

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026



ONTARIO NONPROFIT NETWORK



Reflecting on 2025-2026: A message from ONN's Interim Co-Executive Directors and Interim Board Chair

It is in ONN's DNA to be nimble and responsive while nonprofits continue to operate in an environment that is rapidly changing. During these times it's more important than ever to continue to strengthen existing relationships and build new ones. The last year saw many alarming shifts, coupled with opportunities for collaboration and collective advocacy.

ONN continues to [survey the sector](#) each year and provides a crucial picture of how the sector is faring and why; information and data which helps enable nonprofits to advocate for what they need to best serve their communities. From sparking collective advocacy and shaping sector research, to supporting grant requests and community engagement, our data is leveraged by the entire nonprofit ecosystem.

When we learned about nonprofits experiencing legal challenges for serving vulnerable populations, we stepped up. ONN convened a group of nonprofits to listen, and determine how we could offer meaningful supports. This resulted in [legal information based resources](#), deeper connections with this sub-sector, and a chance to strengthen our collective advocacy.

We also made strides with our [Reimagining Leadership](#) project with video stories from peer leaders and a pocket guide resource to inspire nonprofits to explore new ways to lead within their organizations.

DANIELLE GRIFFIN
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS
AND INITIATIVES AND INTERIM CO-ED

PAMELA UPPAL-SANDHU
DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND INTERIM
CO-ED

KASANDRA JAMES
INTERIM BOARD CHAIR, ONN

Reflecting on 2025-2026: A message from ONN's Interim Co-Executive Directors and Interim Board Chair (cont'd)

Our [regional gatherings](#) continue to offer both ONN and local nonprofits an opportunity to co-create spaces for candid conversations, local collaborations, collective visioning for the future we want, and key insights on how ONN's policy work is resonating and representing our diverse sector.

To engage our sector and the general public, we launched an interactive [community map](#) that highlights the importance of nonprofits in any given community in Ontario.

We did all this, and more, alongside our nonprofit peers, as we all navigated significant economic, social, and political shifts. Shifts included an uncertain economy, a weakening social safety net creating a domino effect for nonprofits, the rapid evolution of AI, new federal and provincial public policy landscapes, deepening polarization, backlash to equity, the global rise in fascism, and shorter times between crises.

ONN shares our deepest appreciation for our members, supporters, funders, Connectors, and network. They make the breadth and depth of our work possible. We are truly grateful for their ongoing support.

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VISION

We envision that communities are thriving because people are connected, well-resourced, and effecting change for the public good.

MISSION

ONN's mission is to connect, strengthen, and advocate with and for the nonprofit sector in Ontario.

