

INFORMED ♀PINIONS

Annual Report 2022-2023



***These are just 10 of the thousands of experts who've taken our media engagement workshops.**

Each of the women pictured has published commentary in influential media sharing their deeply informed diverse perspectives on critical issues.

From left to right: Erin Tolley, Pamela Uppal, Jamie Liew, Anjum Sultana, Sumaya Sherif, Reyhana Patel, Susan Franceschet, Carolina Maass, Elaine Craig, Nadia Naffi

Message from the Chair

By every measure, Informed Opinions had a banner year. We translated the Gender Gap Tracker to measure French language news reporting in Canada; we increased our earned revenues from training and keynotes by 62% over last year; and we made major waves on the advocacy front.

With strong support from WAGE Canada, we walked our own talk and amplified the insights of dozens of expert women to generate significant media, public and political attention to both our #ToxicHush campaign against online hate, and the need for a #BalanceofPower among elected representatives.

At the same time, we continued to recruit new voices to our database of experts and sign up additional journalist subscribers eager to access the informed opinions of women and gender diverse people from across fields and sectors.

Along with my colleagues on the Board of Directors, I salute the strategic and impactful work undertaken this year by the staff, and the groundwork laid for our collective futures.



Evelyne Guindon

Guindon

Message from the Catalyst/CEO

I feel more urgency than ever about the importance of amplifying women's voices. Incremental progress is not remotely up to the task of dealing with the challenges of our times -- from global pandemics and climate disruption to the ongoing scourge of gender-based violence.

We need systems-level change. And the informed opinions of those who have been chronically left out are uniquely equipped to help identify new solutions.

Decades of research reveals that more influence from the 50 percent of the population who continue to have much less will result in greater collaboration and policies that prioritize the needs of women and children. And that seeds improvements in quality of life both economically and socially.

This is the context for why Informed Opinions has expanded our advocacy efforts. We're still working on a tactical level to train and amplify under-represented voices, but we're also leveraging our resources for systemic change.



Shari Graydon

We're shining a light on the devastating impact of online hate



Online hate poses an existential threat to democracy.

The silencing of those with the least power profoundly erodes trust and further marginalizes women and other equity-deserving communities.

Last year, we developed our Toxic Hush Action Kit with input from experts from historically-excluded communities, to support individuals who are experiencing online attacks.

But addressing this problem cannot lie with the women being targeted.

In early June and August, we disseminated a survey to collect critical evidence to pressure governments and social media platforms to make the changes necessary so every woman can speak free from online hate.

Insights gained from our research:

- Twitter (now X) and Facebook: Most prevalent platforms for toxic behavior, including beyond insults and racial slurs (rape jokes, slut shaming, physical and sexual violence threats).
- 25% engaged in self-censorship online.
- 22% temporarily stayed offline to avoid abuse.
- Other effects reported: Safety concerns, work concentration issues, sleep difficulties, seeking mental health support.

We engaged the media to drive change

National campaign documenting online hate against women, pushing for change

Insults, slurs, physical and sexual threats pushing women out of online, public spaces

Online attacks against women on the rise but a new campaign offers hope in silencing the haters

Graydon: Online hate that targets women is a threat to democracy itself

Featured in
11 major news outlets
achieving
43 MILLION
audience impressions

40 News Stories

8 Media Interviews

A Peoples' Tribunal:
Every Woman's Right to Speak
FREE FROM ONLINE HATE



We illuminated legal remedies

We convened an online forum to give voice to the women and gender diverse people who experience the most hate. Every Woman's Right to Speak - A Peoples' Tribunal was designed to not only give women in all their diversity a "day in court" to illuminate the nature and impact of their experiences, but also encourage politicians to take stronger action to hold the platforms accountable.

After opening remarks by Women and Gender Equality Canada Minister, Marci Ien, the Tribunal featured compelling testimonials from journalists and advocates, including Brandi Morin, Amira Elghawaby, Birgit Umaigba, Lori Campbell and Rohini Arora. It also benefited from thoughtful legal analysis by Rosel Kim of the Legal Education and Action Fund, and "citizen judges" Senator Kim Pate, Dean of Law at Toronto Metropolitan University Donna Young and human rights advocate, Waneek Sunshine Horn-Miller.

