
Sector News Digest: June 16, 2020

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In this week's News Digest: stepped-up lobbying, Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund, Alberta outreach, online Pride, and Black Lives Matter.

Charities demand help

[Imagine Canada](#), stepping up its efforts to secure federal support for the philanthropic sector, is asking Canadians to contact their members of parliament, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Finance Minister Bill Morneau, and Minister of Families, Children and Social Development Ahmed Hussen to demand a sector-resilience support program.

To encourage people to write letters, the organization created an [online form that will auto-generate a letter](#) to all four (letters to MPs will be based on signees' postal codes). As of June 13, 307 people had completed the form and sent letters. The campaign's goal is 500 letters.

The Ontario Nonprofit Network, Assemblée de la Francophonie de l'Ontario and the Ontario Trillium Foundation this week also launched a [bilingual survey](#) that looks at the sector three months into the crisis. The three groups want to gather data to develop a "point-in-time" understanding on the impact of the pandemic, the effectiveness of federal and provincial emergency policies, and guidance on how future response can respect the role of non-profits.

These moves come amidst mounting evidence of the pandemic's longer-term fall-out. A recent *Policy Options* article reports that Nova Scotia's more than 6,000 charities are now at risk of collapse. Based on May interviews with more than 30 executive directors and follow-ups from an April [survey of sector leaders](#), the article highlights burnout, compassion fatigue, and financial concerns.

Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund

A \$1.4 million “Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund” launches today, with a mandate to provide \$5,000 to \$30,000 project grants to support Indigenous people and communities. The venture, considered to be the first of its kind in Canada, is led by an Indigenous advisory body with representatives from across the country.

Seed funding came from several foundations, including All One Fund, The Counselling Foundation of Canada, Laidlaw Foundation, Lawson Foundation, and McConnell Foundation, with additional monies provided by the Suncor Energy Foundation and Vancity Community Investment Bank.

“The temptation during the challenges posed by the pandemic is to work to return to ‘normal’. But ‘normal’ in Canada is a state of deep inequity, particularly for Indigenous Peoples,” said Deborah Saucier, President and Vice-Chancellor, Vancouver Island University, in a statement released today. “The support of the IPRF to ensure the resiliency of Indigenous Peoples during this time will uniquely position them to continue the difficult work of addressing inequity in Canada and build for a better future.”

More details are available here: www.iprfund.ca.

Alberta lends a hand

In early June, the Alberta government [announced](#) \$200 million to help businesses and non-profits relaunch. The eligibility requirements have yet to be released, but the funding will allow non-profits to access up to \$5,000 to buy personal protective equipment, pay rent or wages, or replace inventory. This funding adds to the \$30 million in emergency social services announced by Jason Kenney’s government in mid-May. The Tories also plan to introduce legislation to protect non-profits from commercial-tenant eviction due to unpaid rent.

Pride adapts

June is Pride month, and LGBTQ+ organizations across the country are cancelling their events or moving them online because of COVID-19.

In Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver, Pride events will take place digitally. Capital Pride in Ottawa postponed its activities to August and will also offer online programming. Queen City Pride in Regina has delayed its festival until September, with no word yet on whether events will happen live or online.

In New Brunswick, Moncton’s River of Pride, Saint John Pride, and Fredericton Pride have banded together to present the first-ever provincewide Pride celebration online, July 10 to 18.

For more information about activities elsewhere, *Daily Xtra* has published [an extensive list](#) of online Pride events around the world.

Taking action on Black Lives Matter

George Floyd’s death at the hands of four Minneapolis police officers on May 25 sparked global

protests against police violence toward Black people. Like businesses around the world, Canadian charities issued statements announcing support for the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement and changes they will make to better support Black staff, volunteers, and clients.

[FoodShare](#), a Toronto non-profit fighting food insecurity with a special focus on Black and Indigenous people, people of colour, and people with disabilities, has joined with Not Another Black Life to provide food boxes for Black families isolating after the “Justice for Regis” march on May 30. The march was held to protest the death of Regis Korchinski-Paquet, a young Black-Indigenous Toronto woman who fell to her death from a high-rise apartment after five police officers, responding to a 911 call, stormed into her unit.

The Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) [released a statement](#) pledging to “continue to strengthen inclusivity in our own organization through staffing and volunteer practices” and “create equitable spaces for racialized voices in our events and gatherings.” ONN also committed to allocating protected funds for organizations providing culturally appropriate health and well-being support and to strengthening its Anti-Racism Directorate.

Finally, [CanadaHelps.org](#) on June 8 launched the [Black Solidarity Fund](#). It aims to direct grants to more than 40 organizations supporting culture, community, advocacy, food justice, entrepreneurship, youth, social services, and education. As of June 13, the fund had raised \$188,000. [P&G Canada](#) (Procter & Gamble) will match the first \$1 million in donations until July 31.

To-read list

[PhiLab](#), the Montreal-based philanthropy think tank, has launched a new book called [Philanthropic Foundations in Canada: Landscapes, Indigenous Perspectives and Pathways to Change](#). Contributors include leaders, practitioners, academics, and participants in Canadian philanthropy. The book features a collection of essays focused on grant-making foundations, an understudied sector.

The [Ontario Nonprofit Network](#) recently released the second in a series of three policy papers. [Keeping Human Services in Community Hands: Why Nonprofits Deliver Better](#) notes that hospitals, seniors’ homes, childcare centres, recreation facilities, and other community assets are accountable to communities via volunteer boards of directors. But over the last 20 years, for-profit chains have stepped into these roles. Ontario, the paper notes, is seeing the devastating impact of this as COVID-19 ravages seniors’ homes. ONN will release the third paper in the series soon.

Tides Canada becomes MakeWay

Vancouver-based Tides Canada is changing its name to [MakeWay](#), effective June 11. Among other granting and partnership activities, the charitable platform protects vital marine and terrestrial environments and supports Indigenous stewardship.

“No organization takes on a name change lightly,” said Joanna Kerr, MakeWay’s CEO. “But it was clear that the time has come to define ourselves. For too long we’ve been defined by others.”

The change was a response to smear campaigns linking the organization to the US-based Tides Foundation. Premier Jason Kenney labelled the organization “anti-Alberta” in a 2019 public inquiry to scrutinize international funding for the Canadian environmental movement. MakeWay calls the campaign “an expensive un-public government inquiry.” MakeWay celebrates its 20th anniversary this year.

Great Canadian Giving Challenge

CanadaHelps.org has launched its annual Canadian Giving Challenge. Any donation made to a charity through the platform or at GivingChallenge.ca automatically enters the charity to win \$20,000.

In 2019, approximately 109,000 Canadians donated more than \$14 million during the challenge, a 25% increase over 2018.

The challenge ends June 30, and the draw for the winning organization takes place on Canada Day. A [pre-recorded webinar](#) details how organizations can get the most out of the challenge.

Support for people in the federal corrections system

On June 9, Bill Blair, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, announced \$500,000 for five national voluntary organizations (NVOs) to create pilot projects that help reintegrate offenders under supervision at halfway houses.

“Our greatest responsibility during this public health crisis is keeping all Canadians safe and healthy – that includes supporting the transition of offenders released into the community,” Blair said in a statement. “These funds will help support the important work of these NVOs and their networks as they continue to find creative solutions to respond to the crisis and adapt their services to provide a safe, secure and supportive environment for offenders under community supervision.”

The recipients are the Association des services de réhabilitation sociale du Québec, the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, the John Howard Society of Canada, the National Associations Active in Criminal Justice, and St. Leonard’s Society of Canada. The goal is to deliver effective programs and keep residents and communities safe during emergencies like COVID-19.

Online roundup

Charities Aid Foundation is offering [on-demand webinars](#) for charities and non-profits. Topics include: surviving and recovering from COVID-19 for charities, how charities and donors are reacting to coronavirus, and Facebook tips for small and medium-sized charities.

The [Canadian Charity Law Association](#) will offer free webinars through the summer and fall. The next instalment, covering the fundamentals of employment law for charities and non-profits, will take place June 16. Upcoming webinars will address setting up a charity in Canada and carrying out international activities.

Finally, Charity Village will host three webinars in the next month. The first, on June 18, is

entitled [Canadian Fundraising and COVID-19](#). It aims to help fundraisers who want to better understand email and online fundraising in this challenging environment.