2023 Annual Report

SSO

Ottawa Shared Services Organization

Message from the Board Chair

The year 2023 was one of change, stabilization, and accomplishments. The Board approved our first Operational Plan in April; this annual report showcases the results. The Board of Directors was very impressed with the amount of work our hard-working staff have accomplished!

The Operational Plan was divided into six priority actions:

1. Find efficiencies
2. Build customer satisfaction
3. Strengthen organizational foundations
4. Develop strong, well-supported teams
5. Grow at a steady, manageable rate
6. Increase internal and external communications

The Board recognizes that the talents, hard work, and cooperation that each of our staff brings to OSSO have contributed to these accomplishments.

The staff and boards of our Founding Member agencies also support OSSO. With their patience and vision, we are on a path to building a strong social enterprise that is poised to grow and support a wide range of non-profit agencies in Ottawa.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to express our gratitude for your continued hard work and cooperation as we move forward with the 2024 Operational Plan.

Thank you,

Mary Wattie

Board Chair

Board of Directors '23

Ottawa Shared Services Organization (OSSO)

Mary Wattie, President

Andre Rancourt, Treasurer

*Joan Kavanagh-Wilson, Secretary

Emilie Gendron, Secretary

Susan Bihun, Director

*Michelle Bloodworth, Director

Robert Dupuis, Director

Miriam Gartland, Director

Abhijit Potdar, Director

*Brian Stagg, Director

Resigned

Thank You

To our founding members, Ottawa Carleton Lifeskills, Ottawa Foyer Partage and Ottawa Rotary Home, we would like to express our sincerest gratitude for your continued support and trust in our future together.

To our new customers, Wise Owl MacClure and Tamir, thank you for your trust in our services.

Your satisfaction is our utmost priority. Our operational plan was focused and will continue to focus on enhancing your experience and delivering on efficient, effective back office services so that you can focus on your core mandate of serving the community.

Thank you for joining us on this journey.

Goal 1 - Find efficiencies

Actions	Timeline	Report
1. OSSO and the Founding member Executive Directors, to review and harmonize policies relevant to OSSO operations.	Three years[1] Carry forward to 2024	All Founding member EDs agree that this needs to be done and OSSO Directors starting to identify key policies. One policy was harmonized on Asset Capitalization. Work is underway on a harmonized Employee Code of Conduct and an IT Acceptable Use policy. NOTE: while some policy harmonization is important, OSSO needs to focus on the harmonization of procedures in the context of our core services. This was originally set as a three-year project and will continue.
2. OSSO Teams to meet twice a year to discuss workload, efficiencies and strategies for maximizing effectiveness.	Ongoing Carry forward to 2024	Team meetings are now hosted on a regular basis and staff are empowered to explore efficiencies and new ideas. The meetings are not lengthy but have been productive.

Examples of possible efficiencies:

a. Harmonize charts of accounts.	As of April 1 Completed	All the customers (OCL, OFP, OCL and OSSO) have adopted the harmonized chart of accounts and it has been entered into Sage 300. There is allowance for some customization, but it is largely harmonized, and will be fully implemented as of April 1, 2024 for all customers.

[1] Note that the "Timeline" column includes the original timeline from the Operational Plan approved by the Board in April 2023 as well as a notation about if the item is completed, to be carried forward, still needs to be completed, or will be dropped from the plan and become part of our ongoing business approach.

