



12 Organizations Advancing Gender Equality Receive \$320,000 in Funding

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HALIFAX, NS – The Community Foundation of Nova Scotia (CFNS) is providing \$320,000 to 12 Nova Scotia organizations supporting women, girls, two-spirit and gender-diverse individuals in advancing gender equality and systemic change. The funding is part of Communities for Gender Equality, a five-year partnership with Community Foundations of Canada and the Equality Fund, with support from the Government of Canada. CFNS is one of 18 community foundations taking part in the initiative that, together, are disbursing \$3.4 million across the country.

Communities for Gender Equality funding is enabling these community-based organizations to provide programs and services, including mental health, wellbeing, social and justice supports, with a gender-equality lens while helping build resilience and sustain capacity.

- Chebucto Family Centre: *Volunteer Doula Program expansion* - \$15,640
- ElevateHER Mental Health Support Services Canada: *Queer Youth Program* - \$37,320
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Cape Breton: *Right Here, Right Now: Women for Change* - \$37,500
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland NS: *Survivors for Change and Empowerment* - \$37,500
- Guysborough County Adult Learning Association: *Family Literacy Inclusion Project* - \$10,240
- Hope House: *Pathways to Sustainable Livelihood for Vulnerable Women* - \$25,000
- MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning: *2SLGBTQ+* - \$30,000
- Second Story Women's Centre: *Outreach Counselling Program* - \$25,000
- Stepping Stone Association: *Stepping Stone Transition Project* - \$35,750
- Tri-Country Women's Centre: *TCWC Mental Health Services* - \$40,000
- Upper Hammonds Plains Community Development Association: *Girls with Ideas Leadership Program* - \$6,050
- YWCA Halifax: *Sexualized Violence in Skilled Trades – an Intersectional Approach* - \$20,000

Quick facts

- Gender equality means all individuals enjoy the same status and have equal opportunity to realize their full human rights and potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social and cultural development, and to benefit from the results.
- One in four women in Canada have experienced inappropriate sexual behaviours in the workplace, with transgender people more likely to experience inappropriate behaviours in public, online and at work.*
- For every dollar men make, the average earned by full-time working women is 76.8 cents. The gender pay gap is worse for those who face multiple barriers, including racialized women and those with disabilities.*
- Women, girls and gender-diverse individuals are most vulnerable to sexual violence, with certain populations including Indigenous women and those identifying as transgender being at an even greater risk.*
- Women report 1.5 to 2 times higher rates of mental illness than men.*

Quotes

“Psycho-social programming is a vital part of the work we do as it empowers and addresses the needs of the women and gender-diverse people we work with. Communities for Gender Equality funding has played an integral role in sustaining the delivery of our programs, ensuring not only we reach our goals and objectives, but those of our clients as well. Women and gender-diverse people rely on our programs to satisfy legal issues, reunite their families, and build skills to live their best quality of life.”

--Julie Kendall, Associate Executive Director, Elizabeth Fry Society of Cape Breton

“The Communities for Gender Equality funding is allowing Stepping Stone to offer much-needed programs to our clients. As a client-led organization, we’re able to meet the needs requested by our clients and offer the support required.”

--Alex MacDonnell, Executive Director, Stepping Stone Association

“To build communities of respect, belonging and possibility, we need to advance gender equality across our province and country. We’re pleased to be part of an initiative and to support community service organizations across Nova Scotia doing just that. The programs and services provided by these organizations are helping break down barriers faced by women, girls, two-spirit and gender-diverse individuals, including economic, justice and social inequalities.”

--Daniel Holland, CEO, Community Foundation of Nova Scotia



Backgrounder: Communities for Gender Equality Grant Recipients

Associated links:

[CFNS Communities for Gender Equality](#)

*[Canadian Women's Foundation](#)

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About Community Foundation of Nova Scotia

The Community Foundation of Nova Scotia (CFNS) is a charitable giving facilitator. Our purpose is to inspire giving and steward funds to help build Nova Scotia communities of respect, belonging and possibility. We help donors make sustainable philanthropic impact on causes they care about at the grassroots level. We do this by endowing funds for donors, managing donation programs and convening conversations that make a positive difference in our communities.

Established in 2008, CFNS has more than \$18 million in philanthropic investment under management, including 120 funds and 22 scholarship and award funds. We're part of Community Foundations of Canada (CFC), the national network for Canada's 200 community foundations that reaches 90 percent of the country's communities.

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Backgrounder: Communities for Gender Equality Funding Recipients

Chebucto Family Centre

The Chebucto Family Centre provides free programs and services with a focus on community wellness, prenatal and parenting, and children and youth. The **Volunteer Doula Program**, which has been providing doula support to low-income families in Halifax Regional Municipality since 1996, is being expanded to serve Cape Breton. Evidence shows that doula support can be especially beneficial to birthing persons from systematically marginalized communities who may be facing additional barriers, including poverty and lack of access to services. Priority will be given to newcomers to Canada, Black, Indigenous, and 2SLGBTQ+parents, and to parents who are single, under 25, have experienced incarceration, or are full-time students. The program will help improve birthing outcomes in Cape Breton, while providing professional development by offering subsidized doula training with a focus on training Mi'kmaw doulas.

ElevateHER Mental Health Support Services Canada

ElevateHER Mental Health Support Services Canada provides individual and group mental health support services to those who identify as female and their prospective families. Supported by a coordinator working out of the Truro Program Centre, the **Queer Youth Program** will provide wrap-around services to marginalized and racialized youth throughout Colchester County. Participate-led and -driven programs and supports include the Creating Safe Spaces program for parents and caregivers of gender diverse youth; Girl Code; Queer Code; Trafficking and Exploitation Prevention Programming, Healing Trauma, and more. All programs are designed to help women and gender-diverse people navigate and breakdown systemic barriers and empower self-sufficiency, while educating the public on gender equality.

