

MakeWay Strategy

2022

2025





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Looking Ahead

Over the last 20 years, MakeWay has been part of transformational community-led change. Working towards a world that is just, resilient and flourishing, we've created diverse approaches and partnerships rooted in interconnectedness and reciprocity.

We are oriented towards an abundant future of healthy lands, waters, and climate, for all beings. Where the original stewards of this Land have their territories, authorities, and livelihoods restored. Where urban communities enjoy "fair earth living". And where all people who call this place 'home' can see themselves as part of a shared future.

Knowing that change is inevitable, this strategy is our North Star to help guide us toward the impact we hope to achieve over the next three years.

In 2022, in a country and world that will remain volatile climatically, economically, politically, and socially, we recognize the challenges we face.

**Our mission is to
build partnerships
and solutions to
help nature and
communities
thrive together.**



We head into the next three years with a clear sense of our unique role: **to apply all our tools and resources in support of community-led change.**

MakeWay is both daring and reliable. We take risks and try new things, trailblaze where others in the sector won't. Yet, we're also trusted for our expertise in charitable compliance, administration, governance, and management.

We will strive for transformative systems change at the intersection of social justice, and economic, cultural, and ecological wellbeing.

To get there, we will **build on many years of deep trust-based relationships** in remote, Northern, and Indigenous communities, as well as urban neighbourhoods.

We will **support more changemakers with flexible grants and key operational supports.**

We will **provide funders diverse supports** and opportunities to learn and transform while advancing truth and reconciliation and justice.

We will build momentum for change by facilitating **shared learning and connections across strong partner networks** from coast to coast to coast.

By championing ways to **shift systems of philanthropy and charity**, we will push towards more equity, accessibility, and transparency in these sectors.

Let's make way for what's possible...

Theory of Change



If

we build deep trust-based relationships and partnerships with community leaders, changemakers, and funders

and

provide unique, integrated solutions that support community-led initiatives advancing justice, reconciliation, and economic and ecological wellbeing

Then

transformational change will gain momentum to shift systems locally and across this country known as Canada...

Which

will move us closer to a planet where nature and communities thrive together.

Strategic Priorities

In the coming years, we will focus on seven **interconnected** priorities that reflect what we've heard from community partners and our teams about where MakeWay can and should play a role.





Strategic Priority 01

Healthy Lands and Waters

Bold Inclusive Leadership for Healing and Justice

Indigenous Authority, Language, and Cultural Resurgence

Shared Wealth and Economic Wellbeing

Transformed and Indigenous Food Systems

Fair Earth Living and Climate Action

An equitable Charitable Sector Working for Planet and People



An aerial view of the lands and waters of the Pacific coast.

Photo: Cristina Mittermeier

At the heart of all life are the vital sources of land and waters. Sources that everything—from climate to cultures – depend on to thrive and survive. In the face of climate and biodiversity crises and unsustainable development, there is a groundswell of community-led initiatives protecting and nourishing lands and waters and carbon-rich coastal rainforests and open plains. Indigenous communities are stewarding their territories while healing their cultures and re-asserting place-based stewardship and governance.

We see countless opportunities to advance broader policy and systems change for the health of lands and waters across this vast country.

Over the next three years we will:

- Deepen partnerships and expand funding for the development and implementation of marine and terrestrial Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs).
- Advance community-led climate solutions through initiatives that protect key carbon landscapes while upholding Indigenous rights.
- Strengthen the overall capacity and wellbeing of land and water leaders and stewards, through peer-networks and stable funding.
- Increase funding and supports for community partners advocating for a national strategy for freshwater conservation.
- Increase funding and supports for the implementation of marine protected areas.
- Amplify community voices and help shift public narratives around: land and water conservation; effective practices for IPCAs and linked outcomes to reconciliation; Indigenous authority; and sustainable livelihoods.



Strategic Priority 02

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Bold Inclusive Leadership for Healing and Justice

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Members of the Canadian Coalition for Environmental and Climate Justice, a MakeWay shared platform project working to end environmental racism in Canada.

All around us, bold new thinking and leadership is rising to offer new solutions for the most complex social and environmental issues of our time. From the margins and across generations, genders, race and lived experience, new perspectives and leadership approaches are helping to advance healthy and more inclusive futures for us all based on healing, wellbeing and justice. These leaders need spaces, funds, organizational supports and amplification to advance system change. MakeWay will prioritize supporting networks of diverse and emerging leaders addressing today's most pressing issues with services, supports and solidarity.