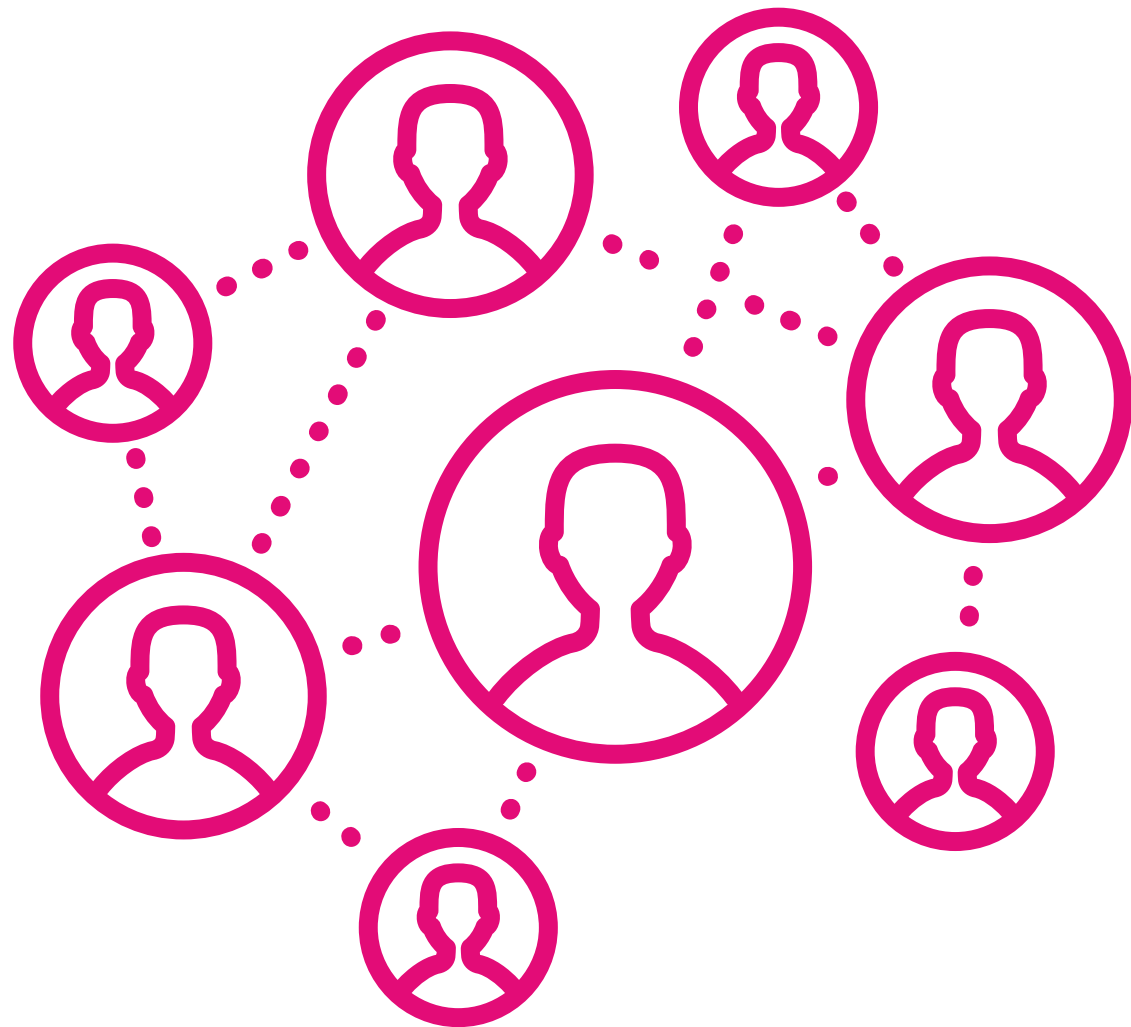
VALUES

Reciprocity: All our work is based on relationships. We invest our resources, our time, and our energy in building mutually beneficial relationships with our people, our network, partners, and other groups and parties including governments.

Collective action: We are stronger when we work together. We share as much as we can. We convene and elevate the voices of our network.

Intended impacts

Our strategic framework guides our work and supports our mission, vision, and values.



- **CONNECTED NETWORKS**
- **SHARED SOLUTIONS**
- **COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY**
- **NONPROFIT DRIVEN
PUBLIC POLICY**
- **PUBLIC CHAMPIONS**

ONN'S POLICY AGENDA (2024-2026)

ONN advances bold and comprehensive public policy that reflects the needs and aspirations of Ontario's nonprofit sector. Our policy agenda has nine focus areas consisting of various policy files that we advance through either legislative, regulatory, budget, and/or implementation initiatives.



