

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023

Advancing Rights. Promoting Abilities.

President's Message

This has been a year of exciting organizational revitalization for Inclusion Nova Scotia, as we return to our roots and the very reason we exist: supporting families and their loved ones with intellectual disabilities to advocate for their rights to live fully inclusive lives in community. Part of this renewal has involved deepening our relationship with Inclusion Canada and welcoming their support as we continue to learn and deepen our understanding of and commitment to inclusion. Together with them, we have reaffirmed our shared vision that “true inclusion can only happen when the lives of children and adults with an intellectual disability unfold no differently - immersed together with their peers without a disability in the same pathways and experience of life common to us all.”

Strategic Plan

We go into this, our 70th, year with a newly approved Strategic Plan, **Advancing Inclusion 2023-2028**, which is anchored by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Nova Scotia Human Rights Remedy. We will have three distinct roles with specific priorities. Across these roles, we focus on partnerships, resource creation, and capacity building efforts to foster inclusion:

- **Empower families** to become leaders for inclusion and equality.
- **Promote the rights** and inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities and their families in **inclusive communities**.
- **Collaborate with government and other partners** to support families and individuals to achieve fully inclusive lives.

I encourage you to take time to read our whole Strategic Plan.



Human Rights Remedy

As a founding member of the Disability Rights Coalition, Inclusion Nova Scotia celebrated the release of the interim settlement towards a systemic human rights remedy to end discriminatory treatment of people with disabilities. This was a landmark decision which marks a bright new era for Nova Scotians with intellectual disability and their families. We owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude to all those who committed hours of their time, talent, and passion to making this possible.

Our Volunteers

The board of Inclusion Nova Scotia has participated in several development and learning opportunities over the past year and engaged together in thoughtful discussions and decisions to move our organization forward. Many thanks to each of them for their shared vision and dedication. We bid a grateful farewell to outgoing board members, Merrilee Rowse, Sharon Hope Irwin, Patti Conrad, John Cox, and Templeton Sawyer.

Our Staff

The staff of inclusion Nova Scotia are the *face* of who we are and what we do, and we are thankful for their work on our behalf. Many thanks as well to former ED Patricia Neves for her leadership. A heart-felt thank you to Barb Horner for her incredible, steady leadership these past months as Interim ED, and to Anna MacQuarrie for her invaluable support as consultant. Stay tuned for an announcement soon about our new Executive Director!

Stephanie Carver. President, Inclusion Nova Scotia

Interim Executive Director Report

It has been a pleasure, yet daunting and hopeful experience to step in as Interim ED at such a transformative time with Inclusion NS, March–June 2023. In addition to overseeing the day-to-day operations and providing support and guidance to staff, a priority of mine has been to reconnect Inclusion NS with families and our grassroots. We have started this by re-establishing our newsletter and hosting virtual information sessions. We have also been using our social media channels to share our position on substantive issues like the NS Human Rights Remedy and the right to education. We are thrilled at the responses these are generating and look forward to more conversations.



While it has been a year of change, it has also been a year of impact. Powerful videos on the right to live in community and inclusive employment increased our reach and strengthened our focus on human rights. As a founder of the Disability Rights Coalition, Inclusion NS has helped secure a Human Rights Remedy that will address the longstanding barriers people with intellectual disabilities and their families have faced in exercising the right to live in community. In March 2023 we hosted a Board Leadership Development weekend that looked deeply at what it means to be leaders for inclusion and reaffirmed our commitment to investing in family leadership. As part of this work, we have undertaken a program review of what Inclusion NS is offering families and people with intellectual disabilities. The outcome of the review will be transformed program efforts that are aligned with our new Strategic Plan, anchored in human rights, and committed to inclusion.

As an organization we are excited to action our new Strategic Plan and continue our efforts - such as our Life Transitions activities and developing resources for families. We are energized to be undertaking new family leadership efforts and helping families understand what the Human Rights Remedy is and what it means. Establishing Inclusion NS as a leading provincial family organization starts with families and I look forward to watching the organization continue to flourish.

