

# Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) Canada 2025 Election Toolkit



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## Context

As leaders in the charitable sector, AFP members and chapters have a responsibility to raise the profile of the issues faced by our sector. The upcoming federal election provides a unique opportunity to be heard by those wishing to represent us.

Please note that AFP is a non-partisan organization. When representing AFP members are reminded not to express political affiliation.

This concise toolkit provides essential resources to enhance the visibility of the fundraising profession and the broader nonprofit and charitable sector among electoral candidates. We invite you to take a moment to explore this document and reflect on how you can champion our sector and the communities we serve.

As you engage with candidates—whether through social media posts, at events, or during in-person conversations—consider how you can effectively advocate for our sector.



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## How to use this toolkit

Each decision made by our federal politicians can impact the efforts of everyone in our sector who makes the lives of Canadians better.

To ensure our politicians understand the importance of those decisions on the charitable and nonprofit sector, AFP Canada developed this toolkit for AFP members, AFP chapters, and other fundraisers and nonprofit professionals to use in the 2025 federal election campaign.



**AFP Canada's priority for the 2025 federal election is to: *Create a permanent, adequately funded, dedicated secretariat for Canada's charitable sector in the federal government.***

We encourage you to advocate on behalf of our sector by using these tools when meeting your local candidates, attending local or regional events, or commenting on social media about the election. We also invite you to share this toolkit with your peers and colleagues.

Our sector is a vital force in every community across Canada, driving positive change and addressing critical needs. By establishing a dedicated secretariat, we can better integrate the sector's priorities into the daily operations of the Government of Canada. This alignment will enable us to amplify our impact and enhance our capacity to serve Canadians more effectively than ever before.



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## You can make a difference

Every Canadian can and should make their voice heard in a federal election. You can advocate on behalf of the nonprofit and charitable sector about the issues we face in serving Canadians.

### *How you can make a difference:*

1. Engage with local candidates when they knock on your door or when you see them at community events:
  - > ask about their experience with charities;
  - > ask them if they know the size and impact of our sector;
  - > are they aware that our sector doesn't have a single window into government;
  - > if elected, ask how they would support our sector;
  - > encourage them to learn more about nonprofits and charities in their community; and
  - > ask where they stand on our priorities.
2. Share responses to questions on social media using hashtag **#AFPCanada**, **#PolCan** and **#Elxn45**. Don't forget to tag your local candidates where appropriate.
3. Vote—and encourage others to vote. To find your voting location, go to [www.elections.ca](http://www.elections.ca).

## Background

### *Our sector*

This federal election is a critical event for Canada and for Canadian charities and nonprofits. There are **170,000+** charitable and nonprofit organizations in Canada, and over 86,000 of these are **registered charities**. The sector contributes **\$216 billion to the Canadian economy, employs over 2 million people and accounts for over 8% of the Canada's GDP**.

Despite its contribution to Canada's GDP, the charitable and nonprofit sector does not have distinct ministerial, regulatory, or organizational administration in the federal government. By comparison, the industries with similar contribution percentages to Canada's GDP (construction, finance, and mining, oil, and gas extraction) all have federal ministers, secretariats, or entire government departments dedicated to their sector or industry.

## AFP Canada

[AFP Canada](#) is a leading national voice for fundraising professionals who are vital in advancing charitable work. The over 3,000 AFP members in Canada play a critical role in helping to shape Canadian policy and by raising funds that change lives. They fundraise for organizations large and small, in rural and remote communities as well as towns and major cities across the country. Fundraisers support the arts, culture, shelters, emergency services, healthcare, education, reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, and social justice.

AFP members in Canada are part of the larger AFP Global network—the largest community of professional fundraisers in the world. The approximately 26,000 members worldwide raise over \$100 billion annually to support thousands of philanthropic causes and organizations across the globe in accordance with AFP’s Code of Ethical Standards.

Learn more about [AFP Canada](#), [our policy priorities](#) and the [impact](#) of our work.

## AFP Canada policy priority for the 2025 election

Establish a secretariat for the charitable and nonprofit sector. Advantages of this priority include:

- > A secretariat would work with public servants in different departments and agencies to help them consider the potential impacts of policies, programs and laws on the sector.
- > Ensure greater collaborative policy development and an understanding of the importance of the sector.
- > Improve the use of government and charitable sector resources enabling both to better meet the wide-ranging needs of Canadians now and in the future.
- > For more information see [benefits of a secretariat](#).