The event was streamed live, then available online, and turned into a written report that was sent to all parliamentarians. It remains available on our website.

There is no constitutional right to threaten to rape or kill a woman because you disagree with her politics.

Senator Kim Pate

We're seeking systemic change for women in politics

Our Gender Gap Tracker continues to show that Canada's most influential news media are quoting men about 70% of the time.

The data further reveal, however, that 60% of both men and women most often quoted are elected officials.

This means that until women hold a balance of power in politics, we're not going to be able to bridge the gender gap in public discourse.

That's why this year we launched a major initiative aimed at mobilizing Canadians around the need to ensure our governments at every level live up to their democratic intentions and genuinely represent the diversity of the citizens they serve.



BALANCE
of POWER

We polled Canadians to gauge their views on who holds the **BALANCE** of POWER

We partnered with Abacus Data to survey a representative sample of Canadians in August 2022.

Two thirds of those polled were concerned, disappointed, surprised or angry to learn that, far from being a leader on this issue, Canada lags five dozen other countries when it comes to women's representation in politics.

The vast majority understand gender balance in decision-making benefits citizens, communities and the economy.

And most also recognized that political parties and governments bear most responsibility for addressing the gender gap.

Canadians say
gender parity in politics is good for...

- 86% ...our communities
- 85% ...ensuring elected officials
best represent constituents
- 84% ...our economy

We publicized the data to demonstrate public support

*Research is only useful if it's seen by people
in a position to act on its insights.*

This is a point we make with our university, research and non-profit partners all the time, and so after gathering the data documenting Canadians' attitudes about the need for better representation, we worked hard to make sure it would get shared.

Poll shows Canada ranks #60 in the world for gender parity in politics; majority of Canadians aren't pleased.

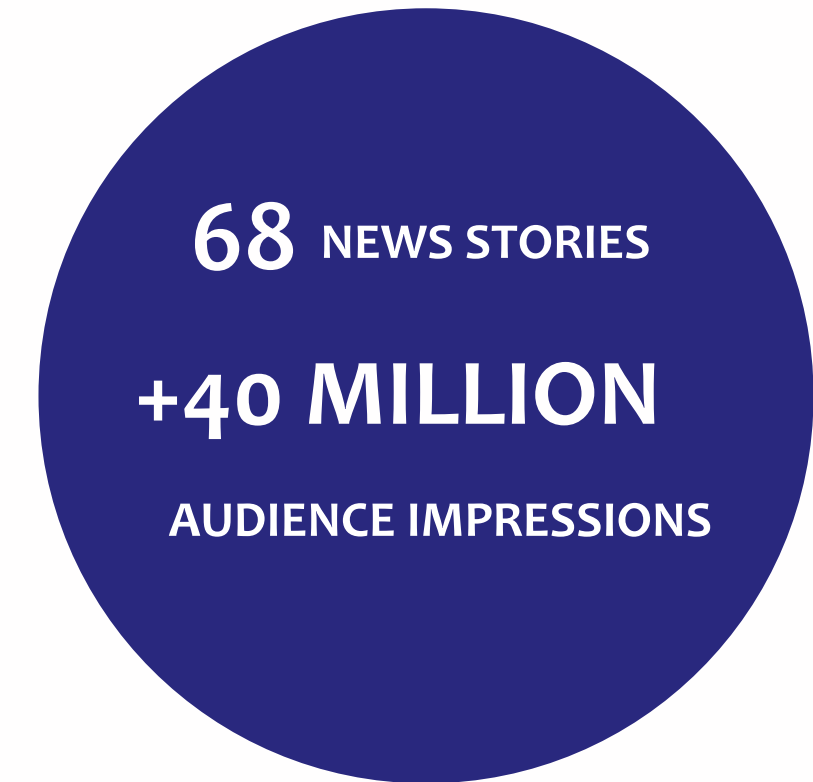
Campaign aims to shine spotlight on problem of Canada's gender parity in politics

Canadians want parties and governments to act on gender parity in politics

Representation is a prerequisite for democracy. Canadian women deserve as many seats at the table as men to exercise a balance of power.

