Member Priorities
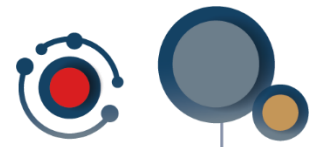
APRIL 2022

RDN

Regional Development Network
Réseau de Développement Régional
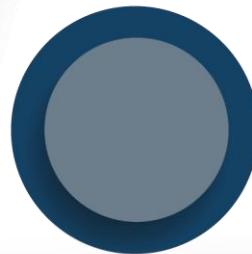
Réunir les
communautés régionales
D'EXPRESSION ANGLAISE DU QUÉBEC

Connecting
**QUEBEC'S REGIONAL
ENGLISH-SPEAKING**
Communities

RDN thanks the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québecois d'expression anglaise for its financial support.

Background

In the spring of 2022 RDN members came together twice to identify and establish common strategic priorities across regions as well as to develop the framework under which RDN will continue to accomplish its mission.

Vision

Thriving English-speaking communities are a vital part of the fabric of Quebec's regions.

Mission statement

RDN's mission is to enhance and maintain the vitality of regional English-speaking communities in Quebec by supporting network members and other entities to work collaboratively for their socio-economic development.

Context

Demographic vitality: English-speaking communities across Quebec have lost critical mass. This out-migration is related to many different factors, including the fact that English-language post-secondary education is largely unavailable in the regions, forcing youth to move to larger urban centers to pursue studies. The decline of some key industries and employment opportunities for English speakers as well as the lack of housing in certain areas has also been attributed to the decline in population.

Economic vitality: English-speaking communities are looking for a way forward in diversifying our economies, repurposing existing resources and infrastructures, retraining employees, and creating new opportunities from old industries. In addition, French language training is needed to increase fluency in order to reduce the barriers in education, employment and social participation, as well as accessing needed support and services available in French only.

Organizational vitality: Community-based organizations serving English speakers in Quebec are seeking to strengthen their financial, human, and legal resources. As not-for-profit organizations, challenges include access to different funding opportunities (notably at the provincial level and core funding), developing and implementing appropriate policies and procedures, and finding administrative efficiencies.

Roles

Various actors will play different roles in achieving these objectives and working on these priorities.

- **RDN**: Meet with government actors, raise awareness, develop shared strategies, improve member's knowledge of MRC, federal and provincial funding, support capacity building of its members, help share learning among member organizations
- **Regional organizations**: Reach out to municipalities and MRCs, to (current or potential) partner organizations and other relevant stakeholders
- **Partner organizations and stakeholders**: Collaborate with RDN member organizations according to their mandate, provide support as pertinent
- **Government**: Provide information, support, and funding; collaborate in understanding and seeking solutions

Values

RDN's membership has identified the following values that guide action on its mission.

- **Collaboration:** By working together, diverse communities and stakeholders foster innovation, strengthen capacity, and engage together in making positive contributions to communities
- **Shared identity:** Strengthening and promoting the communities' unique characteristics and assets is an important aspect to ensuring a strong and vibrant community of English-speakers
- **Sustainability**: Working with other stakeholders helps to ensure the long term economic, social, and environmental viability of initiatives.
- **Equity:** A proactive role in representation, awareness and advocacy will help partners develop policies and programs that ensure the community's equitable access to resources and opportunities

Principles

- **Capacity building**: Members are supported to improve their organizational capacity to build thriving communities
- **Voice for all members**: All network members have the opportunity to contribute their perspectives towards the decision-making process
- **Respect for diverse communities**: The diversity of each community is respected, and efforts are made to accommodate differences

Member Priorities

Objectives	Priorities	Action ideas
Ensure the demographic stability of English-speaking communities	1. Attract newcomers	Create welcome packages. Share newcomer resources and coordinate collaboration amongst organizations
		Organize activities to welcome and integrate newcomers (e.g. intercultural exchanges)
		Work with partners to increase access to housing
		Work with municipalities on immigration policies (to facilitate recruitment)
		Network-wide subscription to job board, such as Jobboom
	2. Recruit and train workers	Connect ES residents to French language training, as needed
	3. Retain the population	Work with employers to help them see themselves as an active partner in integrating and retaining employees
		Help increase a sense of belonging
		Help increase access to daycare (in English)
Increase the socio-economic vitality of the English-speaking communities in the regions	4. Increase and diversify employment opportunities for English-speakers	Explore opportunities in arts and culture
		Increase tourism-related activities for the English-speaking community; for example, identify how ES heritage and culture can be promoted in tourist offer
		Find programs that attract youth to regions
		Work collaboratively to help create more summer employment for youth
	5. Facilitate social economy initiatives	Improve knowledge of microgrants and entrepreneurship programs for individuals wanting to create their own business
Support member organizations in their development	6. Help to increase funding	Represent needs more effectively on different boards to help gain access to new provincial and federal core funding programs
		Improve and develop partnerships with Francophone organizations
	7. Facilitate HR management	Develop policies and procedures for all organizations that can be used to ensure employee well-being
		Improve knowledge on not-for-profit legal issues, employee satisfaction and engagement
		Improve and standardize on-boarding procedures
	8. Enhance organizational capacity	Provide training to improve file management and sharing
		Create a list of vetted contacts to translate from English to French
		Create a succession and knowledge transfer plan and digitalize all information