

THE ONTARIO
TRILLIUM
FOUNDATION



LA FONDATION
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Building Capacity, Granting for Impact

Executive Summary

Building
healthy and
vibrant
communities

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The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, receives annually \$100 million of government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation

About Us

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Ministry of Culture. We are one of Canada's leading grantmaking foundations.

Our funding is generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative. Our time-limited grants to charitable and not-for-profit organizations fund capital, operating and specific project costs in support of four sectors – arts and culture, environment, human and social services and sports and recreation.

Our grants have a wide and lasting impact in communities across Ontario. They provide critical support for organizations to build on their strengths, improve their capacity, develop new ideas and move forward.

We have two granting programs: Community and Province-Wide. More than 300 local volunteers work in 16 regional Grant Review Teams to review and recommend projects for funding under the Community Program. A committee of the Foundation's Board of Directors reviews and recommends Province-Wide Program grants.

The Foundation's volunteer Board of Directors reviews and provides final approval for grants in both programs.

Our Vision

The Ontario Trillium Foundation is a catalyst that enables Ontarians to work together to enhance the quality of life in their communities. We believe that communities across Ontario are rich in talent, creativity and drive and our grants stimulate communities to build on these assets.

Our Mission

Building healthy and vibrant communities throughout Ontario by strengthening the capacity of the voluntary sector, through investments in community-based initiatives.

Who We Are

The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, receives annually \$100 million of government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative.

Our Priorities

The Foundation will support the building of healthy and vibrant communities through community-based initiatives that strengthen the capacity of organizations in the arts and culture, environment, human and social services, and sports and recreation sectors. In particular, the Foundation will place priority on supporting organizations that work in the following areas to help Ontarians achieve their potential:

- Enhanced success for students and learners
- Healthier and more physically active Ontarians
- Enhanced employment and economic potential for workers and their families
- More effective volunteers and more people engaged in their communities

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For More Information

Please visit our website at
www.trilliumfoundation.org
or call 1.800.263.2887.

What Is Capacity Building?

Capacity building for a not-for-profit organization has often been defined as activities or actions that increase and sustain its effectiveness. These can include good governance, solid leadership, a clear mission, vision and values, responsive program development, diversified revenue and strong management support systems.

As a result of this project's findings, OTF plans to expand its definition of **organizational capacity building** for the purpose of grantmaking. This new and broader definition is that organizational capacity building is a process that strengthens four interrelated pillars – the relevance, responsiveness, effectiveness and resilience of not-for-profit organizations.

At the heart of this new definition is the recognition that organizations strive to build their capacity by becoming more effective themselves and through their interaction with their communities.

Organizational capacity building is inextricably linked with **community capacity building**. When organizations build their own capacity, they help build healthy and vibrant communities at the same time. This speaks directly to OTF's vision of serving as a catalyst that enables Ontarians to work together to enhance the quality of life in their communities.

**OTF Support for Capacity Building
Between April 1, 1999 and March 31,
2005, OTF approved more than
9,100 grants valued at more than
\$572 million. Approximately
one-quarter of these grants supported
initiatives that build organizational
capacity in the four sectors OTF
supports – arts and culture,
environment, human and social
services and sports and recreation.**

Hospice Association of Ontario (HAO)

The vision, mission and values of the Hospice Association of Ontario lie at the heart of its decision making processes, just as they are positioned at the centre of OTF's organizational capacity building framework.

The Association's training programs for care providers were well received within its own hospice membership. However, HAO realized that it could only sustain itself as an organization if it could involve its members in expanding and adapting its training program throughout Ontario. HAO therefore decided to build its financial vibrancy by providing fee-for-service training programs. This would be a natural extension of HAO's well-founded reputation as experts in the area of helping people to die well.

HAO identified Long-Term Care (LTC) homes as care providers that address issues similar to those their hospices address with their clients. HAO therefore marketed its specialized end-of-life care training programs to LTC homes. Deliberately starting small and staying close to Toronto, HAO tested its capacity to reach out to this new market. Once it received positive results, HAO called on OTF to support a systematic and planned expansion to other regions of Ontario. It is in the process of doing so by involving its members as key program delivery agents (**resilience**).

This expansion strategy, supported by OTF, serves a number of purposes. The involvement of hospice members increases their local reputation, sustainability and profile in a shared vision (**responsiveness**). The strategy has also provided the means for entering into collaborative arrangements with multiple LTC sites and provide on-site training (**relevance**). These enhance the provision of quality end-of-life care to their residents.

OTF Program: Province-Wide grant

Purpose: Sustainability development

Category: Human and social services

HAO, centrally located in Toronto, is now Canada's largest volunteer hospice organization. HAO members have become the largest direct service providers within Ontario's voluntary health care sector.

Today, in more than 450 communities throughout Ontario, 13,300 volunteers dedicate 630,000 hours of service each year to HAO's member hospices.

