December 10, 2018

Kevin Pittman, Committee Clerk / Greffier de comité
Senate Special Committee on the Charitable Sector
SENATE OF CANADA | SÉNAT DU CANADA
Committees Directorate / Direction des comités
Room 1031, Chambers Bldg / Pièce 1031, édifice Chambers

Dear Senators:

Please accept this brief, which includes highlights of recent research by Ryerson University's Diversity Institute that may help inform your discussion on the Charitable Sector. I understand that your mandate is: to study the impact of federal and provincial laws and policies governing charities, nonprofit organizations, foundations, and other similar groups; and to examine the impact of the voluntary sector in Canada. This report will focus on issues related to employment in the sector including trends that are shaping future skills, diversity and inclusion, and ways in which we may leverage our knowledge on social innovation to strengthen the sector. Specifically it will discuss:

- Challenges for the voluntary sector
- Diversity and inclusion in the nonprofit sector
- Opportunities for innovation
- A case study: Leveraging diversity and innovation and the talent and passion of youth
- Recommendations

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

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## CHALLENGES FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

One of the greatest challenges is in defining the charitable[1], nonprofit[2] and voluntary sectors[3] as they encompass organizations with dramatically different missions which span economic sectors. They focus on social services, health care, education, culture, recreation, religion, development and housing, professional associations, advocacy, environment, international and philanthropic intermediaries. While some have social objectives, for example, the United Way of Canada, many are professional organizations with broader mandates, for example the Information Technology Association of Canada or the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. They range from small community-based organizations, to some of the largest organizations in the country, for example, the University of Toronto, which had 27,000 employees in 2017 and a budget of $1b per year (University of Toronto, 2018). Charities are unique from nonprofits as they are subject to very different regulatory and reporting requirements and have additional privileges (for example issuing tax receipts), but often the boundaries are blurred. Yet the sector, however it is defined, includes approximately 180,000 non-profit organizations in Canada, of these 80,000 are registered charities. Over 1.3 million people are currently employed and more than 6.5 million volunteers are supporting organizational efforts (Voluntary Sector Initiative, 2009) providing services to the community, which supplement government efforts and play a major role in the economy according for more than 8% of GDP (Barr et al., 2006; Hall et al., 2004).

The voluntary sector and nonprofit sectors have become increasingly important in filling service gaps to compensate for fiscal restraints on government budgets (Shields et al., 2017) and play a critical role in advancing Canada's economic and social development and often supplement the service delivery provided by governments. Within such voids, a host of social innovations (SI) have proliferated, playing a key role in addressing the "wicked problems" (Rittel & Webber, 1973) or "grand challenges" (Ferraro, Etzion, & Gehman, 2015) which we currently face. SI serves as part of a broader agenda where governments find support through other actors.

Some argue that organizations in these sectors need more access to government funding and support to cope with growing demands. According to Imagine Canada (2018), demand-side drivers include our rapidly aging population, which is driving an increase in support service use; rising transitional needs among a more diverse population of immigrants and refugees; the impacts of climate change on the environment and communities; and increasing demand for poverty-related services and more. In fact, it has been estimated that the sector needs another $25 billion over the next 10 years to address the burgeoning demands and that revenue is not keeping pace (Baines et al., 2014). What these efforts have in common is that they seek to address issues that are "complicated" and "complex" (Preskil & Beer, 2012). "With a seat at the policy table, charities and nonprofits could make a creative contribution to the government's development of smart policies that would maximize the synergistic relationship between the sector and the broader economy." (Brian Emmet, 2018).

Others argue that it is ripe for disruption and innovation and that there are massive opportunities for improving efficiency, effectiveness and accountability, and for leveraging new approaches, tools and technologies to promote collaboration and do more with less (Ernst & Young, 2016). Fragmentation within the nonprofit sector is argued to make social service delivery difficult and results in duplication and competition and limited advancement of leading practices (Evans et al., 2005). While collaboration could help nonprofits achieve greater social impact at lower cost (Whitaker et al., 2004), many organizations find it difficult to partner with others for a variety of reasons.

