

# THE GREEN LINE



## 2023 IMPACT REPORT

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# DISTINCTIVELY US

The Green Line's focus is simple: provide Torontonians with useful information they actually need to deal with challenges they face while living in our city. We know how it feels to be overwhelmed by an endless stream of content from the internet and social media — so much so that it's hard to find **concrete resources that help you solve everyday problems** happening in your neighbourhood. That's why we're building a new kind of media organization for the future that doesn't just force audiences to passively consume stressful content, but rather encourages them to actively participate in creating a better Toronto.

The Green Line produces handy tools and guides that highlight community-driven solutions, co-creates events with hyperlocal organizations to provide a space for residents to connect and share resources with each other, and **equips our audience with the skills they need** to advocate for themselves and fight for change in their communities.



Our unique theory-of-change model, called the **Action Journey™** is designed so that our team can continue covering problems and solutions that community members have identified as being important to them. This process is important to us because we want to make real, long-term change in Toronto, as opposed to bandwagoning on trending topics that only hold the public's attention until they're replaced by the next big thing.

While traditional journalism admirably holds decision-makers to account by creating policy change through in-depth reporting, this kind of change doesn't often last. Someone new takes office, and suddenly we're back to square one. By reporting on solutions, we equip Torontonians with concrete tools to take action and **create long-lasting change** in their communities. We believe in transforming people because that's a forever change.

Our team is also frustrated with the rising number of biased news sources, and how easy it is for misinformation to divide our communities. In its 2024 Digital News Report, the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism reported that only 39% of Canadians trusted news sources. When it comes to solving a problem in your neighbourhood, **it's a lot easier to trust the opinion of your neighbour** rather than a faceless journalism outlet.

We don't see Torontonians as readers, viewers or followers — we see them as co-conspirators in shaping meaningful change and building stronger communities together. Our relationship with community members doesn't end after publishing an article about them. **We want to know how they're doing** in months — and even years — from when we first connected with them.



## THE MODEL THAT MAKES US DIFFERENT

Partnerships — with individuals and local organizations — are The Green Line's backbone. Not only do our partners help us generate social impact, they also help us diversify revenue streams that open up financial opportunities that aren't accessible to traditional news publications. This is called a **Civic Partnerships Model**.



For example, this year, we worked with Riverside BIA to organize a marketplace event where local vendors sold artisan goods and tasty food, while attendees shared their problems with and solutions for addressing food insecurity in the downtown East End neighbourhood. This event enabled us to show support for a community struggling with food access, but also helped us open up an unconventional revenue stream: indirect access to government funding. For Riverside BIA, the event and our story series **helped support the hyperlocal economy** and even attracted donations from across Toronto to tackle food insecurity.

The Green Line's ongoing partnership with CityNews Toronto is another example of our unique Civic Partnership Model. It's expanded our audience and exposed our brand to even more Torontonians. For CityNews, collaborating with us helped the legacy broadcaster **connect with Gen Z and Millennial** audiences.

"As founding partners in the launch of our weekly CityNews Toronto community shows, Anita Li and The Green Line team continue to deliver compelling visual storytelling, at a neighbourhood level, on some of the biggest issues facing Toronto, including transit, health care and food security. They are a pleasure to work with, and our newscasts benefit from their award-winning journalism and its focus on real people and practical solutions."

✧ **JON WHITTEN, CITYNEWS TORONTO NEWS DIRECTOR**

## WHAT'S NEXT?

The Green Line is on vanguard of the **future of journalism** by innovating the way we deliver hyperlocal information, and by training Canada's next generation of journalists to be more community-minded. The Green Line is not just a publication. We are community members just like you who love Toronto, and want Torontonians to not just survive but thrive in this rapidly changing city we call home.



# 2023 KEY HIGHLIGHTS

In today's digital age when misinformation and disinformation are major problems, destabilizing our democracy and worsening polarization, we want to focus on the voices of average Torontonians who are just trying to survive and thrive in a rapidly changing city — whether that's your neighbour down the street or a small business owner a few blocks away. People invest their time reading and watching our journalism because **they trust us**, and feel like they know who we are as people.