These volunteers provide emotional, psychological and spiritual support to help people with terminal illnesses live at home or in a home-like setting as fully and as comfortably as possible. They also provide respite, emotional and bereavement support to family members.

Executive Director: Janet Napper

Board Chair: Bruce Peer

www.hospice.on.ca

In addition, throughout this expansion, HAO has paid fastidious attention to quality and continuous evaluation from multiple sources, including participants and trainers (**effectiveness**). This feedback has provided partnership development initiatives. It has also provided the means for HAO to explore new training programs and private as well as not-for-profit partnership opportunities, all within the context of its desire to honour its mission and build on its core competencies.

Why and How We Studied Capacity Building

OTF undertook this research on capacity building to increase the impact of its grants to individual organizations and thus strengthen the overall capacity of the voluntary sector in Ontario. This is in keeping with OTF funding principles, which include a commitment to support the work and enhance the long-term capacity of organizations in the voluntary sector. It also complements OTF's mission – to build healthy and vibrant communities throughout Ontario by strengthening the capacity of the voluntary sector, through investments in community-based initiatives.

Over a three-month research period, the researchers reviewed capacity building literature and conducted open interviews with 28 recipients of OTF grants and a number of researchers and consultants in the field. They also conducted in-depth follow-up interviews with six of the 28 grantee organizations to ensure that their findings reflected a diverse range of capacity building grants.

The researchers then carefully reviewed, analyzed and assessed their findings. The following questions guided their research:

- How do we define organizational capacity building?
- What key elements or characteristics successfully allow organizations to build capacity?
- How do OTF grantmaking practices influence organizational capacity building?
- What has been the impact of OTF grantmaking on building organizational capacity over the last six years?
- What lessons and best practices can OTF identify that could inform its granting and evaluation practices?

Regent Park Community Health Centre – Pathways to Education Program

When the diverse and long-time residents of Regent Park and the Regent Park Community Health Centre in Toronto met over a three-year period to create a vision for community succession, they were also planting the seeds for the award-winning and high-profile Pathways to Education Program™.

The vision that inspired Pathways was no less than to transform the life chances of a whole generation of young people and enable them to become the future leaders of their community.

Pathways' first funding partners – OTF and the Counselling Foundation of Canada – provided the means for this vision to become a reality. The organizers gave considerable thought to real differences that this initiative could make within the community, rather than focusing on initiatives trying to make other organizations (such as schools) change. In response to the findings of focus groups with youth, parents, agency staff and schools, they decided to focus on the Grade 8/9 transition period (which contributed to a 56% high school drop-out rate at the time) and support through high school.

Today, Pathways provides integrated academic, social, financial and advocacy support that helps young people in the program succeed in high school, post-secondary education and employment. These areas of support, plus the research that binds them, is rigorously monitored, regularly evaluated and communicated. Parents and youth have to sign an agreement in order to participate, and both receive support. Pathways has also established key linkages with area high schools and boards of education as the students and their siblings progress through the system **(relevance and responsiveness)**.

This initiative started with three staff and 120 students. The results were demonstrable and allowed for the development of feedback and evaluation mechanisms. Within four years, the infrastructure had grown to 25 full-time equivalent employees and 618 students.

OTF Program: Province-Wide grant
Purpose: Community succession
Category: Human and social services

Multiple funders and donors of this Toronto-based initiative now support the annual operating budget of \$2.5 million. More than 350 volunteer tutors, mentors, program ambassadors and board members provide more than 21,000 hours a year of their time (resilience).

The development thrust of the Pathways to Education Program has always been focused on strategic relationship building and long-term informal partnerships with relevant organizations such as post-secondary institutions, school boards and youth employment centres (responsiveness).

The Pathways to Education Program has truly developed into a successful model of effective outcome-based programming by increasing community capacity and partnership.

Executive Director: Carolyn Acker
P2E Program Director: Norman Rowen
Board President: Diana Moeser
www.p2e.ca

By 2004, 99% of eligible Grade 9 students and parents were registered in the program and 60 volunteer group mentors and 150 volunteer tutors were recruited and trained **(effectiveness)**.

Pathways students now significantly outperform their peers at most of the high schools they attend. Absenteeism has dropped by 60% and the proportion of youth with serious academic problems has been reduced by over 50%.

Our Major Finding: The Four Pillars of Capacity Building

We developed a framework for capacity building that includes four pillars. The four pillars of capacity building necessary for organizations to develop their own capacity and, potentially, the capacity of the communities they serve are:

Relevance:

aligning with and understanding community realities such as socio-economic mix, societal norms and values, diversity, history, physical environment, assets/capacities and issues/needs.

Responsiveness:

developing and strengthening community relationships through ongoing consultation, collaboration and systemic as well as specific involvement, to create a shared vision and promote inclusiveness.

Effectiveness:

practising good board governance, management systems and evaluation; implementing well-planned programs and services, communication strategies, resource management and technology.

