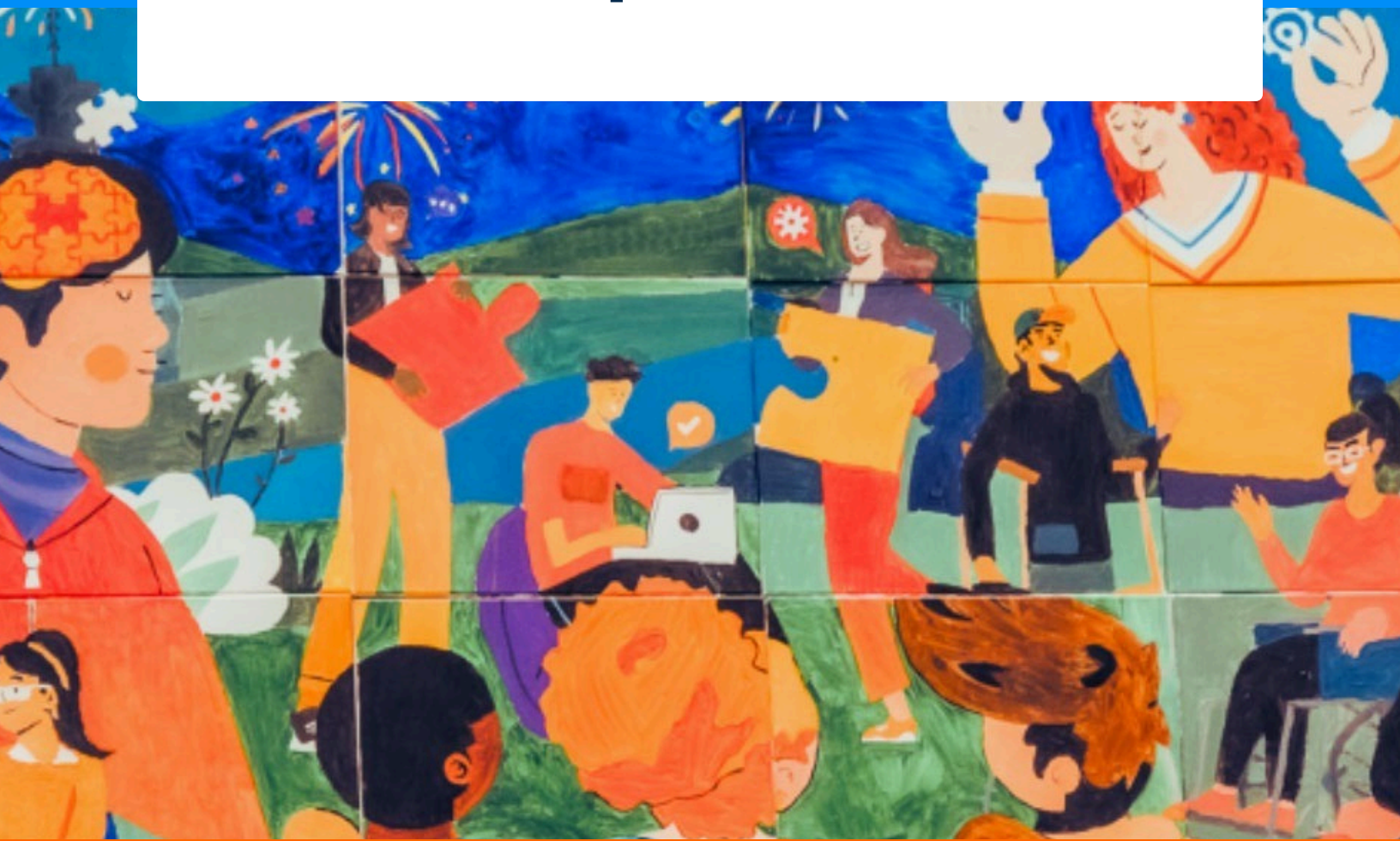


We foster well-being for all by
opening doors to sustainable
and meaningful employment.



2023/2024 Annual Report



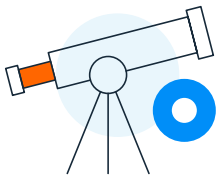
This report has been designed to meet
WCAG 2.0 standards and guidelines, albeit with
some limitations. To provide suggestions on
how we can enhance this report, please send
your feedback to info@opendoorgroup.org.

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About Us



Vision

A world where all people have access to opportunities that give them purpose, prosperity, and belonging.



Mission

Fostering well-being for all by opening doors to sustainable and meaningful employment.



Values

Customer Experience

A customer's entire journey with ODG, is considered and met with a high standard of quality and care. Every department. Every position.

Impact Through Results

We optimize our efforts by using impact as a guiding principle. We understand that being accountable in matching our actions to our words will have the greatest impact.

Accessibility, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

To sustainably deliver on our mission, we must constantly examine and evolve. As a service provider and as an employer.

