

THE OTTAWA COALITION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



ANNUAL REPORT
2021



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Mission

OCTEVAW unites organizations and individuals in Ottawa and the surrounding region to end gender-based violence and abuse, including violence and abuse against women and children.

Vision

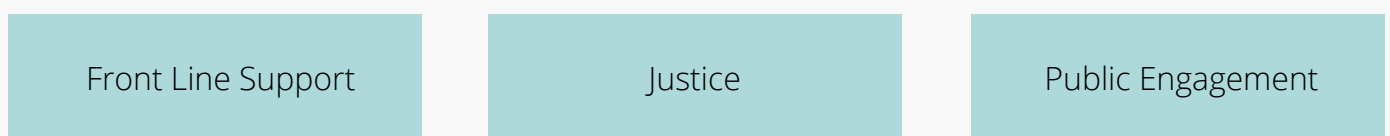
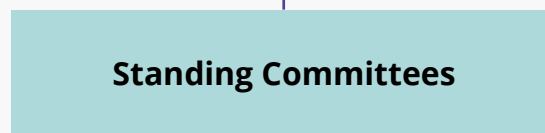
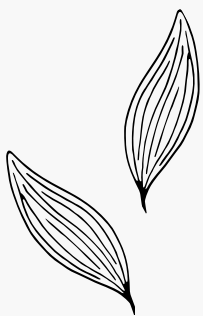
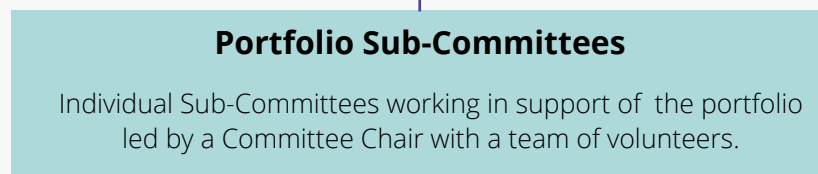
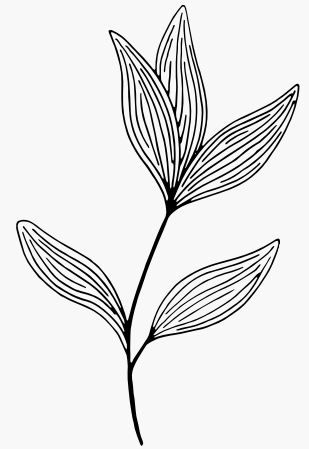
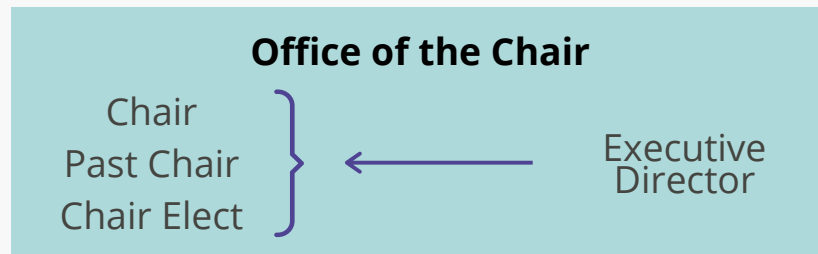
OCTEVAW aspires to a future in which:

- All members of the community, including individuals, organizations, policy makers, and the legal system are united in efforts to ensure a permanent end to all gender-based violence, including violence and abuse against women and children.
- Respect for the inherent worth and dignity of women, trans and gender-variant individuals is reflected in our public institutions.
- Women, trans and gender-variant individuals are able to live violence-free lives rooted in autonomy and self-determination.

Values

OCTEVAW works collaboratively with members and stakeholders in accordance with feminist, anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and pro-choice principles. We recognize the intersectionality and interlocking of oppressions and seek to address these realities in our work. We are committed to the struggle for social justice for all individuals who are marginalized and oppressed, and to advancing the cause of decolonization, reproductive rights, and disability, queer and trans justice.

Board Structure





Report from the Board

At the time of writing, 2021 has receded into the distance, but it was nevertheless a notable year for a number of reasons, many of them positive! It began with the launch of the national—as opposed to what was previously Ontario-based— Victim Advocate Case Review Project, funded by Women and Gender Equity Canada and ably led by Sunny Mariner on behalf of OCTEVAW. Sunny is a nationally recognized expert who has spearheaded the adoption of a country-wide approach wherein frontline sexual violence specialists, independent of police services, review sexual assault investigations that did not proceed to charges. This leads to investigations informed by subject matter experts who work with survivors and can identify concerns, inadequacies, misreadings or omissions and thus provide a more complete picture for the police to draw on.

