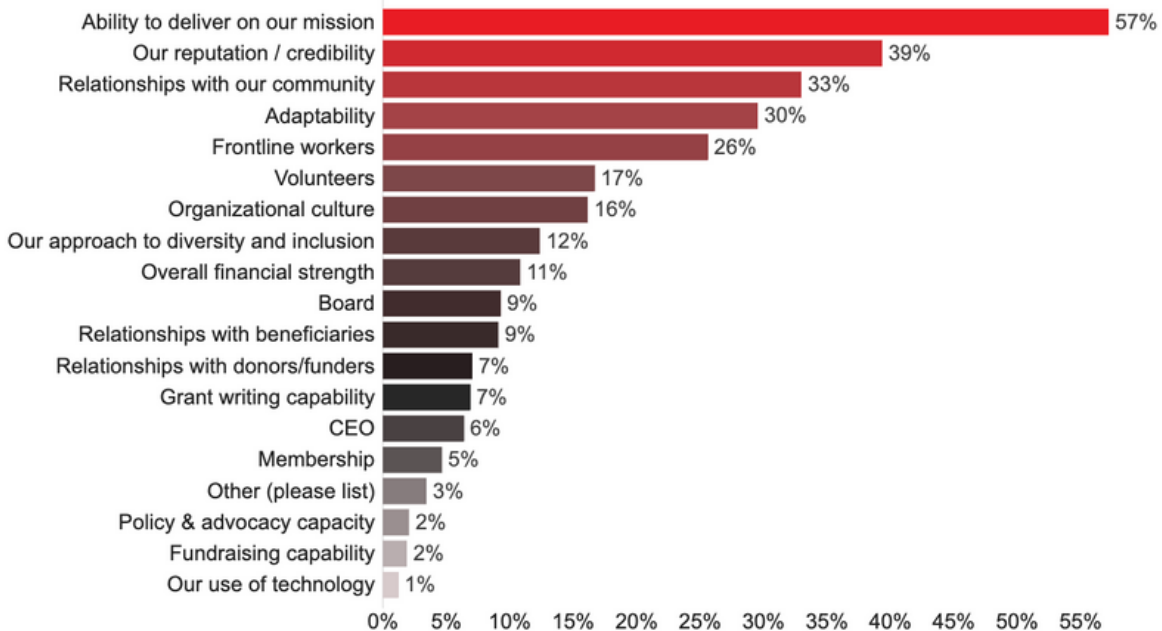
## **CURRENT ISSUES & CHALLENGES FACING THE SECTOR**

We asked panellists to identify current strengths and challenges facing their organization and to reflect on ones to consider in the months ahead.

The dramatic – and uneven – effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Canada’s charitable sector over the past few years has been well documented. In addition to the lingering impacts of the pandemic, the Indigenous and racial justice movements, demographic factors, changing technology, and rising inflation may present an entirely new set of challenges. The study began by exploring these challenges, the strengths that enable organizations to address them, and what participants expect to be the most critical factors affecting their work over the next year.

**W1Q1 - What are your organization’s greatest assets or strengths?** (Multiple choice - please select no more than 3)

582 Responses



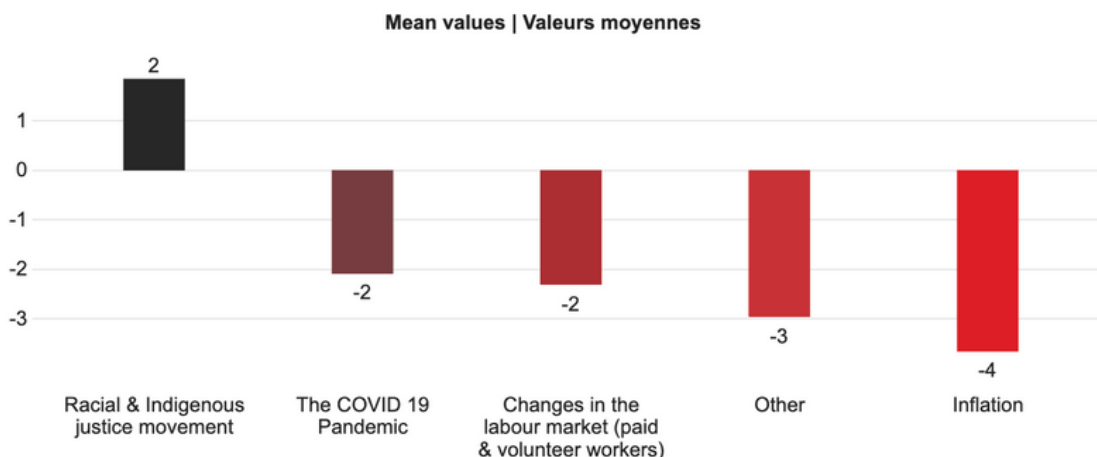
What are organizations’ greatest assets? By far, the greatest strength (noted by 57% of participants) is their organizations’ ability to deliver on their mission, followed by their reputation/credibility (39%), relationships with communities (33%), and overall adaptability (26%). Very few panellists see their capacity for policy and advocacy, fundraising, or even the use of technology as distinctive strengths. These are areas where there is space to build capacity across the sector. Some of the most



