# Sparking Change

## Annual Report 2023-2024

Volunteer Toronto

# A Message from Our Executive Director and Board Chair

The pandemic has driven profound changes in how we resource and deliver our services, prompting a renewed focus on what truly matters and creating an imperative to build back better. As we conclude our five-year strategic plan, we reflect on the spark ignited in this journey and the ongoing need to sustain our collective energy to drive positive transformation.

**Our commitment to systemic change in volunteerism, first sparked in 2020, remains unwavering. We are determined to continue until we realize the change we know is needed.**

This means advocating loudly, exposing systemic issues mischaracterized as volunteer shortages, amplifying the voices of those with lived experiences, and critically examining the causes and roles facilitated by our recruitment platform through the **lens of Decent Volunteerism**. We recognize our role in this system, asking difficult questions about what meaningful, valid, sustainable, and accessible volunteerism looks like—and what kind will foster empathy, rather than division or harm.

As we shift the conversation, we are also addressing the growing disconnect in civic engagement. Many people are leaving Toronto because they feel they don't belong, and we see a vital role for a volunteer centre in fostering stronger connections among citizens. It's why this year we partnered with the Toronto Foundation to **meet people where their interests are**.

Our partnership led to the creation of a Continuum of Civic Engagement and the delivery of microgrants for volunteer-run, neighbour-to-neighbour initiatives.

We also **went to community** by delivering multiple in person micro-volunteer fairs, with the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, including our first ever volunteer fair for newcomers and for Black communities. We ended the fiscal year with the release of our 5-year update to our Meals on Wheels research, finally naming driver volunteer shortages as systemic. The common thread is that we're **working to spark change** to build back better for all.

As outlined in our 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, it is clear we are moving from recovering from the pandemic, to advancing the new future of volunteerism in Toronto. Throughout this annual report, look out for the below symbols on the top right corner of each page. These symbols mark our efforts to accomplish the two key pillars of our Strategic Plan.



**FOSTER VOLUNTEERISM**



**ELEVATE VOLUNTEERISM**

In this report, you will find more examples of how we kept this flame alive. We are adapting our programs based on community insights, turning them into advocacy narratives, forming sector partnerships, and leading the way forward. The signs point to the **modernization of our sector**—an essential transformation already underway. It's a spark we won't let die.

**Joanne McKiernan**
Executive Director

**Sushma Narisetty**
Board Chair



# Land Acknowledgment & Resources



Volunteer Toronto has the privilege to build community and work in T'karonto on the traditional lands of the Chippewa, the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy of Six Nations, and more recently the Territory of Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit, part of the Anishinaabe Nation.

We at Volunteer Toronto take inspiration from the **Dish with One Spoon Wampum Covenant**, a pre-colonial agreement that encourages everyone to only take what they need, leaving enough for both each other and future generations.

We are unable to reverse the violent history of colonization, but we can decide now to engage with this land and its peoples in line with this covenant. We are all a part of this agreement – an agreement which was established before any European foot stepped on this land and pre-dates the city, the country, and any other contracts you might currently be in. We recognize that saviourism and colonization continue to influence how Torontonians perceive and participate in volunteerism in our society. In acknowledging this, we strive to build communities of empathy in the spirit of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Covenant.

Volunteer Toronto's staff and volunteers are humbled to **promote the spirit of helping, sharing, and caring** for our neighbours without expectation, a value that was first, and continues to be, exemplified by each of these nations. In this tradition, we are grateful for the ongoing opportunity to live, work, and build community in T'karonto.

## Access the resources that helped us learn this year:

- (Video) **N'Swakamok Alternative School and Friendship Centre in Sudbury**
- (Short Story) **"Borders" by Thomas King**
- (Article) **National Film Board mini-lesson on "Honour to Senator Murray Sinclair"**
- (Video) **"nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up" documentary by Tasha Hubbard**
- (Article) **Four Directions Teachings**
- (Video) **The Indian Act (The Secret Life of Canada Podcast Episode)**

# Diagnosing Volunteer Shortages

The Ontario Nonprofit Network's 2023 State of the Sector research revealed that non-profits continue to **report volunteer shortages** post-pandemic. As Toronto's volunteer centre, we've analyzed both sides of the funnel—volunteer interest and non-profit engagement trends. It is clear that despite "reported" volunteer shortages, there are still **hundreds of thousands of people interested in volunteering** in Toronto. In fact, the number of times each person searched for a role has increased, indicating people are not finding the types of roles they are looking for, face barriers related to screening, or never hear back from the organizations they apply to.




## What does this mean for non-profits reporting shortages?

- Non-profits must explore who they are excluding from volunteering and move away from only recruiting "easy" volunteers who are willing to comply with discriminatory and often unecessary screening steps.
- Organizations must re-invest in dedicated volunteer engagement capacity, and professional development, to rebuild relationships with volunteers that are both community members and potential donors.
- As a sector, we must evolve the types of roles volunteers are recruited for, considering availability of volunteers, relationship to paid work, and sustainability of relying on unpaid labour for essential services.

**"Protect or Exclude? The Ethics and Real Risk of Over-Screening Volunteers"**

**Sector Article October 2023**

Volunteer Toronto is **advocating against unnecessary screening**. In an article we published in the Engage Journal, our Senior Manager of Learning, Sammy Feilchenfeld unpacks how non-profits put up barriers to involvement, especially for racialized volunteers.

ENGAGE
The global voice of leaders of volunteer engagement

**Access the article here.**

**"Unpaid labour: Why volunteers can't sustain essential services"**

**Opinion Editorial April 2024**

With the release of our latest Meals on Wheels research report, our Executive Director published an opinion-editorial in The Philanthropist. The piece brings overdue attention to how **"reported" volunteer shortages are the symptoms but the diagnosis of the problem goes much deeper** in what activities we rely on paid or unpaid labour for.