Sincerely,
Barb Horner

Program Highlights

While 2022-23 has been a year of transformation, it has continued to be a year of impact. Inclusion NS makes a difference for people with intellectual disabilities and their families in a variety of ways.

2022-2023 By the #s

Ready Willing Able (in partnerships with Autism NS)

- Connected with 246 potential employers
- Engaged 74 potential employers
- Created 27 jobs

Life Transitions

- 40 young adults with intellectual disabilities reached through weekly workshops at NSCC or in community.
- 50 students at NSCC reached through presentations on disability supports and healthy relationships.

Direct Advocacy support to:

- Individuals: 11
- Families: 32

A snapshot of our efforts: Resource Development

- Launched an inclusive employment video anchored in our belief of real work for real pay and the right to employment.
- Released information guides on key issues like:
 - [Supported Housing](#)
 - [Nova Scotia's Adult Consent and Decision-Making Act](#)
 - [Employment](#)
 - [Parent Advocacy](#)
- Completed seven plain language translations for organizations seeking to provide accessible information to people with intellectual disabilities.



Advancing Human Rights

- Inclusion NS made sure the voice of people with intellectual disabilities and their families was central to the [Human Rights Remedy](#) in NS. As a lead partner in the development of the Remedy, Inclusion NS:
 - Helped lead a week long fact-finding mission by external experts, Eddie Bartnik and Tim Stainton, conducting the human rights review and developing a Human Rights Remedy for NS. We were part of the steering committee establishing the meetings, helped identify participants for the meetings, created resources for the meetings (ie invitations), and participated in the meetings.
 - Participated in an intensive virtual workshop process on 6 key directions identified through the fact-finding mission, and, was part of the review team of the final report developed by the external experts.
 - Inclusion NS provided vital feedback on the process, the directions and the need for materials to be developed in plain language.
 - Inclusion NS made sure the voice of people with intellectual disabilities and their families was central to the Human Rights Remedy in NS.

- Supported the development and delivery of a participatory research project, **My Home, My Rights**, on human rights and justice.
 - In partnership with Dalhousie Schulich Law School, Inclusion NS, supported 6 people with intellectual disabilities to be part of this effort.
 - The project looked at living in the community through a rights-based lens. It enhanced Inclusion NS's work on supportive housing by creating an opportunity to look at the barriers that make access to housing a challenge.
 - Supported Inclusion NS to frame the issue of housing within a human rights lens.
 - Through the project powerful videos on the right to housing and the barriers people face in accessing housing were created.
 - My Home My Rights culminated in a powerful art display at the Halifax Public Library.

Strengthening Inclusion NS

The success of our efforts relies on the strength of our movement. To be a strong vibrant movement for inclusion, we need a strong, vibrant organization. Inclusion NS has continued to invest in strengthening our organization to enhance our vision for inclusion and what it means for the work of the organization. This year, these efforts included:

- A presentation to the Board on funding sustainability.
- An intensive board development workshop on family leadership and values-based training.
- Conducted a program review of Inclusion NS programs to assess alignment with our values, inclusion and human rights.
- Developed a new Strategic Plan to guide our efforts for 2023-2028.

Connecting with Families

At our core, we are a family-based movement. Connecting with families is a key priority for Inclusion NS.

- To improve our connection with families, Inclusion NS relaunched our regular newsletter in April.
- Inclusion NS surveyed families and our members on what the supports families need.
- Inclusion NS connected with families via social media channels - our posts on access to education and EPA support generated discussion.
- Inclusion NS hosted a variety of presentations for families on key issues like:
 - Wills and inheritances
 - Healthy relationships
 - Parent Advocacy



Inclusion NS Strategic Plan

Advancing Inclusion 2023-2028

People with intellectual disabilities and their families are the heartbeat of our movement for Inclusion. Inclusion starts at birth and it starts with families. It requires communities that nurture a sense of belonging and recognize people with intellectual disabilities as valued neighbours and citizens. Inclusive communities advance the active participation of people with intellectual disabilities and their families in all aspects of community life.

