

Rise Up! a digital archive of feminist activism

VOLUNTEER GUIDE

Thank you for your interest in [Rise Up! a digital archive of feminist activism](#)! We welcome your support and look forward to your involvement.

This short guide provides a brief introduction to the *Rise Up!* project, including

- Goals
- Background
- Historical Highlights
- Volunteer Committees
- Governance

Contact us at info@riseupfeministarchive.ca for more information or to get involved.

Keep in touch with *Rise Up!*

- Sign up for our regular newsletter using the form on the homepage of the website.
- Follow us on social media
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RiseUpArchive>
 - Twitter: <https://twitter.com/riseuparchive/>
 - Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/riseupfeministarchive/>

GOALS

Rise Up! a digital archive of feminist activism documents and celebrates the initiatives, struggles, and achievements of the Canadian women's movement from the 1970s to the 1990s. Our goals are to capture the diversity, vibrancy, and radical legacy of feminist activism during this era, especially those voices that are often marginalized or erased from the mainstream narrative, and to make this history accessible to new generations of activists, students, and researchers.

Our newsletters and feature articles, educational resources, social media posts and special projects such as the Women Unite Collection also seek to bring together feminists from different generations and across diverse communities for reflection and conversation about this period of bold action and significant debate.

[RISE UP COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY](#)

[SOLIDARITY STATEMENT](#) (SCROLL DOWN THE FRONT PAGE)

BACKGROUND

The *Rise Up!* project began in 2014 when several Toronto-based feminists came together. Our modest plan was to digitize three socialist feminist publications from our personal history as activists in the 1970s and 80s: *Cayenne*, *Rebel Girls' Rag*, and the *International Women's Day Committee Newsletter*.

The project quickly grew into something much more ambitious when we decided to invite others to dig into their own boxes of memorabilia and share their archival materials and stories too. We pictured an online archive of feminist activism built by those who had been directly involved.

Since then, it's been a challenging and exciting road for our small volunteer Collective. We are encouraged by all those who have already contributed to the *Rise Up!* project and by the growing interest in our website. Yet we know the archive itself still barely scratches the surface of diverse and grassroots feminist activism and continues to be a work in progress.

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

2014 - A group of friends got together to start an online archive of 3 publications.

2015 – Our vision of the Rise Up Feminist Archive changed to one that included a wide range of documents, publications, documents, photos, buttons, films, etc. representing grassroots and diverse feminist activism across Canada. The Collective started to reach out to other feminist activists from that period, different archival collections, still-existing organizations, and other potential sources of archival materials.

2016 – The digital archive was launched as a website in October of 2016 during Women’s History Month. Over the previous months, the Rise Up website and online archive was designed and built, and a range of archival materials located, digitized, and uploaded. Although the archival collection of original materials was still modest, our goal was to demonstrate from the outset our intention to be inclusive of diverse voices and of activism across Canada.

2017 – In the spring of 2017, the Rise Up Collective took stock of where we were and where we wanted to be over the next few years. The strategic planning session established a mission statement, set priorities, and created a plan for building a sustainable project. In December of 2017 Rise Up became officially incorporated.

2018 – The [2018 Interim Report](#) provided a detailed overview of our growth since launching, including a breakdown of the makeup of our archival collection which had grown to 1600 items by then. It also measured our progress towards the inclusion of voices often marginalized or erased as well as regional representation across Canada.

In 2018, Rise Up received special recognition at the Heritage Toronto Awards presentation.

2019 – Rise Up got charitable status and launched our first big fundraising campaign which helped us make big strides in developing the website and building the archival collection. We were able to revamp our home page with a refreshed logo and new setup that included regular [feature articles](#) and news items, [educational resources](#), and [collections](#) which could be updated regularly.

