



# Summary of the Evaluation of the Canada Service Corps – 2018 to 2023

## Program description

The Canada Service Corps aims to promote civic engagement among youth across Canada aged 15 to 30. It has a particular focus on Indigenous and under-served youth. It provides funding through grants and contributions to help with the costs of creating, promoting, and easing access to volunteer service opportunities. These opportunities can take the form of volunteer service placements or youth-led projects (micro-grants). Over the evaluation period, the Program awarded **\$204.4 million** in grants and contributions. This allowed organizations to carry out **227 projects** to help youth overcome barriers to civic engagement.

## Key findings



The Program was described as unique, valuable, and complementary to school-led programs by most recipients. Youth participants felt that opportunities through the Program address some needs and gaps in youth civic engagement and in their community.



The Program is reaching Indigenous and many under-served youth populations: **79% of participating youth** in fiscal years 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023 identified as one or more of the under-served groups targeted by the Program. However, some groups face more barriers to participation and completion of their volunteer service opportunities than others.



Most Program participants felt that their experience helped them develop skills, meaningful connections, and improved self-confidence. They also felt that the Program is having positive impacts on communities.



Information about the Program funding opportunities was accessible to organizations, but the extent of youth's ease of access to information and awareness of the Program is mixed. This was dependent on the extent to which youth were involved in or connected with networks or organizations familiar with pathways to such opportunities.



There were some challenges with Program implementation. Namely, lack of predictable funding, tight timelines for submission, and lack of clear communication from the Department. However, changes have been made to respond to these issues.

## Recommendations

1. Continue to explore alternative program design approaches, within a Grants and Contributions framework, to understand and address barriers to youth civic engagement among Indigenous and under-served youth.
2. Continue to take steps to improve awareness and visibility of Canada Service Corps and the volunteer service opportunities available for youth.
3. Take steps to improve data capacity and collection methods to better support and inform policy analysis, research, and evaluation activities.

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The full report for the evaluation of the Canada Service Corps – 2018 to 2023 is available online.