The PHILANTHROPIST Journal

**Access the op-ed here.**

**"More people are not hearing back from the non-profits they are applying to volunteer with, which means we're facing an engagement crisis in the sector, not a volunteer shortage"**

- Joanne McKiernan, Executive Director, Volunteer Toronto

**5x**

as many searches for volunteer roles in 2023-2024 compared to 2021-2022

**50%**

of current volunteer seekers have been in Canada less than 1-year

**6-10**

applications are required for volunteers to find a role with non-profits

# Researching Systemic Volunteer Driver Shortages in Meal Delivery Programs

"It's time to acknowledge that as a society, we rely on volunteers for things we shouldn't."

The Philantropist, April 2024

**0.14%**

of Toronto residents (or less than 9,000) are likely to volunteer as a Meals on Wheels Driver

**1000**

extra volunteers are required to meet current needs

**28%**

of organizations were forced to reduce deliveries due to volunteer shortages

In March 2017, Volunteer Toronto released its research report, "**Why Meals on Wheels Programs in Toronto are Running 19% Short**" — providing an analysis on the recruitment challenges experienced by 17 non-profit organizations in Toronto. Five years, and a global pandemic later, in March 2024 we shared **an updated analysis** based on our Toronto-focused survey of 18 organizations, Meals on Wheels Ontario's survey of 49 organizations, and secondary research conducted by TD Mindpower consultants and UofT Scarborough students.

**Our new report confirmed that it is highly unlikely there will ever be enough volunteers to fill the constantly recruiting Meals on Wheels Volunteer Driver and Runner roles.**

Only 0.14% of Toronto residents are likely to qualify for these roles. Requirements include mid-day availability, a valid driver's license, a clear driver's abstract, an insured car of one's own, consistent time for unpaid labour, and the comfort and experience to drive in one of North America's most congested cities. And yet, **1,000 extra volunteers are needed to meet current needs**. In fact, the demand for meal delivery is only increasing — the number of clients served in Toronto grew by 81% between 2019 and 2022.

Never-ending recruitment has taken its toll. Most meal delivery volunteer managers report extreme levels of distress and burnout, often being forced to deliver meals themselves or to overload existing volunteers. **67% of programs already partially rely on paid staff** to complete deliveries, blurring the ethics between volunteer and paid labour.




## How We're Driving Systems Change

Our research and pilot interventions over 5-years indicate that volunteer matching, corporate partnerships and marketing campaigns will not solve the shortage of Volunteer Drivers. Moving forward, we're committed to convening partners, sharing data, and mobilizing advocacy actions so that in 5-years the sector can sustainably labour food security programs.

- Programs must start with **short-term solutions** like reimbursing volunteers for mileage, purchasing cars, and **tracking volunteer shortages and staff back-up/burnout trends**.
- We must **change the conversation with funders** by naming volunteer driver shortages as systemic in meal delivery programs.
- Half of meal delivery agencies and their volunteer managers say we must explore and **advocate for hiring paid drivers**. The system is unsustainable.

# Enabling Decent Volunteerism via our Platforms

As an enabler in volunteerism, we hold a role in defining what is fair and decent. Since 2021, 25 organizations have been declined a subscription to recruit volunteers through our platform because they **failed to meet our strict eligibility criteria**, which excludes for-profit organizations, organizations facing labour disputes, organizations who have had their charitable or incorporation status revoked, and political parties or campaigns.

Our **Volunteer Advisors also meticulously comb through all active postings**, flagging paid roles, unpaid internships, and roles that demand that volunteers contribute full-time hours, make a donation, or pay for training. Our team quickly and fully investigates public complaints, particularly those that reference the mistreatment of volunteers, and suspends offending organizations when appropriate.

These efforts have resulted in Volunteer Toronto stewarding the safest volunteer opportunity portal in the country, and addresses a need for us to lead by example in modernizing the sector by defining what decent volunteerism is and how we enable it through our channels.

In this work, we've been inspired by the ONN's Decent Work tools and research, and in August 2024, **signed on to our own Decent Work Charter**.

**Read our full Decent Work and Decent Volunteerism commitment here.**

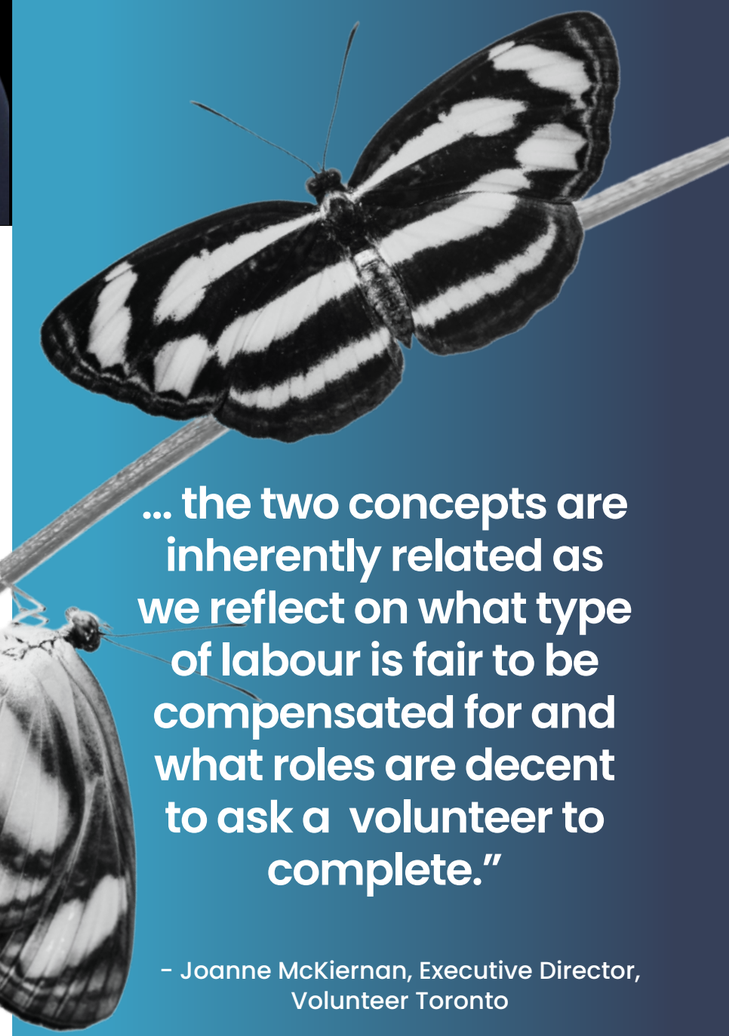



This year, we also took our thought-leadership a step further by engaging **Yamikani Msosa**, Executive Director of the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women, Founder of UBUNTU Consulting, and former Network Engagement Manager at ONN (Ontario Non-Profit Network), to facilitate a **VolunteerLab.ca** course.