Percentage of TGL audience who identify as Gen Zs and Millennials

**73%**



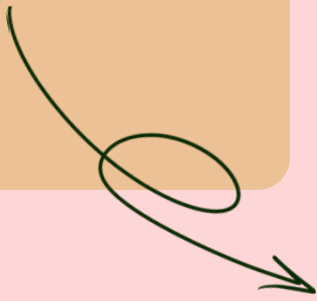
Number of average viewers who watch TGL's biweekly show on CityNews in 2023

**144,167**



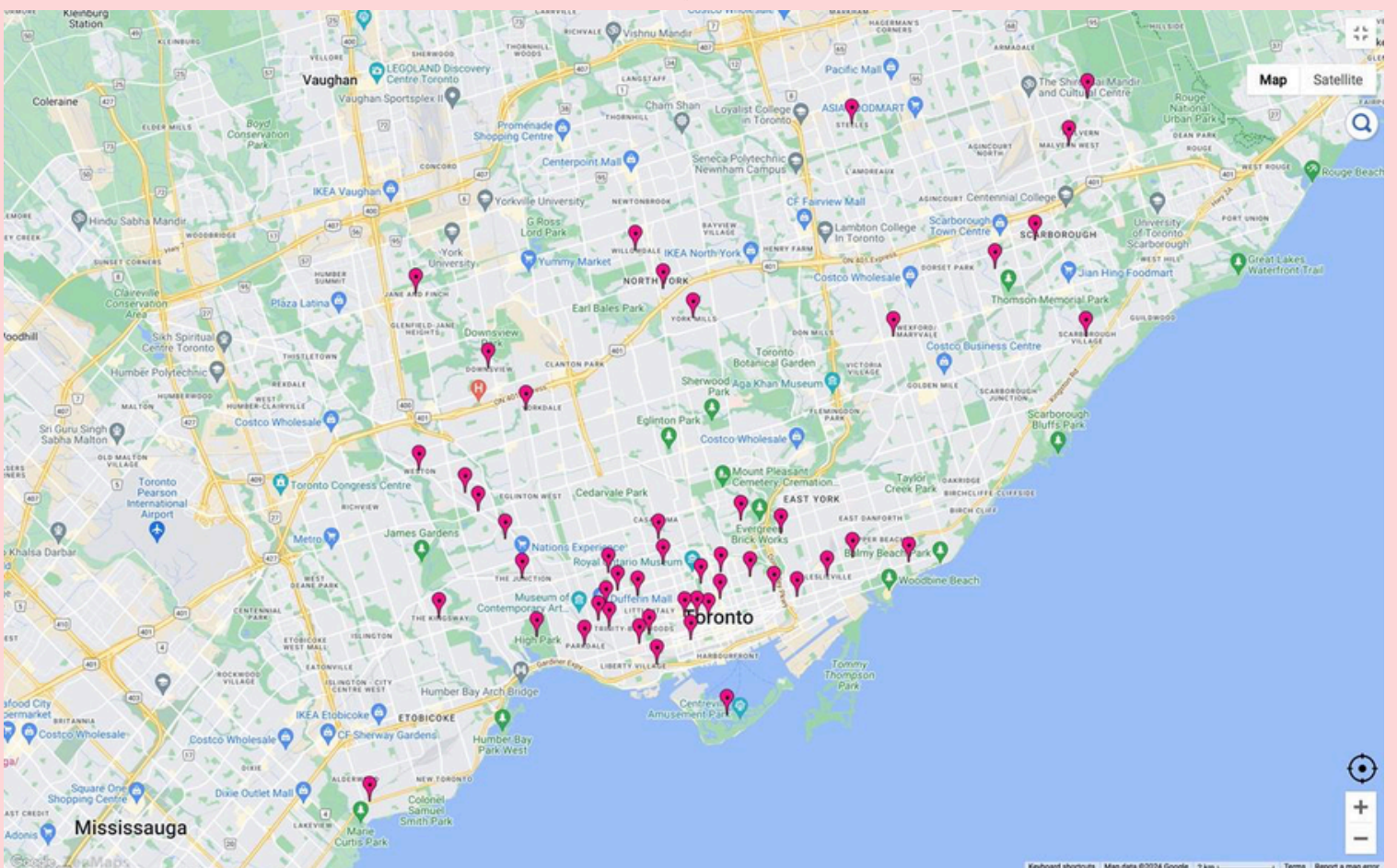
Number of neighbourhoods represented at TGL Action Journey™ events and in our Journalism

