

Sustainable
Capacity
Foundation



Report

Collaborative Grantmaking

Sustainability Case Studies







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Introduction



What is Collaborative Grantmaking?

Collaborative grantmaking is about funders working together to support initiatives within the charitable sector. By leveraging each other to invest in nonprofit organizations, this type of collaboration strengthens both the grantmaking community and the charitable organizations.

“Collaboration can invoke a wide range of interactions between like-minded funders. At the most basic level, a simple exchange of knowledge can be transformational, especially from more experienced parties to those with a shorter track record. At the more complex end, funder collectives come together not only to share their know-how, but also their networks, resources, and decision-making acumen.”

Collaborative Giving,
Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors



Types of collaborations

There are many ways that collaborative grantmaking can take place within the philanthropic sector. It might take the form of private foundations co-funding initiatives or a combination of public funding and private philanthropy.

Report Case Studies

In this report, there are several different examples of collaborative grantmaking in the sustainability sector that the Sustainable Capacity Foundation has been involved in. They showcase a diversity of funder types and supported initiatives.



“The Sustainable Capacity Foundation launched its collaborative grantmaking work in the sustainability sector of Eastern Ontario as these case studies illustrate.”

Kristina Inrig,
President & CEO
Sustainable Capacity Foundation



CASE STUDIES

Collaborative
Grantmaking

Ottawa Energy Collective

Initiative: Ottawa Energy Collective

Funding Type: Private Philanthropy, Public Philanthropy, and Public funding

Funder Collaborative: Sustainable Capacity Foundation, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Ottawa Community Foundation, Ottawa Sustainability Fund, and McConnell Foundation.



Organization Participants: The Ottawa Energy Collective is led by 8 organizations, including Ecology Ottawa, Envirocentre, Canada Green Building Council, SmartNet Alliance, Sustainable Eastern Ontario, Maison Tucker House, Sustainable Enterprise Alliance, and Greening Sacred Spaces.



Ottawa Energy Collective

Story of Development

The Ottawa Energy Collective was launched in 2017 by Ecology Ottawa, Sustainable Eastern Ontario, and Maison Tucker House. The Ontario Trillium Foundation, in partnership with the Tamarack Institute, launched an ambitious program to support collective impact across the province. This helped establish the Ottawa Energy Collective Impact initiative to formalize its structure, operations, purpose and activities. By 2020, the Collective was ready for the implementation stage and the backbone organization was created. The collective is now in the implementation stage.



“The Collective Impact framework contains five core conditions including the development of a common agenda; using shared measurement to understand progress; building on mutually reinforcing activities; engaging in continuous communications and providing a backbone to move the work forward.”

Tamarack Institute

Funding Allocation

Funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation from 2016-2019 supported many of the key development goals and reports including establishing a problem statement, stakeholder map, theory of change, and strategic action plan. The McConnell Foundation Innoweave program supported an evaluation framework in 2018-2019 and a social finance working group in 2020-2021. The Ottawa Community Foundation provided a 3-year implementation grant which started in 2020 and additional funding was leveraged for this stage by the Ottawa Sustainability Fund and the Sustainable Capacity Foundation.

Engagement Organizing Community of Practice

Initiative: Engagement Organizing Community of Practice

Funding Type: Private and Public Philanthropy

Funder Collaborative: Sustainable Capacity Foundation, Gosling Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Ottawa

The Gosling Foundation

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COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

Organization Participants: Ecology Ottawa served as the facilitator in this process and the organizations who took part in the community of practice were Ottawa RiverKeeper, Watersheds Canada, Ottawa Biosphere Eco-City, Maison Tucker House, Faith & the Common Good, and Peace & Environment Resource Centre.



Engagement Organizing Community of Practice

Story of Development

The Gosling Foundation has extensive experience in funding Engagement Organizing in the sector. Multiple Ottawa organizations expressed interest in taking part in such an effort and this resulted in a collaborative approach being brought forward by the Sustainable Capacity Foundation. With an interest in building capacity and collaboration, the Ottawa Community Foundation also supported this initiative.



