

2020/21 IMPACT REPORT

INVISIBLE TO INVINCIBLE



ON OUR COVER

MEET ASHLEY SINDAYEN



'I believe in the power of [the Foundation's] message and the impact they are having on the lives of women today.'

Ashley Sindayen is a mother of three and a care provider for adults with disabilities. Ashley is a BC Women's Health Foundation community champion who uses her personal story of reproductive mental health to draw attention to the health needs of all women.

Photo credit Martina Tamesis

OUR VISION

TO ENSURE ALL WOMEN AT ALL LIFE STAGES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA HAVE ACCESS TO THE HIGHEST QUALITY HEALTHCARE WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW THEY NEED IT.

Cover photo credit Jenn di Spirito



YOUR IMPACT

April 2020 – March 2021

\$8,850,387

contributed by donors

3,955

individual donors, Foundations,
and corporate donors

66

projects funded

1,271

women's stories shared

LETTER FROM CEO + BOARD CHAIR

There were times throughout 2020-2021 when all we could do was courageously keep taking steps into the unknown as the global pandemic brought daily challenges to our mission at BC Women's Health Foundation. So much so that the following sentence would have seemed unfathomable at many points through our tumultuous "COVID year."

Thanks to our community of generous supporters, BC Women's Health Foundation had the highest disbursements in our 26-year history to both BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre, and the Women's Health Research Institute, totaling \$8.8 million.

It is an astounding achievement that fills us with tremendous pride in our team, and immense gratitude for our philanthropic partners, like you.

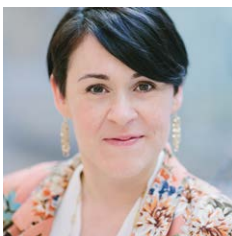
The COVID-19 pandemic shone a global spotlight on systems and inequity, racism, the economy, justice, and gender.

Unfortunately, women's health is often a confluence of

where these social issues meet. It is a convergence that is not universally understood: inequity always shows up in health. In the pages that follow, you will see how together we responded in helping to move the needle on women's health.

You will meet Dr. Wendy Norman who spearheaded the first national Sexual Health Survey in Canada. You will read about the new immunoassay analyzer provided to BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre thanks to your support, that screens every newborn in the province for metabolic disorders. We will introduce you to Professor Kristin Campbell conducting cutting-edge ovarian cancer research at the Women's Health Research Institute, that you helped fund. And real patients share their heartfelt appreciation for the life-changing successes you helped to make possible.

It is a new world, and we will not forget the teachings of last year: be adaptive, be fearless, and never relent in pursuit of our shared purpose; healthy women everywhere, capable of anything.



Genesa M. Greening
President + CEO
BC Women's Health Foundation



Karim Kassam
Board Chair
BC Women's Health Foundation



OUR PILLARS

BC Women's Health Foundation is the largest non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the full spectrum of women's health in the province of British Columbia. Together with you, we address the barriers to health equity for women and gender-diverse people at every life stage through initiatives across our four-pillar mandate: Education + Awareness, Advocacy, Capital + Equipment, and Research + Innovation.

01

EDUCATION + AWARENESS

BC Women's Health Foundation is dedicated to driving a gendered approach to healthcare in BC that is culturally-safe and trauma-informed.

02

ADVOCACY

BC Women's Health Foundation is dedicated to ensuring the investment models in health, research, policy, and practice are shifted towards being gender equitable.

03

CAPITAL + EQUIPMENT

BC Women's Health Foundation is dedicated to ensuring the facilities, equipment, and programs at BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre match their world-class model-of-care.

04

RESEARCH + INNOVATION

BC Women's Health Foundation is dedicated to ensuring that the health needs of women and gender diverse people, have been validated as unique, real, and important through solutions-focused research and innovation.

AMPLIFYING THE VOICES AND HEALTH NEEDS OF WOMEN THROUGH EDUCATION + AWARENESS

Your support of our education + awareness initiatives increases knowledge, and changes the conversation about women's health. You can help to shift the discourse by investing in the most urgent priorities of the Foundation.



