GIFT PLANNING

Paul Nazareth,
Vice President, Education & Development,
Canadian Association of Gift Planners

How to Make Your Donations More Meaningful

It's a continued joy hearing back each year from estate planners across Canada, confirming how valuable a resource this Donors' Guide has been for them, their clients, and communities. Having been connected to the work of this publication for well over 20 years, I hear those stories and incorporate them into the courses we host at the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP) to further educate both charities and advisors in tax, financial, estate and charitable gift planning.

Can I take you behind the curtain of the charity sector for a second?

Giving research tells us that most Canadians donate because they were asked, because of fundraising. Our heads and hearts matter, but on their own they rarely result in a gift that feels good, and you know it's doing good. Canadians are often surprised to learn this about themselves. I've seen it firsthand many times in my extensive work helping new and recurring donors alike establish their own giving plans. More and more advisors are working with clients on giving plans to 'flip the script' to switch from giving as a reaction to donating as an act of hope. They are building pre-emptive safeguards against the world's problems instead of responding to them when, all too often, it's already too late. Giving plans move beyond merely comforting the suffering and allow Canadians to invest in solving problems at their roots.

And right now, Canadians are ready to step up and give, even in uncertain times. Because they care.

More Canadians than ever are on a journey of personal reconciliation and are looking to support Indigenous communities and causes in both urban centers, Indigenous communities and the many northern nations that haven't engaged in traditional settler-created 'philanthropy'. As we all react to the climate crisis and our own communities are affected by fires, floods and crisis, disaster donations will become a more common giving theme. Our nation has a deep and beautiful history to be told in the arts, science, technology and more. The generation that built our modern Canada — that invested a lifetime in their careers and communities and know our rich culture and history firsthand — are transitioning into retirement and beyond. They know better than most the danger of losing our stories and the importance of protecting our legacies.

In 2023 alone, fundraising has already been responsible for Billions (capital "B") of dollars in donations. By using this guide and an educated advisor planning your giving could make those numbers much higher. At the same time, hundreds of sophisticated charities representing huge societal challenges are having to adapt their strategic fundraising due to increasingly insufficient funding and policy at all levels of Government. These opportunities and challenges are exactly why so many advisors are turning to gift planning as an option for their clients; not only during their lifetimes using incentives to donate stocks, insurance, and to advised-foundations but of course strategic donations allocated in Wills and estate plans. To that end, you'll find in this guide an up-to-date and comprehensive listing of charities as a resource to explore causes and opportunities to give back meaningfully and strategically. You'll also find a simple and streamlined overview of the many tax benefits to giving and strategies for tax-smart giving to maximize the impact of your planned donations. Thanks to Canada's highly advanced charitable giving rules, you can have your pick of short and long-term giving solutions.

So come discover local organizations and small charities doing amazing work in your own community. Revisit your tax receipts and see how adding planned giving to your budget or your estate plan can let you give more with less going to taxes. And start considering the "whys" — why you want to help, why you've chosen one organization over another, and why the legacy you leave behind matters to you.

Visit WillPower.ca to find a local advisor with experience in estate planning and a declared interest in helping clients and communities plan their giving. Your Will is a powerful tool to extend your impact well beyond your own lifetime and, with this guide in hand, you can direct that impact where it is needed most. This Canadian Donor's Guide is sent to and used by thousands of estate planning advisors across Canada. Estate planning advisors are engaged and can ensure that your wishes are carried out, your giving has impact, and you can feel good about being generous in your heart, but knowing that your head is happy too because you're giving tax-smart.

Happy planning Canada!

Paul Nazareth has worked in Canada's philanthropic sector for over 20 years. Currently, Vice President, Education & Development at the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP) and was previously VP at the charity CanadaHelps. Paul has been a philanthropic advisor with a national wealth management firm in a trust company and spent many years working with charities from Universities to Churches. Paul is on the board of several charities including The Circle on Indigenous Philanthropy, on the Advisory Council of Carleton University's Masters in Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership program and the editorial committee of the Canadian academic journal "The Philanthropist". He serves as faculty for the Master Financial Advisor in Philanthropy (MFA-P) program led by CAGP, Knowledge Bureau and Spire Philanthropy, and is a frequent instructor for the tax and advisor community with professional communities like CPA, Advocis and Estate Planning Councils.