

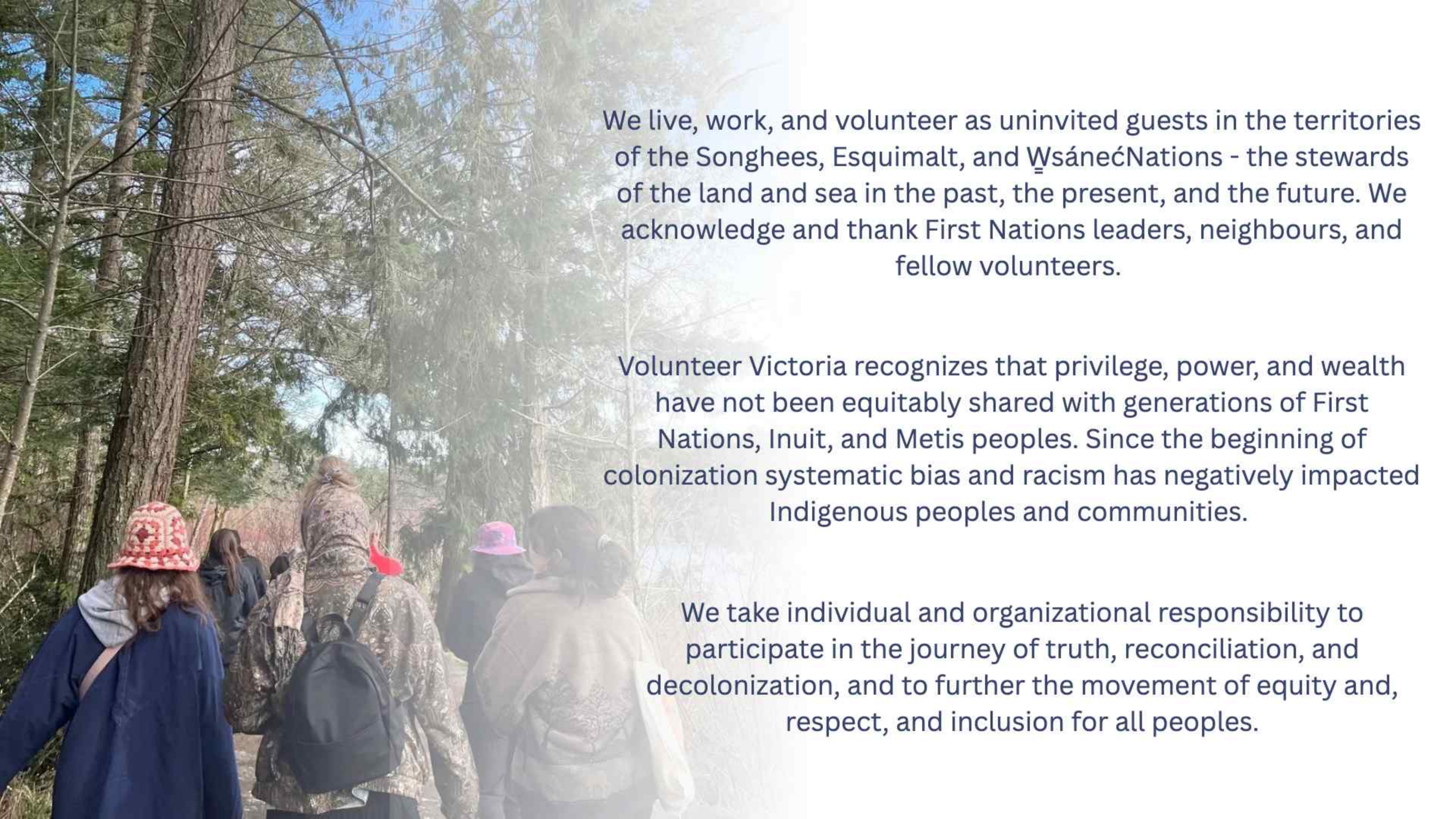


VOLUNTEER VICTORIA

Annual Report

Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2025



A group of people, seen from behind, are walking along a dirt path in a forest. The path is lined with tall, thin evergreen trees. The people are wearing various outdoor clothing, including hats and backpacks. The scene is captured in a slightly hazy or misty atmosphere. On the right side of the image, there are three blocks of text in a dark blue font, each preceded by a faint circular graphic element.

We live, work, and volunteer as uninvited guests in the territories of the Songhees, Esquimalt, and W̓sáneć Nations - the stewards of the land and sea in the past, the present, and the future. We acknowledge and thank First Nations leaders, neighbours, and fellow volunteers.

Volunteer Victoria recognizes that privilege, power, and wealth have not been equitably shared with generations of First Nations, Inuit, and Metis peoples. Since the beginning of colonization systematic bias and racism has negatively impacted Indigenous peoples and communities.

We take individual and organizational responsibility to participate in the journey of truth, reconciliation, and decolonization, and to further the movement of equity and, respect, and inclusion for all peoples.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission, Vision, Values	Pg 4
Welcome - Board Chair	Pg 6
Goal 1 Volunteerism	Pg 10
Goal 2 People	Pg 31
Goal 3 Financial Position	Pg 34
Our Valued Members	Pg 42





Our Mission: To inspire volunteers and empower volunteerism.

Our Vision: Our Vision: Volunteerism enhances everyone's life and is a pillar in communities.

Our Why: To enrich lives, make a difference, facilitate meaningful opportunities that contribute to connection, contribute to community pride, create positive energy in the community, inspire, uplift, help to build individual confidence and social skills, create a welcoming, safe community, and promote volunteerism.

VOLUNTEER VICTORIA

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2024-2027

Promote and enable volunteerism to build connected communities
Apply an holistic approach to employee attraction, engagement, and retention
Ensure that VolVic is a fiscally viable organization with diverse revenue streams



WELCOME

Stephanie Benedict, Board Chair and Lisa Mort-Putland, Executive Director

If you follow management trends, you might have noticed a growing emphasis over the last few years on rewarding lean organizations. The volunteer-led sector may not be very trendy, but we operate in a landscape where extra funding is scarce. Whether by design or circumstance, non-profit organizations tend to be lean, which can present challenges when unexpected situations arise.

A Year of Resilience and Change

At the beginning of fiscal year 2024, our Executive Director, Lisa Mort-Putland, took an extended leave from Volunteer Victoria following her husband's passing. During this time, we were reminded of the resilience, kindness, responsiveness, and dedication of the Volunteer Victoria staff and volunteer team. We also recognized that an Executive Director's role extends beyond leadership and management. Like many small non-profit leaders, Lisa generates revenue through speaking engagements, facilitation work, and service contracts.

So this fiscal year looked different than previous years from a personnel and a financial perspective.

The board hired Heather Gross as our interim Executive Director to help us through the implementation of a new strategic plan, and also to let the staff know that the board was committed to supporting them during Lisa's leave. We thank Heather for her support, care, and for sharing her skills with us.

We also welcomed a very tiny new volunteer to the world when Julia Harrison's beautiful daughter Olivia was born in July.

We moved into the fall with fewer programs and projects. This was an intentional decision made long before Lisa's leave as we needed to create new space for staff to explore intergenerational volunteering for the first time in a dedicated and intentional way.

We partnered with Saanich Volunteers and a group of amazing seniors and youth to unpack what this form of volunteerism means locally and how it might be applied to help fill emerging gaps that are appearing in much needed services across community. This, while continuing to offer our Mental Health Programs and our Youth Volunteering Programs. Vinny, Anisha, and George met with over 7,000 local youth this year – an amazing accomplishment in any year.

Volunteering will never return to how it was pre-pandemic. Volunteers and volunteerism have changed and as volunteer-led organizations and volunteer management specialists we must create new opportunities, and new ways of recruiting and engaging volunteers. The principles of good volunteer management practice have not changed, but we have to learn more about what our newest generations of volunteers need.

It is an exciting time to work as volunteer management specialists and to serve community as Greater Victoria's Volunteer Centre.

We have so many members, people, funders, partners and donors to thank, so we invite you to read our annual report and to dig into our audited financial statements. Please connect with us if you have questions, feedback or you have ways we can work together.

Thank you to our members, the board members, and the staff and volunteers at Volunteer Victoria. We asked you all to step up this year to support Volunteer Victoria in different ways, and we want you to know that you had such an impact. We appreciate you. We appreciate all that you have done this year. Thank you!



GOAL 1: PROMOTE AND ENABLE VOLUNTEERISM TO BUILD CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Volunteer Access Program

As Volunteer Access Program Coordinators, we try to create a volunteer environment that supports people on a mental health and/or substance use journey to achieve their goals and support their paths to wellness. This year, Debbie Flint helped 60+ first time clients and 112 follow-up clients connect with meaningful volunteer positions that matched their strengths and skills to ensure they are a valuable part of an organization and experience success. It is amazing to see how clients grow and move forward in their recovery when they find the right fit, feel a part of the community, and are learning new skills.

