GLOCAL

FOUNDATION OF CANADA

2021

ANNUAL REPORT

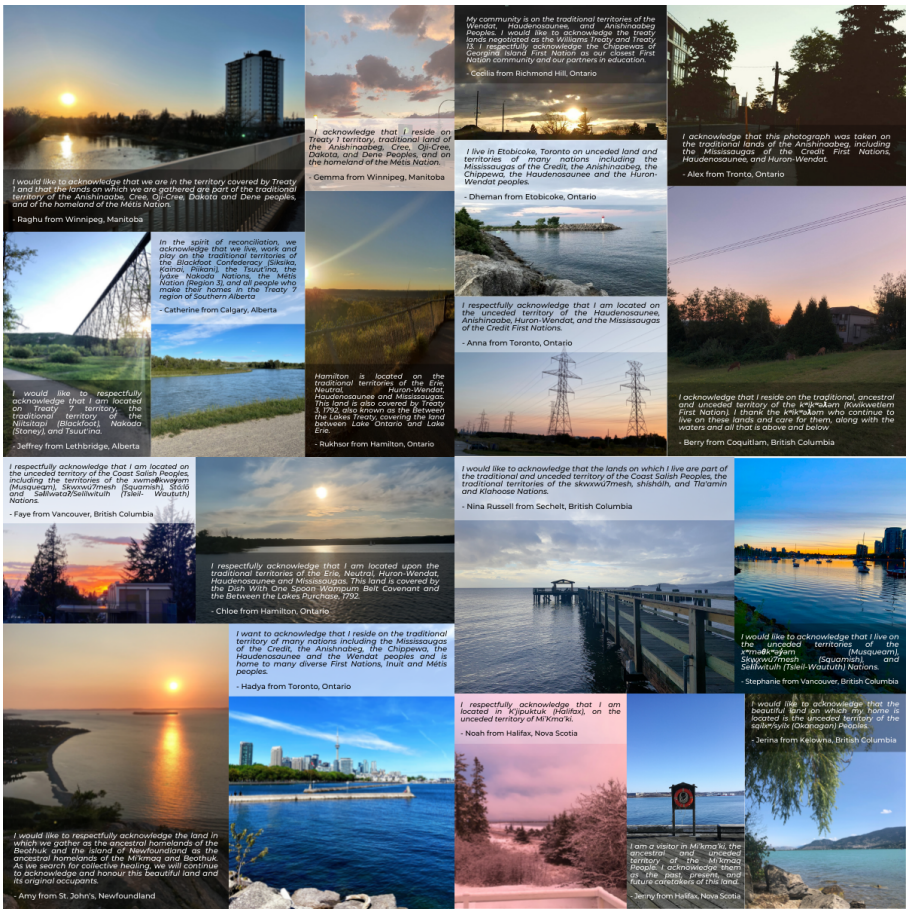
About Us

GLOCAL is **a non-partisan, not-for-profit** civil society organization dedicated to fostering global understanding through domestic engagement and local awareness. We focus on grassroots initiatives that encourage and create avenues for civic participation in Canada's democratic institutions.

Our flagship project is an innovative digital platform for civic engagement called YouCount.ca, which officially launched on July 1, 2021.

Our Team

As of December 2021, our team consists of 60+ **staff and volunteers** who have diverse academic and professional backgrounds, and who represent a wide variety of ethnic groups and languages. Together, our team members speak more than 20 languages, and span four Canadian time zones. We welcome new members and look forward to growing our numbers across the country and beyond!



Products & Services

YouCount.ca

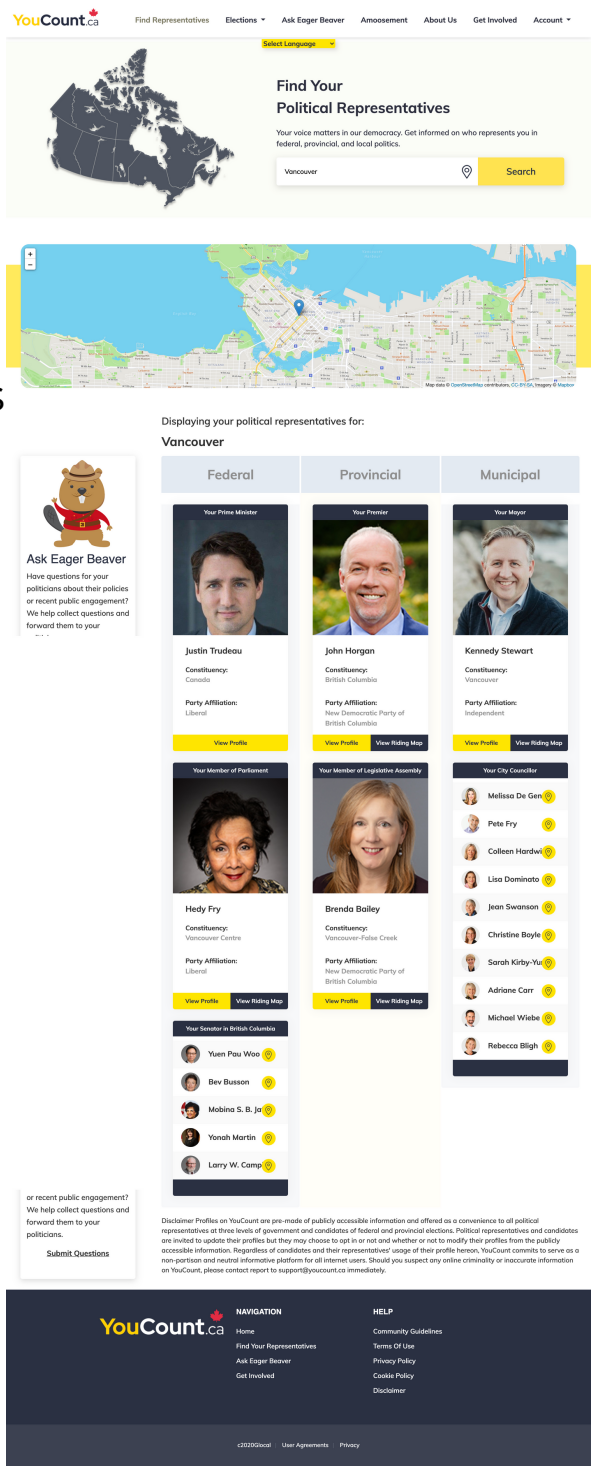
A year after its initial soft launch, we celebrated the first birthday of our online civic engagement platform—**YouCount.ca**—with an official secondary launch on July 1, 2021 (Canada Day).

Available in 109 languages, YouCount.ca is a one-stop digital platform for Canadians to navigate the country's political institutions with ease and engage directly with their representatives at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels.

Key features on YouCount.ca include...

Find My Representatives

By entering their postcode or the name of a nearby landmark, users can access **profiles with essential information of their political representatives at three levels of Canadian government.** In 2021, this feature on YouCount.ca was expanded to include an **interactive boundary map,** making it even easier for users to locate and interact with their representatives.



In 2022, we look forward to engaging more political representatives to directly update their information on YouCount.ca and to use the platform as an engagement tool with their constituents and other interested Canadians.

Ask Eager Beaver

Ask Eager Beaver is a user-friendly feature on YouCount.ca that allows users to access information provided by primary sources on commonly-asked questions about Canadian politics, our democratic institutions, and other topics of Canadian interest. This year, Ask Eager Beaver was piloted to allow users to vote on questions of their interest—including the question, **'what is a constitutional monarchy in the Canadian context', which was submitted in an introductory letter to the Queen of England, hand-delivered to Buckingham Palace by one of our members in London**!