Elizabeth Fry Society of Cape Breton

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Cape Breton has been advancing the empowerment of criminalized women, girls, two-spirit and gender-diverse individuals through programs and advocacy for almost 50 years. **Right Here, Right Now: Women for Change** addresses criminalization through psycho-social programming and referrals, while advocating for systemic change and addressing barriers that prevent gender equality. Programs offered as part of the project include Domestic Violence, Women for Change, Self Esteem, Healthy Relationships, and Empowered. All are designed to equip participants with the skills and coping mechanisms to move forward with their lives and break the cycle of intergenerational domestic violence.



Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia strives to address the root causes of criminalization of women, girls and gender-diverse individuals through programming, justice system reform, housing, advocacy and more. Given the prevalence of sexual violence and its detrimental impacts, **Survivors for Change and Empowerment** supports survivors of sexualized violence, addresses failures of the legal system, explores the root causes of gender-based violence, advocates for systemic changes, and engages with the community to educate about sexualized violence and encourage allyship, all of which are critical to alleviating sexual violence and enhancing gender equality.

Guysborough County Adult Learning Association

The Guysborough County Adult Learning Association has been providing programs and resources that enrich people's personal development and employment opportunities for over 30 years. The **Family Literacy Inclusion Project** will provide literacy resources focused on gender equality, diversity, safe spaces, anti-racism and more in raising awareness and understanding to create a more inclusive community where everyone feels they belong. Families will have the resources to promote social inclusion and equality with their children, while improving family literacy levels and making connections in the community.

Hope House

Hope House is a therapeutic live-in recovery home in Cape Breton for at-risk women suffering from complex trauma, abuse, and substance use disorders. **Pathways to Sustainable Livelihood for Vulnerable Women** will support gender equality business opportunities for recovering women, while helping Hope House expand its social enterprise ventures. Currently, Hope House residents are involved in making soaps and candles that are sold locally. This venture helps women acclimate back into the community and gain employment experience. The goal is to support women by empowering them to take control of their futures through education, skills training, and gender-supportive employment opportunities.

MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning

The MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning offers programs that engage, develop skills and confidence while breaking down barriers in a safe and inspiring space. Founded on the tradition of using creativity as a vehicle to address social issues, the **2SLGBTQ+ Project** combats deficits that prevent 2SLGBTQ+ youth from successfully embarking on their chosen path to success, including social isolation and systems that disproportionately impact 2SLGBTQ+ youth, leading



to food insecurity, poor health outcomes and increased likelihood of encountering sexual violence. Programs have been developed based on community-consultation and from a queer and feminist lens with major focus being on empowering youth to find their own voice through creative practices, community building and supportive adult queer mentors.

Second Story Women's Centre

The Second Story Women's Centre serves girls, women and gender-oppressed people in Lunenburg and Queens counties through trauma-informed programs, education and advocacy. The **Outreach Counselling Program** provides access to safe and free counselling, referral assistance and supports to girls, women and gender-oppressed people, with the majority of those supported facing intersectional barriers around poverty, gender-based violence, access to timely health care, housing, transportation and food-insecurity. Such barriers, which are often exacerbated in rural, economically depressed areas, impact a person's employment, learning, ability to care for children, access to important social services and more. The program helps people move forward, through healing, education and growth,

Stepping Stone Association

Stepping Stone offers services and supports to current and former sex workers, people at risk of human trafficking, and those who identify as being trafficked. Sex workers face great difficulty in breaking the cycle of poverty due to a lack of economic and social security, safe working environments, housing, and access to basic benefits and government programs. The **Stepping Stone Transition program** provides those who identify as women and non-binary with the tools to transition out of the sex trade. Many who enter the trade or have been trafficked face many barriers including stigma and shame that prevents them from accessing services or seeking employment in the formal labour market, fear of incarceration, and mental health issues. Knowing many sex workers will leave and return to the trade an average of seven times before they permanently exit, this program will help individuals build skills and strengths for that transition.

Tri-County Women's Centre

The Tri-County Women's Centre (TCWC) works with all people to achieve an equitable and equal world for women and their families. Recognizing the links between poor mental health and gender discrimination, and that timely access to government provided mental health and addictions services in the Tri-County area are limited, **TCWC Mental Health Services** will help address the gap by providing free, community-based mental health care to women and gender-diverse individuals that is trauma-informed, safe and inclusive. To further contribute to



improved wellbeing and health, mental health counselling services will be linked with wrap-around services from the centre's support workers.

Upper Hammonds Plains Community Development Association

The Upper Hammonds Plains Community Development Association provides a variety of community-based services and programs, while also helping residents gain access to programs such as housing, education, health and wellness. The female-led **Girls with Ideas Leadership Program**, the brainchild of entrepreneur and community member Ariel Gough, helps African Nova Scotia girls discover their strengths, find their voice and build resilience so they can be confident, creative leaders who have the skills to make ideas happen. In addition to learning to work collaboratively with peers, the 10-week program also includes life skills education, including financial literacy, civic engagement and healthy relationships.

YWCA Halifax

YWCA Halifax builds economic security, promotes wellness and creates opportunities for diverse women, girls and their families through advocacy and programming. Skilled trades can provide secure employment for women, yet sexualized violence in the sector impacts a woman's ability to access and retain employment. **Sexualized Violence in Skilled Trades – an Intersectional Approach** will use research and the lived experiences of women and gender-diverse people from Black, Indigenous, racialized and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities to inform and create a systems-change strategy to address sexualized violence in the skilled trades. The project will gain an understanding of the prevalence of sexualized violence in the skilled trades, work with partners to share information and support knowledge translation of the findings for further work, and inform the development of a final report for knowledge exchange.