

The logo graphic consists of three concentric, partial circular arcs in shades of blue, with a dashed blue line forming a larger outer arc. The text 'LAWSON FOUNDATION' is centered within the innermost arc.

LAWSON
FOUNDATION

2021

ANNUAL
REPORT

Healthy development of children and youth



This is our purpose.

The Lawson Foundation is a Canadian family foundation that invests in and engages with ideas, people and organizations that contribute to the healthy development of children and youth.

While this Annual Report provides some key highlights from 2021, we invite you to visit our website for more information about our work, our grants and our impact.

www.lawson.ca

Leadership Message



Marcel Lauzière
President & CEO



Barb Lawson Miller
Board Chair

*A year of bold
new approaches*

2021 was a year to step back and explore new approaches to our work. It was a transition year that gave us the space to think deeply about how best to deliver on our mission. This was about looking at ways to bolster our impact.

We launched our first funding call under our renewed **Child and Youth Diabetes Strategy** now focused on northern and remote Indigenous communities where diabetes is an epidemic. On the **Youth Action and the Environment** front, based on the results of the evaluation of our first three years of work, we decided to move from supporting organizations to supporting individuals, that is to say young Canadians who are facing barriers but who want to make a difference through their environmental action. And we have revamped our longstanding **Miggsie Fund** in London so that we can better support organizations that are providing crucial services to the community.

You will read all about these exciting and bold new approaches in this report.

Our partnerships which have been a way of working for the Foundation for many years now, continue to grow and diversify. This has included the Investment Roundtable initiative that was spearheaded and incubated by the Lawson Foundation, that has now been handed over to Philanthropic Foundations Canada; the [Charity Insights Canada Project](#), a major national data initiative undertaken with four other major foundations in partnership with Carleton University; and the London Funders Network that was recently revitalized by the Foundation and the United Way. These initiatives and others that you will read about in the Annual Report are examples of the continued leadership role that the Foundation plays in the philanthropic sector in Canada.

While we were busy figuring out these new approaches, we also worked with our Governance Committee

to continue to strengthen our governance model. We are really pleased to say that for the 2022 election, the Board slate includes a second member of the 5th generation. This is so encouraging for the continued succession at the Foundation. Not many family foundations in Canada can say that the 5th generation of the family is increasingly active in the work of the organization. There are now 40 members of the 5th generation. How amazing is that?

Moreover, the Board slate also includes a third community member. And for the first time in our history, the Chair of the Board will be a non-family Community member. So, much activity and change on the governance front as well.

We had hoped that we would be back into Foundation House in 2021, but the pandemic continued to play havoc with those plans. This has been difficult because Foundation House, of which the Lawson Foundation is a co-founder, is not just an office space. It is very much part of the way we work, the way we collaborate and the way we learn. Here's hoping that we will be back there in a permanent way sometime in 2022.

And in closing we want to emphasise that if we have been able to accomplish so much in 2021, despite the fact that Board and committees were not able to meet face-to-face, our success is due to the work and the dedication of the Board, the community advisors, the committee volunteers and the staff.

A big thank you to all. It has been another energizing year.

A Time of Renewal and Change

A SHARPER FOCUS FOR OUR DIABETES STRATEGY

The Lawson Foundation has a long history of supporting work on diabetes prevention and management. While important progress has been made on a number of fronts, diabetes continues to be an epidemic in Canada and around the world.

Today, more than 11 million Canadians are living with diabetes or prediabetes – and rates are on the rise, with type 2 diabetes in Indigenous youth recognized as the fastest growing pediatric chronic disease in the world. For First Nations individuals at 20 years of age in Canada, the lifetime risk of diabetes is about 80%.

Given the magnitude of the challenge and our commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in Canada, the Foundation has narrowed our Child & Youth Diabetes Strategy to focus on the prevention of type 2 diabetes and its complications in communities in northern and remote areas of the country.