Resilience:

nurturing an organizational culture that fosters leadership and creativity and embraces strategic thinking, financial vibrancy, continuous learning, asset/strength-based thinking and change management.

Réseau Ontario (RO)

From its inception in 1999, Ottawa-based Réseau Ontario has dedicated itself to providing full-service support for high quality Franco-Ontarian presentations. RO has fostered its inherent flexibility, risk tolerance, self-reflection and responsiveness. As a result, it has developed and successfully implemented an integrated strategy to nurture touring attractions across the Franco-Ontarian community.

RO is a dynamic network of presenters (at schools, theatres, festivals, and cultural centres) with a deep-rooted commitment to quality and continuous improvement for presenters and professional artists alike (**resilience**).

The presenters and artists benefit from RO's extensive booking capacity and from participating in Contact Ontariois, a key annual showcase event. RO also provides presenters and artists with training and consultation in many areas. These include start-up processes, the development of new venues, distribution and promotion advice, fundraising strategies, strategic partnership development and an arts and the schools strategy, which links RO productions and teachers' guides to the Ontario curriculum (**responsiveness**).

Its three-year OTF grant provided RO with the means to engage in comprehensive strategic planning and board development. OTF funding also enabled RO to implement a growth strategy by hiring a full-time marketing and promotions coordinator.

RO generates other revenue from membership fees and grants. Block booking allows it to enjoy economies of scale and reduced costs for producers and artists. While costs will be reduced once its current development phase is complete, ongoing sustainability for an intermediary organization is always a serious voluntary sector challenge.

OTF Program: Province-Wide grant

Purpose: Building administrative capacity

Category: Arts and culture

RO is now working at increasing the ethnic diversity of its member presenters so it can be more inclusive and appeal to an even wider range of Franco-Ontarians (relevance).

RO's success has attracted the attention of media and corporate supporters and all levels of government. It is also now recognized as a cultural resource for other presenter networks across Canada.

Executive Director: Chantal Lamoureux

Board President: Robert-Guy Despatie

www.reseauontario.ca

The greatest benefit to RO from its OTF funding has been its increased access to Franco-Ontarian students throughout Ontario. For example, before its OTF funding, RO presented 52 shows with eight to 10 artists. In 2002-2003, RO experienced a 260% increase in its number of performances. By 2004-2005, it was presenting 450 shows and workshops with 20 artists to audiences comprised of more than 60,000 people (**effectiveness**).

These results have also fostered the development of a school board network that is designed to strengthen the relationship between the arts and education.

Our Major Finding: The Four Pillars of Capacity Building (cont'd)

These four pillars, while interrelated, are equally important. Healthy organizations need to build on all four. Organizations that are **resilient** in the face of change incorporate value-based leadership, strategic thinking, continuous learning and creativity into everyday behaviour. **Effective** organizations have strong management, solid board governance and well-planned programs and services. Similarly, organizations remain **relevant** to their communities when they establish strong relationships and **respond** to their community realities, such as the current economic climate or demographic changes.

Figure 1 is an illustrative model of our framework for organizational capacity building. At its foundation are our beliefs that voluntary sector organizations exist within communities. They are value-based, and they nurture organizational cultures that support the organization's mission.

Figure 1 – An Illustrative Model

Organizational Capacity Building: **The Four Pillars**



Midaynta Association of Somali Service Agencies

In the early 1990s, tens of thousands of immigrants from Somalia came to Toronto as refugees after a devastating civil war. In response to this community's needs and differences, almost 50 Somali community support agencies evolved.

By 1995, the Midaynta Association of Somali Service Agencies had been created to address family reunification issues and provide a forum for service delivery agencies. As community needs emerged, so did inter-agency issues. Executive Director Ibrahim Absiye experienced this dynamic first hand and developed a personal and larger, more inclusive vision for the organization and for the Somali community (**relevance**).

With OTF support, Midaynta launched an organizational development process that responded to the development of the Somali community in Toronto.

The transition to a community with a greater degree of unity under a shared community vision was not easy.

Initial successes reflected an increased level of trust between agencies and the active support of community elders. The organization successfully completed an inclusive consultation process with the existing board of directors, agency staff and community focus groups of youth, women and elders.

A full two-day consultative retreat in August of 2004 provided the space to acknowledge 10 years of challenges and 10 years of successes, and to create a collective and positive vision for the future. Hearts and minds were united and the organization was set for the next stage of development – the transition to Midaynta Community Services.

OTF Program: Community grant

Purpose: Building agency capacity

Category: Human and social services

Midaynta Association of Somali Service Agencies Executive Director Ibrahim Absiye networks with similar agencies across the GTA and seeks out mentors in Toronto immigrant community service organizations.

He actively solicited advice from fellow participants in the York-Maytree Management Certificate Program as he progressed toward building board and administrative capacities and procedures (effectiveness).