INEQUITIES REVEALED

Healthy women are critical to our collective future. They are central to our families, communities, and essential services. Yet, despite a publicly funded healthcare system, women in British Columbia have experienced health inequities for decades.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these inequities, giving our quest to improve the health and well-being of women in our province new urgency. In November 2020, we launched Unmasking Gender Inequity – a series of reports supported by partners Pacific Blue Cross and Community Savings Credit Union – to examine the pandemic's effect on women, and the resulting

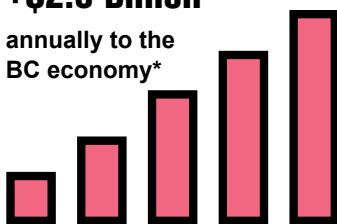
socioeconomic impacts on the province.

An accompanying education and awareness campaign resulted in unprecedented levels of political dialogue and public engagement (reach 65 million), establishing the Foundation as a thought leader in the gender equity and women's health space. The series also outlined why prioritizing investment in women's health is critical to ensure a strong economic recovery in BC, and offered a powerful pathway for business leaders, healthcare professionals, policy makers, and communities to define a post pandemic reality that more equitably serves society – particularly women.

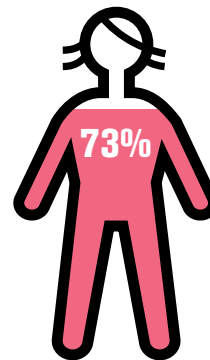
The contribution of healthy women in the workforce adds

+\$2.6 Billion

annually to the BC economy*



Those from under-served communities in BC are 35% more inclined to rate their emotional health more poorly than non-racialized women



of women in BC report negative health outcomes from increased caring for family members, with anxiety being the main impact*

*BCWHF reports including Unmasking Gender Inequity, Spotlight on Women's Mental Health, the Research Divide
To explore the full series and upcoming publications, go to unmaskgenderinequity.ca

Young Women's Council member, Amrit Heer and her son Ethan, wearing the BC Women's Health Foundation masks.



IN HER CIRCLE

AN EQUITABLE FUTURE

The horrific, ongoing discoveries of the bodies of thousands of Indigenous children buried outside residential schools across the country was a long-overdue wake-up call for many about Canada's unacceptable treatment of Indigenous citizens.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to work alongside Indigenous women and Two-Spirit people in actively prioritizing their health and amplifying their voices. One result of that work was the April 2021 publication of *In Her Circle*, a stark and revealing account of Indigenous women's experiences with the healthcare system during the COVID-19 pandemic, produced with esteemed partners, Reciprocal Consulting.

The report shares stories of increased isolation, barriers to healthcare access, resilience, and community. Importantly, it includes **twenty recommendations** for a future where Indigenous women and Two-Spirit people have equitable access to high-quality healthcare when, where, and how they need it. In the year ahead, the Foundation's partnership with Reciprocal Consulting will continue as we put these recommendations into action.

We are grateful to the many donors who share in this commitment and give so generously to the Indigenous Women's Health Fund.



*Dr. Jenny Morgan,
former Director of
Indigenous Health at
BC Women's Hospital +
Health Centre*



*Artist credit:
Margaret August,
Shishálh Nation*

“We have a new climate to serve Indigenous people and their needs, decolonize the health services, and improve health outcomes for our people.”

– Dr. Jenny Morgan, Gitxsan Nation, former Director of Indigenous Health at BC Women’s Hospital + Health Centre

“Inequities already present were increased because of the pandemic ... there is pronounced racism in the healthcare system.”

– Dr. Kim van der Woerd, Namgis Nation, co-Founder, Reciprocal Consulting



DESTIGMATIZING MENTAL HEALTH

Pre-pandemic, British Columbia had the most women-owned, small-businesses of any province in Canada, and this was the province's fastest growing sector*. COVID-19 abruptly changed that, decimating many small businesses.