Over the next three years we will:

- Support more Black, Indigenous, Racialized and youth community leaders to grow their impact through the Shared Platform model.
- Advance systems change for nature and climate through peer-supported, trauma-informed facilitation through Womxn's Leadership Collectives on Nature and Climate Action.
- Support the Canadian Coalition for Environmental and Climate Justice change legislation and build movements to end environmental racism, and increase funding to Black-led initiatives focused on climate justice.
- Grow power-shifting models of philanthropy like the Right Relations Collaborative, led by a network of Indigenous Aunties across Pacific territories and supported by a group of aligned funders - together creating new philanthropic pathways to dismantle inequities and advance joyful reparations.
- Increase grantmaking in Canada's territories and Inuit regions for women and girls working on climate change and cultural resurgence.



Strategic Priority 03

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Children out on the land
learning about hide tanning in
Lutselk'e, Northwest Territories.

Photo: Pat Kane

A sense of self. Relationships to the world and to one another. A way of life, language and culture are essential to a rooted identity. Yet, colonialism has caused intentional negative impacts on Indigenous people while most economic development ignores that humans are part of nature, not separate. In response to these impacts, increasingly many Indigenous communities are reclaiming and reinvigorating their cultures, languages, and authority as caretakers of their lands and waters, in reciprocity. Land-based healing is empowering healthy communities by deepening the connection of people to nature. Elders and youth are coming together to ensure that Indigenous languages thrive, and that the next generations can foster cultural, economic and ecological renewal that sustains us all.

Over the next three years we will:

- Increase long-term financial support for Indigenous cultural resurgence, particularly initiatives that advance land-based healing; cultural sharing and learning; language revitalization; ceremony revitalization; and cultural promotion through the arts.
- Support Indigenous partners through multi-year core support for Indigenous governance and legal revitalization work.
- Amplify Indigenous language revitalization by amplifying community-driven success stories and best practices including: identifying effective programming that ensures language skills transmit from older to younger generations; early childhood immersion; or policy reform in schools.



Strategic Priority 04

Healthy Lands
and Waters

Bold Inclusive
Leadership for
Healing and Justice

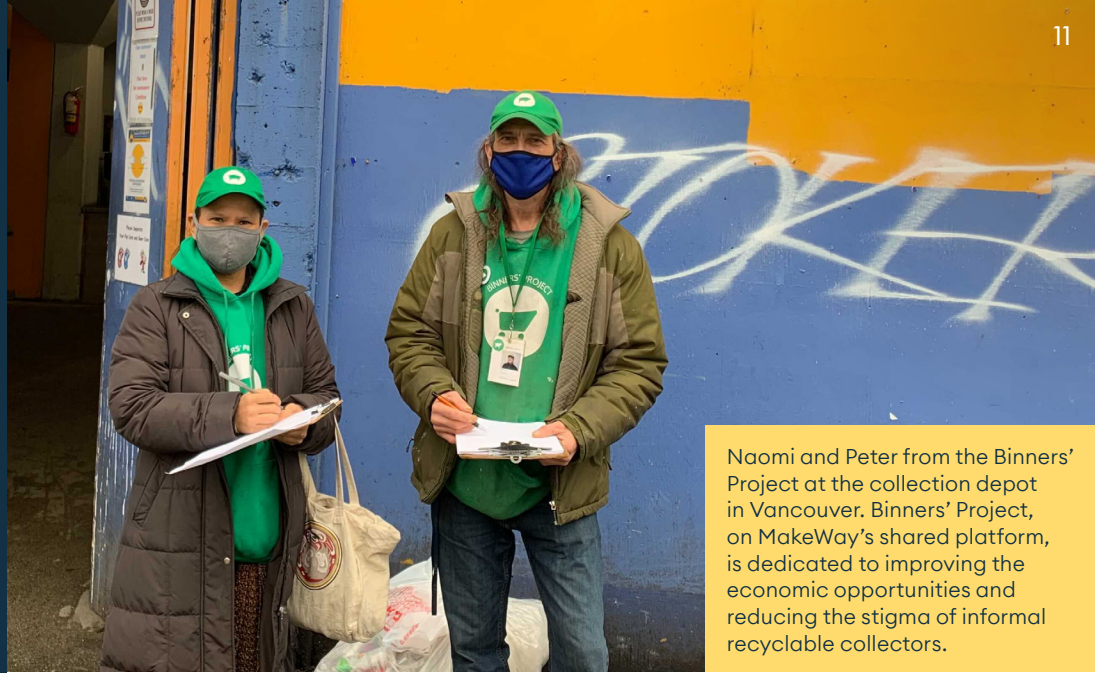
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Naomi and Peter from the Binners' Project at the collection depot in Vancouver. Binners' Project, on MakeWay's shared platform, is dedicated to improving the economic opportunities and reducing the stigma of informal recyclable collectors.