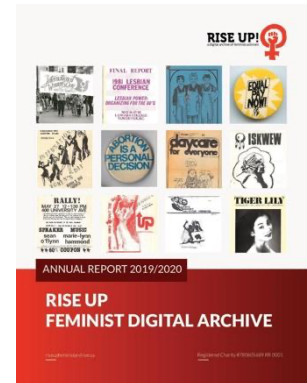
2020 – Rise Up received a grant from Library and Archives Canada to complete an oral history project called Women Unite. This project interviewed Toronto-based activists involved in key



“moments” of grassroots feminist history from the 1970s to 1990s and representing diverse voices, events and issues.

The Rise Up Collective established a working group to help lead us through a process of review and to develop an action to address issues of equity, diversity, and inclusivity with respect to our structures, archival collection, resources, and practices.

The [2019-2020 Annual Report](#) again provided an overview of Rise Up’s development and growth and set out the priorities in different areas for 2020-2021.



2021 –This past year saw us take a big leap ahead with the addition of our [Women Unite Collection](#) of interviews to the website. The interviews have been rolled out over the summer and fall months.

Grants from Canada Summer Jobs and Young Canada Works in Heritage also made it possible to hire six young people who were responsible for adding over 450 new items to our collection and helping us build a stronger social media campaign and outreach to younger and more diverse audiences.

Funding from Mark and Zita Bernstein Family Foundation has helped us expand our archival representation of activism in Western Canada, as well as cultural activism.

Our newsletter and [Feature Articles](#) continue to address significant issues and debates of the past, often linking them to present day questions.

At the same time, over this past year, there was also important, and at times uncomfortable, learning as we continue to grapple with what it means to address racism and other forms of oppression in our organization.

Our growth has also raised significant issues of workload and renewal for our volunteer-run organization and consideration of what steps must be taken to build a sustainable project.

VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES

Rise Up! depends on the work and involvement of volunteers.

We do not have an office, equipment, or ongoing staff. The project is managed by unpaid volunteers, and it is volunteers who do the work to develop and maintain the website; organize fundraising and administrative work; develop strategies for outreach and communication; apply for and manage grants; produce a regular newsletter as well as posting on our social media sites; expand the range of educational resources; and receive, organize, prepare and upload materials. Volunteers also find and donate materials and provide meeting spaces and equipment.

Some volunteers take on a larger role and responsibility, including being members of the Board of Directors and Collective. Board members commit to a contribution of 15-20 hours a month and participate in at least one of Rise Up's committees. Other volunteers work on specific or time-limited tasks as their availability allows. There is a wide range of options for volunteer involvement and our members are always ready and willing to help with any orientation and training needed.

The best way to get involved with Rise Up is to volunteer with one of its committees. The following gives an overview of our current committees and the kinds of work they do.

- ***Outreach and Acquisitions Committee***
 - Identifies priorities for new archival materials and information
 - Develops and carries out a plan of action to find sources and contacts for these materials
 - Researches other websites for related content, possible sources, and links
 - Manages the digitizing and uploading of archival materials

- ***Communications and Social Media Committee***
 - Helps build awareness and foster conversation about *Rise Up!* and feminist activism of the past and present through a strong social media/homepage articles/newsletter strategy
 - Involved in all areas of Rise Up communications: newsletters, social media, blog posts, feature articles, etc.
 - Participates in developing ideas for social media posts and newsletter/feature articles
 - Writes social media posts, newsletter, and/or feature/blog articles
 - Seeks out and works with others to prepare articles

