

Title: "150 Profiles: Kirsti Battista"

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Published in: *The Philanthropist*, [150 Profiles](#)

Date: July 12, 2017

Original Link: <https://thephilanthropist.ca/2017/07/150-profiles-kirsti-battista/>

Date of PDF Download: January 20, 2018

## 150 Profiles: Kirsti Battista

By Kirsti Battista

*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](mailto:philanthropistprofiles@gmail.com)*