

ONN POLICY PRIORITIES 2020-2021

SHARED PLATFORMS

Promote the use of shared governance structures in the sector so that emerging community initiatives do not have to incorporate and manage a separate organization

THE ISSUE

Community groups believe they have no other option except to incorporate but many struggle to maintain their new legal entity.

Being part of a [shared platform](#) would alleviate the pressure on emerging initiatives to manage their own organization by allowing them to have a relationship with another nonprofit (their “platform”) so they can focus on their project while benefiting from strong administrative and governance support. Many nonprofits operate for years with small budgets and a long-term relationship with a “platform” organization would free them up to pursue their work in communities.

POLICY STATEMENT

ONN advocates for an enabling policy environment and greater awareness and take-up in the nonprofit sector of shared platform arrangements so as to: maximize community efforts and donor impact as well as lower the risk for funders; to leverage existing sector expertise and resources; to support innovation for public benefit; to lighten the burden on regulators; and to increase opportunities for equity and inclusion.

NEXT STEPS

Advocate for the Government of Canada to:

- Provide an enabling and modernized legislative framework for nonprofits and charities to support their work.
- Revise their Guidance on demonstrating direction and control to support modern methods of undertaking work such as collaboration and partnership.
- Provide formal recognition of shared platforms.

Work with the Ontario nonprofit sector (and nonprofits across Canada) to:

- Consider the shared platform as an alternative to creating another nonprofit or charity.
- Encourage established nonprofits and charities to foster emerging community projects as a more cost-effective alternative to incorporation and a way to nurture emerging leadership.
- Develop supports (including tools and templates) for shared platform partners as well as recommendations for funders.