Who We Are

Open Door Group, a CARF-accredited, not-for-profit organization and registered charity, continues to operate on the fundamental belief that all individuals have the ability to succeed. We provide employment services to thousands of individuals across Canada, assisting anyone interested in preparing for, finding, and keeping meaningful employment.

The work of Open Door Group takes place across British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario — the homelands of over 500 distinct Indigenous nations and cultures. Our home office is located on the ancestral and unceded territories of the of the skwxwú7mesh, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm and səliłwətaʔ peoples. We extend thanks, honour, and respect to our hosts for stewarding these lands since time immemorial.



A Message From the Chair and CEO

Our vision is a world where all people have access to opportunities that give them purpose, prosperity, and belonging. In a rapidly changing labour market, Open Door Group's role in concurrently providing tailored support for job seekers, on their journey to sustainable employment and working with employers to build strong, inclusive workforces is not just important; it's crucial.

This past year, we continued to focus on three key impact areas to achieve sustainable and meaningful employment for all, while prioritizing our ability to meet the evolving needs of the people we serve in a relevant and adaptable way. While there are many, a few key highlights include:

1. Increasing Access for All People:

In addition to adding new services, this past year, we moved two of our service locations including our Sechelt WorkBC Centre and our Thrive Leisure and Recreation program in Vancouver. Both sites have improved accessibility in location and layout and have received enthusiastic feedback from local clients, employees and the broader community.

We established and activated our Accessibility Advisory Committee, composed of 14 diverse members, bringing a mix of lived experience as people with disabilities, and Indigenous representation. Their voices help Open Door Group identify barriers to accessibility as a service provider and make recommendations on our accessibility plan. We also continued to enhance our capacity to use technology solutions to support increased access to services, given evolving geographic boundaries and the need for flexible service options, while prioritizing data safety and security.

2. Impact through Partnerships:

Over the past year, we have strengthened and built new partnerships across many communities in BC and the country. Working with a multitude of community agencies has opened more doors to service options for people at various stages of their employment journey. In September, we hit a milestone, celebrating the 10th anniversary of our Untapped Inclusion Awards with over 300 BC businesses in attendance to recognize leaders and employers moving the dial on workplace inclusion for people with disabilities.

3. Strengthening our Organization:

With people at the heart of our organization, we were thrilled to launch an enhanced Health and Wellness program for our team members, providing additional access and flexibility on top of existing benefits. This program has been impactful with the increasing cost of living, and 27% of our employees self-identifying as having a disability (Pledge to Measure 2024 results).

This past year, we achieved our eighth consecutive certification as a Great Place to Work, a three-year recertification through CARF Accreditation, and continued to build on a robust cybersecurity program.

Whether rolling with change or navigating factors out of our immediate control that still impact our work, the employees and leadership at Open Door Group are second to none. They have demonstrated their engagement and passion for our mission and for the success of the people we serve, by bringing forward new ideas and giving thoughtful input as we grow. We are grateful to you. To our partner organizations, thank you for your trust, expertise, and shared passion for delivering high-quality, person-centered services across our programs.

Thank you to our government funders for their continued support of the success of people here in BC and across the country. A special thank you to our dedicated volunteer Board of Directors for providing governance and sound guidance, particularly through challenging and uncertain times.

Finally, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the people, community, and employers who access our services. We deeply appreciate and value your trust in us as partners in your journey to sustainable and meaningful employment.

Respectfully yours,



A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink.

Alona Puehse
Chief Executive Officer



A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink.

Clare Waters
Board Chair

Our Impact

Open Door Group

We believe employment is an opportunity to build one's purpose, sense of value, and community connection. Our mission is opening doors to well-being through sustainable and meaningful employment for all.



200+

team members including ODG employees and partner staff providing services across British Columbia, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, and Saskatchewan.



92%

of clients would recommend our services.

90%

of employers would recommend our services.

1155

Open Door Group clients achieved employment in 2023-2024.



71

employees participated in our Pledge to Measure survey

45%

of respondents identified as disabled

"As a person with autism, I have found meaningful employment at Open Door Group, where I truly value the supportive team and the people I work with. The environment here allows me to thrive and feel appreciated for who I am."

Natalie Beanland (she/her)

Administrative Assistant



548

individuals accessed Thrive's leisure and recreation services, receiving mental health support while building stronger community connections and fostering well-being.

2500+

employers across Canada partner with Open Door Group to meet workforce needs and build more diverse, inclusive, and accessible workplaces.

700+

people completed specialized training to support employment readiness and enhance their prospects for employment.

29,215

pounds of produce were harvested by Gardengate participants to give back to the Kamloops community.





Employment and Training Services



WorkBC Employment Program

people found employment through WorkBC Vancouver City Center, Sea to Sky, Kamloops Thompson in 2023-2024

Finding Strength in Challenges: Mitch's Journey to Employment

For Mitch K., finding a job has always been challenging due to the multiple health issues she faces. Mitch decided to seek support from WorkBC—Vancouver City Centre, a decision that would change her life. “After leaving my previous position, I found it difficult to secure new employment, which led me to WorkBC, as was suggested to me by someone close,” Mitch recalls.