Imagine if wealth and abundance were redefined so that the economy actually supports all people and the planet? For many, this is already happening. People and organizations are coming together in new ways beyond the limitations of capitalism to redefine economic models for nature and communities to thrive together. These models are prioritizing collective wellbeing and mutual support. They include conservation arrangements that create social, economic and ecological benefits for people and place. Worker-owned enterprises. Investments in the care economy. Going forward, MakeWay will help link and amplify a growing number of regenerative efforts that promote fair economies at a community scale and support the wellbeing of many instead of a wealthy few.

Over the next three years we will:

- Support more urban and rural projects and partners with an explicit focus on developing or promoting fair economic models at a community scale.
- Amplify strategies and support changemakers advancing conservation-based economies, where both nature and communities thrive.
- Facilitate sustainable conservation financing to sustain Indigenous stewardship of IPCAs through research, policy and capacity building.
- Evolve MakeWay's impact investment strategy to increase positive impacts of investments, alongside more transparency, and shareholder advocacy.



Strategic Priority 05

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Salmon hangs in a smokehouse
in Bella Bella, Heiltsuk Territory.
Photo: Louise Whitehouse

Food matters—for the health of our families and cultures, and for the ecosystems on which we depend. In Canada and around the world, most of our food comes out of systems that have been industrialized with dangerous impacts on people, climate, land, water, and animals. Yet, even though cultural and ecological roots of producing foods have often been pushed to the side, community-based food systems are still alive and thriving. As the pandemic exposed the volatility of global food supply chains, both remote and urban communities are leaping forward to ensure community access to healthy foods. Increasingly, we see community partners prioritizing local and Indigenous food sovereignty work that strengthens soil, water, animals and humans while celebrating connection and culture.

Over the next three years we will:

- Support local urban and national food initiatives that are advancing regenerative and just food systems.
- Secure sustainable funding and share the learnings of collaboratives hosted at MakeWay including the Northern Manitoba Food, Culture and Community Collaborative (NMFCCC) and Gaagige Zaagibigaa in Northern Ontario, that are strengthening Indigenous food systems, culture, and the development of resilient local economies, while inspiring other communities to do the same.
- Provide ongoing grantmaking support for Indigenous-led conservation and restoration of critical salmon-bearing habitats and grassroots efforts that reconnect people with their traditional food sources.
- Complete a multi-year evaluation with Indigenous partners outlining the qualitative and quantitative benefits of full-time, land-based hunter, harvester and guardian roles, including a national media strategy showcasing the positive impacts of these solutions.
- Advocate for reallocation of public funding from subsidized industrial food solutions for the North towards localized, community-led approaches.



Strategic Priority 06

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Shared platform project Not Far From the Tree harvests fruit from Toronto's urban orchard and shares it with community partners, such as local food banks and community kitchens.

It will take all of us to save our climate and biodiversity in an equitable way. It will take policy makers to implement bold new approaches and polluters to be held to account. Economies that ensure decent work and operate within planetary boundaries. And it will take people and communities to transform our ways of living. This is not about forcing people to recycle more or to feel guilty about their consumption. It is about a society-wide effort to inspire and create the conditions for people to play, eat, work, dwell and move in new ways. If we are to get beyond a society that worships materialism, we must centre the value of nature, relationships and health, place and belonging, joy and time. With widespread household and community behaviour change, much-needed public support for systems changes can gain momentum. To do this with equity in mind, it means supporting solutions that communities are already advancing, and ensuring sustainable ways of living are accessible and affordable to everyone.