In addition to this expansion of the VACR project, 2021 saw the culmination of one of OCTEVAW's best known and most successful programs, Young Men Leading Change, supported through the Ontario Trillium Foundation. This program, based on the notion that we need to engage young men, through dialogue, education, and the cultivation of their own leadership skills in the battle to end violence against women, was led for many years by Matt Shaaf. We owe Matt a debt of gratitude for building such a highly respected program which continues to serve as a model around the country.

Then there are many people who supported us in an advisory capacity throughout 2021. We would like to particularly thank Nora Al-Aleiwi, Amal Elmi, Nasreen Rajani, Pamela Twagiyarezu, and Jennisha Wilson the members of our Black and Racialized Committee (BRC) who help to guide us in so many ways – in recruitment, in developing better informed advocacy, in providing input to our strategic planning process and in connecting us to issues and people in equity-seeking and underserved communities. The BRC has become an invaluable touchstone whose wisdom we continue to rely on in virtually all aspects of our work.



Representing Kimiya Project Lab, Layla Farhat brought our strategic planning process to a successful finish in 2021. Layla worked so diligently and patiently to craft a plan that reflected months of painstaking consultation, intelligent reflection, and out-of-the-box thinking. This plan set us up to begin the exciting work of embracing intersectional feminist approaches and, while continuing to advocate on behalf of our members, to reach beyond the membership to join forces with other people and organizations whose work supports survivors in different ways.

As a direct result of our new strategic direction, we embarked on a process to recruit new and diverse board members to OCTEVAW. By the end of 2021 we had the good fortune to find six people who were eager to join us and who came on board just before the New Year: Maggie Echimane, Terhas Ghebretecte, Mandi Pekan, Mashooda Syed, and Nan Wehbe. These are amazing women, who bring a wealth of experience and new perspectives to OCTEVAW as we begin to walk the new paths laid out in our strategic plan.

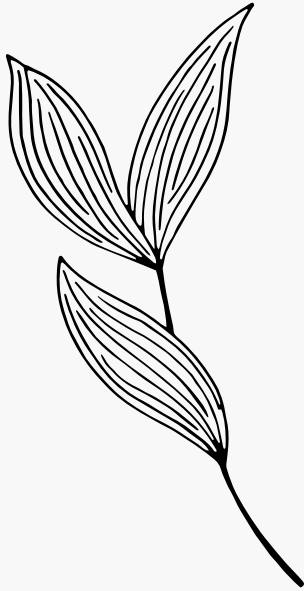
In closing, I would like to thank our Executive Director for her ongoing leadership of OCTEVAW. Erin Leigh has overseen much change and growth in the organization and the burden of much of it has fallen on her shoulders as our only full-time staff member. She has of course been wonderfully assisted by Sonia Figuracion, our bookkeeper, and I would also like to thank the 2021 board of directors: Past Chair Marie-Louise Doyle, Vice-Chair Valerie Auger-Voyer, Communications Lead Amanda Parriag, Finance Lead Kellie Fong, Governance Lead Ann-Marie O'Brien, and valued board members Tara Paterson, and Raha Ravasian. They are all remarkable women in their dedication to the values and mission of OCTEVAW and I thank them all for their invaluable contributions to our work.

And, oh yes, the pandemic! Lest we forget, COVID remained our constant companion throughout 2021 and like so many other organizations, we learned to live with it. It radically changed our workplace and moved us mostly to online platforms. But it did not keep us from the vital work of the coalition, which remained front and centre as we looked forward to all we hope to accomplish in 2022, with or without masks!