Actions	Timeline	Report
b. Move all financial transactions to Sage 300.	As of April 1 Completed	OCL, ORH and Y'sOwl McClure are all now fully on Sage 300 and OFP is ready for full implementation as of April 1, 2024. This has proven to be a complex process with some significant delays in financial reporting while underway. We are confident that starting April 1, 2024, customers will be receiving clear, departmentally segregated, financial statements on a month basis in a timely manner. We will be setting a service standard with regards to timeliness of reporting in our next operational plan. All new customers will be required to work on the same account package.
c. Possible grant to explore software solutions for HR management.	Sept 2023 - March 2024 Implementation will be carried forward	OSSO received a grant of $60,500 for the Shared Employee Management System Software Assessment (SEMSSA) from the Community Services Recovery Fund. After a comprehensive procurement process, OSSO engaged Purpose Analytics and Boardwalk consultants. The consultants completed a number of interviews, focus groups and a survey to assess needs. Based on the needs of our customers they then launched a Request for Information from potential suppliers. At the time of writing, this process is ongoing. MCCSS has been engaged in discussions of an implementation grant.
d. Explore automated screening of CVs to speed up recruitment processes.	By July 2023 Completed	OSSO largely recruits through the Indeed platform. Efficiencies have been added to the process to reduce inappropriate applications by adding in "drop dead" questions that screen out inappropriate applicants. We have sought balance between efficient screening and casting a wide net in the context of the labour shortage.

Actions	Timeline	Report
e. Collaborate with founding members and customers on their strategic planning processes when relevant to OSSO work.	Ongoing Remove from plan	There were no requests for collaboration on strategic planning.
3. OSSO to explore an appropriate means to identify and problem solve issues which cause an extra burden on OSSO staff and customers.	Ongoing Carry forward to 2024	This issue needs attention and diplomacy. OSSO needs to clarify its relationship with our customers. For example, one customer implemented a payroll system which is not used by our other customers and thus added an extra training burdens on OSSO. Another example is how much time OSSO staff spend chasing down approvals, invoicing instructions or Visa reports from customers' staff.
4. OSSO to review document handling processes to seek efficiencies.	By December 2023 Carry forward to 2024	A plan has been created with a framework. Filing systems have been proposed to the departments and they need discussion and implementation which will solve the issue going forward. There remains an issue with existing files, both electronic and paper. OSSO has requested a summer student grant to deal with some of this. Note: almost all OSSO files are digital but there may be some things that need to be retained on paper.

Actions	Timeline	Report
5. OSSO to expand cross training of staff to ensure efficiency, coverage for absences, and to facilitate staff advancement.	Ongoing Carry forward to 2024 as part of our regular business approach	A great deal of effort was put into cross training. In both HR and IT there is full coverage and cross training is complete. This will continue with new hires. There have been efforts at cross training in finance and the move to a common software package and the new team structure will ease things going forward but this remains an issue because of high levels of turnover. We also need better systems of communicating staff responsibilities and coverage to our customers.

Goal 2 - Customer Satisfaction

Actions	Timeline	Report
1. In the 18 months since OSSO has been in operation, we have not formally sought customer feedback. A plan will be developed and implemented to seek this feedback.	6 months to develop and implement Repeat in 2024	A customer satisfaction survey was drafted; the survey was administered; and the results were analyzed. Results were presented to the Board, Founding EDs, and OSSO staff. The biggest concerns identified are timeliness and accuracy.
2. The OSSO master services agreements envision quarterly reports. OSSO needs to develop reporting criteria, a data collection approach and a report format.	One year to 18 months, based on feedback above and priorities identified therein Carry forward to 2024	OSSO is now issuing bi-weekly payroll inquiry summaries to two customers. There are also ad hoc reports on recruiting being issued. Many different possibilities of key indicators have been discussed and will need to be rolled up into a dashboard of service in the future.
3. OSSO must continually strive for excellence and accuracy. See all other objectives.	Ongoing Carry forward to 2024 as part of our regular business approach	Ongoing