Recognizing the toll the pandemic has taken on the mental health of women in the workforce, as well as the key role mental health plays in the stability and success of the economy, we took this important conversation directly to the business community.

In March 2021, over 275 virtual attendees joined us, our Young Women's Council, and 4 expert panelists at Healthy Women, Healthy Companies to engage in a discussion about the unique issues faced by professional women and actionable strategies for fostering healthier work environments.

The event raised \$25,000, garnered over 115,000 impressions from social promotion, and was featured during a CTV Vancouver Morning Live segment. This was made possible thanks to presenting partner DuMoulin-Miller Group of Sotheby's International Realty Canada, champion partner Grosvenor, and advocate partners Special Risk Insurance Managers and Earncliffe Strategy Group.

**Unmasking Gender Inequity Report, 2020*

GENERATING TRANSFORMATIONAL INVESTMENT AND SHAPING POLICY THROUGH ADVOCACY

Your advocacy for women's health shapes systemic change for healthcare policy, practice, and investment. Become a monthly donor today. Your investment will ensure women have equitable access to quality healthcare, now and in the future.



HOW THE FOUNDATION EFFECTS CHANGE

At BC Women's Health Foundation, we know it takes more than philanthropic investment in capital and equipment to move the needle on gender inequity in healthcare. Systemic change requires seismic improvements to health policy and practice, as well as significant investments in women's healthcare and research. That is precisely why we have prioritized "Advocacy" as an essential pillar of our mandate; to pursue change by strategically advocating for women's health equity with elected officials, funders, and government policymakers.

This year, our advocacy initiatives directly resulted in \$65 million in new federal government commitments for women's health and research delivered in Budget 2021. New federal investments in women's health research, national gender data, and reproductive health aside, we didn't stop there.

We launched the Women's Health Collective Canada (WHCC), an historic joining of Canada's three leading women's health and hospital foundations and corresponding women's health research institutes.

Stronger together, we now collaborate with Toronto's Women's College Hospital Foundation and the Alberta Women's Health Foundation on national advocacy opportunities to improve women's health across Canada.

Whether in our reports, in media, before the Legislature or Parliament, our Foundation advocates in support of our shared purpose: healthy women everywhere, capable of anything.

A MAJOR STEP FORWARD



In May 2021, Health Canada took a significant step towards providing equitable access to reproductive healthcare by greenlighting the country's first National Sexual Health Survey. Our Foundation provided critical, strategic support to Dr. Wendy Norman, head of the Contraception & Abortion Research Team (CART), who led the charge.

Dr. Norman has spent the past decade informing government policies on contraception and abortion. **“(A Sexual Health Survey) is needed to give people the reproductive health they want. You can’t show the government how cost effective it is to provide free contraception without the data to prove it. The benefits to society are massive. The cost saving is phenomenal. Research has already shown that \$27 million could be saved annually in British Columbia alone. Countries all over the world know this because they have Sexual Health Surveys that provide the data.”**

Simply put, advocacy works. The Federal Government's endorsement of Dr. Norman's quest demonstrates the wide-reaching benefits of providing people across Canada with the ability to achieve their reproductive goals.



Dr. Wendy Norman, MD, CCFP, FCFP, DTM&H, MHSc, head of the Contraception & Abortion Research Team (CART) at the University of British Columbia

ADDRESSING HEALTH NEEDS AND QUALITY OF CARE FOR ALL WOMEN THROUGH CAPITAL + EQUIPMENT

Your support of the capital + equipment needs of British Columbia's only dedicated women's hospital, helps to provide accessible, world-class healthcare. You can help medical teams catch life threatening conditions in mothers and infants by investing in urgently needed fetal monitors (\$50,000 each).