**50/158**



Number of survey responses collected from Torontonians who shared community-driven solutions

**200+**



**MAP OF TORONTO NEIGHBOURHOODS ENGAGED WITH BY THE GREEN LINE.**

# 2023 KEY HIGHLIGHTS

**19**

Mentions in Press and at Conferences Worldwide

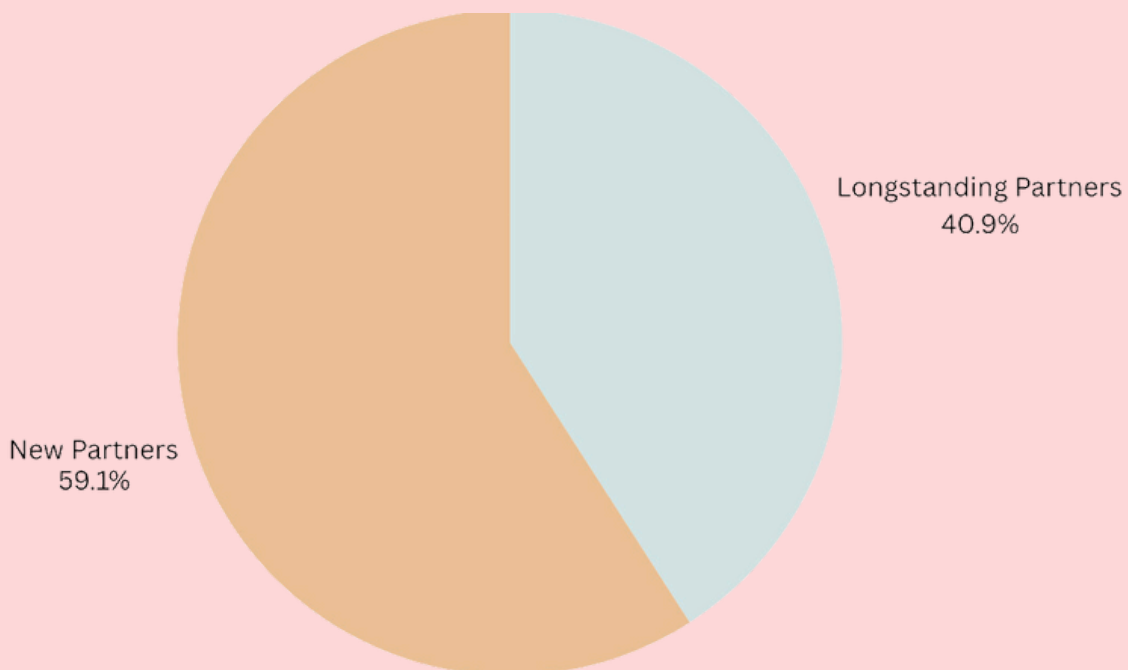
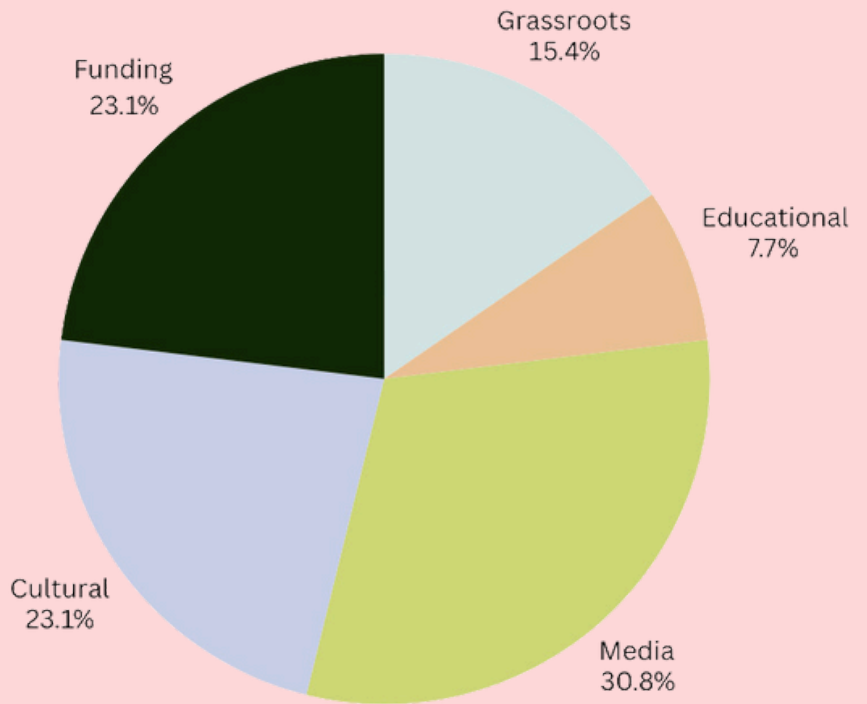
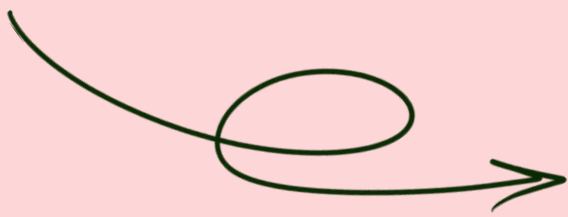
**125%**