Ibrahim believes in the importance of strong, flexible and transparent leadership and strength – all reflections of a deeply-held commitment to community (resilience).

Executive Director: Ibrahim Absiye

Board Chair: Abdulkadir Abow

www.midaynta.com

This entity is in the process of becoming a community-run and community-wide full-service agency, applying for charitable status, electing a community board and developing the means to address key community priorities such as inter-generational family issues (**responsiveness**).

What was behind the success of this process? Ibrahim Absiye suggests that many factors helped participants identify with and join their shared vision. The key ones were openness, honesty, inclusiveness, the willingness to create a common ground for all stakeholders, process transparency and a common language.

Our Other Findings

The following are the most significant findings that emerged from our interviews and literature review. These findings played an important role in helping us develop our framework for organizational capacity building.

Organizational capacity building does not just happen.

It is deliberate, comprehensive and takes time as well as commitment from senior leadership. These leaders work toward capacity building by enhancing the effectiveness of organizations and meeting their structural needs. They also strengthen relationships to make the organization more responsive and hence relevant to changing environmental and societal needs and realities.

Funders need to take the whole organizational context into account.

Funders must consider how they provide support and the nature of their relationships with grantees. They must also consider the culture, community relevance and strengths of grantee organizations.

A strategic plan is not enough.

Communities need performance and results as well as secure funding and effective management practices. Organizations need to understand how a comprehensive planning process leads to specific outcomes, better programs, expanded programs and/or a more stable organization.

Organizational growth is only one success factor.

Grantees who were interviewed often measured their success based on demand for their programs and growth. These are important factors, to be sure. But organizations also must take into consideration how they maintain internal effectiveness when demand for their programs grows. All too often, additional resources or programs result in poorly managed growth that undermines program quality and leaves organizations financially unstable.

Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory (PEPtBO)

To say that the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory tapped into an unappreciated and unexplored natural resource would be an understatement on at least four counts.

The first natural resource PEPtBO tapped into was the passion and dedication that a few volunteers contributed to create the only full-time bird observatory on the north shore of Lake Ontario. Initially PEPtBO was a pilot project, using borrowed equipment and facilities to conduct banding activities. But the energy of a wide base of infectious enthusiastic community supporters, trained volunteers and university students helped it expand. PEPtBO eventually established itself as an integral component of migration monitoring research in Canada, continuing to grow as rapidly as the number and types of species it catalogued. At the same time, its diverse board grew to reflect a wide range of technical, community and regional expertise (**relevance**).

The second natural resource was the link between bird monitoring and education. PEPtBO became part of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network, achieved designation as a global IBA (Important Birding Area) and now provides five education programs linked to the Grade 2 to Grade 12 curriculum. More than 500 school children annually participate in banding; they pass on conservation messages to their parents and complement important research activities (**responsiveness**).

The third natural resource was the connection of birding to eco-tourism and local economic development. Banding takes place only in spring and fall. It is an activity that extends the normal tourist season and attracts avid birders from around the world. As a result, partnerships with local bed and breakfasts and inns have emerged. In addition, PEPtBO has been able to supplement and subsequently supplant OTF funds with membership fees and fundraising events. These include the spring Prince Edward County Birding Festival, Fall Dinner and Dance Bird Ball and the Baillie Bird-a-thon (**resilience**).

OTF Program: Community grant

Purpose: Capital investment and operating funds

Category: Environment

PEPtBO is located along the eastern tip of Prince Edward County, about 20 minutes southeast of Picton. Its two-year OTF grant provided critical resources for a number of initiatives. The funding allowed PEPtBO to completely renovate an on-site cottage that provides facilities for national and international volunteers and equipment; engage the services of a licensed bird bander; and ensure access for school children who otherwise could not afford the necessary transportation costs. By-products of the project funding included the development of volunteer and educational programs and the opportunity to plan PEPtBO's development, growth and sustainability.

More than 50 volunteers contribute almost 6,500 hours of time annually to this seasonal and volunteer-driven charitable organization. It prides itself on operating within its means, building core partnerships and taking planned steps forward (effectiveness).

Project Coordinator: Brian Joyce

Board Chair: Eric Machell

www.peptbo.ca

The fourth natural resource was the ambient flora and fauna combined with millions of migratory birds. More than 300 bird species (the banding totals are 5,000 to 7,000 migrating birds and 98 species) pass through Prince Edward Point and the county annually, including one of the largest fall migration concentrations of Northern Saw-whet Owls in Canada. The project also educates visitors on the importance of the surrounding natural wildlife and ecosystems (deer, otters, coyotes, beavers, turtles and frogs) (**relevance**).

Our Other Findings (cont'd)

Organizational culture plays an important role.