Understanding impact is another challenge for the nonprofit sector. Organizations in the sector are designed to support communities and to deliver public or social benefit. Because of this, there exists a "clear ethical obligation" to conduct themselves in a certain manner and to measure and evaluate their performance. However in many organizations there is a failure to draw distinctions between "administrative accountability", "evaluation" and "public accountability" (Evans et al., 2005). While in recent years, government, granting agencies and private sector donors are requiring higher levels of accountability, rigorous evaluation is still in its infancy and is seldom tied to funding although there have been experiments with "pay for performance models". In the training sector, a recent Ontario

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[1] Charitable organizations in Canada are regulated under the Canadian Income Tax Act.
[2] A nonprofit is a tax-exempt organization that benefits the broad public interest such as: social welfare, civic improvement, pleasure or recreation, any other purpose except profit.
[3] The voluntary sector is usually comprised of organizations whose purpose is to benefit and enrich society, often without profit as a motive and with little or no government intervention.

Auditor General's report suggested that of the organizations receiving almost $1.8 billion in funding annually to deliver employment related training, half are not helping clients gain employment. Of agencies funded to deliver language training, many produce limited results. Increased accountability is critical.

In part, this is a function of the ways in which funders and funding operate. Often there are few incentives for improving processes or promoting collaboration. While there are more commitments to evaluation, most often "promising practices" are defined "as practices that are particularly effective in achieving their stated aims" with little reference to their long term impact or systems change (CISSA, 2012). Satisfaction is not synonymous with impact and more importantly the outcomes are often not shared. Agencies are often not aware of relevant projects beyond their boundaries. "The absence of a transfer mechanism acts as a significant brake on innovation at the industry level…..the sector already has an innovation engine in the form of individuals with skills and creativity; what it lacks is a transmission for linking this creativity to a learning and dissemination strategy that would lead to enhanced sector-wide performance" (CISSA, 2012).

Talent is another challenge in the sector. The aging population is presenting challenges for the voluntary and non-profit sector on several levels. While the social objects of the sectors align well with the values of youth, the workforce is aging. Being relevant and attractive as a workplace, as a place to donate and as a place to volunteer is critical to the survival of the sector. Diversity and inclusion is critical to this.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR

Diversity and inclusion have become organizational priorities in workplaces across sectors and industries as a part of a broader conversation about innovation, productivity and prosperity (McIsaac, Moody, 2013). Advancing talented women and racialized minorities to senior leadership positions has numerous social and economic advantages for the organization (Diversity Institute, 2014). Increasing the representation of women and racialized minorities in senior leadership positions enables organizations to:

- Overcome the skills shortage and the war for talent;
- Respond to increasingly diverse markets;
- Increase innovation and creativity;
- Increase employee satisfaction and reduce turnover; and
- Mitigate legal and reputational costs.

Competition for talent exists across sectors and organizations are focusing on improving diversity and inclusion in order to attract the best and the brightest. In the nonprofit sector, in particular, which often serves increasingly diverse communities, having diverse employees and leaders ensures that their perspectives are understood and they are well served. It also helps establish legitimacy for the organization and commitment to the communities they serve (Abzug & Galaskiewicz, 2001). Having a diverse board enables an organization to be more responsive to its stakeholders and also is tied to both fundraising and social performance or community member attitudes towards the organization (Brown, 2002). Considerable research has also tied increased diversity and inclusion to increased innovation as well as to increased organizational performance.

Generally, the non-profit and charitable sector is considered to be more inclusive than the private sector with higher levels of participation by women, racialized minorities, indigenous people, persons with disabilities and other under-represented groups. However, in spite of the rhetoric, research on diversity and suggests that the leadership is not diverse nor is there a strong commitment to inclusion at the organizational level. (McIsaac and Moody, 2013) Though the majority of voluntary sector employees are women they are overrepresented in frontline or administrative support roles (Baines et al., 2012, Cukier et al., 2014) in low-paying occupations (Moyser, 2017) and in the ranks of volunteers. Research on other dimensions of diversity is sorely lacking.

Recently completed research conducted by the Diversity Institute, drawing on publicly available data had similar findings. The research conducted analyzed the data on senior leaders from the largest organizations in the Greater Montreal and Greater Toronto Areas in six sectors – (elected, public, private, voluntary, education, and agencies, boards and commissions)- located in communities where the racialized minority population exceeds 10%. For this analysis we looked at organizations within

the voluntary sector, excluding religious organizations, ethno-cultural foundations and charities as they are often led by the specific ethnic and cultural groups they serve. While women make up 51.5% of residents in the Greater Toronto Area, they comprise only 38.3% of the board of directors in the largest charities and foundations headquartered in the GTA in 2017. Comparison with 2014 data reveals that very little has changed for women in terms of representation at the leadership level in large charities and foundations, with representation hovering at approximately 41.1%. There is substantial variance within the sector, with 47.6% of voluntary boards having at least 40% women, 4.8% have none. More than half (57.1%) of voluntary sector management teams have at least 40% women while 19.0% have none.