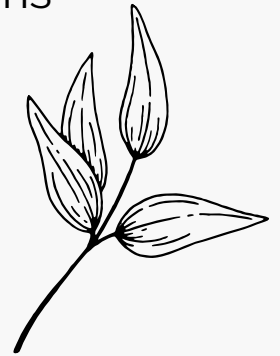
Barbara Laskin
On behalf of OCTEVAW's board of directors



Board of Directors



- **Barbara Laskin**, Chair
- **Kellie Fong**, Treasurer
- **Valerie Auger-Voyer**, Vice Chair
- **Marie-Louise Doyle**, Past Chair
- **Ann-Marie O'Brien**, Governance
- **Amanda Parriag**, Communications
- **Raha Ravasian**, Stakeholder Relations
- **Tara Paterson**, Member Relations



Appointed October 2021

- **Maggie Echimane**, Programs
- **Terhas Ghebretecte**, Governance
- **Mandi Pekan**
- **Mashooda Syed**
- **Nan Wehbe**

Thank you to
outgoing members:
Ann-Marie, Tara,
Raha, & Valerie!

Standing Committees

The Board would also like to thank and recognize the Chair of the Public Engagement Committee, **Jenna Spagnoli**, for her hard work and dedication.



This is us

We are constantly innovating and solving new challenges to bring creativity and high-quality ways of working together and striving for solutions that will better meet the needs of survivors and ultimately end violence against women. We work with incredible community members and remunerate consultants to provide their expertise and insight, as well as with paid staff and a small group of volunteers.

Black and Racialized Caucus

Nora Al-Alewi

Amal Elmi

Nasreen Rajani

Pamela Twagiyarezu

Jennisha Wilson

Violence Against Women Advocate Case Review VACR

Sunny Marriner, VACR Project Lead





This is us

Staffing

Erin Leigh, Executive Director

Matt Schaaf, Program Manager

Sonia Figuracion, Bookkeeper

Sigrid Joseph, Logistics & Communications Coordinator

Kay Angliss, Pandemic Support Coordinator

Jenna Spagnoli, Coordinator

Volunteers

Kay Angliss, MSW placement student

Ray Aust, Placement Student

Julia Hunt, BSW Placement Student

Sam Davin, Communications

Alanna Gray, Communications

Amira Nasser, Communications

Abigail Marsh, Communications

Mireille Sylvester, Communications



Member Agencies



Our member agencies do incredible work for our community and beyond. They each play a role in providing informative resources, crucial front-line support, and fostering a feminist community focused on reducing gender-based violence.

- Minwaashin Lodge: Indigenous Women's Support Centre
- Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre
- Immigrant Women's Services Ottawa
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa
- Interval House of Ottawa
- Nelson House
- Maison d'amitié
- Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre
- Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments
- Cornerstone Housing for Women
- FAM Network
- Ottawa Victim Services
- Planned Parenthood Ottawa
- Carlington Community Health and Resource Centre
- Eastern Ottawa Community Resource Centre
- Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre
- Counselling and Family Services Ottawa
- Family Services Ottawa
- Jewish Family Services
- Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization
- Equity and Inclusive Communities, Carleton University
- Project Lighthouse, Algonquin College
- Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime
- Campus Safety Services, Carleton University
- Feminist Twins
- Sakeenah Homes
- Nisa Homes



2021: a year in review

2021 continued to be a challenging year for our communities - the ongoing pandemic, and shadow pandemic of gender-based violence and violence against women loomed.

We were able to continue to support collaborative efforts in the community including Unsafe At Home Ottawa, the text and chat line for women and 2SLGBTIAQ+ survivors that was created at the start of the pandemic. It has found its supportive full time home at Interval House of Ottawa.

In this time, we focused inwards so that we can do a better job of focusing outwards. OCTEVAW revised its mission, vision, and values in 2017 and committed to values of intersectional feminism, anti-racism, and decolonization. In 2021, we worked solidly on our updated strategic directions for 2022-2025 with the leadership of **Kimiya Project Lab**. This work started in 2019, but took real shape in 2021. The new strategic plan is focused on bringing these values to life across the organization. OCTEVAW's vision as a coalition is that violence against women (VAW) and gender-based violence (GBV) ends.

To achieve this, we need to dismantle the root causes of GBV/VAW that are intrinsically connected to other forms of violence and oppression. Dismantling the root causes of GBV/VAW is only possible if it is informed and led by the needs of those most negatively impacted by mainstream structures, institutions, and society that support, sustain and inflict violence on survivors and communities.

The strategic plan was developed collaboratively with the OCTEVAW Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) Caucus, OCTEVAW members, staff, community partners, and other experts.