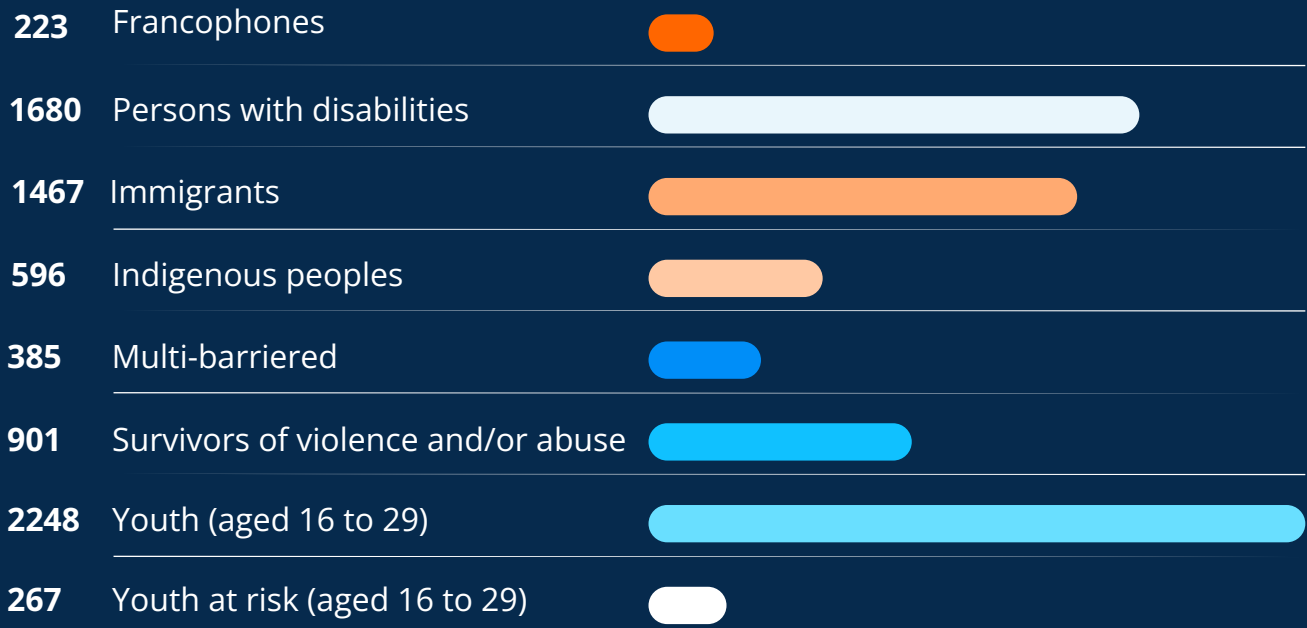
At WorkBC—Vancouver City Centre, Mitch was introduced to an Employment Specialist who quickly became a pillar of support, guiding her through the complexities of the job search process. “My Employment Specialist has been an incredible support,” Mitch shared. “He helped me improve my interview techniques, present myself with greater confidence, and remember to be kinder to myself during difficult times.” Through participating in WorkBC workshops, Mitch began to recognize her own capacity, uniqueness, and self-worth. This newfound confidence made a significant difference in her job search, and with her Employment Specialist's guidance, Mitch noticed a shift in her comfort level when interacting with new people.

The sessions provided her with valuable insights into effective job search strategies and interview techniques, while also helping her identify less beneficial paths. “My Employment Specialist helped me recognize that encountering challenges in the workplace is not only inevitable but also a necessary part of personal and professional improvement,” Mitch reflected. “Rather than viewing obstacles as setbacks, I now see them as opportunities for growth and learning.”

This new perspective inspired Mitch to approach each new experience with a positive mindset and a readiness to adapt to the expectations of potential employers. Through her sessions at WorkBC—Vancouver City Centre, Mitch gained a clearer sense of direction and newfound confidence in her ability to navigate the challenges of the job market. Within months, Mitch not only found a meaningful career in Vancouver, but she also rediscovered her confidence and developed a fresh approach to overcoming life’s challenges. Mitch’s story is a powerful reminder of the impact of support, resilience, the belief that every challenge is an opportunity for growth and everyone has the ability to success. With the support of WorkBC—Vancouver City Centre, Mitch has found strength in her journey, embracing the possibilities that lie ahead.

Mitch K. (name changed)

WorkBC Client Overview





STRIDES

persons with disabilities accessed the program to gain resources, training, and employment skills to find meaningful employment opportunities in 2023.

STRIDES (Solution-focused, Training, and Recruitment promoting Inclusive and Diverse Employment Success) supports individuals with disabilities in their journey towards employment and self-employment. STRIDES is currently offered in Lower Mainland, Okanagan, Thompson, and Kootenay regions including remote areas where employment resources might be limited.