“The engagement organizing community of practice has provided an important forum for learning and information exchange among local environmental leaders. To meet the ever-present challenge of organizational effectiveness head-on, our group has been growing together by learning and experimenting with new techniques and approaches.”

Robb Barnes
Former Executive Director,
Ecology Ottawa



Funding Allocation

Funding was allocated to support Ecology Ottawa as the facilitator of the Community of Practice. Capacity funding was also given to each of the 6 participating organizations as a way to prioritize this work and to support the development of an engagement organizing database.

“Expanding and enhancing the capacity of nature organizations is a focus area for the Gosling Foundation. For several years, the Foundation has been working to bring the perspectives and practices of “Engagement Organizing” to the nature and land trust sector. This supports organizations seeking to enhance their effectiveness through people-powered initiatives.”

Gosling Foundation

The Gosling Foundation



BIPOC Fellowship

Initiative: BIPOC Fellowship

Funding Type: Private Philanthropy

Funder Collaborative: Sustainable Capacity Foundation, Five B Family Foundation, and Inrig Family Foundation



Organization Participants: Sustainable Eastern Ontario, Capacity Building Institute, Ottawa Biosphere Eco-City, Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve and Biosphere Eco-Cities Canada.



BIPOC Fellowship

Story of Development

The BIPOC Fellowship was launched in order to address the systemic reality of a lack of diversity within the sustainability sector. Particularly in leadership roles within organizations, there was a consistent lack of representation of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) leaders. The Capacity Building Institute had been working on training about diversity and support in the sector, but saw a need for direct capacity funding to support this work.



Jean Ked Neptune



Nasha Choudhury



Julie Servant

Funding Allocation

Funding was allocated by the foundation to support key BIPOC leaders at environmental groups as part of this initiative. The first set of funding supported three BIPOC leaders in local environmental organizations, Jean Ked Neptune, Nasha Choudhury and Julie Servant.



Emma Brown
Director of Impact
Five B Family Foundation

“Five B is honoured to support the advancement of BIPOC leaders, and we are grateful to the participating organizations for taking real action in this space. Everyone stands to benefit from a diversity of ideas and lived experiences - critical inputs as we look to building a more sustainable future!”



LaunchPAD

Initiative: LaunchPad

Funding Type: Private Philanthropy and Public funding

Funder Collaborative: Sustainable Capacity Foundation and Employment Ontario provincial funding. The Employment Ontario funds were distributed through local agencies, including the YMCA and Youth Services Bureau.

**EMPLOYMENT
ONTARIO**

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**Y
YMCA**

**YOUTH
SERVICES
BUREAU
JEUNESSE**
Youth Services Bureau
Charitable Foundation

Organization Participants: Over 15 organizations participated in the pilot LaunchPad initiative in Ottawa with 39 youth.

Maison
Tucker
House

ECO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SUSTAINABLE PHILANTHROPY

Eco Change
Canada

Sustainable
EasternOntario.ca

The Apartment
Sustainability Office

LaunchPAD

Story of Development

The Ottawa sustainability sector was already actively involved in internship employment for youth, but saw a need for a pre-employment training program to support youth before they started their roles.

Employment Ontario developed the LaunchPad initiative to support youth in launching their careers in various sectors. The Ottawa pilot was developed to support youth placements in sustainability. The youth placement ran between May 25th, 2021 and all placements were completed by July 30th, 2021. During this time, youth participated in daily live sessions and online training content to build their knowledge and skills. At the end of the placements, youth were then hired on by a local organization for a 6-12 month paid internships position.



2021 Intern Placement photos

Funding Allocation

Employment Ontario provided a portion of wages for youth in the pre-employment placement program that helped develop skills for a future career opportunity in the sector. The Sustainable Capacity Foundation provided funding to support the placement program and to match some of the wage grants.