Racialized minority individuals made up 53.7% of GTA total population in 2017, however, they are poorly represented in the voluntary sector at the leadership level. In the voluntary sector we found a decrease in representation of racialized minorities in leadership roles at 17.4% in 2017, down from 17.6% in 2014. Only 38.1% of boards analyzed had at least 20% racialized minority leaders, 19% have none. Equally notable, 38.1% of senior management teams have at least 20% racialized minority representation, while 52.4% have none.

Looking at the Greater Montreal Area we see a similar pattern. The highest representation of women in senior leadership positions was found in the voluntary sector (50.8%) and Quebec's agencies, boards and commissions (ABCs) (49.7%). Both of these sectors increased the representation of women when compared to 2012 (35.9% and 47.2% respectively). Among municipal ABCs, 27% of them have at least 20% visible minority leaders, but 36% of municipal ABCs and 80% of provincial ABCs appeared to have none.

The data suggest that this issue is not the pool but the intentionality of policies and programs. Some nonprofits have been able to identify and attract diverse leaders and others have not. Based on this research as well as a review of best practices, the Diversity Institute has developed a diversity assessment tool which can help inform the development of a diversity strategy for nonprofits. An integrated intentional strategy requires leadership and appropriate governance, target setting, human resources processes, inclusive culture and applying a diversity lens through the value chain from procurement to program design to marketing and communications. Government can provide additional incentives to operationalizing diversity strategies through legislation as well as applying a diversity lens (and accountability frameworks) to all funding, not just procurement. Thinking creatively about work integrated learning initiatives for students and graduates will help build capacity. Funders need to be more intentional as well about diversity and inclusion in their funding criteria.

