



Basic Income Canada Network
Réseau canadien pour le revenu garanti

Annual Report 2020-21

May 2021

Overview

This report provides a brief update to last year's report that was delayed due to the pandemic and covered a year and a half of BICN's activities. With the pandemic in its third wave as this report is being prepared, we acknowledge the challenges and the grief many people have experienced and assure Canadians that BICN's work for a more hopeful future persists. Vaccines are not going solve the economic insecurity and social ills that the pandemic has exposed. Basic income is the common-sense solution for the security and dignity that everyone needs for the well-being of people and the globe we inhabit.

BICN's highlights of the last few months include a redesigned website and a new multi-partner project connecting environmental and income security goals and planning. We are supporting our US colleagues in planning for a virtual North American Basic Income Guarantee Congress in June this year. We made submissions to federal government budget consultations. We also convened a National Forum as a collective space for national, regional, and local organizations in the basic income movement in Canada to come together and collaborate with allies.

BICN's financial position remains good. Despite some loss of revenue in the wake of the pandemic, we were able to draw on reserves for future-oriented work that is discussed later in the Report.

This year's AGM is being held via Zoom on May 27, 2021 at 7 pm ET. Board elections will be held electronically prior to the AGM.

Report - November 2020 to April 2021

Context

- Of note in the last few months is the third wave of the pandemic that is taking a toll despite vaccination roll-out. It keeps hardship and anxiety high for those who have been most affected by the virus and its economic impact, like people who have lost family members, essential workers who are at great risk, and people whose livelihoods are beyond being recovered. The need for a basic income and its potential to help everyone live with dignity and build something better are as high as ever.
- The continuation of CERB and other emergency benefits show that direct cash transfers are in demand by Canadians and are a great help for those who receive them.
- Canadian champions in Parliament, polling, resolutions at political conventions, and growing allies in the basic income movement all indicate support for a basic income that is not yet shared by leaders, as evidenced by no mention in the 2021 Federal Budget.

Achievements

The following are examples of contributions to the basic income arena over the past six months. Some activities are directly attributable to BICN. For others, credit is shared among individuals and organizations in the wider basic income network and beyond.

Revamped [BICN Website](#)

We were excited to launch our brand new [BICN website](#) in April 2021. We undertook an analysis that indicated that to better serve people new to basic income, to help them gain a solid grounding, and support the work of the growing basic income movement, we needed to promote more general and plain language information on our [website](#) and in other communications, while remaining a credible resource for those looking for deeper knowledge. The Basic Income Canada Youth Network (BICYN) has achieved a milestone too by creating and launching its [new website](#) for its target audience.

Environment and Basic Income Project

A proposal for funding that was submitted to the federal government by The Energy Mix and BICN with Coalition Canada, BICYN, and other expert partners as part of a consortium, was accepted right at the end of our annual reporting period. The project explores how low-carbon action and income security complement each other as a foundation for community resilience and a healthier future for Canada. See more about our future plans for this project under the Future Priorities for 2021/22 section.

National Forum

In October 2020, we held our first National Forum meeting of basic income organizations across the country (national, regional, local) as well as experts and allies from other organizations. At our second meeting in January it was agreed that forum meetings would be held periodically, co-organized among the four national basic income groups (BICN, UBI Works, Coalition Canada, and BICYN).

North American Basic Income Guarantee Congress (NABIG) 2021

This 19th annual [North American Basic Income Guarantee Congress](#) will be held virtually from June 17-19, 2021. Hosting the congress alternates between Canadian and US hosts each year. Accordingly, BICN and BICYN representatives have been involved on the planning committee this year with our US colleagues in the lead. To register for the congress visit [this site](#).

BIEN Congress

One of BICN's major activities in the last couple years was to release the [Policy Options](#) report. The co-authors of BICN's signature policy publication have submitted a proposal to share this work virtually with international audiences at the upcoming [2021 Basic Income Earth Network](#) congress. Those interested in attending can find out more on the BIEN Congress website or register [here](#).

Basic Income Movement Growth

BICN continues to: seek out, respond to, and support interest from allies in other organizations; collaborate to develop webinars and other activities; write articles and letters to the editor; respond to television, radio, print and other media requests; support and amplify petitions and other activities; and connect people across Canada and around the world.

Governance and Election of Directors

The BICN Board has 13 director positions. There are several two-year term positions open for election in 2021. In October 2020, four new directors, Hannah Pazderka (Edmonton, AB), Monika Viktorova (Toronto, ON), Enrique Garcia (Toronto, ON), and Martin Jean (Montreal, QC) joined re-elected board members Tara Kainer (Kingston, ON), John Mills (Hamilton, ON), Sheila Regehr (Toronto, ON), and Jenna van Draanen (Vancouver, BC) and ongoing members Stephen Brown (Brampton, ON), Sameer Nurmohamed (Toronto, ON), John Rook (Calgary, AB), Pierre Stevens (Halifax, NS), and Paul Vallée (Ottawa, ON).

