
Donor-Advised Funds

Helping create the change you wish to see.

Here at the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia, we manage over 120 donor-advised funds focused on a range of interests, from education and the environment to arts, culture, health, food security and more. All were established to address specific priorities in the community. Donor-advised funds (DAFs) have a long history in Canada, with the first fund set up by the Vancouver Foundation in 1952 and have grown in popularity ever since. But what exactly is a donor-advised fund and how can it be effective in supporting causes that matter to you?

Flexible, simple and cost-effective

Donor-advised funds are a great alternative to establishing a charitable or private foundation, which can be a time consuming and expensive process involving legal responsibilities, the setting up a board of directors and more. In contrast, DAFs have no start-up costs, are easy to set-up, offer privacy and are tax friendly. They can be established with a minimum donation of \$10,000 and you can take up to five years to reach this threshold. And best of all, CFNS will take care of all administration of the fund, including accounting, investing, receipting, and Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) requirements. As a not-for-profit registered charitable foundation, our fees are nominal, covering only our actual costs, and we're governed by a Board of Directors, with volunteers from the legal, business, financial, health and non-profit sectors providing fiduciary oversight.

Donor-Advised Funds

- Offer similar benefits to a private foundation but without the administrative responsibilities and financial disclosure requirements
- Offer planning certainty and philanthropic flexibility
- Can issue funds to any registered charity or qualified donee as defined by CRA
- Can grant on an annual or quarterly basis or timeline of choice
- Provide anonymity should you choose to remain private
- The fund can be named, just as you would if creating a private foundation
- Support the causes you care about now and/or over time with legacy planning
- Grow your donation while receiving tax benefits and long-term security
- CFNS manages administration while providing insight and due diligence



Impact and legacy

Through CFNS, you can give to one of our existing funds whose philanthropic vision aligns with your own, or we can help you develop focus and establish your own fund for more targeted giving to the causes you wish to support. If you're unsure, here are some questions to consider:

- What issues are you passionate about?
- How do these issues align with the needs of the community?
- What do you wish to accomplish with your charitable giving?
- Do you want to give now or in the future? Or both?

Engagement

As the donor, your level of involvement with the fund is up to you and we can help you develop the giving process. For example, you may choose to engage with your preferred charities, provide recommendations only or have CFNS administer all granting. Either way, based on your instructions, we manage the disbursements, with the funding issued to charities in the name of your fund.

As a convenor and conduit for community giving, we have a deep understanding of the needs across our province to help ensure your charitable giving will have an impact, today and for future generations.

Talk to us about the benefits of a donor-advised fund and if it's right for you.

*“Why would we handle our charitable giving any other way?
We send CFNS a cheque. They take care of everything.
When we are ready, we just let them know where to send
the donations. It's so easy!”*

Anonymous Fundholder with the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia

