

# Strengthening Governance Practices of Nonprofit Boards

**BUILDING CAPACITY**

In 2016, ECVO convened a group of 26 individuals who now form the Alberta NPO Governance Initiative. Members of this group share an interest in ensuring nonprofit boards have access to the resources and supports they need to be successful. In its first year, the Initiative is addressing the following needs.

- Assessment: Isolating the key data and tools required to assess the health of boards in Alberta.
- Triage: Building an inventory of service providers who can assist nonprofit boards during a crisis.
- Resources: Creating topical capacity-building tool kits for board chairs.

## HELPING NONPROFITS WRITE NEW POLICIES

During 2016, ECVO ran a series of Policy Labs to help board members face the daunting task of updating and creating governance policies. Each lab included a subject matter resource and a discussion-based process.

Participants completed an evaluation and offered suggestions for future topics and approaches. Their feedback will guide a new series of capacity building supports for both policy and bylaw writing in 2017.

**BUILDING CAPACITY**

**LEADING IN THE SECTOR**

## AGENCY AND ALBERTA HUMAN SERVICES PROCUREMENT INITIATIVE

From October 2015 to October 2016, a group of 14 human service agency representatives along with senior staff from Alberta Human Services came together to develop recommendations to improve the Government of Alberta's approaches and process for contracting agency services. ECVO's Executive Director served as the community co-chair.

In December 2016, the group presented its final report to the Minister. The report contained nine key recommendations for a more consistent, streamlined approach to reduce administrative complexity, strengthen accountability and support service integration.



**2016 ANNUAL REPORT**

**OUR VISION IS A STRONG, VIBRANT COMMUNITY STRENGTHENED BY AN EFFECTIVE VOLUNTARY SECTOR WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS.**



Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations

We gratefully acknowledge our funders.

**EDMONTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**



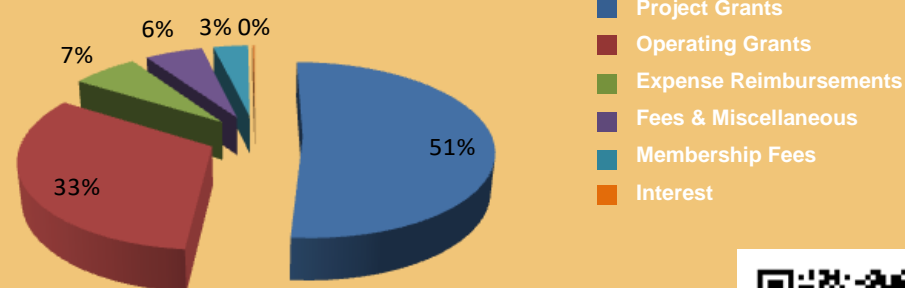
United Way Alberta Capital Region Change starts here.



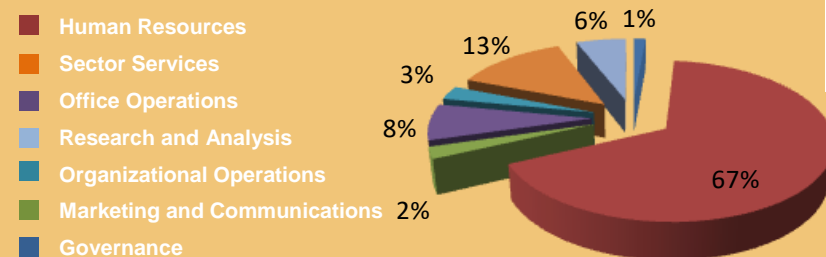
Government of Alberta

## FINANCIAL POSITION

2016 REVENUE - \$757,603.



2016 EXPENDITURES - \$773,706.



Financial Statements audited by Crowe MacKay LLP are available at [www.ecvo.ca](http://www.ecvo.ca) or you may access them using the QR code provided above.