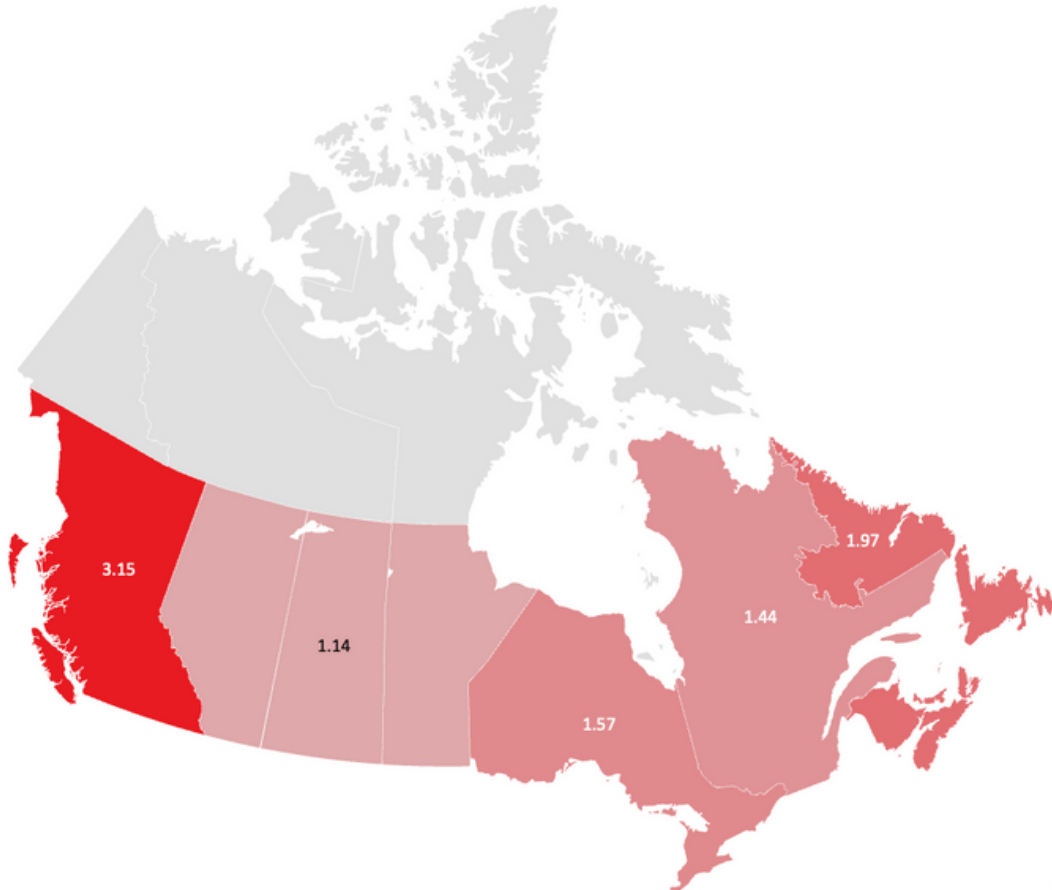
challenging issues to manage in recent years were personnel-related (recruitment and retention of staff or volunteers). The pandemic and the sector’s eventual recovery phase have highlighted the challenges of recruiting and retaining qualified personnel. In future surveys, we will explore the motivations behind joining or leaving the charitable sector to understand and address the staff and volunteer shortage.