Debbie offers people support in a variety of ways including first interviews, visits to sites, working with their support team and the volunteer agency as needed. We offer ongoing support throughout their volunteer journey.

The Access Program Coordinator serves as a liaison with the various organizations as needed to best support the client's needs and goals and to ensure that supports and accommodations are in place so the volunteer feels challenged and needed, but also safe and comfortable.

Volunteering is typically not a one step and done process in the Volunteer Access Program. It takes time to find volunteering options and to provide support with a variety of preparation\readiness steps before clients are able to start and maintain a volunteer position successfully. Many clients identify with a lack of self-confidence, skills, experience, and motivation, and some face additional barriers such as hygiene, clothing, social and communication skills, fear of trying, symptoms of their illness, and increased anxiety.

Volunteering is a valuable and therapeutic resource for Volunteer Access clients to gain confidence, gain new skills, and make friends. Volunteering can also be a step for many clients towards employment.

A client started volunteering as a guitar teacher with Friends of Music Society. She is also taking music courses at UVIC and is so excited about her life. She is keeping busy and is planning a trip this summer to the east coast with her mom.

One client started volunteering at 3 different organizations and is very happy about this.

Volunteer Access and Mental Health Visiting and Activity Programs are funded by Island Health

Mental Health Visiting and Activity Program (MHVAP)

The Mental Health Visiting and Activity Program (MHVAP) continued its mission of fostering meaningful connections between volunteers and adults living with mental health and substance use challenges. This year, the program expanded its reach across a growing number of Island Health and community sites, including Greenridge Place, McCauley Lodge, EagleRock Heights, Glengarry Hospital, The Summit, Saanich Peninsula Hospital, and Shelmarie Rest Home.

Volunteers offered one-on-one companionship to clients experiencing social isolation, building relationships that provided trust, support, and joy. Many balanced their volunteering alongside academic, work, or caregiving responsibilities, demonstrating exceptional dedication and empathy.

Throughout the year, MHVAP undertook a comprehensive program audit to ensure all volunteer placements remained active, compliant, and well-supported. We worked closely with Island Health, ICMHA, and site coordinators to implement updated immunization and screening protocols, while also adapting to new volunteer training platforms to meet evolving standards.

Volunteers shared how the program enriched their personal and professional growth. One volunteer reflected, “My volunteering experience enhanced my confidence in working in the mental health field and gave me a sense of fulfillment by making a difference in an individual’s life.” Another shared, “Since I started working with people with mental disabilities, it broadened my perspectives and deepened my care for others.”

Others described how MHVAP inspired their career paths, strengthened their compassion, and helped them develop valuable skills for future roles in counselling, social work, and healthcare. As one volunteer summed up: “The staff have been kind and caring, which really makes the volunteering more enjoyable. I would strongly recommend this to anyone interested in this work.”

Looking ahead, MHVAP remains committed to expanding access to social connection for vulnerable adults, deepening community partnerships, and nurturing meaningful volunteer placements. We extend heartfelt thanks to every volunteer and partner who made this year’s successes possible.



VOLUNTEER VICTORIA

Adult Volunteering and Advising Program

**725 Advising
Appointments Booked
(**Setmore)**

**6,532 Adults Looked
for Volunteer Positions
in Volunteer Attract**

**861 Potential
Volunteers want to
volunteer for 1 year+**

**120+ Presentations in
Community**

“I heard raving reviews about your presentation on Friday! I wanted to thank you for your time and let you know that you truly inspired the ladies in our class.”

Feedback from a Community Presentation

“Thank you so very much for this!! Really appreciate you and Volunteer Victoria for providing this service.

Merci!”

Feedback from an Advising Appointment



**We acknowledged 200+ Youth
with Volunteer Recognition
Certificates**

Certificate of Recognition

Presented to

Volunteer Victoria Youth Advising & Volunteer Program

Over the past year, individual youth in our program demonstrated outstanding commitment to community service, contributing 400+ hours across a diverse range of local events and initiatives. Their involvement spanned environmental cleanups, cultural celebrations, food security efforts, and intergenerational activities. By working together and partnering with local organizations, they gained hands-on experience, built strong connections, and developed valuable life skills.

Youth reflected in their learning, collaboration, and a deep sense of civic responsibility. The positive impact made by our youth reflects their dedication and the strength of our program.

The Adult Advising Program and Youth Advising and Volunteering Programs are funded by the Province of BC - Gaming, Victoria Foundation, PECSF, the City of Colwood, and the District of Saanich





**WE DELIVERED
105 IN-PERSON
PRESENTATIONS
WITH
6,955+ YOUTH**



volunteervictoria.bc.ca
www.volunteervictoria.bc.ca
250.386.2269



City of Victoria Youth Council

This year, the City of Victoria Youth Council (CVYC) stayed active and involved in many community projects and meetings. The council grew to 24 members, with more youth on a waitlist. Members met regularly to plan projects, attend training, and share ideas to help improve the city.

Youth gave feedback to the City on many important topics, such as the Official Community Plan, public safety, housing, budget priorities, and public art. They also joined consultations on transit, dementia care, and creating complete communities. The council took part in several events, including beach cleanups, mural work, arts and crafts at senior homes, and community fundraisers. They raised over \$600 for the Coldest Night of the Year walk and over \$500 for the Mental Health Society of Greater Victoria through an Open Mic Night.

Members also received training in naloxone use, financial literacy, diversity and inclusion, and public speaking. They helped update the CVYC website, improved their social media presence, and created a new way to track goals as a group.

Thanks to a Youth in Action grant from the United Way Southern Vancouver Island, youth began work on a mural at the Quadra Village Community Garden, which will be finished in spring 2025.

This year showed how passionate and committed CVYC members are to making Victoria a better place. Their voices and ideas made a real difference, and the council looks forward to more exciting work in the year ahead.



CVYC Members Throughout the Year

- | | | | | |
|------------|-------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| • Beatrice | • Andrea | • JT | • Ryan | • Trini |
| • Sarah | • Manon | • Isabelle | • Theo | • Beliz |
| • George | • Hayeong | • Bella | • Ricardo | • Daniel |
| • Lily | • Roseline | • Rachel | • Roka | • Walker |
| • Luc | • Tish | • Guntaj | • Harry | • Avery |
| • Angel | • Charlotte | • Roy | • Alaa | |
| • Crystal | • Yujin | • Meda | • Caitlin | |
| • Lucy | • Saanvi | • Linz | • Eden | |