Organizational culture refers to commonly held values, beliefs, attitudes and approaches that shape the behaviour of an organization. Effective organizations build resilient and responsive cultures. These cultures foster continuous learning, open discussions and problem solving. They also focus on the future, allowing organizations to make tough decisions. An organization's culture affects structural change – whether internal or external, or due to changes in growth, funding, staff or resources – and vice versa. In other words, successful structural change may require an organization to develop new ways of working – essentially, shift its culture. At the same time, structural change will greatly affect an organization's culture.

Capacity building takes time.

Change does not happen overnight. It can take three to five years for capacity building efforts to take hold in a meaningful way.

Leadership breeds leadership.

Organizations can succeed in capacity building efforts only through effective leadership at the senior staff and board level. Leaders must commit to internal and external improvements to support any growth or change. Furthermore, strong organizations identify leadership development throughout their organization as key to their success. Broad-based, responsive leadership is part of the culture of these organizations. Indeed, grantees were emphatic that strong leadership was the key to ensuring that their organization could survive its changing realities over time. As one arts organization grantee stated, "leadership breeds leadership."

External accountabilities are a major issue.

Not-for-profit organizations need to be adaptable, resilient and able to respond effectively to change and growth. At the same time, they must work closely with funders who expect them to demonstrate tangible outcomes and impacts commensurate with the resources invested. They are also expected to develop detailed accounting reports and efficient management systems.

Tips from grantees on how OTF and other grantmakers can deepen impact

- 1. Keep listening to grantees and incorporate learnings into practice.**
- 2. Allow grantees to take risks. As one grantee put it, "Allow us to take risks, and trust the process."**
- 3. Look at softer, more intangible elements of capacity building (such as effective leadership, strategic thinking, continuous learning and creativity). These can help organizations identify measurable results for accountability, without impeding the process of building capacity.**

Niagara Mentoring and Leadership Initiative

Two-way partnerships had been the order of the day for Niagara-area United Ways and other regional service agencies for more than 50 years. Then a 2003 voluntary sector labour market study conducted by the Centre for Community Leadership at Niagara College changed the status quo. This labour market study profiled – for the first time – the challenges faced by voluntary sector organizations in the area.

The results were not dramatically different from other studies. But they provided a level of detail and important recommendations which put the issues facing voluntary sector organizations in the Niagara Region squarely at the doorstep of leading funders and sectoral service providers.

The United Ways of St. Catharines and District, South Niagara, and Greater Fort Erie, Information Niagara and the Centre for Community Leadership decided to take up the challenge – they would work together for the first time.

The power dynamic between funders (in this case the United Ways) and service providers who may be current or potential grantees can be a sensitive issue at the best of times. This commitment required them to address the challenges of arriving at a collaborative consensus among all five organizations (**relevance**).

Participants built conversations and commitments incrementally over several months, facilitated by OTF's Regional Program Manager. To the collective credit of everyone involved, they kept their attention firmly focused on the labour market study and the overarching needs of the voluntary sector (**responsiveness**).

The result is the Niagara Mentoring and Leadership Initiative, a “one stop shop” which will focus on four areas of organizational capacity building support:

- In-house volunteer mentors
- Peer support groups
- Strategic planning
- Training

OTF Program: Community grant

Purpose: Mentoring and leadership

Category: Human and social services

Lessons learned:

- **Have the right people in the room.**
- **Determine individual and collective motivations for participating.**
- **Put the “elephant in the room” on the table and directly address underlying “deal-breaking” issues.**
- **Take time to build trust and rapport.**
- **Acknowledge and address organizational cultural issues.**
- **Keep community needs in view at all times.**

Executive Director: Rosanna Thoms

Board Chair: Karen Pearson

www.informationniagara.com

Our Other Findings (cont'd)

Organizations need resilience to know what is best.

Much of the literature supports the view that organizations have to be ready to successfully implement capacity building strategies – and that they know best what they require in order to build capacity. According to our research, this is an oversimplification. A community organization may be aware of its own needs. But it is only ready to build capacity when it is resilient enough to create real, significant changes that shake its very foundation and transform its organizational culture.

Specific grants supporting technical improvements are important.

A specific grant may have a significant and positive impact on an organization – its staff and the amount of volunteer time necessary, for instance. But a grant that supports technical improvements alone will not provide sustained capacity building over time.

There is a need for flexible and organization-specific approaches.

An overall message in the literature is that there are no magic formulas and no standard “best practices” to strengthen organizations. Furthermore, there is no such thing as a standard management structure, organizational review or set of policies that will fit all situations. In truth, the impact of funding a particular pillar depends on many factors. These can include size of the organization’s infrastructure, level of planning, program complexity, timing, current funding environment and community support for issues. Grantees are convinced that strategies undertaken with due respect for the broader context and specific realities of their communities would have more positive effects than imposed “best practices” approaches. These may include peer support/mentoring groups and team learning opportunities.

Management support organizations (MSOs) can be effective capacity builders.

