

# Building Together

Annual Report

April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023







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## Who We Are

In 1973, Rick Hansen, on his way home from a fishing trip, survived a car accident that left him paralyzed from the waist down. As he learned how to navigate his community in a wheelchair, he also learned how to navigate people’s changed attitudes toward him. In 1985 Rick decided to change attitudes about disability, and in 1987, he completed a 26-month wheelchair marathon across 34 countries around the world.

The Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) was established in 1988 after Rick Hansen’s Man In Motion World Tour was completed. For 35 years, RHF has worked to raise awareness, change attitudes, and remove barriers for people with disabilities.





## What We Believe

We envision a society that embraces both cultural and physical accessibility, understanding that changes to attitudes, policies and practices are needed to support truly inclusive communities. We invite everyone who shares our belief in creating a world where everyone can thrive and realize their full potential, to join our movement for change.



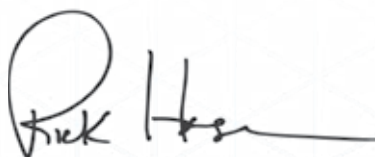
## Message from Our Founder

**This has certainly been an exciting and dynamic year for the Foundation.** I have been honoured to work alongside our CEO, Doramy Ehling, Board Chair, Tamara Vrooman, our dedicated board members, staff and volunteers to continue moving our strategy forward.

I am consistently inspired by the quality of our team, and I'm proud of the momentum and the amount of support we have generated from funders, partners and fellow collaborators.

I'm incredibly grateful for the convergence of support that allows me to keep my dream of an accessible and inclusive world for people with disabilities alive. It takes great courage to tackle big barriers.

Our Foundation and our broader team are innovating with solutions that are creating movements towards real change which translates into real impact. More importantly, I'm encouraged by the continual refinement of our approach, which allows us to consistently add value to a challenging vision within a complex and diverse environment. Early on in my Man In Motion World Tour, I learned that to accelerate change, we need to bring people together. Big dreams can only come true when we have Many In Motion.



**Rick Hansen, CC, OBC**  
Founder



## Message from our Board Chair and CEO

**We are honoured to present to you the Rick Hansen Foundation’s Annual Report for the Period 2022-2023.** Underscoring the year has been a commitment to investing in transformation both at the governance and operational levels. You will find throughout this report references to complex ideas and projects that in some cases were seeded many years ago and which have now, due to hard work, vision and dedication, come to fruition. Please see below for some key milestone accomplishments for our 2022-2023 year:

### **Creating Meaningful Accessible Environments**

As we continued to work with all levels of government, and the private sector, on the merits of adopting Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ (RHFAC) as policy, the opportunities to make infrastructure investments to serve the long term needs of citizens began to resonate across sectors. We were particularly heartened to have the City of Vancouver incorporate RHFAC into policy, which ensures that all newly built municipal facilities will be required to achieve RHFAC Gold. We are proud to report that during this reporting period RHFAC ratings have been performed in 11 provinces and territories across Canada.

### **Educating and Engaging our Future Leaders**

Our School Program continues to connect with more children and youth across the country each year and with the collaboration of community partners we reached more than 54,100 youth and children. In addition, our international outreach included a presentation to 25 Japanese teachers and policy makers on inclusive education in cooperation with UBC’s International Collaboration on Repair Discoveries (ICORD). We also bolstered our engagement with youth with the creation of a Youth Leadership Committee, with initial membership drawn from the student leaders who had participated in our panel event at the UN’s 2022 Global Disability Summit, entitled The Perspective of Youth with Disabilities in Education. We hosted webinars that included Leading Change – Youth Disability Champions in Conversation with our Founder, Rick Hansen, and, Youth Exchange: Disability and Social Justice.

### **Building Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Partnerships for Long Term Success**

As our 10-year funding agreement with ICORD draws to a close we are proud to report that with our support and ICORD’s leadership and stewardship, some 90 seed grants worth \$1.6 million have been leveraged into 50 additional externally funded research projects worth \$32.8 million, and the first international biobank available to SCI researchers across the globe was created. ICORD’s positive contributions to the global SCI research field have equally inspired and supported significant advancements in knowledge and care.



Over the past year we were pleased to work with health authorities, practitioners, researchers and people with SCI to develop a province-wide BC SCI Health Care Strategy. In addition, our work continues toward the establishment of Canada's first Centre of Excellence in Sexual Health and Spinal Cord Injury. This year's completed environmental scan delineates the gaps and barriers within the current referral system for people with spinal cord injuries.

### **Advocacy, Education and Collaboration**

The Foundation's seminal role of advocacy focusses on the core imperative of raising awareness, supporting critical research and thought leadership through community engagement. This year, our advocacy efforts included work with a Canadian consortium of disability organizations focused on supporting and advocating for the passage of Bill C-22, the Canada Disability Benefit Act, which at time of writing has passed second reading in the Senate.

None of what we accomplish would be possible without the support of so many: we are sincerely grateful to the Foundation's Board of Directors and staff, our partners, donors and supporters for joining us on this inspiring journey, striving for accessibility for all and by extension, helping to build a Canada where everyone can go everywhere.

With appreciation,



**Tamara Vrooman, O.B.C.**  
Chair, Board of Directors



**Doramy Ehling**  
Chief Executive Officer



## How We Make a Difference

Individuals with disabilities face barriers to full participation: Compared to individuals without disabilities, individuals with disabilities experience lower health outcomes<sup>1</sup>, higher levels of insecure or inaccessible housing<sup>2</sup> and poverty<sup>3</sup> and lower levels of educational attainment<sup>4</sup> and employment<sup>5</sup>.

The Rick Hansen Foundation was established in 1988 to address the systemic barriers that people with disabilities face. In 1988, approximately 3.6 million or 14% of Canadians reported having a disability. Several legislative acts were passed in the 1980s to change this including the Canadian Human Rights Act in 1985<sup>6</sup> which prohibited discrimination based on several factors including disability, as well as the Employment Equity Act in 1986<sup>7</sup> to remove barriers to employment.

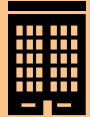
### **The need for RHF's continued work is greater than ever.**

In 2017, 6.2 million Canadians or 22% of Canadians aged 15 and older reported having a disability<sup>8</sup>. Most people had two or more disabilities: 71% of people reported having two or more disabilities, compared to 29% of people who reported having one disability. In 2017, 13% of youth aged 15 to 24 reported a disability compared to 38% of seniors aged 65 and older. Disability rates increase with age, and as Canada's population ages, the numbers of Canadians with disabilities has and is expected to continue increasing.

In 2019 the Government of Canada passed the Accessible Canada Act (ACA), and with it acknowledged that its commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities needed legislative and regulatory action to be achieved. The ACA requires that barriers to inclusion and accessibility be identified, removed and prevented in various domains, including employment and the built environment, under federal jurisdiction by 2040. As we applaud this landmark milestone, we recognize that the journey to a fully inclusive and accessible Canada must be realized in all of the spaces and places that people live, work and play, including those that are not under federal jurisdiction. Through building together, we can extend the breadth of our collective efforts and ensure that accessibility and inclusion are integral to the fabric of our society.

**Until inclusion and access are fully realized rights for children, youth and adults of all abilities, we remain steadfast in our commitment to building a world where people of all abilities can participate and contribute.**

## Thanks to the generosity of our donors and supporters, we invested in the following strategic imperatives:



### \$3.8M

to remove barriers  
in the built environment



### \$2.3M

to fund research to improve the  
health outcomes of people living  
with a spinal cord injury



### \$1.8M

to remove attitudinal barriers  
by raising awareness about the  
critical importance of accessibility  
and inclusion



### \$0.9M

to educate youth and children  
on how to become accessibility  
leaders in their classrooms,  
schools and communities

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- <sup>1</sup> Krahn, G. L., Walker, D. K., & Correa-De-Araujo, R. (2015). Persons with disabilities as an unrecognized health disparity population. *American journal of public health*, 105(S2), S198-S206.
- <sup>2</sup> Housing Experiences in Canada: Persons with Disabilities, Jun 2022. Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/46-28-0001/2021001/article/00011-eng.htm>
- <sup>3</sup> Poverty and low-income statistics by disability status, Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1110009001>
- <sup>4</sup> Educational experiences of young women with disabilities, Oct 2021. Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2021010/article/00003-eng.htm>
- <sup>5</sup> Business ownership among persons with disabilities in Canada, Jan 2022. Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2021012/article/00004-eng.htm>
- <sup>6</sup> Canadian Human Rights Act (R.S.C., 1985, c. H-6)
- <sup>7</sup> Cardillo, B. (1993). Defining and measuring employment equity. *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, (Statistics Canada, Catalogue 75-001), 5, 43-56.
- <sup>8</sup> Measuring disability in Canada, Dec 2022. Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022062-eng.html>

## Building Together to Create Meaningfully Accessible Environments

Removing barriers in the built environment supports opportunities for equitable participation, which contributes to improved social, educational, and economic outcomes for people with disabilities. Since 2017, the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ (RHFAC) program has developed and maintained Canada's only rating survey based on Universal Design principles and informed by the holistic user experiences of people with varying disabilities affecting their mobility, vision and hearing. Sites demonstrating excellent meaningful access are recognized, with the top tier accorded RHFAC Gold status. The RHFAC program also offers education, training, and continuing professional development and networking opportunities to promote informed design, policy, and practice change and communities of practice.

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“Barrier-free refers to having a specific solution, for a specific disability, in a specific location. Universal Design goes exactly the other way. It says, ‘Let’s build it for everyone.’”

**-Brad McCannell, VP Access & Inclusion, RHF**



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Our strategic focus this year was [Investing in Transformation](#). Despite the lingering uncertainty due to the prolonged repercussions of the pandemic and economic instability, the invaluable support of our donors and supporters meant we could still work hard toward strengthening the value proposition of the RHFAC program.