Internship Funding

Initiative: Internship Support

Funding Type: Public funding and Private Philanthropy

Funder Collaborative: Sustainable Capacity Foundation and public funding through federal wage subsidy programs as part of the Youth Employment Strategy. Public funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada, Parks Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada is distributed through partner organizations such as Colleges and Institutes Canada, Eco Canada, and Biotalent Nature Canada.



Organization Participants: Over 37 organizations participated in this opportunity since 2017 to support 97 internships in the sustainability sector. A social enterprise, Eco-Internships, was able to support many of the smaller organizations in developing these roles and funding applications.



Internship Funding

Story of Development

Environmental organizations have often sought funding to support internship roles for staffing needs across the sector. Small-shop nonprofit groups often struggle to complete all the required paperwork for this type of role, particularly when the intern is one of the only staff members at the organization. Sustainable Eastern Ontario began supported local ENGOS in 2017 to obtain funding support for internship roles. This continued to expand each year and by 2021, Eco-Internships was formally incorporated, and had supported over 60 interns.



Aminah



Larissa



Jacob



Christal



Simran



Manon

Funding Allocation

Federal government funding is available for internship positions as part of the Youth Employment Strategy. This is delivered through several federal government departments and administered collaboratively by intermediaries. Funding for the intern roles usually covers 50-80% of employee wages; in some cases, organizations needed additional funding from a non-federal source to help cover the costs for these positions. The Sustainable Capacity Foundation was able to fund the formation of a supportive organization, Eco-Internships, to help with the administrative work involved in hiring interns. Funding has also been provided to match some of the federal wage subsidy. This collaborative opportunity resulted in federal contributions in addition to private philanthropic funding toward internship positions.

“We launch careers, help build resilient industries and strengthen communities.”

Career Launcher, CiCan





Capacity Training

Initiative: Capacity Training

Funding Type: Private Philanthropy, Public Philanthropy, and Public funding

Funder Collaborative: Sustainable Capacity Foundation provided support for capacity funding along with Employment Ontario through the Canada Ontario Job Grant (COJG). Additionally, support for the coordination and development of this work was provided by the Ottawa Community Foundation, the Inrig Family Foundation, and the social enterprise platform.



Organization Participants: The Capacity Building Institute and Sustainable Eastern Ontario launched professional development training programs to support capacity-building for the environmental nonprofit sector. Over 143 participants from 39 organizations have taken part in the training programs to date.



Capacity Training

Story of Development

In order to address the chronic capacity challenges within the local environmental sector, Sustainable Eastern Ontario and the Capacity Building Institute established a training program in 2019. The Capacity Building Certificate Program brought local leaders together for in-person training events to focus on key capacity challenges over a 10-month period. The program was refined in 2020 and adapted to a virtual environment in response to Covid-19. The updated 6-month program became available to organizations across Ontario and by 2021 was expanded nationally. Training was also provided to youth as part of an Intern Training Program and a series on training Executive Directors and Board members was also launched.



“The Capacity Building Certificate Program provides practical tools, inspiring speakers, and one-on-one coaching to expand your organization’s capacity. Staff and Boards will benefit from this program -- as will your community as your capacity to provide your organization’s services balloons.”