Going into this election, we want to thank directors who have served their terms, some for many consecutive terms, and have offered so much wisdom and guidance to BICN and the wider basic income movement. Those stepping down this year include: Stéphane Boisvert who was on the Executive team (Ottawa ON), Martin Jean, (Montreal, QC), Stephen Brown (Brampton, ON) who was Secretary, and Karen Dempsey (Halifax, NS). We are grateful for their service and wish them well, knowing their commitment to basic income is as solid as ever.

Following elections, the new Board will determine executive roles among its members. Please check the website following the AGM for new Board Member bios.

Financial Report

BICN’s financial picture shows we were fortunate to have built up equity going into a pandemic that has now stretched beyond a year and may continue to affect the donor situation for us and many other non-profits for some time to come. While we had to further draw down assets, the investment in a revamped website, communications, and our social media approach was a strategic one. We determined it was important to support public understanding among those newer to basic income during a period when interest is high and we expect the investment will provide a good return over time.

BICN Balance Statement (March 31, 2021)	
Assets (Pay Pal and Cash in Bank)	\$35,200.61
Accounts receivable	0
Total Assets (31/03/2021)	\$35,200.61
Liabilities	
Accounts payable	0
Equity	
Accrued income - previous years	\$36,361.63
- 2020/21	\$(1,161.02)
Total Equity	\$35,200.61
Total Liability and Equity	\$35,200.61

BICN Revenue and Expenses (April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021)	
Revenue	
BICN Board	6,384.00
Members	2,445.00
Support (public donations)	31,707.27
Other	471.00
Total Revenue	\$41,007.27
Expenses	
Operating (insurance, legal, bank fees)	4,349.16
Phone/Communications	1,170.62
Nationbuilder	5,151.06
Website Maintenance/Admin	28.04
Personnel	
General Manager	10,000.00
Website News	8,250.00
Newsletter	2,800.00
Social Media	600.00
Youth Coordinator	400.00
Projects	
Revamp of Website, Communications, Social Media	9,063.18
NABIG 2021 Planning	0
Policy Options (graph design)	356.23
Total Expenses	\$42,168.29
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$(1,161.02)

Plans and Priorities 2021/22

Context

- In the coming year, we will still be affected by COVID-19. The aftermath of the pandemic: worsening inequality and a patchwork of temporary government policies make our work more relevant than ever. There is still much uncertainty and anxiety as well as concern that the window of opportunity to bring about more transformational change is closing and that government will remain path-dependent on outdated program models.
- With a minority government there is always the possibility of an early election. Despite growing need and support for basic income, including calls from within political parties, necessary gains are not yet being made in public policy, budgets, and political platforms. We will continue to work to educate Canadians about what questions to ask of their representatives, and will work to advance the evidence and conversation surrounding basic income in Canada.

Priorities and Expected Achievements for 2021/22

Some plans are firm while others may be more fluid, depending on political and other circumstances.

- The new **Website** and Communications project continues into the beginning of the 2021 fiscal year with plans to add part time personnel to manage related tasks on an ongoing basis.
- BICN will also continue its efforts to attain **charitable status**.
- **National Forum** participants agreed to continue holding forum meetings quarterly. At the April meeting, they agreed to form a sub-committee to explore ways to shape common messaging and strategies among allies and potential friends of basic income to be as effective as possible in making basic income a prominent issue for the next election. BICN will work with other partners in this effort.
- The **Environment and Basic Income project** is a firm commitment, running through March 2022. It will involve a series of community dialogues across Canada to explore the links and synergies between environmental and income security goals. BICN will work with Energy Mix Productions, Coalition Canada, BICYN, individual experts, project staff that will be hired to organize, and community partners that will ensure its success. We already have the support of many allies. As the proposal states: “*Just as every aspect of local resilience is in*

some way connected to climate impact or a low-carbon solution or both, income security is an essential enabler that either reinforces community resilience by its presence, or makes it virtually impossible by its absence.”

- The **NABIG 2021 Congress** will be held virtually June 17-19, 2021. The program is full, exciting, and diverse with several great Canadian proposals accepted. Canada will be well represented by speakers at plenary sessions too, including one that will feature basic income political champions.
- The **BIEN Congress** is being organized by a team in Glasgow, Scotland and will be held virtually from August 18-21, 2021. The co-authors of BICN’s signature publication, **Basic Income: Some Policy Options for Canada**, have submitted a proposal to share this work with international audiences.

Thank you and acknowledgments

The Board of BICN, as always, extends its sincere appreciation to volunteers, supporters, donors, sponsors, and contractors across the country and beyond, for their valuable contributions. We acknowledge and welcome the increasing engagement of people in policy and political spheres - elected and appointed officials, public servants, and party members and supporters. We are thrilled to have tenacious champions of basic income in both the House of Commons and the Senate. We also extend profound thanks to researchers, writers, journalists, activists, and others in Canada and around the world, some of whom have been in this movement for decades and others bringing new energy and diverse insights, to keep us moving forward.

We acknowledge that the pandemic is taking a toll on everyone in different ways and we need to keep treating ourselves and each other with kindness and compassion. For the many people who struggled most before the pandemic arrived or have more recently joined the ranks of those who are falling behind, anyone who is able must keep up the struggle for a basic income for everyone!