Revenue Growth from 2022-23

**15** CURRENT PARTNERS

## HERE'S A BREAKDOWN OF OUR INCREDIBLE PARTNERS.

See page 10 for more details.



# ACTION JOURNEYS™

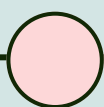


The Green Line Action Journey™ is our original theory-of-change model, which helps us increase loyalty and engagement among our audience members, as well as motivate them to **solve problems in their communities**. Rather than just passively consuming the news, our Action Journey™ encourages Torontonians to take action after learning about different issues in The Green Line.

## OUR PROCESS

### 1. Explainer

Breakdown of the systemic problem explored in the feature.

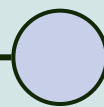


### 2. In-depth feature

Deep-dive reporting on local solutions that address the systemic problem.

### 3. Event

Reporter, sources and community members gather to discuss the feature and possible solutions to the systemic problem.



### 4. Solutions article

Article about the event, featuring crowdsourced solutions that'll inform our future coverage and help our audience take action on the systemic problem.

## IN 2023, THE GREEN LINE...

Published

**6**

Action Journey™ Issues

Attracted

**15,706**

Attendees to Action Journey™ Events

\*In partnership with Nuit Blanche

# ACTION JOURNEYS™

## BETWEEN 2022 AND 2023, WE...

Attained

# 908%

Increase in unique users who read Action Journey™ issues

Attained

# 587%

Increase in returning users who read Action Journey™ issues

Attained

# 49%

Increase in engagement rates on Action Journey™ issues

Here at The Green Line, our mission is more than just reporting on the news. Through our practical service journalism and community gatherings, we want to help people live healthier and happier lives in Toronto. We also want to motivate Torontonians to take action in their neighbourhoods and help **make the city more livable for everyone**. People know themselves and their communities best, which is why it's important for us to ensure that they have access to community-driven solutions and resources. Here are the crowdsourced solutions that Torontonians came up with in 2023:

## 5 PILLARS OF LIVABILITY

How do the solutions from our Action Journeys™ reflect our five pillars?

