

IONS Reimagining Work Award

The IONS Reimagining Work Award is a new award that recognizes an impact organization in Nova Scotia that demonstrates exceptional practices for justice and equity in their workplace.

Impact organizations (nonprofits and charities) provide critical services and solutions for our most pressing social and environmental challenges and the communities affected by them. The work never stops. We know that the Community Impact Sector is stretched – a lack of resources, constant undervaluing – leads to strain on staff and volunteers. This can lead to workplaces where people get burnt out and leave their jobs – and sometimes the Community Impact Sector altogether. This cycle harms our ability to meet our community-based missions that require a strong workforce and leadership to address.

The idea of what makes a “welcoming workplace” is evolving. As we enter an era of society that is marked by the opportunity for transformation, we are recognizing the need for the modern workplace to be supportive of our humanity. The workplace is a place where we can fulfill purpose, realize our potential, and gain support for a balanced and healthy life. Our workplaces can be aligned with practices that reverse systemic oppression and uplift inclusive, inspiring ways of being together that enable us to address the great challenges of our time. This can only happen when people in organizations design workplaces in a way that serves the people who work there.

We also know that impact organizations are some of the most nimble and versatile, solving complex problems, doing more with less, and understanding and meeting needs at the root of social challenges. People in our sector are particularly attuned to what it means to act in ways that embody justice and equity. Impact organizations are leaders for a better way of doing things for people and planet – and sometimes that starts with us and how we work together.

We are looking for leading impact organizations in Nova Scotia that are doing things differently in their workplaces. We want to hear about your unique leadership structures, your practices that enable staff wellness, and your effective policies that bring out the best in your people.

We want to hear how you address racism and ableism, bring in a decolonizing lens, and consider gender equality in your workplace culture. We want to hear all the ways you’re promoting justice and equity

with your people! And we want to share it widely as an inspiring example of how our sector is changing society at all levels.

Finally, we want to support your organization's journey. The selected organization will receive a prize of free services that are meant to strengthen your organizational design – this includes 6 person-hours of pro-bono consulting with the [Lumiere Consulting Team](#) - Juniper Glass (she/elle) and Tania Cheng (she/they); as well as [2 enrolments in the self-paced “Generative Conflict” course by Big Waves](#), plus 2 hours of leadership coaching with Brook Thorndycraft (she/they), and a 2-hour “Emotional Intelligence in Non-Profit Leadership” training with [NewGround Leadership](#). The selected organization will also have access to up to 4 tickets and financially supported participation for the IONS Exchange Gathering happening in Membertou, Nova Scotia in May 2024. This award comes with the opportunity to be highlighted in IONS communications and in the news media.

Application Process

Eligibility

- Registered nonprofit organization
- Located in Nova Scotia
- Community impact-oriented mission
- Paid staff and/or volunteers carry out work

Story Submission

The primary component of the application is two maximum-500-word stories or explanations of how the organization is “Reimagining Work,” using the Principles and Filters of Accountability below.

Principles

Organizations must speak to at least two of the below principles to be considered for selection:

- Human Centered
 - Valuing people through policy and practice
 - Using feedback to adapt processes and procedures
- Practicing different ways of being and working

- Experimenting and innovating with workplace structures
- Inspiring change in people at individual and group levels
- Leading differently
 - Collaborative or shared leadership models
 - Challenging conceptions of hierarchy
- Justice and Equity
 - Other demonstrated practices that embody the principles of justice and equity

Filters of Accountability

To evaluate the applications, we will be using IONS' ["Four Filters of Accountability"](#) to judge the submissions. Applications may touch on these themes in order to demonstrate how the organization is "Reimagining Work."

1. **Relational:** "We create spaces and opportunities to connect that intentionally build trust, alignment and mutual care."

Consider how workplace design and the implementation of justice and equity principles serve the people who work there as full human beings. This could be through creative ways of working, or additional ways to care for or connect with people. Are trusting relationships supported and encouraged to grow stronger?

2. **Reciprocity:** "We make sure that information, opportunities, and impact flows in both directions."

