

**Pre-Budget Submission to the Honourable Bill Morneau, P.C., M.P.**

**Presented by:  
The Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO)**

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**February 26, 2016**



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The Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO) is pleased to provide this submission on the 2016-17 federal budget.

CCVO works to strengthen the nonprofit-charitable sector and provides leadership on the critical issues that impact organizations in this sector. We have a diverse membership of 350 organizations, many of which work in partnership with various levels of government.

Canada's nonprofits and charities fulfill a myriad of roles within our communities and contribute greatly to Canadians' quality of life. The nonprofit-charitable sector supports vulnerable people, provides recreational and leisure opportunities, delivers arts and cultural programs and stewards our natural environment. Many organizations also provide services essential to support the labour force, from settlement services and ESL programs for new immigrants, to skills upgrading and the childcare and elder care programs that enable individuals to participate in the workforce. This sector touches virtually every Canadian. It comes as no surprise that many of the issues and directives included in the Prime Minister's mandate letters to Cabinet directly relate to the work of Canada's nonprofits and charities; they are central to the health and prosperity of our communities. There are approximately 170,000 nonprofit organizations in Canada, 86,000 of which are registered charities.

It follows that CCVO has a particular interest in your mandate to, "...modernize the rules governing the charitable and non-for-profit sectors...[and develop] a new legislative framework to strengthen the sector...". We look forward to engaging with your ministry to this end.

**In the interim, we are recommending that the 2016-17 budget be used to restore and enhance the information available about Canada's nonprofit-charitable sector and its workforce.**

CCVO is encouraged by the Liberal Government's commitment to fact-based decision making and we applaud the government for re-instituting the mandatory long-form census for 2016. Many nonprofits and charities rely on this information to ensure the services and programs they provide have a meaningful impact in the communities they serve.

Sadly, over the past decade there has been a significant erosion of information to support an understanding of the nature and composition of Canada's nonprofit-charitable sector as well as its workforce.

Canada's nonprofit-charitable sector is estimated to employ two million Canadians and constitute 8.1% of Canada's GDP. However, we do not have reliable and up-to-date information. In 2003, Statistics Canada undertook the **National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Organizations (NSNVO)**. This resulted in a comprehensive account of the size and composition of Canada's nonprofit-charitable sector, its financing, workforce (paid and volunteer), needs, challenges and strengths. A lot has changed in Canada over the past thirteen years and the NSNVO data no longer paints an accurate picture. However, it remains a valuable data set for comparative purposes, to help understand how the sector is evolving, how its workforce is changing, how it is financed, and how it is responding to society's shifting needs.

From 1997 to 2008, Statistics Canada maintained the **Satellite Account of Non-Profit Institutions in Canada**. The Satellite Account drew from multiple sources to "fill an important void, addressing important questions", including:

- *What is the economic contribution of the non-profit sector through its role as an employer or as a provider of goods and services in the economy?*
- *In what fields of activity are non-profit organizations contributing to Canadian society?*
- *What are the sources of revenue of non-profit organizations? To what extent are they funded by governments versus private donations?*
- *How healthy or vulnerable is the non-profit sector from a financial point of view?*<sup>1</sup>

This information has not been available for the better part of a decade.

Finally, the Government of Canada's **Sector Council Program** was administered through Employment and Social Development Canada and provided support to the **Human Resource Council for the Nonprofit Sector** (HR Council). Starting in 2005, the HR Council played a critical role in providing national leadership, coordination and resources as they relate to supporting a healthy nonprofit and charitable sector workforce. This included efforts to generate timely and accurate labour market information to inform human resource/workforce strategy.

In 2013, the previous government cancelled the Sector Council program and instead chose to prioritize "key economic sectors" through the legacy **Sector Initiatives Program**. Regrettably the nonprofit-charitable sector was not among these, despite its size, scope and the critical role it fulfills in Canadian society and the Canadian economy. Although some capacity exists at the provincial level, the impact of regional labour market initiatives would be greatly amplified if capacity existed at the national level.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada. *About the satellite account of non-profit institutions and volunteering*, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/nea-cen/about-apos/npi-v-nblb-eng.htm>

Given the scope of Canada's nonprofit-charitable sector, and the critical work it performs, it is essential to have reliable and valid data to inform decision-making. Despite past efforts to develop a fuller understanding of the sector, there is now a considerable void of valid and reliable information. Imagine if we were to rely on data from before the 2008 recession to make economic decisions about Canada's oil and gas sector, or made workforce decisions in the absence of information on the current state of the automotive sector. Yet, in terms of proportion of GDP, Canada's nonprofit-charitable sector is larger than both of these sectors.

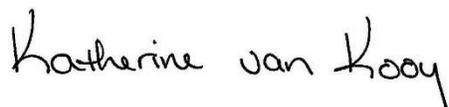
It is imperative that we address this void. We need good data to make good decisions and to make the most efficient use of tax dollars and charitable donations. This is why we strongly encourage the federal government work in consort with the nonprofit-charitable sector to develop a strategy to restore and enhance this critical information. **Such a strategy should be accompanied with commensurate resourcing of Statistics Canada** to resume its role in producing timely, valid and reliable data, potentially through the Satellite Accounts and/or replicating the NSNVO at regular intervals.

Additionally, as the Government of Canada continues down the path of "open data", it will be important to **work in partnership with Canada's nonprofit-charitable sector to explore and identify information collected and controlled by the Government of Canada that could be moved into the public domain.**

Finally, to address the dearth of information about the nonprofit-charitable sector workforce, **the Government of Canada can partner with the sector to generate needed labour market information either through the existing *Sector Initiatives Program*, by including Canada's nonprofit and charitable sector as a key economic sector; or through a new mechanism designed with input from the nonprofit-charitable sector.**

CCVO appreciates your consideration of this submission and representatives are available at your convenience to provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katherine van Kooy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Katherine van Kooy  
President and CEO