Alongside this question, the last quarter of our 2021 has seen outreach to other primary sources with questions related to their field, which we look forward to curating on a new-and-improved version of Ask Eager Beaver in 2022. Through this feature, **we seek to create an interactive platform for the public to engage directly with politicians, public officials, and academics.**

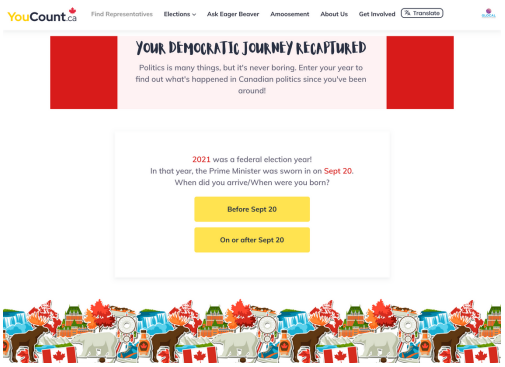
Election Modules

In 2021, we had the opportunity to develop these modules further in our support of **Nova Scotia's 41st general election** and **Canada's 44th federal election.**

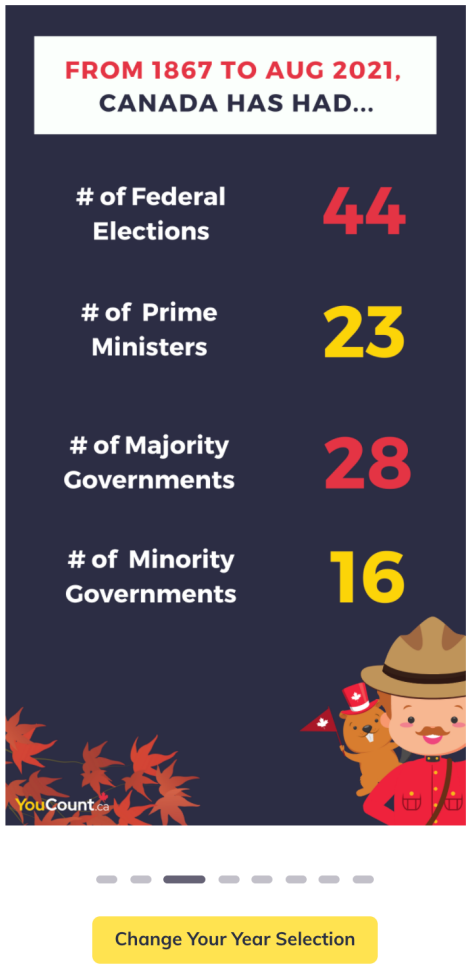
By gathering publicly-available information on election candidates from campaign websites, social media platforms, and direct outreach, our comparison tool allowed users to compare candidates based on their biography, policy priorities, messages to constituents, and reasons for running in the election – basic information that is not easily accessible for many voters.

Amoosement

In September, we launched the 'Amoosement' page on YouCount.ca, a subsection of our digital platform reserved for **gamification and interactive experiences that make civic engagement fun.**



This page was piloted by an **immersive and personalized review of Canada's democracy, titled 'Your Democratic Journey Recaptured'.** Users simply need to enter their birth year (if born in Canada) or the year they arrived in Canada (if born outside of Canada) to access a visual graphic walkthrough of the political landscape since the date they entered, compared to Canada's confederation in 1867! Comparative data-points of this feature include: the user's first prime minister versus the first prime minister in 1867; the longest and shortest-serving prime ministers relative to the user's experience, alongside the longest and shortest-serving prime ministers in Canadian history; and the number of majority and minority governments experienced by the user, compared to the country's total number of majority and minority governments.



In 2022, we look forward to developing our 'Amoosement' section with games to promote civic awareness and knowledge of Canadian politics, including trivia quizzes, bingo games, and digital scavenger hunts!

Knowledge Mobilization

Social Media

In 2021, we largely expanded our social media presence as part of our goal of promoting civic awareness and digital citizenship. With a cross-platform approach to maximize user-engagement, we created content that spanned Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

Expanding on our digital initiatives in 2020, our Educational Posts have continued to offer simple yet substantive 150-word explanations of Canadian politics and our democratic institutions, while our **'Did You Know?'** series consists of fun facts and statistics from primary and/or peer-reviewed sources to pique users' interest in a greater civic effort.

With an approach centered around research, data, and knowledge mobilization, we created content related to Canadian politics as they occurred, including facts and statistics related to Canada's 44th federal election. For example, **among all 2,010 candidates in this year's federal election, the most common first name was 'John'**, and the **electoral district with the most candidates was Saint Boniface—Saint Vital in Manitoba!**

We also debuted two new social media initiatives in 2021. Our Research and Communications teams worked closely together to present quick-and-easy updates in legislation at the provincial and federal levels for users to learn about and stay up-to-date on governmental processes in real time. **'Legislative Updates'** offer insight into the process of creating laws, the stages and sponsors of certain bills, and what those updates may mean for different groups across Canada.

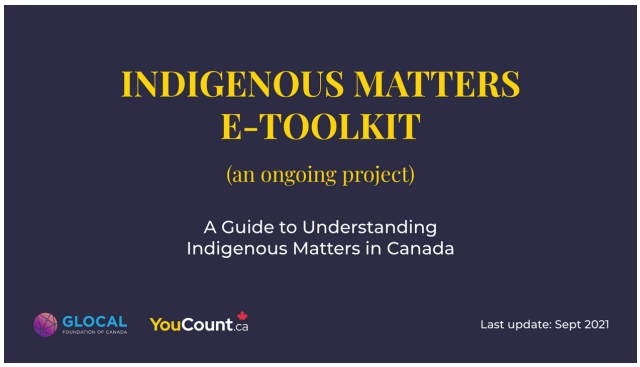
In 2021, we aimed to increase our engagement with younger audiences using **Tik Tok** and other platforms. We launched a new series titled **'Where Am I? / Où Suis-Je?',** where members of our team would film a landmark or their surrounding landscape in Canada for users to guess the location. Encouraging users to pick up on context clues and to conduct their own research to identify the location featured in the video, this geolocation game allows users to learn more about parts of Canada they may be unfamiliar with, and to connect with other Canadians across the country!

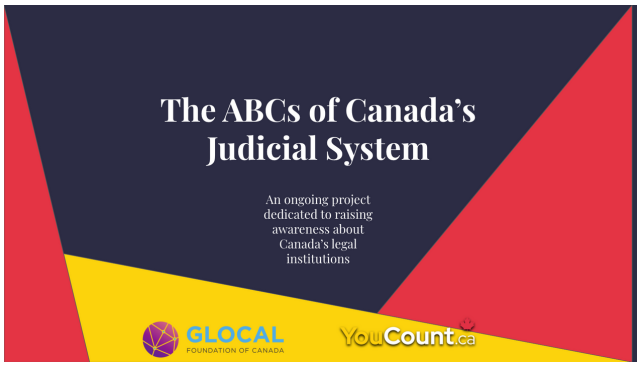
Follow us on social media!