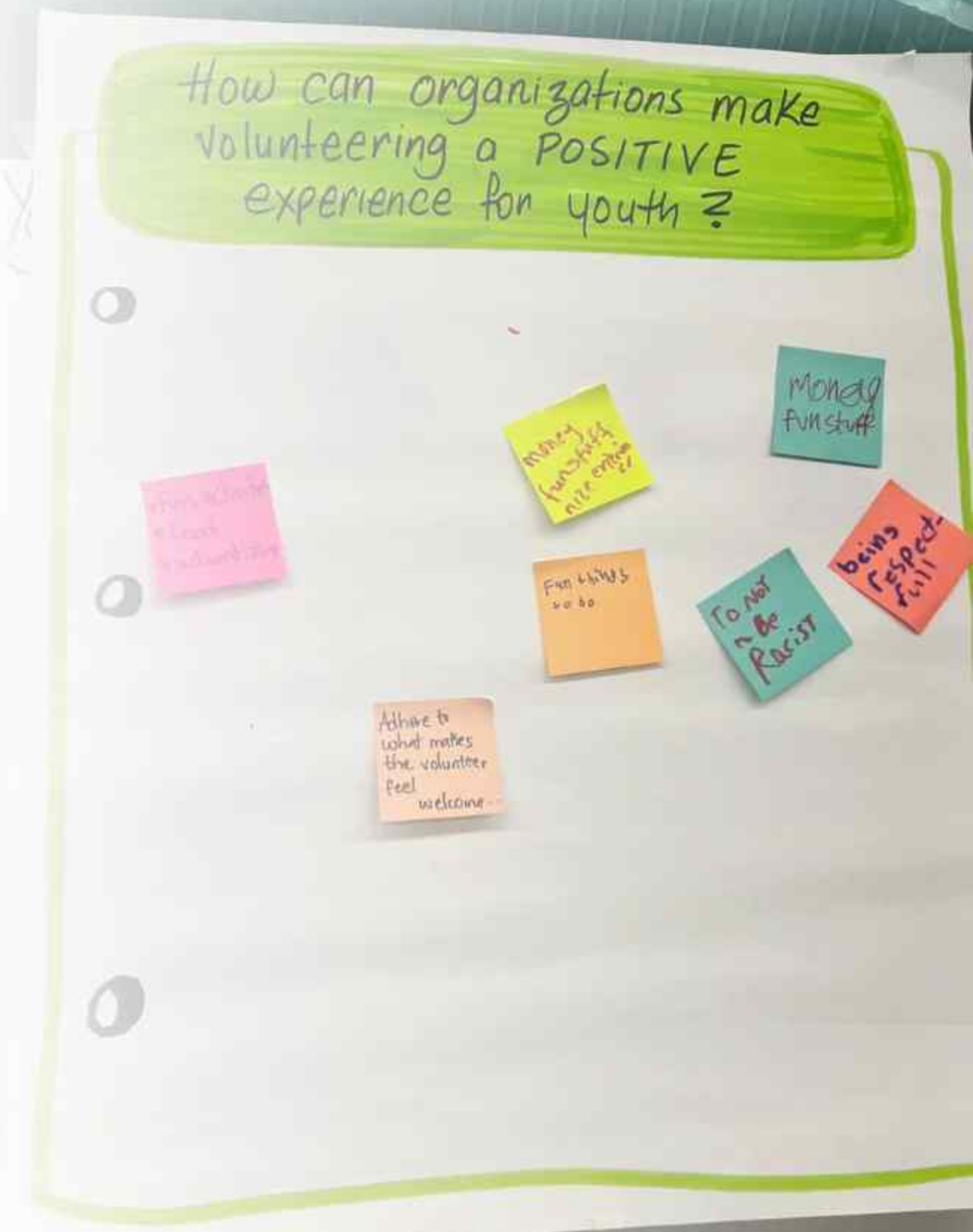


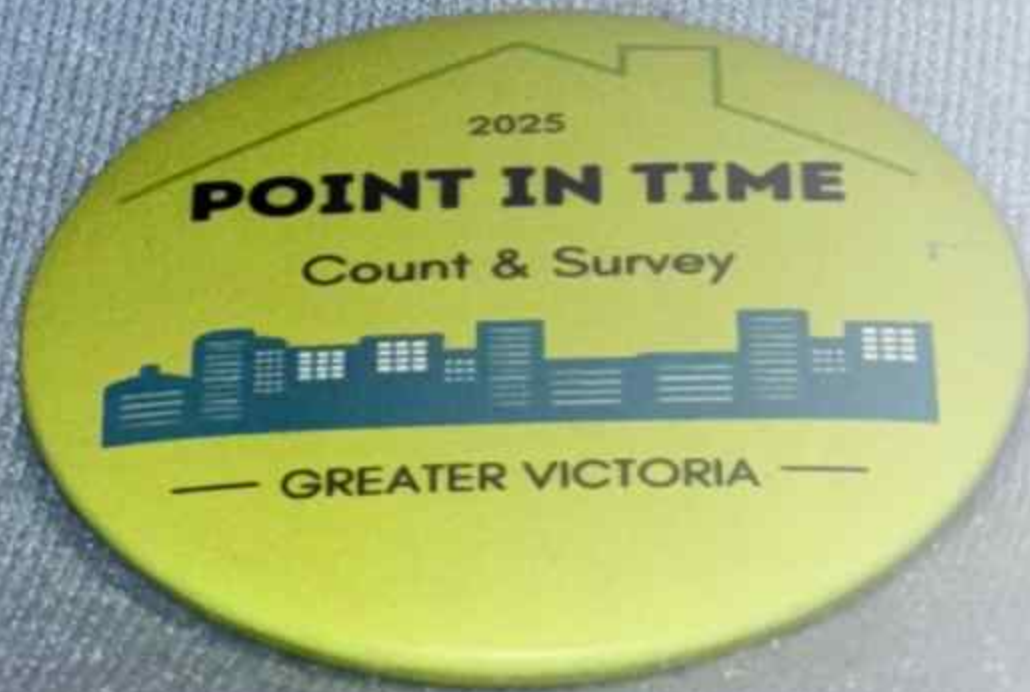
Looking Forward Youth Project

The Looking Forward Youth Project, led by Volunteer Victoria and facilitated by Susana Guadardo from Brightlight Ideas, brought together youth and youth service providers to strengthen engagement, share experiences, and support community-based youth work.

The project included three youth focus groups where participants shared their ideas on how to make volunteering more meaningful and accessible. Activities included storytelling, drawings, group games, and role play. Each youth received an honorarium for participating.

We also delivered nine free workshops for 88 youth workers from 22 organizations. Topics included trauma-informed care, youth leadership, emotional support, and creating inclusive spaces. Feedback showed these sessions filled a gap in accessible, hands-on training and helped build stronger connections between professionals.





Point in Time Count & Survey

Volunteer Victoria supported the Community Social Planning Council by leading volunteer recruitment and hosting training sessions for the 2024 Point in Time (PiT) Count and Survey of people who are unhoused. On March 26, 130 volunteers participated, with additional surveys held at local service agencies in the following days.

Volunteers included individuals with lived experience, those working or volunteering in support organizations, and first-time participants. While some longtime volunteers were unable to return due to age or health, the event welcomed many young people, new Canadians, and a diverse mix of community members, adding fresh perspectives and energy to this important effort.

Intergenerational Volunteering Project

Volunteer Victoria, in partnership with Saanich Volunteer Services Society and facilitated by Heather Gross from Treetop Initiatives, led an Intergenerational Project funded by the New Horizons for Seniors Grant. The goal was to bring together youth (ages 15–29) and seniors (60+) to build relationships, share knowledge, and volunteer alongside one another.

Over the year, the project included group discussions, guest speakers, and hands-on activities. Youth and seniors explored the changing nature of volunteerism, identified barriers like transportation and scheduling, and shared motivations such as addressing social isolation and building stronger communities. Several joint activities helped deepen connections, including arts and crafts, baking, and a group tour of the Hartland Landfill. These experiences encouraged learning and teamwork across generations. The landfill tour, supported by a volunteer-driven bus service, was a highlight, offering insights into sustainability and environmental action.

Guest speakers from local organizations like Big Brothers, Big Sisters and the Luther Court Society, shared ideas on intergenerational housing and mentoring, which sparked thoughtful conversations and future ideas for collaboration. This project showed the value of bringing generations together to build a stronger, more connected community.







GOAL 2: APPLY AN HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EMPLOYEE ATTRACTION, ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION



STAFF & OFFICE VOLUNTEERS IN 2024/25

- Vinny Awasthi — Corporate Volunteering Coordinator
- Sharon Bidner — Accounting Assistant
- Maureen Butler — Accountant (Contract)
- Eli Colussi — Podcasts and Social Media
- George Colussi — Manager of Community Engagement
- Debbie Flint — Volunteer Access Program
- Julia Harrison — Recreation Visiting Programs
- Anisha Kapoor — Youth Council Coordinator
- Betty Leitch — Volunteer Services Coordinator
- Kelly Minter — Office Assistant
- Lisa Mort-Putland — Executive Director
- France Helen Pilon — Office Assistant



VOLUNTEER VICTORIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Chair : Stephanie Benedict
- Director: Debbie Chabot
- Director: Ron Dick
- Director: Chance Dixon
- Past Chair: Tina Lowery
- Director: Claudia Rezende
- Director: Dibya Shrestha
- Director: Nancy Taylor
- Secretary: Katherine van der Gracht
- Board Treasurer: Usman Afzal
- Don Monsour, ex-officio Governance specialist.



**GOAL 3: ENSURE THAT VOLVIC IS A
FINANCIALLY VIABLE ORGANIZATION WITH
DIVERSE REVENUE STREAMS**



TREASURER'S REPORT

Usman Afzal

REVENUE HIGHLIGHTS

- Grant revenues were significantly less than in recent years with the end of the multi-year Youth 2020 Project funded by the Government of Canada. As grant revenues and program costs are correlated, we also realized a significant drop in program expenses in fiscal year ending March 31, 2025.
- We continued our partnership with Coast Capital Savings to support their corporate volunteering program. This partnership ended in December 2024.
- The amount of our Gaming Grant was unchanged from previous years, and while we are grateful for this funding, we also remain cautious as the future of the Gaming Grant is never guaranteed.
- We lost and gained new sub tenants in our office this year as we continue to offset rising rental and operating office costs.
- Membership revenues remain on par with previous years.
- Learning and Special Project revenues were down this fiscal year as the program took a short hiatus over the summer and income generating multi-week online courses were not offered in the summer or fall of 2024.
- Donations remained on par with the previous year.
- Interest on our reserve funds, which are held in GIC's saw a positive increase in returns.