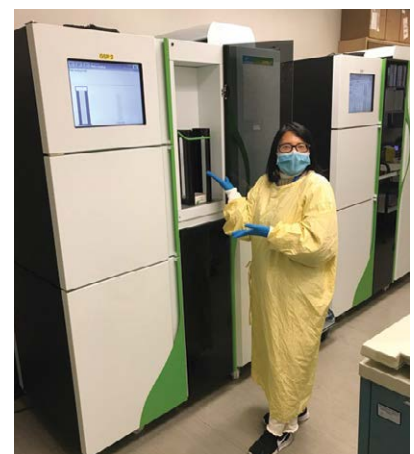
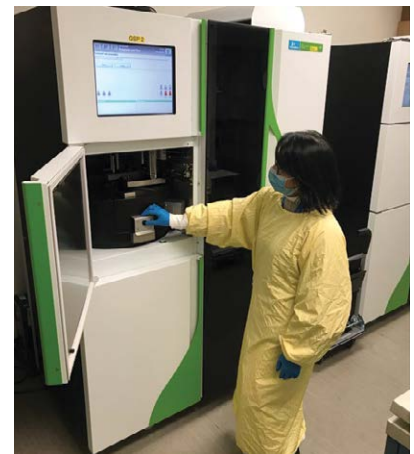
THE MIRACLE MAKER

“[Marie’s] body had already started shutting down...such a small test made such a huge impact.” - Emilie Major, mother of Marie, diagnosed with the immunoassay analyzer

Every year, one in 1,000 babies born in British Columbia has a life-threatening metabolic condition that is invisible to the eye and potentially deadly. Many of these conditions are detected through a province-wide screening program that tests every single newborn in BC and the Yukon – 45,000 babies just last year.

It all starts within hours of birth with a simple heel stick and a tiny drop of blood. Soon, the sample is delivered to BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre where it is scanned by the immunoassay analyzer, alerting healthcare professionals to metabolic disorders. In 2020, replacing the aging equipment became a critical need.

A community of generous donors including the Djavad Mowafaghian Foundation, the Milan & Maureen Ilich Foundation, the Skidmore Family, guests from our Air Canada Birdies for Babies and Dazzling Love events provided the significant and urgent funding needed to purchase a new immunoassay analyzer. Together, we are making a province wide impact and helping to save countless lives far into the future.



CULTURAL TRADITIONS HELP HEALING

Access to traditional medicines, healing, Indigenous cultural spaces and increasing visibility of Indigenous cultures in healthcare settings are important elements of providing culturally safe care. By ensuring access, we are able to help disrupt the cycles of intergenerational trauma and colonization that exist in hospital-based care settings and spaces.

For Indigenous patients, many of whom travel from far across the province, being away from family and community can increase anxiety and stress, which may delay physical recovery. At such times, even a small reminder of home can have an immensely positive impact on a person's sense of well-being.

The connection between body and mind is integral to the Holistic Indigenous Health (HIH) project at BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre. This project supports Indigenous patients by recognizing that cultural traditions nurture the spirit, can

support healing and wellness, and create a sense of belonging—all of which bolster someone's recovery.

Thanks to support from the provincial Civil Forfeiture Grants program, the HIH provides Indigenous patients and families with gift bundles of cultural and ceremonial items. The gifts are signs of respect and appreciation; they acknowledge that an echo of home can help to soothe the mind. Gifts include traditional medicines of sage, sweetgrass, tobacco, and cedar, as well as kits for creating moccasins, decorative leather items, and baskets.

By creating space for Indigenous traditional medicines in mainstream health services, BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre is advancing our commitments to truth and reconciliation. We are deeply grateful to our community of donors who generously support the Indigenous Women's Health Fund HIH project.



“AS A YOUTH, I NAVIGATED THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM WITH MY GRANDMOTHER WHO WAS A RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SURVIVOR. I WITNESSED THE FEARS SHE FACED WHILE IN THESE SYSTEMS. IF I CAN MAKE A CHANGE THAT WOULD HAVE BENEFITTED HER OR OTHERS, I WILL BE VERY HAPPY AND PROUD.”

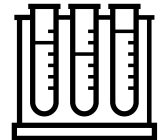
– Danielle Harkey, HIIH project coordinator.

Inuit mother and her daughter, Nunavut.