Over the next three years we will:

- Collaborate with OneEarth and funding partners to help catalyze and amplify better ways of living for justice, nature and climate that:
 - Reinforce ecological interdependence and regeneration
 - Support Indigenous-led movements and leading communities
 - Shift culture through social norms, imagination, and community leadership
 - Take action on 'emission hotspots' across domains and income
 - Enable more sustainable living in cities
- Advance thought leadership through convenings, research, and international engagement on the opportunities for fair earth living.



Strategic Priority 07

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An event hosted by the School for Social Entrepreneurs Ontario, which offers training programs for people from diverse backgrounds passionate about driving social change.

Philanthropy and charity have done considerable good over the decades, but recently this system has been facing significant scrutiny because of its inherent inequalities. We are mindful that MakeWay participates in the very systems we want to challenge and will work from within to better serve nature and communities.

By creating more equitable spaces for philanthropy, by changing processes and advancing policy change, and by removing barriers that keep communities from accessing supports, we can help build new forms of philanthropy rooted in reciprocity.

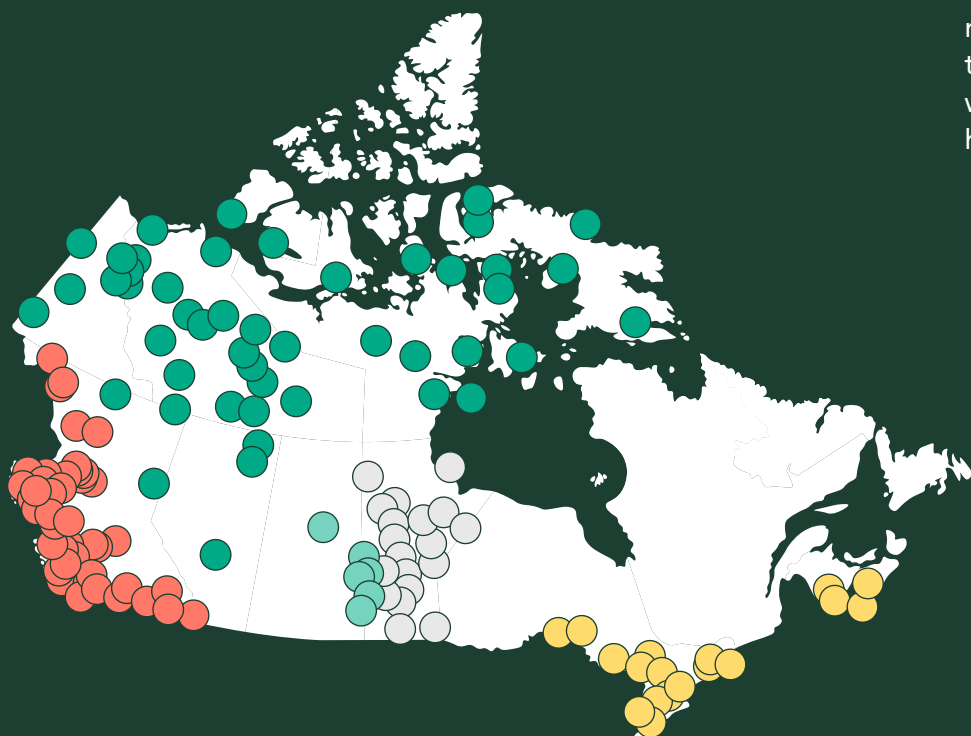
Over the next three years we will:

- Help share lessons learned from the diverse Collaboratives hosted at MakeWay to inspire better philanthropic practices in the sector.
- Increase the annual grantmaking and community decision-making of our Community and Donor Advised Funds.
- Work with community partners to scope and co-create new shared platforms in other parts of the country to increase equitable access to the charitable sector.
- Build partnerships that engage with public policy to build a more equitable and transparent charitable sector.
- Develop, share, and amplify best practices and lessons learned around engaging in participatory, trust-based grantmaking.

In Place

We go only where we are invited.

Significant, sustainable change is not possible without taking the time to nurture deep place-based relationships. While we are open to working with any community, we only work in the places that we have been invited into.



Urban Neighbourhoods

The Pacific

The North

Manitoba

Saskatchewan

Northern Ontario



Financial Advisors

Philanthropists

Foundations

Our Partners

Governments

Changemakers

Community Leaders

Solutions Toolkit

A unique combination of tools supporting a vast array of change making. Going forward we will increase their effectiveness, reach, transparency, and community impact.