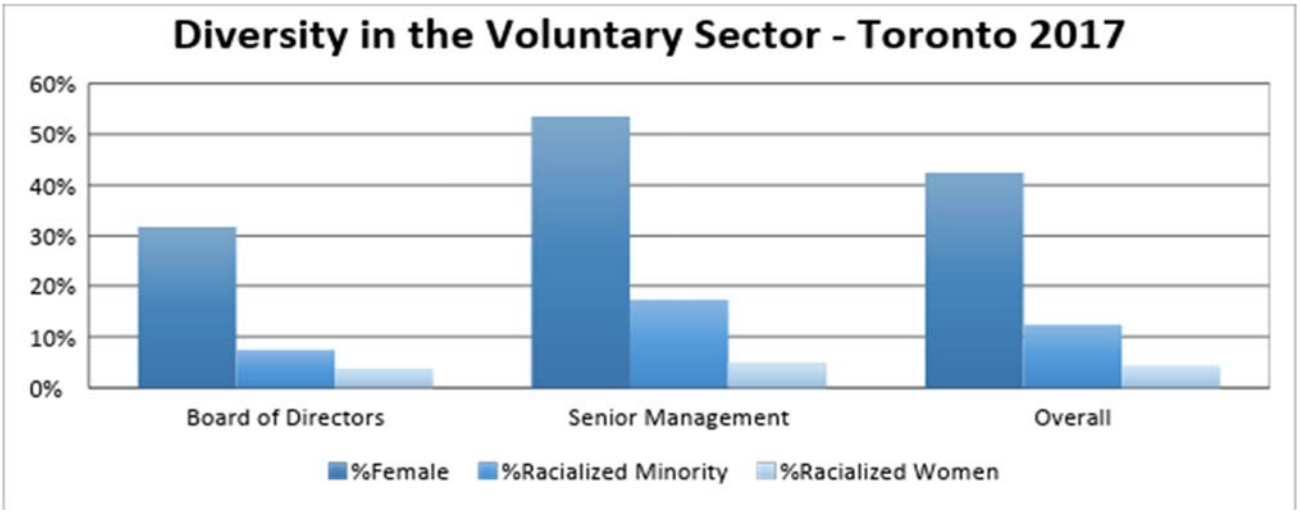


**Figure 1: Diversity in the Voluntary Sector- Toronto**

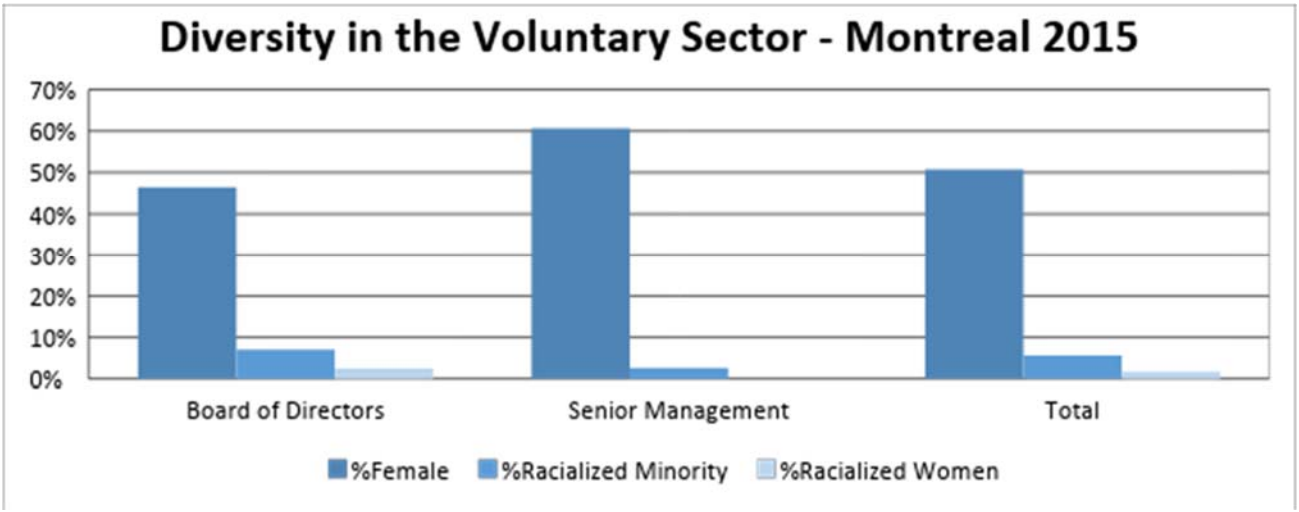


**Figure 2: Diversity in the Voluntary Sector- Montreal**

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATION[4]

Increasingly, there is evidence that nonprofits are engaged in social entrepreneurship, which involves using "private sector strategies to advance public sector goals". Across Canada and globally, there are examples of nonprofits which have adopted innovative policies, practices and tools in order to better meet the needs of clients, improve outcomes, expand resources, improve collaboration, reduce fragmentation and to do more with less. In particular, nonprofits have had to reassess the organizational framework and context in which they operate, driving new models for engagement that include cross sector collaborations such as partnerships with post-secondary institutions and incubators, derive funding from non-traditional sources (ex. Microfinance), and place greater emphasis on evaluation and evidence-based approaches. In order to address these issues with an eye towards innovative and sustainable solutions, new types of organizations and approaches to funding and managing nonprofits are emerging (Cukier et al., 2011; Dart et al., 2010). These include many sites and guidebooks aimed at supporting social enterprises along with a growing number of government programs and incubators (Brouard, 2015; Dart et al., 2010; Defourny & Nyssens, 2012; Gupta, 2010; Madill & Ziegler, 2012; Manwaring & Valentine, 2012).

**New Organizational Arrangements** A growing focus on collaboration are emerging approaches that seem to offer promise in strengthening the nonprofit ecosystem which includes nonprofits but also government, traditional foundations and funders, collaborators (such as universities), and increasingly the private sector. Networks and partnership can increase capacity and bring new resources to the table but also add complexity and coordination costs as new organizational structures, agreements, cultures and styles of management and communications become foundational. Bridging and navigating across organizations and sectors requires new approaches and skills and often even language. Effective cross-sectoral collaborations have long been cited as an essential component of successful social innovations but are challenging to develop and implement. Such cross-sector collaborations allow for the mixing of "ideas, practices and resources between sectors" which facilitate creative solutions (Adams and Hess, 2010, p. 147-148). Researchers (Westley & Antadze, 2010) note that it allows for the emergence of solutions for social problems which "change the basic routines, resource and authority flows, or beliefs of the social system in which the innovation occurs" (p. 2). Cross-sector collaborations also allow for the distribution of risk SI across organizational actors with contrasting skill sets and resources (Adams and Hess, 2010, p. 147-148). This, in turn, has the effect of reducing the likelihood of venture failure (p. 147-148). While there is the potential for inter-organizational disagreement, given the contrasting goals and values of the actors involved, the increased management costs of social innovation are far outweighed by its benefits.