Goal 3 - Strengthen organizational foundations

Actions	Timeline	Report
1. Create a development plan for key Board policies. Examples of possible policies tobe developed: Conflict of Interest; New Customers policy; Board Recruitment; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.	June Carry forward to 2024	A new Governance and Nominations committee brought the following policies to the Board for approval: Governance and Nominations Committee Terms of Reference; OSSO Board Nominations Policy; OSSO Board Skills Matrix; OSSO Board Conflict of Interest Policy; OSSO Board Code of Conduct; a Policy on Board Committees; and a New Customer Admission Policy. The committee also created and delivered a Board Orientation session and is working on a draft Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy as well as Job descriptions for Board Members.
2. Create a better, centralized record keeping system for OSSO.	July-August Completed	A joint management drive has been created in the OSSO record keeping system. Once the Board agreed that Board Minutes are not "confidential," Board records and other corporate records were moved into this central filing system. All Board records held by the previous contractor who was responsible for Board minutes have been transferred to OSSO files.
3. Review the OSSO organizational structure for optimal results.	October Completed	OSSO has 4 layers of hierarchy but only 16 staff. In the finance department, this has been flattened a bit by changing the "Finance Manager" position to "Financial Analyst" position and creating two finance teams. This seems to be going well.
4. Develop a deliberate approach to succession planning for Board and staff.	December Carry forward to 2024	OSSO expanded the board to create more depth and stability. There is not yet a plan in place for staff.
5. Engage in a longterm strategic planning process.	2024 Late 2024	This was discussed at the Board meeting of December 2023 and it was agreed that a long-term strategic planning process will be delayed until late 2024.

Goal 4 - Develop strong, well supported teams

Actions	Timeline	Report
1. Create cooperative relationships and team unity amongst staff when in the office.	Immediate Carry forward to 2024 as part of our regular business approach	Efforts have been made including inviting staff to eat together in the meeting room. We had a productive discussion of on-boarding and welcoming new staff at a general staff meeting and we are exploring working consecutive days in office.
2. Create cooperative relationships and team unity amongst staff on the work from home days.	Immediate Carry forward to 2024 as part of our regular business approach	The staff survey indicated that only one person is clearly feeling lonely so it is not a generalized issue but needs to be revisited with new staff and in a repeated staff survey.
3. Solicit meaningful feedback from all OSSO staff using surveys and other methods.	6 months Repeat in 2024	A staff survey was completed, analyzed, and reported back to staff and board. Key issues are workload, onboarding, and clarity of responsibilities. Needs to be repeated annually.
4. Re-institute monthly staff meetings.	Immediate Carry forward to 2024 as part of our regular business approach	Monthly staff meetings, coupled with a monthly staff lunch, have been instituted and the staff survey indicated that it is viewed as a positive.

Actions	Timeline	Report
5. Create a monthly staff lunch with the staff recognition budget.	Immediate Carry forward to 2024 as part of our regular business approach	These are now ongoing and seem appreciated. Next year we will experiment with different cultural celebrations, not just Christmas.
6. Plan the development of a performance management policy and framework to ensure accountability and clarity of roles and expectations.	One year Carry forward to 2024	A draft was presented to the Team Leads, Staff; will be consulted on the proposed Core Competencies at the January staff meeting.
7. Create and invest in opportunities for staff development and growth.	One year Carry forward to 2024	This is being tied to the new performance management policy. There is a budget for staff development, it is in their employment agreement. Staff have been reminded of this in staff meetings.
8. Work towards becoming an employer of choice.	Ongoing Carry forward to 2024 as part of our regular business approach	In the staff survey just over half said they would recommend us as employer, we would like to improve this number. Have not looked at a designation yet. As a new workplan item OSSO needs to develop a plan to reduce staff turnover.

Goal 5 - Steady Growth at a manageable rate

Actions	Timeline	Report
1. Integrate Y's Owl as a new customer.	April – Sept Completed	Y's Owl McClure is now a fully integrated finance customer. In future we need to look at set up charges for new customers and at the nexus between financial and HR services because payroll creates a great deal of overlap.
2. Develop a new customer policy for board review.	June Completed	Approved by the Board in June.
3. Create clear onboarding processes.	November 2023 Carry forward to 2024	There was a significant learning process with Y's Owl and OSSO incurred significant onboarding costs. Perhaps a pre-onboarding audit is needed? OSSO applied for, but did not get, a grant from the Ottawa Community Foundation to work with CSED on, among other things, a better approach to pricing and onboarding.
4. Develop marketing materials for discussions with new customers.	November 2023 See communications	We are regularly approached by potential customers, many of whom we have turned down. This is not realistically a priority until we clarify what is an appropriate new customer.
5. Maintain discussions with other potential customers.	Ongoing Carry forward to 2024 as part of our regular business approach	All staff are encouraged to be ambassadors. T hat said, we have had discussions with Roger Nielson House, the Centretown BIA and Parents Lifeline of Eastern Ontario. All needed immediate help, so we had to turn them down.