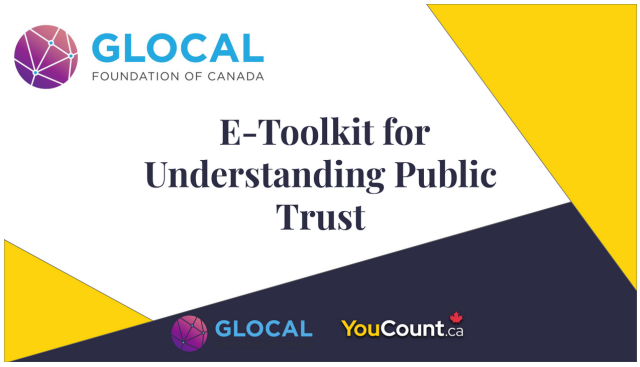
Instagram — @youcountcanada
Tik Tok — @youcount.ca
Twitter — @YouCountCanada, @GLOCAL_Canada
Facebook — @YouCountCA, @GLOCALFoundationCA
LinkedIn—https://ca.linkedin.com/company/glocal-foundation-of-canada

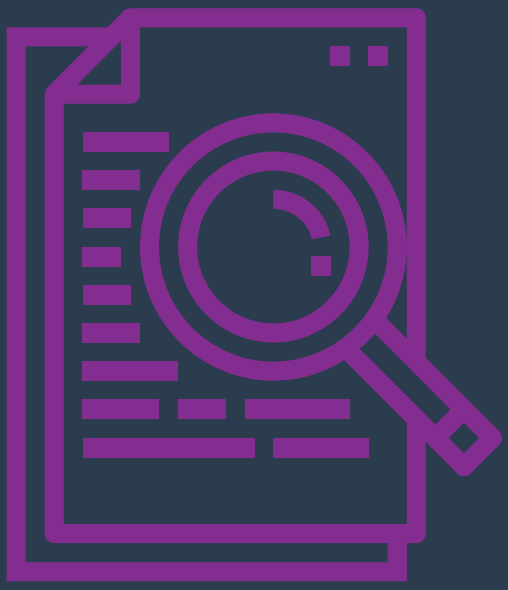
E-toolkits

Our e-toolkits strive to be **quality, curated non-partisan resources for Canadian citizens and residents alike to navigate our political institutions and learn about topics of public interest**. In 2021, we piloted the launch of our e-toolkits with the first publications of five ongoing research initiatives: a how-to on voting abroad for overseas Canadians, an introduction to civic participation for youth, a glance at Canada's judicial system, insights into developing public trust as a not-for-profit/non-governmental organization, and a guide to understanding Indigenous matters in Canada.









Research & Curation

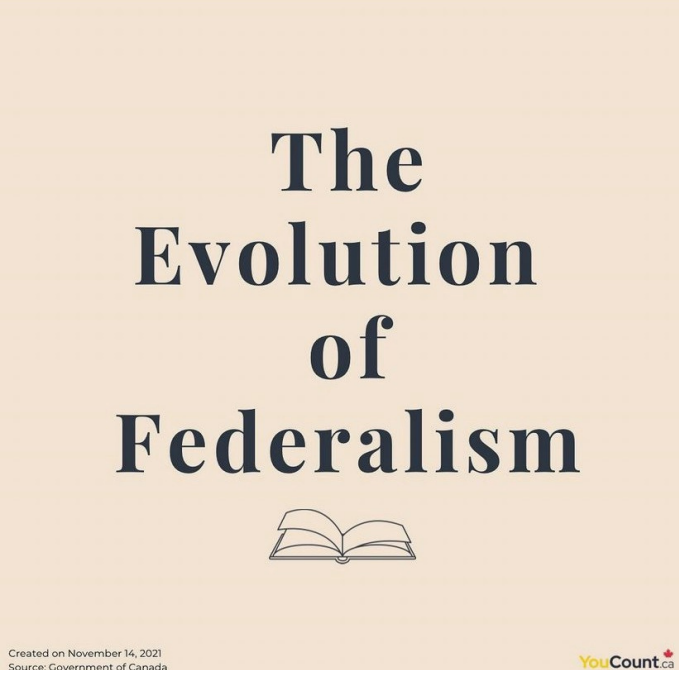
We pursued a variety of research activities this year, aimed generally at ***"stocking the library."***

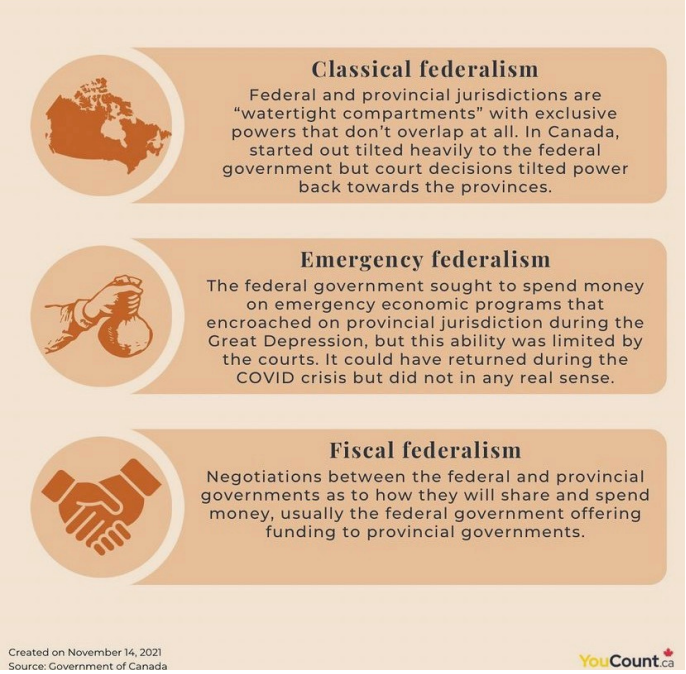
Trivia

Both for specific occasions (like holidays or outreach events) and in order to keep a general vault of fun facts and 'Did You Know?' content, we collected trivia appropriate to various topics of Canadian politics, government and history. These ranged from **quirky coincidences to interesting statistical data points.** Many researchers have contributed to this and the vault of fact-checked trivia continues to grow. A special bespoke trivia quiz package was produced for a collaboration with civil society organization, Apathy is Boring.

Educational Posts

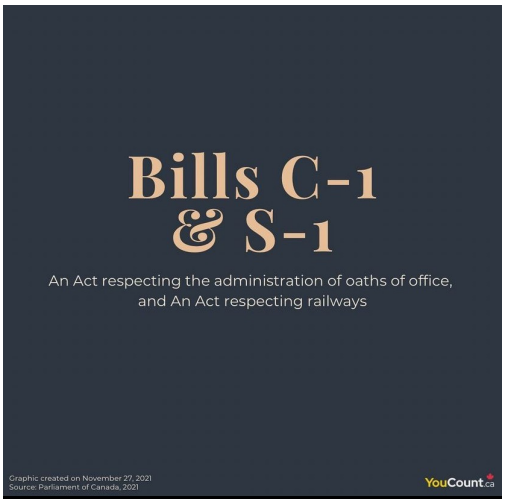
We developed a social media posting schedule with roughly half a year's worth of weekly post topics based on a **typical Canadian Politics syllabus**. Multiple researchers contributed to sourcing and explaining each topic in bite-size form so that the material could be posted on Instagram and other venues where concision is at a premium. The research continues, but when all topics have been researched, we will have a **repeatable twice-a-year crash course in Canadian governing institutions** to post weekly.

