

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 2022, 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



Wynne Young
Board Chair

LAWSON FOUNDATION: A LEARNING ORGANIZATION

As we reflect on 2022, we are thrilled to share the exciting progress we have made bringing bold new approaches to life, turning ideas into action, and embracing the Lawson Foundation as a learning organization.

A significant milestone from last year which we are proud to share was the launch of our first cohort for the *Child and Youth Diabetes Strategy* (CYDS) focused on northern and remote Indigenous communities. This strategy embodies our commitment to Reconciliation and builds off our 2015 Declaration of Action. We have made a tenyear commitment to this work through which we are now supporting Indigenous-led and community-driven initiatives because our Indigenous advisors have told us very clearly that if progress is to be made on the diabetes front, leadership must come from communities.

Through our Youth Action and the Environment impact area, for the first time, the Lawson Foundation has extended its support beyond organizations towards young environmental leaders, and in particular individuals facing a variety of barriers. This pilot fellowship is about providing the resources and support to youth so that they can bring fresh perspectives and new innovative approaches to our environmental challenges.

While the Miggsie Fund has been around for many years in the London community, the Foundation is now taking an entirely new approach to how we support community-based organizations in the broader London area. Our first entirely open funding call resulted in over \$800,000 in grants supporting 22 organizations. Additionally, we are now playing a catalytic role in fostering collaboration and knowledge-exchange within the various funders in the area so that the needs of charities and nonprofits can be better served so that they can in turn better serve their communities.

In addition to our new initiatives, we have remained

steadfast in supporting and monitoring our ongoing strategies, including our *Outdoor Play Strategy*, which is all about supporting the healthy development of our children. We have continued to work closely with our external evaluators to ensure that we are learning from our cohort of grantees and that we are capturing the right information and data. And we continue our commitment to funding key organizations that are all about capacity-building within the nonprofit sector.

This year's report carries a special theme: Lawson as a Learning Organization. It reflects an emphasis that as the Lawson Foundation convenes, grants and impact-invests, we remain curious about how we can adapt and improve while enhancing our understanding of the projects we support. That is why we continue to invest in evaluating our work so that we know what works and what doesn't. We believe that by learning through our work and amplifying those lessons, we not only improve our internal capacity but also that of the sector as a whole.

Throughout all this, we strive to ensure that there is a diversity of voices influencing how we do our work. We are seeing increasing diversity among our Board of Directors, our external advisors and our staff and we believe that this is making our work more effective and relevant.

In closing, we want to thank our Board of directors, our members who volunteer on our committees and our external advisors who provide direction and guidance to everything we do. And of course, a big thanks to our wonderful, committed and competent staff. Together we are learning, innovating, growing, and making a difference.

Did you know...

Access to equity or capital is a key component of business development for non-Indigenous and Indigenous businesses alike. However, the challenges for Indigenous businesses to raise the capital to begin, support or expand their business is considerable and range from there not being a local bank...to the constraints of the Indian Act.

Every \$1 million invested in early learning and child care would create at least 40 jobs, 43% more jobs than the next highest industry, and four times the number of jobs generated by \$1 million in construction spending.

EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT

UNICEF Report Card 17
measured the impacts of
environmental stressors on
the well-being of children and
youth under age 18 and ranked
Canada in the bottom third at
28th of 39 developed
countries.

OUTDOOR PLAY STRATEGY

First Nations Peoples who are 20 years old in Canada face up to an 80% risk of developing diabetes in their lifetimes. In some subgroups within this population, the risk is even higher.

CHILD & YOUTH DIABETES STRATEGY

Adolescence and early adulthood is a critical period of brain development and high creativity, and during this time it is important to leverage young people's innate innovation and collaboration.

YOUTH ACTION & THE ENVIRONMENT

The rising cost of living and prolonged impacts from the pandemic have more Canadians in need of services and support. At the same time, fewer Canadians are making charitable donations.

SUPPORTING THE CHARITABLE SECTOR

Granting highlights from 2022

Our work as a Foundation makes an impact in communities across Canada. Here are a few highlights that help to paint a picture of our impact over the past year.

