



BOLD NEW BEGINNINGS

CNIB Foundation
Annual Report 2018-2019

CNIB
FOUNDATION

Mission

To change what it is to be blind through innovative programs and powerful advocacy that enable Canadians impacted by blindness to live the lives they choose.

Values

Empowerment
Inclusiveness
Innovation
Passion
Collaboration
Integrity



An exciting new chapter

If you've been part of our community for some time, you'll know that we've undergone an incredible journey of transformation over the last few years.

Now as we begin our second century, we are proud to move into our new strategic plan, **Bold Dreams, Bright Futures**. Developed in 2018, this innovative plan is built on three core ambitions: Boost participation in the world of work, Unleash the power of technology, and Drive achievement and equality.

Over the past year, we've launched a range of powerful new programs to support those ambitions - from **CNIB Guide Dogs**, our new guide dog program; to **Phone It Forward**, an innovative new program that gives refurbished smartphones to people with sight loss who need them; to **Come to Work**, a program that helps our participants achieve meaningful careers.

And that's just the beginning. Over the coming months and years, we'll be revolutionizing our program model and providing our participants with even more life-changing programs - from sports teams to college scholarships and everything in between.

We've also put a laser focus on accessibility over the last year. Our goal is to create a world that is fully accessible to people who are living with sight loss, and that starts from within. That's why we developed a **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan** to serve as a roadmap to living the principles of accessibility and inclusion within our organization.

None of this would have been possible without you, our supporters, participants, and friends. Whether you have been with us on this journey for many years, or have just joined us recently, thank you for your incredible support.



John M. Rafferty
President & CEO



Ronald J. Kruzeniski
Chair, National Board of Directors

Our strategic ambitions

Bold Dreams, Bright Futures

In 2018, we launched our Bold Dreams, Bright Futures strategic plan, which was built on the feedback of more than 4,000 Canadians impacted by blindness. That plan is guided by the following strategic ambitions...

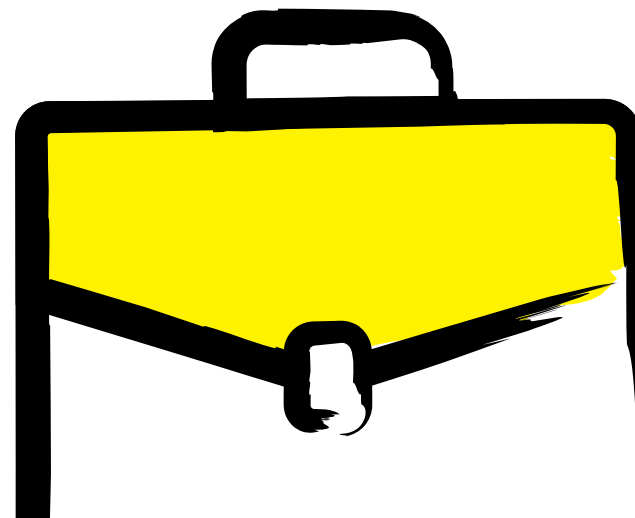


Strategic Ambition

#1

Boost participation in the world of work

A job is so much more than just a paycheck: it's a means to self-reliance, a source of identity and pride, and a gateway to a brighter future. From the moment children are old enough to dream what they'll be when they grow up, through every stage of their education and careers, we'll fuel their ambition and champion their equal participation in the world of work.

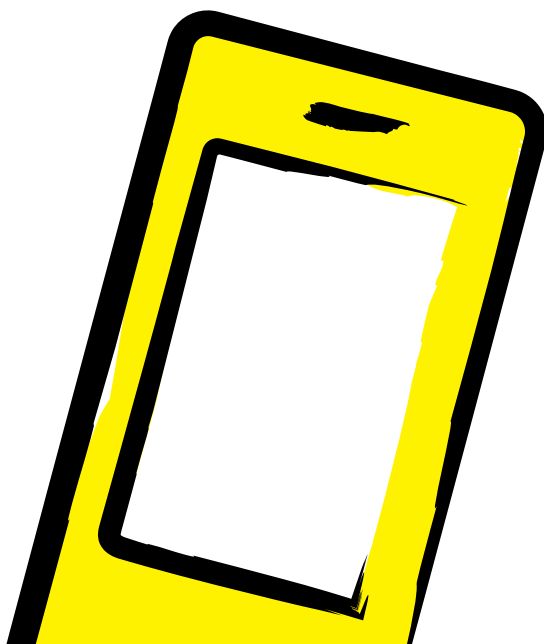


Strategic Ambition

#2

Unleash the power of technology

Technology can level the playing field for people who are blind or partially sighted - but only when it's accessible, available, and affordable. We'll fight to connect people of all ages with the cutting-edge technology they need and want, and help them build the skills to capitalize on its potential.