DECENT WORK



VOLUNTEERISM



SUSTAINABILITY



REAL ESTATE



DATA & PRIVACY



REGULATION



COMMUNITY WEALTH



ANTI-PRIVATIZATION



DEMOCRACY

CONNECTED NETWORKS

NONPROFIT DRIVEN AND BEYOND

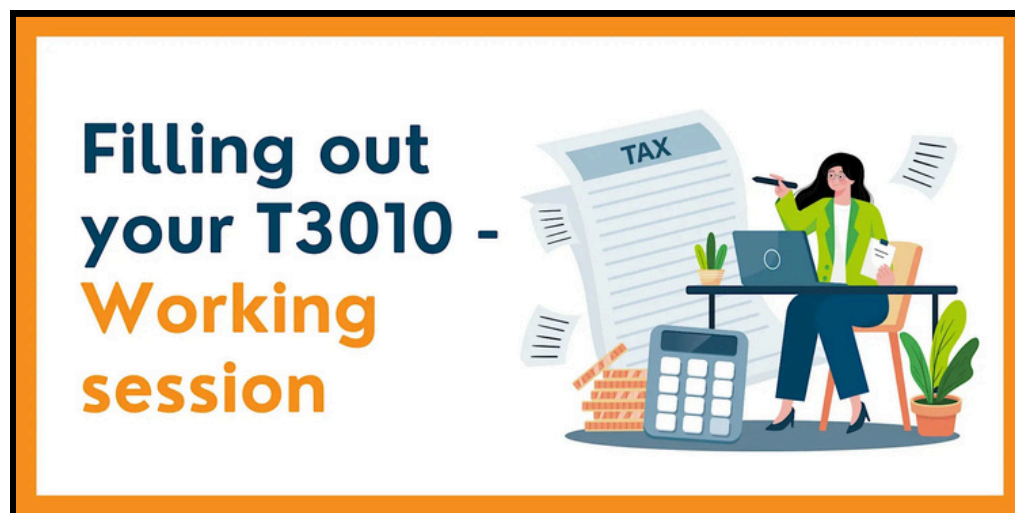
ONN's realignment of Nonprofit Driven to be more decentralized and collaborative has been a great asset to growing our networks across the province, engaging new partners to support our work, and strengthening our connection to a more diverse and representative network of nonprofits. In 2025, we hosted seven gatherings across Ontario, and grew our table of regional networks to include 16 regions. ONN also supported newly emerging, more formalized networks such as Durham Nonprofit Network and Impact Halton Coalition.



SHARED SOLUTIONS

NONPROFIT LAW ONTARIO

ONN's social enterprise, [Nonprofit Law Ontario](#) (NPLO), continues to make strides and deliver presentations to nonprofits and cities across Ontario. Over the year, NPLO delivered 50 workshops to over 1,100 participants and answered over 180 written enquiries. All NPLO activities work to support ONN's overarching mission and equity commitments. For instance, NPLO's funding negotiations session is a direct outgrowth of our funding reform learnings and NPLO's accessible and feminist governance sessions apply NPLO's equity commitments to our most requested training topic.



COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY

ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS

Leveraging the power of networks and collective advocacy, ONN responded promptly to an emerging issue impacting the sector by convening a group of nonprofits undergoing legal actions and threats. Through several convenings, organizations came together to share learnings and resources, and to strategize on long-term collective actions. To support these efforts, ONN also created a series of resources, including an [issues brief](#), a [blog post](#), and an [explainer](#). Over the course of the year we also supported multiple collective advocacy campaigns and highlighted critical examples, such as the women's sector coming together against cuts to Women and Gender Equality Canada.



NONPROFIT DRIVEN PUBLIC POLICY

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

ONN uses government relations tactics to advance nonprofit driven public policy and to engage in the public policy cycle. We immediately met with officials from the Office of the Premier to discuss the impact of the premier's remarks about nonprofits in the legislature and present solutions to deepen the premier's relationship with and understanding of the sector. As a result, the Premier's office and ONN issued a joint press release for Nonprofit Appreciation Week. Additionally, we engaged with elected officials and public servants to advance specific policy files, such as social purpose real estate.



NONPROFIT DRIVEN PUBLIC POLICY

DECENT WORK SYSTEMS

ONN [documented](#) and [reflected](#) on our decade-long journey advancing decent work in the nonprofit sector. We published an adapted Care Policy Scorecard template in [English](#) and [French](#), and continued to support initiatives like the Equal Pay Coalition.