As organizations look ahead, they anticipate their challenges over the next year will include inflation, funding, staffing issues, and relations with ‘government.’ In contrast, the Indigenous and racial justice movements and related changes are expected to have a positive effect on charitable organizations.

**W2Q1 - How much do you feel each of the below will affect the work of your organization over the next year? (Sliding scale: -10: significant harm, -5: some harm 0: no effect, 5: some benefits, 10: significant benefits)**



When asked about the impact of racial and Indigenous justice movements on their organization over the next year, using a sliding scale ranging from -10 for significant harm to 10 for significant benefit, we found that provinces perceived the effects differently. Charities in British Columbia anticipate a much greater positive effect compared to other parts of the country, followed by provinces in the Atlantic, Québec and Ontario. The Prairies anticipate little effect from the movement on their work (mean anticipated effect of 1.14). We will investigate why BC differs from other provinces in future surveys. Moreover, in the coming weeks, we will delve deeper into the ways justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion are being integrated into the work of charities across the country.



The above map provides valuable insight into regional differences in the perceived effects that racial and Indigenous justice movements will have on the work of nonprofit organizations across the country in the next year.





## **PEOPLE MATTERS**

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We explored topics related to Human Resources (HR) and staffing, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), and Donor Relationships.

Canada's nonprofits and charities employ over 2.5 million Canadians,[2] with charities reporting two million individuals in full-time positions in 2018.[3] Employees are critical in providing public benefits through Canada's charitable sector, including raising funds, providing services, and allocating resources within and among organizations.

CICP participants answered questions about their staffing needs, hiring intentions, and perceptions of obstacles to successful hiring. Their responses provided information on potential gaps in the sector and the challenges that organizations may face when trying to fill them. The responses indicated that boundary-spanning activities such as communications and marketing are perceived as needs, as is management capacity. Financial limitations, such as budget constraints and the inability to make competitive offers, were identified as key challenges, along with limitations in candidate pools, including candidate training and diversity.

In conjunction with questions on volunteering, this provides us with a snapshot of organizations' perceptions regarding their most important human resources.

*"We are small and struggle just to get volunteers and board members."*

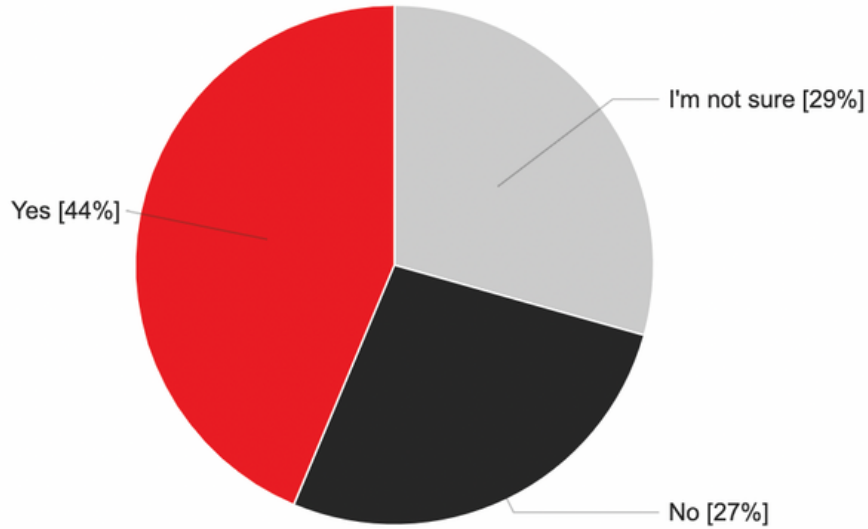
*"Our acquisition of volunteers is primarily opportunity-based or task-specific. Any person who expresses an interest in participating can be offered a role to match their skill set. We are a small organization with no regular recruitment needs."*

2 <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/210430/dq210430d-eng.htm>

3 Although error likely inflates these estimates, see <https://www.canadiancharitylaw.ca/blog/employees-in-the-canadian-charity-sector-most-charities-either-have-no-employee-or-1-employee/>