From Trinidad to Salmon Arm – A Journey of Flavour and Resilience

Meet Cecilia, a Trinidad native now in Salmon Arm. Passionate about cooking, she overcame her challenges to launch Cecilia's Flavour Fusions, offering herb-based seasonings inspired by her Caribbean roots.

Launching a business was no small feat for Cecilia, but with the support of Open Door Group's STRIDES employment services, she found the resources and encouragement she needed to make her dream a reality. "Open Door Group has been a great help. They're there every step of the way," Cecilia shares. The STRIDES program, tailored specifically for individuals with disabilities, provided her not only with financial backing but also the emotional support that was crucial in her journey.



Cecilia, STRIDES participant

Today, Cecilia's Flavour Fusions is more than just a seasoning brand; it's a testament to her resilience, determination, and the importance of honoring cultural traditions. By supporting Cecilia's venture, customers aren't just enjoying delicious flavors—they're contributing to the sustainability of local food practices and celebrating the story of a woman who turned her challenges into triumphs. Join Cecilia on her journey as she brings a taste of Trinidad to Salmon Arm, and discover the rich, vibrant flavors of Cecilia's Flavour Fusions: **Cecilia's Flavour Fusions**.

STRIDES is funded by Canada's Government Opportunity Fund for Persons with Disabilities. opendoorgroup.org/programs/strides-opportunities-fund-program



Jobs in Demand

121 individuals successfully completed Job in Demand training to enhance their employment skills.

Jobs in Demand (JID) employment and training service is delivered in Sechelt, Kamloops, Kelowna, and Vancouver. JID assists participants in cultivating relevant skills and gaining work experience in high demand industries.

Jobs in Demand is funded by Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training.

opendoorgroup.org/programs/jobs-in-demand



“Jobs on Demand was a life-changing experience for me. The program helped me understand myself better, develop a sense of purpose, and realize my potential. The group dynamics created momentum, and the valuable credentials, and practice interviews. Our facilitator was excellent, and the information was presented in a calm and accessible way. Overall, it was a very satisfying experience, and I’m now working thanks to Jobs on Demand. Kudos to Jobs on Demand and everyone involved in making it a wonderful program to work with!”



A.D.

Participant at JID- Sechelt

Wellness & Community Connection Services



Conquering Waves Dragon Boat team, June 2024

Thrive Leisure and Recreation

Thrive offers a safe and welcoming space for anyone facing mental health barriers while working on their wellness goals. Dedicated to providing support, Thrive creates opportunities for personal growth and meaningful community engagement. With a commitment to guiding individuals every step of the way, Thrive helps enhance well-being, preparing participants to achieve their personal goals and find sustainable, meaningful employment opportunities. In 2023, 548 people accessed the Thrive services to improve their mental health well-being.

Gil's Journey: Rediscovering Life Through Thrive

After a long battle with an eating disorder, Gil found herself facing low self-esteem and physical inactivity. Referred by a Recreation Therapist, she reluctantly joined the Thrive program. "At first, I thought it wasn't for me," Gil admits. But with encouragement from a supportive member of the Thrive team, she decided to give it a chance.

Gil started small, attending art groups and mental health workshops. "Art is my first love, so being able to do it with people I felt comfortable with made all the difference," she says. These early steps gradually helped her reconnect with her passions and begin

rebuilding her confidence. The onset of the pandemic brought new challenges but Thrive provided a lifeline through virtual activities. “During isolation, Thrive kept me sane,” Gil recalls. The variety of online groups offered her much-needed connection and engagement during a difficult time. As restrictions lifted, Gil, now retired, embraced new opportunities to stay active. She joined walking groups, completed the Sun Run, and even took up pickleball. “It was a huge confidence booster,” she shares.

During this period, Gil faced the heartbreaking loss of her mother. Throughout this challenging time, Thrive remained a steady source of support. “Thrive helped me get through the most painful period of my life,” she reflects. Today, Gil is more confident and engaged than ever. “I now know I am worthy, just like everyone else, to have a fulfilling and enjoyable life,” she says, crediting Thrive with helping her rediscover her sense of self and connection with the community!

Gil. D (name changed)

Thrive is funded by Vancouver Coastal Health.

opendoorgroup.org/programs/thrive-leisure-and-recreation

Gardengate Horticulture

Gardengate is a space of healing and recovery for individuals living with addictions or mental health conditions. Through activities in the garden, the program supports participants to work towards personal goals such as healthy eating, active living, or vocational training. In 2023, the program has successfully harvested 29,215 pounds of produce to give back to the community, assisted 52 individuals living with mental health conditions to achieve their well-being and connect to the community!

Mitch’s Story: among difficulty, lies opportunity!