NONPROFIT SUSTAINABILITY

ONN published [four funding reform briefs](#) that focused on the need for reformed funding practices with the provincial government. These briefs functioned as the first step to building a funding reform coalition for government-funded nonprofits across Ontario.

VOLUNTEERISM

ONN advocated for more streamlined, consistent and affordable police record checks. We [submitted](#) to a government consultation regarding proposed legislative amendments to the Police Record Checks Reform Act, 2015 (PRCRA). We also supported our partners in advancing a [national volunteer strategy](#).

NONPROFIT DRIVEN PUBLIC POLICY

SOCIAL PURPOSE REAL ESTATE

We led a small-scale [advocacy campaign](#), engaging key partners, to surface concerns on [Bill 10](#) and [Bill 25](#) with relevant cabinet ministers and MPPs, alongside participating in official consultations. As a result, during the regulatory consultation for Bill 10, ONN's recommendations were taken into account. Seizing the moment, we then led a conversation across diverse stakeholders concerned with Bill 10 to push for a full repeal of the concerning clause in Bill 10. Simultaneously we participated in the policy cycle during pre-budget consultations, presenting to the Minister of Finance, and other key consultations to seed nonprofit driven policy ideas and recommendations. Other key policy work includes publishing a [briefing note](#) detailing nonprofits' need to access the Infrastructure Ontario Loan Program.

DATA, PRIVACY, AND AI FRAMEWORKS

ONN continued to actively participate in groups advancing data driven solutions for the sector, such as Carleton's Charity Insights Research Project. We also hosted webinars to support the sector on legal dimensions of risk management, directors and officers insurance, and in navigating fraud prevention.

NONPROFIT DRIVEN PUBLIC POLICY

REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

The Government of Canada introduced legislation to impose new reporting requirements on all nonprofits and increased the details requested in the Nonprofit Information Return. As a result of [sector advocacy](#), the government pushed back the implementation of these new requirements by a year and created an exemption for the smallest organizations.

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

To shift the narrative around economic development, we published an [op-ed](#), highlighting the need for an alternative economic development model that is centred around community wealth building. ONN continued to convene Community Benefits Ontario to share knowledge and align priorities. We also supported community organizing around the federal high speed rail project to ensure Community Benefits Agreements are embedded in the project.

NONPROFIT DRIVEN PUBLIC POLICY

ANTI-PRIVATIZATION

Our 2025 State of the Sector [survey data](#) found that a quarter of nonprofits had seen an increase in privatization in their respective subsectors. In an effort to support the sector, ONN [wrote a brief](#) about the repercussions of Ontario's Employment & Training transformation, and started the production of multiple privatization resources from policy papers to explainers. ONN continued to sit on the Employment Services table supporting collective advocacy and knowledge mobilization efforts within the subsector.

ACTIVE DEMOCRACY

During the federal election, we promoted resources focused on areas like election advocacy and addressing misinformation and disinformation, and amplified various [nonprofit campaigns and election asks](#). In addition, ONN shared information about [protest rights](#) being at risk, and highlighted in our 2025 survey report that deepening polarization, backlash to equity, and the global rise in fascism are all threatening progressive social policy gains and protections of Canada's democracy.

PUBLIC CHAMPIONS

To engage a wider audience of Ontarians, ONN developed an interactive community map. The fictional community of Bridge Hill illustrates how Ontario's communities are deeply supported by the nonprofit ecosystem; from child care centres to settlement agencies, soccer clubs to film festivals.

The map shed a light on the importance and impact of nonprofits in neighbourhoods across the province, and also highlighted current opportunities and challenges for the sector.



2025 STATE OF THE SECTOR SURVEY

ONN State of the Sector survey remains a powerful and reliable source of data for the nonprofit sector in Ontario and beyond, for both core nonprofit operations as well as on emerging trends. From sparking collective advocacy and shaping sector research, to supporting grant requests and community engagement, our data is leveraged by the entire nonprofit ecosystem. Over 4,200 nonprofits completed [the survey](#) between 2022-2025.