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE AND ENABLING EXCELLENCE THROUGH RESEARCH + INNOVATION

Your investment in women's health research bridges the gendered funding gap, exposes biases in women's healthcare, and accelerates change in our province, nationally, and internationally. Your donation towards a virtual platform developed by the BC Reproductive Mental Health Program (\$1.46M) is a significant step towards achieving this goal.



A GENDERED LENS + A CANADIAN FIRST

When the Foundation's Unmasking Gender Inequity series revealed how the COVID-19 pandemic was exacerbating existing gender inequities in healthcare and beyond, we looked to our partners at the Women's Health Research Institute (WHRI) to ask how we could help.

The WHRI presented an urgent funding request to support a wide-reaching, gendered lens study of the pandemic response in British Columbia – the Rapid

Evidence Study of a Provincial Population Based Cohort for Gender and Sex's (RESPONSE) Study.

Through RESPONSE, empirical data was collected and analyzed from nearly 7,000 provincial residents. The results are shedding new light on the ways that women and other vulnerable groups have been affected by pandemic-related public health measures. Now, for the first time in Canada, policymakers have access to gendered data that can support evidence-



based policies, inform pandemic response and recovery, and address existing inequities in the province and Canada.

The RESPPONSE study has gained traction with healthcare leaders and policymakers at the provincial and federal levels, with WHRI recommendations informing a gendered approach to a mental health recovery plan and more.

None of this would be possible without the visionary leadership of our generous donor, Lisa Turner. Together, we are moving women from invisible to invincible.



“... we knew that unless we catalyzed the research, women’s health and gender specific questions would not be examined. ... We (wanted) to ensure these questions were examined rigorously, and as a priority.”

– Dr. Gina Ogilvie, MD, MSc, FCFP, DrPH, Associate Director of the Women’s Health Research Institute.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Artist and entrepreneur, Lisa Turner, has been a passionate supporter of BC Women’s Health Foundation since 1999. As a result of her championship of women’s health and gender equity, Lisa was a pioneering supporter of the Women’s Health Research Institute’s ground-breaking gendered lens research study of the COVID-19 pandemic – the Rapid Evidence Study of a Provincial Population Based Cohort for Gender and Sex (RESPPONSE).

“I know that it is much more difficult to raise money for researching ‘women’s issues’ which makes the commitment to support the work of the Foundation all the more important.”

Lisa likes that her support enables initiatives that positively impact women and families far beyond the hospital walls.

“The Foundation’s mission to improve the lives of women through excellence in research, and public advocacy, aligns with my vision to make meaningful change by creating a safer, healthier, and more compassionate world.”

AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

Women's health research is chronically underfunded, and always has been, resulting in significant knowledge gaps about women's bodies, women-specific diseases, and women's reactions to treatments. Over the past ten years, women's health researchers received only 1% of Canadian Institutes for Health Research funding; with the per grant funding amount \$50,000 lower per year for women's health grants compared to others.* This inequity leads to misdiagnosis, minimized symptoms, and poorly targeted treatments.

Too many issues that are critical to the health needs of women do not receive the attention they deserve.

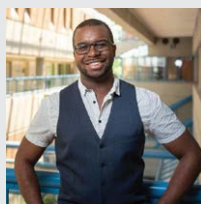
To counteract this, the Women's Health Research Institute (WHRI) created the Catalyst Grant competition in partnership with BC Women's Health Foundation. This annual, donor-funded initiative, provides crucial opportunities for early career researchers to gain insight into new ways to prevent, treat, or cure debilitating women's health issues, by awarding \$27,500 to individual research projects.

In 2020-2021 six Catalyst Grants were awarded, and we are pleased to highlight two of these innovative projects.



Kristen Campbell, PT, MSc, PhD wants to help women with ovarian cancer keep their bodies active and strong, to protect them from serious injury as they age.

Campbell's research study is testing the impact of a tailor-made, oncologist-referred exercise program on the fitness levels of ovarian cancer survivors with the goal of extending and improving their quality of life.



Postdoctoral Fellow, Travis Hodges, PhD, aims to improve the lives of adolescent girls who are susceptible to Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) by finding a more effective treatment for their mental health challenges.