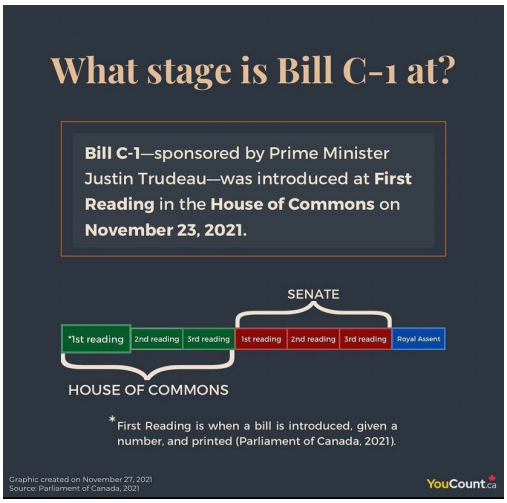


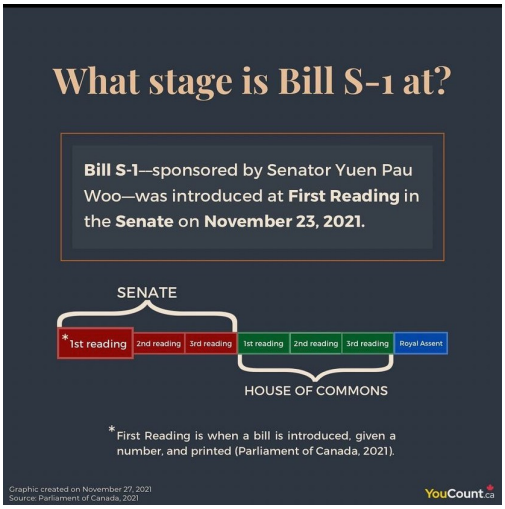


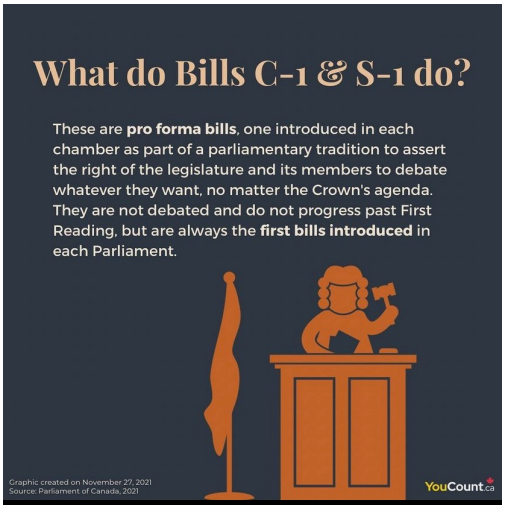
Legislative Updates

We established a schedule for weekly posts about what Canadian legislatures have been up to. Beginning by documenting **major legislative activity in the House of Commons and the Senate** once a week, with a **deeper dive on a single piece of legislation**, we have recently expanded to cover **subnational legislature**s as well. Occasionally, these updates are paired with brief educational content about a procedure or event that has happened in a legislature recently, such as a motion of unanimous consent in the House of Commons, or the meaning of pro forma bills.









Ask Eager Beaver

A flagship feature of YouCount.ca, Ask Eager Beaver features the ability to submit questions about Canadian government and politics to a "Frequently Asked Questions" collection, with the most popular and salient questions to be sent out to primary sources for canonical answers. So far, we have received high-quality answers from **civil servants** and **academics** alike, and have supplemented these with in-house research where an appropriate primary source was someone we had on hand (e.g. a political scientist specializing in the appropriate topic). Recently, we have expanded from questions about democratic institutions such as elections and Parliament to **systems navigation questions about government departments our users may need to interact with, like immigration for students and newcomers in general, elections agencies for overseas Canadians, and various other departments responsible for everything from healthcare to ID.** Despite the topic expansion, the goal of Ask Eager Beaver remains the same: **demystify institutions for curious audiences who may want to know but are unsure of how or whom to ask.**

Quick Bites

These are a **series of explainers**, either short text pieces or scripts to be read for audio(visual) presentations. Like Ask Eager Beaver questions, they take a concept or topic in Canadian politics and offer a brief explanation. These also include quick explainers of **ideas from political science**, like partisanship or strategic voting, and make them **accessible to the average reader** (or listener or viewer).

External and Internal Events

Some of our outreach events with parliamentarians or other civil society organisations have involved **educational presentations on an aspect of Canadian politics or the history of an institution.** Internally, several meetings have also involved **educational presentations on aspects of government** (e.g. electoral systems) or on **provinces or regions and their specific political cultures.** All of these have been thoroughly researched and the material preserved for future use if needed again.

E-Toolkits

Related to external and internal educational materials, we have compiled extensive **e-toolkits** on topics like **anti-discrimination and bigotry**. In some cases, these are documents too large for presentation which nonetheless can stock the library and have smaller presentations or other documents spun out of them. Some are meant to be read alone, others are meant to be presented.

Monthly Commemorations

Some toolkits, as well as trivia and other educational material, were put together specifically relating to certain holidays or time periods, such as **Pride Month** or **Indigenous Heritage Month.** These efforts spanned the different kinds of research we do.

Independent Research

Several researchers were given an opportunity to collaborate in designing a research project on an aspect of Canadian politics, for example:

- **Official communications to the public and multiple literacies;**
- **Media framing and agenda-setting;**
- **The measurement and mismeasurement of youth political participation;**
- **Democratic deficit, decline and backsliding;**
- **Gaming and political choice;**
- **Sources of disinformation in the wellness, ecofascist and Web 3.0 cultures.**

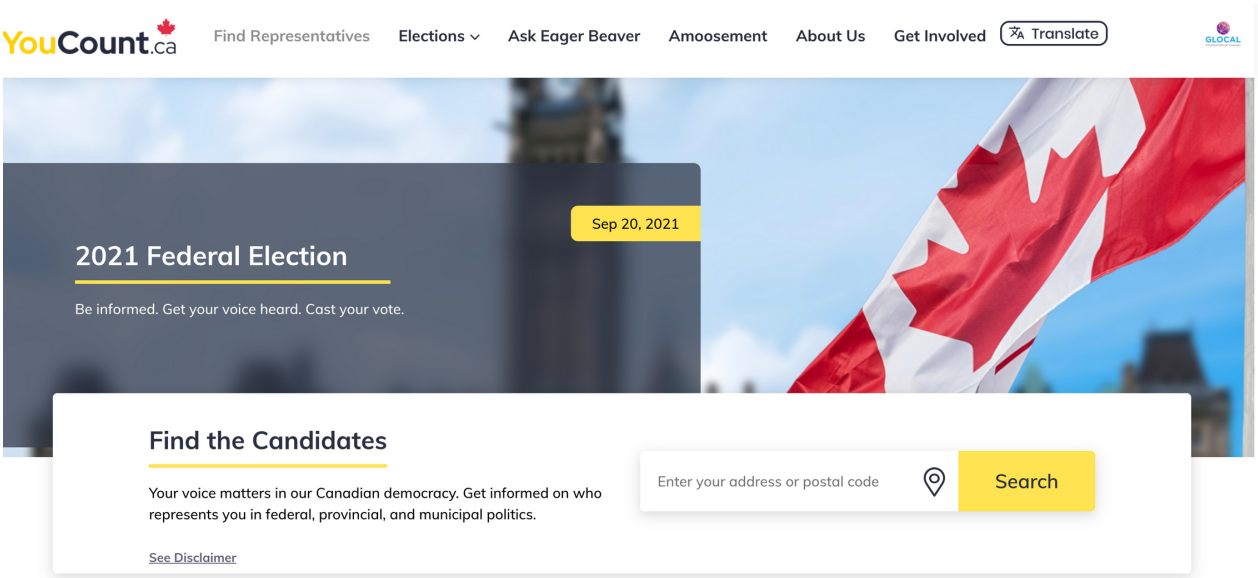
These research projects are also used to stock the library and generate future toolkits and other content.

