



April 1, 2020

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, PC, MP  
Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Hon Jason Kenny, MLA  
Premier of Alberta  
307 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue NW  
Edmonton, AB, T5K2B6

Dear Sirs,

We are writing to bring attention to the non-profits, charities and social enterprises who employ over 2 million Canadians, benefit from the efforts of more than 13 million volunteers, and which contributes ~ **8.5% of total Canadian GDP**. Here in Alberta, our sector employs over 175 000 fulltime and part-time workers and has almost 20% of Canada's volunteer workforce of around 2.5 million (as Alberta has the most not-for-profits per capita in the world). AWSN has been working diligently as a registered non-profit to support under-represented populations in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields across Alberta for over 25 years and hope that we can continue this work for many more years with your support.

**As stimulus packages are rolled out, non-profits, charities and social enterprises need secure and flexible funding.** As layoffs and financial losses increase, fundraising dollars are disappearing. Aid packages need to ensure that non-profit organizations have the tools needed to aid in recovery, not just at the present time but also in the future. AWSN has already experienced a sharp decline in online fundraising efforts and has been forced to cancel our largest fundraiser that was planned for fall 2020. Our group will not fully understand the extent of lost revenues for quite some time, as we will not fully understand the long term effects on our donors and funders.

The consequences of the pandemic and effects on our greater sector must also be viewed through a **gendered lens**. Non-profits, charities and social enterprises are largely dominated by both paid and unpaid female labour. Demand for many non-profit services is already increasing and will continue to increase as women and other under-represented populations are being unduly affected by the COVID-19 crisis through job losses, increased demands in childcare and homeschooling and expected increases in domestic violence incidences. Women are responsible for the majority of unpaid care and affected disproportionately by poverty. We must value the work of care that is largely undertaken by women, both at home and throughout the non-profit sector, and **support structures** that prop up everyone.

We look forward to your support in our continued efforts to contribute to the Canadian and Albertan economies with valuable volunteer labor and supports for our communities.

Sincerely,

Alicia Bjarnason, P.Geol, MA, CCIP  
President AWSN

CC:

Rachel Notley, Government of Alberta  
Jason Copping, Government of Alberta MLA Calgary Varsity  
Travis Toews, Government of Alberta Minister of Finance  
Leela Aheer, Government of Alberta Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women  
Andrew Scheer, Government of Canada Opposition Leader  
Len Webber, Government of Canada MP Calgary Confederation  
Bill Morneau, Government of Canada Minister of Finance  
Maryam Monsef, Government of Canada Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development