



Highlights from Our Third Roundtable Discussion

On November 25, 2025, women from the sector gathered to discuss women in philanthropy in Canada and how we can generate connection. Below are themes that emerged and topic for future discussion.

Defining Philanthropy

- Definitions expand with changes in society, cultures, and global priorities
- Western concepts of “the philanthropist” do not always resonate with women who give
- Broader ways of defining philanthropy - like planning generosity - welcome more voices

Welcoming New Voices

Inclusivity and Diversity

- Many cultures and faiths have embedded concepts of philanthropy
- Intersectional understandings of philanthropy are needed to diversify giving and address gaps
- There are also geographically different ways of giving coast to coast to coast

Emerging Forms of Giving

- Women often feel invisible as a collective force in Canadian philanthropy
- Sector needs to balance existing philanthropic structures with innovative approaches
- Women may be seen as “tagging along” rather than leading philanthropy, despite major contributions

Readiness for Leading Change

Growing Community Connections

- Women philanthropists want to be valued for who they are, not just for their financial contributions
- Need to build momentum through gendered-analysis without replicating traditional power imbalances
- Younger women are more vocal about women’s issues, signalling important generational shifts

Suggested Ways to Gather

Next Steps for 2026

Suggested Future Discussion Topics

- Thematic women’s philanthropy roundtables over Zoom to include a broad group of people geographically
- In-person local events, including coffee chats, to foster connect and community between women philanthropists
- Connect research participants across cities, for mentorship and connection, as they travel

- Lessons learned in overcoming giving challenges
- Alternative ideas of social investment in philanthropy
- Philanthropy for education, housing and food security
- Cultural and generational intersections of giving
- Women’s health and the philanthropic sector
- Growing women’s mentorship and connection
- Philanthropy, government, and civic action
- Stewardship recognition for all ways of giving

“Broader definitions of philanthropy could lead to more participation.”

“Wealth exists, and is shared, in many different ways.”

“Opportunity to talk about community impact helps my decisions.”