**As a result, we achieved a number of major milestones:**

- 1.** We registered our first international client in the United States.
- 2.** Thanks to funding from the Government of Canada's Sectoral Initiatives Program, we started developing an in-house registry to improve client experience.
- 3.** We launched a new partnership with the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) to offer members a discount on RHFAC Training delivered at PowerED™ by Athabasca University.
- 4.** Thanks to support from the Government of British Columbia and the Government of Ontario, we awarded 150 tuition grants to remove economic barriers for individuals pursuing a career as an RHFAC Professional.
- 5.** There were 289 Accessibility Professional Network (APN) members as of March 31, 2023, the largest number of members since we launched the network in 2019, and the first year we recorded an increase in membership since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic (241 and 202 as of March 31, 2021, and March 31, 2022, respectively).



## This year was also a year of firsts, and we congratulate our partners who trailblazed accessibility in their respective sectors:

### First hospital to achieve RHFAC Gold



Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital in Toronto, Ontario, achieved a Gold rating in the summer of 2022. Their participation in the RHFAC program was supported by the Government of Ontario Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility that provided funding for 250 sites in Ontario to be rated.

“[We know that accessibility](#) is an important first step in order to provide excellent patient care for our children with disabilities and medical complexity”, said Meenu Sikand, Executive Lead, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, at Holland Bloorview. The accessibility audit, added Sikand, “gave us a baseline to confirm what we believed about our accessibility and also provided a roadmap for how we can continue to make our interior and exterior spaces even more accessible.”

*Photo credit: Holland Bloorview*

### First fish hatchery to achieve RHFAC Gold



[Mossom Creek Hatchery and Education Centre in Port Moody, British Columbia, became the first hatchery and first location in Port Moody to achieve an RHFAC Gold rating.](#)

Pat Dennett, a long-time volunteer at the hatchery stated that the [RHFAC] assessment was “pretty jolting.”

“When I saw the long list of things, it really opened my eyes.”

*Photo credit: Paul Steeves*

### First tourist attraction in Atlantic Canada to achieve RHFAC Gold



Peggy's Cove Lighthouse was built in 1915 and is located about an hour outside of Halifax, Nova Scotia, in a village of 40 that receives nearly 700,000 visitors annually. The lighthouse itself is a popular tourist destination in Nova Scotia.

“[Accessibility at Peggy's Cove](#) has always been a bit of a challenge based on the terrain,” said Deborah Page, director of marketing and communications at Develop Nova Scotia. “Given that many of our visitors and locals have some type of mobility challenge it became clear to us that this is one of many communities we needed to not only accommodate but lean into and make it as great of an experience for as many as we could.”

### Iconic Canadian landmark achieves RHFAC Gold



The CN Tower in Toronto, Ontario, achieved RHFAC Gold in the fall of 2022. After receiving a rating in 2017, Canadian Lands Company, the corporation responsible for CN Tower, implemented learnings from their scorecard to help them achieve Gold certification and ensured their attraction is welcoming to people of all ages and abilities.

“By making accessibility updates to the CN Tower, the dwell time in our building has increased. People are calmer, happier, and more willing to spend time in our retail store, more than doubling our annual retail sales. So, not only is improved access the right thing to do, but it also makes good business sense.” said Peter George, Chief Operating Officer, CN Tower.

## Building Partnerships

With funding from the Government of British Columbia’s Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction, eight municipalities will receive RHFAC ratings, grants for accessibility improvements, and RHF accessibility and awareness training for staff. Participating municipalities include: Coquitlam, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Port Moody, Prince George, Richmond, and Whistler.

## Research and Technical Standards

**The RHFAC rating survey is updated every three years and, this year, staff worked closely with the RHFAC Advisory Committee and Technical Sub-Committee to prepare version 4.0.** Version 3.0 was released in 2020 and included new mandatory requirements for sites to achieve RHFAC Gold status. There is also increased weight to features essential to providing meaningful access to those with vision and hearing disabilities. Work on RHFAC Version 4.0 is expected to be released in early 2024.

## RHFAC Advisory Committee

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Dave Button (Chair), University of Regina

Philippe Bernier, JLL Canada

Darryl Condon,  
HCMA Architecture and Design

Lachlan MacQuarrie,  
Epic Investment Services

Ana Madariaga, RBC

Trevor Nightingale, NRC Construction  
Research Centre

Gerry Post, Accessibility Consultant

Suki Sekhon, CRS Group of Companies

Benjamin Shinewald, BOMA Canada

Mathur Variem, Cadillac Fairview

Ray Woo, CSA Group

**For a complete listing of Technical Subcommittee members, visit our website.**



RHF is proud to be a community partner of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) funded project “Quality in the Built Environment – Quality through the Lens of Lived Experience” in supporting research teams across Canada to include an accessibility lens in their definitions of quality in the built environment and in co-designing new paths to equity, diversity, and inclusion for people of all ages and abilities. The project team spans 14 universities and includes 70 researchers and 68 public and private organizations to establish a library of multi-disciplinary research on the built environment. This five-year project is ambitious and intended to produce a bilingual Living Atlas on Quality in the Built Environment set on a digital platform that will be created with support from the Canada Foundation for Innovation. [According to Jean-Pierre Chupin, SSHRC Partnership Director and researcher at the Université de Montréal, “I see this project as one of the very first attempts of the field of the built environment to develop a library of research. We want to prepare the next generation of actors in the built environment.”](#)

### **Policy Changes**

In 2021, the City of Surrey became the first city in Canada to commit to building all future civic facilities to a Gold level using Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ (RHFAC). Since then, [40 civic sites have since been rated, giving Surrey the distinct honor of being recognized as a leader in Canada for its commitments to accessibility.](#)

The City of Vancouver became the second municipality in Canada to formally embrace the RHFAC program this year. As part of its Accessibility Strategy, intended to help Vancouver become an international leader in accessibility, the City committed in policy to ensuring that all newly built municipal facilities are required to achieve RHFAC Gold. Vancouver also committed to having 12 staff members take RHFAC Training to gain knowledge and practical skills to rate buildings for meaningful accessibility.

## Building Together for a Brighter Future

Over the past year RHF continued to work with federal government, industry, and community-based partners to make certain that the standards go beyond just meeting code minimums to ensure holistic, meaningful accessibility for people with varying disabilities.

The Accessible Canada Act (ACA) came into effect on July 11, 2019. Its goal is to build a Canada without barriers by January 1, 2040, by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility in several priority areas including the built environment. RHF Vice President of Access & Inclusion, Brad McCannell is on the board of Accessibility Standards Canada, a departmental corporation created under the ACA.

RHF staff also contributed our expertise to other accessibility committees across Canada including but not limited to Accessibility Standards Canada Technical Committees (Model Standard Built Environment & Outdoor Spaces), BC Housing Accessibility Advisory Committee, BC Government Employment Accessibility Standard Technical Committee, National Research Council of Canada Advisory Council on Harmonized Construction Codes, CSA B652 Accessible Dwelling Technical Committee, Canadian Accessibility Network, Public Services Procurement Canada (Accessibility Advisory Committee & Centre Block Rehabilitation Project Committee), and the City of Surrey Measuring Up Working Group.



## Accessibility and Disability Inclusion Education and Training

### Training to become an RHFAC Professional

We continued to offer RHFAC Training for individuals wanting to learn how to apply RHFAC methodologies to rate meaningful accessibility in the built environment. The training program consists of two courses offered over either an eight- or 10-week period. Individuals who successfully complete the courses are eligible to take an exam to obtain their RHFAC Professional designation. The exam is independently adjudicated by CSA Group.

Thanks to funding from the Government of Canada Sectoral Initiatives Program, we are developing an expanded array of course offerings and anticipate launching our first French-language classes in the 2023-2024 academic year.

We offered tuition grants to eligible applicants and anticipate offering up to 150 tuition grants in the 2023-2024 academic year.

### RHFAC Training continued to be offered across the country:

- Vancouver Community College (Vancouver, B.C.)
- Athabasca University (Edmonton, AB)
- Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (Calgary, AB)
- Nova Scotia Community College (Halifax, NS)
- Carleton University (Ottawa, ON)
- George Brown College (Toronto, ON)

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“I liked what I saw in terms of how they developed the RHFAC Training course and the assessment structure, and became a fan. It is a well-put-together and thought-out program, and I’ve been using it myself since I took the course. I loved learning much more in-depth about a range of disabilities and spectrums of disabilities, and how much it impacts people in the physical environment,”

—RHFAC Professional Rick Watters



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## Accessible Spaces 101

In 2021, we launched Accessible Spaces 101, an introductory level course for individuals with limited knowledge of the built environment. 112 individuals have completed the class since it was first offered.

## Professional Development and Networking

We held our annual Accessible Professional Network conference #APN2023: Building Together in both a virtual and in person format at the River Rock Resort in Richmond, B.C. More than 400 individuals attended from around the world in a united effort to create a barrier-free society where people of all ages and abilities have an opportunity to participate. Keynote speakers included Stephanie Cadieux, Chief Accessibility Officer for the Government of Canada, and Michael Gottheil, Accessibility Commissioner for the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

**100%**

#APN2023 attendees said that they would recommend the conference to a friend or colleague

**93.4%**

average rating #APN2023 conference attendees gave the conference

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“The biggest takeaway was the indescribable feeling of everyone in the room being on the same page with the same goal. It’s been years since I’ve felt that.”

— **Arnold Cheng, #APN2023 attendee**



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## By the numbers

### **1,755 sites**

RHFAC-rated since 2016.