\$5.2MM
Amount committed in IMPACT INVESTMENTS
with a median investment of \$400,000



\$38,679
Average size of a Lawson Foundation grant in 2022

Miggsie Fund

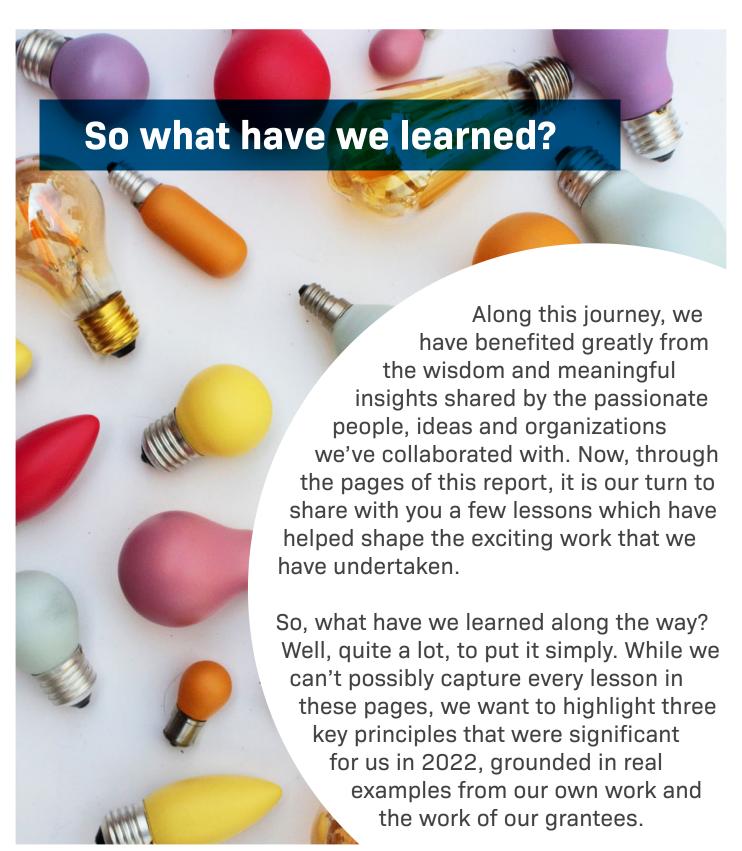
Grants totalling
\$500,000

Number of small grants (<\$25,000) awarded, totalling \$962,395 Number of larger grants (>\$25,000) awarded, totalling \$4,762,135

You can learn more about our impact and our goals as a Foundation by reviewing our Strategic Direction online at lawson.ca.

Lessons Learned

Over the course of five generations of family philanthropy, the Lawson Foundation has grown a network of relationships, supported projects large and small, and championed numerous initiatives whose impacts have stretched far beyond our roots in southwestern Ontario, into northern and Indigenous communities and all the way across Canada.



Lesson 1: Collaboration is key

Collaboration has always been part of the way we do things at the Lawson Foundation. We know that when we join forces with others, we amplify our impact. This is with good reason, too, as throughout our philanthropic journey, we have witnessed the power of collaboration to uplift communities, inspire solutions and create lasting change.

In Practice: London Funders Collaborative

Bringing funders together to amplify local impact

In Practice: Building Network CapacityOur support for the Ontario Nonprofit Network

The Lawson Foundation has a long history of collaboration, however we often see a lack of established local funder networks to pool together resources, capacities and relationships. Our grantees echo these sentiments, sharing their diminishing capacity to seek out funding due to the draining process of re-applying for local granting programs every year.

So, in 2022, we reached out to other funders in the London area to re-establish the London Funders Network with the goal of finding a more efficient way for funders to work together and to remove obstacles for local community organizations. Our first trial of this new approach took shape when the Foundation's Miggsie Fund and the London Community Foundation embraced the opportunity to pool together funds to collectively support several initiatives in London, Elgin, and Middlesex.



This resulted in an immediate impact as organizations facing shortfalls were able to access funding that was quickly put to good use. Examples of this include the London Search and Rescue Team (London SAR) who were able to outfit 30 new search and rescue volunteers to support their incredible work and the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario who were able to replace their aging accessibility change tables to provide a safe way for children and adults with special needs to get changed, so they can participate in swimming and other activities at the local Y.

