

# We're On Our Way

**Supporting Durham's Non-Profit Sector through  
(and post) the COVID-19 Pandemic.**

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# Our Project at a Glance



## 5 Advisory Group Members

Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade,  
Ajax-Pickering Hospital Foundation,  
Durham Child and Youth Planning Network, Durham Community Foundation,  
United Way Durham Region

**91** Key Stakeholders were identified as potential project participants



**2** Focus Groups of **12** Non-profit Stakeholders

**6** Orientation Interviews

**10** Key Interviews

# Our Project at a Glance

Information collected was organized into the following sections:

Key Point 1	Key Point 2	Key Point 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector Description</li> <li>• COVID Impact</li> <li>• Staff Specific Challenges</li> <li>• Operational Challenges</li> <li>• Non-profit Limitations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Competition in the non-profit sector</li> <li>• Collaboration amongst non-profits</li> <li>• Grassroots organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship with the Regional Government</li> <li>• Network Building</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Sector Convening</li> </ul>

# Major Findings

## Key Point 1



**Covid-19 Highlighted Existing Infrastructural Challenges in Durham's Non-Profit Sector.**

## Key Point 2



**Durham's non-profit sector collaborates often for project delivery and to address issues specific to a particular sub-sector but there is little to no collaboration for sector-wide convening and planning. Barriers to sector-wide collaboration include competitive funding structures and limited resources.**

## Key Point 3



**Governments and private investors must intentionally find new ways to ensure non-profit engagement and participation with a multitude of voices.**

# Major Findings

## Key Point 1



**Covid-19 Highlighted Existing Infrastructural Challenges in Durham's Non-Profit Sector.**

## Key Recommendation

- Recovery strategies intended for Durham Region must consider several regional nuances, including geography and proximity to Toronto, and sub-sectoral representation.

*“As a not-for-profit I think the challenges are probably the same as most as funding is always an issue. Finding qualified people to be able to handle that changing environment is difficult and retention of employees is difficult. We always know in the [Organization] that we are often a stepping stone because we just don't have the capacity to pay high salaries. Our retention has been pretty good in the last five, six years, but oftentimes there could be a high turnover in certain things, and then they go off and get a big, high paying job with the government.”*

# Major Findings

*"We have no core funding. We have to rely [on] grants to grants; projects to projects...sometimes when you get lucky, you have some stability with two to three year, 5 year grants. Organizations need to be supported, especially [administrative personnel]."*



## Key Point 2



## Key Recommendations

**Durham's non-profit sector collaborates often for project delivery and to address issues specific to a particular sub-sector but there is little to no collaboration for sector-wide convening and planning. Barriers to sector-wide collaboration include competitive funding structures and limited resources.**

- Invest in more/increased core/operational/administrative funding, including operational/administrative staff funding.
- Encourage and support organizational policy development, including offering financial or consulting support
- Invest in small/grassroots groups who may require support to develop adequate infrastructure
- Supported reserve funding and allow for fund retention post-funding cycle
- Continue to display unprecedented flexibility. While this has been particularly useful throughout the pandemic, non-profits will require continued flexibility as they re-shift new programs and services to meet new demands.

# Major Findings

## Key Point 3

### Key Recommendations

**Governments and private investors must intentionally find new ways to ensure non-profit engagement and participation with a multitude of voices.**

- Establish a formal policy framework that outlines the relationship between the Region of Durham and the non-profit sector.

*"So these funders and [the] Region need to make sure that they have an understanding of all the players and they need to have an understanding of when they're making decisions about resources or partnerships or who should be at what table that they're reaching out to the people who have the expertise in whatever area they're working on."*

# Acknowledgements

Thank you to:

## **Project Partners**

- Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade
- Ajax-Pickering Hospital Foundation
- Durham Child and Youth Planning Network
- Durham Community Foundation
- United Way Durham Region

## **All the Organizations that participated as Key Informants**

- AIDS Committee of Durham Region
- Boys and Girls Club of Durham
- Feed the Need Durham
- Oshawa Seniors Community Centre
- Salvation Army
- Scientists in Schools
- Their Opportunity
- Whitby Chamber of Commerce
- Women's Multicultural Resource and Community Centre

## **Stakeholders who participated as our Orientations Informants**

- Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade
- Community Development Council Durham
- Durham Community Foundation
- Municipality of Clarington
- Region of Durham
- Town of Ajax

## **Focus Group Participants**

- 1855 Technology Accelerator
- A Gift of Art
- Bowmanville Older Adults Association
- Community Care Durham
- Community Justice Alternatives of Durham Region
- Durham Association of Family Resources and Support
- Durham Children's Aid Foundation
- Gate 3:16 Outreach Centre
- John Howard Society of Durham
- Precious Minds Supports Services

# Next Steps

- Present the Executive Summary and full PHASE II report at an upcoming forum
- Continue to work with our collaborating partners and seek advice from the interviewees to discuss ways to leverage resources and further increase our bench strength among Durham Not for Profit agencies
- Work with Durham Region's non-profits to identify and subscribe to software and technology that will enhance our work - today and beyond the pandemic

## Contact Us

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