**Balance of power campaign
to achieve gender equity in
politics**

**Column: Consider the women when
voting in October's civic elections**



We researched the paths to parity other countries have taken

Aiming to make it easier for political parties and governments to do the right thing, we researched the paths to parity taken by other countries, which we highlight in the presentations we've been sharing with audiences across the country.

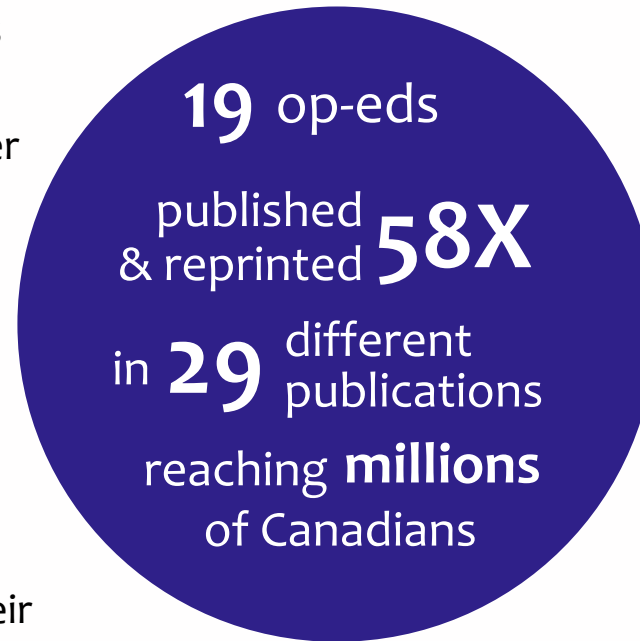
We've packaged a more detailed summary of this research, identifying nations that have taken the different paths and how well they're doing. We've provided it to the parliamentarians with whom we've met.



We amplified compelling thought leadership

The average academic journal article is read by seven people. But op-eds can reach hundreds of thousands of people through widely disseminated mainstream media that's further amplified on social platforms. And research has documented the power of written commentary to help set agendas and shift public opinion.

For our Balance of Power campaign, we supported a dozen women with informed opinions about women in politics to share their insights in publications capable of informing and influencing both political decision makers and the broader public.



Telling women to 'lean in' won't get more of them in politics — the parties have left women behind

By Jennifer M. Piscopo Contributor

More immigrants running for political office means paving the way for active citizenship

BY SEHER SHAFIQ

'Role model effect' can transform how women and girls think of political leadership

SUSAN FRANCESCHET

More women in politics would help safeguard access to abortion

By Katie Davey Contributor

We continue to support thousands of experts in sharing their insights

Every academic expert should attend a workshop with Informed Opinions. When a news story that related directly to my expertise broke, *I felt equipped to respond. I was able to share my research in a timely and impactful commentary.* I cannot thank or recommend Informed Opinions enough.



Meagan Cloutier, University of Calgary

809
Participants

37
Workshops

1,458
Media Interviews

71 Op-eds
Published

We're training researchers and advocates how to influence policy

We've heard from our experts on the vital importance of leveraging their research to influence policy and the need for that training. In response, we recruited Dr. Amanda Parriag, a seasoned policy consultant and researcher, to develop the Translate your Research and Advocacy into Policy Impact workshop, which we began offering in January 2023.

The workshop equips participants with knowledge and insights into the multifaceted dynamics of policy-making. Attendees gain invaluable skills, ranging from effectively engaging decision-makers to articulating clear policy objectives and requests.

The training's impact is evidenced by its resounding success. It quickly became our most popular workshop, and the demand means registration often reach full capacity within a few days.