Consider how the organization is co-creating a workplace where the people who work there can fulfill purpose and realize potential. Are there examples of staff living healthy lives? Feedback and reciprocal communication opportunities for staff and leadership? How is energy acknowledged as given and received in return?

3. **Responsive:** "We seek to deepen our understanding of what people need and act on it with our networks."

How does the organization "listen" and change a course of action in response to what was heard? Are there examples of reversing systemic oppression, and ways they are creating inspiring ways of being together?

4. **Reimagining:** “We look inward and outward to spark new ideas for change that meets what we need now, and what we need to create a just future.”

Consider how this organization is transforming their work place to be more equitable and inclusive. Is the organization using innovative and novel solutions to challenge the root of the social challenges they are facing? Examples could include the transformation and creation of unique leadership structures, practices that enable staff wellness, or equitable policies that bring out the best in their staff.

Timeline

There is a nomination and selection process which takes place over the course of a few months. A selection committee composed of a blend of IONS staff and leaders in the sector will go through the applications and select the organization that will be awarded.

- Feb 13: Applications Open
- March 10: Applications Close
- April 15: Selected Organization is chosen and notified
- May 13-14: Award is given at Exchange Gathering in Membertou

Award

The selected organization will be invited to the IONS Exchange Gathering, where they will be publicly recognized. Participation at Exchange will be financially supported (waived registration fee, accommodation and travel subsidy for up to 4 team members).

The award consists of:

- A physical award
- 2-hour “Emotional Intelligence in Non-Profit Leadership” training with [NewGround Leadership](#)
- 6 person-hours of pro-bono consulting with the [Lumiere Consulting Team](#) - Juniper Glass (she/elle) and Tania Cheng (she/they)
- [2 enrolments in the self-paced “Generative Conflict” course by Big Waves](#), plus 2 hours total of leadership coaching with Brook Thorndycraft (she/they)
- External communications by IONS highlighting your organization

Application Form

To apply, please [fill out the following online application form](#). For accessibility purposes A PDF version of application details can be found here - [IONS Reimaging Work Award PDF](#)

**Please note that applications for the award should only take place through the application form shared above.*

Deadline: March 10, 2024 (11:59pm ADT)

If you have any questions or require assistance or accommodation to apply, please contact IONS Engagement Lead, Clary Chambers (she/her) at clary@ions.ca or call at 613-850-2527

Frequently Asked Questions

Can the application form be filled out on behalf of an organization I don't work for?

Yes! If you are interested in nominating an organization, make sure to reference the eligibility requirements of the organization you want to nominate and apply by the deadline March 10, 2024 (11:59pm). You are also allowed to nominate your own organization that you work for.

Can you tell me more about the event in Membertou?

*The selected organization will be invited to the IONS Exchange Gathering happening in Membertou at the Membertou Convention Centre on **Monday May 13th + Tuesday May 14th 2024**. At this event the winners will be publicly recognized. For Award winners, participation at Exchange will be financially supported (waived registration fee, accommodation and travel subsidy for up to 4 team members).*

When is the last day to submit our application?

The deadline to apply is March 10, 2024 (11:59pm). [You can submit your applications here.](#)

I found out about the award too late will you be offering this award again next year?

Our hope is to offer this award again next year. To stay up to date on IONS Initiatives including what happens next with this award [subscribe to our newsletter here.](#)

Who will be conducting the selection process?

A selection committee composed of a blend of IONS staff and leaders in the sector will go through the applications and choose the organization that will be awarded.

I'm a board member of an organization can I nominate that organization?

Yes – as a board member you have great insight into the change this impact organization is making, and we would love for you to nominate that organization.

I'd like to nominate multiple organizations, is there a limit to the amount of applications I can submit?

You may nominate multiple organizations if you wish. Please submit only one application per organization.

What if we win the prize but I can't attend the event in Membertou?

If you win but are unable to attend the Exchange Gathering in Membertou we will still be pleased to recognize your organization on stage. We will arrange an alternative "meet and greet" to present your award with the IONS team at a later date.

How many awards will you be giving out?

For the first year of this award, we will be giving out one prize.

I need help applying, who should I reach out to?

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