IMPACT REPORT

EVIDENCE FOR DEMOCRACY
FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020



Evidence for Democracy works to engage and empower the science community while cultivating public and political demand for evidence-based decision-making, through issue-based campaigns, original research, and our training and education program.

This year has been an unprecedented one, with the COVID-19 pandemic impacting all aspects of our lives and work. The pandemic has made it incredibly clear just how important it is that our governments are equipped to find and use the best available science to inform their decisions. Around the world we've seen decision-makers responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, some of whom have followed the evidence and some who have not. The difference in outcomes has been stark, and one thing is clear - we all benefit when governments make smart policy decisions, informed by the best available evidence.

Thanks to you, we have been able to continue standing up for science in the face of major challenges. This year, we released two new research reports, one on how Members of Parliament access evidence to inform decisions, and another on provincial science integrity. We ran a collaborative campaign to highlight science as a key issue during the federal election, ramped up our work to combat misinformation, and built upon our suite of training tools. Now, we're soon ready to share a new project on the role of grassroots organizing in support of science policy and we're getting started on a major new project on transparency. Alongside all of this, we have worked hard to keep our community informed about the ongoing pandemic, and to amplify the efforts of so many in the science community who are working tirelessly to keep us all safe.

VOTE SCIENCE CAMPAIGN

In the leadup to Canada's 2019 federal election, we partnered with a number of science policy and student organizations across Canada and led a campaign with the goal of making science and evidence key election issues.



Thanks to a strong collaboration, the Vote Science campaign included:

VOTE SCIENCE

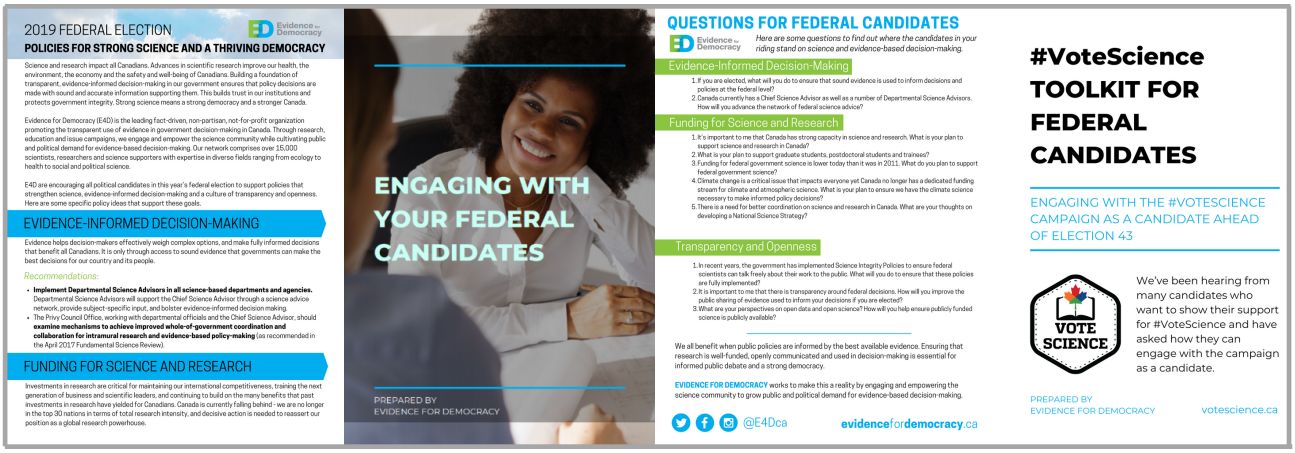
AN ONLINE PORTAL

serving as a "one stop shop" for information and ways to engage

A QUESTIONNAIRE distributed to all the major federal parties asking them to outline how their government would support science

SCIENCE POLICY QUESTIONNAIRE
WHERE DO THE PARTIES STAND?