EXPENSE HIGHLIGHTS

- Our building and occupancy costs grew slightly this year.
- Our wage and benefit costs were down slightly compared with the previous year even with rising costs for wages and benefits. We realized cost savings in part due to the change in working hours for our Executive Director.
- Professional and consulting fees rose year over year as we contracted with a temporary, interim Executive Director.
- Our Directors and Officers Liability insurance was in place and remains in force today.

NET POSITION

- Our net position rose as we posted a small net gain at the end of the fiscal year.
- We feel comfortable with our bank account balances and our bank GIC holdings to protect us from uncertainty.
- We wish to thank to our funders and partners the Government of Canada, the Province of BC (Gaming), The City of Victoria, The City of Colwood, the Victoria Foundation, Provincial Employees Community Services Fund, the District of Saanich, Island Health, and our individual donors for their support this year.
- Please visit **volunteervictoria.bc.ca** to review our audited financial statements or call 250.386.2269 or email volvic@volunteervictoria.bc.ca to request a copy of the statements.



DONORS AND FUNDERS

Alison Holmes
Anonymous Donors
Anthony and Valerie Mort
Black Press
Cara Gibson
Elements Casino Victoria
City of Colwood
City of Victoria
Corinne Mah

District of Saanich
Eugene Valeriote
Government of Canada
GR CD GAMING CORP
Island Parent Publishing
Jim Tighe
Laura Casey
Lilaine and Tom Galway
Lisa Mort-Putland

Lornna Olson
Megan Conway
Norm Smookler
Province of British Columbia Gaming
Provincial Employees Community Services Fund
Terri Mort
Times Colonist Newspaper
UVic Community Engaged Learning
Victoria Foundation
Victoria Newcomers Club

A collage of various volunteer activities in Victoria, with the text "VOLUNTEER VICTORIA" overlaid in large blue letters. The background images show diverse groups of people engaged in community service, such as planting trees, working in a kitchen, and participating in outdoor events. The text is split into two lines: "VOLUNTEER" on top and "VICTORIA" on the bottom.

Learning and Training Program

48 LEARNING EVENTS

581 PEOPLE PARTICIPATED

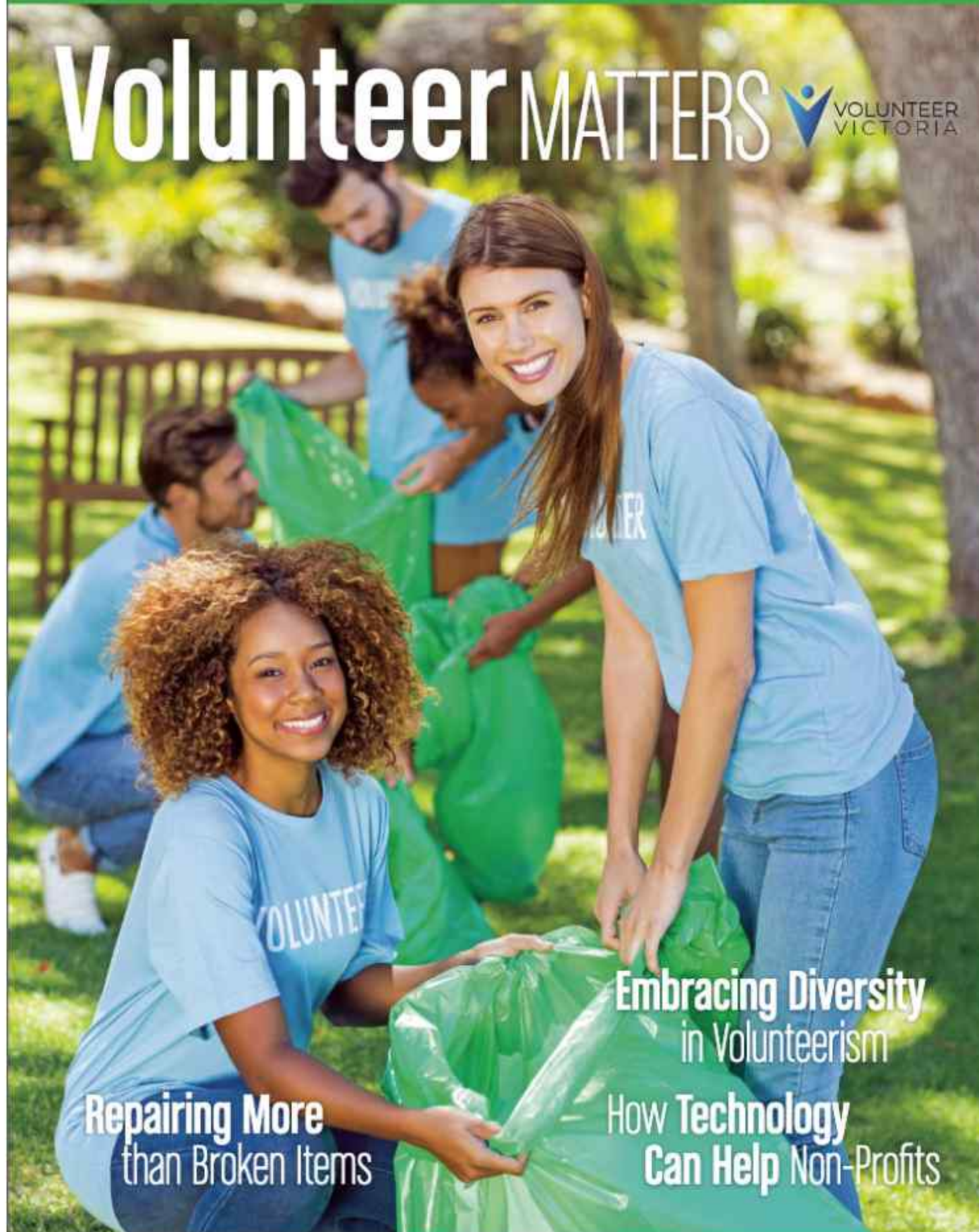
7 GOVERNANCE 101 WORKSHOPS

KEYNOTE AT 3 NATIONAL CONFERENCES

SPEAKERS AT 4 REGIONAL CONFERENCES



Volunteer MATTERS



Embracing Diversity
in Volunteerism

Repairing More
than Broken Items

How Technology
Can Help Non-Profits

Volunteer Matters Magazine

Many thanks to Jim Schneider and the team at Island Parent Publishing – a fully Indigenous Owned company – for their mazing support and guidance. We could not have done this without you.

Published each year, with a distribution of over 3,000 copies in community centres and public spaces.



OUR VALUED MEMBERS: THANK YOU!!

The names that follow may simply seem like a long random list of agencies, businesses, & people in our fine community. But it is much more than that. They are all valued members of the Volunteer Victoria family.

For over 50 years Volunteer Victorian has been working collaboratively and in partnership with our valued members to support them in their work by providing access to a diverse range of member benefits.

On behalf of everyone at Volunteer Victoria, we extend our heartfelt thanks to each of our 250+ member organizations. Whether you're a nonprofit, business, or individual, your dedication to building a stronger, more compassionate community is inspiring. Each of you brings a unique mission, vision, and mandate, but what unites you is your tireless commitment to making a difference. Through the efforts of both volunteers and staff, you create lasting impact, address vital needs, and bring hope, support, and opportunity to countless lives.

We are deeply grateful to walk alongside you and to support your work with the tools, resources, and services that help you thrive. Thank you for trusting us to be part of your journey, and for the incredible work you do every day to make our community a better place for all.



Like a good story?
You've come to the right place.



OUR VALUED MEMBERS: THANK YOU!!

- 1 Up Victoria Single Parent Resource Centre
- 9 - 10 Club Serving Soup To The Hungry Society
- Abbeyfield House St. Peter's Society
- Aberdeen Hospital Site, VIHA 11 Site Membership
- Action Committee of People with Disabilities
- Alliance Francaise De Victoria
- Alliance To End Homelessness In The Capital Region
- Allison, Kristine
- Alzheimer Society of BC
- Amica Jubilee House
- Amy's Bunny Barn Society
- Art Gallery of Greater Victoria
- artsREACH
- AVI Health & Community Services Society
- Ballet Victoria
- BC Aviation Museum
- BC Cancer - Victoria
- BC Children's Hospital Foundation - Victoria
- BC SPCA (Formerly Soley Named WildARC)
- Beacon Community Services
- BeaYOUtiful Foundation
- Benedict, Stephanie
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Victoria
- Bike Victoria Society
- Bolivian Children Foundation
- Borderline Personality Disorder Society Of BC
- Boys and Girls Club Services of Greater Victoria
- Bridges For Women Society
- Broadmead Care Society
- Burnside Gorge Community Association
- Camosun College-Co-op Education and Career Services
- Canadian Blood Services
- Canadian International Tea Appreciation Society
- Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Region
- Capital Region Food & Agricultural Initiatives Roundtable So
- Centre for Earth & Spirit Society
- C-FAX Santas Anonymous Society
- CFB Esquimalt Naval & Military Museum
- Chabot, Debbie Noella
- Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island
- City of Victoria
- Civic Orchestra of Victoria
- Coast Capital Savings

OUR VALUED MEMBERS: THANK YOU!!

