

Max Bell  
Foundation

**Annual Report**  
**2022**

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# Our Purpose

Max Bell Foundation is the living expression of its founder's aspiration to improve Canadian society.

We seek better educational, health, and environmental outcomes for Canadians. We pursue these goals by supporting innovative projects that inform public policy change.

We support civic engagement and resilient democratic institutions. We are non-partisan.

We value inclusion and the application of reason to evidence.



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# Message from the Board Chair

One of our aims at Max Bell Foundation is to focus on issues that matter most to Canada and to Canadians. What matters most, of course, is a matter of perspective. Narrowing the enormous number and diversity of public issues to an agenda of priorities is a challenging task for an organization that seeks to allocate its finite resources in ways that yield the greatest public benefit.

While at a much different scale, this is in essence the same challenge faced by governments across Canada. The many concerns and aspirations of citizens find expression through a set of democratic institutions that, albeit imperfectly, prioritize them and provide governments a mandate to develop responses.

During 2022, Max Bell Foundation focussed on our democratic institutions in two ways. First, we tapped the expertise of the professionals working within them to help us develop our own agenda of priorities. Second, we took to heart serious questions about how well our democratic institutions are serving their intended purposes.

On the first point, during 2022 we conducted interviews with 36 individuals employed in either professional public services across Canada or in civil society organizations. The interviews focussed on the question: what do you expect will be the priorities on your agenda in the foreseeable future? We repeat this exercise every third year to help ensure that our funding priorities are broadly aligned with the priorities of Canadians, as expressed through their democratic institutions and civil society organizations. The result is the set of target outcomes articulated in our Education, Health and Wellness, and Environment program areas. You can review those [here](#). We believe it's a compelling agenda and we look forward to working with partners to advance it in the years ahead.

On the second point, we reflected on the changing nature of citizenship, the problematic information environment, and the structure and function of our democratic institutions. We concluded that more needs to be done to help ensure we have a well-informed civil society with the capacity and motivation to engage, through inclusive processes, with open and resilient democratic institutions. In response, we developed and launched a fourth program area called Civic Engagement and Democratic Institutions. You can read more about it [here](#), and about our priorities in the new program [here](#).

This is a natural extension of the work of Max Bell Foundation. For a quarter century we have, in virtue of our focus on public policy, sought to link the experience and expertise in civil society with public policy decision making in three domains: health, education, and environment. Our fourth program area cross-cuts those domains (and others), focusing on how the critical linkages between governments and citizens can be strengthened. We are energized by the responses we've had to this new program so far, and we believe that by working with like-minded partners, we can make a meaningful contribution to Canadian democracy.

As always, we remain inspired by the commitment and creativity of our partners. It is a privilege to work alongside them.



**Brenda Eaton**  
Chair, Board of Directors

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# Message from the President

In 2022 Max Bell Foundation marked its fiftieth anniversary. Much has been written about the appropriate lifespan of grantmaking foundations, with some arguing that only charitable endowments are equipped to take the long-term perspective on problems that's sorely needed, while others claim the urgency of today's issues demands short-term spending down. In this context, we took our anniversary as an opportunity to reflect on our role in contributing to the public benefit.

Over three Board of Directors meetings during the year, we completed our triennial strategic review. We believe our agenda of priorities, regularly refreshed, continues to be compelling. We have highly engaged governance and management teams and, we believe, a meaningful value proposition. Over the full life of the Foundation, we have not accumulated capital: the purchasing power of the endowment today is almost exactly what it was when the Foundation was established. And, demonstrating the power of invested endowments, the Foundation has contributed to Canadian charities an amount roughly equivalent to the value of the original endowment. We plan to continue with our current purpose and approach into the foreseeable future.

The 50-year story of Max Bell Foundation is the aggregate of the stories of our partners. There have been hundreds over the years, all of whom have brought their unique capacities to the task of improving the quality of life for Canadians. You can find a database of them [here](#). To help honour them, we created a [video](#) to illustrate the kinds of work the Foundation has the privilege of getting involved with. The new grants we made in 2022 are excellent exemplars of how Canadian civil society organizations engage with the public policy process in order to advance their missions. They are detailed elsewhere in this report. The outcomes they aim for include:

- + improving transitions into adulthood for youth in care
- + improving primary health care based on both expert advice and citizen preferences
- + understanding better the success factors for a community-driven program of supports for Indigenous children and families
- + improving mechanisms for protecting the biodiversity of forests
- + improving the benefits available for people with lower incomes
- + improving the community-based services available to seniors
- + innovating policies for the circular economy in Canada

In 2022, Max Bell Foundation invested \$1.9 million in grants to our partners. We expended a further \$173,000 delivering our own programs designed to educate and inform Canadians. Included in those programs was our fourteenth annual [Public Policy Training Institute](#) (PPTI). The PPTI provides professional development to individuals employed by Canadian registered charities to help them more effectively contribute to public policy development. More than 300 individuals have now completed the PPTI.