Within the community, infrastructure organizations such as MSOs play a key role in developing and supporting organizational capacity building. MSOs are not-for-profit organizations, often supported by a large number of funders, that help improve the effectiveness of other not-for-profit organizations. They provide a range of services to not-for-profit organizations, such as promoting best practices, advising, coaching, training and providing opportunities for networking and on-site consulting.

Community context is important.

The changing conditions in a community are just as critical to an organization’s success as are its internal strengths.

Youth Opportunities Unlimited (YOU) / Reuse It

One look at the YOU website and one knows one is entering an environment where a caring social enterprise is endeavouring to meet the long-term employment needs of at-risk youth. Its upbeat look and “can do” approach clearly energize youth and staff alike.

YOU has succeeded in its plan to move away from its former label as a traditional youth job placement service agency that had been serving young people in London and Middlesex since 1982. It has become a successful retail sales group that exposes local businesses to a wide range of entrepreneurial youth who subscribe to a shared social and environmental perspective.

In 1996, YOU created Reuse It – a business with a fee-for-service component that combined social conscience with the ability to make a living. It encourages businesses to hire youth for junk removal services, custom woodworking and recycling services. It was a great demonstration of how these disparate communities could work together. In this case, Reuse It created a customized blue box service for small businesses, as well as Muskoka chairs and garden furniture from telephone poles and baskets. Young adults, employers/businesses and homeowners with a shared focus on the environment also created Market Quality Preserves, which allows participants to split their time between the kitchen and a retail kiosk at the Covent Garden Market. Both Reuse It and Market Quality Preserves now conduct their retail sales under the YOU Made It banner.

YOU’s products have shifted over time from simple to more complex, requiring sophisticated production and retail skills. It encourages its participants to concentrate on the process of doing things. This creates opportunities for them to connect with environmental issues and their own creativity. It also helps youth develop entrepreneurial and life skills and build their self-esteem and potential experience portfolios. Graduates of the program are now capable of managing a warehouse or a retail operation or coordinating 50-60 recycling contracts (**resilience**).

OTF Program: Community grant

Purpose: Organizational effectiveness

Category: Environment

Because of their close connection to youth, the 35 staff generated a new vision and values statement for subsequent board approval. Thus YOU’s mission and values, rather than products and funding, were what drove priorities and opportunities (resilience).

YOU has recognized its production limits, weighing its training mission with the need to promote its social and environmental value-added benefits.

As a result, YOU’s products and its mission are now intimately linked. All customers – from businesses contracting for recycling services to retail customers at the YOU kiosk in the Covent Garden Market in London – learn about YOU and its vision for the community (relevance).

Executive Director: Steve Cordes

Board President: Jim Graham

www.you.on.ca

Meanwhile, YOU re-examined its own focus and realized that training was its ultimate goal, not generating revenue. But with very few people at the management level, YOU had limited ability to plan and develop new initiatives and sources of revenue and meet or address youths’ basic needs. It therefore re-structured its operations so it could focus on getting things done better rather than merely completing projects. Its key leaders are service stream managers (e.g. basic needs service manager, youth enterprise services manager, partnership development manager) who have had extensive prior experience with YOU. These individuals collaborate on ventures, allowing the Executive Director to play a more strategic community liaison role (**effectiveness**).

Our Framework in Action

We decided to apply our new definition of capacity building to several organizations that had already received OTF grants. Our goal was to demonstrate whether improving the effectiveness of organizational structure, relevance to community realities, resilience in organizational culture and responsiveness to community relationships could improve organizational capacity building. The case profiles featured in this report show how each of the organizations used OTF funds strategically to build capacity – that is, capacity which transcends the life of a grant and becomes embedded in the fabric of the organization.

Where We Go From Here

Building Capacity, Granting for Impact

This research has provided OTF with an important foundation for future research and grantmaking – one that will allow OTF to help grantees achieve clear outcomes and higher impact. We believe that the application of this approach will benefit Ontario’s not-for-profit and charitable organizations. This will strengthen their relevance and responsiveness to their communities and at the same time allow them to focus on building their own resilience and effectiveness.

OTF will explore and expand on its findings through consultation, ongoing dialogue and further research. Most importantly, by expanding the knowledge base of its Board, Grant Review Teams, staff, prospective grantees and the voluntary sector, this research will help OTF expand its own capacity for leadership in grantmaking.

Among the questions we will ask:

- How do the four pillars – relevance, responsiveness, effectiveness and resilience – interact with or affect one another?
- Does the importance of each pillar to overall capacity building change at different points in an organization’s history?
- How do organizational capacity building and community capacity building interact?
- According to several grantees who were interviewed, OTF already works from a community development philosophy that establishes close relationships with grantees. Can OTF therefore take advantage of its ongoing connections to its grantees to play a role in helping organizations address their external accountabilities?
- What is the value of funding organizational reviews, feasibility studies or organizational skills assessments that support organizations in building a stronger, more effective infrastructure?
- Can one establish a direct connection between strengthening organizations and positively influencing the health and well-being of the broader community?