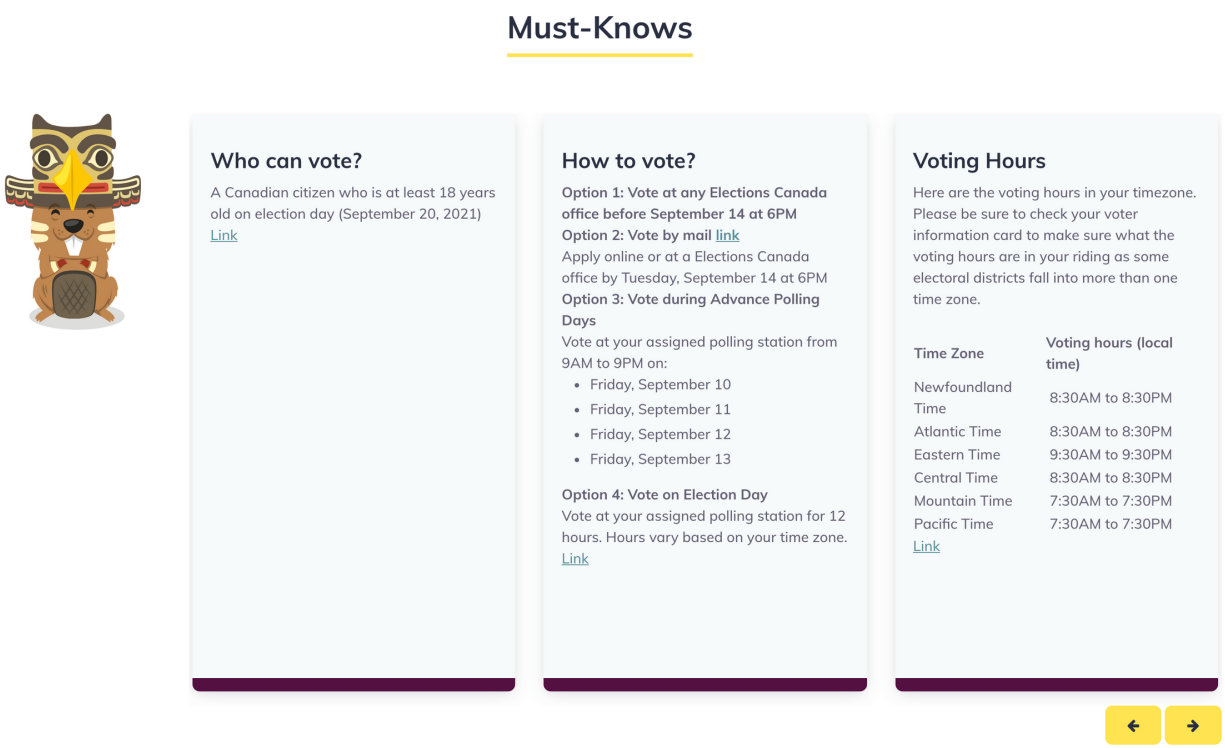
C-Dem Report

The Consortium on Electoral Democracy's 2019 election study dataset and other materials are made available to us through our membership in the Consortium. One of our researchers, Jenny Nilsson, authored a **summary report on the highlights of their latest Democracy Checkup data.**

Election Modules

We resumed our practice of **gathering information on provincial and federal elections to make available to users**, including candidate lists and contact information, how to vote, and other useful information.





Data Collation

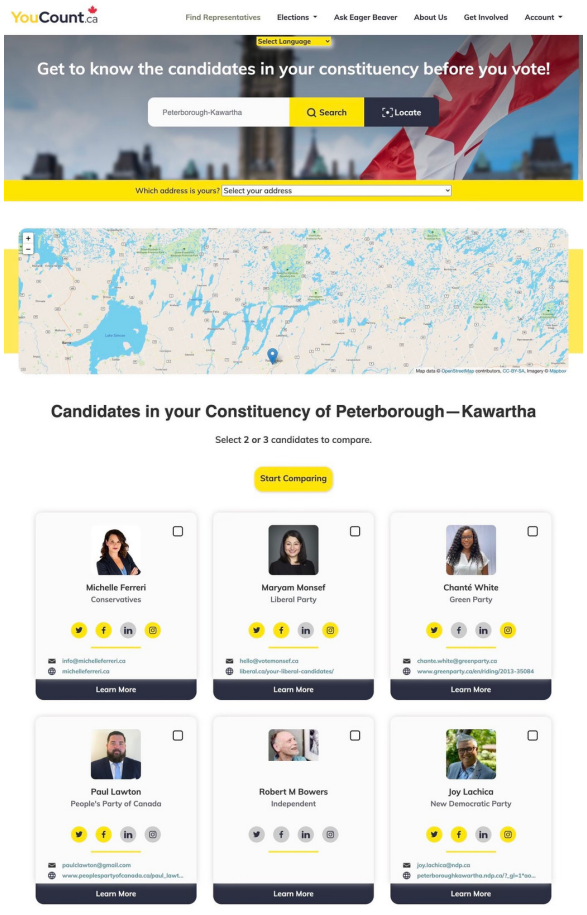
Politician Profiles on YouCount.ca

As advocates for civic engagement and increased political participation for all Canadians, we believe in the accuracy and comprehensiveness of data in providing key insights on political processes and local representatives to empower informed decision-making. Our databases hold up-to-date information on political representatives on all three levels of government. In 2021, our politician profile database contained verified information on all 338 federal Members of Parliament; 97 senators; a total of 771 Members of Legislative Assembly from 10 provinces and 3 territories; and updated profiles of approximately 3,862 city councillors and mayors from municipalities all across Canada.

This information was collected from **official government websites** and through **partnerships with Provincial Ministries** to reallocate their information resources via our digital platform. Our prime objective of open data access is essentially aimed at facilitating transparency, openness and access to the most relevant, up-to-date, and comprehensive information on politicians that represent the needs and ideologies of all Canadian communities, as well as to enable individuals to provide input to their government by facilitating direct connections and creating networks of shared accountability.