RESOURCES to support voters to engage with their candidates including science policy recommendations, a toolkit, and a list of questions to ask election door-knockers + a toolkit for candidates on how they can stand up for science



2019 FEDERAL ELECTION
POLICIES FOR STRONG SCIENCE AND A THRIVING DEMOCRACY

EVIDENCE-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

FUNDING FOR SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

ENGAGING WITH YOUR FEDERAL CANDIDATES

PREPARED BY EVIDENCE FOR DEMOCRACY

QUESTIONS FOR FEDERAL CANDIDATES

Evidence-Informed Decision-Making

Funding for Science and Research

Transparency and Openness

@E4Dca

evidencefordemocracy.ca

#VoteScience TOOLKIT FOR FEDERAL CANDIDATES

ENGAGING WITH THE #VOTESCIENCE CAMPAIGN AS A CANDIDATE AHEAD OF ELECTION 43

We've been hearing from many candidates who want to show their support for #VoteScience and have asked how they can engage with the campaign as a candidate.

PREPARED BY EVIDENCE FOR DEMOCRACY

votescience.ca

A SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

of constituents sharing why science matters to them



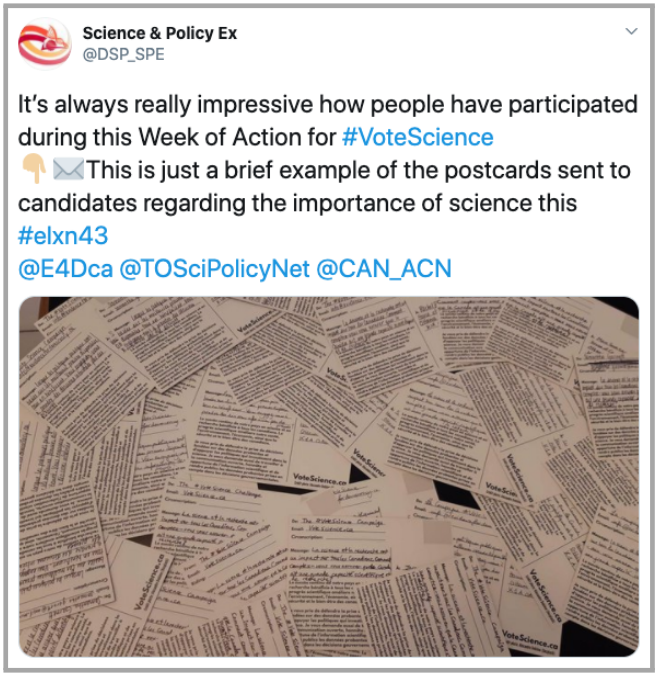


>10 EVENTS

across the country engaging candidates and voters on science and science-related election issues

>600 VOTERS

sent letters to their federal candidates calling for them to be champions for science and asking how they and their party planned to support science and evidence-based decision-making



On top of #VoteScience, E4D organized and hosted an all candidates debate on science and the environment in Ottawa's Vanier riding that drew a crowd of 150 consituents



TRUTH PLEDGE

Ahead of the 2019 federal election, we embarked on a project to equip the science community with tools to elevate truth and combat misinformation based on the latest research in the field:

2 WEBINARS on how to recognize and combat the spread of misinformation, including a collaboration with Buzzfeed Canada



TRUTH PLEDGE

The Truth Pledge encourages our community to commit to do their part to stop the spread of misinformation online

TRUTH TOOLKIT

The Truth Toolkit is full of tangible, evidence-based tips to help our community combat misinformation



A new series of **INFOGRAPHICS** of evidence-based information on topics where misinformation is common, based on the “inoculation method”



The Inoculation Method:

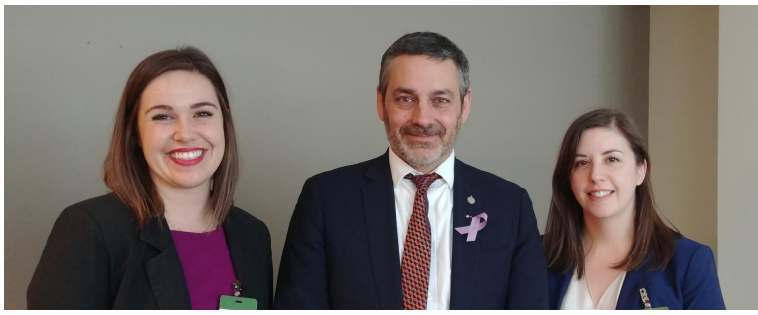
- Let your family, friends, coworkers know when you've seen misinformation spreading on a certain subject (but don't share the misinformation).
- Studies have shown that when we're warned about misinformation, we think more critically about what we see.