We worked closely with a stellar group of advisors to help us figure out how best to define the goals and approaches of our new strategy.

Through this process we learned to think differently about how to support community-driven initiatives and we launched a Letter of Intent process that was entirely new for us with a view to make a real difference on an issue that has such a devastating impact for people from Indigenous communities.

We are committed to investing in this Strategy for the next 10 years.



Photo courtesy of Students on Ice

YOUTH ACTION & THE ENVIRONMENT 2.0

2021 marked the completion of the foundation's inaugural three-year Youth Action & the Environment program, with a cohort-based approach to supporting young environmental leaders.

While the COVID-19 pandemic certainly impacted our original intention for this program, much was also learned through the experience about how we might have greater impact in this focus area. This includes a realization that we should empower youth leaders directly, as individuals, while simultaneously broadening our vision of the impact of youth action in the environmental field.

As a result, the next iteration of programs in this focus area will include a pilot fellowship initiative that provides direct support, including financial support, skill coaching and training, leadership development and mentorship to young environmental leaders, as well as funding for intermediary organizations that support youth environmental leadership.



MIGGSIE FUND RENEWAL

Much of what the Foundation strives for is systemic change in our areas of focus that will lead to transformational change on big challenges facing children and youth. While that is where much of our resources and effort go, we also know the importance of supporting smaller community-based organizations that are making such a difference in people's lives day-in, day-out.

To that end, in 2021 we refocused the Miggsie Fund to renew our approach to supporting the London community. In collaboration with our Miggsie Fund Advisors we set new goals, implemented a communications strategy, broadened our reach to include Elgin and Middlesex, and launched our first-ever funding call for small multi-year grants.

We are proud to continue Miggsie's legacy of support for the London community.

Partnership and Collaboration

Partnership and collaboration are integral to our approach at the Lawson Foundation. Our impact is amplified when we engage and work with partners who have different skills, insights and expertise - helping us to achieve results that would otherwise be beyond our reach. Here are a few examples:



Charity Insights Canada Project

Pooling funds for greater impact

The Canada Charity Insights Project (CICP) at Carleton University will be the first-ever information and data-tracking platform for the charitable sector in Canada which will support the long-term economic viability, impact, and resiliency of the sector by assisting policymakers in making evidence-based policy decisions, developing data capacity for practitioners, and expanding knowledge of Canada's charitable sector. This is made possible by a unique national collaboration between 5 funders: the Lawson Foundation, the Mut-tart Foundation, the Metcalf Foundation, the Vancouver Foundation and an anonymous donor.



Investment Roundtable

Peer-to-peer knowledge exchange

A few years ago, the Lawson Foundation incubated the Investment Roundtable to bring together the people who lead the investment strategies of private foundations with the goal to facilitate communication and sharing of information between highly qualified volunteers who are often isolated from their peers. Tim Gardiner has been chairing this successful initiative that regularly welcomes new foundations. In 2021, we transitioned stewardship of the Roundtable to Philanthropic Foundations Canada.



MRI Foundation Collaborative & Impact United

Sharing resources for greater impact

The Lawson Foundation co-founded the Mission-Related Investing Collaborative several years ago, bringing together eight private foundations to explore potential impact investments. This collaboration has allowed us to build our collective knowledge and capacity around impact investing, including sharing our due diligence to co-invest in projects and initiatives with others. We have also helped to build the market for impact investing in Canada. In 2021, we decided to formalize the collaborative and we are now engaging with Impact United to continue to support this work, to help bring in more collaborators, to share and learn from each other, and to drive transformation in the impact investing field in Canada.



Outdoor Affinity Group

Stepping outside to create change

In collaboration with Arc'teryx and Environment Funders Canada, we have begun to explore the concept of an affinity group for funders around the outdoors. The goal is to encourage more funders to participate in this work, support diverse outdoor initiatives that will have a positive impact on health, education, and the wellbeing of Canadians, as well as strengthen community development and environmental awareness and action.