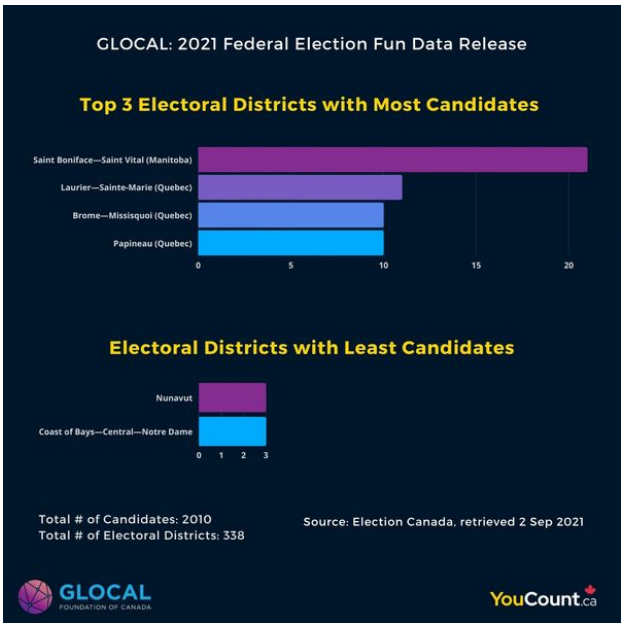
Elections

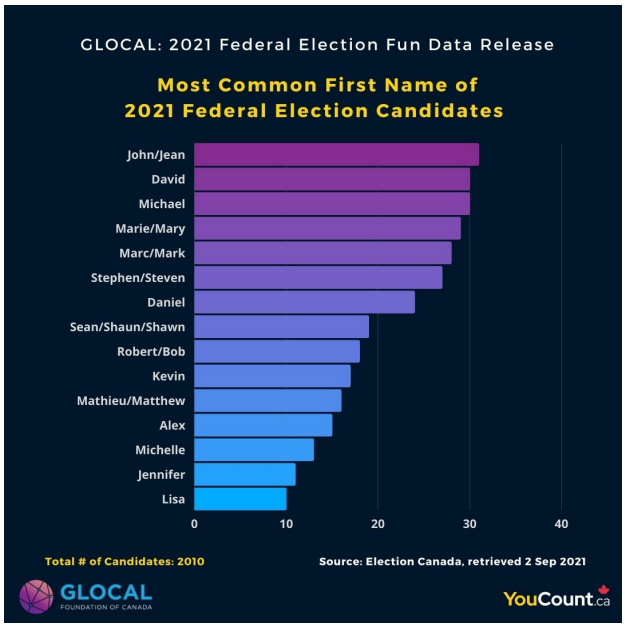
Our election modules for **Nova Scotia's 41st general election** and **Canada's 44th federal election** on YouCount.ca housed the information of election candidates for easy voter reference. Candidate information for both modules was sourced from campaign websites and subsequent responses from direct email outreach, and later mobilized in a streamlined comparison tool that allowed users to **compare up to three candidates' biographies, policy priorities, messages to constituents, and reasons for running in the election.** Canada's 44th federal election yielded **2010 candidates** (from 22 participating political parties and 91 independent candidates), 88 of which logged into YouCount.ca themselves to update their profile!

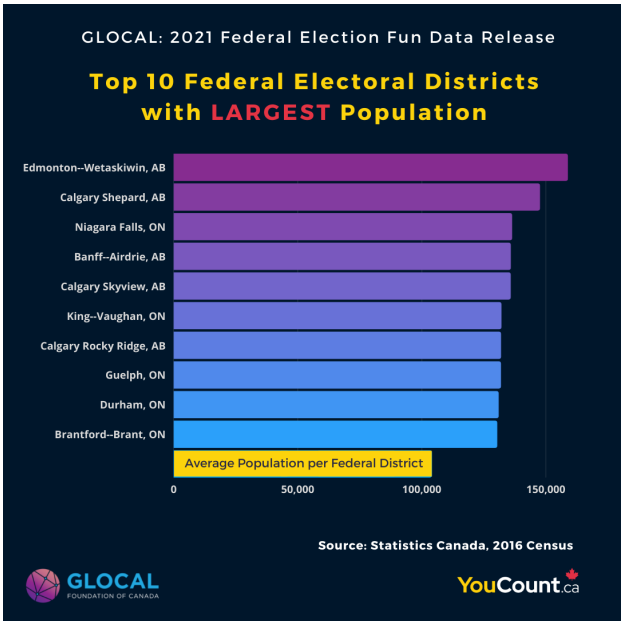


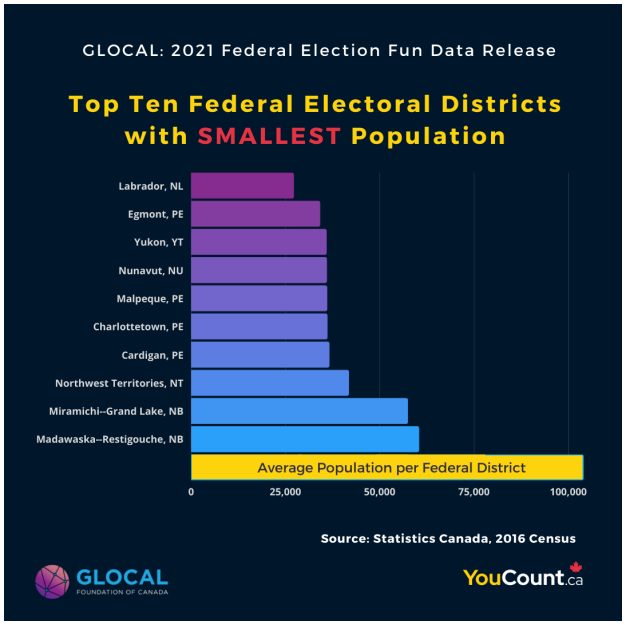
Fun Data

In our collation and curation of election candidate data, we extracted some trivia-worthy data-points that Canadians may not know!









Top left: The most common first name among all 2,010 candidates in Canada's 44th federal election was John/Jean; Top right: The electoral district with the most candidates was Saint Boniface—Saint Vital (MB), whereas the electoral district with the least candidates was Nunavut; Bottom left: the electoral district with the smallest population, and thus, least constituents is Labrador, NL; Bottom right: the electoral district with the largest population, and thus, most constituents is Edmonton—Wetaskiwin (AB).

Events & Programs

Workshops

Canadian Politics 101

In 2020, we began conducting **workshops on Canadian politics for new immigrants**, with a specific focus on institutions, services available to them, and their representatives. As a precursor to our prospective collaborations with settlement agencies and other civil society organizations, we delivered our first workshop of 2021 to the **Saskatoon Open Door Society** via Zoom. For the attendees who recently immigrated to Saskatoon, this workshop was a first foray in understanding and navigating the Canadian political system.

GLOCAL Professional Development Program for Creative Civic Engagement

In October 2021, we launched a new **Professional Development Program for Creative Civic Engagement**, which consists of recurring workshop sessions centered around career development, as well as work experience and its application to civic engagement. These workshops foster open-panel discussions that encourage both speakers and participants to share their professional experiences. Built into our bi-weekly general meetings on Sundays, attendees' successful participation in 8 of these sessions will earn them a certificate in recognition of their enrolment and achievement in the program.

Roundtable Discussions

Invite Your MP

In early 2021, we reached out to all 338 MPs with an invitation to participate in a series of **virtual, non-partisan roundtable discussions on civic engagement.** From February to April, we were joined (in order) by **Daniel Blaikie** (Elmwood—Transcona, MB), **Paul Manly** (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, BC), **Heather McPherson** (Edmonton Strathcona, AB), **Andy Fillmore** (Halifax, NS), **Tom Kmiec** (Calgary Shepard, AB), **Randeep Sarai** (Surrey Centre, BC), **Alexandre Boulerice** (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, QC), **Sébastien Lemire** (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, QC), and **Greg Fergus** (Hull—Aylmer, QC).

Roundtable with Senators

This year, we hosted two virtual, non-partisan roundtable discussions with various senators to discuss a variety of topics, including **civic engagement, the daily responsibilities and routines of a senator, and respective bills they have worked on.** On February 20, 2021, we were joined by **Senator Yuen Pau Woo** (BC), **Senator Paula Simons** (AB), **Senator Patricia Bovey** (MB), and **Senator Salma Ataullahjan** (ON). On May 16, 2021, we were joined by **Senator Margaret Dawn Anderson** (NT) and **Senator Kim Pate** (ON).