The priorities are intended to make space for and centre BIPOC individuals, groups, and survivors in the mainstream VAW/GBV sector that has traditionally centred the experiences of white people. Project activities include carrying out the strategic plan's five priorities: governance, member and community engagement, organizational change, programming and collaboration, and advocacy.





Prevention

Engaging with individuals and public institutions across the community to share best practices for preventing gender-based violence and supporting community-wide prevention efforts.

Program Snapshot:

The **Young Men Leading Change (YMLC)** program supported young racialized men across Ontario to be leaders in helping to prevent and end violence against women and gender-based violence. YMLC ran for for 3 years, ending in August 2021.

It was at this time that Matt Schaaf ended his time with OCTEVAW, as the lead on our engaging men work. We are indebted to his commitment, expertise and thoughtfulness to this work over the years and believe our programming has enriched the community and helped to create a network of dedicated and talented men advancing this cause.

This project involved 332 young men from newcomer and racialized communities in London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Peterborough, and Ottawa. Each group met over a period of months to consider their ideas of healthy masculinity and community leadership with the expertise of organizations working to end gender-based violence.

The results of surveying young men before and after the program show that their **attitudes and beliefs about what it means to be a man expanded to include “non-traditional” traits and roles**. The data also indicates that **the young men were more likely to take action** as a result of analyzing common situations of gender-based violence and practicing strategies to skillfully intervene.

YMLC was delivered through partnerships with Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization, Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre, Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region, Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre, Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration, and Anova. **We are thankful to the Ontario Trillium Foundation which generously funded this program.**

Public Education & Movement Building

The **first 8 weeks are known as the 'red zone' on campuses** - when sexual violence spikes. OCTEVAW, in partnership with CALACS francophone d'Ottawa, the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre, and the four post-secondary campuses across Ottawa supported public education for students about sexual violence on campus during this critical period.

Our **#JustGotWeird** campaign shares messaging about what sexual violence looks like, how students can help intervene safely in harmful situations, and how to support survivors. For 2021, we pivoted the focus to reflect COVID - issues of consent in a physical distancing world and greater issues related to online intimacy. We also focused our outreach through online geo-fencing ads that were geographically focused on campus locations, student living accommodations, and rental neighbourhoods. We reached the target audience with **258,332 impressions**.

The **Public Engagement Committee** continued our longstanding work of hosting and helping organize feminist events including commemorating important dates in the year such as International Women's Day, .

WOMEN'S EVENTS NETWORK

We also contributed to the Women's Events Network (WEN) by being a core organizer of the **December 6th vigil**, which we had to move online due to COVID-19. Instead of meeting at Minto Park, we recorded two videos that can be found on WEN's Youtube channel. We were honored to have amazing local community leaders speak, including Elder Claudette Commanda, Yvette Ashiri, Rosie Douge-Charles, and Ifrah Yusuf (Justice For Abdirahman Coalition).

Amplifying Front Line Voices

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ADVOCATE CASE REVIEW

OCTEVAW is committed to giving voice and resources to those who work with survivors of violence to ensure that their expertise informs public policy and contributes to legislative reform.

Violence Against Women Advocate Case

Review (VACR). When we submitted a grant proposal in 2016 to Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) to *try* and review closed sexual assault case files in four communities, we had no idea how far this work would expand.

Not long after we submitted this proposal, the Globe and Mail's "Unfounded" series was launched in February 2017. The series' scaffolding was built on the expertise of local advocate Sunny Marriner.

The Unfounded series highlighted what advocates in Ottawa have been saying since the 1970s. Women aren't believed when they report sexual assault to police. The unfounding rate in 1973 was 37%. In 2017, the G&M found the national rate was 20%. 1 in 5 women wasn't believed.

Our response to this problem is Violence Against Women Advocate Case Review (VACR). Front line advocates provide their expertise to closed police cases and determine if there were missteps or promising practices, .

Our grant was to bring VACR to 4 communities

4

We engaged in deep readiness assessment work with 36

36

Implementation in 19 communities, including Ottawa ...and counting

19

In December 2020, OCTEVAW secured a three year \$1M dollar grant from Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) in recognition of the profound systemic change that it can bring about. The project is to support communities across the country in implementing VACR.