Reactivating a Funders Network in London

Collaborating for local impact in London-Elgin-Middlesex

In the spring, we took the initiative to reach out to the United Way in London to reactivate a funders network in the community to support better collaboration, learning and shared action amongst 11 grant-making organizations. This network includes the Lawson Foundation, the Blackburn Foundation, Canada Life, the City of London, the Government of Ontario, Libro, the London Community Foundation, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, TD, the United Way and the Westminster College Foundation. By working together, we can better support community organizations in the London area.



Foundation House

A philanthropic hub to convene, collaborate and advance impact

Since 2019 when the Lawson Foundation partnered with the Counselling Foundation and the Laidlaw Foundation around the idea to create a home for foundations and philanthropic organizations, Foundation House has been a space to convene, collaborate and advance impact, together. Now 13 organizations have a presence at Foundation House. While the way we worked together may have shifted during the COVID-19 pandemic, the foundation of our approach and commitment to collaboration remains strong and we are keen to continue to leverage the benefits and opportunities that come with sharing space, resources and ideas.

Philanthropy & Reconciliation

The Lawson Foundation is committed to supporting and advancing the work of reconciliation between Canada's Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

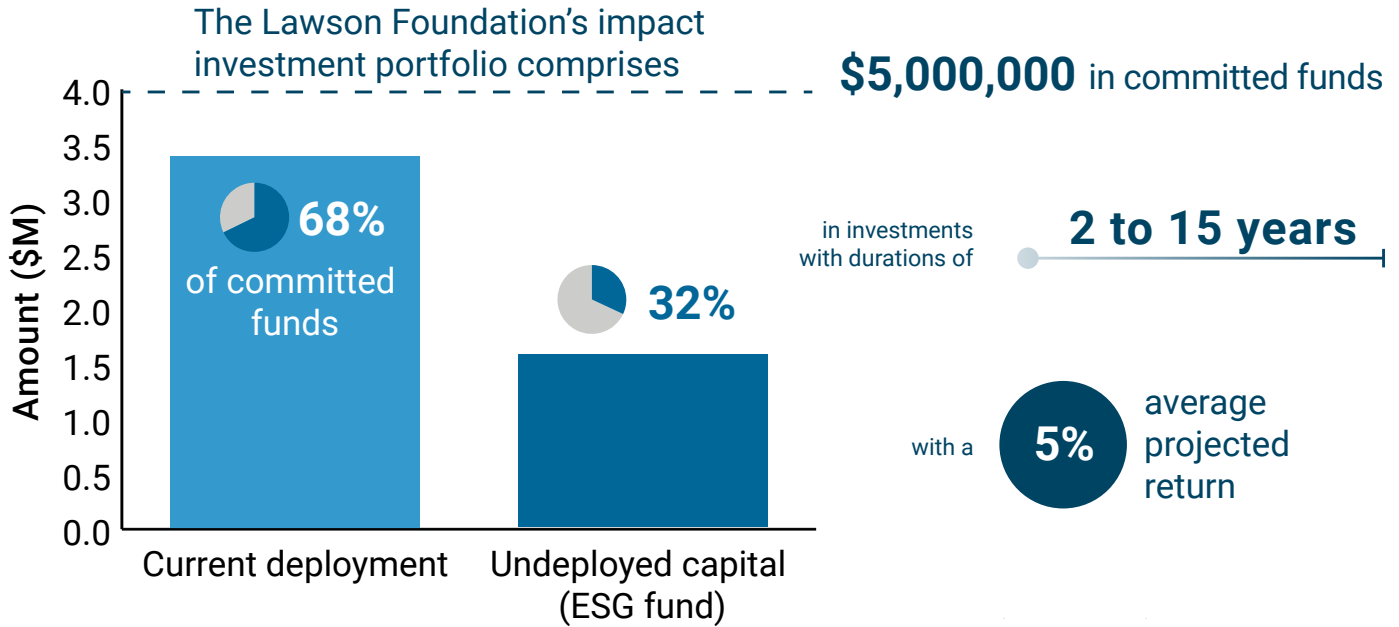
We see this work as a continuous journey and not a destination or goal to be achieved. As we walk the path of reconciliation, we are learners and listeners first.