- Measures web traffic and monitors Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- **Educational Resources Committee**
 - Seeks out educators currently using *Rise Up!* and willing to share resources/assignments/lesson plans
 - Researches links to online educational resources relevant to the *Rise Up!* archive and its materials
 - Develops new educational resources
- **Website Development and Technical Operations Committee**
 - Participates in discussions about new features, elements, functional improvements, etc.
 - Works under the direction of the Website Administrator on tasks related to maintenance/upgrading/security
- **Archival Content Management Committee**
 - Prepares and uploads archival materials, in accordance with agreed-to standards, including scanning and OCRing, as well as preparing metadata and descriptions
 - Works with other volunteers to develop new pages and related descriptions
 - Assists with technical data issues
 - Works with WordPress and Google Workspace on a regular basis
 - Assists with managing offline filing and storage of archival materials
 - Assist with management of online content:
 - Edits website content, including finding and fixing errors, typos, and inactive links
Adds missing or additional metadata information to uploaded archival materials, including names of authors, descriptions/captions, dates, related organizations, etc.
 - Uploads new pages and/or items, including appropriate links to related materials
 - Upgrades and replaces archival materials
 - Reorganizes materials as new organizational systems are developed, new sections are added, or additional information is received
- **Volunteer and Membership Committee**
 - Acts as first contact with new volunteers
 - Provides introductory information
 - Discusses areas of interest and answers questions
 - Links the volunteer with the relevant committee coordinator

- Recruits new volunteers
- Maintains a list of volunteers and contact information
- ***Financial and Administration Committee***
 - Keeps up-to-date financial records and ensures regular financial reports and oversight, as required
 - Oversees charitable contributions and receipts
 - Maintains an up-to-date file of legal and other significant documents, such as governance policy, bylaws, etc.
 - Ensures minutes of meetings are recorded and filed
 - Files corporate documents and tax documents with the CRA
 - Circulates required notices of meetings and other materials for the Annual General Meeting and Board of Directors' meetings
- ***Fundraising Committee***
 - Seeks out sources of funding
 - Develops and manages fundraising appeals
 - Completes grant writing
 - Reaches out to possible donors
- ***Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Committee***
 - Aims to build a more equitable, diverse and inclusive Rise Up Board, Collective and Membership than is presently the case
 - Seeks to facilitate meaningful conversations about the Archive with Black, Indigenous, and Women of Colour, disabled women, immigrant women, and LGBTQ2S+ persons whose feminist activism has often been marginalized or erased in the historical record
 - Seeks to expand and diversify Rise Up's networks to include the voices of all age groups, francophones, and those based in regions outside Central Canada
 - Plans to run webinar series, film series, and collaborative projects featuring activists, researchers and educators working to bring marginalized histories to the centre
- ***Human Resources and Operations Management Committee***
 - Managing correspondence, answering questions and providing information
 - Grants administration
 - Recruiting, scheduling, and managing Rise Up employees
 - Managing Rise Up's GSuite and Mailchimp functions
 - Advising on privacy issues

GOVERNANCE

Rise Up! incorporated in the spring of 2018 and acquired charitable status in 2019. Our governance plan was approved in January 2018 as part of Incorporation and has been updated as we grow.

The Rise Up Feminist Archive Board of Directors is very much a working Board with no permanent staff. We rely on the commitment of our Board members, working through the Collective and Committees, not only to oversee Rise Up's development but to carry out the work required to support the organization, build the online archive, and develop the website.

The following is a brief overview.