**LEADING IN THE SECTOR**

## Encouraging Collectivity

In 2016, six of Alberta's 'capacity building' organizations met twice to explore ideas and approaches that would support and benefit the province's nonprofit sector. One idea is to form a leadership coalition (similar to the Ontario Nonprofit Network) that could:

- Engage the sector to create a collective voice;
- Create common messaging about the value of the nonprofit sector;
- Support a culture of collaboration; and
- Provide leadership to chronic and emerging issues.

Further discussions are scheduled in 2017.

## ECVO is future-focused.

During 2016, the Board explored our collective understanding of the impact of change on our "worlds". Constrained resources, lack of sector specific data and a poor understanding of the value of the social profit sector along with a need to grow our collective profile emerged as future challenges.

To respond, we believe the sector needs to begin the process of weaving a network that will enhance our capacity to work differently and challenge the status quo. We believe ECVO members expect us to add value to their futures by championing a progressive, transformative agenda. To do that, some of the current elements of our business model must shift. It is time for ECVO to:

**DISRUPT | TRANSFORM | LEAD**

We look forward to engaging with you as we undertake this agenda. Please let us know how we can help you prepare for the future or if you wish to help us.

C.W. (Cliff) Higuchi, Board Chair



Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations

**13 YEARS**

SUPPORTING EDMONTON NONPROFITS

**MEMBERSHIP**

**171 MEMBERS**

**137 ORGANIZATIONS**

**33 INDIVIDUALS**

**1 CORPORATIONS**

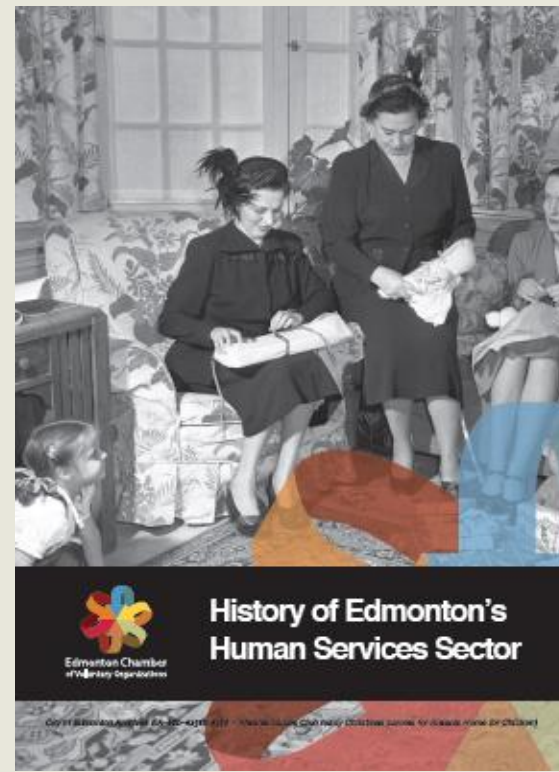


## GIVING VOICE TO STORIES

**Moving to Action** is an ECVO initiative funded in 2016 by The City of Edmonton in support of the Human Services Sector. Telling stories is a time-honoured tradition, a proven learning strategy, and a means of giving voice to issues impacting the ability of the voluntary sector to be effective. *Moving to Action*, with the involvement of our community partners told five important stories in 2016 publishing them in a variety of formats.

- Stories from the Human Services Sector following the Fort McMurray wildfires
- Story of the integration of the Canadian Mental Health Association and The Support Network
- C5 Story Website
- Syrian Refugee Story – When Crisis Strikes Home: How Edmonton Welcomed Thousands of Newcomers Uprooted from Syria and What We Are Learning as the Strive to Put Down Roots
- History of Edmonton's Human Services Sector

READ, LEARN AND BE INSPIRED. VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR THE HUMAN SERVICE SECTOR STORIES FROM 2016.



## LEADING IN THE SECTOR

The Government of Alberta announced its proposed climate change policies in the summer of 2016. ECVO and the Pembina Institute invited the Alberta Energy Efficiency Agency to meet with local nonprofit organizations. At the gathering, the Agency shared policy information; Pembina Institute shared energy efficiency opportunities and potential solutions; and nonprofits sought clarification and gave feedback to the Energy Efficiency Agency.

