



# DOHaD Canada Inc.

## Annual Report 2023-2024

DOHaD Canada is a Regional Society of the International DOHaD Society committed to advancing knowledge on early development, improving the health and well-being of Canadians today and into the future, and promoting healthy futures on a global scale.

**Mission:** DOHaD Canada is committed to advancing the understanding of the developmental origins of health and disease, fostering multidisciplinary collaborations, and translating research findings into actionable policies and practices that ensure the well-being of Canadians from conception to adulthood, leading the way for a brighter and healthier future for generations to come.

DOHaD Canada strives to foster equity, diversity, and inclusion within its ranks and create a welcoming and inclusive culture that prioritizes the voices and experiences of equity-deserving groups in all areas of academia, education, research, and advocacy.

**Vision:** We envision a Canada where the principles of DOHaD are integrated into health policies, medical practices, and public awareness, ensuring that every individual has the best possible start in life, regardless of socio-economic background or geography.



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## President Remarks

Over the past year, there were four key changes to business as usual for DOHaD Canada.

Firstly, with the aim of making our annual meeting more multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinarity, and also cost-effective and sustainable, DOHaD Canada partnered with several perinatal and child health research groups (CNPRM, ENRICH, CAMCCO, CHEER, MICYRN) to host the first joint Perinatal conference in Vancouver in June 2023. This DOHaD Canada conference shared meeting time with CNPRM, its long-time conference partner, as well as having its own dedicated time. With over 80 participants at the DOHaD Canada meeting, with many attendees from the other research groups, it was a successful first-time venture. Congratulations to our award winners, Jess Hercus and Elisabeth Balin Xie for their prize-winner Oral and Poster presentations respectively and a huge thanks to Dr. Julian Christians for his and his team's work in organizing the event and to Dr. Gerald Giesbrecht for leading the DOHaD Canada's Scientific committee support platform.

Secondly, our energetic Trainee Committee and Outreach committee have all had a successful year. The Trainee committee launched a virtual seminar series for DOHaD Canada trainees, which has been well received by our community and we look forward to its continued success in 2024-25. Thanks to co-chairs Drs. Elnaz Vaghef-Mehrabany and Gillian England Mason, for this launch and all their work leading this group. This was complemented by the hard work of our Outreach committee led by Dr. Stephane Bourque and Claudia Holody and the publication of the DOHaD Canada newsletter in its new format. Thank you!

Thirdly, there was a membership model change in 2023-24, whereby DOHaD Canada became a regional society of the DOHaD International Society. As part of this change, International Society members in the categories of Standard, Trainee/ECR or Undergraduate members, who identified as members of DOHaD Canada, became DOHaD Canada voting members. Folks who selected Associate membership, or who have decided not to join the International society remain within our community but are not able to vote on DOHaD Canada society matters. Additionally, as part of these changes our By-laws and Terms of Reference have been updated and your council has worked hard over the past year to finalize these important incorporation documents which will now go to vote at our next AGM.

Finally, at our election this year we welcomed Dr. Kristen Connor, we look forward to working with you. We'd also like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Ryan Van Lieshout who has stepped down. We thank Dr. Van Lieshout for his service/commitment. We would also like to thank Dr Maria Ospina for her three years of outstanding service as DOHaD Executive Secretary.



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In closing, 2023-24 has been a year of new developments at DOHaD Canada. Looking forward to 2024-25 there again promises to be many new and exciting changes and we welcome all member's input as we move forward.

Anita Kozyrskyj  
Outgoing President, 2023-2024

# Secretary Annual Report

## 1. Society Membership

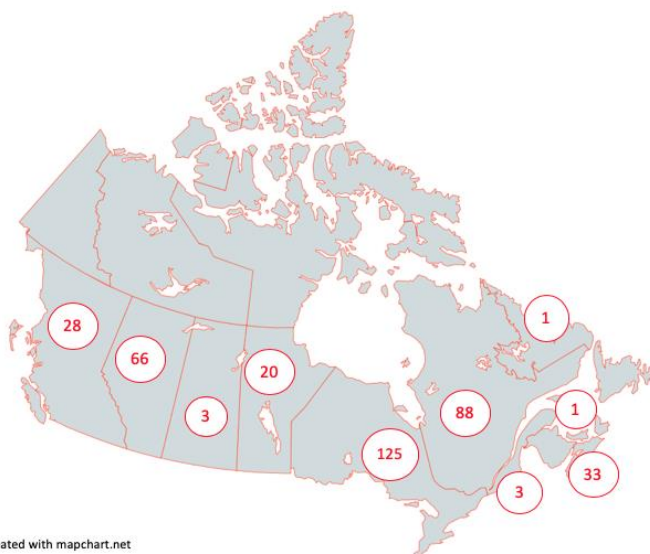
- Since our last AGM meeting on July 20, 2023, after the transition of DOHaD Canada as a Regional Society of DOHaD International, the membership model of DOHaD Canada was altered to align with the new Regional Society status requirements of International DOHaD. As of May 2024, DOHaD Canada’s official membership was 71 members. Under our Corporation By-laws, these members are now listed as having Class A membership. To respect the wishes of our community who have not joined International DOHaD, but still wish to remain engaged with DOHaD Canada activities, a Class B membership has been established in our corporation to reflect their engagement in DOHaD Canada’s mission and values.
- Membership characteristic