- Community Living Victoria
- Community Options for Children and Families
- Community Social Planning Council
- Connections Place Society
- Cook Street Village Activity Centre
- Craigdarroch Castle
- CRD Parks
- Creating Community Wellness Society
- District 69 Society of Organized Services
- Diverters Foundation
- Dixon, Ms. Chance
- Early Music Society Of The Islands
- Edwards, Alison
- ElderDog Canada -- Victoria Chapter
- Emergency Management Victoria (AKA VictoriaReady)
- Esquimalt Farmers Market
- Esquimalt Neighbourhood House
- Esquimalt Volunteer Services
- Fairfield Gonzales Community Association
- Family Caregivers Society of BC
- Foster Parent Support Services Society
- Friends of Bowker Creek Society
- Friends Of Government House
- Friends of Music Society
- Funding For Life Society
- Garry Oak Meadows Preservation Society
- George Pringle Memorial Camp Society
- Global Village Store -- Victoria Global Village Society
- Gorge View Society
- Greater Victoria Alliance For Literacy
- Greater Victoria Citizens' Counselling Centre
- Greater Victoria Down Syndrome Society
- Greater Victoria Festival Society
- Greater Victoria Folk Festival Society
- Greater Victoria Green Team
- Greater Victoria Housing Society
- Greater Victoria Literacy Connection Society
- Greater Victoria Performing Arts Festival
- Greater Victoria Sports Hall of Fame
- Greater Victoria Women's Shelter Society



Like a good story?
You've come to the right place.





OUR VALUED MEMBERS: THANK YOU!!

- Habitat for Humanity - Victoria
- Help Fill A Dream Foundation
- Hol, Darryl Mr
- Horticulture Centre of the Pacific
- Human Nature Counselling
- Immunity Canada
- Independent Living Housing Society of Greater Victoria
- Indigenous Perspectives Society
- InnovativeCommunities.Org Foundation
- Inter-Cultural Association
- Intrepid Theatre Company Society
- Island Community Mental Health Association
- Island Deaf & Hard of Hearing Centre
- Island Kids Cancer Association
- Island Prostate Centre
- Island Sexual Health Society
- James Bay Community Project
- James Bay Market Society
- James Bay New Horizons Society
- John Howard Society of Victoria
- Junior Achievement of British Columbia
- Kidney Foundation -- BC & Yukon Branch
- KidSport Greater Victoria
- La Societe Francophone De Victoria
- Land Trust Alliance of BC
- Langham Court Theatre
- LDABC The Learning Curve
- Learning Through Loss
- Lifetime Networks Victoria
- Lowery, Tina
- Luther Court Society
- M'akola ILBC Housing Society
- Maritime Museum of BC
- Memory Connections
- Mental Health Society Of Greater Victoria
- Mercy Ships Canada
- Monterey Recreation Centre
- Mount Douglas Seniors Housing Society
- Mount St. Mary Hospital
- Murray, Melodie (Mel)
- Mustard Seed Street Church
- Nature Kids BC
- NEED2



Like a good story?
You've come to the right place.





OUR VALUED MEMBERS: THANK YOU!!

- North Park Neighbourhood Association
- Oak and Orca Bioregional School
- Oak Bay Volunteer Services
- Oaklands Community Association & Centre
- Oasis Society
- Open Space Arts Society
- Our Place
- Pacific Animal Therapy Society
- Pacific Centre Family Services Association
- Pacific Institute For Sport Excellence Society
- Pacific Opera Victoria
- Pacific Training Centre For The Blind
- Pacifica Housing Advisory Association
- Pandora Arts Collective Society
- Peninsula Streams Society
- Phoenix Human Services Assoc. (Thrive Social Services Soc.)
- Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society
- Quadra Village Community Centre
- R.A.V.E.N. Respecting Aboriginal Values & Enviro. Needs
- Rocky Point Bird Observatory
- Royal BC Museum
- Royal Jubilee Hospital Auxiliary
- Royal Victoria Marathon
- Saanich Emergency Program
- Saanich Neighbourhood Place
- Saanich Peninsula Stroke Recovery Association
- Saanich Police Department, Block Watch
- Saanich Volunteer Services
- Salvation Army - Public Relations Office
- Scouts Francophones De Victoria
- SeaChange Marine Conservation Society
- Selkirk Seniors Village
- Sendial
- Seniors Serving Seniors Association Of BC
- Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea (New Marine Centre Society)
- Shekinah Homes Society
- Shrestha, Dibya
- Silver Threads Service
- Soap For Hope Canada
- Society Of St. Vincent De Paul
- Sooke Family Resource Society
- Sooke Region Community Health Network

OUR VALUED MEMBERS: THANK YOU!!

- Sooke Region Historical Society
- Sooke Shelter Society
- Sooke Transition House Society
- Soroptimist International Of Victoria Wstshore
- Southern Gulf Islands Neighbourhood House
- Southern Vancouver Island Nature Trails Society
- Special Olympics BC - Victoria
- Sunrise Senior Living Of Victoria
- Support Soweto Junior School
- Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary
- Tau Wellness Cooperative
- Taylor, Nancy
- The Circle Salt Spring Education Society
- The Cridge Centre for the Family
- The First Open Heart Society of BC
- The Literacy Circle
- Tighe, Jim
- TLC The Land Conservancy
- Together Against Poverty Society
- Town of View Royal
- Tsukino-Con Society
- Umbrella Society for Addictions & Mental Health
- University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society
- University of Victoria Students Society
- UVic Community Engaged Learning Department
- UVic English Language Centre
- Vancouver Island Dirt Riders Association
- Vancouver Island Strata Owners Association
- Victoria Airport Authority (Red Coat Program)
- Victoria Artistic Swimming
- Victoria BC Ska and Reggae Society
- Victoria Brain Injury Society
- Victoria Conservatory of Music
- Victoria Cool Aid Society
- Victoria Disability Resource Centre
- Victoria Dragon Boat Festival Society
- Victoria Festival of Authors Society

OUR VALUED MEMBERS: THANK YOU!!

- Victoria Film Festival
- Victoria General Hospital Auxiliary
- Victoria Hospice
- Victoria Latin Dance Association
- Victoria Police Department
- Victoria Pride Society
- Victoria Rainbow Kitchen Society

- Victoria Therapeutic Riding Association
- Victoria West Community Association
- Victoria Women In Need Community Cooperative
- Victoria Women's Transition House Society
- Victoria Symphony
- Victoria Youth Empowerment Society

- Wear 2 Start Society
- West Coast Reach Association
- West Shore Arts Council
- WITS Programs Foundation
- Worklink Employment Society
- YMCA-YWCA Of Vancouver Island