**Changing Philanthropy and Social Finance:** Social finance is "a sustainable approach to managing money that delivers social, environmental dividends and economic return through social enterprises

[4]This section is drawn from the recent study, Cukier, W., & Gagnon, S. (2017). *SSHRC Imagining Canada's Future Initiative Knowledge Synthesis Grant.* Ryerson University, Diversity Institute. Toronto: SSHRC.

operating in the non-profit or public sector" (Draimin, 2008, p. 12). The Grameen Bank, for example, offered microcredit loans to the poor so that they could build businesses. Social finance instruments were a critical piece of the UK's social innovation strategy and have been coupled with accountability mechanisms, including pay-for-performance. Sources of funding include foundations (which conservatively have assets of more than $20B and dispense $1B a year (Dramin, 2008), labour investment funds, government funds (e.g., Ontario's Social Venture Capital Fund), and private funds (e.g., Social Venture Partners). The Federal Government of Canada recently launched a new strategy on social finance, including use of dormant funds and tax incentives.

Increasingly, foundations and other funders are intentionally promoting social innovation models as a way of doing more with less and building capacity to develop evidence based approaches, collaborations and new forms of revenue generation. Some are focusing on pay for performance models of giving to tie outcomes to donations. Private players including RBC's Social Finance Initiative are similarly seeking to ignite growth and shape the direction of social finance in Canada, while a number of other private organizations are developing avenues to support Canadians looking to engage with social impact investing. Social finance has the potential to generate considerate social impact in Canada, but it remains undercapitalized because the market still needs to adequately assess opportunity and risk and develop appropriate incentives for intermediaries and investors. New tools include the National Crowdfunding Association of Canada (NCFA) connecting interested investors to social crowdfunding and alternative finance opportunities. Organizations listed in NCFA's portal include: SVX, an Ontario-based impact investing platform for ventures, funds and investors looking to achieve financial and social impact; Quebec's yoyomolo, which describes itself as "the only open online donation platform in the world" to use a multilevel solicitation system where multiple players and participants can fundraise towards a given priority; and British Columbia's FrontFundr, an online investment platform for social investors.

**Growing engagement of post-secondary institutions:** Colleges and Universities remain large untapped sources of human capital for the nonprofit sector developing talent with the skills needed but also a new generation of volunteers and innovators. For example initiatives by the McConnell Foundation and international Ashoka Changemaker Campus have engaged a range of Canadian institutions. Changemaker campuses have especially expanded curriculum and practice and have impacted research. Carleton University's Sprott School of Business hosts a Centre for Social Enterprises; the University as a whole hosts the Carleton Centre for Community Innovation (3ci).The University of Waterloo hosts the Waterloo Institute for Social Innovation and Resilience (WISIR) as well as the Social Innovation Generation (SiG), which offers a Graduate Diploma in Social Innovation. In Quebec, the Université du Quebec à Montreal (UQAM) hosts the Centre de recherché sur les innovations sociales (CRISES); it also hosts a Canada Research Chair (CRC) in social economy, and offers an MBA degree in collective businesses and a graduate diploma in social and collective enterprise management. Simon Fraser University is home to a social innovation lab called RADIUS. Scholars have started to examine issues related to the role of post-secondary institutions in the social innovation ecosystem as well as training and education of students to advance social innovation culture outside the classroom consistent with the global trends noted above.

**Incubators:** There has been recent work to adapt the notions of incubators to the social innovation space – providing infrastructure to support nascent social enterprises, build capacity and collaborations to tackle social challenges. Some are linked to the Canadian university ecosystems (e.g., Social Venture Zone at Ryerson), others are university-private sector and foundation collaborations (e.g., SiG at Waterloo), and several are public-private partnerships (e.g., MaRS Discovery District). Alongside key players such as the Centre for Social Innovation, Ashoka U Canada and the J. W. McConnell Foundation, hubs, incubators, and networks connect, grow and support social innovators and their organizations across Canada. By identifying what we know and where knowledge gaps persist about Canadian SI in academia and in practice, this project provides key information to policymakers and practical stakeholders for evidence-based policy making and to support smart institutional investment.