The 2025 survey data revealed that nonprofit organizations were largely affected by the economic downturn, which disrupted nearly every aspect of operations from revenue and expenses to staff and programming. Notable changes included data on reserve fund usage which climbed to levels not seen since 2020. And, the impact of the HR and volunteer crisis on services and programs increased to the highest it has ever been.

The [results of 2025's survey](#), paired alongside the economic, social, and political landscape, brought up many important questions for our team. ONN firmly believes that the answers lie within our network, and the broader sector, and we will continue to do sense-making of the data, in collaboration with peers.

“

“We are doing everything we can with what little we have. We are fully volunteer-run, have no core funding, and constantly wear too many hats. Most of us are burnt out, but we keep showing up because our communities need us. This survey hits hard because the gaps are fundamental. We are not just answering questions; we are living them.”

STRATEGIC PROJECTS

MAP OUR NETWORK

The diversity and representation of our direct network contacts grew significantly in 2025. Though the focus was on physical presence and growing the network, we engaged in more research to support the creation of a digital map. ONN's relationships with networks in all regions grew.

ACTIVATE ADVOCACY

ONN focused on building advocacy capacity in the nonprofit sector with various tactics that all have significant uptake and are catalyzing further actions. We published blogs and hosted webinars on timely topics, developed resources on advocacy at all levels of government and how nonprofits can engage, created a key messages resource for organizations to use during pre-budget consultations, and monitored and tracked legislations, producing legislative summary, so nonprofits have up-to-date information on crosscutting policy issues.

Information session
on the new **federal
advocacy rules** for
nonprofits



January 29, 2026

11 am - 12 pm



STRATEGIC PROJECTS

HIGHLIGHT THE NONPROFIT DIFFERENCE

Our 2025 survey policy report included calls to action for the public to get involved in their communities, support nonprofit advocacy, and participate in democratic processes. We also launched an interactive community map to help all Ontarians understand the value of nonprofits in their local neighbourhoods.

