

Nonprofit — National Survey

Calgary community associations' need for financial and volunteer resources.

The National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations was released in September 2004, completing a survey cycle done in 1997, 2000 and 2003.

Did You Know?

- In 2003 there were 161,000 nonprofit and voluntary organizations drawing on 2 billion volunteer hours and 2 million people are employed in the voluntary sector
- There are 19,356 organizations in Alberta, and 75% have a local focus.
- 26% of Alberta organizations have sport and recreation activities, the largest distribution.
- In Alberta, organizations engage 175,783 paid staff and 2,488,070 volunteers.
- The voluntary sector in Canada is four times larger than agriculture, over twice the value of mining, oil, and gas extraction, and more than 50% larger than the entire retail industry.

For more info visit www.statcan.ca

“Funding Matters: The Impact of Canada’s New Funding Regime on Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations, recent research by Katherine Scott, examined the changing funding landscape in Canada and assessed the impact of these changes on the financial capacity and long term sustainability of nonprofit and voluntary organizations. The research findings speak to the needs in Canada but reflect the situation in Calgary as well. Some of the findings include:

- The instability of the sector threatens the future of a diverse range of social, health, cultural, recreational, and other not-for-profit community services for millions of Canadians.
- There has been a marked shift away from a core funding model, which funds organizations to pursue their mission.
- The new model is project-based and is characterized by contracts that give funders increased control over what the organization does and how it does it.
- Funders are reluctant to fund administrative costs that cannot be directly tied to a project or a program.
- Funding is being provided for shorter periods of time and reporting requirements have increased.
- Corporations are now more likely to favour organizations that are in a position to deliver a significant return, by way of recognition on their investment.

For more info visit www.ccsd.ca

The research also showed that people, both paid and volunteer, are stretching themselves to the limit to meet the new challenges from funders and still remain faithful to their mission and to the citizens and communities to whom they feel responsible. Many organizations benefit from the commitment and skills of volunteers, but the cost of using volunteers labour is often overlooked. Capable volunteers are a wonderful resource, but organizations must have the time, energy, and funding to recruit, train, organize and retain them. All this is a very competitive environment; volunteers have less time to give, the demand for their time is increasing, and many are looking for commitments or projects that have a limited time frame.

Community Associations are expected to operate on a business model and still comply with the City of Calgary-Public Use Policy. As well, in most cases the community buildings are on municipal reserve land which restricts the activities that the Community Association can undertake. As the majority of Community Associations are not federally registered charities this limits the sources of funding. Community Associations and many of their user groups are heavily reliant on provincially administered gaming funds through casinos, bingo, and grants such as the Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP), the Community Initiative Program (CIP) and the Wild Rose Foundation. Any threat to the gaming funding will have a serious impact.

This is not only a Community Association crisis, it is critical to the entire voluntary sector. Community Association financial and human resources are being stressed to the maximum and the situation can't continue. All three levels of government, corporations will have to step up to the table with support.



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