### HOUSING

- Modular Housing
- Land Trusts

### HEALTH

- Redefine Masculinity on Social Media
- Invite Masculinity Conversations
- Talk about Men's Mental Health

### JOB

- Pay Transparency
- Self-Produced Shows
- Social/Street Marketing
- Funding and Application support

### FOOD

- Discreet food programs
- Pay-What-You-Can Groceries
- Community Gardens
- Cooking Groups

### SOCIAL EQUALITY

- Grassroots Organization
- Dedicated Funding
- Black-Specific Events
- Public Art Exhibits
- Community Arts Collaboration

# THE GREEN LINE



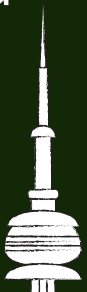
# CASE STUDY: TORONTO MAYORAL BY-ELECTION



There's always so much going on during election seasons, including an overload of information to process that might seem very distant from our daily lives. That's why, for our June 2023 Action Journey™, our team focused on producing accessible and useful coverage of the **2023 Toronto Mayoral By-Election**.

# 250

Attendees  
at our  
ticketed  
event



This issue covered a **variety of topics**, including tips on how to become an informed voter, 32 mayoral candidate profiles (including Mayor Olivia Chow) based on surveys they submitted and live coverage of election night in partnership with award-winning publication The Trillium.

With rising costs, it's become harder and harder to find joy in Toronto these days, and our team understands the challenges of living in the city. Our hope is that The Green Line's solutions-focused journalism and warm community gatherings will help Torontonians **find collective strength** in rapidly changing times.

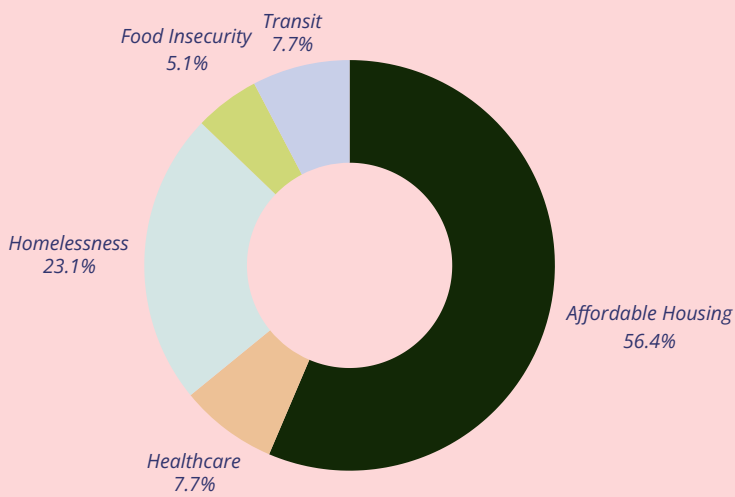
That's why, for our June 2023 Action Journey™ event, we hosted a live concert and party to **encourage people to recharge** and to vote.

# CASE STUDY: TORONTO MAYORAL BY-ELECTION

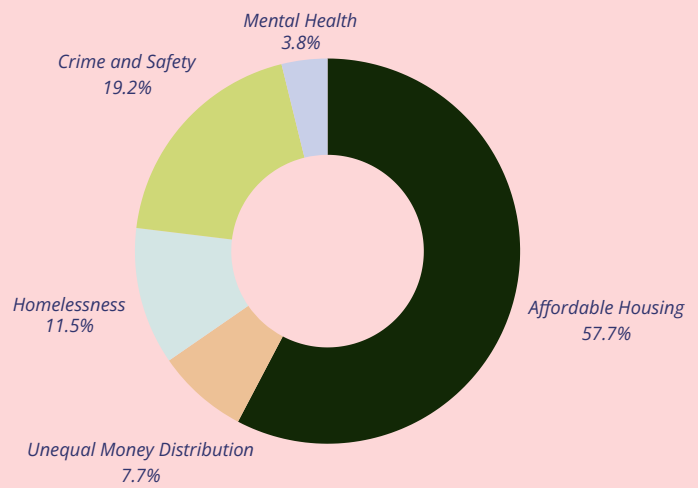


For this Action Journey™, we asked both mayoral candidates and event attendees about the systemic issues that candidates should prioritize. Here's what they said:

## ATTENDEES PRIORITIZED THESE ISSUES:



## CANDIDATES PRIORITIZED THESE ISSUES:



Of course, no Action Journey™ would be complete without crowdsourcing concrete solutions from our community members. Here are a few examples of what people suggested in response to the issues identified above:

"Make better use of crown, provincial and municipal lands to build mixed-use buildings. Make our streets safer and calmer. Prioritize LRT and streetcar efficiency by removing traffic on street car lines (i.e. Queen Street). 30 km/hour limits around school zones. Less expensive speed cameras, and more narrow streets and speed bumps."

✳️ **EVENT ATTENDEE**

"Housing, transit and homelessness: Increased housing construction and multiplexes in existing housing alongside fair pricing and increased funding for the TTC"

✳️ **EVENT ATTENDEE**

## WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

**1,363**

Users who accessed **crowdsourced, tangible tools** to improve their lives in Toronto

**92%**

Increase in new users who visited THEGREENLINE.TO within **one month**

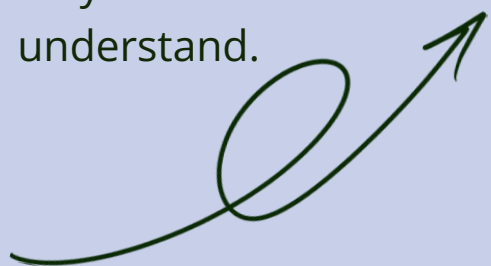
# CASE STUDY: TORONTO'S STAND-UP COMEDY SCENE



Toronto is always on the go, with big things constantly happening across the city — from Raptors games and TIFF to Taste of the Danforth and the Toronto Caribbean Carnival. But Torontonians aren't usually aware of off-the-radar or hyperlocal **events tucked away in their neighbourhoods** — and those are the types of events we like to host.



To wrap up 2023, we partnered with Riverside BIA to host a stand-up comedy show in a beautiful outdoor cafe in Riverside. Called "Your Hood's a Joke," our territorial roast battle featured celebrity guest Andrew Phung (of Kim's Convenience) and got all the attendees laughing uproariously at **inside jokes** only Torontonians would understand.



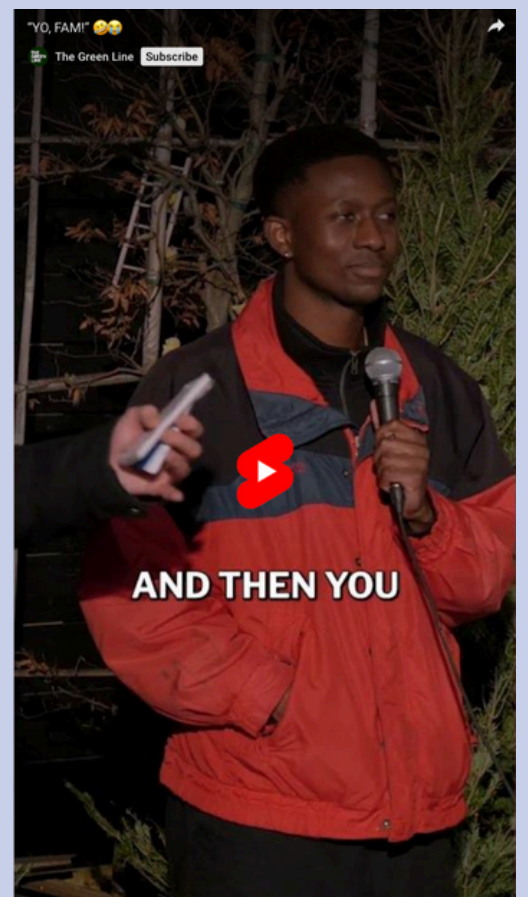
# CASE STUDY: TORONTO'S STAND-UP COMEDY SCENE



We know how difficult it is to live in Toronto, and how it's so **easy to feel stuck** when you're focusing on problems and what's negative in our city.