Our journey is grounded in the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Along with a number of other philanthropic foundations and grant-makers, we have also signed the Philanthropic Community's Declaration of Action, signalling our commitment to ensuring that positive action on reconciliation continues through our philanthropy and related work.

Impact Investing

In addition to our grantmaking, the Lawson Foundation leverages its assets to create social good through impact investing.



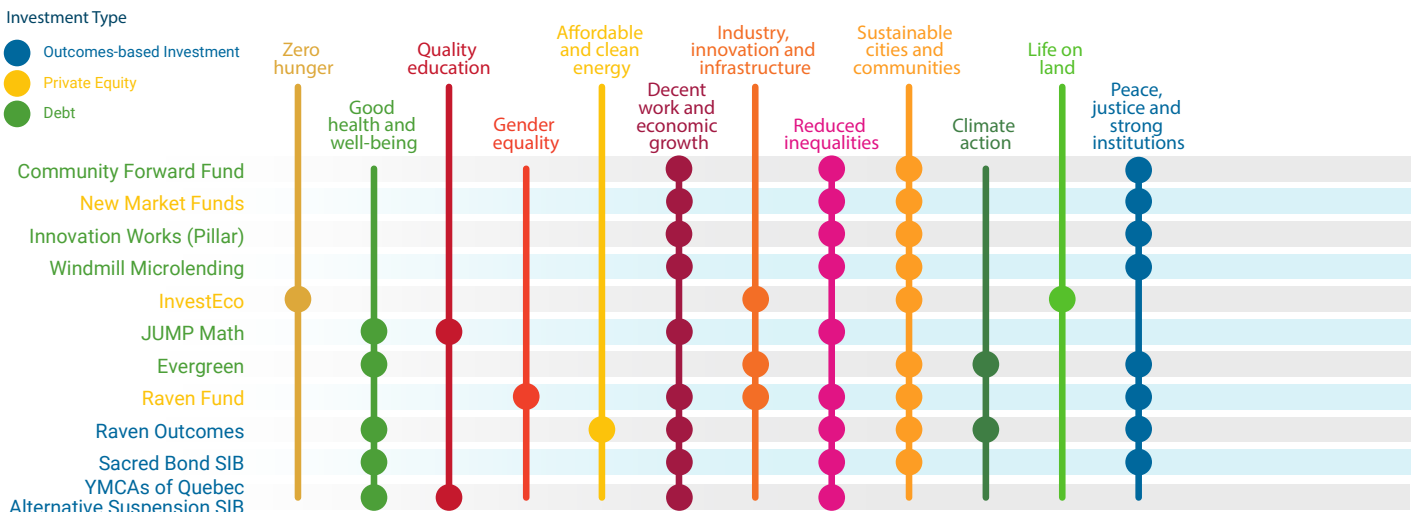
OUR IMPACT INVESTING PORTFOLIO AT A GLANCE

The Foundation's impact investment portfolio has eleven investments, with committed capital that is as yet undeployed invested in an ESG (Environmental/Social/Governance) fixed income fund.

These investments have generally performed as expected over time, with an average overall return of 5%. Some investments have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic or other factors, which has resulted in capital being deployed slower than expected. In 2021, one of the Foundation's impact investments, Evergreen, matured.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The SDGs are the foremost international metric for measuring, comparing and understanding the impact of different portfolios. Every investment in our portfolio contributes to one or more SDGs.



Financial Highlights

Investment in Communities	2021
Granting*	\$ 7 228 300
Convening	\$ 226 447
Impact Investment Commitments	\$ 4 300 000
Total Community Investment	\$ 11 754 747

2021 Audited Financial Statements are available on the Foundation [website](#).

* Includes the cost of granting.



