



OCTOBER 2025 EDITION

NONPROFIT CONNECT: INSIGHTS & UPDATES

Welcome to the October 2025 edition of TRAICON's newsletter, where empowerment meets opportunity! Whether you are leading a small grassroots initiative or managing a large nonprofit organization, we know the challenges you face — limited resources, growing community needs, and the constant push to do more with less. That is where we come in, as champions of change, we understand the power of knowledge and connections in driving your nonprofit's mission forward.

At TRAICON, we specialize in building capacity in nonprofit organizations through tailored training, strategy support, and practical tools designed with your reality in mind. Our mission is simple: to help nonprofits grow stronger, smarter, and more sustainable.

Join us as we explore tips and tools for organizational development, upcoming events, online networking opportunities, insights on emerging trends, funding resources, and more.

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Nonprofit Connect — Free Networking Event

Join peers from across our sector for **Nonprofit Connect**, a casual, high-energy networking meet-up—**free** to attend! Our guest speaker is **Jim Schmidt from Grant Advance**, who will share practical tips on grant readiness, finding the right funders, and strengthening proposals, followed by an open Q&A.

Date: December 8, 2025

Time: 12:00 pm – 12:45 pm EST

Cost: Free

Who should attend: Executive Directors, fundraisers, board members, program leads, and volunteers.

Bring your questions, swap ideas, and leave with new connections and grant-winning insights.
Save your spot today—RSVP and share with your team!

[REGISTER here!](#)

NONPROFIT
CONNECT

FREE
ONLINE EVENT

presents

GRANT ADVANCE SOLUTIONS

FOUNDATION FUNDING FOR CHARITIES

Guest Speaker: Jim Schmidt, Funding Consultant
Topic: The Simple Way to Find, Write, and Win More Grants

 **Monday, November 10th, 2025**
12:00 - 12:45 PM EDT

Nonprofit Connect is a collaborative initiative between TRAICON, Trent University, Nonprofit Management Essentials Micro-credentials program and the Kawartha Lakes Community Foundation.

Secure Your Funding: Key Deadlines for Growth and Capital Projects

Do not miss a critical window for substantial funding, with several key grant deadlines approaching in **November/December 2025**. Ontario-based organizations can scale their proven success with the **Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) Grow Grant** (\$100,000–\$600,000) or secure support for environmental and agricultural work through the **Greenbelt Foundation Grant Program**, both due on **November 5**. The **Ontario Arts Council (OAC)** has multiple project grant deadlines in early November (including **November 4, 5, and 6**). Finally, the Ontario Government offers two programs with a **November 13** deadline: the **Connecting Links Program** for road and bridge projects, and the **Indigenous Community Capital Grants Program (ICCGP)** to fund capital projects (Feasibility, Design, or Construction) in Indigenous communities. Nationally, the **SSHRC Partnership Development Grants** deadline is **November 17**, providing \$75,000–\$200,000 to foster collaborations in social sciences and humanities. Prepare your proposals now to meet these mid-fall deadlines.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Review: Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) 2025 State of the Sector Survey

The Ontario Nonprofit Network's (ONN) 2025 State of the Sector Survey report paints a stark picture of the operational health and systemic challenges facing Ontario's nonprofit and charitable sector. Mirroring the fragility of the broader economy, the data reveals significant financial and human resource distress that threatens the sector's capacity to meet accelerating community needs. Key findings indicate that the recent economic downturn broadly affected operations, with 69% of organizations reporting disruptions to revenue, 62% to expenses, and over half (57%) to staffing and programming (54%).

The persistent challenge is a continuous climb in demand for nonprofit services that is increasingly outpacing the sector's static or shrinking capacity to deliver them. While the long-running HR crisis shows early signs of trending downwards, staff recruitment and retention remains a major concern. Compounding these issues is a concerning level of risk, with a substantial proportion of nonprofits remaining highly vulnerable to potential closure within the next three years.

The overall sentiment is polarized, with approximately 30% of respondents feeling hopeful, but a significant portion feeling under-resourced (25%) or stressed and fatigued (24%). The ONN

leverages these findings to issue strategic calls to action directed at government, the sector itself, and the public, emphasizing the need for modernized funding models and policy changes to prevent further deterioration of Ontario's social infrastructure.