Since 2007, the Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) has been the independent network for the 58,000 nonprofits across the province, focusing on policy, advocacy and services that strengthen Ontario's nonprofit sector. For several years, the Lawson Foundation has provided unrestricted funding to support ONN and its work as a key infrastructure organization for the sector.



In addition to growing its own capacity to support nonprofits in Ontario, ONN has been collaborating with existing and emerging nonprofit networks in Canada - facilitating the building and sharing of relationships, resources and data to help strengthen the voice and effectiveness of the sector in jurisdictions across the country.

This spirit of collaboration is yielding impressive results. Annual state-of-sector surveys provide measurable and comparable data across the country, enabling us to better understand the needs of nonprofits and charities. Policy wins in one province or territory are leveraged to advocate for shifts in other jurisdictions. And in Ontario specifically, nonprofits across the province were able to work collectively to keep important issues impacting the sector on the radar of voters and those seeking office from all political parties in the 2022 provincial election, leveraging resources, information and key messages that were curated and shared by the team at ONN.

Lesson 2: Sharpen your focus

Over our 67-year history, the Lawson Foundation has been a patient funder, adopting a big-picture mindset that is informed by the lessons we learn and the evolving needs of those we support. This long-game strategy for change-making includes sharpening our focus in recent years to zero in on critical opportunities that we hope will deliver tangible results and impact in each of our areas of focus.

In Practice: Diabetes in Indigenous Communities *Investing in Indigenous-led initiatives and programs*

In Practice: A Policy Win - Decades in the Making Lawson's ongoing support for Imagine Canada

For decades, the Lawson Foundation has approached the challenge of the diabetes epidemic by focusing on prevention, management and research. In 2015 we sharpened our focus specifically on child and youth diabetes, and in 2021, that focus was sharpened even further with the announcement of a 10-year commitment to support Indigenous-led programs that focus on the prevention of type 2 diabetes and promote improved health outcomes in northern and remote Indigenous communities. This is because First Nations youth under the age of 25 have an 80% chance to develop type 2 diabetes in their lifetime.

This sharper focus was also informed by the pledge we made in 2015, when the Lawson Foundation was one of the first foundations to sign onto the philanthropic sector's Declaration of Action - a commitment to play an active role in meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous communities across Turtle Island.

This decade-long journey that we have embarked upon with Indigenous partners recognizes the time and focus needed to build trust, relationships, knowledge and capacity. These factors are criticial to having an impact on the epidemic of diabetes in northern and remote Indigenous communities. In 2022, we annouced \$3 million over three years to support ten Indigenous-led projects that are delivering community-based prevention and health promotion initiatives on the ground where they are critically needed, as well as activities that seek to inform the development of sound public policy.



Patience and persistence. These are hallmarks of a long-game approach for change-making, especially on the public policy front. Changes in government, priorities and public opinion are inevitable given the short-term, and often short-sighted, nature of politics, but staying the course and keeping our focus on important policy issues can lead to significant results.



One example of this in practice is the work that Imagine Canada and its predecessor have been leading on behalf of the sector to advocate for new rules to allow charities to better influence and inform public policy in Canada. For too long, charities were limited in what they could do or say to inform policy. Several years ago there was what many in the sector describe as an "advocacy chill" and significant media attention focused on the sector as the Canada Revenue Agency conducted audits of several high-profile charities to ensure that they didn't spend more than 10% of their resources on advocacy activities.

Many things and actors, including a precedentsetting and courageous legal challenge by one small charity, contributed to a recent shift in policy that now allows charities to be full and equal players in the public policy space, bringing their experience, skills and leadership to the table.

Imagine Canada's leadership and consistent focus on this issue over decades were also crucial, and it wouldn't have been possible without ongoing support from its many funders and partners over the years. The Lawson Foundation is proud to be among them, providing ongoing funding to enable Imagine Canada to work on behalf of the charitable and nonprofit sector in Canada.