For two years, Mitch was a valuable participant at Gardengate. His time in the program first started when he moved a couple blocks away from the farm and was encouraged by his Occupational Therapist with the ACT (Assertive Community Treatment) team to start volunteering. Mitch says that he has always been interested in gardening and was keen to develop related skills as well as his strength and stamina while in the program.

At Gardengate, Mitch immersed himself in a range of activities: carpentry, field work, cooking, community outings, greenhouse production, produce sales, and driving the golf cart. He particularly enjoyed the cooking groups, where he was able to refine his skills and gain confidence in the kitchen. Initially uncertain, Mitch grew capable of independently selecting and completing recipes. Mitch fondly recalls his time at Gardengate as “one big great memory,” cherishing the friendships and humor shared with fellow participants and team members.



Mitch, Gardengate volunteer

Now, as he completes his courses at Street School, Mitch looks forward to future employment or volunteering opportunities. He carries with him inspiring quotes from his experience: “You are nowhere closer to God than when you are in a garden”; “You can’t adjust the wind, but you can adjust your sails”; and “Among difficulty lies opportunity.”

Mitch T. (name changed)

Gardengate is funded by Interior Health and Kamloops Food Policy Council.
opendoorgroup.org/programs/gardengate-program

Project EveryBODY

In 2023, the community’s favorite event, ProjectEveryBODY, made its highly anticipated return on December 4th at the Community Roundhouse & Art Recreation Center in Vancouver. The event drew over 200 attendees and featured 32 performers from across the Lower Mainland. Organized by Open Door Group in partnership with posAbilities, the PEBCelebratesLive event showcased a collaboration of community and non-profit organizations. It celebrated the achievements of individuals with disabilities and advocated for vibrant, diverse, and inclusive communities.

“ D.V.A (name changed), shared, “The show was an uplifting experience. This is my 4th time attending the show with my family. Witnessing talented artists overcome barriers to pursue their dreams is truly inspiring, hopeful, and motivated!”

opendoorgroup.org/events-and-media/news/embracing-diversity-and-inclusivity-a-vibrant-talent-showcase-at-pebcelebrateslive

Supporting Diverse, Inclusive, and Accessible Businesses!

Accessible Employers

The Community of Accessible Employers (CAE) is a free and inclusive network dedicated to helping employers foster workplace inclusion. Accessible Employers offers a range of tools, resources, training, and events for BC employers focused on effective recruitment, hiring, and retention of employees with disabilities.

Recent service expansions have been notable, with 511 new users enrolling in Accessible Employers' online courses. The CAE has also welcomed 45 new members, who are now fully integrated and visible on the website. This expansion connects over 30,000 additional employees to Accessible Employers' initiatives, further enhancing its commitment to accessibility and disability inclusion.

Pathfinding Project through the Disability Supports for Employment Fund and Vancouver Foundation Disability Supports for Employment Fund (DSEF).

accessibleemployers.ca

Pledge to Measure (PTM)

Organized by Accessible Employers, Pledge to Measure aims to inspire businesses to measure and improve their disability inclusion in the workplace, fostering a culture where diversity is at the forefront. In 2023 there were 46 Pledge participating companies representing 90,295 employees, with 8,875 employees with disabilities who self-disclosed, 376 of whom were senior leaders.

“

Small Business BC is honoured to once again participate in the annual Pledge to Measure and be part of the growing list of businesses committed to hiring people and improving representation of persons who identify with a disability. Small businesses account for 98% of all businesses in BC and employ over 1.1 million people. With one-in-four Canadians identifying with at least one disability, that translates to more than 284,000 folks in BC who work for a small business, and they all deserve to be counted!”

Tom Conway, CEO, Small Business BC

Canadian Partners in Workforce Innovation (CAN WiN)

CANWiN helps employers meet workforce needs by connecting job seekers with disabilities to accessible employers across **British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario.**



CANWiN Team at the 4 Pillars Training

As of March 2024, 802 employers have embarked on the 4-Pillars Commitment & Readiness workplace inclusive hiring training, with 189 successfully completing the program. Additionally, 160 employers have initiated enhanced support activities to improve workplace accessibility and inclusion, and 111 have fully completed these initiatives.

These activities aim to enhance workplace diversity, inclusion, and accessibility to hire and retain talent that are people with disabilities.

ICBC: Leading the Way in Inclusive Hiring Practices



ICBC is a true example of an employer that is leading the way for inclusive hiring. As a founding employer partner of CAN WiN, ICBC is unwavering in its commitment to promoting diversity, ensuring equity, and enabling conscious inclusion across its organization. This steadfast commitment instills confidence in their inclusive practices.

Recruitment: ICBC recognized an opportunity in their recruitment process to increase inclusive hiring. They implemented a more proactive approach to hiring by introducing a new recruitment system designed to better track hiring outcomes for persons with disabilities. We suggested a leading practice of implementing an “evergreen” posting to ensure that job opportunities were always accessible to this community.