*Academics often
don't know where to begin
to translate their research
into policy impact.*

*This workshop provides tangible
and accessible ideas to get started.*

Workshop participant

We're inspiring audiences

As organizations began convening in-person events in the Spring of 2022, Informed Opinions' Catalyst, Shari Graydon, was invited to address delegates at a number of gatherings. These included well-received keynote speeches to educators and women leaders across sectors in Halifax, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Banff, Lethbridge and Vancouver.

“Shari is a dynamic, thoughtful and insightful speaker. At two Women Symposiums, the audience was fully engaged and hungry for more. Through her talks, Shari is empowering women to become leaders.”



Heidi Yetman
President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation



IDEAS REMAKING THE WORLD

Presented by

FedEx

iWf

iWf



After Shari's "Ideas Remaking the World" presentation to the International Women's Forum conference in 2019 received a standing ovation, she was invited back for a follow-up on-stage conversation at IWF's Las Vegas conference in November.

We're building organizational capacity

Although Informed Opinions began with a sole focus on training women and gender diverse people to translate their expertise into persuasive, publishable op eds, we have significantly expanded the content we deliver in response to needs identified by our partners.

This year, we delivered workshops across all sectors, to researchers and non profit leaders, corporations and unions on a variety of topics:

OUR WORKSHOPS

ENGAGE WITH MEDIA

- Develop your Media Interview Skills
- Insider Strategies to Become a Go-to Media Source
- Write Compelling Commentary

INCREASE YOUR IMPACT

- Translate your Research and Advocacy into Policy Impact
- Communicate more Strategically
- Increase your Ability to Persuade
- Storytelling to Increase your Impact
- Masterclass in Public Speaking

As an organization representing public-sector registered nurses working during a very challenging political environment, the need for the Ontario Nurses' Association to communicate effectively has never been greater.

Informed Opinion's media training was a timely and incredibly valuable reminder of how to steer clear of complex medical jargon and ensure we are speaking to those who rely on us most – our patients – in a simple and comprehensible way.

It has been profoundly helpful.



Sheree Bond,
Media Relations Officer,
Ontario Nurses' Association

OUR CLIENTS

UNIVERSITIES



RESEARCH



UNIONS



NON PROFIT



CORPORATE



OUR FACILITATORS



JACKY HABIB

A freelance journalist who has also taught at Toronto Metropolitan, Jacky delivers media engagement workshops, including one she developed on "Positioning Yourself as a Go-To Source for Journalists."



AMANDA PARRIAG

A respected policy and research consultant, and a long-serving former chair of Informed Opinions' board or directors, Amanda co-developed and delivers "Translate Your Research into Policy Impact."



LAURA SHINE

A former RDC journalist and designated a Public Scholar by Concordia University, Laura has been leading FemmesExpertes and delivering media engagement and presentation skills workshops since 2017.