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### **76% of sites**

rated since 2016 achieved Certified or Certified Gold status.

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### **70% of RHFAC rated sites**

are office buildings, educational, recreational facilities, or community centres.

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### **116 organizations conducted ratings**

this year, the first annual increase in the number of participants since 2020 (82).

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RHFAC ratings completed for sites in

### **11 provinces and territories across Canada.**

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### **150+ individuals**

completed RHFAC Training this year.





## **549 individuals completed RHFAC Training**

since launch. 54% completed the course in the last two years.

## **176 active RHFAC Professionals**

compared to seven in 2018 and 120 in 2022.

## **~300 members**

of the Accessibility Professional Network--exceeding target

## **9 professional development webinars**

delivered to nearly 800 participants, an increase of approximately 25 participants compared to last year.

## **76% of completed RHFAC ratings**

were supported with funding provided by the Governments of British Columbia, Ontario, or Canada.

## **25 organizations**

have had more than 10 sites rated including TELUS, Brock University and The Cadillac Fairview Corporation.

## Building a Network for Spinal Cord Injury Cure and Care

In 1995, Rick, together with the University of British Columbia, established what is now known as ICORD, or the International Collaboration on Repair Discoveries. Five leadership endowments worth \$20 million were established to make basic research more relevant to people with spinal cord injuries.

Thanks to our incredible donors and supporters, in 2014, RHF committed to a 10-year funding agreement with ICORD to help establish it as an international centre of multidisciplinary research excellence dedicated to making spinal cord injury (SCI) preventable—to keep injuries from happening in the first place; livable—making stepwise improvements in functionality and quality of life; and curable – finding ways to cure both acute and chronic SCI. With funding from RHF, ICORD researchers have made significant advances: we know more about what happens to the spinal cord after injury on a molecular level now than we did in 2013; we are close to having injury models for research purposes that better reflect what happens in real-life scenarios; acutely-injured people have treatment that offers more promising outcomes; and, people with SCI have better rehabilitation options.

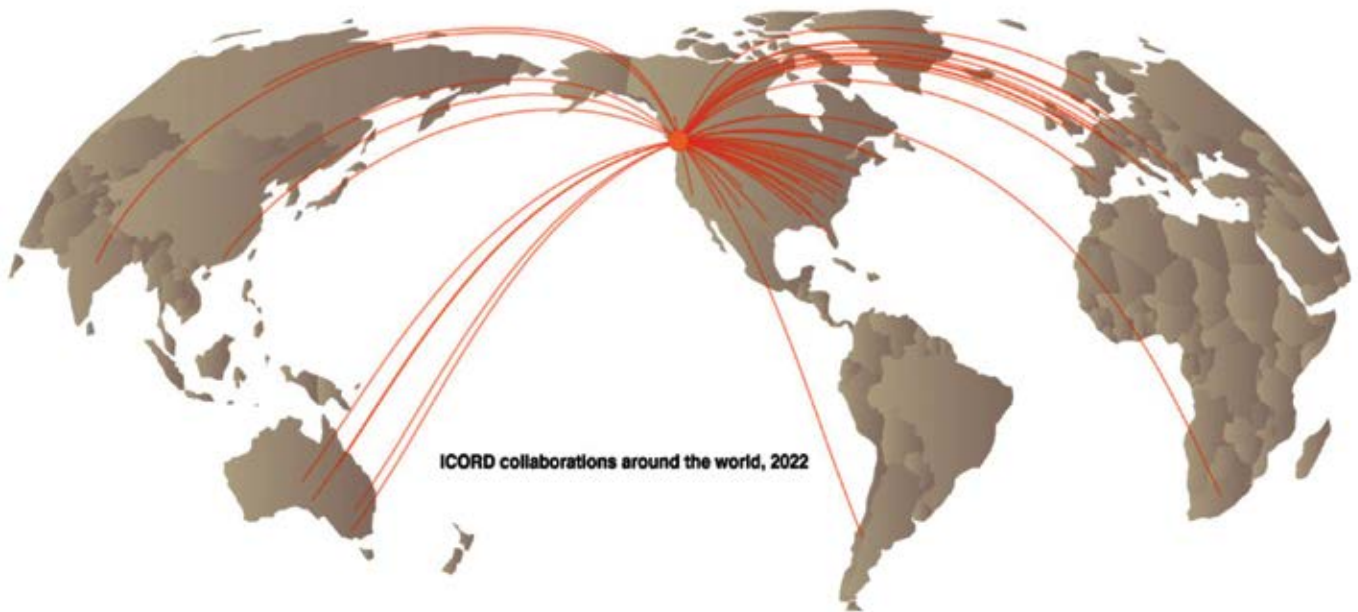
### Since 2014, ICORD has:

- welcomed 25 new faculty as Principal Investigators and Investigators;
- leveraged 90 seed grants worth \$1.6 million into 50 additional externally-funded competitive research projects worth \$32.8 million;
- supported 42 international exchanges and 282 trainee travel awards for ICORD graduate students and postdoctoral fellows;
- funded the first international spinal cord injury biobank; and
- funded knowledge translation-focused projects events and meetings including ICORD's annual research meeting, trainee-oriented symposiums and seminars and community research nights.

An independent assessment published in *Spinal Cord* last year found that UBC demonstrated remarkable achievement in the field of SCI research, ranking second in number of publications, following the University of Toronto and ahead of the University of Miami, Northwestern University and the University of Pittsburgh<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Yongbo Li', Baixing Wei', Yihan Zhong', Hao Feng' and Han WuD15, A bibliometric analysis of global research on spinal cord injury: 1999-2019. *Spinal Cord* (2022) 60:281 – 287.





**This year, funding from RHF continued to support:**

- The Yuel Family Physical Activity Research Centre (PARC), a vibrant community engagement initiative with more than 500 registered participants.
- A partnership with Spinal Cord Injury BC to support the recruitment of study participants, an initiative that helped ICORD researchers complete their studies by alleviating a bottleneck previously associated with recruitment for clinical studies.
- A knowledge translation project, SCIRE, that provides comprehensive evidence-based information on a set of topics relevant to SCI rehabilitation and community reintegration to both clinicians (SCIRE Professional, <https://scireproject.com/>) and community members (SCIRE Community, <https://community.scireproject.com/>).

**Funding from RHF also enabled ICORD researchers to establish new avenues of research, including:**

- **Biomaterials Program** – A partnership with the UBC Department of Orthopedic Surgery and School of Biomedical Engineering to compete for a faculty renewal position and hire a new faculty member, Dr. Dena Shahriar, a biomaterials scientist and neural engineer whose lab focuses on new materials for spinal cord repair.
- **Wound Healing** – The partnership with UBC’s School of Biomedical Engineering also resulted in the recruitment of a second biomaterial specialist in wound healing.
- **Acute Care Monitoring** - Dr. Babak Shadgan, who won a Michael Smith faculty scholarship, leads this work monitoring blood flow in the acutely injured spinal cord using near infrared technology.
- **Nerve Transplant Program** - Dr. Michael Berger established a new program at the Vancouver General Hospital working with plastic surgeons to allow individuals with spinal cord injury to undergo a nerve transplant which leads to the return of partial hand function.
- **Spinal Cord Regeneration** – The recruitment of Dr. Hilton at the UBC Department of Cellular and Physiological Sciences to work on molecular strategies to promote axon regeneration in the injured spinal cord.

A 10-year review of ICORD’s achievements will be completed next year and is expected to inform the development of RHF’s renewed strategy on SCI research funding priorities, intended to continue advancing British Columbia as an international leader in spinal cord injury research and care. In addition to this review, we anticipate continuing our work on a new initiative to improve evidence and community-informed care in B.C.

## **Activating Change in Spinal Cord Injury Health Care in B.C.**

We wrapped up Phase One of a community-led initiative with health authorities, practitioners, and researchers to develop a strategy to address gaps in the health care continuum for individuals living with a spinal cord injury. A significant amount of consultation and engagement transpired over the past year and resulted in a series of recommendations informed by a thorough review of previous work and progress in provincial spinal cord injury care, perspectives of individuals living with spinal cord injury, and national and global benchmarks. This work would not have been possible without the invaluable assistance and dedication of our donors and supporters, whose contributions have been pivotal in bringing us closer to realizing the team's shared vision of B.C. being a place where every person with spinal cord injury can engage in an active life, supported by evidence- and experience-based care delivered in a respectful, safe, and timely manner.

### **They are grouped into five areas that are holistic in nature:**

- 1.** To establish foundations for improved focus and coordination, designating SCI a provincial priority, formalizing a 'hub and spoke' health network, and operationalizing an ideal patient journey.
- 2.** To initiate short-term changes to address patient pain points, from earlier rehabilitation to professional navigation to insurance-adjusted financial support to regional clinics that complement primary care.
- 3.** To expand health care and rehabilitation infrastructure and expertise, including creation of SCI acute capacity, consolidation of a B.C. rehabilitation strategy, and training to address specialist talent gaps.
- 4.** To develop the community infrastructure, notably accessible housing and transportation, to improve the experience of those living with SCI and optimize utilization of high-cost acute care facilities.
- 5.** To strengthen and align data, research, and innovation to enhance collective understanding of SCI, better inform practice and policy, and continually push the boundaries in rehabilitation.

These recommendations were mapped onto a 5+ Year Roadmap for Change and include formalizing a sexual health network, establishing an ideal patient journey, improving navigation and regional clinics, expanding rehabilitation capacity, planning new acute care and rehabilitation infrastructure, SCI insurance schemes, housing models and expanding The Right Fit program across B.C. to ensure accessible housing, specialist hiring and strategic expansions of education and clinical research programs.

