



Basic Income Canada Network Réseau canadien pour le revenu garanti

Volunteering for a Basic Income Guarantee

General Guidance

Thank you for your desire to contribute to the movement for a Basic Income Guarantee (BIG) for all in Canada! It will require the volunteer engagement of a large number of people across Canada for this goal to be realized. Everyone has something to offer and we appreciate your desire to participate. The collective aim is to build enough public awareness and support for BIG to help our political representatives—especially at federal, provincial and territorial levels—do the right thing: ensure that everyone in Canada has access to a BIG.

*Do not let what you cannot do
interfere with what you can do.*
John Wooden (1910-2010)

This document provides general guidance for getting involved in the Canadian basic income movement. Of course it is up to you to decide what you would like to do, how much time you can devote to the task, who you would like to work with etc. But rest assured: within you (as you may well know) is the capacity for leadership for a BIG, be it initiating contact with your elected representatives and expressing your support for basic income, convening a group of friends or colleagues to help found a new local basic income support group, or any number of ways in which, once again, you can make a difference.

Your volunteering can be with others directly involved in Basic Income Canada Network (BICN) and/or with others involved in a local or regional support group that are part of an informal network across the country. Your volunteering can range from doing just one thing one day or multiple things on an ongoing basis over years: again, it is up to you what you will do, when, how, with who etc. **The important thing is to begin.**

*There is only the trying; the rest is not our
business. T. S. Eliot (1888-1965)*

Example volunteer actions for the Canadian basic income movement:

1. **Increase your knowledge and understanding** of basic income through reading and talking with others who share your interest in basic income: good starting points for more information are BICN's web site (www.basicincomecanada.org) and the web site of Basic Income Earth Network (www.basicincome.org).
2. **Register your support** for the idea of a BIG for everyone in Canada, by completing a form on BICN's web site (www.basicincomecanada.org/support): encourage others to do the same—with every new supporter, the Canadian basic income movement gets that much stronger.
3. **Attend (and promote) basic income events** in or outside of your community; among other reasons to do so, it's a great way to form new relationships based on mutual interest in basic income. Check the BICN web site from time to time for events that may be of interest (<http://www.basicincomecanada.org/events>).
4. **Introduce the idea of basic income** to family members, friends, neighbours, work colleagues etc.
5. **Use social media to spread word** about basic income and basic income developments in Canada and around the world. Join BICN's Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/BasicIncomeCanada>) and/or follow BICN on Twitter (@basicincomecdn).
6. **Write letters to the editor** of local, regional or national newspapers, about or related to basic income.
7. **Write comments** to online articles about basic income that advance the discussion and challenge misconceptions.
8. **Write "op-ed" articles** (typically 600-800 words) about or related to basic income for publication in local, regional or national newspapers.
9. **Write articles about or related to basic income** for online mainstream or other media.
10. **Organize basic income speaker events in your community.**

Our worst foes are not belligerent circumstances, but wavering spirits.
Helen Keller (1880-1968)

11. **Ask speakers at other public events and forums concerning economic and/or social issues about their positions on basic income.**
 12. **Connect with BICN’s communications team** to help develop particular BICN communication tools such as blogs for BICN’s website, brochures, postcards, PowerPoint presentations, podcasts, videos and more. (Email info@basicincomecanada.org to express your interest.)
 13. **Obtain support for basic income from an organization** to which you belong (union, faith group, professional association, other group or business): such support may have strategic and/or symbolic importance.
 14. **Join a local or regional basic income support group** (http://www.basicincomecanada.org/local_networks) or if none exists in or near your community, **start a local or regional basic income support group**—it’s amazing what even a small group of people can achieve! Identify the group’s vision, mission and goals, mixing idealism with pragmatism. Write out a plan in support of those ends—the tasks to be undertaken, who will do them and when—execute and update the plan and keep everything fresh and alive with positive energy. Seek out and network with other support groups across Canada for ideas and inspiration as to what’s possible through a team effort.
- A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history. **Gandhi (1869-1948)***
- Reach out to one or more others to get the ball rolling with a new local or regional group; if you need help in finding others, contact BICN (via info@basicincomecanada.org) to request a database search and email query of people in your community who share your interest.
15. **Promote and where possible participate in research** related to basic income. If you are an experienced or aspiring researcher yourself, propose and pursue new research to add to the body of evidence about basic income.
 16. **Contact your federal, provincial (or territorial) and municipal¹ elected representatives** by email, social media, telephone or in person to express your support for basic income. Ask for their leadership to help realize a BIG for all.

¹ Although the federal government, primarily, and provincial/territorial governments, secondarily, lead on income security programs in Canada, municipal governments (especially of Canada’s largest cities) may be influential in bringing along federal-provincial/territorial support for basic income.

17. During election campaigns, **express your support for basic income and ask candidates for elected office to commit to the idea of a BIG for all.**
18. **Consider running for elected office yourself**, letting the citizens you would serve know that you are committed to a BIG for all.

There is no secret as to how you can use your citizenship to elevate our public life: by registering to vote and voting; by contacting elected officials and stating your desires and beliefs on particular issues; by getting involved in campaigns for candidates who support your beliefs; by personally applying your beliefs through some form of public or civil service; and, ultimately, by running for public office yourself, if you desire.

Joseph Lieberman (1942-)

About Basic Income Canada Network

Basic Income Canada Network is a voluntary, non-profit, non-partisan organization that originated in 2008 in affiliation with Basic Income Earth Network at the international level. BICN is composed of people interested in basic income issues and who come from many walks of life. We include people who are struggling to meet basic needs and those who are financially well-off. We include researchers, activists, policy analysts, professionals, business people and other people of diverse backgrounds, interests and skills. We respect that everyone brings different talent, viewpoints and experience to the basic income conversation and that the input of all is valuable.

To learn more and to support our work for a basic income guarantee for everyone, please contact us:

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