Photo courtesy of Students on Ice

Membership

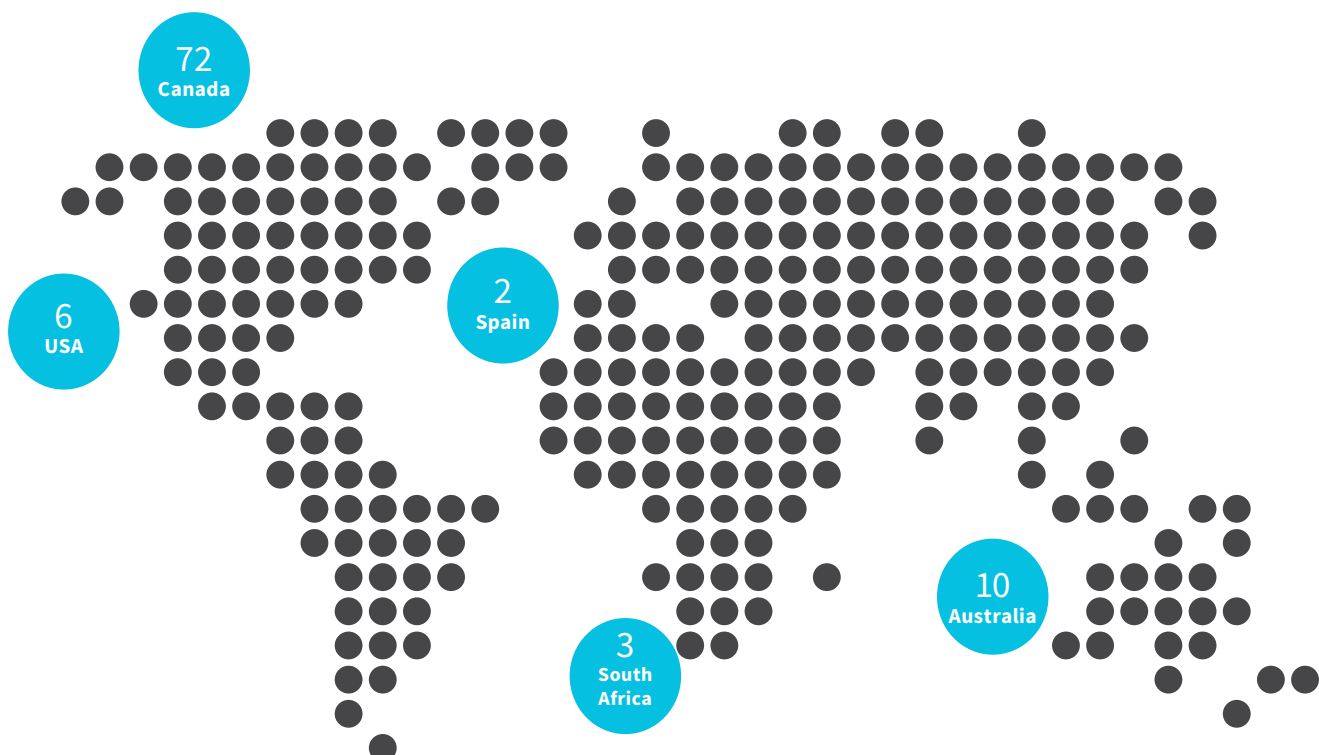
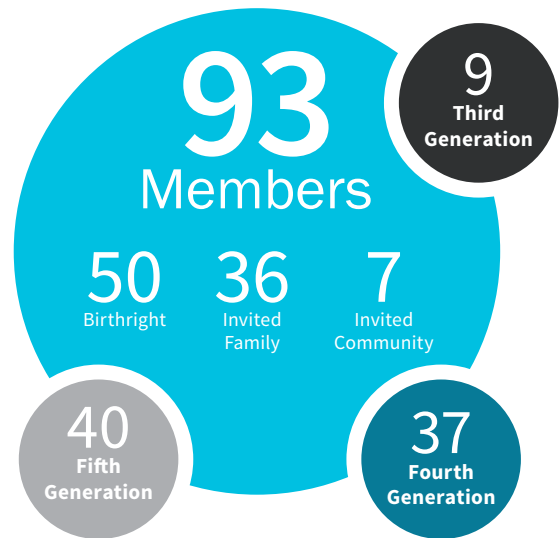
The Lawson Foundation has an active and engaged membership that includes both members of the extended Lawson Family and invited community members, each of whom have a voice in shaping the direction and impact of the foundation and its work.