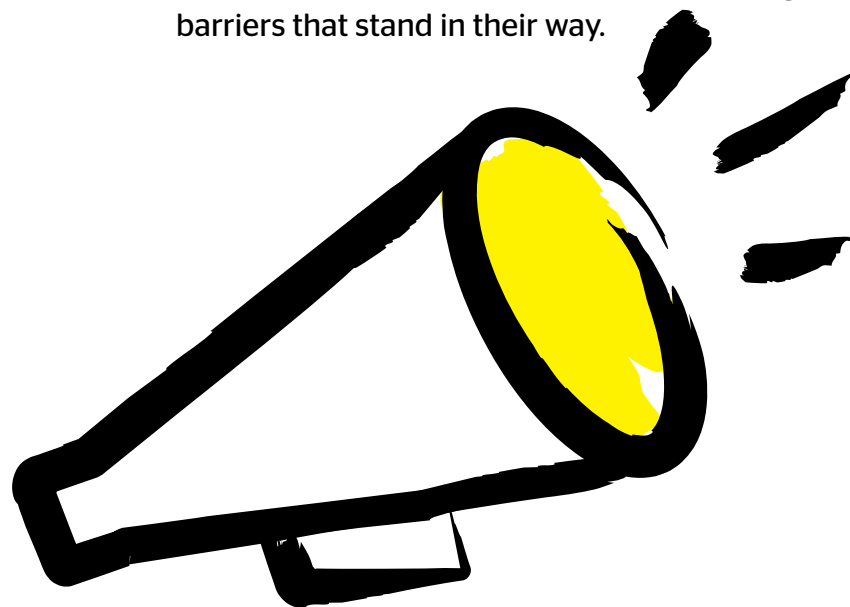


Strategic Ambition

#3

Drive achievement and equality

Life is a beautiful, wonderful, crazy thing. Life with blindness should be no different. We'll embolden people who are blind or partially sighted to lead independent, active lives and chase their dreams - and we'll smash the stigma and barriers that stand in their way.



A photograph showing two women sitting at a yellow table in a workshop or classroom. The woman on the left has long blonde hair and is looking at a small pink device. The woman on the right has short white hair, wears a purple shirt and large black headphones, and is looking down at her hands. A blue water bottle and some papers are on the table. In the background, other people and computer monitors are visible.

Highlights

Strategic Ambition **#1**

Boost participation in the world of work

Understanding employment needs

Alongside project partners across the globe, we released key findings from our International Levels of Employment Study, highlighting the gaps in employment rates among people with sight loss, as well as opportunities for growth.

Supporting entrepreneurs

Our new Venture Zone program gives would-be entrepreneurs the tools they need to build a small business, and includes meet-up groups, post-secondary partnerships, as well as a free iOS app game that provides an accessible, fun way to gain entrepreneurial knowledge.

Helping Canadians ‘Come to Work’

Launched in November, Come to Work is a new program designed to help participants build real-world job experience. Our first group of participants have now received internships, and 21 partner organizations - including major Canadian and international brands - are engaged in the program.

Strategic Ambition **#2**

Unleash the power of technology

Phoning it forward

Last year, we provided hundreds of smartphones to participants across the country through our new Phone It Forward program, as well as 10-15 hours of training for each participant. The program continues to grow with partnerships with urban libraries, individual donors, and corporations nationwide.

Joining forces with Apple Canada

We were proud to create a partnership with Apple Canada, whose products have been standouts in the accessible technology field for many years. Leveraging the company's in-store experts, we're now able to provide Apple training and curriculum to people with sight loss across Canada to help them get the most out of their iOS devices.

Supporting accessible technologies

Assistive technologies like smartphones and digital wearables are game-changers for people who are blind. Last year, we established partnerships with four innovators in the accessible technology space - Aira, BlindSquare, eSight and Key2Access - to help bring their cutting-edge products to more Canadians who can benefit from them.

Strategic Ambition **#3**

Drive achievement and equality

Championing accessibility legislation

By meeting with leaders and pounding the pavement, we championed changes to **Bill C-81**, the Accessible Canada Act, to make Canada's new accessibility legislation stronger and more accountable.

Promoting accessible travel

We worked with the Canadian Transportation Agency to develop and improve regulations to make travel more accessible, and raised our voices to make a sight loss lens a priority for "self-driving car" manufacturers.

Fighting for accessible elections

During federal byelections, we created an investigative advocacy campaign. After illustrating how inaccessible elections are for Canadians with sight loss, we secured a commitment from the federal political parties to do better during the 2019 general election.

Life-enriching programs

The needs of our community are constantly changing, and we need to keep changing too. That's why, through our **Bold Dreams, Bright Future** strategic plan, we've revolutionized our program model, and are now providing our participants with even more life-enriching programs. Those programs are divided into six categories...