**We look forward to continuing to facilitate the 100+ members to drive this important work forward, and we thank all participants including the members of the Steering Committee, Advisory Committee and the individuals and organizations who participated in the Community Conversation Roundtables and Outreach.**

## Steering Committee

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Mary Ackenhusen, formerly  
Vancouver Coastal Health

Scott Brolin, Fraser Health

Vinay Dhingra, VCH

Janene Erickson, First  
Nations Health

David Granville, VCH  
Research Institute

Brian Kwon, University  
of British Columbia

Walt Lawrence, GF Strong

Anne Martin-Matthews,  
University of British Columbia

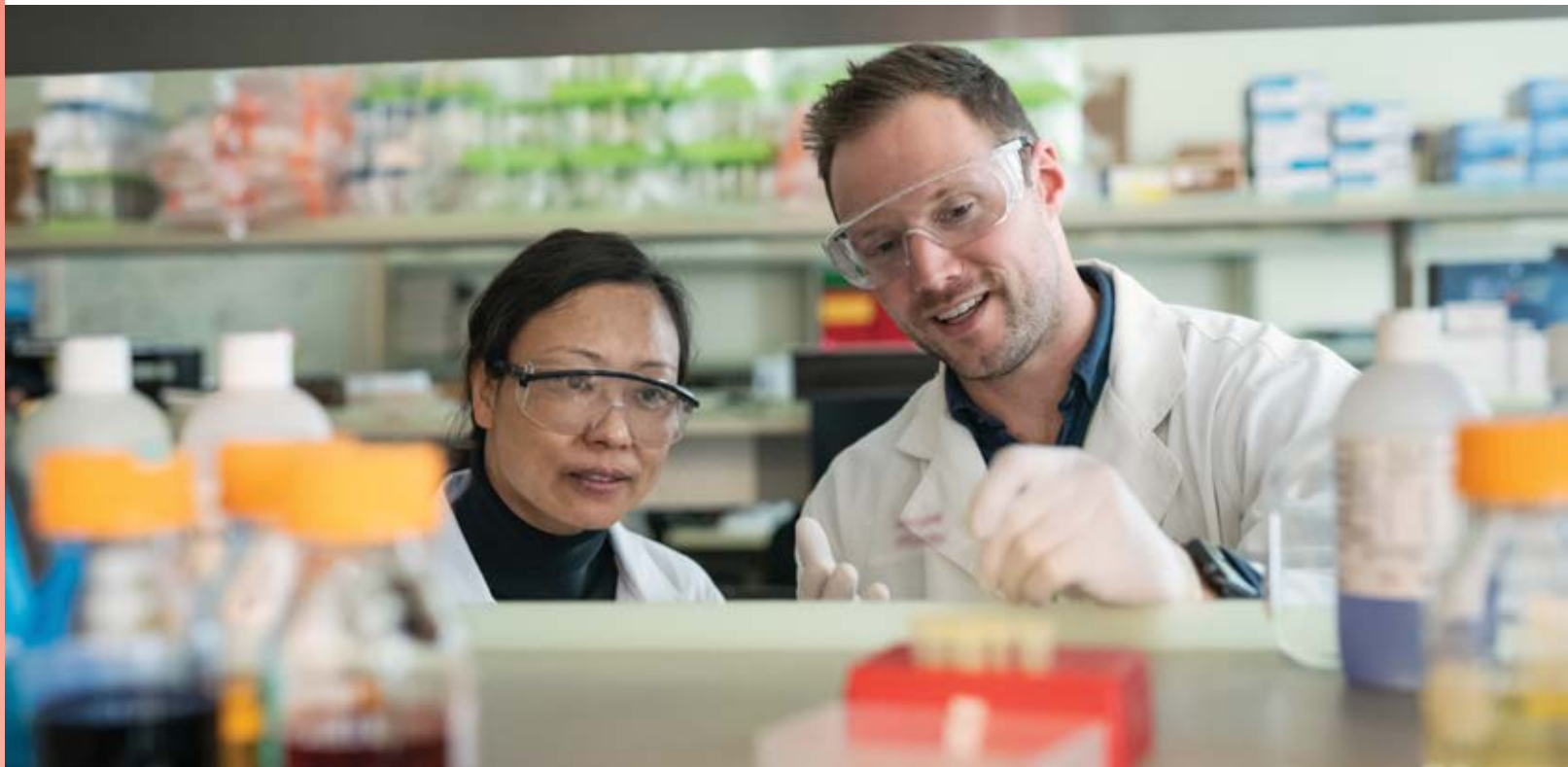
Rob McMaster, UBC

Kendra McPherson,  
Provincial Health Services

Andrea Townson, UBC

Viet Vu, UBC

*Photo credit: Martin Dee*



## Advisory Committee

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Chloe Angus, Chloe Angus Designs	Dan Coulter, Government of British Columbia	Val Orr, business owner
Richard Baker, Squamish Nation	Mary-Jo Fetterly, Trinity Yoga Incorporated	Richard Peter, Praxis Spinal Cord Institute (Praxis)
Ed Bell, Advanced Mobility Products	Sonja Gaudet, Paralympic Athlete	Trent Seymour
Gary Birch, Neil Squire Society	Mike Harcourt, formerly Premier and Mayor	Michelle Stilwell, Paralympian and former BC Minister/MLA
Stephanie Cadieux, Government of Canada	Pat Harris, Spinal Cord Injury BC	Sam Sullivan, former Mayor of Vancouver
Tauren Collinson, Parks Canada	Ford Nicholson, Kepis and Pobe Financial Group	

## Community Conversation

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Bill Barrable, Praxis Spinal Cord Institute	Armin Curt, Balgrist University Hospital	Alana McFarlane, formerly Praxis Spinal Cord Institute
Lise Belanger, Vancouver General Hospital	Marcel Dvorak, UBC Stacy Elliott, UBC	Vanessa Noonan, Praxis Spinal Cord Institute
Paul Brennan, formerly NervGen	Kendall Ho, UBC	Cori Ross, GF Strong
Penny Clarke-Richardson, Praxis Spinal Cord Institute	Maria Hudspith, Pain BC	Jeff Sommers, Heart and Stroke Foundation BC & Yukon
Cathy Craven, University of Toronto	Andrei Krassioukov, ICORD	Chris West, UBC
Doug Cochrane, Interior Health Board	Chris McBride, Spinal Cord Injury BC	Rhonda Willms, GF Strong
	Mary Ann McColl, Queen's University	Jennifer Yao, UBC



### **Center of Excellence in Sexual Health and Spinal Cord Injury**

In 2021, we began working with Dr. Stacy Elliott, Clinical Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Urologic Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia, Medical Director, BC Centre for Sexual Medicine, Co-Director, Vancouver Sperm Retrieval Clinic and Medical Director, Men's Sexual Assessment and Rehabilitation Service, Prostate Centre and 2014 Rick Hansen Foundation Difference Maker of the Year Award recipient, to establish Canada's first Centre of Excellence in Sexual Health and Spinal Cord Injury. This project is to ensure all persons with spinal cord injury (SCI) in B.C. have access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services so they may actualize the physical, psychosocial, and relational benefits of sexual wellbeing. This year, Dr. Elliott and her team came together to complete an environmental scan documenting gaps and barriers within the current referral pathway for individuals living with SCI in B.C., complete 18 interviews with individuals across the medical community in B.C., Alberta, and Ontario and prepare an action plan focused on the creation of a sustainable Centre of Excellence. **The major challenge facing the team: the lack of readily accessible funding, meaning that future work will focus on strategic planning, shareholder engagement and securing sustainable funding.**

*Photo credit: ICORD*

## Building Awareness and Engagement

Misconceptions and outdated beliefs about people with disabilities are major barriers to inclusion. Attitudes account for some of the greatest barriers faced by people with disabilities daily, and these barriers are often present due to a lack of education and understanding. Before attitudes are confronted, real change does not happen. When we challenge our assumptions of what disability is, we set in motion the steps needed to create lasting change and a truly inclusive society for people of all ages and abilities contributing to improved social, educational, and economic outcomes. Since Rick’s historic Man In Motion World Tour, Rick and the Foundation have been challenging perceptions and raising awareness of the potential of people with disabilities through engaging content, campaigns, and initiatives on milestone dates such as National AccessAbility Week and International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Our awareness initiatives bring together business, government, disability community leaders and the public to grow the movement that influences policy and creates a cultural shift to inclusion. The generous contributions from our donors not only fuel these initiatives but also symbolize the collective commitment to fostering a more inclusive and accessible society. This support is instrumental in turning vision into action.

### Building a World for #EveryoneEverywhere

Launched in 2019, the #EveryoneEverywhere awareness campaign continues to ensure RHF is a top-of-mind charity and sector leader when it comes to removing physical and attitudinal barriers for people with disabilities. Thanks to the generosity of pro-bono creative agency TAXI and national in-kind media partners Corus, OUTFRONT Media, and The Globe and Mail, we generated 1.6 million digital, print, and radio impressions nationally between July and September 2022. In addition, thanks to funding from the Government of British Columbia, we were able to run the campaign in eight select B.C. municipalities from July to October 2022, generating an additional 1.5 million impressions. This support allows RHF to continue to communicate the importance of removing barriers and motivate change. According to research by the Angus Reid Institute in September 2022, 71% of Canadians strongly agree that the campaign makes them want to remove barriers for people with disabilities in their communities.