Vigorous Advocacy

We play an important role in bringing member agencies together to build our own capacity and frameworks to better support and advocate for survivors, Members of our Public Engagement Committee, Front Line Support Committee, Justice Committee, and beyond, help shape our priorities and actions,

In 2021, we advocated for



The needs of survivors to be met with city and provincial supports for the pandemic. We were tasked by the City of Ottawa to disburse \$200K to meet the needs of survivors, and prioritized \$75k to be directed towards Indigenous women involved in the sex trade - those most vulnerable to contracting COVID and to be targeted for violence. .



Supporting the development and implementation of the Women and Gender Equity Strategy of the City of Ottawa



Supporting survivor advocates to have legislative changes made to the Provincial Municipal Act at the provincial level. Currently, termination and other serious consequences are not able to be applied to municipal councillors that engage in egregious harassment and abuse. Financial abuse is considered more damning than gender-based violence, and changes to the Act are needed.



Funders

Our funders demonstrate wisdom and confidence in supporting the Coalition. Without the generous support of our funders, the important work of enhancing a coordinated response to violence against women & gender-based violence our efforts would not be possible.

THANK
YOU



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada



Ontario



Ontario
Trillium
Foundation



Fondation
Trillium
de l'Ontario

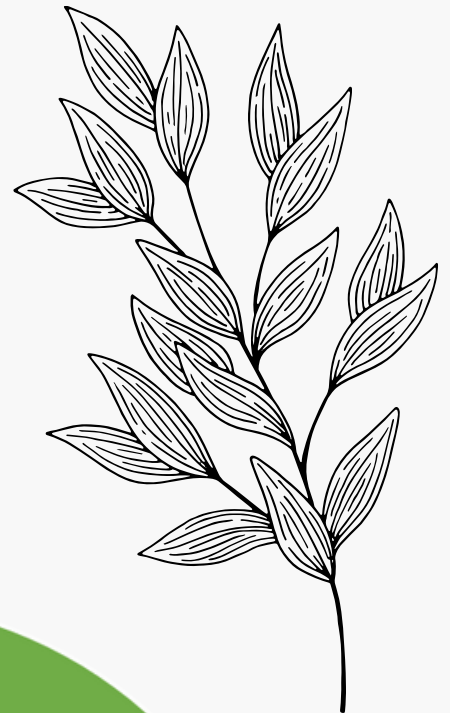
An agency of the Government of Ontario
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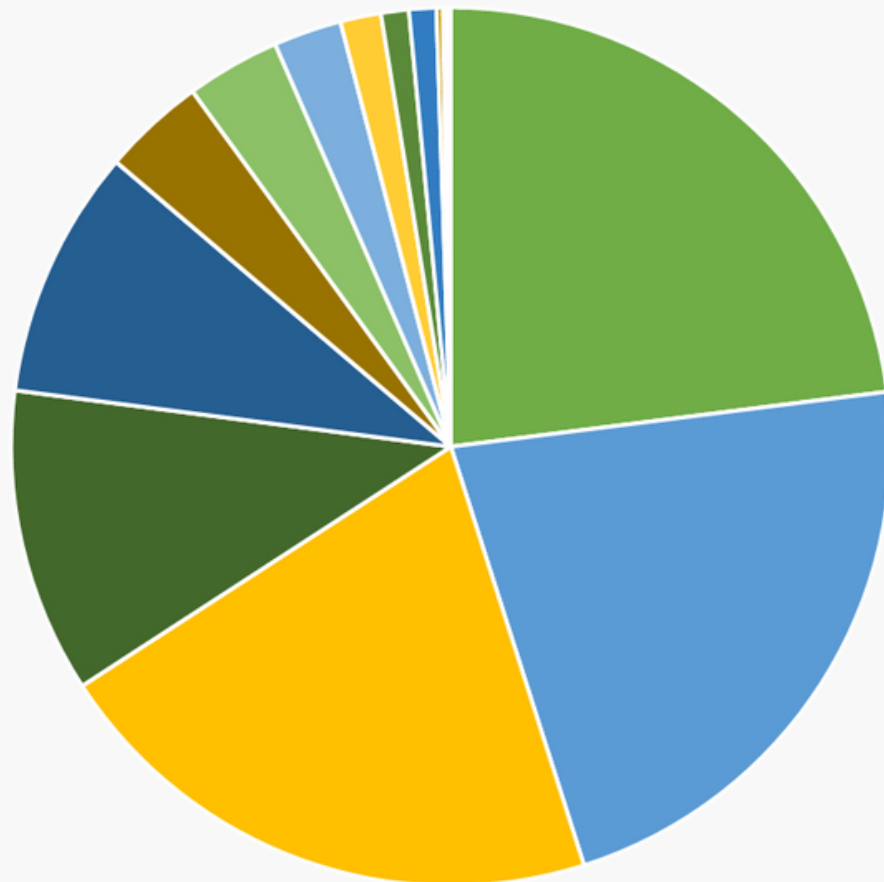
OTTAWA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