GLOCAL Speaker Series

Summer Event:
Civic Engagement in the International Context

On August 20, we hosted a virtual event featuring **Mr. Maher Nasser** (Director of Global Communications, United Nations) as a guest speaker. Before taking audience questions, Mr. Nasser discussed the **role of the UN's communications team in promoting international civic engagement and how Canadians can get involved with efforts such as action against climate change and advocacy for Indigenous rights.**

Maher Nasser has over 32 years of work experience in the United Nations System. Mr. Nasser is currently the Director of DGC's Outreach Division and the Commissioner-General of the United Nations. In addition to New York, he has worked in Vienna, Cairo, Amman, Jerusalem, and Gaza where he held positions with the UN Department of Global Communications, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), and the UN Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC). Mr. Nasser was appointed three times as Acting Under-Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Global Communications. He plays a key role in promoting the role of the UN in the world.

Novelty Events

YouCount.ca Turns 1 — Panel Celebration

On July 1, 2021, we celebrated the **first birthday and official launch** of our digital civic engagement platform, **YouCount.ca**, with a virtual panel event.

Following a pre-panel trivia game on Canadian politics and preambular words to commemorate the official launch of YouCount.ca, our attendees were sorted into breakout rooms to engage in discussions related to their **experiences in civic engagement**. These discussions were prompted by questions related to **formative work or volunteer experiences, interests and passions, digital tools and initiatives, and Canadian diversity,** and served as reminders to our team of our **collective mission to increase civic participation.**

Virtual Open House on September 20

On September 20, we hosted a virtual 'Open House' event to facilitate a Q&A session on our ongoing grassroots initiatives that supported voters in Canada's 44th federal election. In between several rounds of discussion on our activities—including a demonstration of our newly-live 'Your Democratic Journey Recaptured' feature on YouCount.ca—our attendees enjoyed some fun games of election-themed trivia and bingo.

Operations

Organizational Structure

Executive Director

Operations
- Operations Manager
- Organizational Development Manager
- Project Management Officer
- Compliance Officer
- Finance Officer
- Grants and Funding Officer

Public Engagement Team
- Immigrants, Refugees, and Temporary Residents Engagement Officer
- Overseas Canadians Engagement Officer
- Indigenous Community Engagement Officer
- Youth Engagement Officer
- Legislators Engagement Officer
- Partnerships Manager

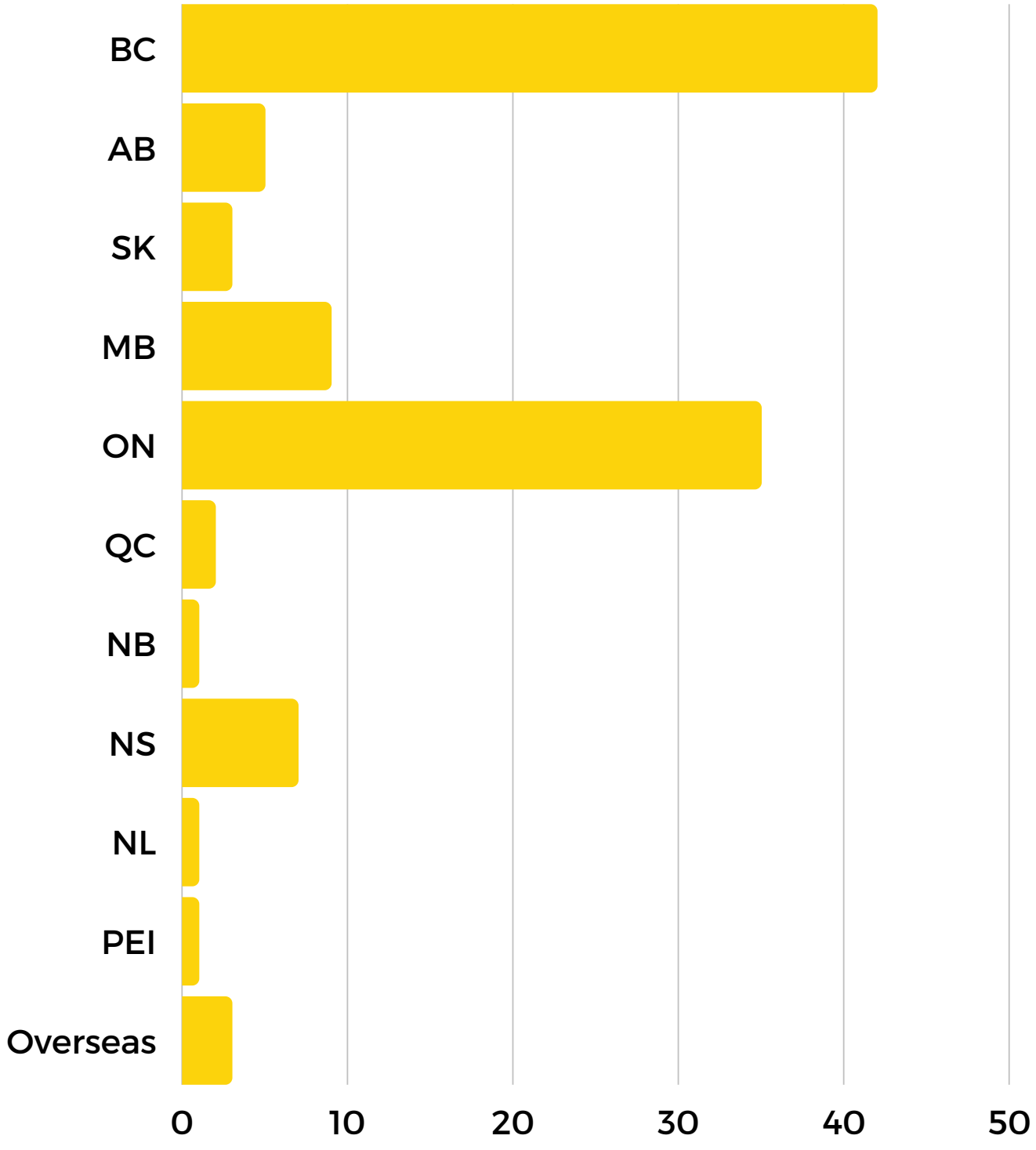
Research Team
- Research Director
- Research Fellow
- Research Assistants

