

Community Sector Network of PEI | Report Brief

Closing the gap between economic recognition and job quality

The report commissioned by CSN in spring 2026, Opportunities and Challenges for Workers in the PEI Not-For-Profit Sector, highlighted several ongoing obstacles for those working in these vital careers. Alongside recent data sets, CSN has outlined key learnings below, and strategic actions to compliment them.

The Island's nonprofit sector contributes GDP above the national average.

PEI's nonprofit sector GDP share of 10.5-11.3% consistently tops the national average.^{i-iv} Ongoing Investments should reflect that weight, through stable, multi-year core funding partnerships alongside stronger job security, matched by benefits and wages.

The nonprofit workforce is 75-80% women, reflected in the PEI report survey.

A sector workforce of ~80% women currently earns below comparable positions.^{iv-vi} PEI has the country's highest share of women in non-profit jobs, and has the opportunity to support the work of closing the gender-pay gap nationally.^{iv-vii}

The wage gap for sector workers is 10-31% below the national average.ⁱⁱⁱ

Most nonprofits in PEI run on 0-2 full-time staff,^{iv-vi} who redo the funding math every year. Participants asked for multi-year core funding, and a home in government as a method of improving this unsustainable statistic.^{vi}

Strategic Actions

Multi-year Operational Funding

Act as per the 2023 mandate letters to extend existing operating agreements for organizations already core-funded, so they stop re-justifying their existence, but continue reporting.

A Home in Government

Develop a strategic action plan for the creation of a Minister Responsible or an Interministerial Nonprofit Secretariat, which is modeled on the existing Women's Secretariat.

Greater Funding Transparency

Support the creation of clear eligibility criteria to access core funding, alongside a clear website housing all provincial nonprofit funding opportunities available to the sector.

Partner with CSN to Address Gaps

Resource CSN to continue leading on their Shared Services program, supporting the sector with staff professional development, data collection, and other operational needs.

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Direct Quotes from the Opportunities and Challenges for Workers in the Not-For-Profit Sector Survey

Comments on the Structure of the Sector:

"...there are things that are currently being offloaded onto the community that should be core public services, and there are things that really would be better delivered in the community that are being delivered by government. It has to be specific to each sector, but there has to be a really clear conversation."

"There needs to be a shared services program because I don't need a tech person 40 hours a week, but I do need a tech person sometimes right? So there's some value in sharing resources even though we're in different sectors or delivering different services."

"(People) want to go have a job that's more than \$20 an hour because they presumably have gone through university and gotten a degree in something, and the marketplace is \$25 to \$30. There almost should be another pay level there for positions that require more skills...because we're trying to make that (employment) program work for something that it's not working for."

"It tends to be a 37.5 hour week, but as we all know, there's projects, not enough staff, and things that have to get done. So, if that week, you know, it takes 50 hours, well, guess what? You're working 50 hours... So burnout then becomes the factor, right?"

"The pay rates maybe, like if you look at the type of job you do within the not-for-profit versus if you were doing it for government or others, it doesn't really correlate. So those people tend to go to government jobs where there is long-term planning, for things like retirement and future investment."

"You see the business community definitely champions business leaders. There's awards. There's promotions for them...people who have their whole careers in the nonprofit sector, I don't think there's any platform for them to even display their skills or display their gifts or their accomplishments."