invested for good

Financial Snapshot



2021 Revenue: \$869,459

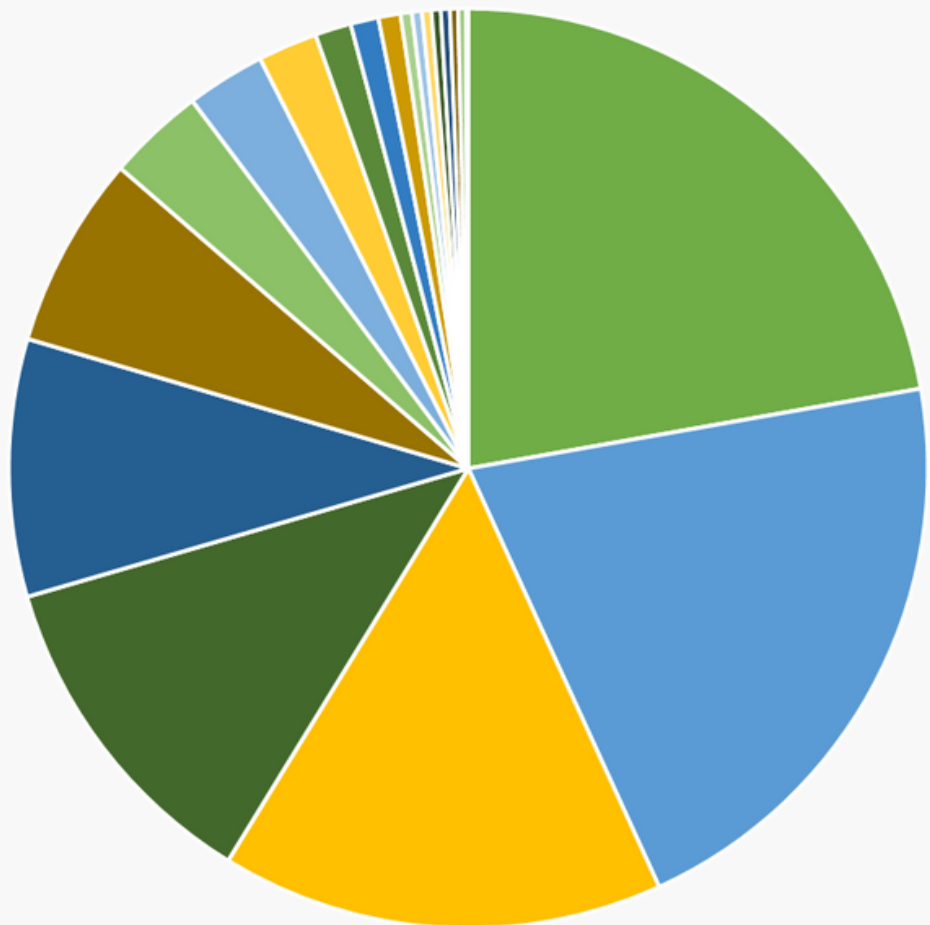


- City of Ottawa - COVID Relief
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Women and Gender Equality - Capacity Building Project
- Canadian Women Foundation
- Ottawa Community Foundation
- Donation
- Sexual Assault Network
- Membership
- Women and Gender Equality - VACR
- City of Ottawa
- City of Ottawa - Chiarelli
- MCSS
- Planned Parenthood Ottawa
- Other revenue
- Maifest Change



Financial Snapshot

2021 Expenditure: \$828,179



- Salaries and benefits
- Outreach
- Program facilitation and workshops
- Occupancy costs
- Translation
- Amortization
- Telephone
- Professional fees
- Salaries and benefits - Partner agencies
- Honorarium
- Other expenses
- Staff development
- Supplies
- Travel
- COVID-19
- Administration
- Evaluation
- Website
- Insurance
- Bad debt