Mara Shaw,
Executive Director,
National Farmers Union



Funding Allocation

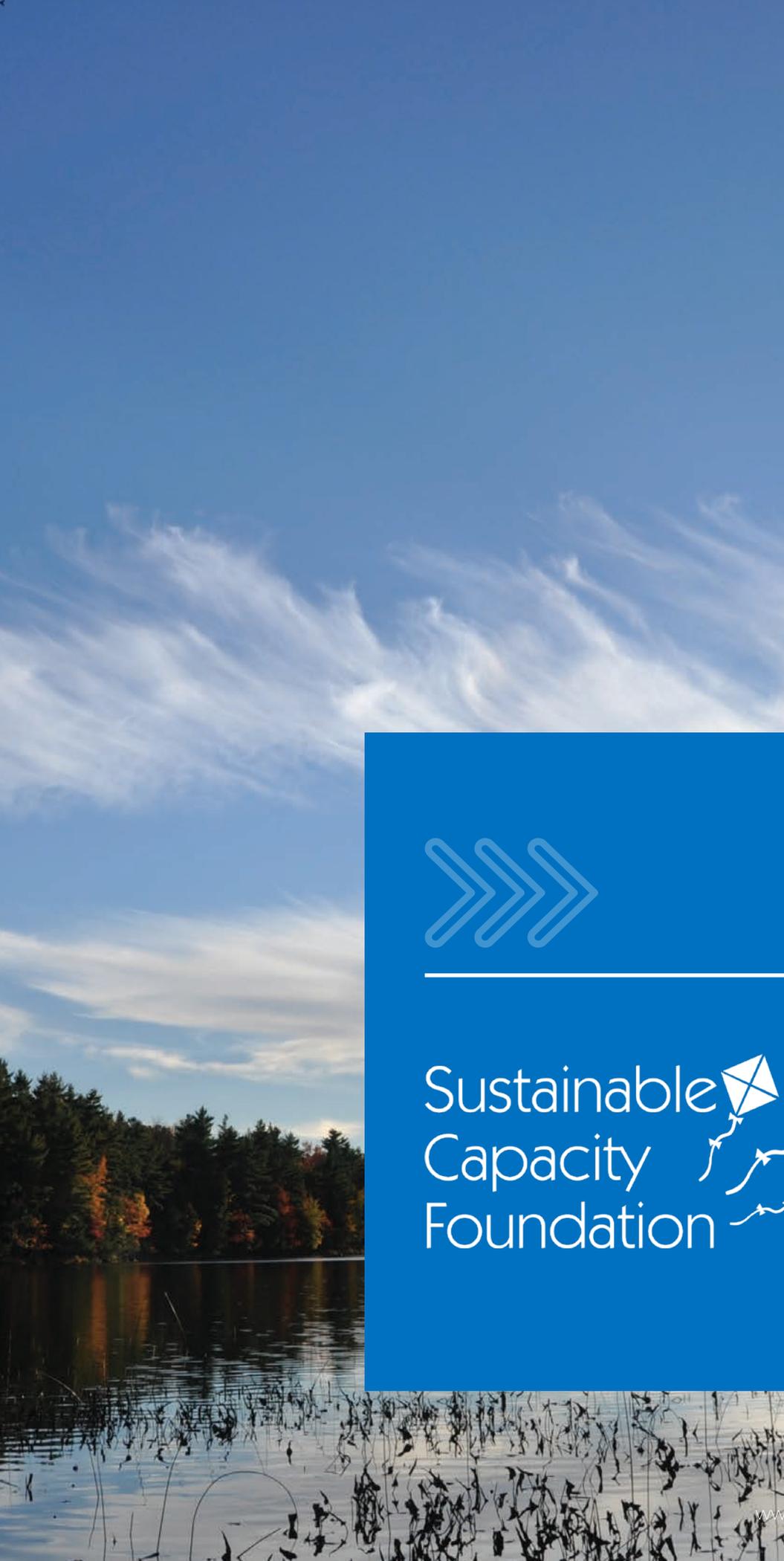
Funding from the Canada Ontario Job Grant (COJG) supported 5/6th of training costs for organizations who were taking part in the training program. This funding came from Employment Ontario and was delivered by the Youth Services Bureau and YMCA. In addition to this funding, organizations needed support for wages, materials, and other costs. The Sustainable Capacity Foundation began supporting this program in 2020.



Conclusions

Collaborative grantmaking enables funders to execute more robust investments in important community work. The Sustainable Capacity Foundation is a collaborative grantmaker that works to leverage philanthropic partnerships in order to build the capacity of the sustainability sector. By working together with public and private philanthropic partners, the impact of each investment can be amplified.

We hope to inspire further collaboration within the philanthropic community, particularly for capacity funding which is so greatly needed by nonprofit organizations.



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