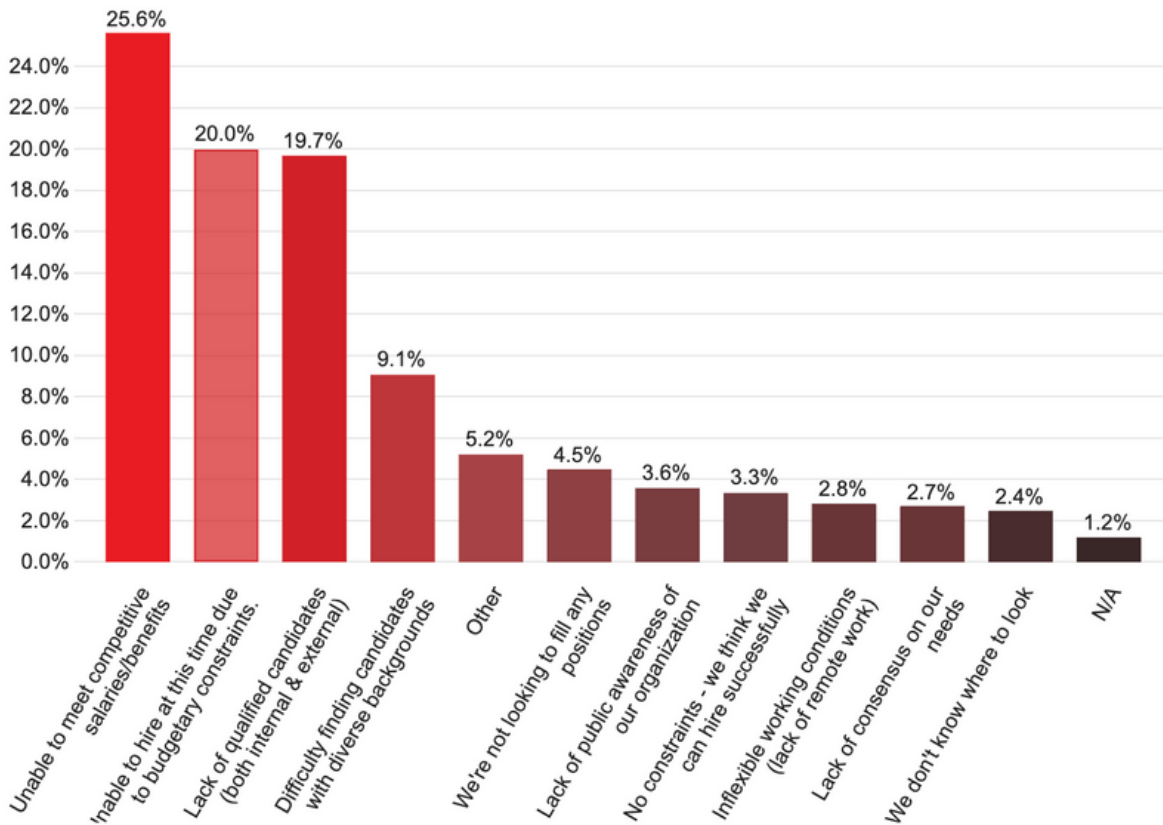


**W4Q2 - Do you plan to hire new, skilled employees in the next 6 months?**



**W4Q3 - If your organization could successfully hire for one position in the near future, of the below, what do you foresee causing difficulties or constraints in your abilities to fill this position or others?**

692 Responses





In the spirit of the new year, the survey conducted in the first week of January asked participants to name a new year's resolution for their organization. While the responses varied, many focused on commitments to seek more sustainable funding, improve staffing, and enhance community relations. Interestingly, many charities viewed the upcoming year as an opportunity to reassess their activities and establish new strategic directions for their organizations, beyond simple evaluations. They viewed the year ahead as a year of necessary growth, program expansion, and improvement. However, a dominant theme emerged around concerns related to human resources and staffing shortages.

*"To stabilize our human resources (recruitment and retention of quality employees) to better deliver on our mission."*

*"Consolider les emplois de le contexte de rétention de la main d'oeuvre."*

*"Not necessarily just a next year issue - talent pipeline and succession planning for key roles and especially fundraising."*

Other common themes among the survey responses included:

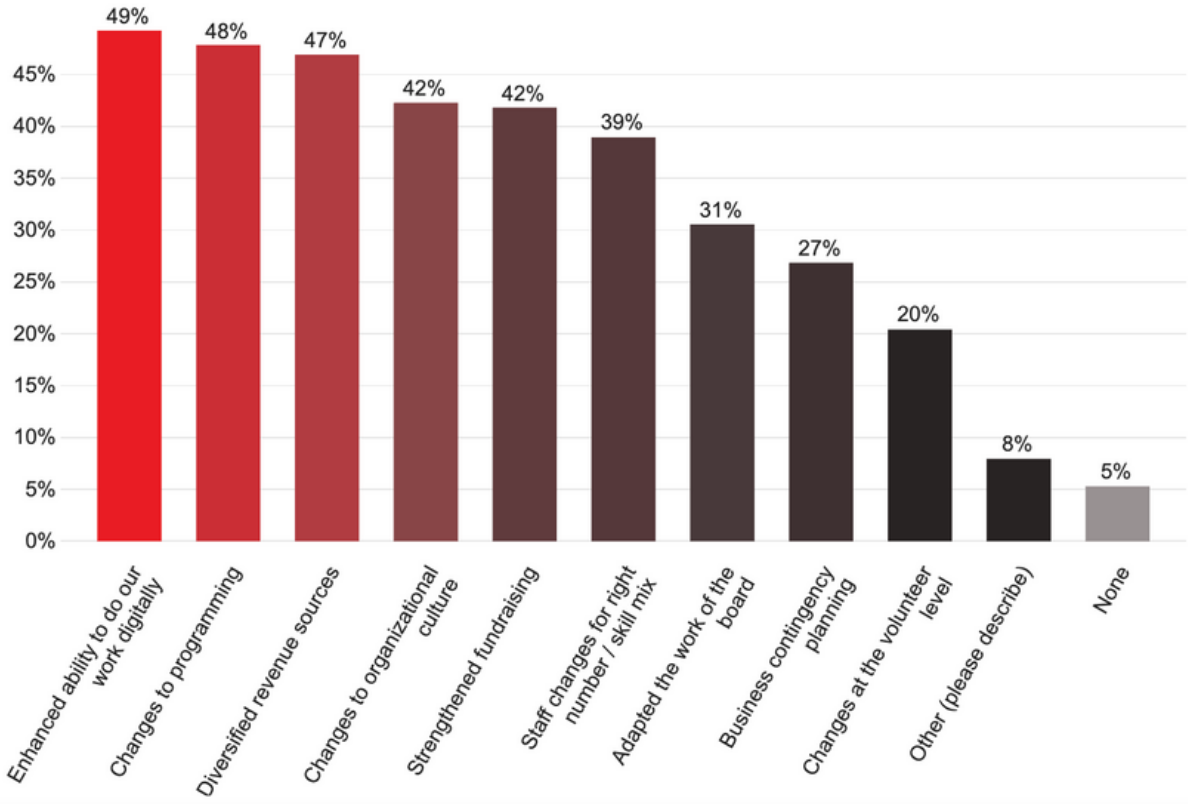
- Building and maintaining a team that reflects their values
- Raising funds and ensuring financial sustainability and stability
- Improving human resources and addressing workers' concerns
- Expanding services and addressing the current needs of clients
- Addressing accessibility and the needs of Indigenous Peoples
- Community development and engagement
- Updating policies, leadership development, and implementing strategic changes
- Simplifying and streamlining their work





W2Q2 - What changes has your organization made that would enable it to be prepared for the year ahead? (Select all that apply)

642 Responses





## **SECTION 3: LOOKING AHEAD**

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In the coming months, we will be exploring the following themes/topics:

- Collaboration within the sector
  - Advocacy efforts
  - Community engagement
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As the project continues to grow, we will be updating our website frequently to include more detailed analyses of the data we collect, finalize the white papers related to the study's methodology, upload working drafts of research papers our team is working on, and the study's data.

**Mark your calendars** – the **CICP-PCPOB annual data summit** will take place on Thursday, November 9th, 2023. This event will be an opportunity for sector stakeholders to come together to review the year's results, consider the state of the sector and review the role(s) of the project for the year(s) to come.

