



EQUAL VOICE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2020-2024

MISSION

Equal Voice is a multi-partisan organization dedicated to electing and supporting women at all levels of political office.

VISION

Gender parity in politics.

STRATEGIC GOALS 2020-2024

1

Equipping women
to succeed in
politics

2

Retaining women
in politics

3

Advocating for
representation

4

Building
organizational
capacity

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We are multi-partisan and work with all political parties to nominate and elect more women.

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We are committed to equity, diversity and inclusion, and accessibility in all our work.

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We are bilingual and endeavour to incorporate Indigenous languages in our work.

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We are national and operate through regional Chapters across Canada.

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We are a non-profit, funded through individual donations, partnerships, and grants.



ELECTING MORE WOMEN, TOGETHER.

Canada's political institutions were built for men, by men, during a time when only a small percentage of the population had the right to participate in our democracy. As times change, politics must too. For legislatures to be representative of the Canadian population, it's important to bring women's voices, experiences, and concerns to the table.

Equal Voice is a multi-partisan organization dedicated to electing and supporting women at all levels of political office. We are the only not-for-profit in North America that works with and engages directly with all political parties to elect more women to all levels of government.

In 2021, we will celebrate 20 years since we opened our doors – and together, we have accomplished so much.

Alongside hundreds of volunteers across the country we've hosted campaign schools and boot camps across Canada, providing meaningful training and networking opportunities to current and prospective candidates, as well as campaign staff and volunteers. We've also made real impact toward gender-sensitive legislatures, providing expertise and support to legislatures from coast to coast to coast.

In 2019, we celebrated the election of a record number of women in House of Commons – while reflecting on the frustratingly slow and incremental nature of increasing women's representation in Canada. We've met with hundreds of stakeholders, built strong partnerships, and maintained excellent relationships with political parties and elected officials. We have organized two iterations of the internationally recognized Daughters of the Vote program, and subsequently funded more than 100 community projects led and implemented by delegates themselves.

While we've made great strides together over the past years, there is so much more to be done.

Through this strategic plan, which charts our course to 2024, Equal Voice is committed to creating a pathway for women, in all of their diversity, to run for elected office. This means not only equipping women who are running with the tools and support they need to succeed, but also creating a political environment conducive to effectively recruiting and retaining women in politics. We will accomplish this together through continued advocacy at all levels of government, focusing on equity, diversity and inclusion, and accessibility throughout the organization, and building our organizational capacity so we can always deliver high-quality programs and tools to our members and the public.

Thanks to valuable input from members, partners, and stakeholders across Canada, Equal Voice has developed an ambitious plan for the next four years. This plan focuses on four strategic directions for action, and is guided by the following principles that underpin all of our work:

- ✓ We are multi-partisan and work with all political parties to nominate and elect more women.
- ✓ We are committed to equity, diversity and inclusion, and accessibility in all our work.
- ✓ We are bilingual and endeavour to incorporate Indigenous languages in our work.
- ✓ We are national and operate through regional Chapters across Canada.
- ✓ We are a non-profit, funded through individual donations, partnerships, and grants.

We are so excited to continue our work. Together, we will elect more women to all levels of political office in Canada.

Sharmila Setaram

Sharmila Setaram
Chair, Equal Voice Board of Directors

Eleanor Fast

Eleanor Fast
Executive Director, Equal Voice

EQUIPPING WOMEN TO SUCCEED IN POLITICS

What this means

- ▶ Women* from all backgrounds see politics as a viable career option.
- ▶ Women have the knowledge and skills they need to run for office.
- ▶ Women's political leadership is recognized and celebrated.



What EV will do

- ▶ An inclusive nationwide multi-partisan campaign school program.
- ▶ An online toolkit for prospective candidates.
- ▶ Continue the biennial Daughters of the Vote program on Parliament Hill, and expand to provincial and municipal youth programs.
- ▶ Networking, skills-building, and mentorship.



What success will look like

- ▶ Gender parity in politics.
- ▶ More women elected, seeking nomination, and running for office.
- ▶ More diversity in women running for office, including diversity of age, race, religion, sexual orientation, and abilities.
- ▶ Aspiring women politicians face no barriers in knowledge, skills, and networks.



*Throughout this document, we use the word "women" to mean people who self-identify as women, and to include ALL women representing the diversity of Canada including (but not limited to) diversity of age, race, religion, sexual orientation, ability, and socio-economic background.

RETAINING WOMEN IN POLITICS

What this means

- ▶ Legislatures across Canada are welcoming workplaces for all women.
- ▶ Safe working conditions for women politicians.
- ▶ Legislatures incorporate and apply intersectionality in policies and practices.
- ▶ Policy changes result in gender-sensitive legislatures.



What EV will do

- ▶ Advocate for diverse, inclusive and gender-balanced legislatures and governments.
- ▶ Campaign for safe working conditions for all women politicians.
- ▶ Work with all political parties to increase women's participation within party systems.

What success will look like

- ▶ Gender parity in politics.
- ▶ Gender balanced cabinets in all jurisdictions.
- ▶ Political parties - from riding associations, to executive leadership, to elected officials – are gender balanced and represent the diversity of Canada.
- ▶ No women politicians experience harassment or violence.



ADVOCATING FOR REPRESENTATION

What this means

- ▶ Canadians understand the importance of gender parity in politics.
- ▶ Canadians are aware of the effect harassment and abuse has on current or potential women politicians.
- ▶ Equal Voice is a respected source of information about women and gender representation in politics.
- ▶ More Canadians are members and supporters of Equal Voice.



What EV will do

- ▶ Engage through multiple media platforms to provide information and analysis on women in politics.
- ▶ Work with community organizations and leaders to ensure the representation of all Canadian women.
- ▶ Hold national, regional, and local events to engage the public in advancing women in politics.
- ▶ Work with politicians, political parties, and partners to combat harassment and abuse of women politicians.

What success will look like

- ▶ Gender parity in politics.
- ▶ EV is well-known to politically-interested Canadians.
- ▶ Increased representation of all Canadian women in politics.
- ▶ Growth in EV membership, subscribers, and supporters.
- ▶ EV events are in high demand and well attended.
- ▶ No women politicians experience harassment or violence.



BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

What this means

- ▶ EV members are engaged and committed.
- ▶ EV is an inclusive organization.
- ▶ EV works collaboratively with a diverse range of partners.
- ▶ EV's funding is increased and diversified.
- ▶ EV has a robust, committed, and highly qualified team of staff and volunteers.



What EV will do

- ▶ Invest in our Chapters.
- ▶ Develop membership and donor relations strategies.
- ▶ Continue to deliver on our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, and accessibility through our organization wide equity plan.
- ▶ Focus on partnerships.
- ▶ Invest in and develop our staff and volunteers.
- ▶ Treat every penny with care and ensure excellence in financial and organizational management.

What success will look like

- ▶ More EV chapters, members, and donors.
- ▶ Strong partnerships.
- ▶ Robust chapters across Canada.
- ▶ EV becomes a leader in integrating intersectional approaches.
- ▶ Sustainable and diversified funding.





Equal Voice Canada

130 rue Albert Street, Suite 1410 | Ottawa, Ontario | K1P 5G4
T 613.236.0302 | info@equalvoice.ca

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www.equalvoice.ca

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