### Under the previous membership model

Trainee	212
Faculty	204
Other/non-faculty	32
<b>May, 2023</b>	<b>448</b>

### Under the new membership model

Trainee/ECR	26
Undergraduate	2
Standard	37
Associate	6
<b>May, 2024</b>	<b>71</b>



Province	N (May 2023)	N (May 2024)
Alberta	80	17
British Columbia	29	13
Manitoba	23	4
New Brunswick	3	0
Newfoundland & Labrador	3	2
Nova Scotia	34	3
Ontario	153	19
PEI	1	0
Québec	89	7
Saskatchewan	4	2
International	29	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>71</b>

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## 2. DOHaD Canada Elections

- The 5<sup>th</sup> election for Council seats of the Society took place between November 2023 and February 2024.
- Kristin Connor was elected for a first term of three years to occupy the DOHaD Canada Council member seat (2024 – 2027).
- One sitting Council member whose first term would expire in 2024 was reappointed for a second and final term of three years as no other nominees ran for election:
  - Shela Hirani (SK)
- We did not receive any nominations for the incoming President. As per our current Terms of Reference, a Council member could nominate or self-nominate for the Interim Incoming President position until the next council elections are called in three months. DOHaD Canada Council approved the nomination of Tim Regnault as Interim President until new elections are called.
- Council ratified the appointment of John Krzeczowski for the Secretary position and Stephen Renauld as Treasurer (beginning July 1, 2024).

*We thank all Council members for their continued service to our Society.*

## 3. Council Activities

- A total of nine (seven regular meetings, two extraordinary meetings (May 29<sup>th</sup>, Mar 4<sup>th</sup>) Executive meetings, and six Council meetings have been conducted between August 2023 and August 2024.
- Oversaw and supported the 7<sup>th</sup> annual meeting (DOHaD Canada 2024).
- DOHaD Canada Council members have worked to develop a Framework for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization, and Indigeneity (EDII) to foster a safe, and welcoming climate and culture within DOHaD Canada that prioritizes the voices and experiences of equity-deserving groups in our activities within academia, education, research, professional activities, and public service. The framework is inspired by Belonging, Dignity, and Justice (BDJ) values that guide the implementation of EDII practices in DOHaD Canada's policies and processes. A BDJ/EDII Interest Group led by Dr. Deb Sloboda has been established to work with the DOHaD Canada Executive, Council, and Chairs of the four DOHaD Canada Committees to ensure that BDJ values and EDII principles are incorporated into all Society activities. DOHaD Canada members, and particularly those who self-identify with equity-seeking groups are encouraged to contact Dr. Sloboda to join this Interest Group and help guide the Society to build a more equitable, diverse, and just Society.
- Created a new DOHaD Canada logo
- Complete review of Terms of Reference
- Updated society bylaws and Terms of Reference updated to align with the bylaws
- Elections: Sheila Hirani to serve a second term representing Saskatchewan, Kristen Connor will represent Ontario (first term)
- Tim Regnault volunteered for Interim President Position after no nominations were received for president

#### 4. Updated Council Composition

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Anita Kozyrskyj	Outgoing President
Stephen Matthews	Advisor to council
Tim Regnault	Interim President
Stephen Renaud	Treasurer
John Krzeczkowski	Secretary
Victoria De Luca	Administrative support
<i>Pablo Nepomnsashy</i>	<i>Rotating Executive member (Sept 1-Dec 31 2024 )</i>
<i>Ian Weaver</i>	<i>Rotating Executive member (Jan 1-Apr30 2025)</i>
<i>Gerry Giesbrecht</i>	<i>Rotating Executive member (May 1-Aug 30 2025)</i>

