



 **Dogwood**

Strategic Framework 2021–2024

Who is Dogwood?

Dogwood is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit organization working in the unceded Indigenous territories known as British Columbia.

Dogwood brings people together to transform our democracy, uphold Indigenous rights and defend the climate, land and water that sustain life in B.C.

Our supporters, volunteers, donors and staff value people, the environment, justice and democracy. These shared values shape the beliefs that drive the organization:

- The people who live in B.C. should have more power over government decisions than corporations, industry lobbies or wealthy elites.
- The climate emergency is an urgent, overarching threat to ecosystems and communities across B.C.
- Effective climate action is not possible without decolonizing our society at the same time.
- The overlapping crises we face do disproportionate harm to people who are already marginalized. Dogwood’s work should contribute to fixing those injustices, not perpetuating them.
- It is the responsibility of non-Indigenous people to repair colonial injustice, return stolen land and reconcile our laws with Indigenous laws and systems of government.
- The provincial government will and must play a role in tackling the climate emergency and dismantling colonialism. But the current political system is holding us back.
- Organized people working in collaboration have the power to change what is possible in B.C.

Dogwood can’t succeed alone. Our organization is part of broader movements for social change and climate justice. We believe Dogwood has a unique role to play in changing the balance of power in B.C. through political organizing.

People at Dogwood share a long-term vision of a society that is democratized, decolonized and decarbonized. Where our commitments to each other and the



place we live have made B.C. an inspiring example for others.

Therefore, if we organize people in our communities to challenge concentrated power and transform our democracy, Dogwood will contribute to decolonizing and decarbonizing B.C.—because organized people working together have the power to change what is possible.

This represents a new direction for a dynamic organization that has made a mark on B.C. politics for more than two decades. The thousands of people who have been involved at Dogwood over the years have contributed to some major victories and accomplishments. At the same time, people working for and with Dogwood have made mistakes along the way and perpetuated

harms characteristic of colonialism and oppression.

This strategic framework builds on Dogwood’s past work, and recognizes the conditions we live and work in have changed. Dogwood must continue to adapt and change to carry out its mission. As of 2021, Dogwood’s supporters, volunteers, donors and staff are predominantly settlers and people who have more privilege in society. We aim to change this over the next several years, building a more diverse base and deeper, reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities and equity-seeking groups. This guiding framework reflects Dogwood’s ongoing commitment to become a more just, equitable, diverse and decolonized organization, building on our [2018 statement](#).

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What does Dogwood do?

Since 2020 Dogwood has been working towards these goals to fulfill its mission:

- Shift the balance of power in B.C. so that...
 - › Government decisions are shaped by the people who have to live with them
 - › Action and change in B.C. reduces provincial greenhouse gas emissions, and emissions beyond our borders, significantly before 2025
 - › Our colonial institutions stop blocking Indigenous sovereignty, governance and land reclamation
- Sustain an organization until at least 2028

2021–2024 Strategy

There's no way around it: for Dogwood to succeed our work must influence government decision-makers. After several years of peak growth and success, Dogwood staff and leadership have realized simply building a base of voters and then getting them out to vote is not enough to ensure politicians are accountable to their communities and governments will change their policy and development decisions. We need our leaders to take bold, urgent action on the climate emergency,

Indigenous rights and the interrelated crises that threaten the place we live. That means our organization needs to step things up and build people power in ways that will disrupt and transform business as usual.

Our campaigns, programs and actions will build towards electing a critical mass of provincial lawmakers in 2024 with a strong mandate to decolonize, democratize and decarbonize our province. We'll be looking for leaders who might make bold, independent-minded candidates who are committed and accountable to the communities they serve. This could include people from allied groups, municipal councils or our own organizing ranks — or current MLAs who might be ready for greater courage.

While this plan is framed by a provincial electoral cycle, Dogwood's work will aim to contribute, always, to the generations-long project of repairing the injustices of colonialism and dismantling systems of oppression.

Each year over the next four years, Dogwood will adjust its activities to advance this overarching strategy. Staff, with input from a changing constituency of supporters, volunteers, donors, allied organizations and frontline groups, will choose issues, campaigns and activities from the menu of options (see page 6), recognizing that these options will change as the world around us changes and Dogwood's constituency changes.

These activities will overlap and constantly build on one another. They won't necessarily fit exactly into blocks of each year, but the key focus will shift over time. Campaigns, organizing and other activities will all be chosen to provide the sustenance, equipment, energy and tools needed to successfully navigate the strategic journey. There will be a menu of options to choose from in any given year or phase (see page 6) and resources can be shifted to seize opportunities that may come earlier than expected or that we haven't even imagined might be possible.

If the strategy to identify and support candidates is not working, in any year we can readjust tactics for building and applying people power differently to transform and decolonize the democratic system — from the inside or from the outside.