We also hosted public events in Montreal, Winnipeg, and Regina on issues of public concern:

- + [Financing the Energy Transition to Net-Zero](#) (Montreal)
- + [Are Food Security and Sustainability Compatible?](#) (Winnipeg)
- + [The Future of the Indigenous Economy](#) (Regina)

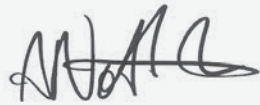


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In reviewing proposals for support, Max Bell Foundation relies on anonymous expert reviewers. We thank them sincerely for their outstanding voluntary contributions, which are invaluable to our decision-making.

When Max Bell created his Foundation, he stipulated that 30% of the gifts the Foundation makes go to his alma mater, McGill University. Over the years, the Foundation and the University have partnered in a variety of ways to realize Max's wishes. Since November 2018, this gift has gone to support the Max Bell School of Public Policy under the direction of Dr. Chris Ragan. In 2022, the third cohort of students graduated with their Master of Public Policy, and the fourth cohort began their studies.

As ever, our partners inspire us to play our part in making a better future.



**Allan Northcott**  
President

# Our Work

## The following new grants were initiated in 2022

### Child Welfare League

Better Transitions to Adulthood and a Just Recovery for Youth in Care / \$127,453 over 18 months

Encouraging governments to adhere to a set of standards for equity will improve outcomes for youth in care transitioning to adulthood.

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### MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions at St. Michael's Foundation

Informing Primary Care Reform / \$300,000 over 24 months

Primary care reform inevitably requires trade-offs, and those should be informed not only by experts and practitioners, but also by patients themselves.

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## Martin Family Initiative

Early Years Cost Benefit Analysis / \$110,000 over 12 months

Community-driven program models for Indigenous children and families respect sovereignty, can generate better outcomes, and can be more efficient.

## Max Bell Foundation

Public Policy Training Institute 2023–2026 / \$623,800 over 4 years

Support for Max Bell Foundation's Public Policy Training Institute.

## Ontario Nature

Building the case to permanently protect Forest Stewardship Council designated conservation lands / \$50,000 over 23 months

Developing a policy pathway can make it easier to move voluntarily conserved lands to permanent legislatively protected conservation areas.

## Prosper Canada

Closing the Financial Help/Benefit Gap for People with Low Incomes / \$450,000 over 33 months

Low-income Canadians should have barrier-free access to filing their taxes.

## Sage Seniors Association

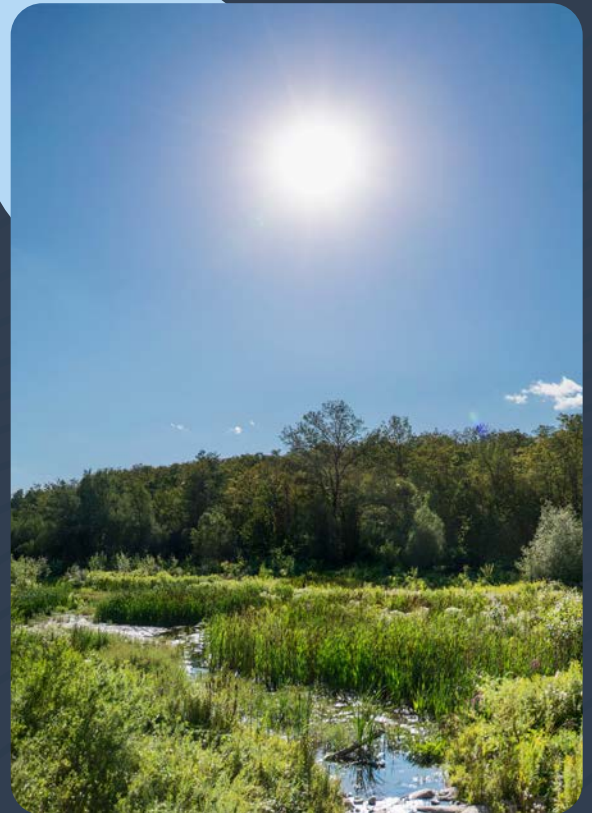
Community-Based Senior Services / \$200,000 over 24 months

When seniors receive services in properly supported community settings, they can achieve better and more cost-effective outcomes.

## Smart Prosperity Institute, University of Ottawa

Circular Economy Policies / \$260,000 over 24 months

Circular economy approaches can improve the competitiveness and sustainability of Canada's critical minerals strategy.





# Directors' Discretionary Grants



<b>Barth Syndrome Foundation of Canada</b>	\$12,150
<b>Carmichael Outreach</b>	\$1,000
<b>Indspire</b>	\$6,075
<b>Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre</b>	\$7,150
<b>McGill University</b>	\$2,150
<b>Nature Conservancy of Canada</b>	\$6,075
<b>North Central Family Centre</b>	\$650
<b>Phoenix Residential Society</b>	\$6,000

<b>Planned Parenthood Regina</b>	\$500
<b>Regina Sexual Assault Centre</b>	\$500
<b>Regina United Way</b>	\$2,000
<b>Regina YWCA</b>	\$1,000
<b>Street Worker's Advocacy Project</b>	\$500
<b>The Study School Foundation</b>	\$10,000
<b>United Way of Winnipeg</b>	\$5,000
<b>The University of Victoria</b>	\$4,000
<b>Victoria Hospice and Palliative Care Foundation</b>	\$8,150



# Ongoing Grants

The Foundation continued the administration of the following grants during 2022

## **Brookfield Institute at Toronto Metropolitan University**

**Job Pathways Project / \$125,000 over 12 months**

A well-designed job transition model can aid in the development of pathways to help workers move from disruptive or declining jobs into promising or high-growth jobs.

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## **Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation**

**A Path Forward for Early Literacy Advocacy / \$21,333 over 4 months**

Improving Children's Literacy in Canada.

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## **Centre for Suicide Prevention**

**Training Teachers to Respond to Students at Risk / \$200,000 over 24 months**

Professionals in helping professions (like teachers) play important roles in identifying and assisting students at risk of suicide.

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## **Child Welfare League**

**Better Transitions to Adulthood for Youth in Care / \$72,532 over 12 months**

A wisely developed set of standards can guide the improvement of provincial policies on youth transitioning out of care.

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## CIVIX

Ctrl-F – Improving Digital Media Education in Canada / \$200,000 over 24 months

Wider use of an evidence informed teaching tool helps students get better at evaluating information online.

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## Max Bell Foundation

Policy Collaborative Evaluation / \$133,500 over 36 months

To Evaluate collaborative public policy advocacy compared to single-organization approaches.

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## Momentum

Enabling Education Savings for Low Income Families – \$115,000 over 24 months

Policies aimed at helping low-income families save for their children's education can be better designed and implemented.

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## Ophea

**Healthy Schools Certification / \$254,307 over 21 months**

Supporting the implementation of the Comprehensive School Health Framework will improve health and education outcomes for students in Canada.

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## Partners for Action at the University of Waterloo

**Effective Property Buyout Programs to Reduce Flood Risk in a Changing Climate / \$134,825 over 24 months**

Well-designed property buyout programs are a viable option for responding to climate-induced flood risk.

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## PolicyWise

**Opportunity Youth Employment Policy in Alberta / \$17,813 over 8 months**

A robust plan of the policy landscape will identify opportunities for interventions that will help youth move into the labour market.

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## Sagesse Domestic Violence Prevention Society

**Building an Alberta Primary Prevention Framework: A Public Policy Collaborative to Prevent Domestic and Sexual Violence / \$566,940 over 24 months**

An updated primary prevention framework will reduce the impacts of domestic and sexual violence in Alberta.

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## The Natural Step

A Public Policy Collaborative / \$525,200 over 24 months

Innovation in Finance will help enable a transition to a Low-Carbon Emissions Economy.

## United Way Halifax

East Coast Public Policy Training Institute / \$30,000 over 7 months

Providing professional development to leaders in non-profit organizations helps them become more effective public policy advocates.

## University of Alberta

Policy Ready Youth Mental Health and Schools Briefing and Advocacy for further Dissemination of Mental Health & High School Curriculum Guide / \$59,980 over 12 months

To scale up more widely across Canada a Guide and accompanying online teacher training program addressing youth mental health literacy.

## University of British Columbia, Okanagan

Volunteer Navigation Partnerships: A Compassionate Community Approach to Early Palliative Care / \$328,899 over 38 months

Community volunteers can increase quality of life for those living with a chronic illness.

## Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Canada

Key Biodiversity Areas for Land Use Planning in Manitoba and Newfoundland / \$140,000 over 12 months

Taking a rigorous evidence-based approach helps policy decision makers identify the most important habitats for conservation.





# Ongoing Internal Programs

The foundation continued the administration of the following ongoing programs in 2022

## **Max Bell Foundation**

Public Policy Training Institute 2019–2022 / \$583,340 over 4 years

Support for Max Bell Foundation's Public Policy Training Institute.

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## **Max Bell School of Public Policy at McGill University**

Evaluation / \$35,000

To provide support for an evaluation of the Max Bell School of Public Policy at McGill University.