>400 PEOPLE have signed on to the truth pledge, and 130 people have attended our misinformation webinars. As well, E4D has been invited to share our work on misinformation at 13 talks on the topic attended by over 1700 people.

We’re also very excited to build on our misinformation work. This summer we kicked off a new research project aiming to explore the latest research on misinformation, better understand the barriers that scientists face around misinformation, and exploring potential policy solutions for combatting misinformation in Canada. More on this work will be coming soon!

RESEARCH REPORT: EVIDENCE IN ACTION



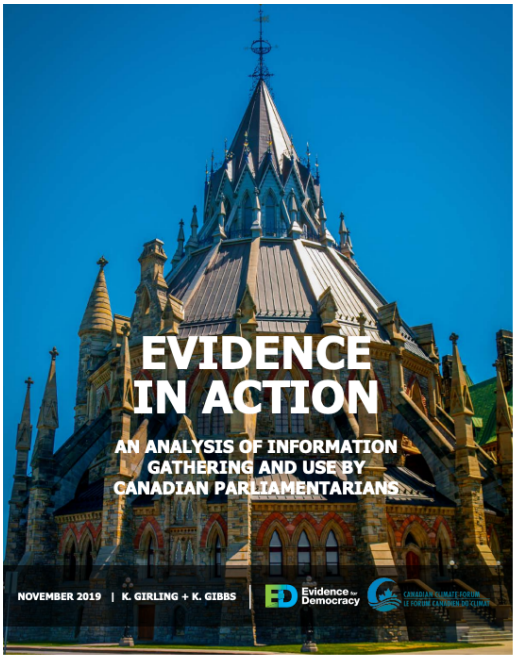






In November we released a new report called *Evidence in Action: An Analysis of Information Gathering and Use by Canadian Parliamentarians*. This report was the product of a year of research aiming to better understand how Canadian parliamentarians find and use evidence in practice.

Based on one-on-one interviews with Canadian MPs and their staff, we found that even when parliamentarians want to use the best available evidence, there are challenges to evidence-based decision-making in practice, like limited time, challenges finding and interpreting science, perceived bias, or lack of expertise. The report identified gaps in the process of getting science and evidence to parliamentarians, and made several recommendations on how to improve this process including: helping scientists understand and connect to parliamentary committees, policy-relevant science communication, tools to help MPs better connect to experts, and improved parliamentary research capabilities (such as more funding for the Library of Parliament).



The reception of this work was very positive, and E4D was invited to share the work in a wide number of forums, including at universities, the Canadian Science Policy Conference, parliamentary and senate libraries and more. As well E4D held a sold-out launch event for the report in the fall. Now, E4D is using the recommendations to better inform our own work to more effectively close the gap between evidence and government. This includes new trainings informed by the report, such as a new webinar on writing briefing notes, and exploring new tools to help parliamentarians find experts efficiently.



RESEARCH REPORT: SPOTLIGHT ON INTEGRITY

Government science integrity should ensure science is well supported, that scientists can speak about their work, and that evidence is integrated into decisions without political interference.

This spring, in partnership with the Professional Employees Association of BC, we released our newest research report *Spotlight on Integrity: An Update on the State of Science in British Columbia* which explored scientific integrity at the provincial level, and aimed to make recommendations on how to support science and evidence-informed policy in the provincial government.



This report is an update on our 2017 report *Oversight at Risk*. Here's what we found:

48% of scientific professionals in the BC public service lack sufficient research capacity to meet their ministerial mandates

93% believe the public would benefit from greater professional capacity in the public service

76% of scientific professionals in the BC public service feel that vacant positions or hiring delays affect the ability of their Ministry to fulfill its mandate

Many scientific professionals in the BC public service feel a lack of time and resources prevent them from taking part in professional development