Lesson 3: Money isn't everything

While generous (and unrestricted) funding is important - maximizing impact requires more than just money. Whether it's leveraging our social capital to advocate for policy shifts, or the intentional way we convene grantees, partners and collaborators, the Lawson Foundation has learned and leveraged the value of these additional tools in our philanthropic toolbox to drive change.

In Practice: Convening ecosystems for learning Lawson Foundation Outdoor Play Strategy

Understanding the diverse sectors and actors in the outdoor play ecosystem is at the heart of our Outdoor Play Strategy (OPS). Building that ecosystem of actors - including researchers, practitioners, policymakers and organizations involved in outdoor play - is a deliberate intention of our cohort approach.

We know that in addition to funding important work in this field, creating opportunities for shared learning, relationship building and network development are also critical to the success of individual projects and the broader field.

Case in point - in 2022, two of the eight OPS projects begain exploring the importance of decolonizing practices and ethical space approaches in their work. This learning is being shared and will inform the work of the other projects in the cohort.

Another example of this in practice is the development of Outdoor Play Canada. With a solid foundation of shared learning that has been ongoing since 2015, Outdoor Play Canada has evolved from a loose network of organizations and practitioners into an incorporated nonprofit in 2022, with a diverse board of directors and a full-time executive director.

In addition, Outdoor Play Canada secured an anonymous funder's generous \$2M investment over the next five years to support its growth as a national network and partnership with the newly established Canadian Centre for Outdoor Play in Ottawa.



In Practice: Leveraging Social Capital and Influence *Working with UNICEF Canada on child wellbeing*

In the world of advocacy, sometimes who says something is as important as what's being said. UNICEF is recognized by many as the world's leading organization focused on children. They work in more than 190 countries and territories, including Canada, to defend every child's right to a childhood. UNICEF Canada advocates for the rights of every child, and works to make Canada a great place to grow up.

The mission of UNICEF Canada is clearly aligned with the Lawson Foundation's purpose: the healthy development of children and youth. Given this alignment on mission and purpose we are proud to fund and support the work of UNICEF Canada.



One of the many contributions that UNICEF Canada makes is their research on child and youth wellbeing. Did you know that Canada ranks 30th out of 38 wealthy countries for child and youth well-being? That 20% of children in Canada live in poverty? That more than a third of young people experience discrimination?

These are sobering statistics. The credibility and leadership of UNICEF Canada in conducting and sharing this type of research, including its ability to draw comparisons to international jurisdictions, is an invaluable tool that we can leverage and amplify in our advocacy efforts here in Canada.

By working in collaboration with partners like UNICEF Canada, the Lawson Foundation is able to be part of a broader system of change that works together to advocate for important policy changes to protect the rights of every child in Canada.