Grantmaking



Shared Platform



Community and Donor Advised Funds



Collaboratives



Impact Investing



Advisory Services



Public Policy Engagement





Grantmaking

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Community and
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To address the systemic barriers that keep community partners from accessing philanthropic support, we will increase our grant-making and continue to develop new pathways for funding, on community terms and in the spirit of reciprocity.

As an intermediary, MakeWay's strategic grantmaking approach is place-based, creating pathways for funding to flow to rural and remote, often Indigenous, communities. Advised by communities, we will increase our partnerships and further practices of participatory grantmaking –shifting decision-making power to communities. This includes flexible proposals, reporting, and evaluation processes that meet their unique needs.

Measurement and Evaluation

To honour our relationships and reduce administrative burdens placed on community-led initiatives, we are developing a dynamic approach to measurement and evaluation of grantmaking at MakeWay–informed by the organization's diversity and integrated approach to social, environmental, and economic outcomes.



Shared Platform

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Since launching Canada's first national shared platform and providing infrastructure, operational, and strategic supports to over 150 community initiatives, we have learned two key things. First, that demand for the platform far outweighs what we can provide. Second, that many community initiatives get stuck in a cycle—they can't get their income above \$100k annually, and therefore stay dependent on volunteer time, remain small, and are unable to achieve their desired impact.

Moving forward, we will continue to offer the platform for transformative projects as a time and cost-effective alternative to becoming a charity. And, because we believe that connection and collaboration between projects can increase impact, we'll facilitate more peer collaboration and shared learning – to enable each of the current 72 projects (and growing) on the platform to be more than the sum of their parts.

Over the next three years we will also...

- Apply a recruitment strategy focused on equity and alignment with organizational priority areas to support at least an additional six projects per year.
- Create a new seed fund to help grow projects out of the 'starvation cycle' and into thriving program delivery.
- Develop platform supports specifically for Indigenous projects who want to build their capacity to transition into their own charities.
- Work with partners to design, develop, and pilot new shared platforms in communities lacking this critical changemaking infrastructure.



Community and Donor Advised Funds

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For over 20 years, MakeWay has been home to hundreds of donor advised funds (DAFs). An alternative to starting one's own foundation, donor advised funds are an efficient and flexible vehicle for charitable giving.

In 2022, MakeWay held 141 DAFs with a value of \$31 million, all invested in fossil-fuel free funds. While last year's disbursement rate was over 30%, we strive to increase it in the coming years.

Unlike many other DAF-providers, MakeWay leverages advised funds to enable, nimble, transformative philanthropy—increasing the flow of unrestricted capital into communities.

Building on lessons learned, we will work with more funder partners that want to listen to and learn from community, who have the courage to share and shift power, and who are active in their approach to social, environmental, and economic justice.

Over the next three years we will also...

- Create, test, and refine a new community-advised fund model that enables funding partners to transition power to communities with the latitude to self-organize and determine equitable pathways.
- Provide ongoing strategic philanthropic advisory support to existing Fund partners and increase their unrestricted and flexible funding.
- Heighten transparency around the number, purpose, value, disbursements, and investments of advised funds.
- Create peer learning opportunities for fund advisors on issues of truth and reconciliation, and the interconnectedness of social, environmental, and economic issues.



Collaboratives

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Collaborative models of philanthropy, where funders work together toward shared goals, can enable trust-based relationships while centering communities and increasing impact.

MakeWay will continue to advance two key collaborative models that create spaces for many parties to come together around a common goal that helps advance key priorities.

1. Community-advised funding: community advisors come together with funders to co-create solutions, centring community voices and participation in strategy and funding decisions. It also offers opportunities to (un)learn from members, making participation in the process a key part of the impact.
2. Pooled Funding: funds are designed with the core principles of trust-based philanthropy. Funders contribute to pooled funds where granting decisions are often advised by diverse representation.

Over the next three years we will...

- Expand collaborative models to regions where they do not currently exist and communities have expressed interest, particularly Yukon, Nunavut and Saskatchewan.
- Increase networking and peer learning opportunities for the many collaboratives that MakeWay already supports.
- Ensure long-term financial durability of collaboratives that MakeWay already supports.

Impact Investing

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As an engaged steward of financial capital, an early adopter of impact investing, and one of the first foundations in Canada to invest in entirely fossil fuel-free products, MakeWay believes all investments should generate net positive social and environmental returns.