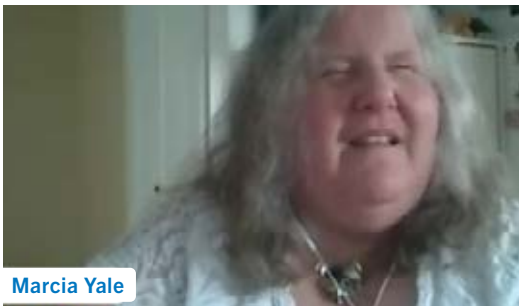
Joel Dembe



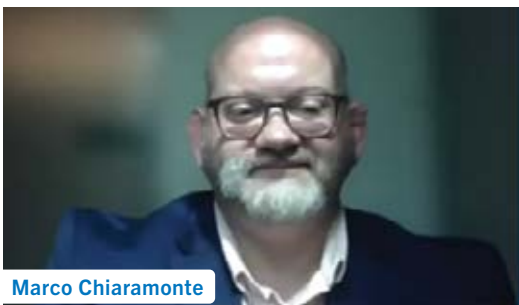
Maureen Haan



Philippe Bernier



Marcia Yale



Marco Chiamonte

## Building Community Conversations

Our donors have enabled us to host enlightening conversations that have the power to affect meaningful change in attitudes and environments. In 2021, we launched The Power of Inclusion live panel series to raise awareness of physical and attitudinal barriers that continue to exist and inspire change. This past year, we held two panels. With 549 registrants, the first panel in honour of National AccessAbility Week in May 2022 brought together four leaders for an hour-long conversation on The Power of Inclusive Workplaces – moderated by Joel Dembe, Retired Paralympian and Senior Manager, Corporate Communications at Royal Bank of Canada. Panelists included:

- **Marcia Yale**, President, Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians
- **Marco Chiamonte**, Senior Accessibility and Inclusion Specialist, Vancouver International Airport
- **Maureen Haan**, President & CEO, Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work
- **Philippe Bernier**, Vice President of Strategy, Operations & Sustainability at JLL Canada

“

“I feel inspired to improve instead of ashamed of past inadequacies.”

– **The Power of Inclusive Workplaces attendee**

”



The second panel titled *The Power of Inclusive Allyship* was held on November 30, 2022 in honour of International Day of Persons with Disabilities. With 478 registrants, it featured allies, advocates, and people with lived experience of disability who all offered thoughtful perspectives and suggestions people can take to be an ally. The discussion moderated by Trish Kelly, Managing Director of Untapped Accessibility, included the following panelists:

- **Dr. Karen Keddy**, Associate Professor, Ball State University
- **Laetitia Mfamobani**, Digital Accessibility Specialist, Rick Hansen Foundation
- **Dr. Rheanna Robinson**, Assistant Professor, Department of First Nations Studies, University of Northern B.C.
- **Spencer van Vloten**, Writer, Editor of BC Disability.com, Community Advocate

**87% and 88% respectively of those who completed the post panel surveys from each panel reported leaving the sessions with a tangible action on how to increase inclusion.**

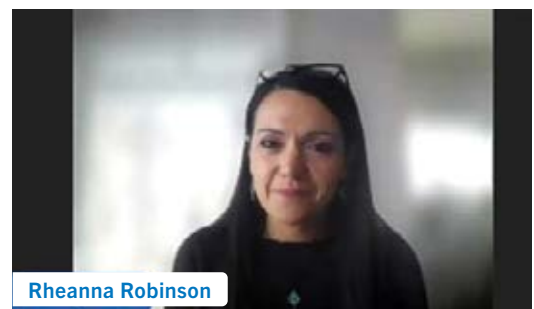
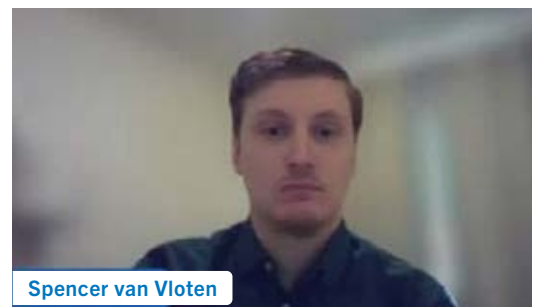
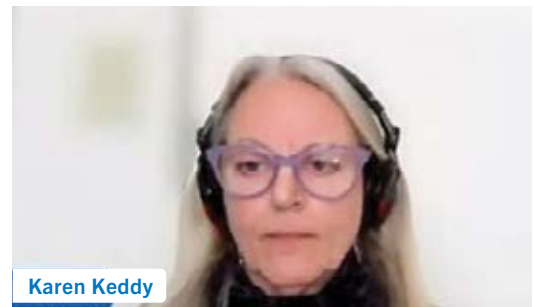
**For a recap of each panel within *The Power of Inclusion* series, please visit our blog.**

“

“I will continue to advocate for accessibility and inclusion - but ask more questions about how to improve collaboration and recognize my bias and privilege when coming to these conversations”

– **The Power of Inclusive Allyship attendee**

”





### Man In Motion World Tour

May 2022 marked the 35th anniversary when a cheering crowd filled BC Place Stadium in Vancouver, B.C., to welcome Rick home from his World Tour. To commemorate this anniversary, we held a celebratory luncheon in the stadium’s B.C. Sports Hall of Fame with many original team members.

Brian Pound, one of the attendees, wittily remarked, “I have the distinction of being the only person here who told Rick that he wouldn’t be able to do it.” He continued, his voice tinged with amazement, **“Wheeling around the world? It seemed impossible! But here we are.”** His words were met with a chorus of laughter.

We also concluded a nine-year project to digitize historical records documenting Rick’s legacy, starting with his World Tour, continuing through to the establishment of National Access Awareness Week in partnership with the Government of Canada and the establishment of the Blusson Spinal Cord Centre now located at the Vancouver General Hospital campus. Nearly 100 major projects are featured in this digital archive which includes thousands of records including historical documents, media clippings, photographs and memorabilia. These records will preserve important legacies of the Rick Hansen Foundation since its inception nationally and internationally. This unique, digital archive will continue to be updated to reflect Rick’s ongoing journey. In 2020, the Man In Motion World Tour collection was acquired by the Canadian Museum of History, including 1,700 artifacts and thousands of behind-the-scenes videos, photographs and documents spanning Rick’s early athletic career and life during his World Tour. Highlights from the collection were featured in the museum’s W.E. Taylor Salon from May 21 to September 11, 2022. We look forward to future collaborations with the museum as they continue to fully digitize their collection.

## Strength in Unity: Collaboration and Government Advocacy

In the Canadian context, we continued to work with the Pan Canadian Disability Coalition to lobby government on disability supports. The coalition includes over 25 disability organizations who in 2021 hosted a national and accessible all-parties debate on disability issues hosted by Craig Oliver, then chief political commentator for CTV and host of “Challenges & Change with Craig Oliver” on AMI (<https://www.wavefrontcentre.ca/debate-on-disability-issues/>). This year, our lobbying efforts focused on ensuring the passage of Bill C-22, the Canada Disability Benefit Act remains a priority for the federal government. According to the Angus Reid Institute, Canadians living with disabilities are four times more likely than those who are not to say that they’re struggling to get by financially. Bill C-22 received royal assent on June 22, 2023, and is now law. The Canada Disability Benefit Act was passed unanimously in the House of Commons and passed in the Senate. We look forward to continuing to work with the coalition to advocate for the financial security of persons with disabilities.

“

“This law follows years of tireless activism from the disability community. This is their victory. I look forward to working with the community this summer as we begin the regulatory process to make the Canada Disability Benefit a reality.”

– **Former Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Carla Qualtrough.**



”

Globally, just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we submitted an application to the UN Economic and Social Council for consultative status and look forward to the results, which we anticipate receiving next year.

## Educating and Mentoring the Next Generation of Accessibility Leaders to Build Inclusive Communities

Youth with disabilities experience lower rates of high school and post-secondary education, contributing to a higher risk for experiencing unemployment or underemployment. Since 2001, the Rick Hansen Foundation School Program has supported educators, children and youth with and without disabilities to become leaders through education, mentorship and awards. These interventions lead to more accessible, inclusive learning environments, which in turn contributes to improved social participation outcomes, contributing to improved educational and employment outcomes. As we reflect on the successes of the past school year, we extend our deepest gratitude to our donors whose support has been a cornerstone in achieving these milestones and making a transformative impact in the lives of countless children and youth. We are pleased to share the following successes that you enabled from the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

### RHF Ambassadors

RHF Ambassador presentations are inspired by our Founder and first Ambassador, Rick Hansen, and an integral component of our RHF School Program. Our Ambassadors are inspiring, fun, and engaging speakers who draw on their personal experience living with a disability to educate children and youth about how to create accessible and inclusive classrooms and communities. Complimentary pre- and post- presentation activities were provided to classrooms to generate further thoughtful discussions. The activities created a lasting impression as students explored the themes of compassion and empathy as experienced through a personal connection.

“

“Going into the presentation, my students felt like they already knew Laura thanks to the pre-presentation activities. It made such a difference in terms of their ability to connect and be engaged during the presentation. The Ambassador Presentation was just so thoughtfully organized by the Foundation.”

– **Bonnie Gremont, Grade One educator at Leo Baeck Day School, Toronto, ON.**

”

This year, we received 197 requests for Ambassador-led presentations and welcomed five new Ambassadors, all members of our Youth Leadership Committee. 50% of Ambassadors were youth between the ages of 18 and 30. Although the number of presentations declined from 404 last year to 140 this year, we reached more children and youth this year compared to last. The average number of participants per session increased, mainly due to two record-setting audiences: In April of 2022, we reached approximately 29,000 students during two presentations to elementary and high school students in the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board in Ontario. We also reached over 3,100 students during two presentations to students in the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School District in March of 2023 and over 2,000 community-based youth during seven presentations to three public libraries: Okanagan Regional Library, Vancouver Public Library, and Milton Public Library.