#### **Elected Council Members**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Province</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Term started</b>	<b>Term ends</b>
Stephane Bourque	Council member	AB	Second	Jul, 2022	Jun 2025
Vern Dolinsky	Council member	MB	Second	Jul, 2022	Jun 2025
Gillian Englan-Mason	Council member	Trainee rep	First	Jul, 2023	Jun 2026
Gerald Giesbrecht	Council member	AB	Second	Jul, 2023	Jun 2026
Sheila Hirani	Council member	SK	Second	Jul, 2024	Jun, 2027
Maryam Kebbe	Council member	NB	First	Jul, 2023	Jun 2026
Mike Kobor	Council member	BC	Second	Jul, 2022	Jun, 2025
Anita Kozyrskyj	Outgoing President	AB	Second	Jul, 2023	Jun 2026
Tina Montreuil	Council member	QC	First	Jul, 2023	Jun 2026
Pablo Nepomnaschy	Council member	BC	Second	Jul, 2022	Jun, 2025
John E. Krzeczkowski	Secretary		First	Jul, 2024	Jun, 2027
Sophie Petropoulos	Council member	QC	First	Jul, 2023	Jun 2026
Timothy Regnault	Interim President			Jul, 2024	
Steve Matthews	Council Member and Advisor to council	ON			
Stephen Renaud	Treasurer		First	Jul, 2024	Jun, 2027
Deb Sloboda	EDII Chair (council member)	ON	First	Jul, 2024	Jun, 2027
Kozeta Miliku	EDII Co-Chair (council member)	ON	First	Jul, 2024	Jun, 2027
Elnaz Vaghef-Mehrabani	Council member	Trainee rep	First	Jul, 2023	Feb 2026
Ian Weaver	Council member	NS	Second	Jul, 2022	Feb 2025



Kristin Connor	Council member	ON	First	Jul, 2024	Jun, 2027
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Elections will take place to fill the positions of those who are in their 2<sup>nd</sup> term which ends in 2025

## DOHaD Canada Committees – Overview of 2023 – 2024 Activities

The Society has five Committees, each tasked with its own set of Terms of Reference, whose objectives all work towards the objectives of the Society.

### 5.1. Education

**Chair(s):** Tim Regnault and Gerlinde Metz

**Members:** Tracey Galloway, Sandeep Raha, Sophie Petropoulos, Stephan Dombrowski

The committee has reviewed its terms of reference and committee composition. The group also reviewed its mission and redeveloped a plan to roll out a series of education and training resources in accordance with the committee's mission in 2024\_25. This plan is due for discussion in the Fall of 2024, followed by a presentation with a budget request to the council. The overarching mandate of the plan is one that includes elements for trainee development and educational support, but also presents resources with which to support our society's wider community educational activities, especially in the public domain. The plan will involve interactions with not only the DOHaD Canada committees, but also engagement with other DOHaD Societies and in particular their related education and training groups. In addition to these activities the committee continues to support one of CIHR - Health Research Training Platform Pilot (H RTP) Funding Opportunities – ENRICH, with mentorship members and participation in ENRICH learner activities. With these activities 2024 is set to be a truly developmental year for the committee setting the stage for future education success.

### 5.2. Trainee Development Committee

**Co-Chairs:** Elnaz Vaghef-Mehrabani, Gillian England-Mason

**Members:** Savana Biondic, Innocent Uzochukwu Okagu, Hauna Sheyholislami, Jessica Laura Puranda, Anahita Yadegari

**Recent Activities:** In June of 2024, the TDC team was expanded, as one new trainee joined the committee. Over the past year, the TDC has been focused on five main tasks:

(i) The organization and delivery of the DOHaD Canada trainee seminar series. The seminar series was developed to provide a supportive and collegial atmosphere for trainees to learn and grow. Since its inception, the TDC has successfully delivered five bi-monthly trainee seminars.

(ii) The development of the DOHaD Canada trainee Slack page to provide a virtual hub for communication and community building. The Slack page information was circulated to DOHaD Canada members via email, social media, and the DOHaD Canada newsletter. The TDC membership has been active on the Slack page and are continuing to encourage DOHaD Canada faculty members and their trainees to join.

(iii) Assisting with the development of the upcoming career panel workshop. This workshop was originally planned for early 2024 but has been rescheduled a few times based on the availability of the panelists. The TDC co-chairs have had meetings with the Education Committee to help determine the scope and background of panelists to be invited, the format of the workshop (i.e., an informal "town hall" style), and to suggest potential moderators.



(iv) Co-organizing a pre-conference panel discussion and trainee networking events with the CNPRM trainee representatives at the 2024 Perinatal Child Health Research Meeting in Vancouver. We also sent out invitations to our trainees to join a Slack page that we shared with the CNPRM trainees, to connect with their peers before the conference about travelling and accommodation.

