



**VOLUNTEER
ALBERTA**

2016 **Annual
Report**

DOING GOOD. TOGETHER.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Since our inception, Volunteer Alberta has succeeded in promoting, celebrating, and enabling volunteerism within the nonprofit sector across Alberta.

In 2016, in collaboration with other capacity building organizations, we continued to advocate and reflect the collective voice of our sector. Connecting and collaborating with our colleagues allows Volunteer Alberta to leverage our networks to meet collective goals. We are honoured to work with and serve so many nonprofits who contribute to the development of a strong and resilient nonprofit sector.

Our Board remains focused on high-level strategies that create space for collaboration, innovation, and courage within our sector. With a goal to strengthen the sector workforce, we continue to support Alberta's nonprofit organizations through network stewardship and knowledge mobilization. Our work enhances the skills, knowledge, and resources required to make a difference in communities and for all Albertans.

Thank you to our Volunteer Alberta Team for their effective translation of strategies that elevate the impact of nonprofit organizations in Alberta. The leadership, courage, and vision of the Team will continue to build resiliency in the sector for stronger Alberta communities in the future.

The Board and I wish to express our pride in the achievements of Volunteer Alberta in 2016 and look forward to another exciting and impactful year.

Jeanette Bancarz
President, Board of Directors

REFLECTING ON 2016

2016 was a year of redevelopment and redesign for many of Volunteer Alberta's programs and services. With the purpose of making lasting impacts for the sector, we continued to build on changes that began in 2015. Our focus and attention was on program redesign, understanding our assets, and growing and adapting to fulfill the evolving needs of the nonprofit sector in Alberta. Our redesign work in 2016 will impact our programs and services, and our members and clients, in 2017.

Two of our key programs went through significant redesigns in 2016. The Serving Communities Internship Program (SCiP) moved to an online platform, while the Volunteer Screening Program saw big changes and additions.

We created a new website for SCiP and transferred all of our processes from paper to online for Program Year Six, beginning in August 2016. Changing our website created process efficiencies, allowed nonprofits to track the progress of their internship postings in real time, and reduced the paperwork for each internship.

We re-invented our Volunteer Police Information Check Program into the new Volunteer Screening Program. Changes included an education strategy to provide information and resources for volunteer engaging organizations across the province.

We continued to build relationships and our collective work in the province. Working closely with our partners and stakeholders allows us to be a valuable voice and leader in the nonprofit sector in Alberta. We recognize our collective work is valuable in growing the sector's capacity and resilience, and building engaged communities across Alberta.

In 2016, we formalized our relationship with Alberta Social Innovation Connect (ABSI Connect). Moving forward, we envision a high-functioning, impactful, and resilient nonprofit sector emerging through the social innovation ecosystem in Alberta. We want to know:

How can we work together to develop dynamic relationships required to maintain stability, while taking risks required to explore and test innovative approaches?

How can we better solve complex social and environmental problems in our province?

Our Social Innovation work aligns with our vision of a connected society. We are excited to see where our relationship with ABSI Connect takes us.

We will continue to be a voice for Alberta's nonprofit sector in 2017 and beyond. All the work we take on, conversations we participate in, and connections we make support our vision for a strong, connected, and engaged society serving the common good in Alberta.

“With the purpose of making lasting impacts in the sector, we continue to build on changes that began in 2015.”

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Volunteer Alberta's financial management focuses on transparency, accountability, and fiscal management.



- Contracts, Grants, & Contributions (\$1,010,428)
- Membership, Workshops, & Donations (\$44,034)
- Interest (\$2,481)



- Programs, Services, & Resources (\$887,029)
- Management & Admin (\$156,634)



NETWORK STEWARDSHIP

Connecting people and organizations to opportunities to collaborate

CONNECTING WITH OUR NETWORK

By working with others in Alberta's nonprofit sector, we are creating collaborative relationships and alliances with network leaders in the sector.

Our combined work encourages collaboration within the sector as well as creates a strong and connected group of organizations serving the common good in Alberta.

We have met with five other capacity building organizations from across the province to discuss strategies for creating a collective voice and supporting collaboration in the sector. In 2017, this group will continue to carve out a future for this type of work in our province.

The Alberta Volunteer Centre Network (AVCN) includes organizations leading volunteerism in their communities. The network connects monthly through Volunteer Alberta.