Partnership Awareness: ICBC invited our team for an extensive tour of their facilities. This tour was instrumental in helping us understand the specific requirements of various job roles within the company. We met with department heads, managers and current employees to gain insights into the skills and accommodations needed for each position.

ICBC also emphasized training by partnering with CAN WiN. Their leaders participated in CAN WiN's Four Pillars of Accessible Training, and we worked together to review and customize their interview questions according to best practices. Through these proactive measures—evergreen job postings, a sophisticated recruitment system, detailed facility tours, and comprehensive training—ICBC has set a new standard for inclusive practices in BC. “We are proud to partner with ICBC and celebrate their remarkable success in leading the way for inclusive hiring,” Jasmine, Inclusion Workforce Specialist at CANWiN concludes.

CANWiN is funded by Canada's Government Opportunity Fund for Persons with Disabilities.

canadianpartnerswin.ca

Untapped Accessibility Social Enterprise

Untapped Accessibility (UA) provides organizations with the tools and expertise needed to advance their accessibility initiatives. They work with organizations to go beyond mere compliance and build genuinely inclusive environments. By leveraging the skills of UA's accessibility experts, organizations can enhance their capacity to foster true inclusivity for all.

Since its inception in late 2022, UA has assisted over 155 organizations in enhancing accessibility, resulting in more than 7700 hours of paid work for professionals with disabilities. UA's team of staff and associate consultants support clients to reach beyond compliance, sharing their accessibility expertise and lived experience of disability to identify accessibility strategies that create truly inclusive environments for all. The majority of staff offer this powerful combination, with 89% identifying as disabled professionals.

Managing Director Trish Kelly is energized by the teams' work and their partnerships with their clients. “Accessibility work requires strong partnerships and the Untapped team is lucky to work with clients who show a whole hearted commitment to improving inclusion for community members with disabilities,” she says. “It's awesome to see the impact of our collaborations.”

untappedaccessibility.ca



Trish Kelly

Managing Director

Untapped Workplace Inclusion Awards



Untapped Awards 2023 attendees

In collaboration with Accessible Employers and CANWiN, the Untapped Awards 2023 celebrated its 10th anniversary on October 23rd at PARQ Vancouver. This milestone event honored BC businesses and individuals who were leading the way in workplace equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

The celebration highlighted 72 exceptional nominations and welcomed over 300 guests from across B.C., including business leaders, service providers, government representatives, industry experts, and dedicated advocates. Together, they celebrated the significant progress made in advancing disability inclusion in the workplace and the remarkable achievements driving positive change.

opendoorgroup.org/untapped-series/untapped-workplace-inclusion-awards

"It's challenging to do justice to the impact of the Untapped Workplace Inclusion Awards in words. It's equal parts informative and inspiring; engaging and enlightening. It's a day filled with abundant learning from governments and organizations who are championing disability inclusion across industries. It's an opportunity to engage in thoughtful discussion about how we can continue advancing accessibility in meaningful ways within our respective businesses and communities. It's space for celebration as we reflect on the progress being made, and curiosity as we envision what's to come. It's a showcase of achievement through accountability. It's time to reconnect with familiar faces, and to make new connections. It speaks to the head and to the heart. It's an annual highlight for our team. And it's one you won't want to miss."



Emily Dietrich

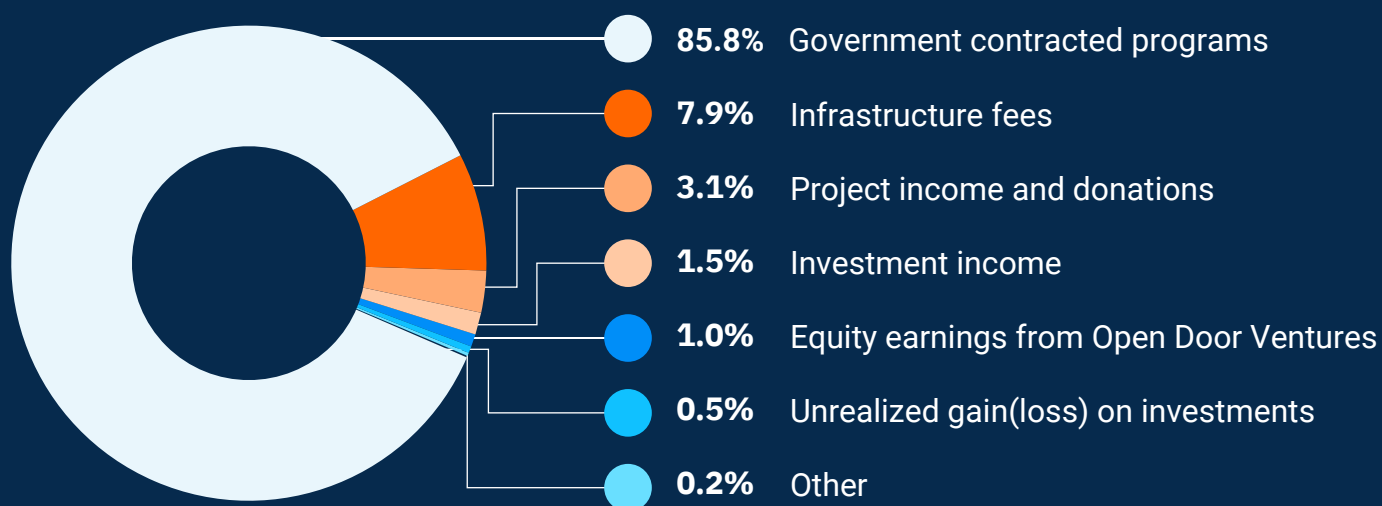
Equity and Inclusion Program Manager at BCAA