Dogwood's core strategies will continue from years past: online storytelling and campaigning paired with community organizing; supported by fundraising, digital systems & data and administrative services.



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Dogwood Timeline 2021–2025

Options and Phases to Decarbonize, Democratize and Decolonize

Mobilize

Slate



ORGANIZING MENU

2021/
2022

ISSUE MENU

- Regional teams
- Support local groups/leaders on local decarbonization
- Relationships and solidarity with Indigenous Peoples
- Decolonization training
- Electoral opportunities; municipal & federal elections; recall or initiative campaigns

- Stop making it worse:** Halt TMX, CGL, fossil fuel subsidies; no gas in new builds; reduce police budgets
- Support frontline land defence
- Start making it better:** PACE, municipal action & local decarbonization
- Support Aq'am Solar, Indigenous utilities
- Support #Vote16 campaign
- Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act solidarity

Build base

ORGANIZING MENU

2023/
2024

ISSUE MENU

- Recall or initiative campaigns
- Regional teams snowflake to key ridings
- Influence BCNDP leadership race
- Support leaders in nomination races
- Support slate in provincial election

- Stop making it worse and start making it better, cont.** Consider new opportunities like BC Hydro reform, free transit, just transition for workers, redirecting public money from fossil fuels
- Declaration Act solidarity
- Support Indigenous & municipal utilities
- Support municipal decarbonization projects, local jurisdiction

Develop leaders

2025+

FUTURE MENU

- Major climate legislation and funding
- All laws compliant with Declaration Act
- Change Local Government Act to give municipalities more power
- End whipped votes on party lines
- Expand limits on corporate influence
- Expand voting rights to permanent residents

Make change

How will Dogwood succeed?

Dogwood exists to pursue its mission. If we cannot sustain a healthy organization until at least 2028 Dogwood's strategic goals will be moot. And if the organization does not continue in its quest to become more just, equitable, diverse and inclusive at best Dogwood's victories will be hollow, and at worst could harm and undermine our vision for a better future.

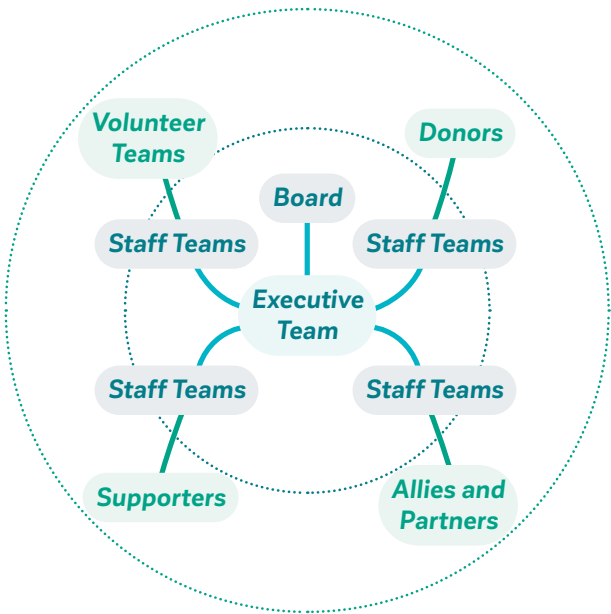
Dogwood strives to reflect its commitment to democracy, empowerment and justice in the way decisions are made at the organization and the way our staffing and volunteer network are structured. The organization seeks to provide the best conditions for collaboration, shared leadership, equity, diversity, learning and adaptation. These are Dogwood's organizational development objectives for 2021–24.

Culture

- Become a place where people of diverse identities, backgrounds and abilities want to work and feel safe working as staff and volunteers;
- Learn from Indigenous forms of governance and dismantle features of colonialism and white supremacy that are embedded in structures, culture and practices within the organization;
- Maintain practices and policies that reward commitment and collaboration rather than competition;
- Deploy the tools and structures of a unionized workplace to enact democracy and equity;
- Sustain ongoing discussions and experiments to define and enact decolonization year over year at all levels of the organization.

Governance & Structure

- Maintain structures and practices that allow everyone involved in the organization's work to contribute to decision making;
- Maintain a team of two to five leaders to share the executive role at the organization, in a structure that adapts over time to the operational needs of the organization;
- Maintain an adaptive structure of staff teams, organized by key functions, that allows for distributed decision making and creativity;
- Maintain a board of directors that holds Dogwood's leadership accountable to the organization's mission, values and strategies; oversees and evaluates the Executive Team; ensures sound fiscal and legal operation of the organization and supports sustainable fundraising efforts.



Finances & Resources

- Sustain a diverse base of funding for strategic and operational priorities that relies primarily on donations from individual donors to maintain independence, accountability and integrity;
- Sustain the capacities and resources needed to accomplish the mission and strategy.

