

# 2025

## ANNUAL REPORT

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# REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT



**SEANNA  
WATSON**

President

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**I WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND MY HEARTFELT THANKS TO ALL THOSE I HAVE WORKED WITH AT CFIC OVER THE YEARS.**

Disturbing global events in the past year have demonstrated the need for humanism, and in the past year, CFIC has worked on several fronts to help highlight and champion humanist values in Canada and around the world. Thanks to the donations of our members and supporters, CFIC has been able to continue our programming, including an ongoing series on nuclear energy, the continuation of our weekly Secular Chat and monthly Living without Religion Zoom meetings, and even a webinar on the ethics of duck hunting. Our Podcast for Inquiry is now in its 5th year with the indefatigable host Leslie Rosenblood, and we continue to produce our monthly newsletter, Critical Links.

Over the past year, as members and contributors to the broader humanist community, CFIC partnered with BC Humanists on the Secular Pastors project (final report coming soon). We also sponsored a number of conferences across the country, and our Secular Chair, Leslie Rosenblood, made presentations at several of them.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sandra Dunham, our Executive Director of Development (EDD), and Mark Maharaj, our Office Manager, who work to make our geographically dispersed organization run smoothly. CFIC is largely a volunteer organization, and I would also like to thank the members of the board and council, and the other volunteers who make our work possible.

And now, it is time for me to say goodbye. After several years as Branch Manager for CFIC Ottawa, joining the board in 2015, becoming vice president in 2019, and spending the last 3 years as President, I have made the decision to step down as CFIC president.

I will still be a member of the board and council to assist with the transition to the new leadership.

“

**YOUR HUMANIST  
COMMUNITY  
FOR SCIENTIFIC,  
SKEPTICAL,  
SECULAR,  
AND RATIONAL  
INQUIRY.**

— Centre for Inquiry Canada

”

# REPORT ON SECULARISM



**LESLIE  
ROSENBLOOD**

Secular Chair and  
Host of Podcast for Inquiry

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**PODCAST FOR  
INQUIRY**

## **WHILE MANY GOVERNMENTS MOVE AWAY FROM THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE, CFIC CONTINUES TO PROMOTE SECULARISM, BOTH IN CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD.**

In the past year, CIFIC has focused on the public funding of religious schools, tracking the challenge of Quebec's Bill 21 (religious symbols law) as the Supreme Court prepares to hear the case, and changing the language of the [misleading census question about religious affiliation](#).

We know that stopping public funding of religious schools is a generational endeavour. We explored why this is the case in Ontario in Podcast for Inquiry's [Greg Oliver asks: Why is religious discrimination official provincial educational funding policy?](#) In Alberta, [increased funding to charter and independent schools, the majority of which are religious](#) has raised concerns that Canada may be moving in the wrong direction on this issue. Leslie Rosenblood, CFIC's Secular Chair, spoke about Ontario's separate school system at the Society of Freethinkers' annual conference in Kitchener.

CFIC has continued to explore the issues of [mandatory religious ceremony participation in the armed forces](#). We encourage armed forces personnel who feel compelled to participate in religious ceremonies or feel discriminated against for their refusal to do so to make a complaint within the forces. The armed forces now has a [humanist chaplain](#) (Podcast for Inquiry [spoke with Marie-Claire Khadij](#)), suggesting that [needed changes are coming](#), though slowly.

Internationally, government legislation and decision-making based on religious beliefs seems to be on the rise. Afghanistan continues to increase restrictions placed on women.

In Iraq, a new bill "[would let clerics rule according to their interpretation of Islamic law](#)", which might legalize child marriage. Closer to home, many key positions in the United States are filled by [Christian Nationalists](#), leading to a continuing reduction of human rights, women's rights, and free speech.

Not all is doom and gloom, however. A [2025 Pre-Budget Consultation](#) recommended "Amend the Income Tax Act to provide a definition of a charity which would remove the privileged status of 'advancement of religion' as a charitable purpose." (Recommendation 430). The recommendation is consistent with the findings of CFIC's research into the [Cost of Religion in Canada](#), and is the first step in the (extended) process to eventually change the Canada Revenue Agency policy that is based on a centuries-old ruling inherited from England.

