

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
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By email: [justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca](mailto:justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca)

Re: Letter of congratulations

October 5, 2021

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of the Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN), congratulations on your re-election as Prime Minister of Canada. We look forward to working with you, once again, to support and strengthen communities across the country.

As you and your team put forth an invigorated policy agenda for Canada's pandemic recovery, we urge you to consider the nonprofit sector as a natural ally to government. The sector and your government have a shared commitment to using our collective resources to support the needs and priorities of Canada's diverse communities, and more generally, the public good. Your 2020 mandate letters highlighted the key role of nonprofits in implementing your priorities and we hope to see that continued priority.

### **About ONN**

ONN is the independent nonprofit 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 to work together on issues affecting the sector and channel the voices of our network to government, funders, and other stakeholders.

### **Nonprofits play an essential role in Canadian communities during crises and beyond**

Across urban and rural Canada the nonprofit sector plays an essential role in job creation, volunteer engagement, and programs and services that support the well-being of Canadians. The sector generates more than 8.1 per cent of the country's GDP, employing 2.4 per cent of the workforce<sup>1</sup> -- of whom 80 per cent are women, making us a women-majority sector.

As a sector, nonprofits receive less than half of their revenues from governments and reinvest all surpluses in their missions. They leverage government revenues through private grants and

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<sup>1</sup> Imagine Canada. "Everything you need to know about Canada's charities and nonprofits." August 20, 2021. <http://www.imaginecanada.ca/sectorstats>

donations, the sale of goods and services, and volunteer efforts to create additional value for the communities they serve. Through their job creation and local spending activities, nonprofits generate considerable economic impact above and beyond the extensive social, cultural, and ecological value they provide to Canadians.

Nonprofits are also at the forefront of fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, leading vaccination efforts with hard to reach populations, and supporting communities into pandemic recovery. Many frontline workers in the sector are considered essential workers in essential services. Others in the sector are supporting communities with affordable housing, youth employment, and inclusive economic development. Arts and culture, sports and recreation, faith, and environmental organizations are ensuring community well-being is front and centre. All Canadians, especially those that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic - women, Indigenous Peoples, Black and racialized people, youth, seniors, and newcomers to Canada - rely on nonprofits.

### **The sector is a natural ally to government**

Canada is headed into a decade of significant transformations and Canadians need an ambitious plan, based on principles of fairness, inclusivity, and sustainability, to match the scale of social, economic, environmental, and technological transformations heading our way.

“Forward. For Everyone” cannot be achieved without the partnership of the nonprofit sector. A true partnership can leverage nonprofits’ expertise, local infrastructure, and community-centered missions to build an economic system that works for everyone. Nonprofits which are Black-led, Indigenous-led, women and gender-diverse people-led are essential partners in bringing people together and truly moving the needle on anti-Black racism, nation-to-nation building, and gender equity. Nonprofits can assist in fast-tracking sustainable practices in communities that will steward our planet for generations to come.

### **Key immediate actions that can enhance both the work of the sector and your priorities**

- 1. Establish a home in government for nonprofits so they can focus on serving communities:** Establish a central body in government that can coordinate policy, engage strategically with a diverse sector, and eliminate duplicate efforts. It can better harness the sector’s knowledge, expertise, local insights, and data.
- 2. Strengthen the nonprofit sector’s ability to expand licensed child care spaces.** This includes capital investments to build new spaces and retrofit existing ones and to start-up/scale up nonprofits that can function as intermediaries between nonprofit child care services and the child care spaces building processes (e.g., technical assistance and capital project financing experts).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ontario Nonprofit Network. “Nonprofits Deliver Canada-Wide Child Care System.” June 2021. <https://theonn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Nonprofits-Deliver-Canada-Wide-Child-Care-System-Briefing-Note-JUNE-2021.pdf>

- 3. Ensure that the mandate on women and the economy includes sectors that are traditionally overrepresented with women, to advance gender equity** When our sector's women-majority and racialized workforce can access decent work it ensures that not only do the marginalized communities they serve get the best care, but historically discriminated against workers have economic security as well.
- 4. Expand the care economy and ensure care work is decent work for a low-carbon and long-term recovery.** Demand for care in Canada is growing while care services and care workers struggle to keep up. Unlike in other sectors where technological disruption is eradicating jobs, care jobs will not be taken over by technology. Studies across jurisdictions highlight that investments in care services have better economic, ecological, and social benefits than investments in any other sectors.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your team at your earliest convenience to discuss how ONN and our network can act as a partner to government in taking action on a refreshed mandate.

Sincerely,



Cathy Taylor  
Executive Director, Ontario Nonprofit Network