Is there a theme or topic you'd like us to explore in one of our upcoming questionnaires? Contact us at the following email address and follow us on our socials for more information:

**Email:** [cicp.pcpob@carleton.ca](mailto:cicp.pcpob@carleton.ca)

**Website:** <https://carleton.ca/cicp-pcpob/>

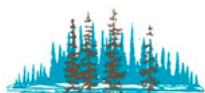
**Newsletter sign up:** <https://confirmsubscription.com/h/t/3D0A2E268835E2F4>

**Twitter:** @CICP\_PCPOB

**Facebook:** @CICP.PCPOB

## **IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**

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## **SECTION 4: APPENDIX - METHODOLOGY**

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The participants in this study were recruited using randomized lists created with publicly available T3010 data (2019), administered by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency.html>. T3010 data was downloaded and sorted into sample lists. No data was altered from its original state. Our lists were produced as copies of an official work published by the Government of Canada and were not endorsed by, or produced in affiliation with, the Government of Canada.

This year, we partnered with the Canadian Hub for Applied and Social Research (CHASR) at the University of Saskatchewan to create our initial sample lists. As a team, we felt it was good practice to have a third party draw our randomized samples. From the initial population of 83,991 Canadian registered charities in 2019, we decided to exclude some organizations from the study in the first year. As we continue to study the whole population of registered charities, we hope that subsequent years will include more organizations.

The principal exclusions we discussed as a team from the T3010 dataset included: religious organizations associated with a specific denomination or place of worship (with some exceptions), hospitals, and schools. While the entire panel includes 1003 registered charities across the country, we also were mindful of creating seven subsamples to help us study specific groups with our final population of organizations. We opted for this strategy after our pilot study in June and July 2022 revealed the important challenges in recruiting some strata of the population of registered charities after our initial exclusions. The methodological details will be discussed in the white paper for this study (currently in preparation). In addition to excluding religious organizations, hospitals, and schools, we decided to constitute our panel as follows:

The final sampling frame for this year's study included the whole population of registered charities that -

- a.** Were designated as charities (type C in the T3010 form, thus excluding public and private foundations (type A and B).
- b.** Had at least 1 full time employee (FTE) based on their T3010 form data.
- c.** Had expenditures greater than 1\$ on their 2019 T3010 to make sure we focus on active charities.



Based on these criteria, the sampling frame was 32,384. We drew a randomized list of all the organizations left and recruited a total of 1003 participants. We refer to that first sample as the “main sample.” However, given our interest in specific subgroups of Canadian registered charities and in consultation with the sampling experts at CHASR, we created a series of sub-samples that would allow us to study some groups that proved problematic to recruit in our pilot phase.

The following sub-sample categories were created to include some of these hard-to-reach populations. In future years of the project, we will investigate further some of these subgroups and develop strategies to improve our recruitment efforts. These subsamples (SS) are as follows:

- **Subsample 1 (SS1):** Includes only charities with the designation A and B (public and private foundations) that have at least 1 full time employee (FTE) and had expenditures of at least 1\$ in 2019.
- **Subsample 2 (SS2):** Includes only charities with the designation C (charities) that have no full-time employee (FTE) or that left the field blank and that had expenditures of at least 1\$ in 2019. Those are what we think of volunteer run organizations.
- **Subsample 3 (SS3):** Includes all charities designated as C (charities) with at least one full time employee in the province of British Columbia and that had expenditures of at least \$1 in 2019.
- **Subsample 4 (SS4):** Includes designation C charities with at least 1 FTE, \$1 in expenditures in 2019 ensuring representation from all geographical regions of the country
- **Subsample 5 (SS5):** Includes designation C charities with at least 1 FTE, \$1 in expenditures in 2019 ensuring representation from the province of Québec.
- **Subsample 6 (SS6):** Includes designation C charities with at least 1 FTE, \$1 in expenditures in 2019 that have spent at least 1\$ international (information found in Schedule 4).

*Table 1 presents an overview of our study samples.*





<b>List</b>	<b>Population N (32,384)</b>	<b>Number of participants recruited</b>
<b>Main Sample</b>	14,267	836
<b>SS1 (Foundations)</b>	936	74
<b>SS2 (Volunteer-run charities)</b>	16,575	106
<b>SS3 (Charities in BC)</b>	1,926	180
<b>SS4 (Geographic regions)</b>	14,266	861
<b>SS5 (Charities in QC)</b>	4,992	238
<b>SS6 (International charities)</b>	606	80