Last year, CFIC founded a coalition of secular organizations working to remove the bias that over-reports religious adherence in Canada for the 2031 census. Recently, we learned that this question will be included in the 2026 long form census. While we continue to work towards changing the language, please encourage everyone you know to select "No Religion" on this year's long form census (sent to about a quarter of Canadian households) if they are not an active member of any religious faith.



# REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS



**ONUR ROMANO**

Human Rights Chair

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## IT IS UNBELIEVABLE THAT OUR PRIMARY A4A PROJECT REMAINS SUPPORTING OMER.

It seems the timing of his “escape” from Pakistan was terrible. First, the pandemic put a hold on everything and now, Nepal’s stance on refugees, has conspired to keep Omer in Nepal. Our community was incredibly generous and the funds required to pay Omer’s exit fees were raised, however now, he languishes in Nepal, where his only exit option is to return to Pakistan. His sponsors have involved the Canadian government and are hoping for their assistance in securing Omer’s release. As always, we are committed to keeping you informed and grateful to those of you who continue to support Omer.

There was a particularly bright spot in secular human rights in 2025 with the release of Mubarak Bala, who was interviewed on Podcast For Inquiry: Nigerian Nightmare: [The personal toll of being a Humanist, with Mubarak Bala.](#)

PFI also told the story of [“Burkas, beatings and bicycles – The life of Yasmine Mohammed.”](#) This was especially gratifying as CFIC had planned a Central Ontario tour with Yasmine Mohammed in the spring of 2020, which was cancelled due to the pandemic.

## PROTECTING BLASPHEMERS VI

December 10, 2024  
Tuesday, 4pm EST

VIRTUAL EVENT • PANEL DISCUSSION  
Highlighting the leading blasphemy cases of 2024.



E. ONUR C. ROMANO

TONOY N. E. ALAM

GUL AHMAD ZARGAR

## AND IN DECEMBER OF 2024, CFIC HOSTED OUR 6TH ANNUAL PROTECTING BLASPHEMERS EVENT.

Featuring Gul Ahmad Zargar, an Afghan atheist activist, Tono Alam, President of Atheist Alliance International and me (Onur Romano) representing CFIC and Turkey’s Atheist Refugee Assistance Program (ARAP). This “call to action” explores how the secular community can collaborate to strengthen global support systems for individuals at risk.

In the coming year, CFIC will continue to support secular human rights in collaboration with other international secular and humanist organizations.

# REPORT FROM CFIC'S SCIENCE CHAIR



**ZACK DUMONT**

Science Chair

## I HAVE BEEN PLEASED WITH THE ADDITION OF REGULAR PROGRAMMING AND WRITING RELATED TO THE PROMOTION OF SCIENCE.

As a pharmacist, my passion and expertise remain with issues of spreading pseudoscience and the rejection of medical advances that have been demonstrated to save lives. As a father, I share concerns about anthropogenic climate change and other issues of sustainability, which are already affecting me and my family.

We never stray too far from the issue of science and healthcare. In March, PFI presented, [“Distinguishing jargon from gobbledegook – Dr. Jonathan Stea on evidence-based medicine over wellness industry misinformation.”](#)

In 2025, the benefits of nuclear energy and the need to further explore and use this non-greenhouse producing energy source have been highlighted in Podcast for Inquiry ([New clear nuclear news](#), and [Is nuclear energy low carbon, cost efficient and sustainable?](#) Both with Jason Donev). We also enjoyed the inaugural webinar about this important topic, [“Energy, Prosperity, and Geopolitics”](#), with Todd DeRyck.

Further environmental-related coverage included, [“A Little Less Livestock, a Lot more Action”](#) with Mark Lynas and [“Saving civilization is about more than climate change, says Professor Katherine Richardson.”](#)



## CFIC ALSO SHOWED UP TO PRESENT THE SCIENCE OF TRANS PEOPLE.

The degree of interest and unsubstantiated opinion and rhetoric about this topic is perplexing. In March 2025, River Champeimont used science to explain Transgenderism ([A Trans Woman Debunks Anti-Trans Rhetoric](#)), and in June, Aaron Devor (PhD) [“Explains the ABC’s of the Trans+ Community”](#) in an informative discussion with Leslie Rosenblood on Podcast for Inquiry.