**Impact Assessment and Evaluation:** One of the major criticisms of the literature that emerged in 2008 was its lack of analytic rigor. Arguably, much of what was written during this early period was essentially evangelical, for it was an effort to draw attention to this new phenomenon (or to the reframing of existing practices as social innovation) (Cukier et al., 2011). In the last decade, focus has shifted toward issues of measurement and accountability. Predicting the success of social programs

before we fund them holds great promise for the future of social impact (Saul, 2016). Better use of data in the design, operational and evaluation phases of nonprofit programs allows for:

- Rational resource allocation.
- Better prediction and tracking of outcomes.
- Better benchmarking.
- What works? Standardized data for social programs will enable us to compare relative performance of one program versus another.
- Level playing field. Simple accessible tools could actually level the playing field and erode the tendency to reward good proposal writing. Often the most impactful programs are local and small scale and spend their time "doing" rather than talking about it but as a result they may be overlooked.
- Attract private capital. With better data, there are new opportunities for investments.
- Replicate and scale: One of the biggest challenges in the sector is that good projects are often not replicated and projects that are not producing results continue to get investments. Clearly not everything that is valuable can be quantified and evaluation is not just about numbers but intelligent use of data can help improve performance and actually promote rather than stifle innovation.

**New skills and tools**: There is little doubt that digitization is affecting every sector creating new tools, policies and processes and dramatically altering traditional forms of organization and behaviour. These represent particular challenges to the nonprofit sector where the general workforce is aging and where the human resources policies and practices are not necessarily well aligned with the aspirations of highly skilled workers and youth. Young people bring innovative ideas to tackle the complex challenges that confront today's society and youth–adult partnerships (Y-APs) are supporting organizations in NFP sector and community to implement innovative practices (Zeldin et al., 2005).

**Work-integrated learning (WIL):** WIL has recently emerged as a mechanism that can help address skills mismatches. It refers to educational activities, such as co-op programs and apprenticeships, that integrate academic learning with experience within a workplace environment (Peters et al., 2014). WIL is effective in that it allows students to develop skills and competencies during their placements that may not be possible to develop through traditional classrooms and "textbook" learning. Although a number of studies have focused on WIL within the Canadian context (e.g., Drysdale & McBeath, 2012; Peters et al., 2014; Turcotte et al., 2016; Wayland & Goldberg, 2009; Yee, 2003), few have examined disparities in access, retention, experience through an equity lens. Our research at the Diversity Institute (Cukier, McNamara, & Campbell, 2018) focused on the Ontarian context has found that there remain many barriers to the participation of traditionally marginalized groups in WIL.

However, the uptake of new approaches is mixed among Canadian NGOs. While surveys claim that Canadian NGOs are increasingly using social entrepreneurship processes (Trico, 2016) and many are being required to do so by their funders (McIsaac et al., 2013) there is still limited research on the impacts of this in terms of changing practices or outcomes. There are also mixed views of whether this is a good thing or a reflection of increasing withdrawal of support and growing precarity (Bains et al., 2014).

## LEVERAGING DIVERSITY AND INNOVATION AND THE TALENT AND PASSION OF YOUTH

Examples of successful and innovative approaches in the nonprofit sector abound, but a more recent and impactful example is Ryerson University's Lifeline Syria Challenge (RULSC). In response to the Syrian refugee crisis, a group of citizens launched the *Lifeline Syria* initiative with the goal of privately sponsoring 1,000 refugees in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). To help meet this goal, a group of individuals within Ryerson University launched the RULSC – with the goal of organizing ten sponsorship groups within the university community to raise $270,000, enough to sponsor 10 families. The program design was simple: a leader had to commit to donating $5000, and mobilizing a team to raise the remainder of the funds. In partnership with private and civil sector organizations and led by over 500 student volunteers, the RULSC wildly exceeded these original goals, mobilizing 75 teams, and raising more than $5m to privately sponsor and fund over 100 families or 300 newcomers (RULSC, 2018). The response to the Syrian refugee crisis by the Ryerson University Lifeline Syrian Challenge provides a model for successfully utilizing social innovation practices in the areas of philanthropy and private sponsorship to assist challenges faced by governments responding to the

global refugee crisis. The success of the initiative can be attributed due to its ability to i) build new collaborations ii) embrace entrepreneurial approaches to develop new processes iii) tap into new talent at post-secondary institutions and iv) employ innovative technologies to develop a sharing platform linking people with needs to people with assets and perhaps above all v) develop a culture supporting strategic action.

