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## Sector News Digest — February 11, 2020

#MeToo in the philanthropic sector. Big trends for 2020. And new data on the continued decline in individual giving.

### **Sexual harassment of fundraisers is hidden in non-profit sector**

The power imbalance between those who fundraise for non-profits and those who donate to them is well known and documented, but a recent survey about sexual harassment in the sector is sparking an important conversation about this power dynamic.

The [Professional Harassment Survey](#) was conducted in 2018 by Harris Poll and commissioned by [The Chronicle of Philanthropy](#) and the [Association of Fundraising Professionals](#) (AFP).

As the CBC's Frances Willick reported in a January 2020 investigation, "[When Donors Cross the Line: Charitable Sector Grapples with Sexual Harassment](#)," the survey contains disturbing findings that are no surprise to those with experience in the sector.

Harris Poll interviewed 1,040 fundraisers (106 of whom work in Canada) for the survey and found that 25% of female respondents and 7% of male respondents had experienced sexual harassment. While colleagues perpetrated some of these acts, respondents reported that the aggression came from donors in 65% of the cases. The report also found that less than half of respondents reported incidents to their organizations. Of those who did, 71% said no action was taken, while 35% experienced repercussions from their employers.

"Workers in some fundraising roles can be particularly vulnerable to harassment due to the deep power imbalance between fundraisers – who are often young women, and whose jobs depend on meeting donation targets – and donors, who are often wealthy older men," Willick wrote. She also outlined some of the steps AFP has taken to address a range of issues affecting women in the sector, including AFP's [Women's Impact Initiative](#), the development of donor responsibility documents, and follow-up interviews with fundraisers about their experiences of job-related harassment.

### **11 trends for the non-profit sector in 2020**

To help American charities navigate the coming year, the Michigan-based Dorothy A. [Johnson Center](#) for Philanthropy last month released its fourth annual look-ahead study, titled "[11 Trends in Philanthropy in 2020](#)." While aimed at a US audience, the compilation of research, data, and thought leadership will resonate with Canadian readers. The topic list this year includes critiques of big philanthropy and the role of philanthropy in climate-change mitigation.

Three have particular relevance for Canadian charities:

1. *The proliferation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) models for strategically aligning business and philanthropy.* According to a summary by Patty Janes and Olivia Rau, corporations' CSR initiatives have evolved from seeing profit in isolation from societal

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challenges and “now [embrace] social impact as part of their mission.”

Janes and Rau cite a 2015 KPMG report that found that “92% of the Fortune 250 took action toward a larger social mission and produced an annual report summarizing their actions and impacts.” But the authors caution that while many businesses now follow McKinsey & Company’s approach to situate CSR objectives as aligning business practices and social benefits, many initiatives are still marketing-driven activities with low social benefits.

*2. The growing use of data and equity mapping tools to empower community decision-making and drive resource allocation.* Citing the rapid proliferation of digital information, analysts Kallie Bauer and Rachel Borashko note that “there is a growing demand for practitioners to be skilled at collecting, interpreting, and using data.” They also say the sector will require more “tools and systems that can help broader audiences make sense of large quantities of data for informed decision-making.”

*3. The impact millennials are having on non-profit workplaces.* In a section called “Millennials in the Nonprofit Workforce: Present Challenges and Opportunities,” Teri Behrens and Tory Martin point out that the demographic born between 1981 and 1996 will soon account for half the workforce in the US.

Drawing on a wide range of research, Behrens and Martin note that millennials “are attracted to workplaces that commit to professional development, ongoing and transparent feedback, and cross-generational mentorship.” The members of this cohort also “want workplaces that measure productivity in output, rather than hours worked or physically in the office.”

### **Tax filing data shows continued decline in charitable donations**

[The Fraser Institute](#) in December released [The 2019 Generosity Index](#), with an in-depth report and a [short summary](#) tracking trends in charitable tax donations in Canada and the US. The Canadian findings, based on 2017 tax filing data, are illustrated in an [infographic](#). It shows that the percentage of household income donated to charity continues to fall: for three years running it’s ranked below the previous .6% low point in 2000.

One of the institute’s main conclusions: “Private monetary generosity in Canada is considerably lower than in the United States.” The group, a right-of-centre think tank based in Vancouver, also points out that generosity varies significantly from region to region, with Manitoba holding the highest ranking in Canada.