We are now deeply committed to moving our investments further along the continuum towards higher net positive impact. By taking an active and critical approach to our own investment portfolio, we will work to understand all the impacts of our investments, while activating an impact investment strategy to mobilize more capital towards solutions that help nature and communities to thrive together.

Over the next three years we will...

- Increase public transparency of MakeWay investment strategy, governance, and investments.
- Deliver on a new strategy for direct investments and ability to assess and prioritize impact investments with the aim of increasing the proportion of impact investments in the MakeWay portfolio.
- Develop new Program Related Investment (PRI) opportunities.
- Implement shareholder advocacy and partnership engagement strategy.
- Develop and implement an active impact measurement approach that goes beyond basic metrics through an investigative and critical process.
- Facilitate learning for the philanthropic sector and investment manager community.



Advisory Services

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MakeWay provides strategic advice for philanthropists, foundations, and businesses, offering an integrated toolkit of services to help accelerate positive impact. Building advisory relationships with partners like [Patagonia](#), Harbinger Foundation, Google.org, and the [Dragonfly Fund](#), have enabled more communities to access new pathways for funding, while collaboratively shifting funder approaches towards reciprocity and trust-based grantmaking.

Going forward, we will continue to integrate the many, flexible solutions at MakeWay including advised funds, grantmaking programs, the shared platform, collaboratives, and mission-aligned impact investments.

Over the next three years we look forward to deepening relationships with current funder partners and the communities that they seek to support, and welcoming new partners that are aligned with our organizational priorities.



Public Policy Engagement

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**Public Policy
Engagement**

Our commitment to community-led change assumes that governments play a key role. While communities can model and demand transformative change, governments can enact policies and create incentives for scale and sustainability.

MakeWay's history is filled with strong government relations and policy work. In the Pacific region, the legacy of the Great Bear Rainforest helped us learn to work across many different governments including First Nations.

Currently, in the North, we work with territory governments as a philanthropic partner to establish multi-stakeholder conservation agreements. We now have team members in Ottawa deepening work with the federal government to advance the strategic priorities of our community partners and of MakeWay.

Over the next three years we will expand policy development, research, and government relations efforts to advance federal, provincial and territory policy change on all seven organizational priority areas.

People and Values

MakeWay is a community of over 250 passionate people committed to supporting nature and communities thriving together. To live into the work of truth and reconciliation, equity and anti-racism, we are working to learn and lead better together—to cultivate changes that support wellbeing and build our capacity to do this work.

Our core values guide the MakeWay team, rooting us in PLACE and guiding our work forward.



Partnership

We are stronger when we work together. Because we believe that we are all connected, we build trust through reciprocity and transparency, seeking opportunities to share and learn from our partners.

Listening

Listening and being open helps us find the best solutions. Hearing out different perspectives helps us build empathy and makes us better colleagues, partners, and collaborators.



Action

We are committed to helping our partners solve problems and achieve their visions for change. We think innovatively and efficiently, work hard to fill gaps and find creative solutions.

Courage

We are not afraid to do things differently—to experiment to accelerate change. We take on complex challenges with courage and compassion. Rather than fall prey to fear and polarization, we choose optimism and perseverance.



Equity

Social, environmental, and economic equity is the essence of lasting positive change. We recognize that many people and communities face injustice and we believe that a healthy environment is a matter of social justice. We are committed to the implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP).

These next three years will be critical.



There is momentum at the community level to significantly advance reconciliation, community wealth, environmental protection, and new intersectional leadership – momentum that requires urgent funding for breakthrough. Similarly, there are national and regional opportunities to establish Indigenous Protected and Conservation Areas, food system change, more care-based social policies, new agreements for Indigenous governance, urgent climate commitments and so much more.

MakeWay is up for the challenge. This will require hard but joy-filled efforts, deepening our impact through trusting relationships, bolder grantmaking and supporting courageous changemakers.

So, let's make way for ecological balance and interconnectedness. Let's make way for collective wellbeing being borne from healing ourselves and healing broken systems.

Let's make way for nature and communities thriving together.

MakeWay is home to

MakeWay Foundation
(BN 868947797 RR0001)

MakeWay Charitable Society
(BN 130560188 RR0001)

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makeway.org

Contact

info@makeway.org

CONTACT US