MEET OUR AGM KEYNOTE SPEAKER

AN
INTRODUCTION
TO AI

SARAH
DOWNEY



SARAH DOWNEY
• CONSULTING •



AI and the Nonprofit Sector: Journey to Oz

Volunteer Victoria AGM • Gorge Pavilion • June 26th, 2025

Sarah Downey

About Sarah Downey



SARAH DOWNEY
• CONSULTING •

Strategic Leadership | Change Management | AI for Nonprofits

20+ Years in Non-Profit Sector

15 Years as an Executive Director

Executive MBA in Strategic Leadership & AI

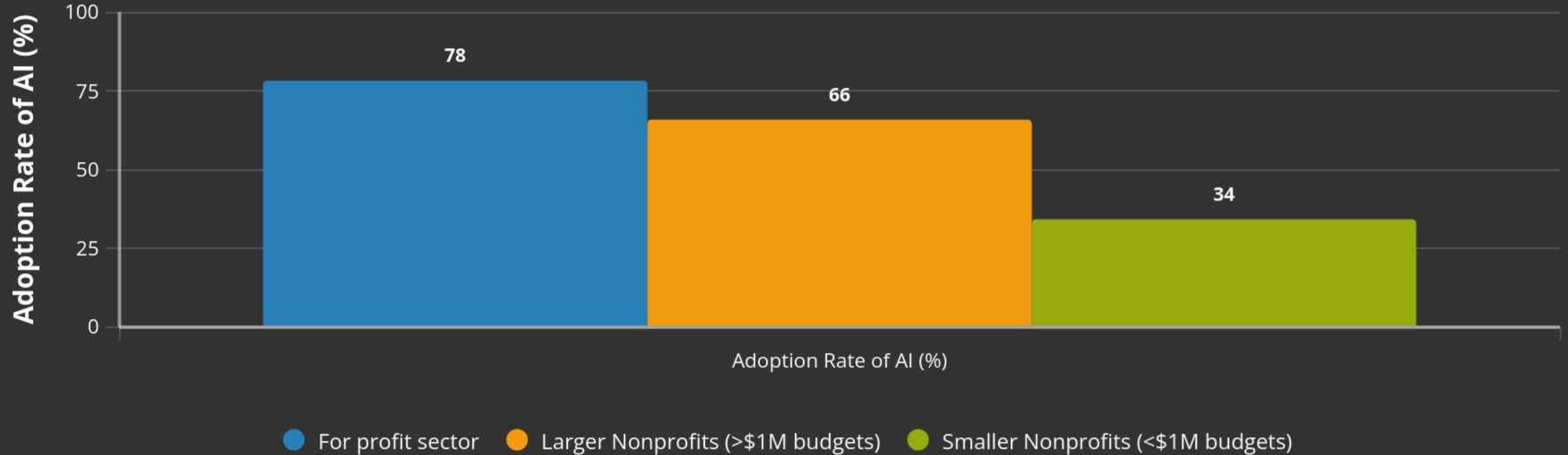
Certified Professional Change Manager (CPCM)

Social Impact Consultant

Blends Big-Picture Strategy with Hands-on Support

AI will touch every part of our work — but the biggest shift isn't technical. It's cultural.

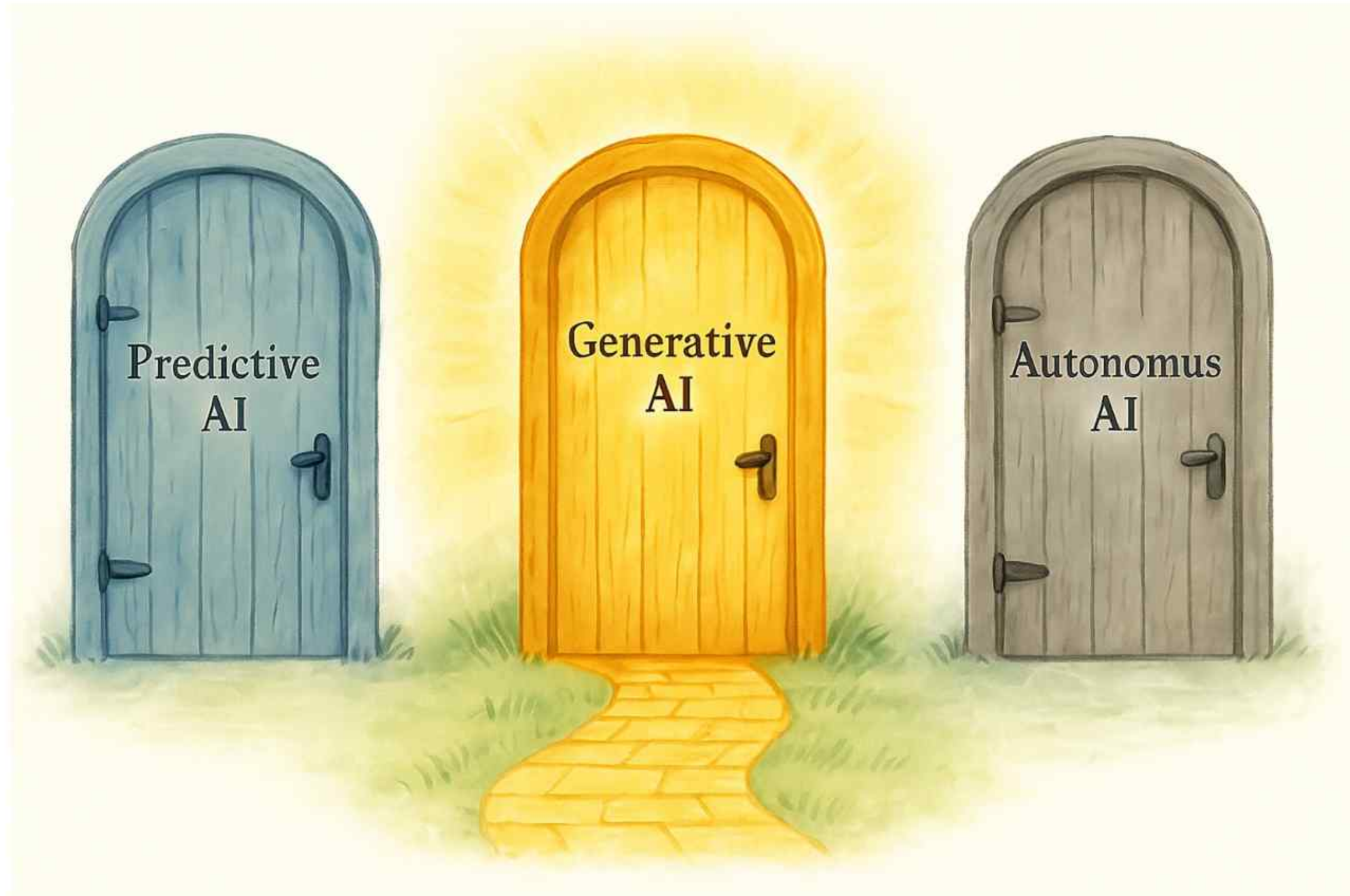
Nonprofits Left Behind: The AI Adoption Gap



Larger nonprofits are adopting AI at nearly twice the rate of smaller organizations.

*The State of AI in Nonprofits 2025 - TAPP Network/Techsoup

What kind of AI are we talking about



The Journey Begins

A painting of a winding yellow brick road through a lush green landscape. The road starts in the foreground, curves to the left, and then continues into the distance. The landscape is filled with rolling green hills, grass, and small yellow flowers. The sky is a mix of blue and green, with some white clouds. The overall style is painterly and evocative.

"Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore."

Who we will meet along the way



Scarecrow

Intelligence and Data



Nonprofits already collect valuable data

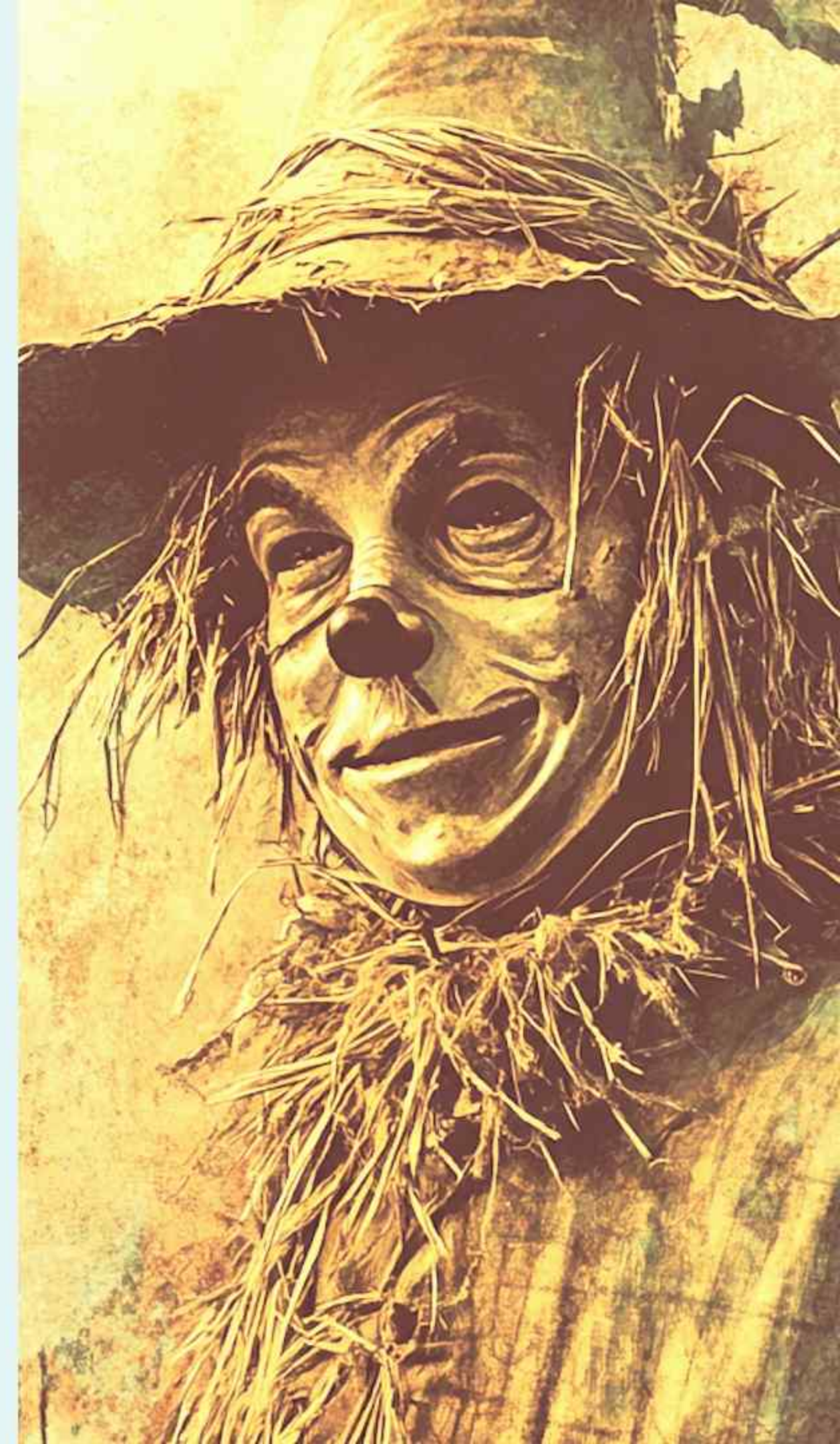
- Donor reports
- Volunteers
- Program impact reports