The struggle is real. The rising cost of living is real. Increasing gentrification in the city is real. So, one thing we can do is **laugh at these problems together** when a local comedian jokes about them.

Life in Toronto can be hard, and we face a lot of challenges. But for us at The Green Line, **finding joy** is part of the solution, so the best thing you can do is to have a good time with others who are in the same boat, while trying to solve the problem. That's the message we wanted to leave with attendees who came to our comedy event.



## WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

"It was really lively. When I pulled up early and saw a line around the corner for entry, I already knew the show was going to go off in spectacular fashion."

✦ **SEBASTIAN CHOW, COMEDIAN**

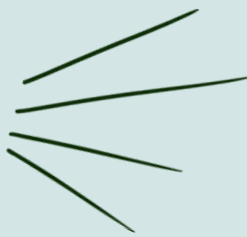
"It was a cool concept to have a comedy battle — something different from the usual standup."

✦ **EVENT ATTENDEE**

"It was nice to see a huge turnout for an event outdoors and in the East End! It just shows that we need to continue putting on fun and different events, and people will come and see them!"

✦ **SARAH ASHBY, COMEDIAN**

# WHAT WAS NEW IN 2023?



We accomplished a lot of new things in 2023, and participating in Nuit Blanche, Toronto's annual all-night celebration of contemporary art, was definitely one of our favourite memories. Take a look below at some examples of the cool work we produced in 2023:



## THE GREEN LINE'S INTERACTIVE DATABASE ON THE DIVERSITY OF TORONTO'S VISUAL ARTS SCENE

In 2023, we launched an [interactive database](#) that breaks down the demographic representation of a majority of Toronto art galleries based on gender, nationality, age, location and more.



**24**

Galleries represented

**900+**

Artists featured

## WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

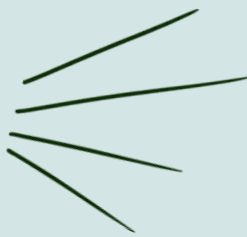
**2024 RTDNA CANADA AWARDS**

Nomination for Excellence in Innovation

**2024 DIGITAL PUBLISHING AWARDS**

Honourable Mention for Innovation in Digital Storytelling

# WHAT WAS NEW IN 2023?



## REYNOLDS JOURNALISM INSTITUTE X THE GREEN LINE ACTION JOURNEY GUIDE

In partnership with the University of Missouri's Reynolds Journalism Institute, The Green Line produced a [guide](#) about our original theory-of-change models, the Attention Journey and Action Journey™.



Our goal was to help news publications increase loyalty and engagement among audience members, as well as motivate their audiences to take action on issues that matter to their communities. Beyond delivering impact to our local communities and partners, The Green Line believes in driving impact within journalism industries worldwide by supporting them to create community-led, solutions-oriented journalism that aims to drive civic engagement.

## WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

# 30+

### NEWSROOMS ACROSS NORTH AMERICA

Intend to use our Action Journey™ model in their journalism after accessing our guide with RJI

# AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS



We've received many significant recognitions both domestically and internationally in 2023, and we want to celebrate these achievements with our community.