In this course, Yami discusses the link between decent volunteerism, anti-racism, and equity, the need to challenge the concept of "organizational fit," the value of consistency, transparency, and flexibility with regard to scheduling, how to ensure wellness and volunteerism go hand in hand, and how to approach conflict in a restorative way.

**Watch the full course by subscribing to the Volunteer Lab here.**

**"Volunteer Toronto is committed to implementing Decent Work practices within our own organization and leading the sector's understanding of Decent Volunteerism...**



**... the two concepts are inherently related as we reflect on what type of labour is fair to be compensated for and what roles are decent to ask a volunteer to complete."**

- Joanne McKiernan, Executive Director, Volunteer Toronto

# Uplifting Organizations

Volunteer Toronto serves non-profits of all sizes, budgets and missions with capacity building programs. From volunteer recruitment technology to webinars for Executive Directors and workshops for volunteer managers, our non-profit programs evolve constantly to meet needs based on feedback collected, trend data, and insights from the sector at large.

In 2023-2024, we delivered 62 **live training sessions for volunteer managers,** reaching nearly 300 different organizations and hundreds more through conference presentations. This includes 43 **on-demand sessions for agencies** such as the Daily Bread Food Bank, Pride Run Association, and Afghan Women's Organization. We stewarded, in partnership with the Provincial Association for Volunteer Administrators (PAVRO), two cycles of study groups for 41 professionals seeking to become a Certified Volunteer Administrator.

This year, we also developed and delivered a **brand new session called Decolonial and Anti-Racist Volunteer Engagement**, encouraging non-profits to think differently about their volunteer engagement systems, role scoping, and screening practices that potentially exclude and harm diverse volunteers.

Our reach expands beyond volunteer managers, however, and in 2023, we partnered with the Toronto Nonprofit Network and Ontario Nonprofit Network to deliver a capacity building session to help non-profit leaders and board members **update their bylaws for compliance with the Ontario Nonprofit Corporations Act**.

These efforts, plus our online courses and resources for boards, executive directors and grassroots groups, make-up our extensive learning offerings that influence organizations to make positive change. Our **most popular resource topics**, accessed by hundreds of non-profit staff or leaders, are listed 1 through 5 to the right.



1 Volunteer Management



2 Police Checks




3 Volunteer-Led Groups



4 Engaging Older Adults



5 Preparing for Volunteer Fairs

**2091**
volunteer management resource downloads

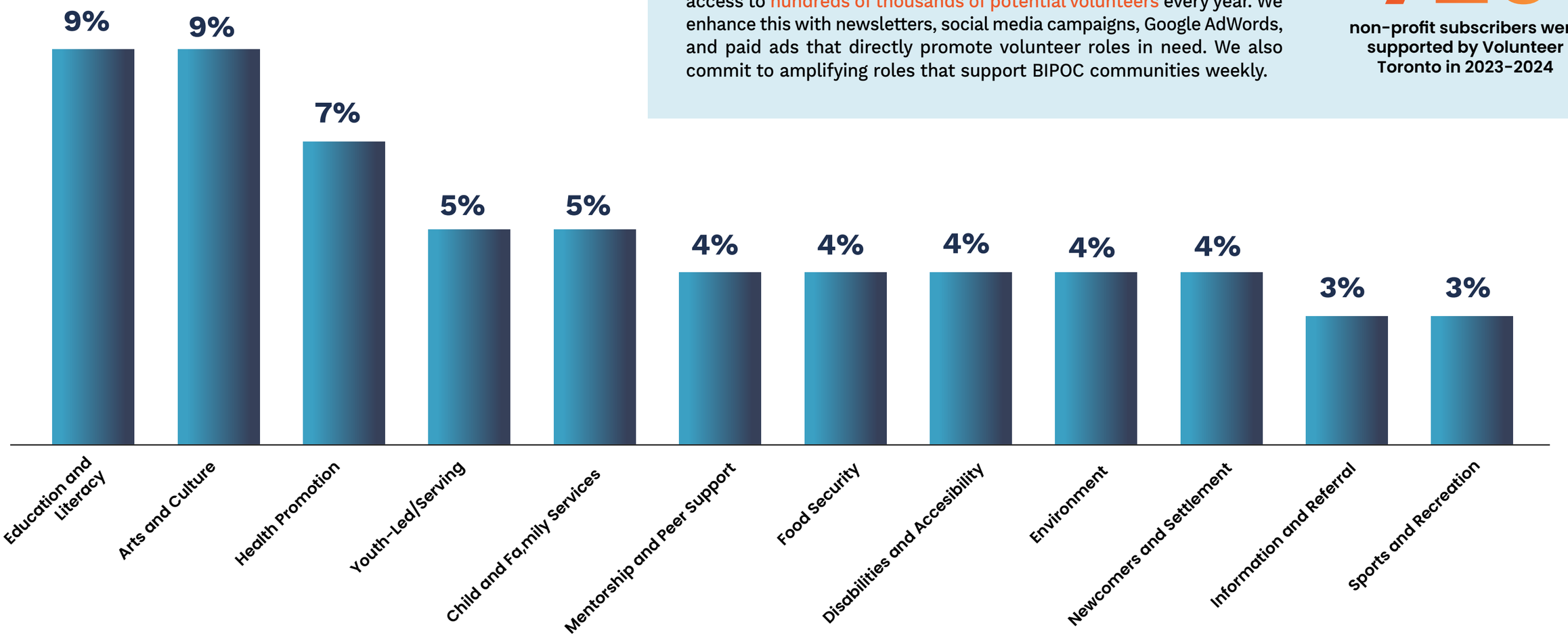
**65%**
of volunteer managers made a change within three months of attending a workshop

**2091**
individual learners in our workshops, online courses, and presentations

**"Volunteer Toronto is very insightful on responding to current issues and their commitment to decolonizing volunteer programs, and supporting the growing challenges in our city which is encouraging."**

— Adriana Myland, Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre

# Top Non-Profit Sectors Recruiting Through Volunteer Toronto




## How We Help Non-Profits Recruit Volunteers

Through our recruitment portal on VolunteerToronto.ca, non-profits gain access to hundreds of thousands of potential volunteers every year. We enhance this with newsletters, social media campaigns, Google AdWords, and paid ads that directly promote volunteer roles in need. We also commit to amplifying roles that support BIPOC communities weekly.