Financial Review

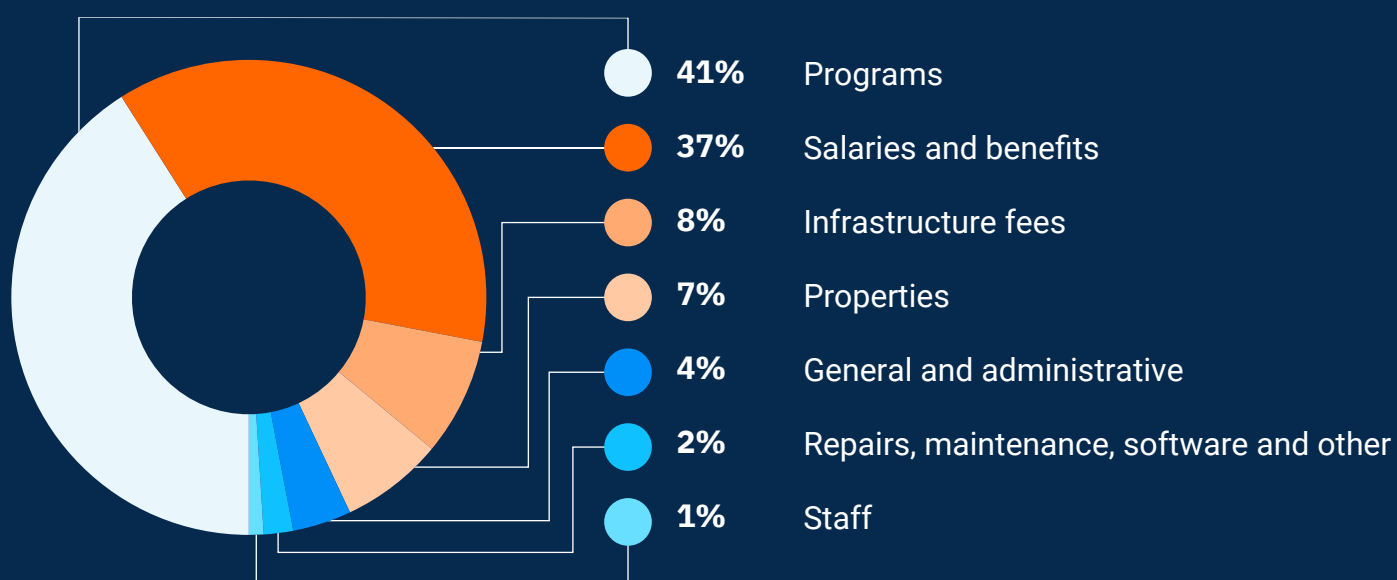
Revenues	2024		2023	
Government contracted programs	24,792,005	85.8%	24,844,469	78.5%
Open Door Ventures equity earnings	266,545	1.0%	2,072,058	6.5%
Infrastructure fees	2,283,850	7.9%	3,045,105	9.6%
Project income and donations	896,208	3.1%	1,281,914	4.0%
Investment income	442,722	1.5%	237,365	0.7%
Unrealized gain(loss) on investments	150,866	0.5%	(92,375)	-0.3%
Other	59,654	0.2%	280,607	0.9%
Total Income	\$28,891,850	100%	\$31,669,143	100%

Expenditures	2024		2023	
General and administrative	1,204,970	4.1%	1,426,755	4.9%
Repairs, maintenance, software, etc.	571,701	1.9%	495,266	1.7%
Infrastructure fees	2,283,850	7.8%	3,045,105	10.5%
Programs	11,972,718	40.7%	10,703,846	37.1%
Properties	2,057,060	7.0%	1,971,595	6.8%
Salaries and benefits	11,055,847	37.6%	10,848,552	37.6%
Staff	294,064	1.0%	383,547	1.3%
Total Expenditures	\$29,440,210	100%	\$28,874,666	100%

Revenues



Expenditures



Locations



Vancouver Burrard

900 – 1200 Burrard St., Vancouver, BC
Phone: 604-334-6372

Vancouver East Hastings

134 East Hastings St., Vancouver, BC
Phone: 604-334-6372

Vancouver West Pender

200 – 250 West Pender St., Vancouver, BC
Phone: 604-334-6372

Thrive

300-1338 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC
Phone: 604-872-0770

