

Alberta Nonprofit Data Strategy: Community Nonprofits in Alberta

Fourth quarter 2022

Workforce Needs Amidst Rising Costs



Statistics Canada is reporting on community nonprofit sector conditions through the Canadian Survey on Business Conditions.¹ Due to increases in the sample size for this survey to 364 organizations for Alberta, this report moves to a focus on Alberta nonprofits, although similar patterns were seen across Canada.

Facing substantial cost, staff, and volunteer challenges, Alberta community nonprofits remain optimistic about the next year (87% of organizations). Organizations face ongoing challenges related to increasing costs and demands. Alberta community nonprofits reported rising inflation (60%), rising cost of inputs (40%), and cost of insurance (44%) as key obstacles to their operations. Inflation was high in Canada at 6.8% in November 2022 but has shown some signs of falling.² These obstacles combine with expectations of increased demand, increased expenses, and decreased cash reserves for community nonprofits. Rising costs put pressure on organizations as they support more clients surrounded by tough times, that will worsen if growing recession fears come true.³

Alberta community nonprofits also face ongoing challenges related to their staff. Many organizations identified challenges with staff recruitment and retention (47%), with 58% of organizations saying that recruiting and retaining staff is more challenging than a year ago.*

To address these challenges, organizations plan to increase wages to existing employees, offer flexible schedule, and provide paid time to engage in learning. The average planned wage increase is 5.2%, with 75% of organizations considering inflation as they set wages.

This iteration of the survey also looked at volunteering, which is an important aspect of community nonprofits. Most Alberta community nonprofits (81%) intend to or had recruited volunteers. This is greater than the 69% across Canada community nonprofits and 2% for private sector organizations in Alberta. Among organizations seeking volunteering, 82% mentioned a shortage of new volunteers and 69% mentioned issues related to the retention of volunteers. Furthermore, among these organizations, the challenges related to recruitment and retention of volunteers were discussed as relating to employee burnout, and reduction of programs and services delivered.

While Alberta community nonprofits are optimistic about their future, rising costs and workforce issues remain significant barriers to community nonprofits' recovery. Organizations face challenges with recruitment and retention of staff, with similar patterns seen for crucial volunteers.

1. Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Business Conditions, Fourth Quarter 2022

2. Statistics Canada, Consumer Price Index, November 2022

3. Leger, A Look Back at 2022 and Worries for 2023, December 2022

*. Low data quality for Alberta results. However, these patterns are similar to those cross-Canada, based on high quality data.