Jumblies Theatre and Clay & Paper Theatre

Compatibility between artistic directors is not unusual. It rarely extends to collaborating on administrative supports and extensive transitional mentoring. However, that is exactly what took place between art-in-the-heart-of-community companies Jumblies Theatre and Clay & Paper Theatre, both based in Toronto.

Clay & Paper, while well-established, needed support to make a transition to a higher profile and more complex scale of production. Jumblies Theatre was just getting started and needed to build its administrative infrastructure from scratch.

The grant from OTF provided the means to jointly acquire the services of an administrator to guide them through their respective administrative transitions.

Jumblies was able to recognize the importance of a sound administrative infrastructure. It established synergistic relationships between and amongst its financial systems, operational policies and procedures, functional job descriptions, governance and board development, fund acquisition and maturing artistic capacity (**effectiveness**).

At the same time, Jumblies' artistic director Ruth Howard realized the benefits of building growth and artistic integrity hand-in-hand rather than at the expense of one another (**resilience**).

Their administrative collaboration complemented a mutually supportive artistic mentoring process between the two artistic directors.

Clay & Paper Artistic Director David Anderson mentored Jumblies, providing a source of artistic creativity. On the administrative level, a foundation was established to solicit development and artistic grants from a number of foundations and work toward a vision of having a permanent space (**effectiveness**).

OTF Program: Community grant

Purpose: Organizational effectiveness

Category: Arts and culture

Clay & Paper Theatre has presented large-scale giant puppet productions in open community commons since 1969 and doesn't charge an admission fee.

Jumblies Theatre, established in 2001, creates grassroots community arts projects in urban settings.

Clay & Paper

Artistic Director: David Anderson

Board Chair: Sheila Goulet

www.clayandpapertheatre.org

Jumblies

Artistic Director: Ruth Howard

Board Chair: Lisa C. Freeman

www.jumbliestheatre.org

Both companies nurtured the participation of theatre students and established an intimate mentoring network called Raucous Caucus throughout their transition (**relevance**).

Jumblies Theatre and Clay & Paper Theatre are now established, recognized Toronto-based theatre companies.

These two Toronto-based companies also make significant contributions to the theatre scene-at-large by mentoring other companies and speaking out on the importance of support for the arts in Canadian society (**responsiveness**).

Acknowledgements

This research project was truly participatory, encompassing a high level of commitment and enthusiasm from all levels. It is impossible to do justice to the dedication, passion and creative foresight behind the organizations selected as case profiles. Many thanks also to the Capacity Building External Resource Committee, comprised of colleagues from across Canada and the U.S., and OTF staff, who provided valuable input. Special thanks to OTF senior management for their vision and leadership as well as important and timely feedback.

Capacity Building External Resource Committee

Elio Antunes, *Ontario Physical & Health Education Association, Toronto, Ontario*

Pat Bradley, *Ontario Arts Council, Toronto, Ontario*

Phil Buchanan, *The Centre for Effective Philanthropy, Cambridge, Massachusetts*

Mark Cabaj, *Tamarack, An Institute for Community Engagement, Waterloo, Ontario*

Kathleen Enright, *Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, Washington, D.C.*

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Katharine Pearson, *McConnell Family Foundation, Montreal, Quebec*

Kathryn Townshend, *Canadian Environmental Grantmakers' Network, Toronto, Ontario*

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Arti Freeman, *Program Manager, Niagara*

Theron Kramer, *Program Manager, Grey, Bruce, Huron and Perth*

Ruth Mott, *Program Manager, Quinte, Kingston and Rideau*

Colette Naubert, *Program Manager, Toronto*

Renée Ouellet, *Senior Communications Officer, Marketing and Media Services*

Jackie Powell, *Program Manager, Durham, Haliburton, Kawartha and Pine Ridge*

Sheila Simpson, *Program Manager, Thames Valley*

Marilyn Struthers, *Program Manager, Province-Wide Program*

Dan Wilson, *Manager of Policy, Research and Evaluation*

eyeGO to the Arts

eyeGO to the Arts has grown like a brush fire, alighting the energy of presenters and young people into enthusiasm for the performing arts throughout Ontario.

Before launching eyeGO to the Arts in 2000, the Centre in the Square in Kitchener Waterloo and the River Run Centre in Guelph spent almost 12 months, supported by the Ontario Arts Council, investigating the feasibility of establishing a vehicle to promote attendance to the performing arts by young people. They used focus groups, among other vehicles, to explore why young people weren't attending the performing arts and what one could do to make it possible for them to attend. They learned that the programs themselves didn't need to change, but the experience needed to be demystified. Traditional promotional vehicles were not reaching young people and financial considerations were a real barrier.