SHARI GRAYDON

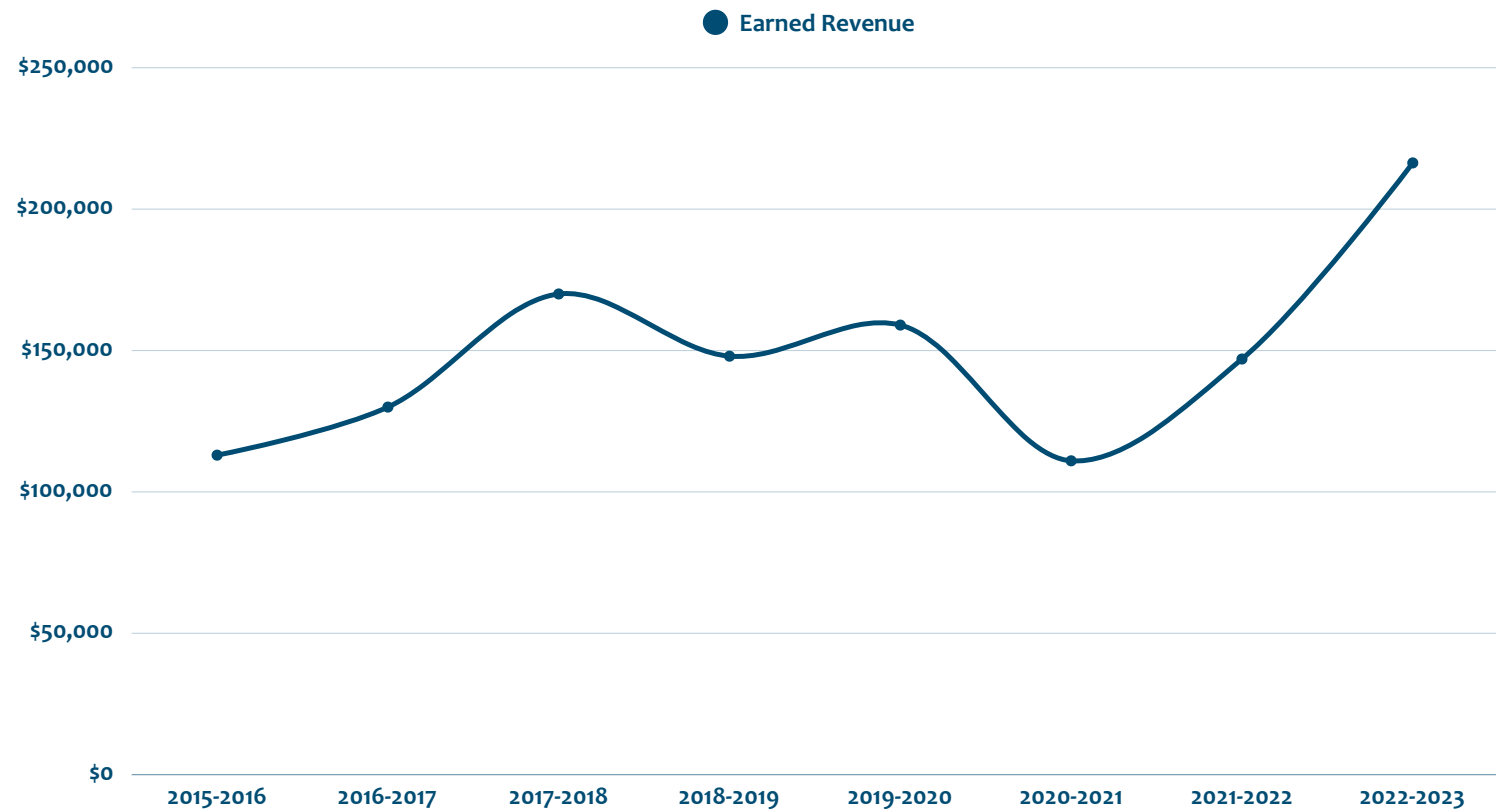
Informed Opinions' Catalyst and CEO, Shari continues to develop and deliver strategic communications workshops of all kinds, including those focusing on effective storytelling and persuasion skills.

We had a banner year for earned revenues

In addition to an unprecedented volume of advocacy work, our social enterprise revenues continued to rise this year.