(v) Sending out a survey to trainees to collect their feedback on our ongoing initiatives and suggestions for future initiatives.

**Future activities:** The TDC will continue to actively work towards: (i) recruiting new trainees to present their research in the ongoing seminar series, (ii) encouraging members to join the Slack page and participate in the channels, (iii) planning the future career panel workshop. In addition to these ongoing activities, the TDC plans to (iv) create a trainee-specific account on social media (discussions ongoing and to be reinvigorated), (v) further expand membership, and specifically prioritize the increased representation of Black, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIAP+, and persons living with disabilities in the next selection round of members, and (vi) organize trainees-led mini-workshops in different areas (e.g., drafting a compelling resume, EDIA in teaching and research, mapping out a mentorship plan, etc.).

### 5.3. Engagement and Communications Committee

**Chair:** Stephane Bourque

**Members:** Vern Dolinsky, Claudia Holody, Kristin Connor, Steve Renaud

Over the past year, the Engagement, Communications and Outreach committee has done its best to fulfill its mandate of sharing information relevant to our members. This has largely been achieved through regular emails, newsletters, and updates on social media platforms. We are currently putting the final touches on the Summer 2024 issue of 'DOHaD Digest', which will be disseminated before the upcoming AGM.

In the past, the ECO has made a concerted effort to disseminate information directly related to DOHaD Canada – i.e. updates from our society and from the International DOHaD Society. More recently, we have begun collaborating with other scientific societies to share information about upcoming conferences and opportunities with the goal of reaching wider audiences. As such, if any DOHaD Canada member has information about upcoming events or other announcements they would like to share with the DOHaD Canada Community, please don't hesitate to send us the details and we'll make sure that's disseminated through the appropriate channels.

Over the next year, the ECO committee will be focusing on two areas. The first is member engagement – we want to reach out to our members to gain more feedback on how DOHaD Canada can best serve its members, and what strategic initiatives are most conducive to achieving its mission. The second, is website development. The goal is to make the website the central hub for communications and keeping members in the know.

Finally, the ECO committee has had a considerable turnover in its members in the past year. We've been fortunate to recruit two outstanding individuals, Vern Dolinsky (University of Manitoba) and Jessica Puranda (University of Ottawa). We've also had several members step down, including Anita Kozyrskij (University of Alberta) and more recently Steve Renaud (Western University), as they took on executive responsibilities of interim president (2023-2024) and treasurer (2024-2025), respectively. The ECO committee is therefore looking for new members, please reach out to [communications@dohad.ca](mailto:communications@dohad.ca) if interested.



#### 5.4. Scientific Program Committee

**Chair:** Gerald Giesbrecht

**Members:** Ian Weaver, Jennifer Thompson, Meghan Riddell, Sophie Petropoulos, Innocent Okagu (trainee representative), Tara Perrot, Jennifer Khoury, Tina Montreuil, Serge McGraw

The Annual DOHaD Canada meeting that took place in Vancouver June 3-4, 2024 presented a new opportunity this year to collaborate with other organizations that wished to hold their annual meetings simultaneously. DOHaD Canada has always held its meeting in collaboration with CNPRM, but this year's meeting represented a consortium of perinatal and child health research organizations including CNPRM, ENRICH, CAMCCO, CHEER, MICYRN, IMPaCT, and RareKids-Can. The DOHaD Canada meeting was chaired by Julian Christians. Along with the opportunities and financial efficiency that was generated by cohousing all these meetings simultaneously, there were also some 'growing pains' and learning opportunities that required additional effort and flexibility to work out all the details. Thanks to Julain Christians and Tim Regnault for stepping up in a big way to support the planning for this meeting.

Future Activities:

The primary activity for the committee in the coming year will be planning the 2025 DOHaD Canada meeting, which is yet to be scheduled. We will again be joining with the above-listed perinatal research groups to offer a combined meeting. Our hope is to build upon and refine the efforts from the past year to offer an exceptional meeting experience. The committee welcomes feedback from DOHaD members regarding meeting planning. If you have any suggestions, please send them to Gerry Giesbrecht, ggiesbre@ucalgary.ca.

#### 5.5. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigeneity

**Co-Chairs:** Deb Sloboda, Kozeta Miliku

**Members:** Eric Mohns

**Recent activities:**

DOHaD Canada EDII was established in March 2024. During these months, the committee has drafted an initial set of TOR and Strategic Activities. In June 2024, the committee welcomed the trainee member, Eric Mohns, an Indigenous doctoral student.