Sector findings on skills gaps, non-profit organizations are primarily looking for development in the following four areas:

1. **Fundraising** (specifically reported by **42%** of organizations in the ONN survey).
2. **IT / Technical skills** (specifically reported by **34%** of organizations in the ONN survey).
3. **Leadership and Management Skills** (often described as soft skills, including delegation, conflict resolution, and the capacity to lead and retain staff in a high-stress environment, a critical need driven by the ongoing HR and burnout crisis).
4. **Volunteer Management and Engagement** (identified as a major challenge, particularly in the areas of recruiting and retaining volunteers, which requires specialized skills in community-building and engagement strategies).

Read the full report [HERE](#)

Professional Development for Nonprofits

Nonprofit Micro-credential Courses offered through Trent University



November 1, 2025

Embracing Diversity: Creating Equitable Work Environments course explores the foundational principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within organizations. Participants learn practical strategies for fostering inclusive environments, addressing systemic barriers, and promoting diversity within nonprofit workplaces and programs.

[Learn More](#)

Optimizing Fundraising Efforts for Nonprofits covers various fundraising strategies and techniques. Participants learn how to develop effective fundraising plans, engage donors, cultivate relationships, and diversify funding sources to ensure financial sustainability.

[Learn More](#)

Foundations of Financial Administration for Nonprofits teaches essential financial management knowledge and skills for nonprofits, covering record-keeping systems, NPO-specific accounting standards, budgeting, and policies for financial integrity and compliance. [Learn More](#)

Project Management Basics

Learn the five phases of the project life cycle while learning to create project plans with clear scope, timelines, and budgets. Gain hands-on experience with tools like Gantt charts, work breakdown structures (WBS), and risk registers, and develop practical strategies to track progress, manage risks, adapt to change, and communicate effectively with stakeholders. [Learn More](#)

Partnership Power: Why Your Nonprofit Should Be Working with Your Community Foundation

In an era where many nonprofits face accelerating demand coupled with static or shrinking resources—a challenge highlighted in the recent ONN State of the Sector Survey—strategic partnerships are no longer optional. One of the most powerful allies your organization can cultivate is your local community foundation.

Community foundations are public charities that manage funds contributed by individuals, families, and businesses to benefit a specific geographic area. They are, essentially, local experts in philanthropy, possessing deep knowledge of regional needs, which makes them much more than just a source of grant funding.

Beyond the Grant: The Core Benefits

Partnering with a community foundation offers several distinct advantages that contribute to your organization's long-term stability and impact:

1. **Deep Local Knowledge:** Community foundations serve as a hub of intelligence. Their staff and boards understand the unique challenges, opportunities, and priorities in your community better than almost any other funder. By engaging with them, you can refine your program strategy to align precisely with the most pressing local needs.
2. **Professional Endowment Management:** Many foundations offer the ability for nonprofits to establish a **Nonprofit Fund** (or Agency Fund). This allows your organization

to set aside permanent endowment assets that the foundation manages professionally. This service removes the administrative burden of investment management, gift acknowledgment, and accounting, freeing your staff to focus on your mission.

3. **Enhanced Credibility and Networking:** Associating with a reputable community foundation lends instant credibility to your work. They also serve as powerful conveners, providing networking opportunities with other nonprofits, civic leaders, and major donors who share a commitment to local improvement.
4. **Access to Broader Giving Mechanisms:** Beyond their unrestricted grant cycles, community foundations manage various types of funds, including Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs) and Field-of-Interest Funds. A strong relationship can position your organization to receive distributions from these diverse and often flexible funding streams.

Three Steps to a Strong Partnership

To move beyond simply applying for grants and toward a true partnership, consider these strategic steps:

1. **Do Your Research:** Start by reviewing the foundation's strategic priorities and their recent grants list. Do they fund capacity building, or are they solely focused on direct programming? Ensure your needs align with their mission before reaching out.
2. **Start a Dialogue (Well Before Applying):** Do not wait until an application deadline to introduce yourself. Schedule an informational meeting with a program officer to share your organization's mission, its current impact data, and its long-term goals. Frame the conversation around community needs, not just your budget needs.
3. **Explore Endowment Options:** If your organization is looking for long-term sustainability, inquire about establishing a Nonprofit Fund. This signals a commitment to permanence, which foundations value, and provides a stable source of revenue to help weather economic uncertainty.

By proactively building a relationship with your community foundation, you tap into a resource that offers financial support, strategic guidance, and a powerful network—all essential components for navigating the current complexity of the nonprofit sector.

Find your local Community Foundation [HERE](#)



At TRAICON, we sincerely appreciate you taking the time to read our newsletter. We invite you to share it with your colleagues and associates who may also benefit from our insights and updates.

Got ideas? Tell us what you would like to read about in upcoming newsletters!

Sincerely,

Carey McMaster, Capacity Building Specialist | TRAICON