In 2016, Volunteer Alberta continued to connect our network of Alberta's Volunteer Centres and FCSS's. We host monthly teleconferences with the network members.

This network is valuable to both Volunteer Centres and Volunteer Alberta because members are able to share their experiences, expertise, and insights with each other. Volunteer Alberta provides context and guidance within the network; but more importantly, we understand some of the challenges and opportunities our communities are facing. Because of the Alberta Volunteer Centre Network, Volunteer Alberta has both the ability and the information needed to elevate issues and concerns to decision-makers at provincial and national levels.



ADVOCACY & VOICE

Listening to nonprofits and advocating for positive change for the sector

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We listen to our members. We consult with our partners. We gather feedback from our program participants. What we hear informs our advocacy and program development. Volunteer Alberta's Board and Staff participate at a number of local, provincial, and national committees. We take the information we gather from our networks and reflect the voice of the sector. Our position in the province and the diverse networks we work with allow Volunteer Alberta to be a valuable voice for Alberta's nonprofits.

Over 2016, Volunteer Alberta:

- held four engagement forums
- hosted three focus groups
- circulated six surveys
- organized 20 strategic conversations

Volunteer Screening and Police Information Checks

2016 became a learning experience for Volunteer Alberta in our volunteer screening work (including our Volunteer Police Information Check Program - now the Volunteer Screening Program).

We recognized the Volunteer Screening Program needed to be updated, so we consulted with our program users to understand how we could make changes that would have the most impact. Our program evolved from simply a fee waiver program to a program that also includes resources and educational tools that are significantly needed in the sector.

Public Policy

Volunteer Alberta is often approached for input on specific policy issues. We collaborate with partners, such as ECVO and CCVO, to create a united standpoint. We offer submissions and present to Standing Committees. Some of the public policy work we were involved with in 2016 includes:

- Lobbyist Act
- Carbon Levy
- Community Organization Tax Exempt Regulation
- Privacy Legislation



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Supporting nonprofit professionals, volunteers, and the future workforce

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

We focus on creating a strong and engaged nonprofit sector. For Volunteer Alberta to achieve this vision, we need to ensure nonprofit organizations in Alberta have access to appropriate leadership opportunities and to learning resources and programs related to engaging and screening volunteers.

Serving Communities Internship Program

The Serving Communities Internship Program (SCiP) introduces post-secondary students to real-world learning opportunities through nonprofit internship projects. SCiP impacts nonprofits in Alberta by providing students with opportunities to apply their skills to address complex social challenges in the nonprofit sector. At the same time, students gain transferable skills for their professional futures.

From August 2015 - August 2016, SCiP engaged:

- 950 students, each receiving a \$1,000 award
- 227 nonprofit organizations engaging at least one SCiP student

Volunteer Screening Program

The development and delivery of our screening education resources was a milestone for our Volunteer Screening Program (VSP). Throughout 2016, Volunteer Alberta listened to our program users and worked with our partners to create a robust Volunteer Screening Program. This redesigned program supports volunteer engaging organizations with downloadable learning resources, tools, and templates, and access to funding. These resources allow nonprofits to create and implement effective and efficient volunteer screening practices supporting citizen engagement and risk management.

In both SCiP and VSP, we worked closely with the Government of Alberta to develop and deliver effective programs for nonprofits.



KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

Sharing relevant information to increase understanding and learning application

MOBILIZING INFORMATION & IDEAS

Sharing and promoting relevant information to our network supports the growth of leaders and staff in the nonprofit sector.

From our work with MBA research students, we now have a better understanding of the gaps in professional development for the nonprofit sector. Many of the gaps identified pertained to access to resources. This insight created an impetus within Volunteer Alberta to increase online resources and support nonprofits across the province in accessing relevant information right at their fingertips.

We refreshed our learning modules and created more online educational resources like webinars and templates for our members and program users. We travelled across the province offering support and providing learning opportunities in Alberta communities.

We look for experts and elevate their resources to our networks. We share learning opportunities available in communities across Alberta, or online, and search for new ways to connect both our members and clients to the resources that are already available.

Volunteer Alberta continues to work in partnership with organizations in order to extend our reach and increase the number of learning opportunities available to our network.