The result is eyeGO to the Arts, a \$5 ticket program dedicated to full-time students in Grades 9 through 12. It provides a limited number of best available seats to any performance in a given community – be it Stomp, Lily Tomlin, a symphony or an opera (**relevance**).

Through eyeGO to the Arts, going to a performance is as easy as going to a movie. Students can select a show in their community on the eyeGO to the Arts website, go to the box office, show proof they are a high school student and pay \$5 for an eyeGO to the Arts ticket. An outreach officer makes direct presentations to schools and an eyeGO Youth Council provides inspiration and a reality check. Word of mouth and a dynamic website also increase the popularity of the program (**responsiveness**).

Behind the scenes, OTF funding provided the "gift of time" to develop a three-year strategic plan and a comprehensive marketing strategy.

OTF Program: Community grant

Purpose: Organizational effectiveness

Category: Arts and culture

The very essence of eyeGO to the Arts is to reach out to young people and nurture future audiences. So media, corporate and community support has been an essential component of the group's success. Within less than a year, the group went from having two partnerships to having 33. The experience has literally changed lives, enabling young people to open their eyes to a world which they had otherwise perceived as closed to them (responsiveness).

Director of Development Cheryl Ewing finds her carefully calculated statistics redundant as she recounts the difference the program has made.

"Collecting the stories" is a key component of their development success.

The pressure from young people to expand the program across Canada came early in the launch of the program. eyeGO to the Arts chose to undergo a five-to-ten-year strategic planning process and put in place a national expansion committee. It is now poised to expand throughout the province (resilience).

Director of Development: Cheryl Ewing

Board Chair: Bill Chesney

www.eyego.org

The group opted against going the traditional route of hiring one multi-purpose administrative person (which would strain resources). Instead they hired Brava, a full-service special events and arts management company, which offered the services of three talented professionals. This administrative component is likely to decrease as the group undertakes an anticipated expansion and puts appropriate systems in place (**effectiveness**).

Acknowledgements (cont'd)

OTF Volunteers and Staff

Helen Burstyn, *Chair of the Board*

L. Robin Cardozo, *Chief Executive Officer*

John Ecker, *Director of Communications and Public Affairs*

Patricia Else, *Director of Grant Operations*

Donna Gilhooly, *Board member*

Jane Greer, *Manager of Marketing and Media Services*

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Susan Stowe, *Consultant for Francophone grantee interviews*

Gayle Waxman, *Director of Policy, Research and Evaluation*

Children’s Water Education Council (CWEC) / Just Add Water

Its “Just Add Water” strategy is the latest in a series of initiatives by the Waterloo Wellington-based Children’s Water Education Council. This strategy also reflects its development as the premier voice in Ontario for water conservation, protection and education.

Children’s groundwater festivals had already taken place in a number of locations throughout Ontario. But they gained a significant foothold and following in Waterloo Wellington when 5,000 children participated in the Waterloo Wellington Children’s Groundwater Festival in 2000.

This experience prepared the Festival to make the transition into the province-wide CWEC in 2001. A regional Community grant from OTF that year provided the means for the Council to stabilize its operations and embark on a number of training, research and development initiatives, including strategic planning, board development, website development, a comprehensive “How to Host a Water Festival” handbook and a festival marketing strategy (**effectiveness**).

Learning through experience has been a key component of the Festival from the outset. It has taken great care to ensure that it provides activities tied to specific curriculum requirements. For children in the later grades, the program becomes more scientific than in the early grades. Older children can take a field course that offers drilling, installation and monitoring of wells (**relevance**).

The centerpiece of a second OTF Province-Wide grant is a “Just Add Water” concept that makes it easier for communities to organize a children’s water festival. Local organizers can choose to use up to 10 pre-designed and fabricated activity centres that come in a mobile trailer and can be circulated around regions to a number of festivals (**resilience**).

OTF Programs: Community and Province-Wide grants
Purpose: Building capacity
Category: Environment

The position of the CWEC as both a role model and mentor for other festivals has resulted in the important development of a network of festival organizers who meet in locations throughout Ontario to exchange experiences and ideas and address issues of quality control (resilience**). These meetings also provide an opportunity for those who are interested in hosting a festival to learn more.**

Plans are underway to continue expanding the number and locations of water festivals, including to Northern Ontario. This will empower even more children to become stewards of one of our most precious of natural resources.

In 2002, the Waterloo Wellington Children’s Groundwater Festival received the prestigious Outstanding Achievement Award for volunteerism in Ontario.

Program Coordinator: Susan Reid
Board Chair: Peter Grey
www.cwec.ca

Since its inception in 2001, the Council has hosted or supported the hosting of 14 festivals. These festivals have brought together more than 3,500 volunteers who have educated 180,000 students from Grades 2 to 6 at local water festivals.

Partnerships have also expanded CWEC. The Ontario Water Works Association and Conservation Ontario now participate, and organizers are hoping to foster other viable and compatible relationships that can lead to partnerships (**responsiveness**).