

# What Constitutes an “Enabling Environment” for Canadian SMOs?

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# Research Team



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SSHRC  CRSH  
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# DATA COLLECTION

## SURVEY

- October-November 2022
- 91 completed surveys

## INTERVIEWS

- November 2022 – February 2023
- 17 interviews with SMOs, Provincial Councils, NGO network organizations & donors

## POINTS OF COMPARISON

- Drawn from informal conversation with experts and existing literature on the enabling environments in the US, the Netherlands, Flanders (northern federal region of Belgium) and France.



# KEY THEMES

- 1) Funding
- 2) Policy & Regulatory Frameworks
- 3) Collaboration & Innovation
- 4) Public Engagement
- 5) Varied Realities of SMOs



# 1) FUNDING

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

- SMO-specific funding opportunities are available and impactful, but strict regulations, long processes and limited overhead are challenges

## PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

- Quebec & Manitoba provide funding

## CANADA'S BROADER PHILANTHROPIC SECTOR

- Relatively small and donors seem more interested in funding projects at home



# 1) FUNDING

“There are a wide variety of sustainable funding sources that are accessible to my organization.”

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree



## 2) POLICY & REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

### SOME POSITIVE ASPECTS:

- Access to government
- Gaining charitable status

### SOME KEY CHALLENGES:

- Direction and control
- Audits



## 2) POLICY & REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

“The process of attaining and maintaining charitable status is transparent and reasonable.”

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree





# 3) COLLABORATION & INNOVATION

## COLLABORATION

- Needs to be meaningful and based on a shared vision and equal partnership.
- Resources are needed to seek out and maintain collaborative partnerships
- It can be difficult to share limited funding in collaborative projects



## 3) COLLABORATION & INNOVATION

### INNOVATION

- Innovation is risky
- It is beneficial when donors are willing to shoulder these risks

*“One of the things I love about [FIT] is that it actually counts on some failures. That's an amazing model. I think that's really great.”*



# 4) PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

“My organization successfully engages with the general public on development issues.”

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree



## 4) PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Canadians need to gain a deeper understanding of international cooperation
- It can be challenging to turn interest into action
- Technology enables a more expansive reach, but also pulls the public's attention in many directions



# 5) VARIED REALITIES

IMPORTANT DISTINCTIONS: SIZE AND FAITH-AFFILIATION

## SIZE

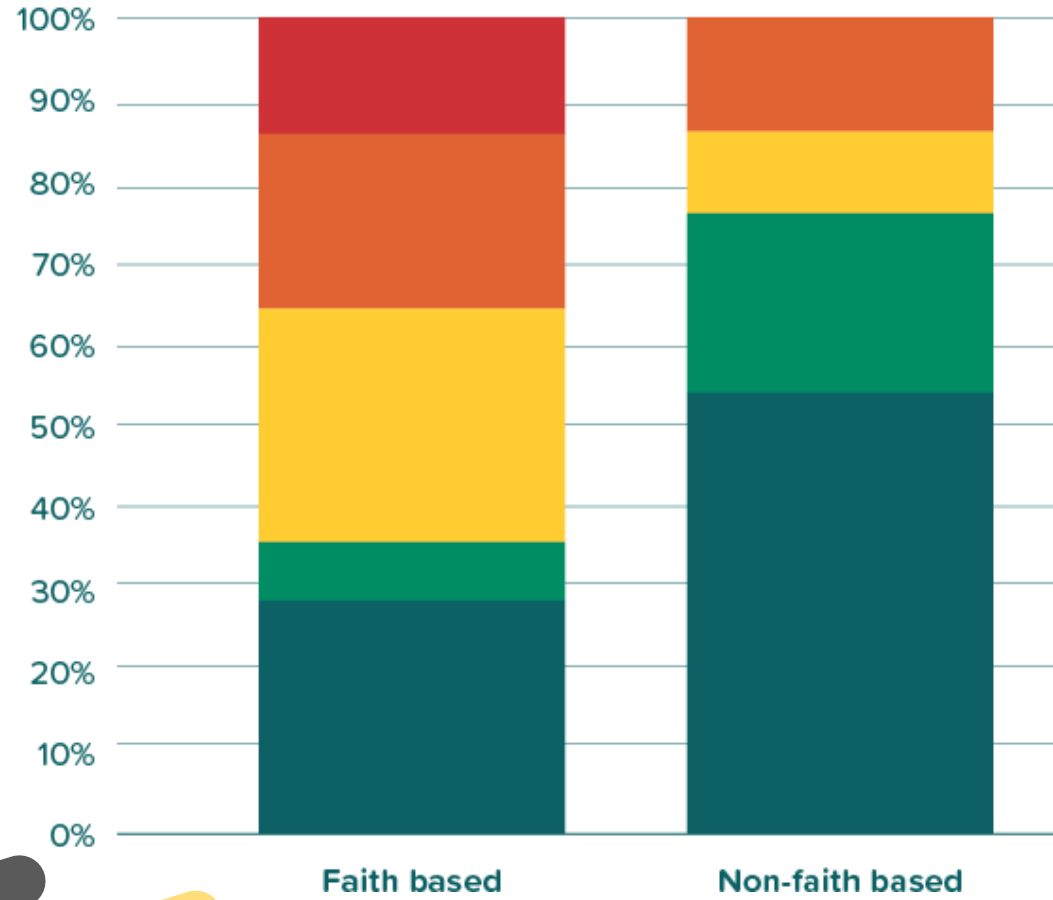
- Smaller entities tend to be more flexible and closer to the ground.
- Medium organizations benefit from greater capacity and a larger resource pool to rely on for their operations.



# 5) VARIED REALITIES

“There are a wide variety of sustainable funding sources that are accessible to my organization.”

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree



# 5) VARIED REALITIES

## FAITH AFFILIATION

- Faith-based SMOs can reach a natural constituency of interested donors.
- They can bridge international divides using shared faith as a common platform.
- Increasingly, they must navigate a more secular and diverse public in their fundraising efforts



# 2023 SMO REPORT

ENGLISH

<https://spurchangeresource.ca/en/training/spur-change-2023-smo-report/>

FRENCH

<https://spurchangeresource.ca/fr/training/rapport-pmo-activer-le-changement-2023/>





# THANKS!

ANY QUESTIONS?