AI helps reveal patterns in that data

- AI can help turn raw data into insights for better decisions

More data clarity = stronger impact



Keeping AI Human & Heart Centered



**Nonprofits are values-driven,
so our AI must be guided by
compassion and fairness.**

Technology should amplify our care
for communities, not undermine it.



**AI can support us in making
connections more personal
and meaningful.**

- Personalized donor outreach
- Stronger volunteer engagement
- Mission aligned communication

"Human-centered AI is about augmenting and amplifying human capabilities, not replacing them.' This is exactly how we should think about AI in non-profits—as a tool to support meaningful human connection, not replace it." ~ Fei-Fei Li



Cowardly Lion

Leading through Uncertainty



Many teams are waiting for clarity before they act

- Fear of "getting it wrong" is stalling progress
- AI is evolving faster than they can catch up
- Waiting may feel safe but it risks falling behind



Boards want policy before AI - but you can't regulate what you don't understand

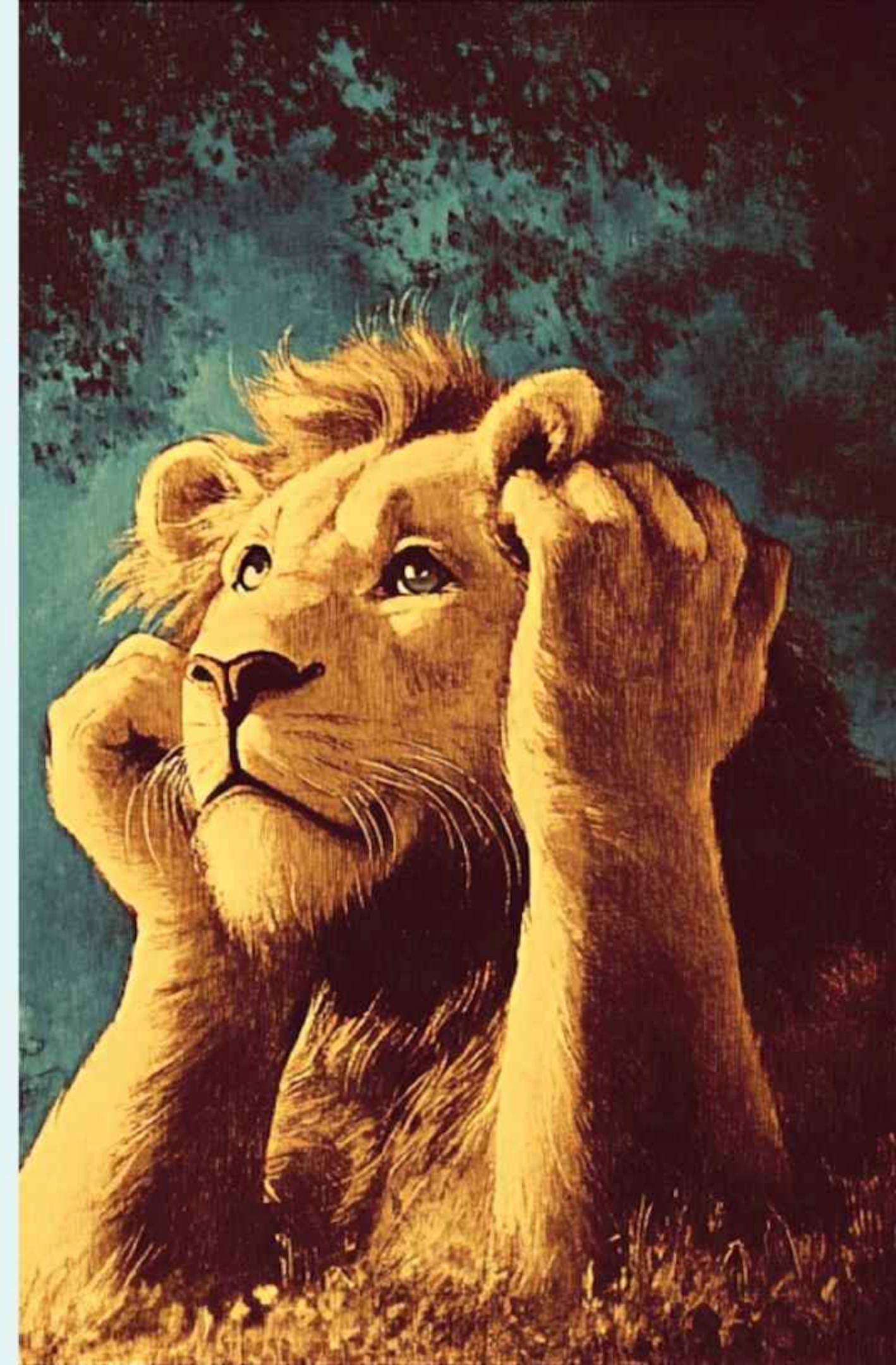
- Pressure to "control the unknown" is common
- You need firsthand experience to shape good policy
- Low-risk experiments are a helpful starting place



Leaders are modeling "try and learn"

- Courageous orgs are starting with pilot projects
- Learning in public builds team trust
- Progress starts with permission to explore

"You can't lead people through a storm by waiting for it to pass."



Wicked Witch

AI Reflects Our Biggest Challenges



Bias

- AI reflects the inequalities of our systems
- AI can replicate racial, gender, and economic bias
- Equity must be actively designed in - not assumed



Misinformation

- AI can "hallucinate" facts and sources
- AI sounds confident even when wrong
- Human fact-checking and editing are required



Privacy & Power

- AI can reinforce surveillance & data exploitation
- Marginalized communities face greater risk of harm
- Nonprofits must lead with clear privacy practices when using AI

This is our moment to step up - and make sure AI aligns with our values and doesn't just magnify what's already broken



Flying Monkeys

What Can Go Wrong With AI



Scams & Deepfakes Are On the Rise

- Fake invoices, impersonation attempts
- Smarter phishing and scam messages



Automation can backfire

- Mass email glitches and misdirected messages
- Orgs are starting to assign staff roles in "AI Oversight"