Actions	Timeline	Report
6. Explore expansion of services to current clients.	September 2023 Carry forward to 2024	We have told Tamir that we can only continue Financial services until the spring. But we will continue with HR as the arrangement is working better and the contract adjusted to make more sense for OSSO. We have had to turn down IT service requests from Tamir and Y's Owl as we need to better meet the needs of our current customers.
7. Build relationships with Ministry representatives and other key stakeholders.	Ongoing Carry forward to 2024	The Ministry came to AGM and noted in public that they have customers waiting for us. Board met with Regional Director of MCCSS to promote the OSSO model. Brad has joined the OASIS labour relations committee which has strong visibility.
8. Explore the business case for assisting small agencies with budgets under $1million.	December 2023 Carry forward to 2024	A grant application to the Ottawa Community Foundation was submitted but turned down. We have been encouraged to resubmit.

Goal 6 - Increase internal and external communications

Actions	Timeline	Report
1. Develop a communications plan to be presented to the Board.	September 2023 Carry forward to 2024	A communications plan was presented to the Board in September. As part of the plan, the Board has agreed to explore a name change and (re)branding, with the intent that that come to the next AGM. The consultative process got bogged down with too many ideas and no clear path to a choice, so a grant request for outside help was submitted to the Ontario Trillium Foundation. We await results.
2. Expand website.	Present-September Carry forward to 2024	The website was improved and expanded. Further improvements were put on hold waiting for decisions on rebranding. There is also a draft OSSO Board SharePoint.
3. Host Annual General Meeting.	May 2023 Carry forward to 2024 as part of our regular business approach	The AGM we hosted in May was successful.
4. Create e-letterhead, PP slide background, report format and other branded items.	July 2023 Completed	This was found to exist already; we just need to ensure that staff know where it is. Business cards were created in small quantities.

Actions	Timeline	Report
5. Look for opportunities to network and build relationships within the Development Service sector and within the Ottawa nonprofit sector as a whole.	Ongoing Carry forward to 2024 as part of our regular business approach	The ED and management staff regularly attended community events to facilitate networking. External speakers are invited to staff meetings.
6. Focus on communicating our Vision, Mission and Values.	Carry forward to 2024 as part of our regular business approach	

Financials

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
Year ended December 31, 2023, with comparative information for 2022

	2023	2022
Assets		
Current assets:		
Cash	$ 463,004	$ 433,248
Accounts receivable	6,290	6,622
Due from related parties	43,739	9,850
Prepaid expenses	–	3,001
	$ 513,033	$ 452,721
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	$ 122,316	$ 114,615
Government remittances payable	193,769	193,188
Deferred revenue	27,802	–
	343,887	307,803
Net assets:		
Unrestricted	169,146	144,918
	$ 513,033	$ 452,721

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
Year ended December 31, 2023, with comparative information for 2022

	2023	2022
Revenue		
Membership fees	$ 1,344,500	$ 1,356,999
Service fees	87,335	23,906
Grant revenue	20,548	–
Interest	7,536	4,471
	1,459,919	1,385,376
Expenses		
Salaries and employee benefits	1,313,559	1,156,873
Purchased services	65,392	60,494
Supplies	17,098	8,694
Insurance	15,265	8,968
Professional fees	14,000	12,421
Telecommunication	5,336	4,871
Office and administrative	5,041	9,676
	1,435,691	1,261,997
Excess of Revenue Over Expenses	24,228	123,379
Net assets, beginning of year	144,918	21,539
Net assets, ending of year	$ 169,146	$ 144,918

Shared operational efficiencies for nonprofit organizations

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