## **Educating Children, Youth, Educators and Policy Makers about Accessibility and Inclusion**

- We reached more than 54,100 children and youth this year and more than 252,000 since 2016.
- Over the last seven years, presentations to community-based youth have generally increased. On average, we reach nearly 2,000 community-based youth per year, although in 2020-2021 we only reached 202 youth. This year, we reached approximately 4,900 youth, nearly 2,000 more than last year.
- We engaged the Social Studies Educators Network of Canada (SSENC) to conduct an expert review of the relevance of our resources. As a result, 37 new resources were created, 39 existing resources were updated, and 11 resources were discontinued.
- In collaboration with UBC's International Collaboration on Repair Discoveries (ICORD), we supported the Vancouver Professional Development Program organized by AK Jump Educational Consulting Inc. to provide a workshop to 25 Japanese teachers and policy makers on inclusive educational systems.
- To celebrate National AccessAbility Week as well as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we hosted webinars about accessibility, inclusion and social justice including:
  - Leading Change – Young Disability Champions in Conversation with our Founder, Rick Hansen, featuring alumni from the Canada 150 Youth Leadership Summit as speakers. The Summit was held in 2017 to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday and connected 50 youth from across the country for leadership training, workshops and other special events.
  - Youth Exchange: Disability and Social Justice, featuring speakers from our Youth Leadership Committee who discussed the culture of disability, the social model of disability, and advocacy projects they have been involved in.
  - Le Handicap et la Justice Sociale, featuring RHF Ambassador Marjorie Aunos, and Canadian Armed Forces Military Officer Patrick Lévis as panelists and facilitated by Mihai Covaser, Youth Leadership Committee Chair.
  - The English language webinars were well attended however with fewer than 50 attendees at our French language webinar, we will refine our engagement journey to better meet the interests and needs of our French-speaking stakeholders.

**The overall feedback from our annual survey of shareholders was encouraging:**

- 60% of respondents, compared to 52% in both 2021 and 2020, reported that because of the Rick Hansen Foundation School Program, their students are taking action to make their classroom, school or community more accessible: “Students are making sure the hallways are clear.” - Andrea Carter, Grade 5 Teacher, Lakefield Elementary School, New Brunswick
- Educators reported making positive changes as well: “We are currently in the planning and fundraising stages of building a new accessible playground at our school.” - Aselin Ettinger, Teacher, Tri-County Regional Centre for Education, Nova Scotia



## **Building Up the Next Generation of Leaders through our Youth Leadership Committee**

For a number of years, we've provided informal mentorship opportunities to a group of emerging student leaders. Last year, members of this group participated in a panel event at the February 2022 United Nations Global Disability Summit titled "The Perspective of Youth with Disabilities in Education." This year, we formalized our commitment to better support emerging student leaders with varying disabilities by activating a Youth Leadership Committee and invited members of that 2022 panel to join. The Committee is a gathering space for individuals of all abilities aged 15 to 30 to be part of a highly committed group of youth driven to make positive change. Committee members met monthly to provide youth perspective on programming topics raised by RHF staff as well as brainstorm and problem solve solutions to their accessibility projects. We look forward to showcasing their accomplishments in the fall/winter of 2023.

### **We also congratulate and thank all Youth Leadership Committee members for their hard work this year!**

- Mihai Covaser, Chair (he/him) and Youth Delegate at the 2017 Rick Hansen Youth Leadership Summit
- Lucy Diaz, Member and 2022 recipient of a RHF School Program Difference Maker of the Year award
- Élise Doucet, Member (she/her) and Youth Delegate at the 2017 Rick Hansen Foundation Youth Leadership Summit
- Payton Given, Member (she/her)
- Alexis Holmgren, Member (she/her and they/them), Youth Delegate at the 2017 Rick Hansen Foundation Youth Leadership Summit and 2021 Difference Maker of the Year award recipient
- James Kwinecki, Member
- Jordan Lowe, Member and Youth Delegate at the 2017 Rick Hansen Foundation Youth Leadership Summit
- Maggie Manning, Member (she/her) and Youth Delegate at the 2017 Rick Hansen Foundation Youth Leadership Summit



## Recognizing Accessibility Leaders with the RHFSP Difference Maker of the Year Awards

The RHF School Program Difference Maker of the Year awards are issued to youth, educators and community leaders who have championed accessibility and inclusion in their local schools and communities. Nominations opened in January 2022 and applications were reviewed in May 2022. We recognized 16 individuals across Canada. With generous support from our donors, we were able, for the first time, to provide award winners with a \$500 cash award. Congratulations to all award recipients!

### Children and Youth Recipients:

- Lucy Diaz, British Columbia
- Megan Donesley, British Columbia
- Saheed Alawiye, Alberta
- Liam Isaiah Warrington, Ontario
- Alexis Lewis & Maizie Carter, New Brunswick

### Educator and Community Leader Recipients:

- Scott Kerby, Yukon
- Simone DeGannes, Nunavut
- Spencer van Vloten, British Columbia
- [Angela Regush](#), Saskatchewan
- Tracy Gervais & Elly Pahl, Manitoba
- Archie Allison, Ontario
- Véronique Messier, Quebec
- Daphne Davey, Prince Edward Island
- Kem Young, Newfoundland and Labrador



The awards were adjudicated by a committee consisting of one educator, one community leader, and a youth leader between the ages of 15 and 30. For more information about the RHF School Program Youth Leadership Committee or the Difference Maker of the Year Awards, contact us directly at [Schools@rickhansen.com](mailto:Schools@rickhansen.com) or visit our website at [www.rickhansen.com/Schools](http://www.rickhansen.com/Schools).

**Meet student recipient... Megan Donesley!**

Inspired by Rick Hansen, Megan is making a difference by using her lived experience to highlight which areas of her community are accessible based on her ability to get around. Megan is working with the Regional District of the South Okanagan to promote accessibility and determine which areas require improved accessibility.



**Meet educator recipient... Angela Regush!**

Angela is an educator in Saskatchewan who is creating change for students and staff at Constable Robin Cameron Education Complex. She has created an environment of inclusion in the grade 5-12 classrooms and often stays after hours to ensure everyone receives the help they need. She also empowers her colleagues to find meaningful solutions to best support students with varying abilities.

**To meet our other recipients and learn about their accomplishments, visit our [blog](#).**

## Challenges we faced this year as we build momentum for the future

- In 2020, we pivoted our School Program to virtual delivery as COVID-19 lockdowns came into effect. This year, our offices in British Columbia and Ontario continued to operate remotely and, as a result, RHF Ambassador speaking engagements, the Difference Maker of the Year awards ceremony, and monthly meetings of the Youth Leadership Committee were conducted virtually. Online versus in-person engagement comes with its own challenges and while we exceeded our targeted number of presentations at elementary schools this year, we did not reach our targeted number of presentations to secondary school students. To address this, we anticipate resuming in-person speaking engagements at secondary schools next year.
- The digital landscape is evolving at unprecedented rates. We piloted a new engagement platform this year, ThoughtExchange. The continuing utility of this platform along with others will be examined next year as part of our larger commitment to digital transformation.
- With pandemic-related travel and social distancing restrictions lifted, we resumed our work this year with the Ministries of Education in Guyana and Barbados and developed a model for internationalizing our existing program resources. A key finding from this preliminary effort was the need to develop a more nuanced understanding of local perceptions and needs regarding disability, access, and inclusion. We look forward to continuing this work in the years to come.
- The Government of Ontario Ministry of Education engaged us to develop and implement an Ontario-specific initiative to train primary and secondary school educators on creating accessible, barrier-free learning environments next year. We look forward to working on this new project!



## By the numbers

### **1,900 RHF Ambassador presentations**

since 2014.

### **252,000+ youth and children**

reached via RHFSP since 2016.

### **76 RHFSP resources**

were updated or created this year.

### **2,200+ participants**

joined our youth-led webinars about accessibility, inclusion and social justice this year.

### **66% of children and youth engaged**

this year were in elementary school.

### **6,400+ individuals registered**

for the School Program newsletters, more than double the number of individuals who registered for our newsletters in 2018 - 2019.

### **100% of our resources**

are available in English and French.

### **100% of respondents**

to our annual survey this year reported that they are likely to recommend our resources to fellow educators.

## Top 3 resources downloaded from our website:

### On the Move: A Digital Storybook (video)

A new resource this year. This animated video follows friends Alex and Liam for an afternoon adventure as they explore their accessible city. The video is available in both French and English, and is fully accessible with open captions, LSQ or ASL, and described audio.



### Just Like U (video)

Another new resource. This video features three youth with disabilities as well as their friends and family. They share their experience of living with a disability or having a family member or friend with a disability, and their dreams about what is possible in an inclusive world.



### Understanding Disability (Grades 3-5 worksheet)

A short activity where students watch a video about a teen with scoliosis. They discuss what disability and inclusivity look like through a series of discussion questions.



“Great video prior to the discussion. Really connected the class to someone who was close enough to their age that had an operation to fix their scoliosis go wrong. This was a great way to install empathy and understanding that these things can happen and it doesn’t have to stop someone from pursuing their passions/goals.”

**- Brandon Mulholland, Teacher, Capitol Hill Elementary School, Burnaby, B.C.**

## Our Team

### Supporting Work-Life Balance

Most of our team continued to work remotely, a practice which we expect to continue even as some other organizations return to back-to-office policies. Through several culture and pulse surveys, our staff identified wellness as an ongoing issue as well as potential solutions. This input will be considered for implementation starting next year and we look forward to continuing to support our staff in maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

### Our Commitment to Truth, Reconciliation and Allyship

In response to the national inquiry and collaborative truths shared by residential school survivors, the Canadian government negotiated an agreement that included the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). The TRC contains 94 Calls to Action including calls for truth in the form of education. As part of our commitment to truth and reconciliation, we engaged Santeles Healing Circle who facilitated a virtual blanket exercise for our staff to learn about pre-European contact to post-European contact, treaty-making, colonization, resistance, and perseverance.

