The Alberta Nonprofit Data Strategy Story

Building a Knowledge-Driven Nonprofit Sector

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ABNN
Alberta Nonprofit Network

Policy Wise
for Children & Families

Alberta

EDMONTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Toward an Alberta
Nonprofit Data Strategy

A number of initiatives at local, national, and international levels over the past ten years have created the conditions for an Alberta Nonprofit Data Strategy. Throughout the 2010's, new data platforms like **Community View Saskatchewan** and **Data Driven Detroit** indicated a growing interest in the uses and benefits of data. The global open government movement continued to snowball, bringing increased attention and opportunities for the availability and use of government data. In 2015, the Mowat NFP published its seminal report ***An Open Future: Data priorities for the not-for-profit sector***, which suggested that it was time for the Canadian nonprofit sector to take action.

The Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) was an early data champion. In 2015, they published their framework, ***Towards a Data Strategy for the Ontario Nonprofit Sector***. In it, the ONN discussed the ways data can support the nonprofit sector to learn and communicate its impact, deliver more responsive initiatives, collaborate more efficiently and effectively, and diversify and stabilize its funding. The ONN further identified how data standards, policies, skills & resources, and leadership are necessary to advance the data strategy.

It did not take long for both Ontario's data strategy framework and their nonprofit network model to gain traction in Alberta. **Volunteer Alberta**, the **Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (ECVO)**, and the **Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO)** met with then **Alberta Culture and Tourism** in 2016 to discuss an Alberta nonprofit data strategy[1]. While work would not begin until 2018, this meeting represented the "tangible first step" toward a provincial data strategy[2].

At the same time, key organizations were also planning an Alberta nonprofit network, which was launched in June 2018. By 2019, the **Alberta Nonprofit Network (ABNN)** had over 700 members and were advancing four sector-wide strategic priorities on behalf of the Alberta nonprofit and voluntary sector: workforce development, government relations, sector value & impact, and the development of a nonprofit data strategy.

The CCVO began leading Phase I of the Alberta Nonprofit Data Strategy in April 2018, with funding from Alberta Culture and Tourism. Province-wide engagements sessions in Lethbridge, Calgary, Red Deer, and Edmonton identified the data opportunities and challenges experienced by the nonprofit sector. Over 100 stakeholders identified how they used data, **the datasets the sector is interested in**, areas in which to focus data capacity building efforts, and opportunities to leverage. From these engagements, a high-level ***Alberta Nonprofit Data Strategy Roadmap*** was developed to move the nonprofit sector from the current to future state.

The *Roadmap* was formally adopted by the ABNN in 2019 and oversight for the strategy transitioned to the ABNN Data Strategy Steering Committee. **PolicyWise** and the Ministry of Alberta Culture, Multiculturalism, and Status of Women funded 2019-2020 work.

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[1] Calgary Chamber or Organizations (CCV0), *Building a Foundation for an Alberta Nonprofit Data Strategy – Project Whitepaper (2018)*

[2] CCVO 2018, p.1

A Community Initiative (2019-20)

Sector engagement has been key throughout the Alberta Nonprofit Data Strategy. CCVO's provincial engagements in 2019-20 resulted in the Roadmap. PolicyWise continued stakeholder engagement at the 2019 ABNN Sector Gathering, qualitative interviews with key informants, and the creation of three project-focused task teams. Each task team supported the development of a sustainable data ecosystem for the nonprofit and voluntary sector. Government of Alberta Data, Newcomer Data, and Data Hub Task Teams brought together nonprofit data champions from government, community-based funding organizations, and the nonprofit sector.

Each task team leveraged their networks and volunteered considerable hours toward environmental scans, creating and distributing a survey, and interviewing experts to inform responses and strategies. We then created a 2019-2020 Report to document the progress made on the Alberta Nonprofit Data Strategy.

Read our 2019-2020 Report and Summary documents here.

Data About the Sector (2020-23)

Funded by **Edmonton Community Foundation**, **Alberta Culture**, and **PolicyWise**, we are engaging with the nonprofit sector to produce analyses, build sector capacity, and share analyses to support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nonprofit analyses

1. We created an in-depth analysis of Registered Charities in Alberta.
2. We are performing timely quarterly community nonprofit analyses using Statistics Canada surveys on business conditions.
3. We created an interactive dashboard on the economic and workforce contribution of the nonprofit sector using Statistics Canada data.

Capacity Building

4. We hosted a session to engage Alberta nonprofit sector leaders with Statistics Canada leaders to engage on sector priorities.
5. We created two webinars to share how to use key Statistics Canada datasets to the nonprofit sector.
6. We created a 6-part training series in partnership with Statistics Canada to teach non-profit staff to work with Census data.

Sharing nonprofit resources and analyses

7. We updated the Alberta Non-profit Data Strategy website to increase sharing of key analyses from the data strategy and other resources.

The Alberta Nonprofit Data Strategy Journey

2023 and beyond

PolicyWise will continue to produce data about the sector, build capacity, and share to support sector COVID-19 recovery. We will also work to meet other sector priorities, such as further in-depth analyses, more knowledge hub sharing, supporting better nonprofit data, etc.

2020-2023

Toward a Knowledge-Driven Sector

PolicyWise produced data about the sector, built capacity, and shared to support sector COVID-19 recovery

2020

Project Plans Developed

Task Teams developed 8 projects for sector to lead based on identified needs

2019/2020

Task Teams

ABNN, GoA, and PolicyWise partnered to continue leading the strategy with 25 nonprofit data champions.

2018/2019

Alberta Nonprofit Data Strategy is Launched

CCVO leads province-wide engagement and develops a Roadmap

2016

Project Conception

ECVO, CCVO, Volunteer Alberta, and Alberta Culture & Tourism discuss a data strategy

2015

Toward an Ontario Data Strategy

ONN releases report