**729**

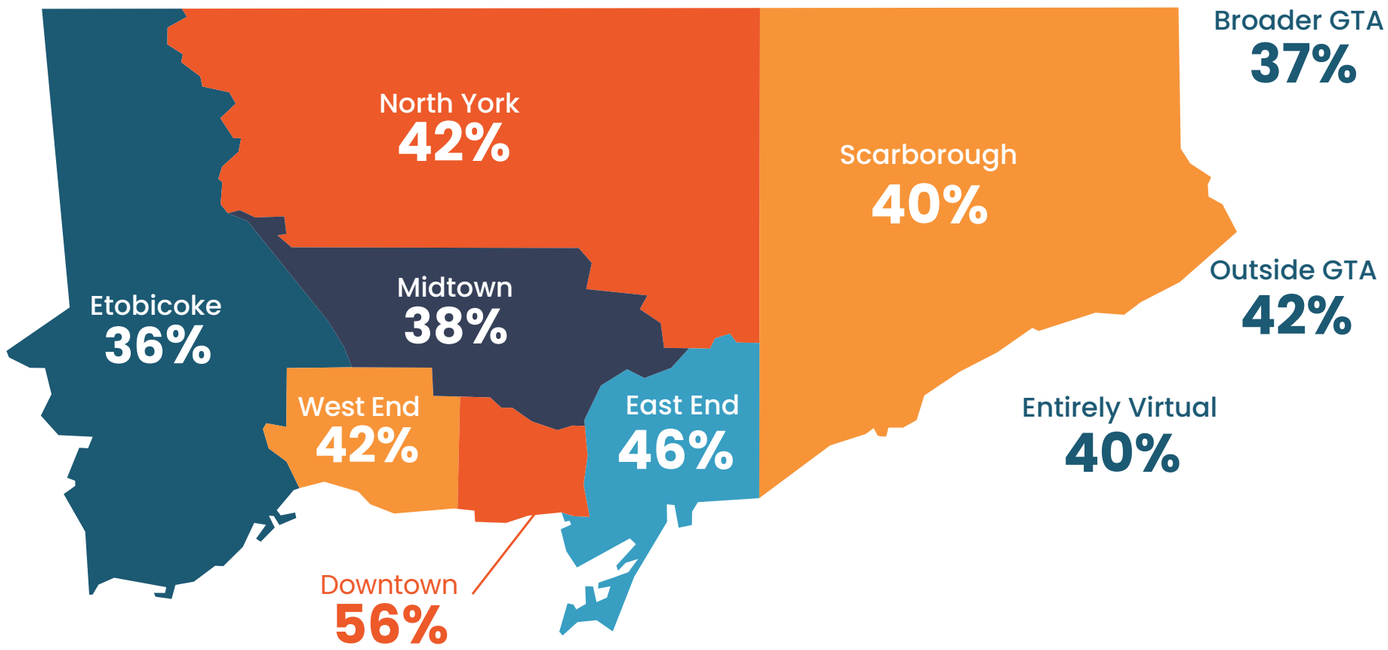
**non-profit subscribers were supported by Volunteer Toronto in 2023-2024**

**58%** of non-profit subscribers recruiting volunteers are considered **grassroots**

**66%** of subscribers have a **designated** volunteer manager or coordinator

**38%** of volunteer managers are looking to Volunteer Toronto to **conduct advocacy** on behalf of the volunteer sector

## Where are Non-Profits Engaging Their Volunteers?




## Common Trends Non-Profits Experienced in 2023-2024



Arts and culture organizations, in particular, report **struggling with a lack of volunteer applicants**. This reality is compounded by the funding and governance issues that this sub-sector has faced over the last fiscal year.



Since the last fiscal year, there has been a major increase in the number of **organizations engaging volunteers in Scarborough**, particularly among organizations with annual revenues of $75,000 or more.



Searches for volunteer roles are up but **barriers continue to prevent participation** - applicants report never hearing back, being uncomfortable with screening requirements, or being unable to make a long-term commitment.



In response to public concern, we have increasingly had to **take action against unethical volunteer engagment practices**. The distrust of non-profits that these postings sow contributes to the so-called "volunteer shortage".

# Delivering Micro-Volunteer Fairs

Volunteer Toronto is thankful to recognize the **Ontario Trillium Foundation** for their support through a Resilient Communities Fund grant valued at $81,500. With funding, Volunteer Toronto delivered new in person programming between June 2023-June 2024, including a series of five hyper-local volunteer fairs, to meet the demand for connection-building services and to address volunteer shortages in the non-profit sector.

The grant has helped Volunteer Toronto **bring back and expand in-person programs** which were significantly reduced due to COVID- 19, scaling up presence tabling at community events, meeting partner requests for speakers on volunteerism, and delivering adapted in person volunteer fairs, including:

- **Newcomer Volunteer Fair**
- **Youth Volunteer Fair**
- **Volunteer Fair for Black Communities**
- **Arts & Culture Volunteer Fair**
- **Seniors Volunteer Fair**

Each fair provided an opportunity for members of the public to browse and apply for volunteer roles with **more than 120 non-profits** looking to engage a specific population or interest area. These touchpoints are an important step forward in recovery from COVID-19 through rebuilding in-person access points to re-ignite civic engagement. The fairs also included a forum for volunteer managers to discuss insights on what potential volunteers are looking for, to unpack how to reduce barriers, and to network with their peers.