Sechelt

101 – 5530 Wharf Ave., Sechelt, BC
Phone: 604-885-3351

Sea to Sky

302 – 37989 Cleveland Ave., Squamish, BC
Phone: 604-639-1743

Kamloops North Shore

795 Tranquille Rd., Kamloops, BC
Phone: 250-377-3670

Kamloops South Shore

210 – 450 Lansdowne St., Kamloops, BC
Phone: 250-377-3670

Chase and District

822B Shuswap Ave., Chase, BC
Phone: 1-800-763-1681

Clearwater

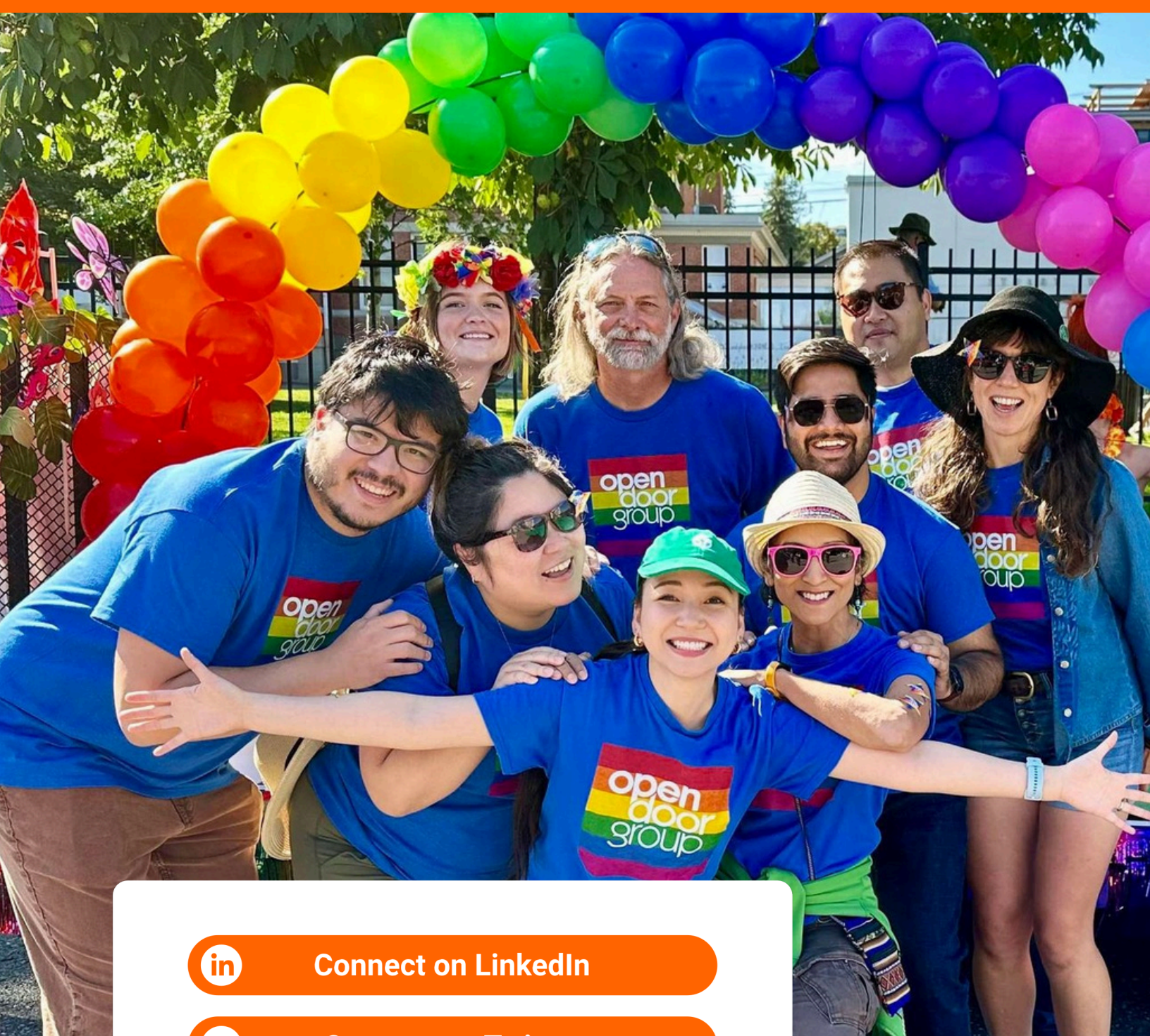
100 – 240 Park Dr., Clearwater, BC
Phone: 250-674-2928

Barriere

5 – 4480 Barriere Town Rd., Barriere, BC
Phone: 250-672-0036

Kelowna

245 - 1855 Kirschner Road, Kelowna, BC
Phone: 236-427-5932



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door
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