We were also privileged to engage TransFocus who provided a series of facilitated conversations for our team on specific actions that we as an organization and individuals can take to increase inclusion of gender diversity.



## Financial Sustainability

- The ongoing pandemic and challenging economic times continued to impact our operations. We held our first in-person event fundraiser since the pandemic began and intend to plan more in-person events in the coming years. On June 21, we partnered with the Skidmore Foundation to host a golf tournament and dinner at the Pagoda Ridge golf course in Langley, British Columbia. More than 150 golfers enjoyed an 18-hole round of golf followed by a lively dinner that featured prizes, live and silent auctions and an inspirational talk from our Founder Rick Hansen. Funds raised from this event supported our School Program as well as the Pacific Autism Family Network and the Wagner Hills Recovery Centre.
- In the fall of 2022, RHF also entered a three-year partnership with the Vancouver Canucks Alumni Foundation (VCAF), as the charity of choice of the VCAF annual fundraiser, Canuck Country Rocks (CCR). This unique, in-person concert experience which features notable country music stars, Vancouver Canucks alumni, local Vancouver celebrities, and the general public, took place on Thursday, October 13, 2022, at the Commodore Ballroom. Funds raised at CCR 2022 were directed to the Rick Hansen Foundation School Program and spinal cord injury research. RHF is very excited to continue this exciting partnership with VCAF over the next few years.
- We continued to rely on a combination of government grants, donations, corporate sponsorships, and grants.
- We began assessing the feasibility of expanding our Accessibility Advisory Services, to generate a sustainable stream of unrestricted revenue to support operating costs.

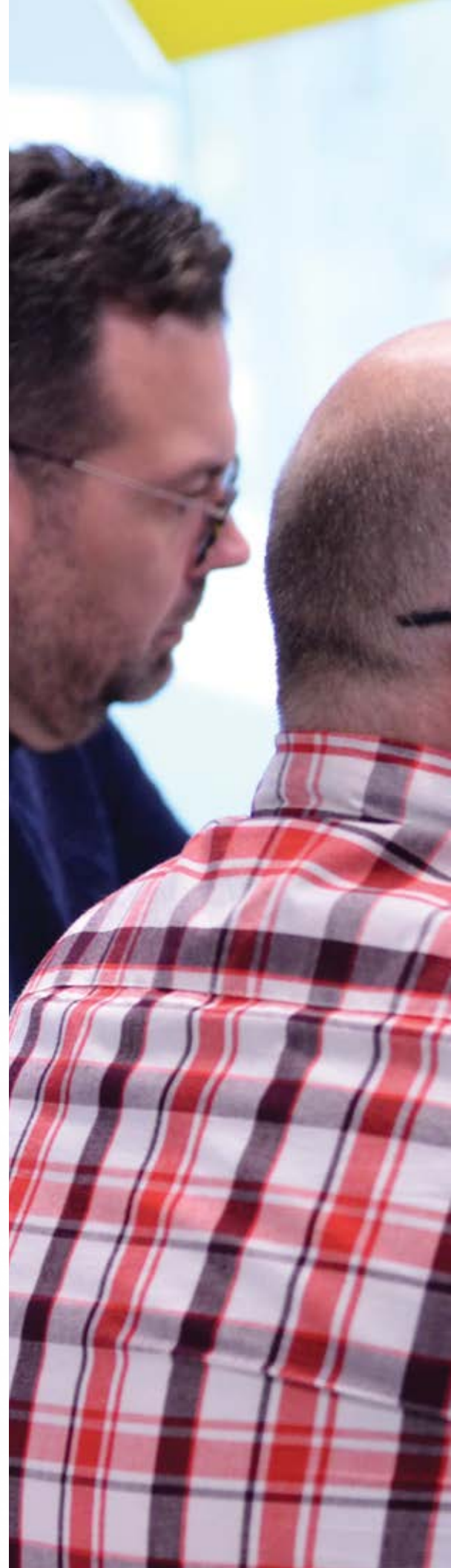


**Corporate Partnerships:**

We secured \$600,000 over three years from the Scotiabank ScotiaRISE 10-year \$500 million initiative to promote economic resilience among disadvantaged groups. According to Maria Saros, Vice President & Global Head, Social Impact at Scotiabank, “Supporting inclusive and accessible schools is crucial to ensuring that students can succeed in education and perform at their full potential. Through ScotiaRISE, we are proud to support the Rick Hansen Foundation to foster a culture of allyship both inside and outside the classroom.”

**Aligned to Government Priorities:**

- The Government of Canada Sectoral Initiatives Program has provided funding to support RHF Accessibility and Disability and Inclusion education, including RHFAC Training, to establish a new standardized profession of accessibility professionals and increase expertise and information on how to build accessible spaces in a way that includes people of all abilities.
- The Government of British Columbia Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction provided funding to enhance physical accessibility in eight municipalities across B.C., including Coquitlam, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Port Moody, Prince George, Richmond and Whistler. Indigenous communities will be included in the program and announced next year.
- We received funding from the Government of Ontario Ministry of Education to develop and deliver educational resources to students and educators across Ontario.





## Strategic Renewal

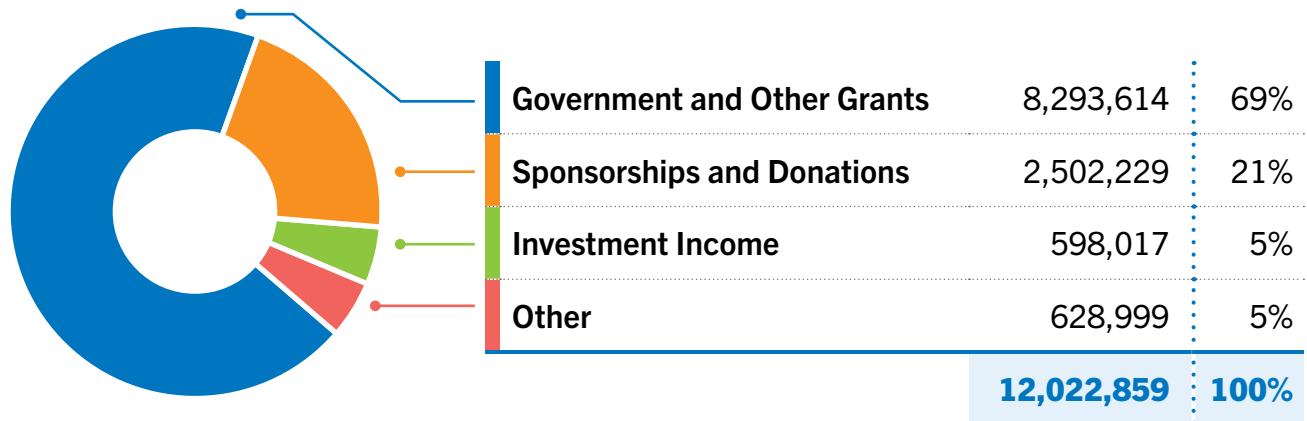
We concluded a three-year partnership with LIFT Impact Partners. Funded by the Government of Canada Employment and Social Development (ESDC), LIFT Impact Partners worked closely with members of our leadership team to refine our impact measurement framework as well as develop a multi-faceted strategy to diversify revenue sources and secure unrestricted and consistent funding, including a robust social enterprise roadmap that leverages RHF Accessibility Certification assets and a volunteer strategy that supports an agile and sustainable organizational structure. This work will inform our next strategic plan, which we started to develop this year and will be complete next year. We look forward to sharing our new strategic plan with our communities, partners and supporters at that time.



## Fiscal 2023 Financials

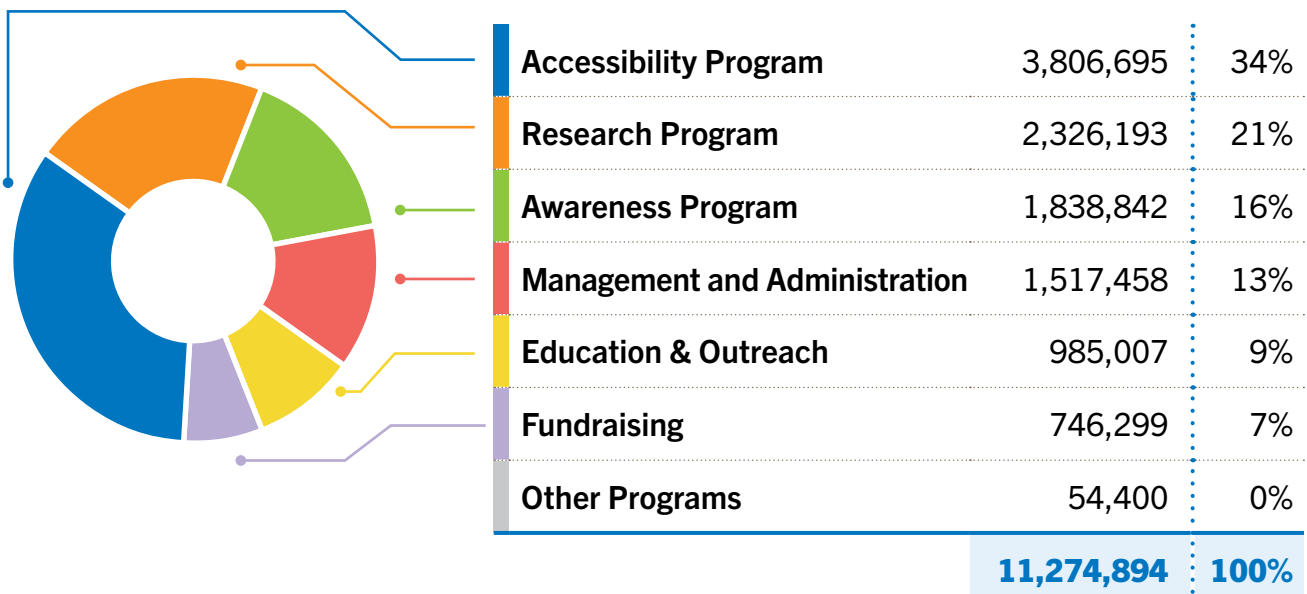
### Revenue for the year ended March 31, 2023

