FROM ADVOCATES TO ARCHITECTS: SHAPING HOW CANADA FUNDS DEMOCRACY



A year-round approach to fund the Democracy Sector in the ways that matter the most....

Canadian Democracy Coalition

A Proposal from the Public Investment Working Group

WHAT IF FUNDING AN OPERATING SYSTEM LIKE AN APP NO LONGER WORKS?

40 OF 58 ORGANIZATIONS IN OUR SECTOR RAISED THE CURRENT WAYS OF FUNDING THE DEMOCRACY SECTOR AS A STRUCTURAL PROBLEM ON THEIR OWN

Democracy is a process. It is funded as 1-3 year projects.

We spend as much time chasing grants as we do doing the work.

Good people are leaving. At least 3 organizations are going part-time. Sustainability is a constant concern.

SOURCE: CANADIAN DEMOCRACY COALITION LISTENING EXERCISE, 58 ORGANIZATIONS



NO SINGLE SOURCE WILL FIX THIS.
A MIX MIGHT.

PHILANTHROPY

Democracy Funders Canada

Coordinate, share what we fund, and move toward multi-year core support.

PUBLIC INVESTMENT

The Democracy Endowment, currently in discussion with the Government of Canada

Durable, arm's-length funding.

BLENDED FINANCE

Models like the Equality Fund

Public, philanthropic and private capital working together.



What if these three conversations became part of one overall strategy?

THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

A phased plan to build a year-round funding model that works for the sector, long-term

EXPERT GUIDANCE Sector leaders, specialists, and peers advising and collectively building at every step.

	MONTHS 0–3	MONTHS 3–6	MONTHS 6–9	MONTHS 9–12
1. **DEMOCRACY FUNDERS CANADA COORDINATION**	Initial dialogue with DFC + preparing sector risk assessment (*)	Bring funders and democracy coalition together at the Ottawa Civic Space Summit for an interactive Scenario Activity	Test samples and structures with members, experts and funders in line with proposed Initiatives	Align with 3 to 5 funders to pilot multi-year core funding, with a unified mechanism
2. **DEMOCRACY FUND SUPPORT**	Endorse, promote, advance outreach/relationship building with MPs/Committees/Officials	Source expert guidance from other endowments/grants globally and within Canada	Sketch out and build viable options for a funding mechanism/disbursement/oversight and governance for government consultation	Advance coalition model within consultation, engage with stakeholders/ MPs/ Committees/ Officials, advocate for shared vision.
3. **ARCHITECT BLENDED FUNDING MODEL TO INCREASE FUNDS**	Identify examples, starting with the Equality Fund.	Interview 10-12 leaders and hold 1-2 expert roundtables that Coalition members (and funders) are a part of	Draft options for potential blended funding mixes, structures and governance	Test and choose a direction. Pilot first funding vehicle focused on long-term priorities for the sector
	PREP	**SOURCE**	**IDEATE**	**TEST**

WHO WE'D LIKE TO LEARN FROM

IN CANADA

Canadian Democracy Funders Network

Equality Fund

Environment Funders Canada

Government of Canada Social Finance Fund

INTERNATIONAL FUNDS AND ENDOWMENTS

Civitates

European Endowment for Democracy

National Endowment for Democracy

Democracy Fund

Civic Power Fund

ABROAD, DEMOCRACY NETWORKS

Pacto pela Democracia (Brazil), UK Democracy Network, Australian Democracy Network/Mannifera

JOIN US: EACH STRAND INVITES SUPPORT BY 3-5 ADDITIONAL MEMBERS

12-15 MEMBERS TOTAL

WHAT WE'LL ASK EVERYONE

What were the steps you followed? What did building involve?

What constraints do you face What barriers do you remove?

How is independence protected? How is power distributed

What took longest? What missteps to avoid?

What would you do differently?



THIS ONLY WORKS IF WE BUILD IT TOGETHER

JOIN the working group: 3-5 seats for each strand. About 6-8 hours a month

OPEN a door: introduce us to funds, networks and people we should talk to

SHOW UP: join a working session, review a draft and propose alterations, help test.

BE HONEST: share your funding risk/opportunity picture, in confidence. Tell us what would work better

PLEASE LET US KNOW WHICH GROUP YOU WISH TO BE A PART OF