## 2023 LION PUBLISHERS LOCAL JOURNALISM AWARDS - PRODUCT OF THE YEAR (SMALL REVENUE TIER)

### 2023 RTDNA CANADA AWARDS

- ✦ Best Canadian Local News Award winner for Overall Excellence in Digital
- ✦ Central Region Award winner for Feature News Video (Large Market)
- ✦ Central Region Award winner for Overall Excellence in Digital

### ASPIRING INNOVATORS AWARD 2023

## 2023 DIGITAL PUBLISHING AWARDS - HONOURABLE MENTION FOR BEST NEWS COVERAGE (COMMUNITY PUBLICATION)



Our Editor-in-Chief, Anita Li, has made dozens of media appearances and conferences worldwide to speak about The Green Line's work and Action Journey™ model.

# WHAT TO WATCH FOR IN 2024



## THE GREEN LINE'S COST-OF-LIVING CALCULATOR

A quick and easy tool to estimate your monthly expenses, and to plan your finances. Use it [here](#).

## ALEXANDRA PARK COMMUNITY NEWSROOM AND ENGAGEMENT OUTPOST

A neighbourhood project to train Toronto's next generation of journalists focused on community engagement. Check it out [here](#).



## DOCUMENTERS CANADA

An initiative to help the public advocate for themselves by connecting them with the right civic and storytelling tools. Learn more [here](#).



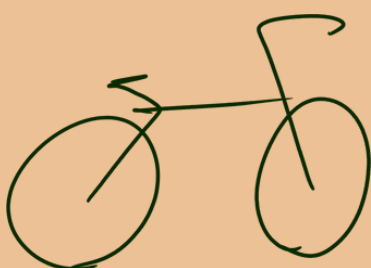
## ORIGINAL VIDEOS

We'll be publishing more original videos on our YouTube [channel](#) to deliver engaging journalism to Gen Zs and millennials.



## THE GREEN LINE'S 5 PILLARS OF LIVABILITY

To help us better uphold our vision and mission, we'll be focusing on these key pillars: transit, food, housing, health, jobs.



## YAHOO DISTRIBUTION

We'll be partnering with Yahoo News to distribute our journalism to a broader audience. Stay tuned for more info!





# WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU



Thank you to our funders and sponsors without whom our work and impact wouldn't be possible:



INNOVATIVE FITNESS

PREMIUM PERSONAL TRAINING

(UNTITLED)  
by FLAUNT BOUTIQUE



Canada 

DRESDEN

Thank you to our partners for contributing to The Green Line's journalism and community work:



CENTENNIAL COLLEGE

VILLAGE media

Toronto Metropolitan University



CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

THE GRIND



Riverside BIA



NEXTGENMEN



CityNews Everywhere

# LAST BUT NOT LEAST



Thank you to all of our members and donors for your ongoing support of *The Green Line's* community-driven journalism. We're excited to continue learning about your stories, and reporting on what matters most to you!



@TheTdotPyro 3 weeks ago

This is the kind of story where real local journalism like this can save lives. Thanks!



6



Reply



@zigzag00 2 months ago

The federal, provincial, and municipal governments need to see this and fund more transit 🙏 Thank you Green Line for making sure everyone's voices are heard, keep it up!



13



Reply



@EPMTUNES 2 months ago

Great video. People often ignore the still real racial divide that exists for transit expansion, while we are still experiencing the effects of inequities in transit.



9



Reply



@zigzag00 5 months ago

Keep up the videos! You're one of the few if not, the only channel that goes in depth, interviewing people from different Toronto neighbourhoods 🙌💪



2



Reply



@Khymeira 5 months ago

I love this channel. Keep up the good work!



2



Reply

Many thanks to everyone in our community for a wonderful 2023. Here's to a more livable and lovable Toronto!

# WANT TO SUPPORT HYPERLOCAL, COMMUNITY-LED JOURNALISM THAT FOCUSES ON SOLUTIONS?



Email us at [hello@thegreenline.to](mailto:hello@thegreenline.to) if you're interested in funding our work or partnering with us.



Make a [direct donation](#) to support The Green Line and our work.



Become a [paying member](#) to access exclusive perks to Action Journey™ events and more.



Sign up for our newsletter to learn about local Changemakers and organizations working to make Toronto a more livable place for everyone, and how you can support them.