# 56

Nonprofits convened to talk energy efficiency policy with the GOA.

During National Volunteer Week, 2016, ECVO promoted the diversity and value of volunteerism in Edmonton by sharing the stories of 30 local volunteers.

## ENCOURAGING VOLUNTEERISM

### Rhea's Story

**I started volunteering at university and I fell in love.** Volunteering got me involved in non-academic activities and helped me learn a lot about who I was and who I wanted to be.

Today I am a "Big Sister" mentoring a little girl. I am Vice President of the Centre for Autism Student's Association at university and I am doing a volunteer internship with a nonprofit board. I've done a lot of other things too, because volunteering just makes my life better. The hardest part is getting started. It can be intimidating – especially if the organization is big and well known, but the truth is, organizations LOVE volunteers!

MORE VOLUNTEER STORIES ON OUR WEBSITE  
[www.ecvo.ca/volunteers](http://www.ecvo.ca/volunteers)

## Applying Developmental Evaluation Techniques, Fishbowl Style.

### BUILDING CAPACITY

Michael Quinn Patton, an internationally acclaimed independent evaluation consultant, took members of Edmonton's Human Services sector to a new level of understanding of developmental evaluation during a full-day workshop on November 21, 2016.

The field of evaluation offers a rich variety of contrasting models, competing purposes, alternative methods, and divergent techniques to evaluate projects and organizational innovations. During the workshop, Patton walked participants through the unique niche of developmental evaluation, focusing on methods and tools.

Patton enriched the learning experience by offering three organizations the opportunity to join him in a fishbowl - applying the theory of the workshop to their specific project evaluation with all eyes in the room watching and learning.

**115** ATTENDEES    **61** ORGANIZATIONS    **97%** GAINED NEW KNOWLEDGE    **100%** SATISFACTION

### BUILDING CAPACITY

**848** Individuals attended ECVO capacity building events

**96%** Of survey respondents said they gained new skills

## BOARD-TO-BOARD NETWORKING

As Human Service agencies take on more and more responsibility for maintaining the social infrastructure of our communities, they need new ways to increase their impact with limited resources. Board to Board Networking is a space ECVO provides for independent board members to come together to learn about how other boards are working in collaborative models to increase their impact in the community.

**3** Networking Events  
**109** Board Members  
**92** Different organizations

### LEADING IN THE SECTOR

### From little things, big things grow.

It doesn't take much, just an hour or two a week and a helping hand here and there, and before you know it, you've made a big difference in your community.

### Be a part of Edmonton's volunteer movement.

#yegvolunteers  
#nvw2016

Visit [ecvo.ca](http://ecvo.ca) for volunteer stories and opportunities!



### BUILDING CAPACITY

## Funding Forum for Nonprofit and Ethno-Cultural Communities

Partnering with the Government of Alberta, the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, REACH Edmonton, Action for Healthy Communities, ASSIST Community Services Centre, and Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta (ACFA), ECVO hosted a one-day event to increase the capacity of small organizations to seek funding sources, and complete grant applications and funding reports.

**200** Participants  
**153** Organizations

**100%** of respondents said they gained new knowledge

**99%** of respondents said they had a greater ability to develop their community's partnerships and funding.

### BUILDING CAPACITY

## VOLUNTEER SCREENING

In 2016 ECVO partnered with Volunteer Alberta to start addressing local issues associated with volunteer screening. In May, we jointly hosted a Screening Forum with community engagement specialists from Volunteer Canada, and local agencies to explore the scalability of screening practices, approaches and processes. In November, we convened organizations again for a deep dive into what informs volunteer screening practices and looked at the underlying structures, sources and mindsets that influence volunteer engagement. Edmonton Police Services participated to weigh in on the discussion of police information checks and their impact on volunteer engagement.