Hodges' study is exploring a correlation between MDD precursors to determine if an alternate treatment will be effective in avoiding the development of a major depressive disorder.

**The Research Divide (2020), BC Women's Health Foundation*

ALONE

YOU ARE NOT

Ava experienced severe depression during her pregnancy journey. She is not alone – almost one-quarter of women in Canada* will experience depression or anxiety during pregnancy and postpartum.

“When I discovered I was pregnant, it was a complete shock. I was newly married and already overwhelmed by all the changes in my life. I couldn’t block out the negative emotions. My appetite vanished. Day by day, I was starving myself and my baby. It got so bad I was tempted to throw myself onto the Skytrain tracks.”

Ava was referred to the BC Women’s Hospital + Health Centre’s Reproductive Mental Health Program. She shares, **“and in the most courageous decision of my life, I walked through the doors.”**

I’m glad I did. They gave me an unexpected feeling: hope, and they walked with me every step of the way.”

Thanks to the care and expertise Ava received, she went on to deliver a healthy baby boy, Chris, while also developing coping skills to navigate her postpartum depression.

“The team gave me the help I needed to take control of my mental health. While I knew there would still be challenges, I was ready to love and care for Chris – and for myself. The Reproductive Mental Health Program saved my life, and my family.”

Your investment in our \$4.5 million Reproductive Mental Health Campaign gives more women like Ava access to innovative treatments for their reproductive mental health challenges.

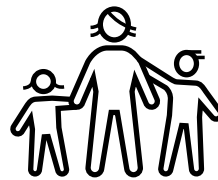
Photo credit: Jenn di Spirito

** Statistics Canada 2020*



BRINGING COMMUNITY TOGETHER IN A VIRTUAL WORLD

Your commitment enables us to support community partners with initiatives that serve the unique healthcare needs of women throughout the province, including virtual resources for women experiencing violence.



CREATING COMMUNITY IN A TIME OF CRISIS

As the COVID-19 pandemic kept everything shut down, our response was to step things up. Buoyed by unprecedented support from the Foundation's Board of Directors, community of donors, and corporate partners, we pivoted hard and fast, without missing a beat. With physical isolation closing everyone's world, the virtual doors we opened supported our pan-provincial mission. In doing so, we created new community, encouraged investment, and increased awareness for equitable access to quality healthcare. And in this time of crisis, the community responded.

Our annual fundraiser, GLOW Gala presented by TELUS, and community fundraising initiatives, the Butterfly Run Vancouver and Run for Women, brought to you by the LOVE YOU by Shoppers Drug Mart[®] program successfully transitioned online. We launched virtual Lunch + Learn events and panel discussions led by health experts, drawing in new audiences. And our Changemakers Market presented by BlueShore Financial, celebrated women-led businesses with province-wide engagement, amplifying our message of healthy women everywhere, capable of anything.

A SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT

Last year, we shared the exciting news about the Women's Health Collective Canada (WHCC) launch – a national alliance founded by three of Canada's leading women's health foundations. Now, we are thrilled to announce that the WHCC is funding an innovative cervical cancer research study in British Columbia. CervixCheck, with partners TD Ready Commitment, will develop novel engagement strategies to ensure all women have access to timely cervical cancer screening. Together, we are creating a world-class standard of care for women across the country.



Genesa Greening, President + CEO of BC Women's Health Foundation, with Mercedes Laporte, Principal and Style Director of Smash + Tess.



Cheryl Gipson, Office Manager BC Women's Health Foundation, participating in the virtual Run for Women event.



Participants in the Run for Women event.

IMPROVING WOMEN'S HEALTH BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF OUR FOUNDATION

Fueled by the power of our collective impact to positively affect the lives of women across British Columbia, we are building a community of like-minded organizations that lead with commitment, compassion, and resilience.

Our donor supported partnerships range from assisting anti-violence programs across the province with the Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC), to sourcing personal protective equipment for WISH Drop-in Centre Society (WISH), to funding new telehealth supports for Options for Sexual Health's telehealth service.