While, arguably, private sponsorship of refugees is itself an important social innovation producing better outcomes than government sponsorship of refugees in large part because of the way it helps newcomers quickly develop social capital and that provides a way to leverage public sector resources with contributions from citizens and the private sector. The Ryerson University Lifeline Syria Challenge offered some new lessons which could be applied to deal with other societal challenges. First, it brought together people with needs and people with assets from across sectors and really leveraged the incredible asset that young people can bring to the table. Some sponsors had money but no time. Students had time but no money and further extended the resources but also brought fresh ideas and peer support. Key was creating opportunities for them to engage but also co-create. Second, RULSC leveraged technology in new ways developing a platform to link together sponsorship teams, to crowdfund and to share information. Third, RULSC embraced entrepreneurial approaches and agile adaptive methods to respond to sponsors, refugees and partners. For example, rather than using structured training sessions and models typical of the sector, the team offered a high level of customization, assisting sponsors with administrative work, customizing training and support and trying to minimize pain points in order to actively engage "more than the usual suspects." Fourth, RULSC's university and informal networks used existing resources and supplemented them based on research-identified needs, including those related to language, employment and other social supports. Fifth, the program actively engaged with employers right from the outset and placed a heavy and immediate focus on employment opportunities and skills development almost immediately as well as developing partnerships with employers (e.g. Paramount Fine Foods) wishing to hire Syrian newcomers to stage job fairs, and provide language training to supplement existing government programs in these areas. Sixth, core support systems associated with accounting, finance and advancement at the University adapted quickly to develop processes needed to support this unique experiential learning/research project.

Culture is also important. The RULSC began less than an hour after an informal exchange of emails among Ryerson University staff, and swiftly pivoted in its direction multiple times, expanding its focus as opportunities surfaced for it to collaborate with different entities. This agility and responsiveness to changing circumstances allowed it to operate much quicker than many other established organizations in this space with more rigid structures that delay procedural adaptation. The model that was developed can be applied to other critical social issues but requires new ways of thinking, acting and collaborating.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are four key recommendations that are important to modernizing the non-profit sector in Canada that will focus on a diversity and inclusion lens:

1. Comply or Explain Legislation for the Nonprofit Sector: Develop reporting requirements and strategies for nonprofit organizations focusing initially on larger organizations. Like our employment equity legislation or Bill C-25, (An Act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act, the Canada Cooperatives Act, the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, and the Competition Act), a comply or explain approach would require: setting and reporting on targets as well as a strategy to advance inclusion for, as a minimum, the four designated groups (women, racialized minorities, indigenous people, persons with disabilities). Unlike quotas this would enable flexibility within the legislative framework to assist organizations in reaching their diversity goals while maintaining ongoing communications with the federal government. Organizations in the NFP sector should be required to: a) report their data on diversity (as defined above) on boards and employees; and b) define targets and outline their strategy for increasing diversity. Accountability mechanisms are also important.
2. Government Levers to Advance Diversity and Inclusion in the Nonprofit sector: Use available policies, programs and funding mechanisms to advance diversity and inclusion as well as innovation. The Federal government's extensive funding of nonprofits could be used to incentivize

both diversity and innovation. For example rewarding diversity, partnerships, rigorous evaluations, innovative use of technology, and scaling what works.

3. Government could do a better job of using data to drive decision making, mapping and sharing information on what works, promoting horizontal collaboration across departments, scaling effective practices and making funding decisions tied to outcomes.
4. Current government research, innovation and talent programs often do not include the nonprofit sector or address social challenges across sectors. For example, why not develop a super-cluster aimed at tackling "wicked" programs in a coordinated, intentional and accountable way; or ensuring that Work Integrated Learning programs include the nonprofit sector thereby building and leveraging the talent of youth; or encourage better use of technology and innovation in the nonprofit sector.

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## Appendix: Background on the Diversity Institute

### ABOUT RYERSON UNIVERSITY'S DIVERSITY INSTITUTE

We undertake research on diversity in the workplace to improve practices in organizations. We work with organizations to develop customized strategies, programming, and resources to promote new, interdisciplinary knowledge and practice about diversity with respect to gender, race/ethnicity, Aboriginal peoples, abilities, and sexual orientation.

We collaborate with industry, government, not-for-profits and academics to:

- Research existing practices and evaluate programs;
- Explore barriers to full participation in the workplace;
- Develop fact-based policies and programs to help organizations attract, motivate, and develop underrepresented groups; and
- Provide customized training to support the development of diversity strategies.

Using an ecological model of change, the Diversity Institute is driving social innovation across sectors. Our action-oriented, evidence-based approach is advancing knowledge of the complex barriers faced by underrepresented groups, leading practices to effect change, and producing concrete results.

### THE BUSINESS CASE FOR DIVERSITY

Promoting diversity in the workplace has numerous social and economic advantages for organizations. Effectively managing diversity enables organizations to:

- Overcome the skills shortage and the war for talent;
- Respond to increasingly diverse markets;
- Increase innovation and creativity;
- Increase employee satisfaction and reduce turnover; and
- Mitigate legal and reputational costs.