Table 1

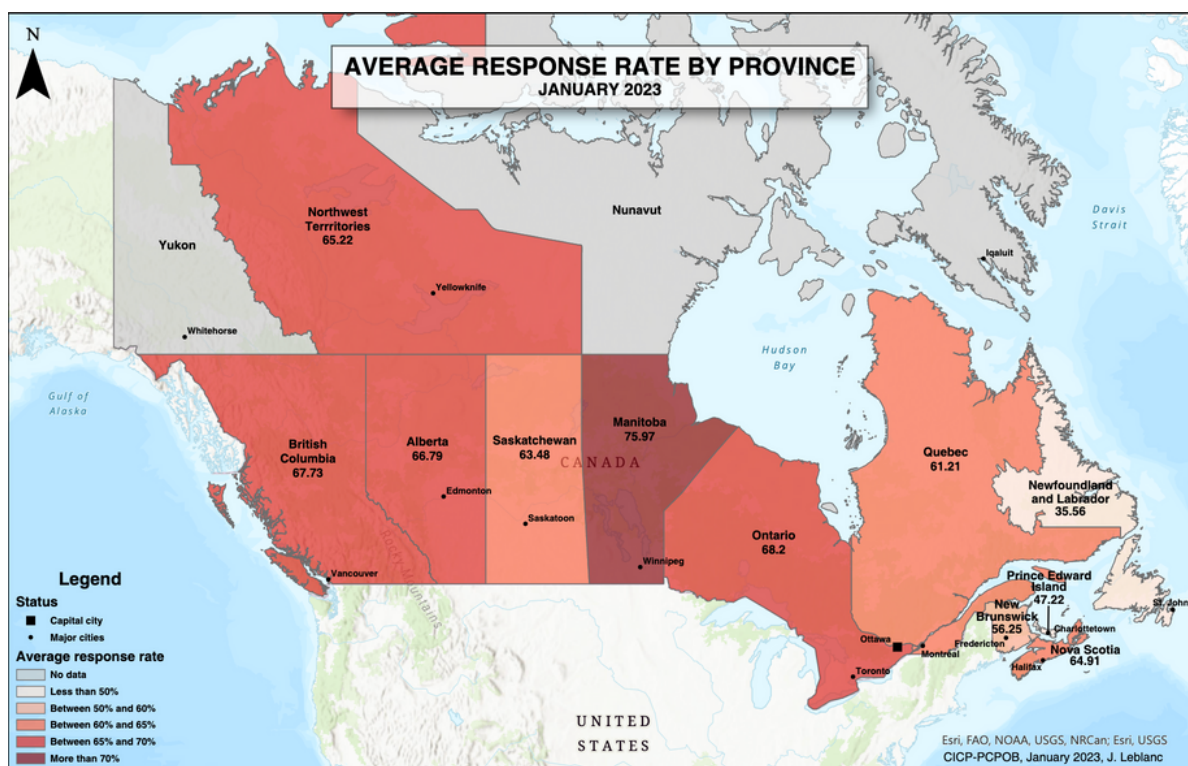
As of February 23, we had a panel of 1003 subscribed panelists, with new panelists recruited weekly. Participant recruitment has been conducted via mail, e-mail, and phone-calling. All new panelists have filled in a panelist information form. The data collected through these forms is then collated with existing CRA T3010 data to provide a more robust overall picture of panelist/organizational information. In addition to confirming their contact information, we ask them to give us greater details on their organization's human resources.

Questions are currently being developed by the CICP-PCPOB core team (Raggio, Phillips, Grasse, and Mathieson). We are in the process of establishing an advisory board to help us respond to the needs of the communities and make sure the project captures emerging trends. Advisory board members will be recruited from various organizations representing the charitable sector in Canada.



Project surveys are distributed weekly on Wednesday mornings (7 am Eastern Time). Panelists are given a response period of 24 hours. Reminder emails are sent 24 hours after the initial survey has been distributed (Thursday morning), providing panelists with an additional 24 hours to respond. Weekly reports are published on the CICP-PCPOB website every Friday morning, providing initial graphs and descriptive findings for the week's questions. The monthly reports, quarterly reports and research papers will provide more details on the trends observed and deeper analyses of the data collected.

We have an excellent weekly response rate of between 63 and 72%, although we find this varies across geographic regions.



More technical information will soon be available on our website, including the full downloadable data tables for December 2022 and January 2023. We will share programming codes used to create our samples, analyses (when available), and research papers as we continue to develop the project. We are committed to collaborative, transparent, and accessible research. We welcome researchers interested in collaborating with our team.