**"This was a very informative and very much appreciated volunteer fair. Thank you to everyone who set this up and showed up"**

— Anonymous Fair Attendee

Ontario Trillium Foundation / Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



**2000+**

**people were reached through volunteer fair registrations**

**93%**

**of attendees found a role at the Volunteer Fair for Black Communities**

**66%**

**of attendees found a role at the Newcomer Volunteer Fair**

**"During Toronto's reported volunteer shortages, these programs, powered by volunteers, facilitate sorely needed face-face connections between community members and non-profits"**

- Joanne McKiernan, Executive Director, Volunteer Toronto

# Meet Roshini Mathews: Project Lead & Past Volunteer

Roshini Mathews was a newcomer to Canada when she reached out to volunteer with Volunteer Toronto more than 5-years ago. Her skills in **connecting with others** was immediately recognized and she was recruited as a Volunteer Advisor with Volunteer Toronto, assisting other newcomers in finding volunteer opportunities that can support their settlement journey.

When the pandemic hit, Roshini was hired for a short-term contract with Volunteer Toronto, made possible due to emergency funding from the United Way of Greater Toronto, where she was part of a team responsible for calling non-profits and providing 1:1 consultations on how to overcome volunteer engagement challenges during the pandemic. These 1:1 touchpoints **expedited volunteer roles available in the community** and she directly contributed to the re-engagement of volunteers as a result of her calls with non-profits.

It was then through other funding arrangements, Roshini was retained as a staff member at Volunteer Toronto to continue non-profit engagement work and expand into community event planning to increase volunteer recruitment access points. It is this incredible journey within the organization that stands out. We are thrilled to recognize Roshini in our 2023-2024 Annual Report.

In 2023-2024, Roshini was our **staff project lead for the delivery of five micro-volunteer fairs** and intensified community outreach funded through the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Roshini describes the fairs as a "wonderful opportunity for the people to come together". This was needed, especially after COVID-19 where people felt disconnected.

Roshini strongly believes in "**being what's needed**", one of Volunteer Toronto's values. Between supporting the needs of the non-profits that depend on volunteers and the people looking for volunteer opportunities, people need connection to thrive, to believe in and feel like they belong. These are the ingredients needed to strengthen any community.

**" My favorite part of hosting the fairs was watching everything come together on the day of the Fair! Time spent planning, coordinating, and connecting with non-profits culminates on the day of – where I can watch it all come to life! Observing organizations interact with the public to recruit volunteer seekers and volunteer managers networking with each other... the synergy is inspiring! "**

— Roshini Mathews, Engagement Specialist, Volunteer Toronto



# The Power of Us Partnership

Toronto ranks as among the **loneliest places in the country**. When Toronto Foundation released their 2023 Vital Signs report, highlighting how disconnected Torontonians are to one another, we came together to try something new to engage the city — and it worked.

TORONTO FOUNDATION

Volunteer Toronto and Toronto Foundation believe **all forms of civic engagement are meaningful** — it could be you are in the right place to give rmoney, volunteer your time and skills, or maybe you need to ensure your voice is heard — anyway you can contribute right now is the right way.

With shared values, our partnership with the Toronto Foundation started with the launch of the **Power Of Us campaign** and the release of a brand new Continuum of Civic Engagement and self-assessment quiz. These new tools help people explore the many ways they can contribute based on their interests and capacity right now, recognizing that everyone is different and today you may hold one role, but tomorrow you could hold a completely different one.

The Power of Us campaign ran for 150 days between the release of the **Vital Signs report** in November 2023 and National Volunteer Week in April 2024. It included social media features, ad and newsletter campaigns, extensive media coverage, incentivized engagement via contests, and culminated around the announcement of the Power of Us microgrants to further invest in addressing social isolation in Toronto.

**Watch below to learn about our Continuum of Civic Engagement**




- Thank you **Breakfast TV, CP24 Breakfast**, **CBC**, **MET Radio**, and **Zoomer Radio** for highlighting the Power of Us Campaign during National Volunteer Week 2024!




**489**
people completed our Continuum of Civic Engagement quiz

**9773**
Engagements and nearly 200,000 views with Power of Us campaign materials

**25%**
Increase in volunteer searches during the fiscal year and driven by the Power of Us campaign



**"Ultimately there's a strong association between active participation in community and overall well-being."**

- Mohamed Hoque, Toronto Foundation

# 35 Civic Engagement Projects Funded with Microgrants

Our partnership with the **Toronto Foundation** also enabled us to hold a new role — granter. Our organizations believe increasing participation in group activities can curb the rising tide of social isolation and loneliness. We also believe that people from a community are the best people to lead initiatives in their own community and for their neighbours.

In November 2023, we co-launched the Power of Us microgrants — a stream of funding for **volunteer-run groups** of three or more neighbours to deliver an event focused on connecting people. We saw an incredible 270 applications and funded 35 initiatives with $1,000 each. The Power Of Us grant recipients continue to deliver their projects throughout 2024, including:

- **Healing circle in Kensington Market**
- **Sustainability workshop in the West End**
- **Kids Pride Parade at Maryland Park**
- **Drumming workshop for Black women**
- **Scarborough arts showcase for youth**
- **+ more diverse projects across the city!**




**Watch the video to learn about the 35 funded projects!**




**"The amount of people from different cultures participating encourages us to do more for the community"**

— Project Organizer, Ghanaian Canadian Seniors Group

**"This was the lowest barrier funding and most supportive granter we've ever engaged with"**

— Initiative organizer, Sistaz In Sound

**"I met a newcomer at our event and helped her get a job through my network"**

— Project Organizer, Sustainable Junction Triangle

**"Community Initiatives like this are the reason I choose to stay in Toronto"**

— Attendee at the East-End Maryland Park Children's Pride Parade, June 2024

# Engaging the Public

Volunteer Toronto engages **hundreds of thousands of volunteer seekers** through our programs and communications initiatives. From jobseekers to newcomers, youth and seniors, we provide custom support to help people find a volunteer role that meets their needs and interests.