Data Team
- Data Manager
- Data Analyst
- Data Assistant

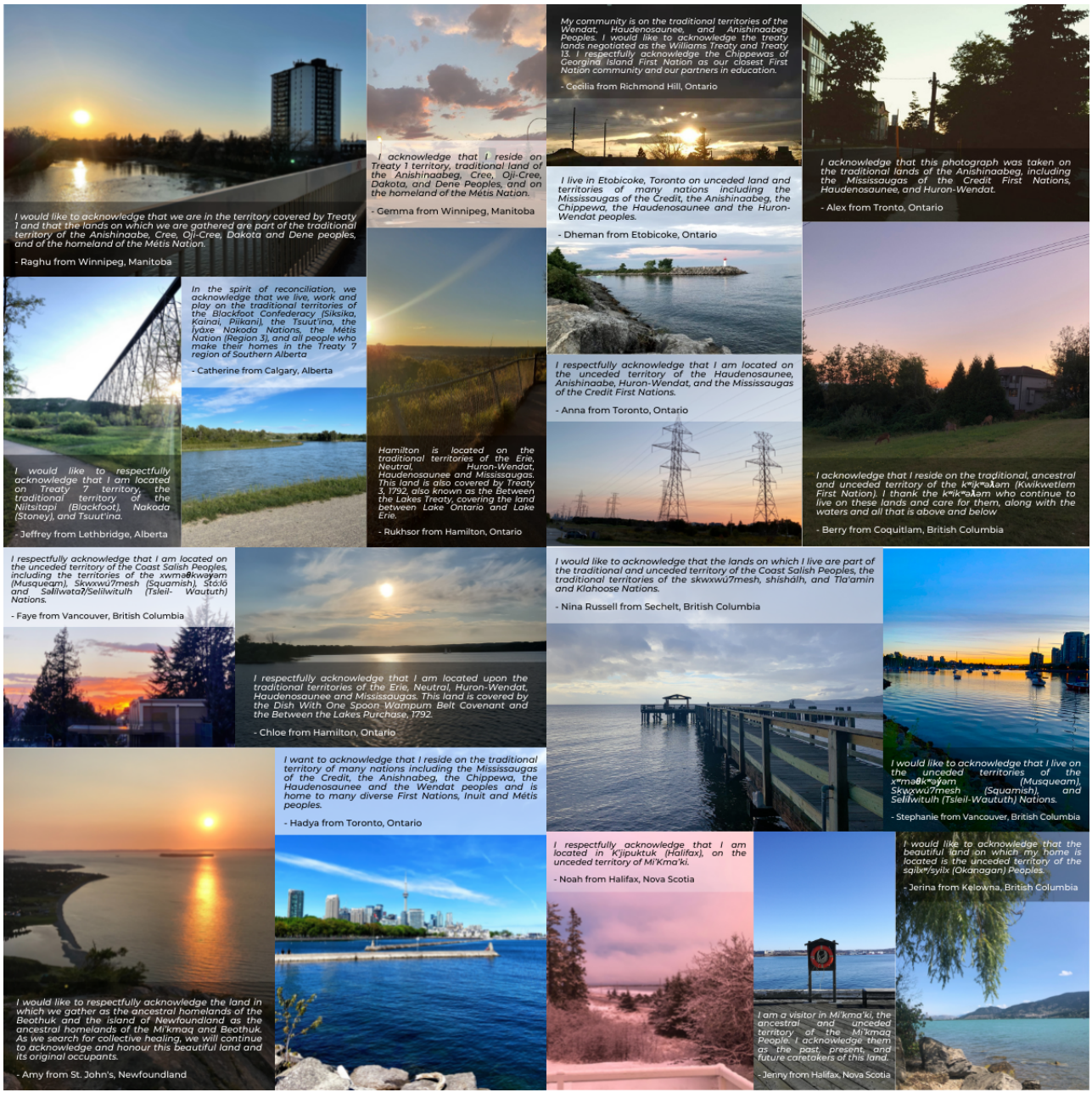
Communications Team
- Communications Coordinator
- Communications Assistants

IT & Design Team
- Backend Developers
- Frontend Developer
- UI/UX Designer
- Graphic Designer
- IT Assistants

Geographical Breakdown of the GLOCAL Team (Cumulative as of December 2021)



Our Team on the Traditional Unceded Territory of Canada's Indigenous Peoples



Remote Work

As a not-for-profit organization comprised of Canadians across the country, we strive to effectively utilize digital tools to maximize our productivity and collaboration in accordance with our remote working conditions. This has included —

- Bi-weekly general meetings among all team members to share work updates and announcements, to engage in team-building activities, and to participate in workshops (including sessions centered around professional development, digital literacy and tutorials in our online collaborative tools, and understanding politics in different provinces/territories across Canada)

- Weekly meetings among our Management Team members to share work updates, discuss strategic work plans, and arrange collaborative projects.

- Synchronous meetings and asynchronous communications between respective members for collaboration.

- GLOCAL Speaker Series: presentations by experts in relevant fields of interest to our team.

Our online collaboration tools have included:

- ClickUp—task assignment and review
- Slack —communication and collaboration
- Zoom —synchronous video conferencing
- Canva—infographic creation
- Google—Shared Drives, Folders, Documents, Forms, and Sheets

Designated 'Office Hours' simulate structures of onsite work, allowing members to collaborate in real time despite being from across six time-zones.

Grants Applications

MITACS

MITACS Accelerate is Canada's premiere research internship program. It connects companies with over 50 research-based universities through graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, who apply their specialized expertise to business challenges. Interns transfer their skills from theory to real-world application, while the companies gain a competitive advantage by accessing high-quality research expertise. Open to all disciplines and industry sectors, projects can span a wide range of areas, including manufacturing, technical innovation, business processes, IT, social sciences, design, and more.

Result: Successful, in progress (to be executed in 2022)

Canada

Canada Summer Jobs

CSJ is a program under Youth Employment and Skills Strategy, which aims to provide flexible and holistic services to help all young Canadians develop the skills and gain paid work experience to successfully transition into the labour market. The CSJ program objectives align with the redesigned Youth Employment and Skills Strategy and are as follows: **provide quality work experiences for youth, respond to national and local priorities to improve access to the labour market for youth who face unique barriers, provide opportunities for youth to develop and improve their skills.** The program provides wage subsidies to employers from not-for-profit organizations, the public sector, and private sector organizations with 50 or fewer full-time employees, to create quality summer work experiences for young people aged 15 to 30 years.

Result: Successful, with funding for 25 positions. As this was our first year receiving funding from CSJ, we intend to streamline the administrative processes on our end in 2022. These positions also function well as 'probationary' positions as a means to build understanding and trust between ourselves and new employees.

Innovate BC

The Innovator Skills Initiative is designed to increase diversity in the tech sector and help B.C.-based businesses fill talent shortages and grow. The program provides grants to employers that are hiring for tech or tech-related roles.The program aims to help more under-represented people get their first job in the tech sector by ensuring placements for under-represented people are available. Employers will offer valuable paid work experience to prepare individuals for ongoing employment.

Digital Skills for Youth (DS4Y) is a program funded by the Federal Government of Canada through Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), that aims to match underemployed youth with small to medium-sized businesses (SMBs) and not-for-profit organizations to provide meaningful work experience to support their successful transition to career-oriented employment in the digital economy or with digital skills. Applicant organizations are eligible for a grant that covers the full wage of a Youth Intern (Intern) to create employment opportunities for youth to build digital skills essential for the digital economy. A training stipend is also provided to support youth in developing digital skills through the course of the placement.

Result: Pre-approved status (successful at this stage); in progress

Heritage Canada Digital Citizenship Program: COVID-19 Special Grants Call

The **Digital Citizen Contribution Program** supports the priorities of the Digital Citizen Initiative by providing time-limited financial assistance for research and citizen focused activities in order to support democracy and social cohesion in Canada in a digital world by enhancing and/or supporting efforts to counter online disinformation and other online harms and threats to Canada's democracy and social cohesion.

Result: Unsuccessful
Takeaways: The biggest takeaway is understanding the application process for Heritage Canada programs and how our project falls under digital citizenship. Moreover, it is important we do not direct our resources until we have received the funding.

Commonwealth Foundation: COVID-19 Special Grants Call

The purpose of the special grants call is to enable the foundation to deliver support to commonwealth civil society organizations in response to COVID-19 quickly, efficiently, and in a way that both reflects and advances our broader mission.

Result: Unsuccessful
Our proposal focused on strengthening civic participation of immigrants in post-pandemic Canada. The objectives of the project were to 1) facilitate civic engagement of immigrants in Canadian democracy, 2) identify unique challenges faced by immigrants coping with COVID-induced restrictions, and 3) provide input on a post-COVID recovery plan that recognizes the vital role that immigrants play in Canadian society.

Contact Us

info@glocalfoundation.ca
info@youcount.ca

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glocalfoundation.ca
youcount.ca

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@youcountcanada

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