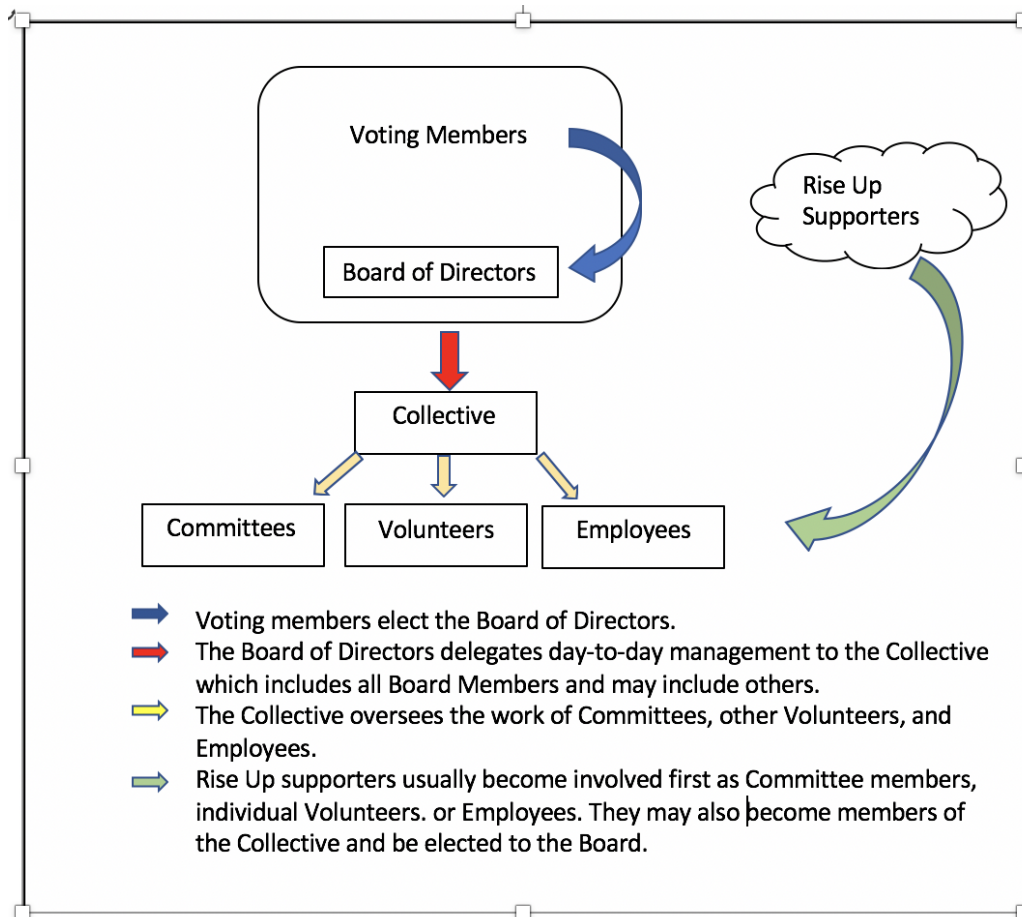
Organizational and Management Structure

- A **Board of Directors**, elected annually at the *Rise Up!* Annual General Meeting, meets from time-to-time to make decisions about the overall direction of the organization. The Board currently delegates its responsibilities for strategic planning and oversight to a Collective. All Board Members are also members of the Collective.
- The **Rise Up Collective** meets monthly, to hear updates, provide oversight, and to manage the day-to-day operations of *Rise Up!* As well as Board members, the Collective includes Volunteer Committee Coordinators, and may also include other volunteers and employees. The Collective operates on a consensus-building model for decision-making.

[Current Members of the Board and Collective](#)

- **Volunteer Committees** set up by the Collective plan and carry out the work in different areas. Each committee is coordinated by a member of the Collective and includes other members and volunteers. Their work is overseen by the Collective as a whole.
- Special **Working Groups** are created from time to time to manage specific projects, such as the Women Unite Interviews.

Organizational Chart



The Rise Up Governance Plan also includes the following:

- **A Conflict of Interest Policy:** The policy applies to all members of the Board of Directors, all staff, and all volunteers. It defines what a conflict of interest is and describes different types of conflict. It also sets out how the policy will be applied, and the responsibilities for prevention and management. Transparency and good judgment are key elements in the application of the policy.

Volunteers are responsible for respecting the Conflict of Interest policy and should take any questions to the appropriate volunteer coordinator or other member of the Management Committee.

- A **Code of Conduct**: The code establishes that the Board of Directors is committed to teamwork and effective decision-making and sets out a series of expectations for board members.
- The **Articles of Incorporation**: These establish our corporate identity, including our official name; a statement of purpose; restrictions on activities; and types of members.
- Current **Bylaws**: These cover various operational issues such as our financial year; banking arrangements; annual financial statement; description of official positions; membership conditions; notices for meetings; voting; electronic participation; and quorum, among other matters.

The full *Rise Up!* Governance document is available on request.

[Registered Charity #780605689 RR 0001](#)

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