<p>Vision People with intellectual disabilities and their families live full and inclusive lives in the community and have the supports they need to thrive.</p>	<p>Values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ All persons have inherent and equal worth. ★ All persons are entitled to equal access and opportunity. ★ All persons have inherent and inalienable dignity. ★ All persons are entitled to respect.
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Roles and Priorities

Anchored by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the NS Human Rights Remedy, Inclusion NS works across the province to advance the rights and full inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities and their families. We have three distinct roles with specific priorities. Across these roles, we focus on partnerships, resource creation, and capacity building efforts to foster inclusion.



Role	Empower families to become leaders for inclusion and equality.
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a progressive vision for inclusion • Facilitating Family Leadership • Increasing Support to Families

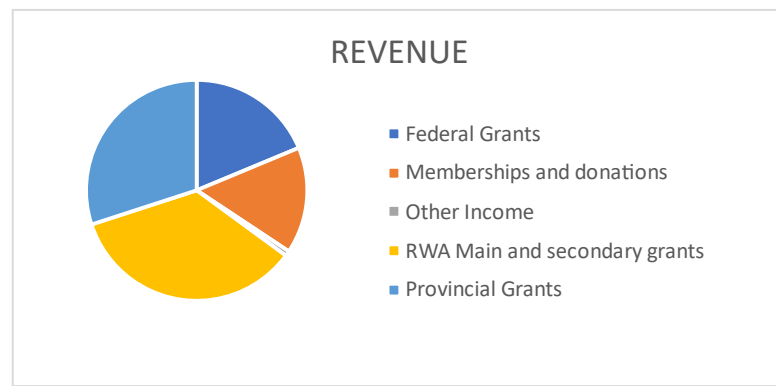
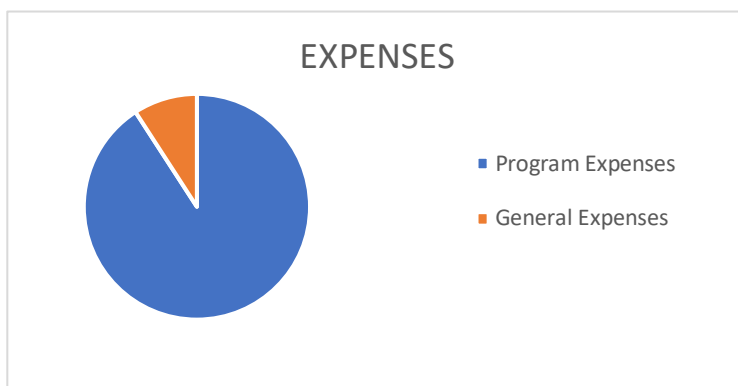
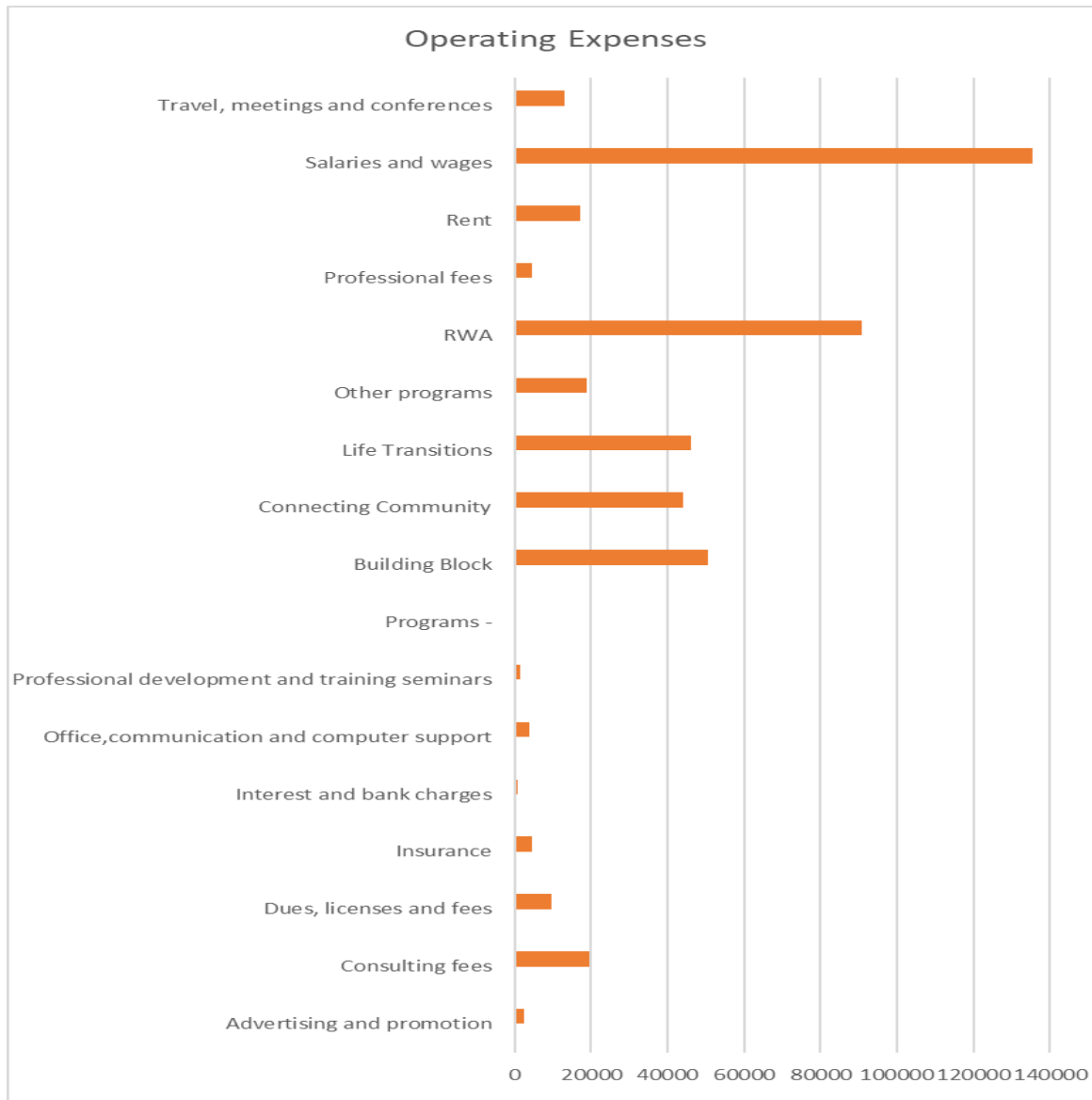


Role	Promote the rights and inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities and their families in inclusive communities.
Priorities	<p>Inclusive communities are places we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live • Work • Learn • Play • Are heard



Role	Collaborate with government and other partners to support families and individuals to achieve fully inclusive lives.
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for inclusive policies and practices • Support the implementation of NS's Human Rights Remedy

2022-2023 Financials



From Our Members

CACL Antigonish

It has been an exciting and very productive 2022-2023 year at CACL Antigonish. We are pleased with our capacity building, collaboration, and inclusion and awareness efforts that support CACL Antigonish participants and their families.

Currently, CACL Antigonish supports over 85 folks. Over 60 folks are attached to Supported Employment and we have over 45 Business Partners in Antigonish Town and County collaborating with us in our Supported Employment program.

CACL Antigonish Food Services, Catering, Café are wage based Social Enterprises and our participants earn a wage. Our Bakery and Wood Production labs are transitioning to paid employment away from Stipend base and this is planned to be accomplished in early 2024. We are increasing our day program Health and Wellness Component. Additionally, and excitingly, CACL Antigonish participants are completing self-advocacy training and this self-advocacy is driving CACL Antigonish participants to frame up their own Participant Council and lead the direction forward on the choice of programming, based on requests and interests, they wish to participate in. CACL Antigonish will be breaking ground soon to start construction on a new D3 small option home. Along with other locals, CACL Antigonish is reviewing and observing movements around the 'Remedy' to improve and provide more choice for all participants and their families. At the Board level, we have had the option to participate in an online board governance conference comprised of three webinars offered by the Institute of Corporate Directors. The three online webinars focused on the following non-profit board governance topics: 1. what makes a great board, 2. Boosting the bonds between board and management, and 3. Community sector insights. In the next week, we also have plans to participate in an in-person board governance development session with Jennifer Georgia.