STRENGTHEN OUR WORKFORCE

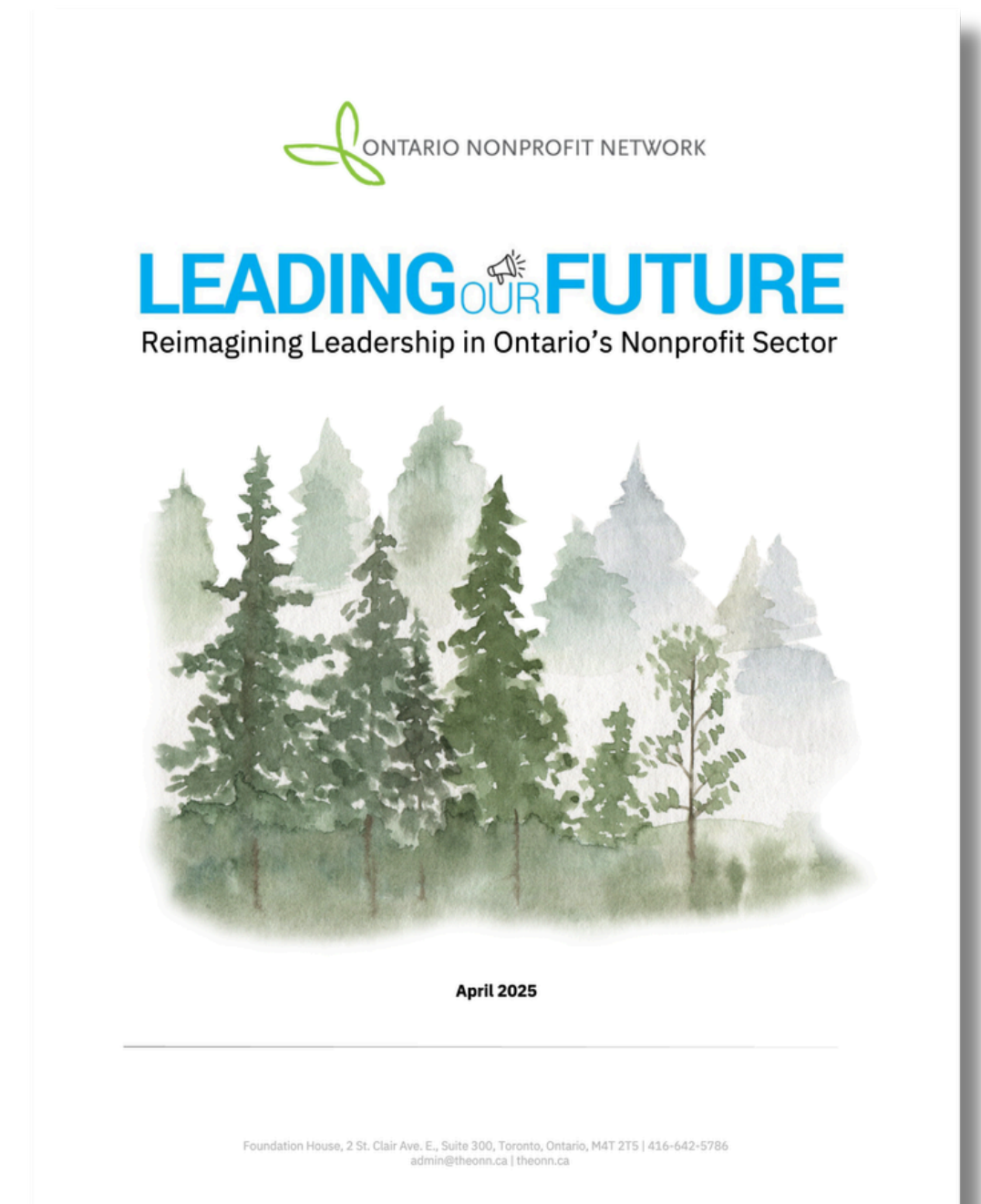
ONN is steadfast in supporting United Way Centraide Canada's labour force strategy project at the federal level, creating connections provincially for the work. This includes supporting connectivity with provincial human services associations, federal advocacy opportunities, and shaping data collection.