LIVE

Our "Live" programs are about building a rich, full life with blindness. They connect participants with a community of support and help them enhance their daily living skills so they can seize the future with confidence.



PLAY

Our "Play" programs make having fun easy, whether someone is learning how to paint or hitting the streets on a tandem bike. They're all about connecting with others and showing that people with sight loss can do anything.



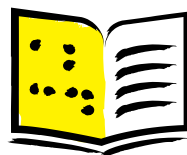
ADVOCATE

Our advocacy efforts seek to bring about change so people with sight loss can participate fully in society as equal citizens. When we fight for rights, they become ingrained in society.



WORK

Our "Work" programs give participants the skills and resources to achieve their career ambitions, and help employers tear down barriers for blind job-seekers and employees.



LEARN

Our "Learn" programs foster social development and independence for students who are blind, and teach braille literacy skills to people of all ages.



TECH

Our "Tech" programs open up new worlds of information and accessibility, with access to innovative devices, tools, and the training participants need to get the most out of them.



CNIB Guide Dogs take on the world

Our first guide dogs graduate from training



They weren't wearing caps or gowns, and there were no diplomas in sight, but our first class of guide dog graduates were still a proud-looking bunch at their official graduation event in November - ready to embark on a lifelong journey helping their human counterpart live a fully independent life.

After launching CNIB Guide Dogs just over a year earlier, our team here at the CNIB Foundation was also beaming with pride, eager to send our first dogs off with their excited handlers.

"This is a milestone for our guide dog program," said John Rafferty, CNIB President and CEO. "We've been able to see our vision for this program come to life and exceed our expectations."

Exceed our expectations indeed. In less than two years, this program has grown from a glimmer in our organization's eye to a full-fledged guide dog school with seven successful graduates already, and another 50-plus future guide dogs currently in training across Canada.

Designed to train guide dogs to specifically meet the needs of people with sight loss, the program's training philosophy focuses on maximizing success. With its person-centric focus, CNIB Guide Dogs offers training tailored to the needs of each guide dog partnership at no cost to the handler. The program also offers handlers a full suite of follow-up support throughout the dog's working life, including additional and refresher training, peer support, and social groups.

"I couldn't ask for a better guide. Barney's a great match for me," says Cindy Shone, who was among the program's first six handlers. "I'm so grateful to the CNIB Foundation. Having a guide dog has given me my freedom back."

Your support is making partnerships like Cindy and Barney's possible. Thank you!

Learn more about CNIB Guide Dogs at cnib.ca/guidedogs.