Ninu Kang

Executive Director, EVA BC

"When organizations like ours join forces, there is so much more we are able to accomplish. Through our partnership we amplify the needs of women in British Columbia and effect change. I'm looking forward to a new era of collaboration and innovation."



Mebrat Beyene

Executive Director, WISH

"We are grateful for BCWHF's recognition of the needs of women who are chronically under-served by the healthcare system, and grateful to them for providing WISH participants with much-needed PPE at the outset of the pandemic."



Michelle Fortin

Executive Director,
Options for Sexual Health

"Support from the BCWHF helped us to expand the reach of our telehealth service, giving Options staff and folks we support in remote communities, consistent and timely access to physicians."

FINANCIAL MEASURES

FINANCIAL MEASURES

2020/2021

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Total Revenue received	9,615,763
Total Expenses	3,043,535
Surplus of Revenue over Expenses	6,572,228

DISBURSEMENTS

Programs + Equipment	2,231,047
Capital Campaigns	5,775,003
Research	730,301
Total Disbursements	8,736,351

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS*

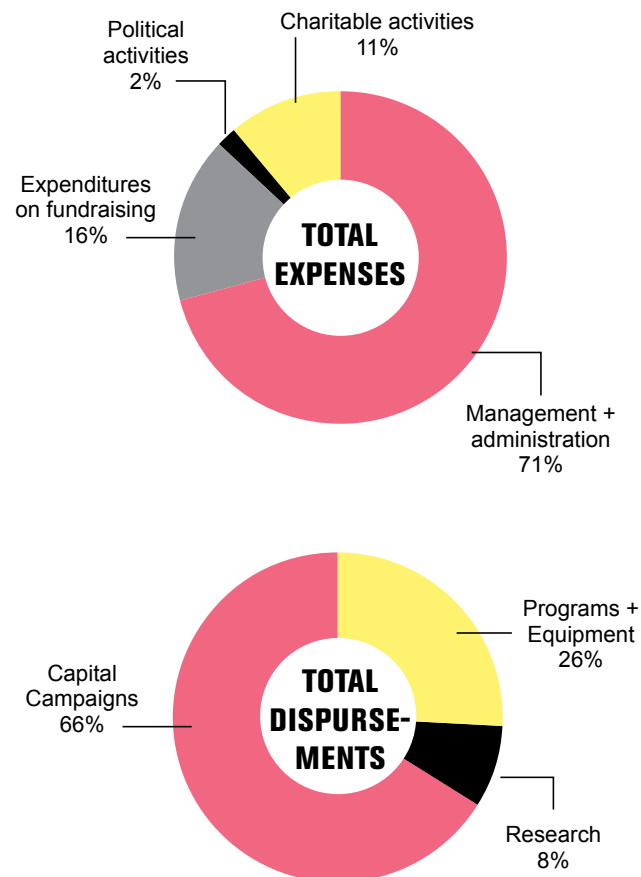
Current Assets	2,393,244
Investments	16,532,011
Total Assets	18,925,256

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	622,146
Designated funds held trust	103,606
Deferred revenue	0
Total Liabilities	725,752

FUND BALANCES

Unrestricted	8,256,142
Externally restricted	4,322,202
Capital restricted	4,997,274
Endowment restricted	623,886
Total Liabilities + Funds	18,925,256



*The investments include \$10.8m in restricted funds.



BC WOMEN'S
HEALTH
FOUNDATION



D310 — 4500 Oak St. Vancouver, BC V6H 3N1
604.875.2270 Charity Number: 890267537 RR001

**THANK YOU FOR HELPING TO ENSURE
ALL WOMEN, AT ALL LIFE STAGES,
HAVE ACCESS TO THE
HIGHEST QUALITY
HEALTHCARE, WHEN,
WHERE, AND HOW
THEY NEED IT.**

To learn more or make a donation go to bcwomensfoundation.org

We acknowledge that we carry out our work on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples – Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.