## PRINT THIS PAGE TO KEEP BY YOUR DOOR OR TO TAKE TO A FORUM

### Questions to ask the candidate at the door

1. What will you do to help ensure that local charities get the support from government they need to respond to increasing demands from Canadians who access their programs and services?
2. Did you know that there is no single place in government tasked with increasing the sector's vibrancy, its growth and its ability to deliver critical services in communities across our country? Our sector contributes over 8% to GDP and 24% of Canadians rely on the sector for basic needs – just to get by!
3. What experience do you have volunteering at or leading a charity in our community? Specifically, how will this shape your priorities if you are elected to represent me in the House of Commons?
4. How will you engage government on behalf of charities if you are elected?

**Reminder: Don't forget to make it local. Share how the charities in your community are making a difference and changing lives.**

### Sample Tweets or Social media:

The AFP Canada Federal Election communications resources can be found on our [website](#). When posting in social media, please check our website to ensure you use the correct hashtags and don't forget to tag your political candidate and their party. Here are a few sample posts:

*Over 170,000 charities and nonprofits in Canada work tirelessly to provide education, healthcare, housing, food, and arts to our communities. They make our lives better every day—don't let them be overlooked. #AFPCanada, #PolCan and #Elxn45*

*Charities face increasing demand, rising costs, and fewer resources. In this election, ask candidates: What's your plan to strengthen Canada's charitable sector? Your vote can make a difference for the millions who depend on these vital organizations. #AFPCanada, #PolCan and #Elxn45*



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# The Critical Importance of a Secretariat for the Charitable Sector in Canada

*The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) Canada is calling on the federal government to create a permanent, adequately funded, dedicated secretariat for the charitable sector in Canada.*

## The time to act is now. Canadians need the government to create a secretariat.

- There is no single place in government tasked with increasing the sector's vibrancy, its growth and its ability to deliver critical services in communities across the country.
- A secretariat would work with public servants in different departments and agencies to help them consider the potential impacts of policies, programs and laws on the sector.
- It would result in greater collaborative policy development and an understanding of the importance of the sector.
- It would improve the use of government and charitable sector resources enabling both to better meet the wide-ranging needs of Canadians now and in the future.
- Charities and nonprofits supplement government by focusing on some of the biggest problems our country faces today (e.g., poverty, hunger, healthcare, disasters, inequalities).
- Charities and nonprofits provide support to those affected by important challenges that the government aims to tackle such as climate change, cost of living, affordability and jobs.
- With more than 9.6 million Canadians relying on the sector to help meet their basic needs, the demand for services is growing. The sector must have government policies that strengthen its ability to be there for the people it serves.
- In its written response to the special senate committee report on the sector in 2021, the government expressed support for the creation of a single window into government. This would be accomplished through a secretariat.



**170,000**  
nonprofits and  
charities in  
Canada



**24%**  
of Canadians  
rely on services  
from the sector



**\$216**  
billion (8%)  
contributed  
to GDP



**\$11**  
billion in  
donations  
annually

## About AFP

[AFP Canada](#) is a leading national voice for fundraising professionals who are vital in advancing charitable work. The 3,000 AFP members in Canada play a critical role helping to shape Canadian policy and raising funds that change lives. They fundraise for organizations large and small, in rural and remote communities as well as towns and major cities across the country. Fundraisers support the arts, culture, shelters, emergency services, healthcare, education, reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, and social justice, all while contributing over 8% to GDP annually.

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## General guidelines for charities during federal elections in Canada

Organizations can be a powerful voice for legislative and regulatory change in Canada. Because most of AFP members are employed by registered charities, AFP Canada recommends following these guidelines before and during an election:

- > Generally, all activities of your organization during the election period must be focused on policy or legislation, and **NOT** the candidates or political parties.
- > Charitable organizations, and representatives speaking on behalf of organizations, **cannot publicly endorse or oppose a specific candidate or a specific political party.**
- > In general, **candidates from each of the three major federal political parties must be given the same opportunity** (time, visibility, exposure) to participate in any event hosted by a charity.
- > If you invite one candidate to visit your organization (e.g., a meeting, a tour, etc.), **you must invite the other candidates from each of the major federal political parties.** The visits do not need to happen at the same time, and not all candidates need to accept your invitations, but candidates from all major parties must be invited.
- > Your organization cannot post messages (online or at your location) or issue public statements in support of or in opposition to a specific candidate or a specific political party.
- > Individuals associated with your organization (employees, board of directors, volunteers, etc.), **can assist political candidates or parties in a personal capacity.** However, they cannot link this work to the work of your organization in any way.
- > When a political party or candidate supports a policy that is also supported by your organization, **you may promote the policy but cannot directly or indirectly support the political party or candidate.**

### *For further information:*

- > AFP Canada: [Federal Election in Canada | Association of Fundraising Professionals](#)
- > AFP Canada: [The Need for a Secretariat for the charitable sector in Canada.pdf](#)
- > Elections Canada: <https://www.elections.ca>
- > Imagine Canada: <https://imaginecanada.ca/en/federal-election-readiness-for-nonprofits>