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# Financial Report

**\$1,946 million**

Disbursements in Grants

**\$173,000 cost**

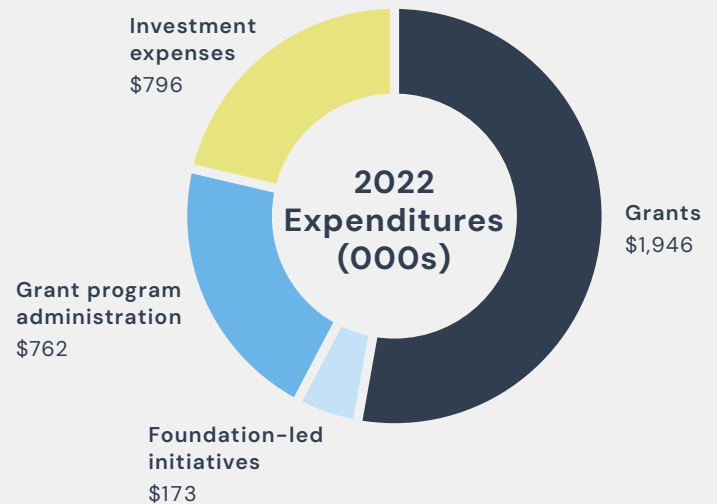
For Charitable Projects

**58%**

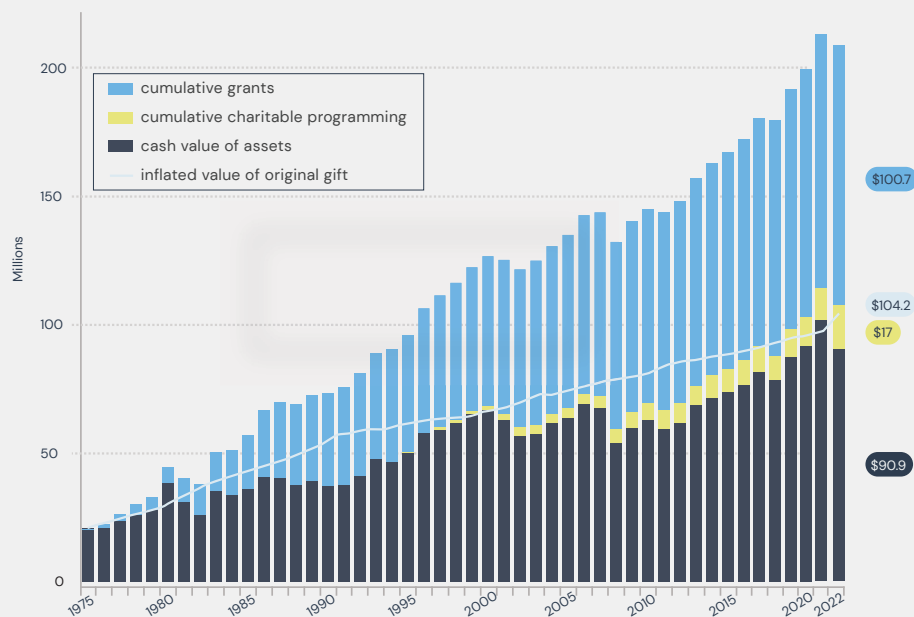
Combined Grants and Projects of

**\$3,677 million**

Annual Total Expenditure



## Max Bell Foundation: Invested in the Community — 1975 to 2022



During calendar 2022, the Foundation's investments funded the expenditure categories above and their value declined from \$98.3 million to \$90.9 million. Had the growth of the Foundation's asset base kept pace with inflation since 1974, it would be valued at \$104.2 million at the end of 2022.

Since the Foundation's inception, it has invested \$100.7 million in grants to improve Canadian society, and has invested \$17 million in identifying, helping develop, and administering those grants as well as directly delivering charitable programs.

# Directors

**Brenda Eaton**, Chair

**Ken Marra**, Vice Chair

**Paul Boothe**

**Donna Miller**

**Doug Moen**

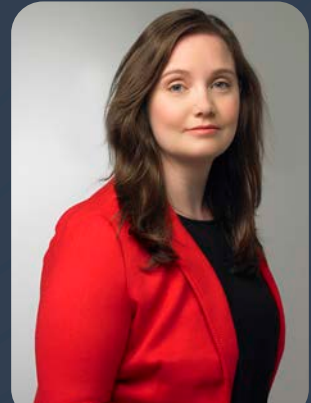
**Christopher Manfredi**

**Margaret-Jean Mannix**

# Staff



**Allan Northcott**  
President



**Margaret Herriman**  
Program Officer



**Sibelle El Labban**  
Program Officer



**Arlene McCarry**  
Grants Coordinator/  
Administrator



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