79% are in favor of reducing barriers to attending trainings and conferences

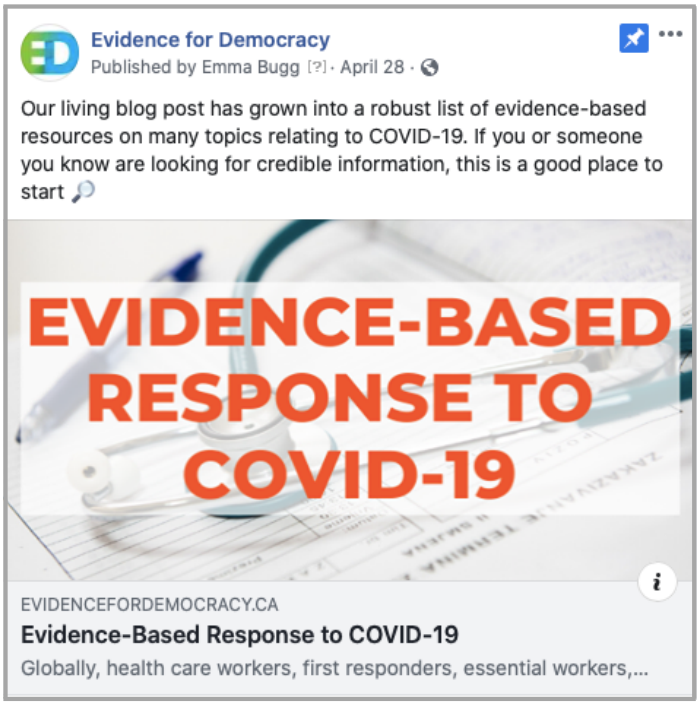
43% of Qualified Professionals in the BC public service feel that political interference compromises the use of science in policy

In an effort to make sure these findings make their way into the hands of decision-makers, we ran a digital campaign which saw nearly 200 British Columbians reach out to their MLA's to share the report and recommendations for strengthening science integrity in BC. As well, E4D shared this work with the public through two webinars and a podcast.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

The importance of our organizational mandate in the face of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has been especially clear. In the midst of adapting to the challenges brought by this crisis, we have set out to make sure science remains at the forefront of the conversation.

To keep our community informed, we created a living blog post of curated evidence-based resources on COVID-19 including information on understanding physical distancing, increasing testing capacity, combatting misinformation, skill sharing, strengthening data collection, and reopening responsibly.



The COVID-19 pandemic has brought with it significant mental health challenges for so many of us.

That's why, led by an E4D volunteer, we also released a list of mental health resources accessible during COVID-19.

Since the start of the pandemic, members of the science community across all sectors have rallied together to take action. To help share these efforts, E4D hosted a virtual Q&A event with experts leading collaborative response efforts in the Canadian science community, including two government departmental science advisors, leaders of covid19resources.ca, and a rep from the Chief Science Advisor's office.



Thanks to COVID-19 Resources Canada founders Dr. Guillaume Bourque and Dr. Tara Moriarty; Dr. Masha Cemma of the Office of the Chief Science Advisor; Dr. Cara Tannenbaum, Departmental Science Advisor at Health Canada; Dr. Sarah Gallagher, Departmental Science Advisor at the Canadian Space Agency; and Marie Franquin, Co-President, Science & Policy Exchange



As COVID-19 continues to impact all aspects of our lives, E4D will continue to monitor the fast-changing situation, and will continue to update and adapt our work as needed. Internally, as a small, digitally savvy organization we were able to make the transition to remote work smoothly and while we did have to cancel one event (see you next year March for Science!) we've been lucky to be able to continue our projects without major disruption.

KEEPING SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC EYE

E4D staff and board members contributed to

44 MEDIA ARTICLES AND RADIO INTERVIEWS

E4D staff and NoE members contributed to and published

6 OPINION ARTICLES

in major media outlets, were guests on

5 PODCASTS

and created

18 BLOG POSTS

on E4D's website.



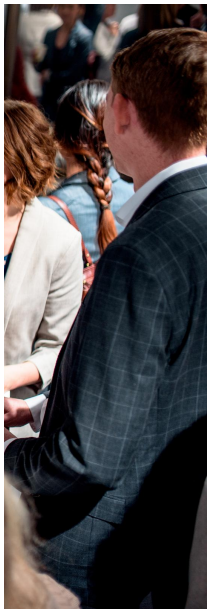
CREATING A COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT AND ADVOCATE FOR SCIENCE

Hosted, participated in, and contributed as a speaker at

50 EVENTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY & ABROAD ATTENDED BY 4200 PEOPLE

bringing together researchers, students, and science aficionados!