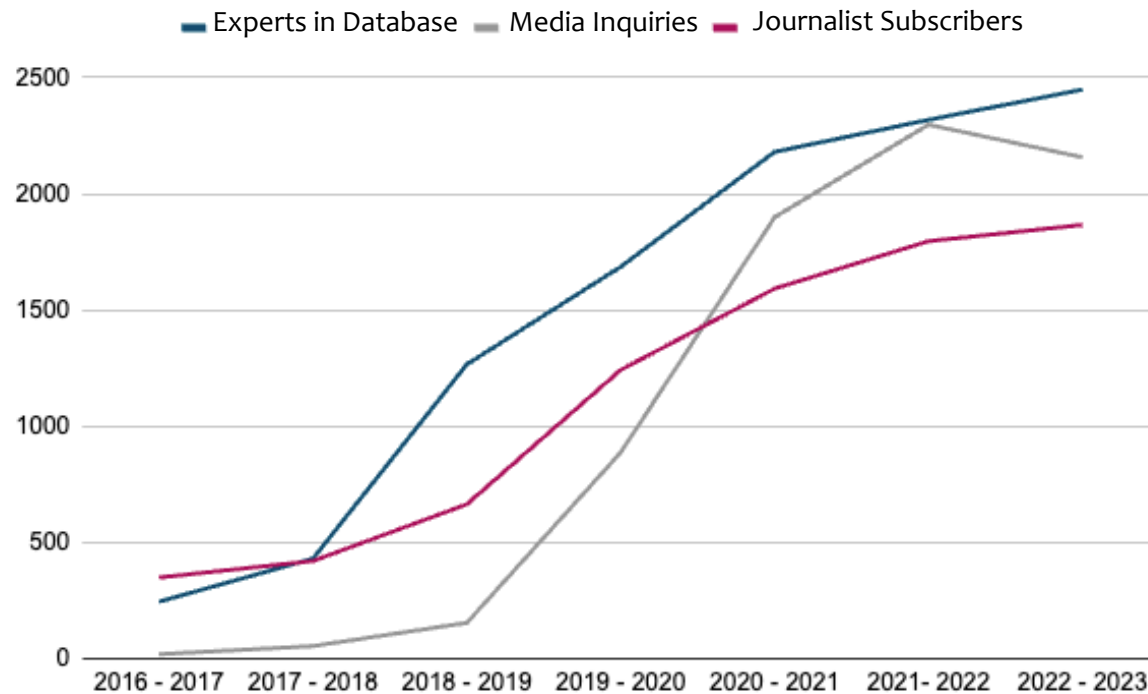
This was partly due to the availability of three highly-rated associate facilitators offering an expanded array of workshops.

We also received an unusually large number of keynote requests, from Halifax to Vancouver, with a particular concentration of interest from the education sector.

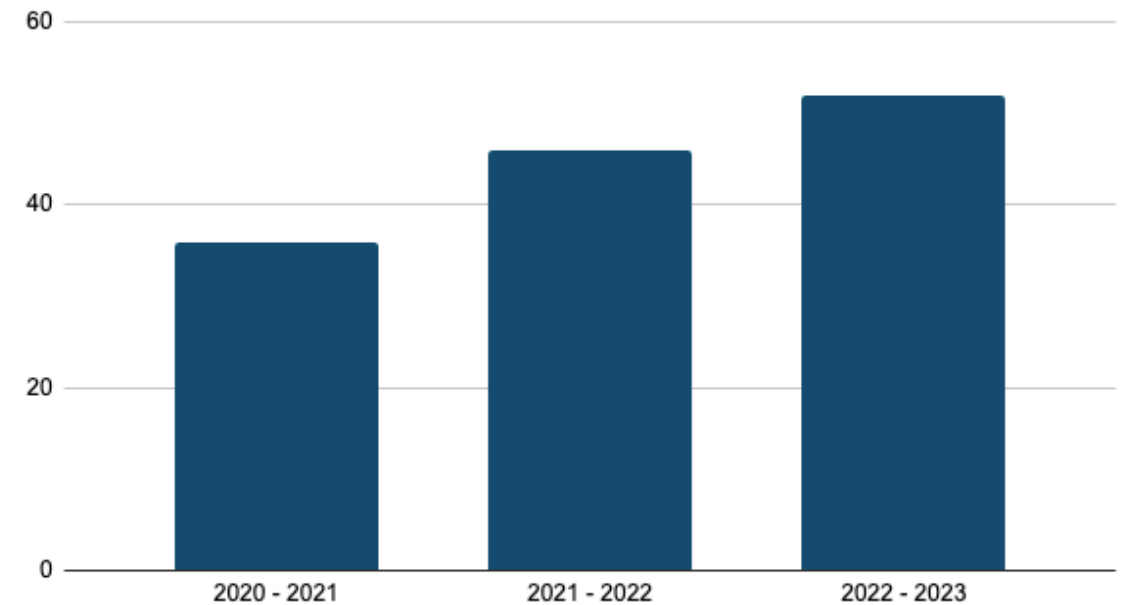


We're continuing to amplify under-represented voices

Our database of women and gender diverse sources now features 2,448 experts across disciplines, sectors and geographies. Our journalist subscribers also increased: weekly emails promoting sources on current issues are now sent to 1,866 reporters, producers and editors across the country.



