

## **ONN's 2011 Ontario Provincial Election Strategy**

This election is a chance to strengthen linkages within the sector, showcase our sector's contributions, and continue developing stronger relations between the government and the sector. The heightened interest of media and Ontarians to the political landscape during elections makes this an excellent opportunity to draw attention to the enormous value the nonprofit sector brings Ontario's economy and civil society, and helps set the stage for building long-term partnerships with other groups working for the public benefit in Ontario.

ONN's primary goals for the election are: to inform Ontarians and candidates from across all parties about nonprofit sector's impact and its four key priorities (Partnering with Government, Amending Provincial Governance Legislation (Bill 65), Funding Reform and Social Finance Innovation); to help nonprofit organizations connect and share the impact they have in their communities, and their organizational priorities; and to continue developing mutually beneficial partnerships between our sector and the government.

### **Conveying the Impact of the Nonprofit Sector – Provincially and in Communities**

In order to inform and promote the value and relevance of the sector in communities, across the province, ONN has developed an Elections Kit for the 2011 Provincial Elections. This kit includes a brief background on the sector; sector data broken down by each constituency; summaries of the four major party platform and their relevance to the sector; and summaries of four key sector priorities, including each party's positions (if any) on these priorities and 2-3 questions on them for candidates running for office.

To ensure that the sector's contribution in each community is clear, ONN has partnered with Ajah Fundtracker to create riding-by-riding information on the number of registered charities, the collective revenue they generate and the collective number of jobs they create. This information is exclusively available on an ONN election website and can be searched by postal code or riding name. Information also includes a list of the names and contact information for registered charities in each riding, information for Ontario as a whole, and the appropriate disclaimers on data. The site can be viewed at <http://www.ontarioelections2011.ca>

### **Conveying Key Sector Priorities**

Given the sector's value and relevance in a rapidly changing economic and social climate, candidates from each of the four main parties should be informed on ways to grow the sector's reach and impact. Sector leaders and their organizations across Ontario have identified four priorities designed to strengthen the sector's collective ability to deliver efficient and effective programs and services, support volunteers and grow civil society across the province. These four priorities – **Partnering with Government, Amending Provincial Governance Legislation (Bill 65), Funding Reform and Social Finance Innovation** – are outlined in the Elections Kit (see draft attached).

In addition to conveying the four key priorities, ONN's strategy creates opportunities for individual sector voices to be heard. ONN is reaching out to its network across the sector and seizing existing opportunities (e.g. the Coalition of Provincial Arts Service Organizations (PASO)'s election webcast) to connect organizations in the sector. As well, ONN's updated website (to Launch Sept 6<sup>th</sup>) can receive and post comments, and link to the election positions of other sector groups. The Election Kit and web updates are also designed for adaptation and discussion on sub-sectoral and local issues at the riding level.

### **Understanding Major Parties' Positions on the Sector and Strengthening Partnerships**

In addition to the Election Kit, web postings, and a pre-event with PASO, ONN is exploring a provincial-wide main party leaders' Conversation with the Sector. Planned for late September, technology permitting, this live meeting will feature the Green, Liberal, New Democratic and Progressive Conservative Party leaders or representatives, and be broadcast across Ontario. Feedback from nonprofit organizations throughout the province will inform questions for this conversation. This input will be gathered in response to the Election Kit, web posts, Ajah Fundtracker riding-by-riding information site, and election page on ONN's home site.