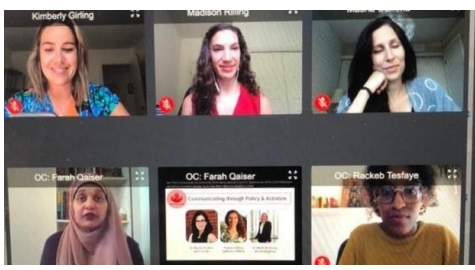












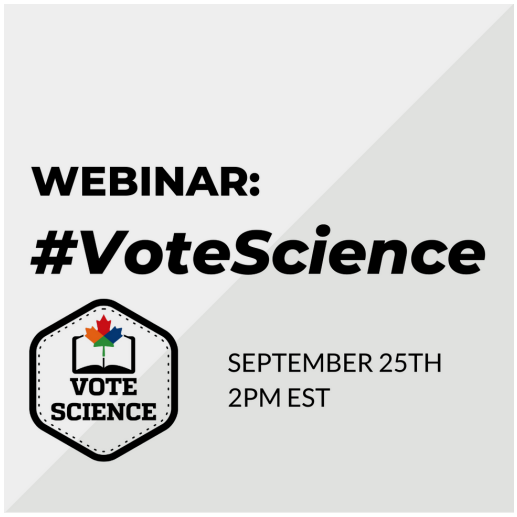
DELIVERED 6 WEBINARS

Training nearly

300 SUPPORTERS

on misinformation, public engagement, and communicating science to policymakers.













"Attended another great webinar by Evidence for Democracy on how to combat misinformation during this time. The inoculation method ie. preparing ppl for the misinfo rather than retweet is genius! Empowers others to think for themselves. Looking forward to the next one!"
- E4D webinar attendee

LOOKING FORWARD

During an unprecedented year, E4D has continued to grow and remains focused on supporting Canada's science community to uphold evidence-based decision-making.

Thanks to the support of grants, we added one full-time and two part-time staff to our team, two of which joined us during the pandemic. Meet our newest staff:



Aden Gebremeskel
Operations and Finance Manager



Tej Heer
Senior Research Associate



Charlee Heath
Research Assistant



Briony Lalor
Board Member

In January, we brought together our Board of Directors for a strategic planning session at which board and staff determined organizational goals for the next three years.

We have continued to work with our board to navigate the changing landscape brought by COVID-19. We also welcomed a new board member, Briony Lalor.

We have a lot of new projects underway that we are excited to share with you soon including new work on misinformation, a major upcoming project on government transparency, research informing grassroots organizing around science in Canada, and additions to our suite of training tools.

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

We are lucky to work alongside many great initiatives and organizations in our efforts to support science and strengthen our democracy. By collaborating and amplifying one another's work, we can all have a greater impact. Below are just a few of the programs and groups we were lucky to work with this year:

COVID-19 Resources Canada

GreenPAC

AAAS
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

CSPC

PEA
BC's Union for Professionals

KROEGER POLICY CONNECT

TSPN Toronto Science Policy Network

SCIENCE & POLICY EXCHANGE
DIALOGUE SCIENCES & POLITIQUES

And all our *Vote Science* collaborators

BREAKDOWN OF E4D'S FUNDING SOURCES

While COVID-19 presented a new urgency to our work to advance the use of science in government decision-making, it also brought with it significant challenges for many organizations and individuals.

Like many organizations, we have felt the effects of COVID-19. Fundraising has proven to be challenging during this time with so many causes, organizations, and individuals in urgent need of support. We have unfortunately lost a number of monthly doors due to financial strain caused by COVID-19.

We are so grateful to all of our donors, and especially to our dedicated community of monthly donors, for their generous support which has allowed us to continue supporting our staff and standing up for science in Canada throughout this unpredictable time. We are also extremely grateful to the foundations who have awarded us grants and who have assured us that those grants remain in place.

BREAKDOWN OF E4D'S FUNDING SOURCES

The work of Evidence for Democracy is made possible thanks to the support of:

>1800 INDIVIDUAL DONORS

& 250 MONTHLY DONORS

as well as the support of the following foundations and organizations:

Wilburforce foundation
Trottier foundation
Hewlett foundation
Professional Employees Association of BC

THANK YOU!

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