STRATEGIC PROJECTS

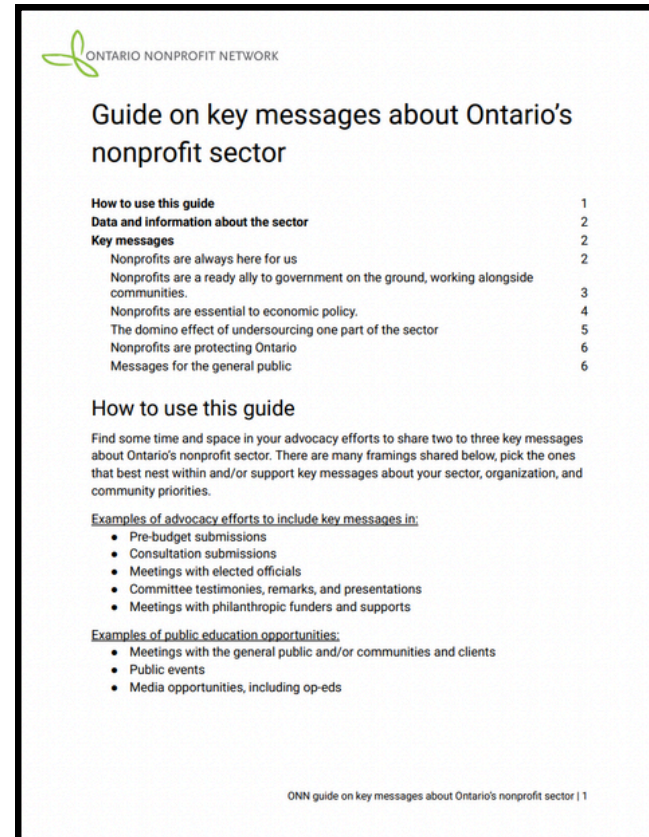
REIMAGINING LEADERSHIP

We published a report, [Leading our future](#), that introduced the concept of planting a leadership forest. The idea emphasized the importance of cultivating an ecosystem in which leaders can support each other, share power, and grow together. The report includes learning from ONN, and outlines what needs to be done to dismantle urgency culture and foster environments where leaders thrive.

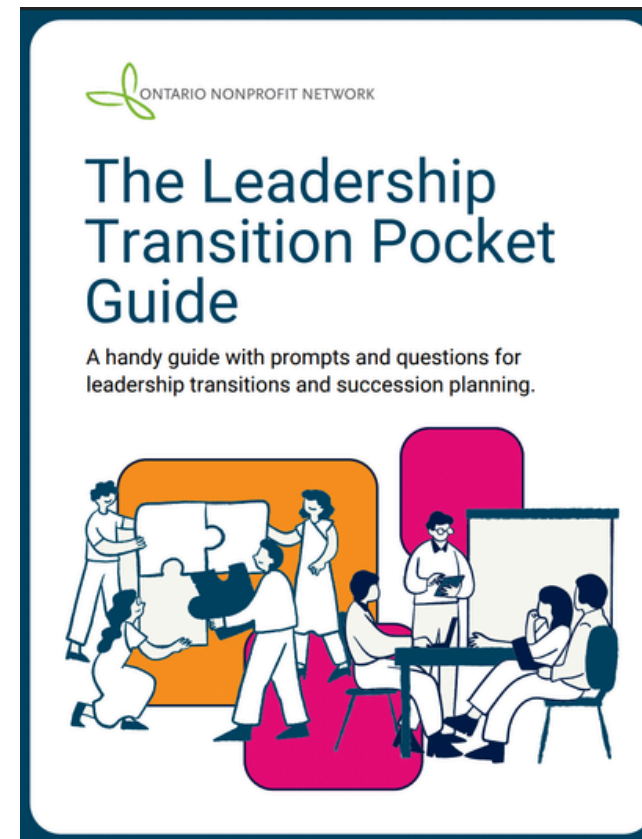
Through 2025, ONN also created a [story series](#) to spotlight nonprofits and charities who are actively experimenting with different leadership models to complement our 2024 report on reimagining leadership. We also launched a [pocket guide](#) resource to support organizations undergoing leadership transitions or engaging in succession planning.



NEW SECTOR SUPPORTS & RESOURCES



Guide on key messages about Ontario's nonprofit sector



The Leadership Transition Pocket Guide



Provincial Transfer Payment Agreements Series – 2026



2025 State of the Sector policy report and technical report. Available in English and French.



ONN FUNDERS

Thank you to our funders who help us mobilize policy and advocacy action to connect the sector, government, and the communities we serve.



The Charitable and Nonprofit Sector Infrastructure Collaborative Fund

ONN acknowledges the support of Women and Gender Equality Canada.



Women and Gender Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada

ONN CONNECTORS

Thank you to our ONN Connectors, a special group of forward-thinking leaders committed to a strong and resilient nonprofit sector in Ontario.



LYLE S. HALLMAN
FOUNDATION



NONPROFIT DRIVEN SPONSORS

Thank you to the sponsors of the Nonprofit Driven Regional Events in 2025



STAFF TEAM FOR 2025-2026



Nicole Farrell, Candice Zhang,
Danielle Griffin, Erin Kang, Ebony
Davitt, Lynn Eakin, Oveesh Mian,
Pamela Uppal-Sandhu

Not Pictured: Kavita Dogra,
Benjamin Miller, Laura Benglian



Thank you for your ongoing support!
Our work would not be possible without you.