While health care and the environment are sure to remain key issues for CFIC, our ability to cover important scientific issues that have the capacity to improve life circumstances for the population depends on the willingness of our members and volunteers to champion causes. If you have a scientific issue that you believe warrants attention, please write to me at [zdumont@cficanada.ca](mailto:zdumont@cficanada.ca).

# REPORT ON COMMUNICATIONS



**JOSHUA  
JEYAKUMAR**

Communications Chair

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## COMMUNICATIONS REMAINS A PRIMARY GOAL OF CFIC.

Good communication is necessary to spread our message about Critical Thinking, Science, and Secularism.

In 2025, we continued to use a variety of social media channels to reach people who are not subscribed to CFIC in other ways. CFIC's primary communication channels remain our dynamic and interactive [website](#), direct email, monthly [Critical Links newsletter](#), [webinars](#), and their subsequent publication on [YouTube](#) and [Podcast for Inquiry](#).

We thank the many volunteers who helped us spread our message and invite others, with a background in communications to, [join us](#).



# REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT



**SANDRA  
DUNHAM**

Executive Director  
of Development

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## THE END OF FISCAL YEAR 2025 ROUGHLY COINCIDES WITH MY 8TH ANNIVERSARY WITH CFIC.

We have come far in that time and I have learned a lot, I've met some wonderful people and I feel a sense of pride about how much this very small organization has done.

Many of our key donors have continued to support us and keep us operational; however the economic downturn has certainly made it difficult for some people to continue their support. We understand the situation and thank you for doing what you can.

**Thanks to our volunteers, members, and donors – you are CFIC and I am proud to be associated with you.**

## EACH YEAR, THE NUMBER OF MONTHLY DONORS TO CFIC CONTINUES TO INCREASE.

As of September 30, 2025, CFIC had 56 monthly donors. These donors contribute almost \$20,000 each year to CFIC. We thank these loyal donors, some of whom have been giving since before I arrived in 2018.

As one of only 2 paid contractors in the year ending 2025, I am thankful for the tremendous work done by CFIC volunteers, including a dedicated board of directors. The mission of this organization is critical, and the financial and labour support of our members is the only way we can get this done.

We are delighted to have added a new staff member at the beginning of our new fiscal year, diversifying our leadership team's skill set. A warm welcome to Tran Pham, Digital Media Coordinator. Tran's addition to the team allows me to work fewer hours and focus on things I do well.



# DIRECTOR: EDAN TASCA



**EDAN  
TASCA**

Critical Links Editor /  
Vice President

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## CRITICAL LINKS CONTINUED TO PUBLISH MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS THROUGHOUT 2025.

During the year, I made the difficult decision to step down as editor of Critical Links and took on the position of Vice President. It has been gratifying to see that Critical Links has continued to produce high-quality, informative newsletters under a new leadership team.

As Vice-President, I have been working with Seanna Watson to ensure a smooth leadership transition.

# TREASURER'S REPORT



**JOHN  
LOMBARD**

Branch Liaison

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## CFI VANCOUVER HAD A VERY SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIVE EVENT WITH THE SETI (SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE) INSTITUTE AT SCIENCE WORLD.

We hope to use this as a model to assist other forming branches in seeking partnerships that will allow them to offer bigger and better programming to members.

We have also been working with local humanist groups across the country to offer programs that will be engaging to our membership.

<b>STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION</b>		
	YE 2025	YE 2024
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets	41,652	58,787
Equipment	428	535
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>42,080</b>	<b>59,322</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current Liabilities	8,601	21,591
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>8,601</b>	<b>21,591</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted Net Assets	33,479	30,972
Internally Restricted Net Assets	–	6,759
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>33,479</b>	<b>37,731</b>

<b>STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS</b>		
REVENUES	YE 2025	YE 2024
Donations	90,031	82,927
Membership Fees	11,350	12,283
Fundraising and Events	786	2,108
	<b>102,167</b>	<b>97,318</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Subcontractors	60,656	40,496
Program	21,714	18,462
Occupancy	15,840	15,840
Professional Fees	4,050	3,930
Fundraising Costs	1,470	1,445
Office	1,405	2,107
Insurance	1,177	1,168
Amortization	107	134
	<b>106,419</b>	<b>83,582</b>
<b>Excess of Revenues Over Expenses</b>	<b>- 4,252</b>	<b>13,736</b>