Throughout 2022-2023, CACL Antigonish Fundraising and PR Committee has planned several fundraising and awareness events including the RCMP Musical Ride in August 2022, our flagship annual 'Business Ability Banquet' in November 2022, our Festival of Trees to celebrate the holidays in December 2022, and a very well attended 'Ham and Bean supper in May 2023 - Who doesn't like ham and beans! We also initiated work on developing an organizational foundation that is progressing nicely.



Inclusion Clare

This year has been filled with transformation and growth.

Work has been completed at our small options home to enhance its backyard and make it more user friendly for residents, staff and visitors.

New opportunities via Directions Council Home Services Nova Scotia social enterprise have been going great in our community. We now offer companionship home visits and are delivering for Meals on Wheels. We were able to host a paint event as well yoga sessions for seniors. Every month we offer themed cookies to seniors in our community. Doing yard work has also been a great experience for our workers.

Université Sainte-Anne is our newest inclusive employer. They hire two of our workers to help their cleaning staff.

We have been showcasing inclusive employers in our community via our Facebook page. Our employee spotlights and celebrating workers and staff's work anniversaries through social media has been really well received.

Our online auction continues to expand as more people join and contribute to it via sales and donations.

Our vocational building got some much-needed repairs. We now have a new roof and freshly paved parking lot thanks to the DCS.

We have been blessed with grants that are contributing to our social enterprises and social activities.

One was through Directions' Waste Diversion. This grant made it possible for us to purchase a shed where we collect refundables. Our workers then clean, count and bag the bottles/cans which we then bring for reimbursement.

Another was a Wellness Fund from the Community Health Board. This grant gave us the ability to have instructors lead chair yoga and water aerobic classes with our workers. We were also fortunate to have a registered dietician come in to host 3 nutrition classes. It was a great way to try out new food/recipes while learning lots.

We've hosted several firsts for our organization:

We had a Walk of lights event in the trail behind our vocational building which ended with a visit from Santa, live music and sweet treats for sale.

We had an open house for our small options home as well as our vocational building where we received love ones and community members. It was wonderful to show everyone what we do/what we are about. Our vocational open house was even featured in a provincial newspaper!

We recently had a vendor's/flea market event. We sold things we prepared in our community kitchen as well as products from our kindling/wood business.





Inclusion. Self-Determination. Human Rights. Respect. Dignity.

We have a vision of an inclusive HRM in which people with Developmental Disabilities and their families are valued equally and are able to participate fully in all aspects of society.

Taking a look back over the year Halifax Association for Community Living (HACL) has had a positive year of growth, determination and goal planning.

Despite some challenges we welcomed a new volunteer Board of Directors, many thanks to the Department that provided Board Training to ensure confidence within the organization and for the persons whom we support.

The Transition Support Program has continued to be an important service for those living with a disability and their families in the HRM. Planning for the future, accessing community resources, referrals and advocacy.

The Peer Support Program offers several types of peer engagement for persons with disabilities. We continue to offer 1:1 and small group support sessions. Peer Support group sessions are held weekly to engage in art, crafts, games and other activities. We continued to offer our Pen Pal program, which began in 2020 in the face of the pandemic to allow participants the ability to connect with one another long distance. As changes have come about the Pen Pal Program came to an end. Working on a new program that will engage a larger population to come.

Partnership formed with NSCC to launch a new group with Best Buddies Canada. Look forward to a new semester of students to run the next round.

The Inclusion Support Program will continue to evolve programs to benefit the ever changing needs of the community. Continuously working with other community partners to promote a brighter and inclusive community.

