
150 Profiles: Kirsti Battista

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As we mark the 150th anniversary of confederation, The Philanthropist is profiling Canadians from across the non-profit sector and putting a face to 150 individuals who work or volunteer in Canada's social sector.

Name: Kirsti Battista

Current role in the sector: Manager, Vibrant Communities Canada at Tamarack Institute

Years working and/or volunteering in the nonprofit sector: 5 years.

What was your first job in the sector or a defining moment?

The first job I secured in the non-profit/sustainability field after completing my MSc in Sweden was a six-month Career Focus internship with The Natural Step Canada in Ottawa. I was hired to support the organization with business development and internal processes, which led to another contract doing more event specific work. I distinctly remember feeling like I had “hit the jackpot” when I was hired and I still believe that today. My then manager, Saralyn Hodgkin, encouraged and supported my aspirations to grow as a non-profit leader and her mentorship has had a lasting effect on me.

Describe your desk/workspace.

Tamarack is a remote organization so my office is technically anywhere I am with a laptop and a good internet connection. Most often I work from my home office in Toronto. I have a whiteboard up on the wall, a small potted succulent on the left side of my desk, and a three-tiered, overflowing file tray on the right. One of my secrets to staying organized is the “5 Days a Week” paper mousepad that I also keep on my desk. A former colleague introduced me to this

handy stationary product and now I'm hooked.

What are you reading or following that has expanded your understanding of the non-profit sector?

I'm currently reading *Managing for Happiness: Games, Tools, and Practices to Motivate Any Team* by Jurgen Appelo and *Five Good Ideas: Practical Strategies for Nonprofit Success* by Alan Broadbent and Ratna Omidvar. For good ideas and practical advice, I also follow [NonprofitAF](#), [Stanford Social Innovation Review](#), [Fast Company](#), and authors/coaches [Seth Godin](#) and [Danielle Laporte](#).

What do you think our sector needs to be thinking about?

The sector needs to be thinking about how we take care of our people. If we don't meaningfully consider the well-being of our most valuable resources, how can we expect to deliver the changes we want to make in the world? This requires a close examination of our policies related to inclusive hiring practices, closing the gender pay gap, eliminating precarious work and offering decent wages and benefits. I appreciate that Tamarack pays close attention to many of these factors and I am a big proponent of the ONN's push for a decent work movement in Ontario's nonprofit sector. We need more organizations to champion decent work practices so that we can strengthen our capacity as a sector to effectively deliver impact.

Do you know someone we should profile as part of this series? Email us at philanthropistprofiles@gmail.com