A MODEL FOR OTHER FAMILY FOUNDATIONS

We are proud of the multi-generational engagement of our members, especially the Fifth Generation members, who play an active role in our philanthropy.

Many foundations experience a decrease in engagement over the generations as connections with the intentions and aspirations of the founders wane with time. But the Lawson Foundation has been able to adapt and evolve – continuously increasing its membership and engagement. We are at the forefront of important social impact work in Canada, and this is thanks in large part to the agency and engagement of our members.

The Foundation continues to be approached by other family foundations to learn from us. We are happy and humbled to share our experience with them.



Our People

From our board of directors to our standing committees, from our volunteers to our staff team, people are at the heart of our philanthropy. We'd like to recognize and thank the following individuals for their contributions to the Foundation in 2021.

Board of Directors

Barbara Lawson Miller - Chair
Wanda Brascoupé - Director**
David Gardiner - Director*
Tim Gardiner - Vice Chair**
Erin Grace - Director**
Holly Henning Wood - Director
Patrick Johnston - Director*
Robin Lawson - Director
Neil Miller - Director
Susie Osler - Director
Wynne Young - Secretary-Treasurer

Audit Committee

John Callaghan - Chair
Cameron Cross**
David Gardiner
Barbara Lawson Miller
Bob Paterson*
Vijay Venkatesan**
Evan Wood
Wynne Young

Governance Committee

Wynne Young - Chair
Wanda Brascoupé**
David Gardiner*
Erin Grace
Patrick Johnston*
Joanne Lawson**
Robin Lawson
Barb Lawson Miller
Susie Osler
Sarah VanDuzer
Christina Wood
Evan Wood

Investment Committee

Tim Gardiner - Chair
Anish Chopra
Cameron Cross
Andrew Gardiner
George Gardiner
Holly Henning Wood*
Barbara Lawson Miller
Neil Miller
Susie Osler
Justin Wood**
Wynne Young

Impact Investment Committee

Neil Miller - Chair
Erica Barbosa**
Anish Chopra**
Nancy Gardiner*
Erin Grace**
Simone Helston VanDuzer**
Patrick Johnston
Robyn Kennedy**
Barbara Lawson Miller
Chris Osler
Monica Patten*
Alasdair VanDuzer
Gwyn Wansbrough**
Wynne Young*

Advisors

Child & Youth Diabetes Strategy
Heather Dean
Margaret (Peggy) Dunbar
Robyn Houlden
Donna Lillie

Miggsie Fund
John Callaghan
Barb Lawson Miller
Melissa Miller
Sheila Simpson

Staff

Christine Alden
Program Director

Caitlin Blacklaws***
Governance & Communications Manager

Nayan Datta Biswas***
Admin Coordinator

Marcel Lauzière
President & CEO

Amanda Mayer
COO & Program Director

Karen Pischedda
Program Director & Grants Management

Karen Shelstad
Program Director / Director, Social Finance

Allison Tse
Program Manager

Shared Foundation House Staff

Ruth Cortez***
Receptionist & Office Assistant

Jonathan Hutchinson
Systems Administrator

* Board, chair or committee term or officer position ended in June 2021.

** Board, chair or committee term or officer position started in June 2021.

*** Left the organization in 2021 or joined the organization in 2021.



The Lawson Foundation

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