

COMMITMENT

40 Years of Giving: Celebrating Trust, Impact, and Legacy

Philanthropy is often marked by milestones and moments—gifts of time and treasure that signify meaningful transitions, growth, and sometimes, farewells. These moments inspire donors to reflect on how they can make an impact and shape a legacy that leaves the world better than they found it.

Marking amazing moments is part of what makes it especially meaningful to celebrate the Ruby Anniversary (40th) of the Canadian Donor's Guide.

This guide has been a trusted source of curated information, connecting donors, professional advisors, and fundraising professionals with causes that matter. Since 1985, it has helped make giving more strategic, more informed, and even more impactful.

It is hard to pinpoint the exact numbers from the 1980s, but it is safe to say the charitable sector in Canada looked very different. Today, recent reports by Imagine Canada indicate that the charitable sector in Canada is made up of over 85,600 registered charities and employs over 2 million people. These numbers mean that the sector contributes to approximately 7% of Canada's GDP. The scale of the sector is immense, and so are the responsibilities of those working within it.

A major change in the last 40 years is how we engage with queries and the need for more information. We live in a time where we can access the world from a tiny device in our pocket. Any question can have an instant answer. A

Google search takes less than a second, AI is embedded into every office system and autocorrect function, and tools like ChatGPT respond to questions in 1–5 seconds. However, speed does not guarantee accuracy. ChatGPT itself advises “that it should be thought of as a very well-read assistant—useful, fast, and often accurate, but not a final authority.” That's why trusted, vetted resources like the Canadian Donor's Guide remain so critical.

The Canadian Donor's Guide is not built by bots. It is created by sector professionals, fundraisers, advisors, and legal experts—people who understand the ethics, strategy, and nuances of charitable giving.

The Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP), while not quite 40, has also spent decades serving Canada's philanthropic community. Its members are professionals involved in strategic charitable gift planning in Canada, and this unique and amazing group is made up of gift planners, fundraisers, lawyers, financial advisors, accountants, and others who advise on philanthropic giving.

National Education programs, delivered in partnership with the CAGP Foundation, cover areas like gift planning fundamentals, bequest administration and online webinars, and local programs. CAGP aims to build the capacity of planned giving professionals at all stages in their careers.

In its own efforts to ensure access to



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trusted information sources, CAGP offers its members an amazing tool called ‘Ask an Advisor.’ The ‘Ask an Advisor’ tool provides members with the ability to pose specific questions, which are sent to a real person within the CAGP network. The response they receive ensures they have confidence that they understand the context of the gift and situation, so they can then work with and facilitate the needs of the donor or professional advisor.

In many of our local chapters, mentoring opportunities are available. In addition, with a national network of colleagues, CAGP ensures members have access to a wide range of talent and expertise through their local chapter contacts.

Initiatives like the CAGP Foundation's Will Power Campaign help to raise awareness and drive real change in planned giving. The Will Power website provides tools and information to help Canadians take decisive action by leaving a gift in their Will. This action has helped Canada rank among the top three countries in the world in terms of the percentage of individuals leaving charitable gifts in their Wills, following the UK and Australia.

All of these efforts are designed to assist people in gathering the information they need to make informed decisions.

Change is inevitable, but trusted resources remain steadfast. As professionals move through their careers,

they can take their CAGP membership with them, ensuring they bring the Canadian Donor's Guide along as well. Whether in print or online, people entering the field know they can pick up the guide and find resources that will serve them. People moving deeper into their careers know the guide that has served them will continue to do so. Donors who have come to recognize the guide know that those engaged in its creation are reliable and trustworthy. The guide remains a consistent, trusted presence in a fast-changing world. It has been—and will continue to be—a

great privilege for CAGP and the CAGP Foundation to be a trusted part of the Canadian Donor's Guide.

We count ourselves lucky to join the ranks of charity professionals, donors, professional advisors, and organizations coming together to wish the Canadian Donor's Guide a Happy Ruby Anniversary, and we look forward to the next 40 years together!

Tara Sandler serves as the Vice-President of Education & Partnerships at the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP). As Canada's only professional

association dedicated to connecting fundraisers and professional advisors, CAGP inspires and educates those involved in strategic charitable gift planning. By fostering collaboration and innovation, CAGP empowers donors to achieve their philanthropic dreams. Through the CAGP Foundation, the organization delivers cutting-edge education to professional advisors and charity staff, equipping them with the tools and expertise to make a lasting impact.

*Learn more at www.cagp-acpdp.org
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