#### Where Our Funding Comes From



### Expenses for the year ended March 31, 2023

#### How We Put the Funding to Work



## Statement of Financial Position and Operations

March 31, 2023, with comparative information for 2022

	2023	2022
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current assets:</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 13,457,357	\$ 7,989,423
Accounts receivable	299,585	2,839,266
Prepaid expenses and deposits	230,996	216,486
	<b>13,987,938</b>	<b>11,045,175</b>
Investments held at fair value	6,555,046	6,744,884
Tangible capital assets	137,331	156,516
Intellectual property rights	1,800,000	1,800,000
	<b>\$ 22,480,315</b>	<b>\$ 19,746,575</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current liabilities:</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 824,052	\$ 590,041
Deferred revenue	99,383	13,145
Deferred contributions	10,938,509	8,928,938
	<b>11,861,944</b>	<b>9,532,124</b>
<b>Net assets:</b>		
Unrestricted	4,245,605	3,708,627
Internally restricted	6,239,198	6,372,256
Endowment	133,568	133,568
	<b>10,618,371</b>	<b>10,214,451</b>
Commitments		
Related party transactions		
	<b>\$ 22,480,315</b>	<b>\$ 19,746,575</b>

## Statement of Operations

Year ended March 31, 2023, with comparative information for 2022

	2023	2022
<b>Revenue:</b>		
Government and other grants	\$ 8,293,614	\$ 6,929,987
Sponsorships and donations	2,502,229	3,450,324
Investment income	598,017	339,744
Other	628,999	457,845
	<b>12,022,859</b>	<b>11,177,900</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Accessibility	3,806,695	2,783,582
Awareness	1,838,842	2,086,050
Research	2,326,193	1,822,992
Education and outreach	985,007	1,180,870
Other	54,400	48,145
<b>Total programs</b>	<b>9,011,137</b>	<b>7,921,639</b>
Fundraising	746,299	561,892
Management and administration	1,517,458	1,168,090
	<b>11,274,894</b>	<b>9,651,621</b>
Surplus of revenue over expenses before the undernoted items	747,965	1,526,279
Fair value changes on investments	(344,045)	259,316
Loss on disposition of tangible capital assets	-	(523)
<b>Surplus of revenue over expenses for the year</b>	<b>\$ 403,920</b>	<b>\$ 1,785,072</b>



## Thank you to Our Partners and Supporters!

We are incredibly grateful for the continued support of our funders, donors, supporters and partners committed to removing barriers for people with disabilities and creating a world where everyone can go everywhere. **Thank you!**

### Government Funders

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Government of Canada through  
the Ministry of Social Development  
and Social Innovation

Government of British Columbia

Government of Ontario

Government of Nunavut

### Corporate Donors

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Aviva Canada

TAXI

The Manufacturers Life  
Insurance Company in  
honour of John Cassaday

RBC Foundation

TELUS Corporation

Scotiabank

### Corporate Partners

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Accessibility Institute,  
Carleton University

McCarthy Tétrault LLP

Toyota Canada

Cadillac Fairview

Pacific Blue Cross

University of Alberta Online  
and Continuing Education

Canada Post Corporation

QuadReal

Vancouver Airport Authority  
(YVR)

Easter Seals BC & Yukon

Royal Bank of Canada

Scotiabank

KPMG LLP

The Printing House

## Media Partners

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Corus Entertainment

OUTFRONT Media

The Globe and Mail

## Major Gift Donors

---

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Skidmore Foundation

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Hugh O'Reilly

## Community Partners

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Mossom Creek Hatchery

University of British  
Columbia

Sakku School, Nunavut

Fraser River Sturgeon  
Conservation SocietyVancouver Adaptive Snow  
Sports ProgramNorth Shore Disability  
Resource CentreInternational Collaboration  
on Repair DiscoveriesVGH & UBC Hospital  
Foundation

## Bequests

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Estate of Ruth Yvonne Baker

Estate of Lauren Albert Miller

Estate of Karen Lee Cannings

Estate of Frances Vallance

## Planned Gifts

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Hildegund Brueckmann Charitable Foundation

## Community Giving (\$500+)

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Anonymous (4)	Ed and Shannon	Joan Milina
AccessSMT	Donkersgoed	Nancy Morrison
Allmar Inc.	Geraldnye J. Doyle	Pass-through Grants Fund, Victoria Foundation
Kofi Amankwah	Dr. Jane Ekong	Peel Scrap Metal Recycling Ltd.
Ronald Amos	Gail Forrest	Penner Doors & Hardware
Ola Armstrong	Ann Barbara Gillen	People Corporation
Adrienne Bailly	Perry Goldsmith	Gerald Philippson
Carolyn Bayley	Frank Goodman	Allen Piddington
Ryan Bigge	Goodyear Canada Inc.	QMB Barrier Systems Inc
Philip Boorman	Michael Haden and Johanne Drouin	Carrie Rogers
Robin B. Boyer	Martha Hayter	Keith and Joanne Sequeira Fund
Barbara Broadbent	Audrey Kenny	Anita Sinner
Sigmund Brouwer	Allison A. Killam	Lorraine Smith
Coaching Association of Canada	Lyll D. Knott	Ryan Stark
Melvin Cohen	Diana R. Laubitz	The Ollie Lantela Foundation
Doortech Mfg. & Distribution Ltd.	Polly Lo	June Vey
Dormakaba	Donald G. Lockhart	Steve and Kim Vlchek
CP Distributors Ltd.	Juliana Martay	Gloria Yang
Greg Dixon	Natascha and Ryan Martin	
	Rene McKinnon	
	Charles McNeil	



## Monthly Donors

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Anonymous (7)	Margaret Hale	Allan Miller, in memory of Tom McCool
Sharon E. Aylsworth	Neil Hamilton	Monifa Miller
Regina D. Bandong	Evan Harte	Suzanne Murphy
Marjorie Becker	Katherine Hayduk	Carmen Niessen-Nelson
Franceen Berrigan	Heather Hollyer	Rosalind Pattison
Joseph Blesch	Bruce Innes	Margaret Peden
Philip Boorman	Harry Jennings	Dr. Heather Percival
Sheila Buckle	Gail P. Junnila	Donna and Lyle Phillips
Dorothy J. Calbeck	Annie Kaap	Brian Pomeroy
Bruce F. Clarke	Eric G. Kelly	Bruce Raber
Margo Collins	Ken Mayo Accessibility Inc.	Chris Reaume
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Colin Ewart	George E. Marlatte	Helen I. Tripp
Dennis Flewelling	Lawrence Mascarenhas	Richard Tull
Donna Ford	Ruth Mathieson	Paul VanderGriendt
Kim Gerein	Edith Matous	Parida Wichayasunan
Nancy Graham	Pauline McDonald	Emily Zurbrecht
Katie C. Grieve	Doreen Melling	
	Christina Clavelle Meyer	

## Staff Donors

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Anonymous (3)	Sarah McCarthy
Hana Cairns	Sandra Pimpao
Ariel Castillo	Michael Reid
Uli Egger	Karen Sallovitz
Doramy Ehling	Brad Scott
France Gagnon	Heidi Shuter
Rick and Amanda Hansen	Marika Van Dommelen
Alannah Johnston	Frank and Charlene VanderGriendt
Jamie Matsumoto	
Laura McBride	Una Zhang
Brad McCannell and Tarren McKay	

## Community Fundraiser

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Door Hardware Institute (DHI) Canada



Made possible by the generous support of Scotiabank, The Gordon and Ruth Gooder Charitable Foundation, and The Skidmore Foundation.

**Scotiabank.**

THE GOODER FOUNDATION

Skidmore



Photo credit: Holland Bloorview



## Leadership

### RHF Board of Directors

This year we welcomed three new directors to our Board: Rich Donovan, Jane Halford, and Hugh O'Reilly, and extend our sincere gratitude to departing members Rob Guénette, Kimberly Kuntz, and Eric Watt for their dedication and years of service.

Chair, Tamara Vrooman, O.B.C

Secretary, Stanis Smith

Treasurer, Eric Watt, FCPA, FCA (until July 2022)

Treasurer, Annette Aquin, CPA, CA (effective July 2022)

Ida Chong, FCPA, FCGA

Lisa Coltart, CPA, CA

Rich Donovan

Rod Graham

Rob Guénette

Jane Halford

Amanda Hansen

Kimberly Kuntz

Dr. Colleen Nelson

Hugh O'Reilly

Ryan Peterson

Suki Sekhon

Greg Yuel

### RHF Executive Team

Doramy Ehling, Chief Executive Officer

France Gagnon, Chief Financial Officer & Vice President, Operations

Brad McCannell, Vice President, Access & Inclusion

Sarah McCarthy, Vice President, Strategic Initiatives

Mike Reid, Vice President, Resource Development



**Rick Hansen Foundation**

300–3820 Cessna Drive, Richmond, B.C. Canada V7B OA2

1-800-213-2131 | [info@rickhansen.com](mailto:info@rickhansen.com)

[rickhansen.com](http://rickhansen.com) | [@RickHansenFdn](https://twitter.com/RickHansenFdn)

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