Every April, we also mark **National Volunteer Week (NVW)**, a time to uplift, recognize, and celebrate Toronto's volunteers. In 2023-2024, Volunteer Toronto partnered once again with Panago Pizza to provide 100 medium pizza vouchers to volunteers nominated through our Instagram activation contest.

We also repeated our recognition collaboration with Cirque du Soleil, by offering a discount for volunteers, and complimentary tickets for Volunteer Toronto's volunteers.

In 2023-2024, through our evaluation survey data, we tracked the efficacy of our public programs by audience. What we learned was:

- The **representation of newcomers** in our programs has significantly increased year-over-year, now representing roughly 50% of participants.
- Our 1:1 Volunteer Advising program for volunteers is the **most effective format** for helping newcomers find a role.
- Youth are most effectively engaged through volunteer fairs and digital content, and are the **most engaged audience** with our blog.
- Partnerships matter in increasing reach, such as our collaboration with the **Toronto Public Library** to deliver information sessions at branch locations.
- **Newsletters** and social media campaigns keep volunteering front of mind for members of the public.



**2281**

people reached through Volunteer Toronto's 81 information sessions in 2023-2024

**8%**

engagement rate on Volunteer Toronto's social media content in 2023-2024

**1132**

hours of support provided to members of the public through Volunteer Advisors

**"I was hesitant at first to take a phone call appointment, but the advisor didn't make me feel like that. The advisor gave step by step information and guidance which was the best about the process, also he was very patient to answer and advise."**

— Anonymous Volunteer Advisor participant

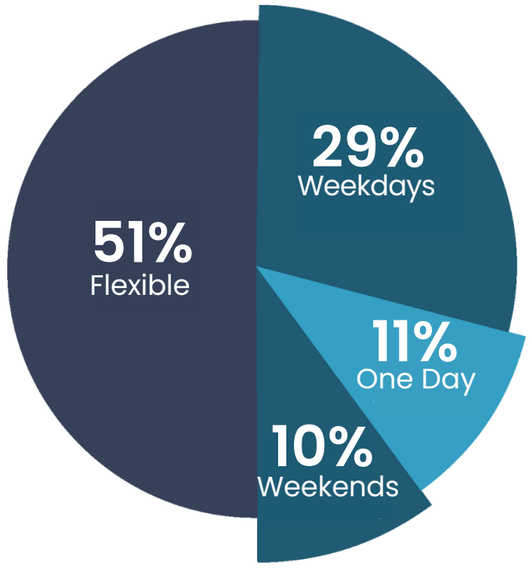
**802,258**

Visits to Volunteer Toronto's Search Opportunities page

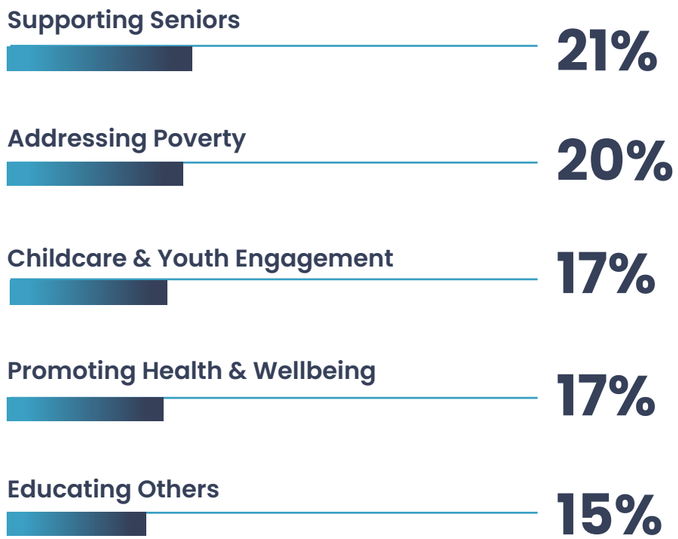
**27,899**

Youth started their journey with our **High School Volunteers resource**

## Volunteer Participation by Schedule




## Volunteer Activities



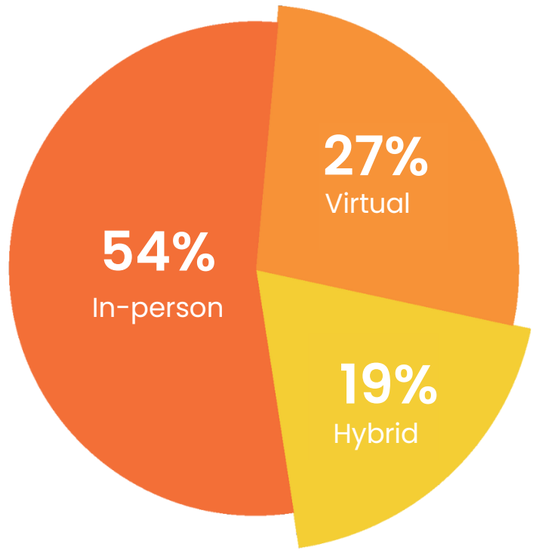

## Common Trends Experienced by Volunteers

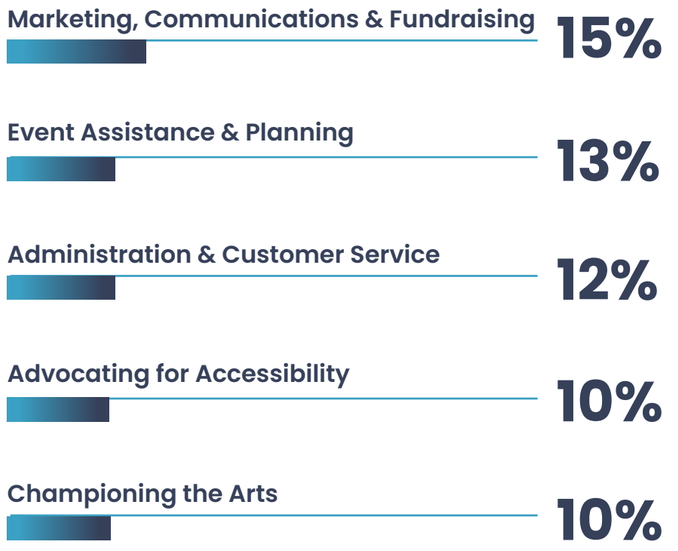
There are hundreds of **thousands of people interested** in volunteering, despite "reported" volunteer shortages.