Clean Data = Fewer Monkeys

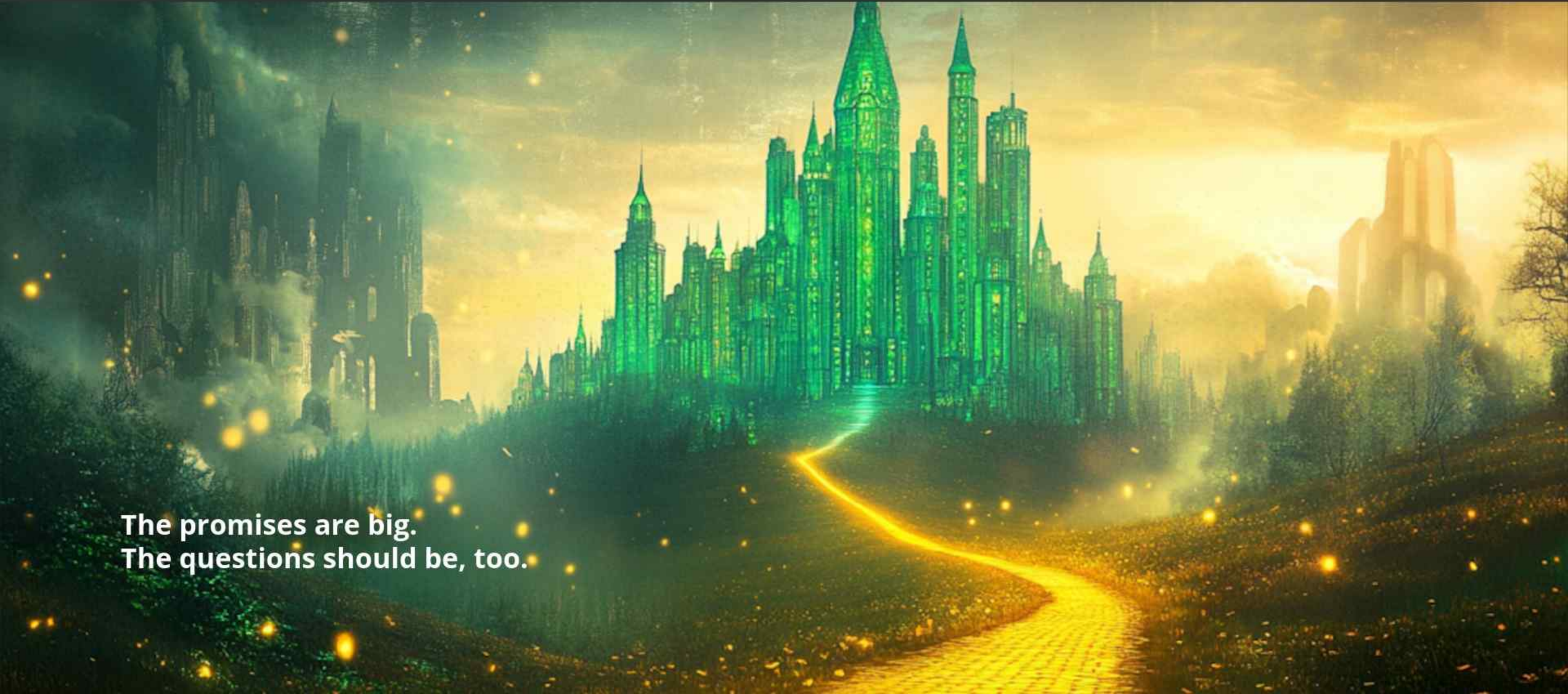
Inconsistent data is causing errors in outreach and reporting

AI Readiness means good "data hygiene" before using AI automation tools

We're now seeing where things can go wrong and how teams are stepping up to prevent it.

The Emerald City

AI Hype vs Reality



The promises are big.
The questions should be, too.

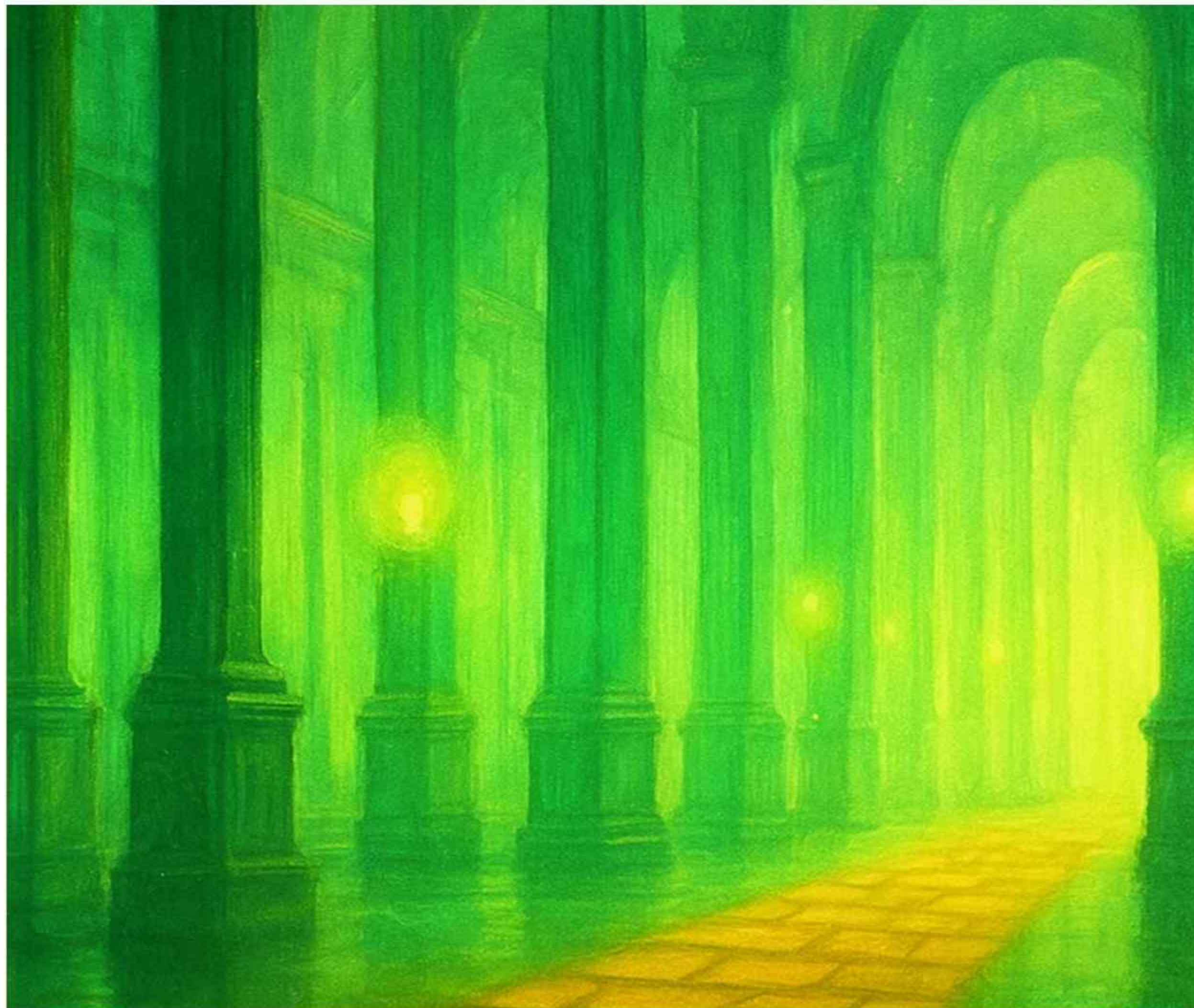
The Wizard of Oz

Pulling back the Curtain

Generative AI doesn't think —
it predicts patterns

It reflects what it's been fed —
human language, bias, noise

The "Wizard" is impressive...
but not wise





The Wizard Unveiled

There is no all-knowing AI.
Just math, mirrors... and our
own data.

We are the Wizard



Glinda the Good Witch

What Can Go Right With AI



Opportunities for Nonprofits

- Reduce admin overload and burnout
- Strengthen outreach and engagement
- Automate routine reporting and data tasks
- Save time so people can focus on *people*



Guided by Values

- Start with purpose, not tools
- Center equity and accessibility
- Build ethical guardrails
- Use AI to support - not replace human connection

When We Lead With Values, Technology Can Serve Us

Don't Let AI Become Another Thing That Divides Us



- Stay curious, even when it's uncomfortable
- Be generous — people are learning at different speeds
- Make space for emotions, not just opinions
- Watch out for fear-based headlines
- Get informed through trusted, balanced sources

Contact

Sarah Downey Consulting



250 888 1139



info@sarahdowney.ca



www.linkedin.com/in/sarahdowney1

1:1 Coaching or small group training

Custom workshops for board & staff

Policy-building aligned with your mission



Stay curious. Stay connected. Stay human

VOLUNTEER VICTORIA

We are here to help....call, email, send a card!

Tel: 250.386.2269

E-mail: volvic@volunteervictoria.bc.ca

www.volunteervictoria.bc.ca

602-620 View St. Victoria BC V8W1J6

- We cannot say it enough. Thank you
- Volunteer Victoria's mission is to inspire volunteers and empower volunteerism
- We raise new generations of volunteers; provide training and expertise to volunteers and volunteer-led organizations; and create opportunities that make a difference
- We invest in volunteerism, so that volunteers can invest in people, places, and projects that matter



VOLUNTEER
VICTORIA

groups with
disabilities

libraries

dictions

oaching

schools

gardens
mental health

children

tourism

environment

seniors

culture

newcomers

healing

housing

animals



★ **CONGRATULATIONS LISA!!!**

on your ★

★ **KING CHARLES III**
CORONATION MEDAL