We connect with the following influential capacity building organizations:

- Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO)
- Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (ECVO)
- FuseSocial
- Propellus
- Volunteer Lethbridge

We mobilize our networks and share knowledge in a number of ways:

- Social media followers: 11,000+
- E-newsletters: 1,800+
- Program participants: 1,800+
- Website views: 70,000+ annually

MEMBERSHIP

In 2016, we had a membership of 325 organizations including the Alberta Volunteer Centre Network. Reviewing our membership, and how we interact with our Members, became a larger project in 2016. We created a Membership Review Committee to explore the benefits (both tangible and intangible) of a Volunteer Alberta membership.

Through the work of the Committee, we discovered our membership needed to reflect how Members want to interact with us. This process helped us launch a new membership in 2017. Our 2017 membership helps us better work with nonprofit organizations and meet them where they are.

We now offer three membership service packages:

Member - for organizations looking to increase their ability to achieve their mission and impact their community.

Connected Leaders - for organizations well-connected in their network. Those who are ready and willing to be influential leaders in their community.

Network Leaders - for organizations who play a strategic leadership role in their community and networks.

INTERNAL EXCELLENCE

Along with our membership review, we also took the opportunity to review our partnerships. We created a matrix for evaluating new partnerships to help ensure mutual benefit and shared values.

Supporting our Staff to access professional development opportunities helps to build our internal expertise and continues to be invaluable as we help Alberta do good, together.

Our Board of Directors was also active in demonstrating fiscal responsibility and accountability. The Board developed two ad hoc committees to discuss risk and public policy to ensure Volunteer Alberta's work has a strong foundation.

Board of Directors 2016-2017

President - Jeanette Bancarz
 Vice President - Matt Knight
 Secretary - Tracey Vavrek
 Treasurer - Scott Lundell
 Director - Sian Anderson
 Director - Morgan Bamford
 Director - Renée Gagnon
 Director - Susan Gulko
 Director - Evan Romanow
 Past President - Timothy Jobs

Volunteer Alberta Staff

Executive Director - Jann Beeston
 Managing Director - Annand Ollivierre
 Operations Director - Cindy Walter
 Creative Director - Katherine Topolniski (on leave)
 Controller - Brooke Matter
 Program Manager - Vada Antonakis
 Communications Manager - Jennifer Esler
 Communications Coordinator - Sam Kriviak
 SCiP Coordinator - Tim Henderson
 Workforce Development Coordinator - Daniela Seiferling
 Membership Administrative Assistant - Darcy Ames



Our Board and Staff are passionate about the work we do and about creating a vibrant future for both Volunteer Alberta and the nonprofit sector as a whole.



FUTURE FOCUSED



Volunteer Alberta will continue to explore nonprofit collaborative opportunities, build on foundational conversations that occurred within the past year, and leverage collective strengths.

Our future, for both Volunteer Alberta and the nonprofit sector, lies in partnerships and collaboration.

As we work together to address society's complex challenges, Volunteer Alberta will continue to support a future where people are meaningfully engaged in building community and quality of life.

Our Board and Staff are passionate about the work we do and about creating a vibrant future for both Volunteer Alberta and the nonprofit sector as a whole.

Our interest in Social Innovation and the work we are doing with ABSI Connect is a focal point for our future.

Re-imagining how we can help society tackle complex social issues in Alberta is important. Volunteer Alberta is working to leverage our networks to advance this work.

We recognize it is insufficient to simply react to symptoms of the shifting context for citizen engagement. In the year ahead, we are focusing on discovering and revealing underlying conditions that generate complex challenges. Through exploring the whole system, we can identify leverage points and opportunities to improve outcomes and increase our impact.

Citizen engagement in the nonprofit sector is changing. Youth involvement looks different from prior generations. Our society and our sector are evolving. Volunteer Alberta is ready to address the changes and look for new ways to work with Alberta's youth, as well as nonprofit organizations, to meet these changes.

Through our emerging program, Generative Conversations, we continue to connect with Alberta communities to help collectively identify challenges, discover solutions and processes to enhance community relations, and build local collaborative capacity and leadership capacity.

We are excited to continue supporting and nurturing networks of organizations and individuals making a noticeable, positive impact in their communities.

Jann Beeston
Executive Director

MISSION

To enable Alberta's nonprofit/voluntary sector organizations through knowledge exchange and strategic connections.

VISION

A strong, engaged, and connected society serving the common good in Alberta.

The Association of Volunteer Centres and Volunteer Engaging Organizations in Alberta

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