Volunteers are most interested in roles that **offer flexible scheduling**. Seniors and newcomers are less likely to commit to a role for 6+ months given changing life priorities.

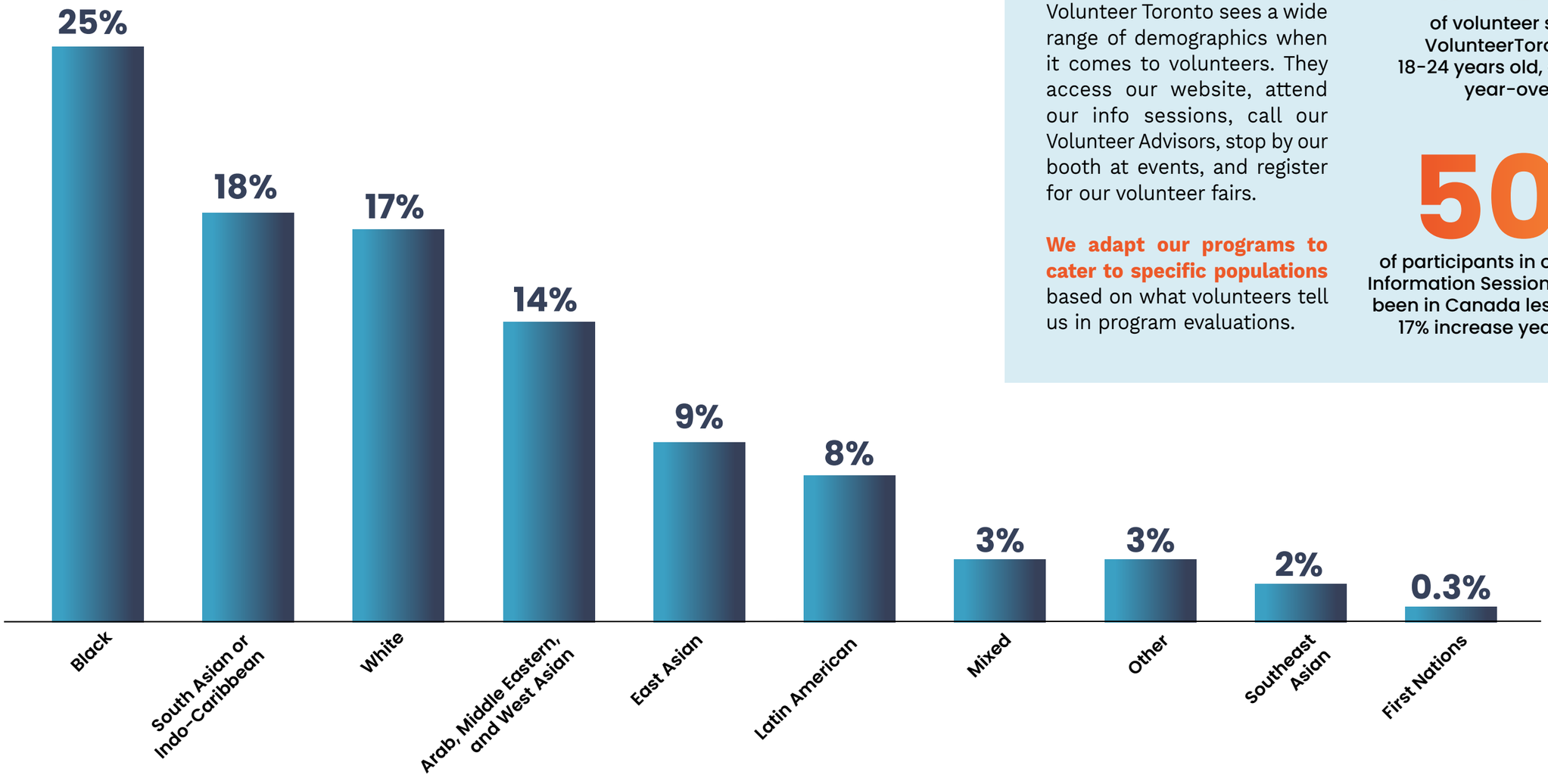
**Newcomers to Canada make up almost 50% of users** who access Volunteer Toronto's services. Top motivations include making new friends and acquiring new skills.

## Volunteer Participation by Location



# Representation of Volunteer-Seekers Accessing Our Programs




## Tracking Changes in Volunteer Demographics

Volunteer Toronto sees a wide range of demographics when it comes to volunteers. They access our website, attend our info sessions, call our Volunteer Advisors, stop by our booth at events, and register for our volunteer fairs.

**We adapt our programs to cater to specific populations** based on what volunteers tell us in program evaluations.

**36%**

of volunteer seekers on VolunteerToronto.ca are 18-24 years old, a 4% increase year-over-year

**50%**

of participants in our Advisor and Information Session programs have been in Canada less than 1-year, a 17% increase year-over-year.

# Engaging Our Audience

Volunteer Toronto's communications channels have a wide reach, providing services and roles for thousands of volunteer role-seekers. Our website — VolunteerToronto.ca —is the most visited volunteerism focused website in Ontario. We provide enhanced promotional support to non-profits through our newsletters and social media channels which garner hundreds of thousands of impressions and engagements every year.

We also connect with thousands of volunteer-role seekers in the widespread community, but offer demographic-specific supports to **seniors, students, and newcomers** who are interested in volunteering through our communications such as the Volunteer Times and Community Response Team Alert newsletters.

We are also excited to continue a project started last fiscal year — the upgrade of our website. We've self-funded this project to ensure our portal matches a **modern, accessible and user-friendly experience.** Development is still in progress throughout 2024, and we are excited to present a renewed look and feel to our website over the next few months.