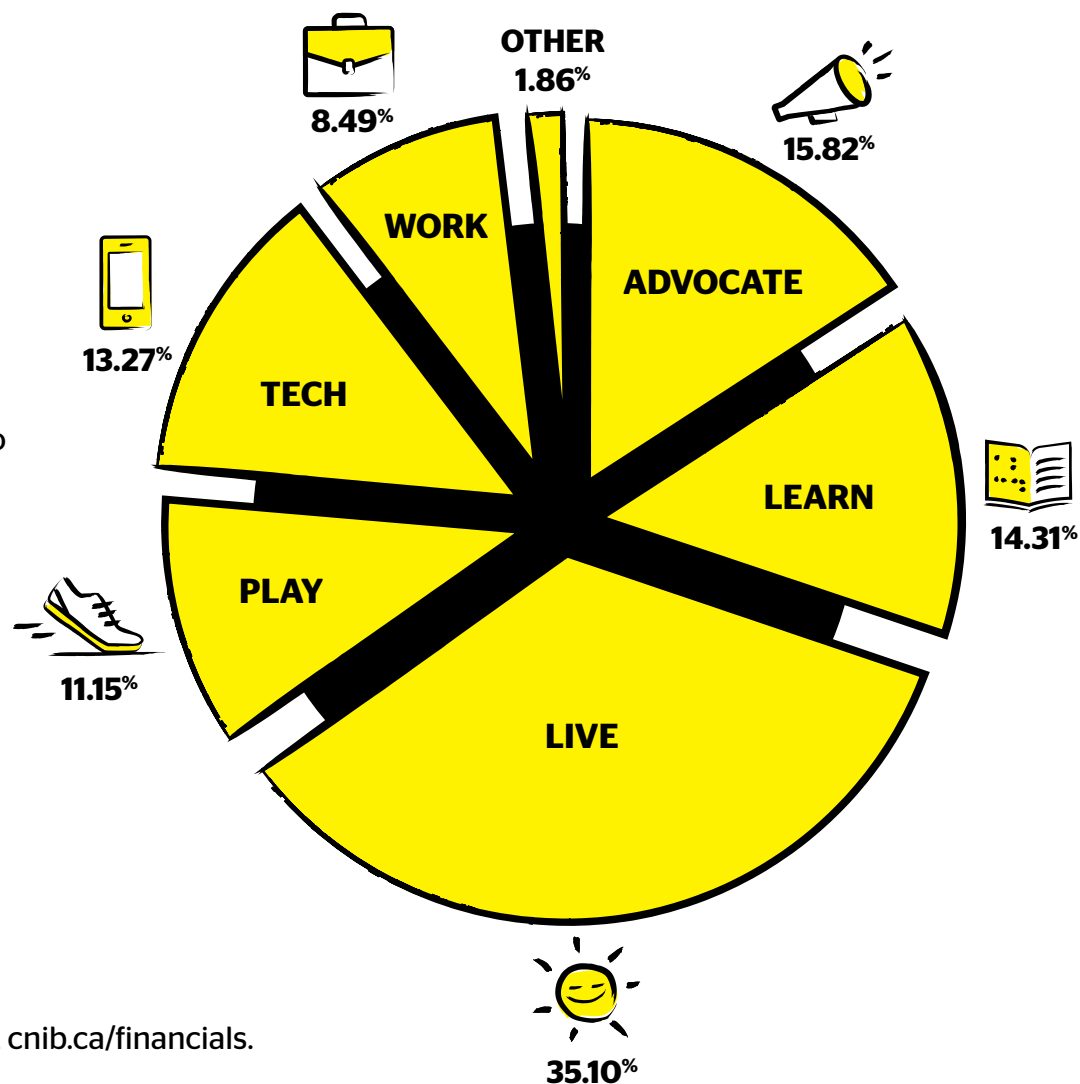
Your money at work

As a charter member of the Imagine Canada Ethical Fundraising and Financial Accountability Code, CNIB takes pride in upholding the highest standard of ethics in the distribution of donations. Our financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and were audited by Deloitte LLP.

Last year, we invested more than \$30 million directly into programs for Canadians with sight loss. The financial support for these programs comes from government funding (10%), public support (52%), investments (2%), retail lottery and gaming (20%), fees for service (1%) and other fundraising initiatives (15%).

For CNIB's complete audited financial statements, visit cnib.ca/financials.

Cause-related program expenses



Thank you

Every year we are astounded by the incredible support of our donors. Some of you attended a fundraising event, others made a gift in your will, signed up to be a monthly donor, or donated in memory of a loved one. However you chose to help, you made it possible for thousands of Canadians with sight loss to lead fuller, more joyful lives. Thank you!

To read the names of the people and organizations who've generously supported us this past year, visit **cnib.ca/thankyou**.

Our amazing volunteers

Our volunteers are the lifeblood of the CNIB Foundation. From the caring Canadians who work directly with our participants as Vision Mates, to those who answer the phones, narrate accessible audio books, organize events, or share their own experiences of sight loss with others as peer support group leaders, we simply couldn't keep our doors open without them.



Giving the gift of literacy

Meet volunteer Genevieve Wales



Every Tuesday, Genevieve Wales heads to her local CNIB Foundation office. There, she gives the gift of literacy to people with sight loss, week after week, year after year.

Genevieve is a volunteer braille teacher, and whether she admits it herself or not, she's changing lives in incredible ways.

"Any volunteer I've spoken to has said that they get more out of volunteering than what they put in," says Genevieve.

The Halifax resident began volunteering with CNIB in 2011, starting as a Vision Mate, where she was matched with a person with sight loss to provide friendship and assistance around the home.

With her background in braille education, we asked Genevieve if she'd be interested in teaching our participants. She happily accepted, and has been helping to bring the joy of reading into the lives of people with sight loss ever since.

That task is certainly not easy. Each of Genevieve's students is different, and each has a unique learning style that she needs to understand and master. There's also an emotional aspect to the work. Many of Genevieve's students have only recently lost their sight. They're not only coming to grips with a new way of reading through their fingertips, but adjusting to a life that looks very different from the one they knew before.

"You need to realize you're teaching the person more than just braille and that learning can't take place when a student is feeling frustrated," says Genevieve. "Allow them to express their frustrations, be patient and understanding, and continue when everyone's ready."

"The best feeling is simply just seeing that 'Eureka!' moment on someone's face after they've been successful with braille for the first time."

Learn about volunteer opportunities in your area at cnib.ca/volunteer.



Founded in 1918, the CNIB Foundation is a non-profit organization driven to change what it is to be blind today. We deliver innovative programs and powerful advocacy that empower people impacted by blindness to live their dreams and tear down barriers to inclusion. Our work as a blind foundation is powered by a network of volunteers, donors and partners from coast to coast to coast.

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