Although the grey line shows the number of media inquiries declining slightly this year, we know from our monitoring efforts that interviews with experts in the database continues to rise. This is because once they've connected with an expert for one story, journalists can follow up directly for future interview requests.



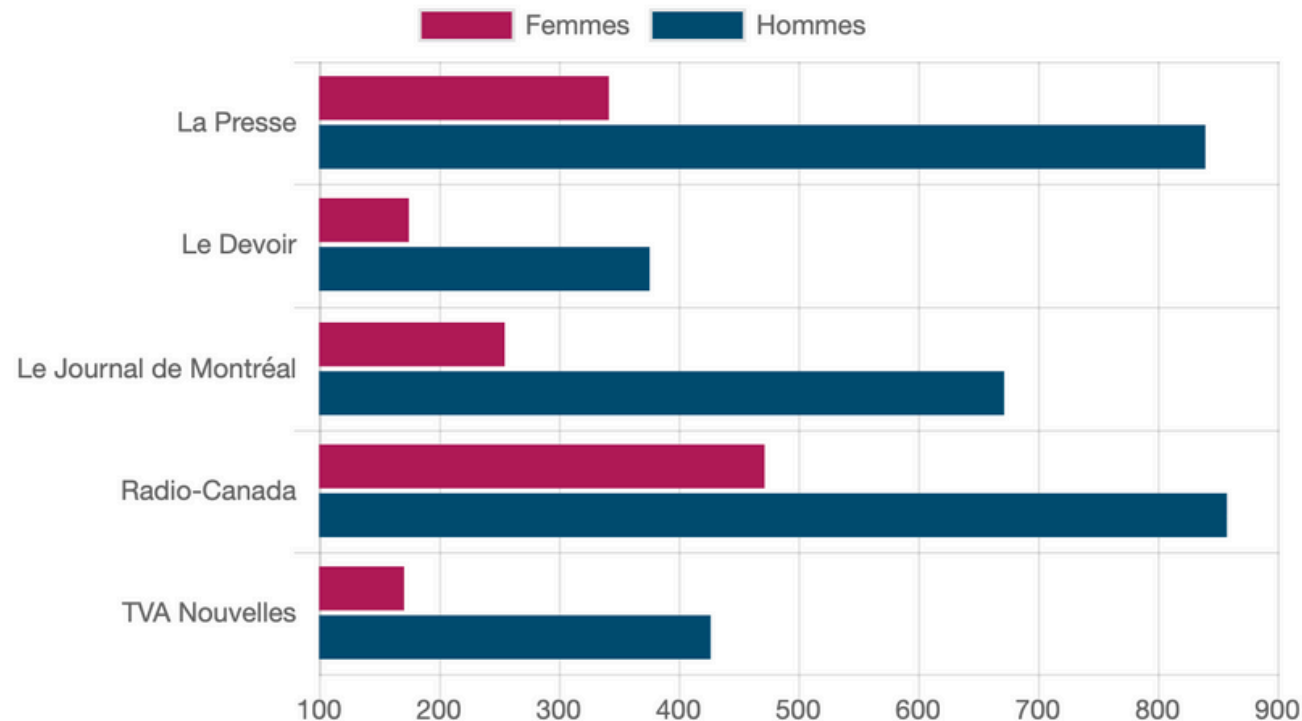
Total number of journalist outreach emails sent each year



Propulsé par  SFU

is now measuring Francophone media

Ratio d'hommes et de femmes cités.es



Since 2018, our innovative Gender Gap Tracker has been monitoring how often Canada's most influential English language media are quoting men versus women. Adapting the innovation to similarly measure French media was a challenge, but in February, with support from the federal department of Women and Gender Equality, we launched Radar de Parité.