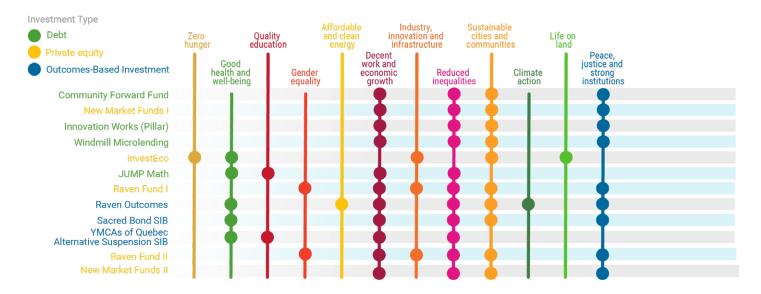
Impact Investing

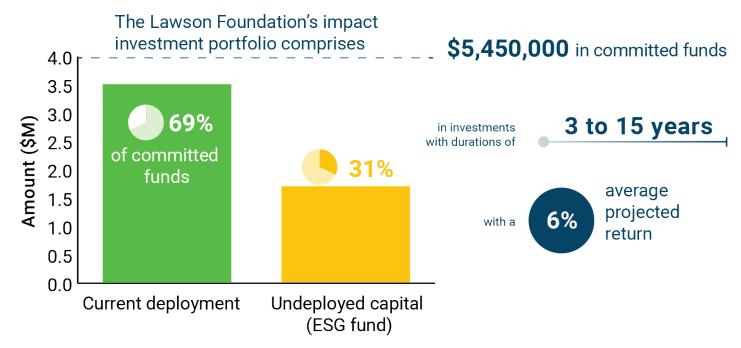
Our impact investment portfolio has 13 investments, with committed capital that is as yet undeployed invested in an ESG (Environmental/Social/Governance) fixed income fund. The hallmark of the year was our decision to invest in the Raven II Canadian Feeder LP, Raven Capital Partners' second Indigenous venture capital fund. The Foundation also received the full success payment from its first outcomes-based contract, the Raven Indigenous Community Outcomes project to install on-reserve geothermal energy in Manitoba. This project demonstrates the success of the community-driven outcomes contract, Raven's signature model that centers Indigenous community decision-making through the Solutions Lab process. We have been an early investor in and a long-time partner with Raven on multiple fronts, including in supporting the Solutions Lab, with a specific goal of building the Indigenous social finance market in Canada.

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.

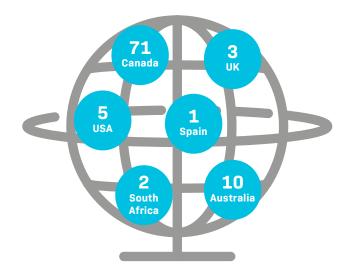






Membership





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.

Canadian Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change

The Lawson Foundation is committed to becoming more accountable for philanthropy's role in addressing the climate crisis. Our mission is to pursue the healthy development of children and youth, and we know that the health of our planet's climate is critical to the health and well-being of children and youth in Canada and around the world.

As such, the Foundation is a signatory on the Canadian Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change, a call on all foundations and other funders in this land to signal their commitment to act on climate change regardless of their respective missions. We see this work as a learning journey alongside a number of funders that commit to integrate climate considerations in all areas of work.

The Lawson Foundation is a proud member of the following nonprofit sector networks and capacity-building organizations:

Financial Highlights

Investment in Communities	2022
Granting	\$ 5 724 530
Convening & Programming	\$ 520 613
Impact Investment Commitments	\$ 5 195 836
Total Community Investment	\$ 11 440 979

2022 Audited Financial Statements are available on the Foundation website.



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 2022.

Board of Directors

Wanda Brascoupé - Director
Tim Gardiner - Vice Chair
Erin Grace - Director
Holly Henning Wood - Director
Lauren Lawson - Director**
Robin Lawson - Director
Barbara Lawson Miller - Past Chair
Neil Miller - Director*
Susie Osler - Director*
Vijay Venkatesan - Treasurer**
Wynne Young - Chair

Audit Committee

John Callaghan - Chair Cameron Cross* Lawson Cross** Dave Gardiner* Doug Grace** Holly Henning Wood** Barbara Lawson Miller* Vijay Venkatesan Evan Wood Wynne Young

Governance Committee

Wanda Brascoupé
Erin Grace
Raegan Kennedy**
Joanne Lawson
Lauren Lawson**
Robin Lawson
Barb Lawson Miller - Chair**
Susie Osler*
Sarah VanDuzer
Christina Wood
Evan Wood
Wynne Young

Investment Committee

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

Impact Investment Committee

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

Advisors

Child & Youth Diabetes Strategy Lynden Crowshoe Heather Dean Treena Delormier Kimberly Fairman Michael Green

Miggsie Fund John Callaghan Barb Lawson Miller Melissa Miller Sheila Simpson

Advisors - cont'd

Youth Action and the Environment Fellowship Leah Davidson Kareina D'Souza Robin Lawson Steve Lee Tessa Wissink

Staff

Christine Alden Program Director

Nayan Datta Biswas Admin Coordinator

Jeff Laplante***
Program Director

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 (Maternity Leave)

Shared Foundation House Staff

Ruth Cortez
Receptionist & Office Assistant

Simran Gill*** IT Support Specialist

Precious Ogadi***
IT Support Specialist

 $^{^{\}star}$ Board or committee term or officer position ended in June 2022.

^{**} Board, chair or committee term or officer position started in June 2022.

^{***} Left the organization in 2022 or joined the organization in 2022.

