



The Honourable Bill Morneau, Minister of Finance
Department of Finance
Ottawa, Ontario
By email: bill.morneau@parl.gc.ca

April 23, 2020

Dear Minister Morneau:

As communities adapt to the new normal imposed on Canadians by the COVID-19 crisis, nonprofits and charities have been working hard to ensure vital services are delivered, staff are paid, and programs are preserved.

As organizations respond to the COVID-19 pandemic by delivering services, and weather the significant funding declines, **nonprofits and charities require support from our government partners through a sector resilience grant program to stay open.** This support will help our diverse sector survive this crisis and get back to the vital business of ensuring the wellbeing of communities across Canada.

ONN is the independent network for the 58,000 nonprofits and charities in Ontario, focused on policy, advocacy and services to strengthen the sector as a key pillar of our society and economy. We work to create a public policy environment that allows nonprofits to thrive. We engage our network of diverse nonprofit organizations across Ontario to work together on issues affecting the sector and channel the voices of our network to government, funders, and other stakeholders.

Charities & nonprofits are an economic engine

Across Canada, there are over 171,000 diverse nonprofits and charities engaged in public benefit activities. The sector plays a vital role as an economic driver, generating more than 8 percent of Canada's GDP and employing over 2 million people, with 80 percent women workers.

Charities & nonprofits are essential to community & individual wellbeing

Communities are greatly strengthened by nonprofits and charities. We know that when nonprofits such as faith spaces, sports and recreation groups, arts festivals, food banks, and drop-ins start to fold under increased demand, communities are greatly affected. Homeless shelters, women's shelters, food banks, organizations that help released inmates re-adjust to society are all overwhelmed with the requirements of physical distancing and/or increasing demand. In some cases, essential services are no longer being provided because organizations have had to close.

For vital services to continue, communities need further investment in Canada's nonprofits and charities through a Sector Resilience Grant Program.

Sector Resilience Grant Program

The \$350 million Emergency Community Support Fund and the inclusion of nonprofits and charities in the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program are welcomed supports. However, they cannot substitute a sector-wide program that can assist most nonprofits and charities in weathering the pandemic now and its long-term impacts.

The Sector Resilience Grant Program would complement the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy by providing core operating support to a wide range of organizations, helping them to continue to respond to rising community needs and costs. This core support would partially offset the collapse of revenue streams due to COVID-19 used to cover costs like personal protective equipment, information technology and innovative ways of delivering services while physically distanced, rent, and utilities. It would also provide support to the tens of thousands of organizations that are operated completely by volunteers and do not receive assistance through the CEWS.

Thank you for championing nonprofits and charities during the pandemic and as we transition into the recovery phase.

Sincerely,



Cathy Taylor
Executive Director
Ontario Nonprofit Network

Copy to: The Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister of Women and Gender Equality Canada and Rural Economic Development

By email: minister-ministre@swc-cfc.gc.ca, Maryam.Monsef@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion

By email: Carla.Qualtrough@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Child and Social Development

By email: Ahmed.Hussen@parl.gc.ca