Senator Julie Miville-Dechene and Femmes Expertes' lead, Laura Shine hosted an expert panel to talk about the critical importance of featuring women's insights in public discourse. The event generated new collaborations with media, strengthened Femmes Expertes' network and generated additional visibility through earned media exposure.



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Informed Opinions' work benefits from the generosity of many donors, large and small, who share our commitment to amplifying the voices of women and gender diverse people.

This year we are especially grateful to:



Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada



Nancy's Very Own Foundation

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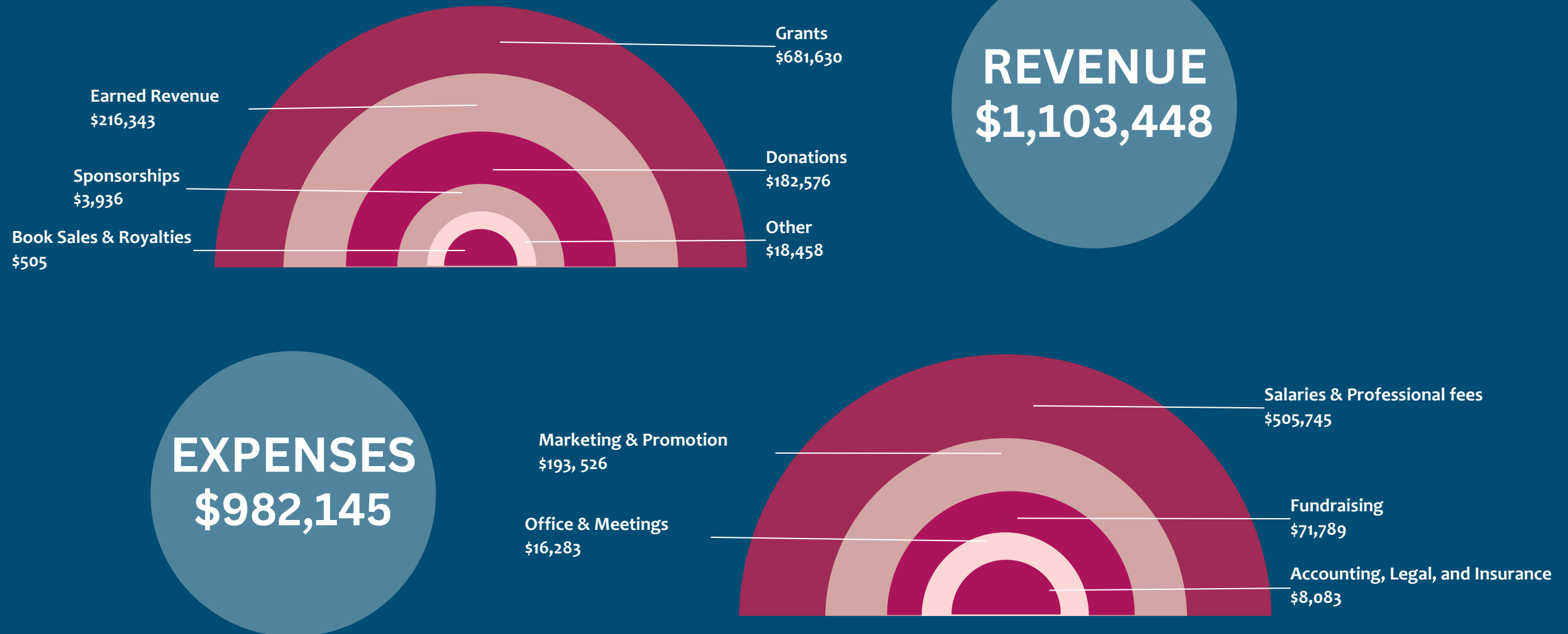
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gifts of \$1,000+ per year

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