Future activities:

1. Initiating a call for committee members with a focus on purposive sampling of racialized and Indigenous individuals.
2. Developing a survey to gather detailed information on our society's membership (ongoing).
3. Conducting a retrospective analysis of our society, examining aspects such as leadership, award recipients, and the representation of members based on sex, gender, and ethnic/racial backgrounds.

### DOHaD Congress 2024 - Vancouver

- Report attached



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## **2023-2024 Planned Activities:**

- Presidential elections
- Elections for 5 council positions

Prepared by:  
John E. Krzeczowski, PhD  
Secretary  
DOHaD Canada Inc.



## Treasurer's Report

DOHaD Canada, Inc.

Treasurer's Report 2023

Financial year July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

For details, please see the attached financial summaries July 1 2023 – June 30 2024

The year reporting 2023-2024 saw a continuation of face-to-face operations for many of us including DOHaD Canada. One of the main highlights this year was the DOHaD Canada annual meeting, which took place at the Sheraton Wall Center in Vancouver, BC on June 3-4, 2024 in collaboration with the Perinatal & Child Health Research Meeting (June 3-7, 2024). DOHaD Canada was well represented at the meeting. In addition, in 2023-24 the DOHaD International Society realigned relationships with regional societies. This reorganization changed how membership fees are allocated to regional societies, and new mechanisms are currently being operationalized.

The continuing direct benefit of members belonging to both DOHaD Canada and the International DOHaD Society is the return of 50% of the international members' DOHaD Society membership fee back to DOHaD Canada. This income allows DOHaD Canada to develop programs that align with the vision and mission of DOHaD Canada. Since Society status was conferred (2016), we have received International DOHaD Society's reimbursements of 50% of the International members' DOHaD Society membership payments equaling a total of \$17,050.04 CAD up until 2022/23. For 2023/24, International DOHaD is realigning their reimbursement plans and it is expected that monies for 2023/2024 membership will be received in 2024/25. Additionally, the International DOHaD Society also sponsors regional society meetings, and in 2023-24 DOHaD Canada received \$1,253.09 in support of our annual consortium meeting.

Returned membership fees from the International DOHaD Society and small surpluses from scientific meetings currently constitute DOHaD Canada's principal sources of annual income. Additionally, in 2023 the International DOHaD Society held their meeting in Vancouver with DOHaD Canada as the host regional Society. DOHaD Canada's grant from this meeting was \$75,056.40.

The 2023/24 revenue was \$78,876.96 compared to \$23,037.58 for 2022/23. This revenue was made up of DOHaD Canada meeting registration (amounting to approximately \$2,500), DOHaD Canada's grant from the DOHaD International meeting (\$75,056.40), meeting support granted from the International DOHaD Society (\$1,253.09) and other income (\$67.47, mostly from accrued interest).

In 2023/24, DOHaD Canada's total expenses were \$9,930.13. The most significant expense was a legal expense associated with the revision of DOHaD Canada's incorporation documents to reflect new relationships with DOHaD International as well as several significant changes to DOHaD Canada's Terms of Reference (\$6,834.15). Other expenses included advertising and development (\$945), bank charges (\$32.50), insurance (\$1,518.48), and \$600 for speakers to attend the 2023 annual meeting.

It should be noted that DOHaD Canada's administrative support continues to be provided through the Alliance for Human Development, Lunenfeld Tanenbaum Research Institute remains very generously in-kind and significantly reduces DOHaD Canada operating costs.



In 2023/24, revenue exceeded expenses resulting in a net gain of \$68,946.83 compared to a loss in 2022/23 of \$2,992.62. This gain in 2023/24 resulted in an increase in equity from \$6,432.20 to \$77,293.15, driven in large part by the grant received from the International DOHaD Society meeting held in 2023.

As of the 2024 financial year end, DOHaD Canada's total assets were \$77,293.15 and there were \$2,000 in liabilities (i.e. money still owed to vendors for services rendered).

Concluding remarks and 2023/24 objectives:

- Further broadening of the membership base and diversification of income streams will be needed going forward if DOHaD Canada is to fully develop programs that align with its vision and mission.

Important objectives for 2024/25 include:

- With the influx of revenue in 2023/24 received through a grant from the International DOHaD Society meeting, a major priority for DOHaD Canada is to decide how to strategically use this grant in order to further the society's mission and entice new membership in the International DOHaD Society. This is vital because membership in the international society (and DOHaD Canada) are a main source of annual revenue.
- Maintenance of incorporation status and associated CRA activities.
- Development and support of DOHaD Canada committee missions.
- Exploring sustainable society sponsorship options.

Yours truly,

Stephen Renaud  
Treasurer  
DOHaD Canada Inc. August 21, 2024