### CURRENT PROJECTS

**DiversityLeads** is a five-year Community University Research Alliance (CURA) project generously supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). With more than 20 private, public, and non-profit partner organizations, as well as collaborators from five different universities, this $2.7-million initiative aims to:

- Benchmark and assess the progress of diversity in leadership;
- Examine barriers at the individual, organizational, and societal levels;
- Explore leadership representation in media; and
- Develop an integrated approach across groups, sectors, and levels for sustained change.

**Partnership for Change: The RBC Immigrant, Diversity and Inclusion Project** is a $1.75-million initiative generously supported by the RBC Foundation that enhances knowledge and practice relating to issues faced by immigrants and their children. In partnership with the Ryerson Centre for Immigration and Settlement (RCIS), this project is achieving its aim through action-oriented research projects, a series of internships and seed funding for new ventures, as well as a strong focus on outreach and knowledge mobilization to shape policy and practice.

**The Peel Region Social Mobility Project** is a two-year project designed to expand current understanding of the immigrant experience and inform policy and services in Peel Region. Working alongside government and community-based partners, this multi-stakeholder project uses interviews and workshops to identify and explore the factors affecting the social mobility of immigrants.

**The Black Experience Project in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)** is a ground-breaking research venture in partnership with the Environics Institute, United Way Toronto, and YMCA of Greater Toronto. This project explores the lived experiences of Black Torontonians, building community, and informing policy and service development.

**Re-thinking Financial Literacy** seeks to develop ways to diversify the pool of qualified candidates considering careers in the financial sector. In partnership with TD Bank, this project will create tools that make financial literacy resources easily accessible for classroom use, with a focus on youth from neighbourhood improvement areas.

**Diversity in the Legal Sector** is a sub-project of DiversityLeads that examines the progress of diversity in senior leadership positions in law firms as well as in the composition of federally and provincially appointed judges in the Canadian judicial system.

**Diversity in the Media** is a sub-project of DiversityLeads that examines the representation and portrayal of designated groups in both print and broadcast mainstream media. The project also looks at the experts that appear on current affairs programs, identifying variances in representation between shows and subject matter.

## PAST PROJECTS

**Understanding the Skills Gap of Social Science and Humanities Students** was a project supported by the Ontario Human Capital Research and Innovation Fund (OHCRIF) that examined issues related to the demand and supply of Social Sciences and Humanities students in order to inform policymaking and practice. Using advanced data mining and analytics coupled with surveys of employers and graduates, this project aimed to improve the supply of skilled workers to meet the needs of employers.

**The Ontario Human Rights Project Charter** was a collaboration with the Ontario Human Rights Commission, the Toronto Police Services Board, and the Toronto Police Service that aimed to counter discrimination in the police service and the community. The Diversity Institute evaluated the project's implementation and assessed its impact, concluding that the project was successful in spearheading a unique collaborative approach to addressing human rights issues in policing.

**Scadding Court – Business in a Box** was a social entrepreneurship project that sought to lower barriers to entry into retail for low-income and newcomer entrepreneurs by repurposing shipping containers as retail outlets. Funded in part by the Ontario Centres of Excellence, this project evaluated the impact and sustainability of the business model for social enterprises.

**DiverseCity Counts** was a three-year research project conducted as a part of DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project, an initiative of Maytree and the Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance. This project tracked rates of diversity among leaders in the GTA across private, public, and non-profit sectors, with the goal of taking a snapshot of the senior-most positions in the most influential organizations.

**The Peel Immigration Labour Market Survey** looked at the labour market experiences of immigrants residing in Peel Region as compared to those of their Canadian-born counterparts. In collaboration with Peel Region, this project explored areas such as credential recognition, differences in job search strategies, perceptions of discrimination, and job mobility plans.

**Career Advancement in Corporate Canada: A Focus on Visible Minorities** was a project in partnership with Catalyst Canada that surveyed more than 17,000 managers and executives across Canada on their perceptions and experiences regarding career satisfaction and advancement. Significant gaps were found in both levels of career satisfaction and perceptions of fairness between visible minorities and their white/Caucasian colleagues, with implications for employee retention and organizational performance.

**Diversity – The Competitive Edge: Implications for the ICT Labour Market** examined the workforce composition of the technology sector in Canada and identified barriers to full participation facing women and internationally educated professionals.

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