**273K**
Unique users on Volunteer Toronto's website




**2.5M**
Pageviews on Volunteer Toronto's website




**25K**
Newsletter Subscribers



**447K**
Social media Impressions

# Our Dedicated Volunteers

Our volunteers are at the forefront of sparking change — enabling, informing, delivering, and responding to everchanging needs of both non-profits looking to engage volunteers and volunteer seekers looking to give back.

Our volunteers are wise and trusted voices in delivering our vision. Over 60 volunteers contributing to Volunteer Toronto's presence in our community over the year, and we could not be more appreciative.

This illustation represents our volunteers. **Each individual star set represents the time, efforts, and talents of each of our 'bright' shining volunteers** who give back in roles such as:

- Advisors
- Ambassadors
- Board Members
- Copywriters
- Digital Receptionists
- Posting Support Assistants
- Zoom Support Assistants

**"Volunteering has allowed me to give back to the community and positively impact others' lives while also learning valuable new skills. Additionally, it has helped me build lasting connections with people from various backgrounds."**

— Yashvi Shah, Digital Receptionist Volunteer, Volunteer Toronto

**60+**
Volunteers supported our work in 2023-2024

**10+**
Unique Volunteer Roles Supported

**1691+**
Hours volunteered in 2023-2024

# Board of Directors

**Sushma Narisetty, Chair**
*Director, Toronto Hydro Electric System Limited*

**Helen Moroz, Vice-Chair**
*Chief Policy Officer, Digital ^ Shift*

**Jenny Okonkwo CPA, FCMA, CGMA,MBA, Treasurer**
*Director of DEIBR, Meridian Credit Union*

**Vernis Cheung, Secretary**
*Legal Counsel at iGaming Ontario*

**Aseem Bhatnagar, Director**
*VP & CFO, Canadian Personal Bank, TD*

**Polina Kosareva, Director**
*Public Sector Professional*

**Sarah Llewellin, Director**
*HR Consultant*

**Tony Nguyen, Director**
*Chief Operating Officer, healthcare consulting firm*

**Kanta Wadhwan, Director**
*Partner (retired), Baker McKenzie*

**Horace Wright, Director**
*IT Transformation, National Bank of Canada*

**Benetta Yogendran, Director**
Director, Operations Strategy, Cresco Labs

# Staff Team

**Joanne McKiernan**
*Executive Director*

**Cara Eaton**
*Senior Director, Strategy and Growth*

**Kasandra James**
*Director, Programs*

**Sammy Feilchenfeld, CVA**
*Senior Manager, Learning*

**Tatiana Letang**
*Manager, Marketing and Communications*

**Nira Mariathas**
*Manager, Operations*

**Samah AbdelAziz**
*Coordinator, Programs*

**Roshini Mathews**
*Coordinator, Engagement and Outreach*

**Olivia Sonnenberg**
*Communications & Engagement Specialist*

**Gabrielle Meldrum***
*Program Assistant*

**Aiesha Ahmad***
*Program Assistant*

**Heather Balmain***
*Communications Assistant*

**Anastassiya Tregubenko***
*Marketing Assistant*

***Employed part of the 2023-2024 fiscal year**



# Financial Snapshot

## In fiscal year 2023-2024 , Volunteer Toronto saw $1,004,223 in revenue and $929,565 in operating expenses, resulting in a less than 1% surplus.

Volunteer Toronto engaged the auditing firm Clarkson Rouble LLP for our annual audit, and we continue to receive positive feedback on the accountability of our leadership team and financial controls. In the previous fiscal year, we planned for a strategic deficit to self-invest in the redevelopment of our website technology on its 10th anniversary. Redevelopment is well in motion and the modest surplus from 2023-2024 offsets the financial impact from this project.

We extend our sincere gratitude for the ongoing commitment and support of our core funders—**Ontario Health**, the **City of Toronto and United Way of Greater Toronto**. Their ongoing commitment to volunteerism ensures that our organization can build capacity for the health sector and allows us  to meet emergent needs based on local insights and trends.

In 2023-2024, we welcomed a new funder and partner—the **Toronto Foundation.** We are immensely grateful for their collaboration, mentorship and investment that enabled us to mobilize a Continuum of Civic Engagement and microgrants for Torontonians. We also recognize and appreciate a significant corporate donation in 2023 from **Meridian Credit Union**, and the investment from an **Ontario Trillium Foundation Resilient Communities grant**, worth $81,500, which helped us return to in person programming.

This year, after 4 years, we also saw the recovery of our earned revenue streams (training and service subscriptions) to pre-pandemic levels and recognized partial forgiveness as we repaid our COVID-19 Canada Emergency Business Account loan. These highlights contribute to our **revenue growth year over year**, and ability to live our value of being what is needed.




| | |
|---|---|
| 31.5% | Ontario Health (MOH) |
| 25% | City of Toronto |
| 17% | United Way of Greater Toronto |
| 10% | Ontario Trillium Foundation |
| 8.5% | Other (Loan Forgiveness, Investments, Donations) |
| 6.5% | Subsciptions and Training |
| 1.5% | Special Projects |

Total: $1,004,223




| | |
|---|---|
| 45% | Core Expenses and Marketing |
| 15% | Engaging Organizations |
| 17% | Community Engagement |
| 13% | Special Projects |
| 5% | Engaging Leaders |
| 5% | Engaging Youth |

Total: $929,565

Ontario Health

TORONTO

United Way Greater Toronto

Ontario Trillium Foundation / Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

Meridian

# Volunteer Toronto

## Our Mission

Volunteer Toronto increases the positive impact that volunteering has on the City of Toronto through innovative initiatives that inspire, inform, and connect volunteers and the organizations that need them.

## Our Vision

We envision a Toronto that is caring, inclusive, and engaged where volunteering is an important avenue through which everyone has the opportunity to participate and contribute meaningfully.

**VolunteerToronto.ca**
**CRA# 119287092RR0001**

**Mailing Address**
**2110-439 University Ave.**
**Toronto, ON. M5G 1Y8**