

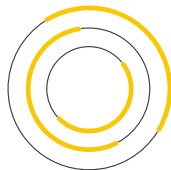
In Canada, workers' deferred wages and retirement savings, in the form of pensions and investments, amount to over \$2 trillion.

This money is invested in markets across the globe. Although workers are the indirect owners of countless publicly listed companies, infrastructure projects, real estate, private funds and other financial assets, they have very little control over how their capital is invested.

The CCSN is an action-oriented movement of trade union representatives and labour-nominated fund trustees. The movement came together through a shared conviction that workers' deferred retirement savings can and should be invested in a way that builds a just and secure economy for workers, their families and their communities. Since its foundation two years ago, the CCSN has mobilized investors to support workers' rights to organize, bargain collectively and secure decent work in various companies and sectors.

The CCSN is housed at the Shareholder Association for Shareholder Association for Research and Education (SHARE), a non-profit responsible investing organization. Through shareholder engagement, advisory services, and research, SHARE mobilizes investor leadership for a sustainable, inclusive, and productive economy.

CANADIAN
CAPITAL
STEWARDSHIP
NETWORK



RÉSEAU
CANADIEN
D'INTENDANCE
DU CAPITAL

What the CCSN does

The CCSN mobilizes investors to use their voices as shareholders to support corporate practices that protect human and labour rights.

This, in turn, supports unions as they develop strategies to organize new workers, improve conditions at the bargaining table or take on broader public interest campaigns. The CCSN works with unions to bolster campaigns on the ground by engaging investors and activating its network of labour trustees.

CASE STUDY

Capital Stewardship in Action

In 2021, cleaners in a Canadian shopping mall were facing an employer who would not bargain in good faith. The union reached out to the CCSN for support in mobilizing investors. The CCSN activated a group of trustees whose pension funds owned the underlying asset and supported them in raising the issue with their boards and with their asset manager. Following the trustees' interventions, the cleaners were able to sign their first collective bargaining agreement, securing paid sick days and fair wages.

How the CCSN Supports Unions

TRUSTEE NETWORK BUILDING

The role of a trustee on a pension board is demanding. All pension trustees, including those nominated by workers and unions, have a fiduciary duty of loyalty to the interests of plan beneficiaries. Legal research conducted by leading Canadian and global law firms, and supported by the United Nations-backed Principles for Responsible Investment, find that failure to consider environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues in the investment process is a failure of fiduciary duty. Moreover, trustees are increasingly expected to analyse systemic risks, such as climate change or inequality, to inform their decisions, as those risks may impact the type of society that beneficiaries will retire into.

By collaborating with unions that appoint trustees, the CCSN works to ensure that trustees are empowered in raising ESG issues, including labour rights considerations, specifically on their boards. The CCSN organizes educational events and produces resources to foster trustee leadership on ESG issues. Through workshops and networking opportunities, we are building a community of practice among labour-nominated trustees.

CAMPAIGNS SUPPORT

“Capital stewardship” refers to how investors oversee and execute the rights and responsibilities attached to their ownership of assets and/or companies. It encompasses a range of practices, including meeting with companies to press for changes, filing and/or voting on shareholder resolutions and collaborating with other investors on joint initiatives. Capital stewardship is an important tool to hold the companies where workers' savings are invested to the highest standard.

The CCSN supports unions in developing and executing capital stewardship strategies that can be used to supplement efforts to secure workers' rights on the ground, as one component of a broader campaign. The campaigns may seek to bring improvements to workers in areas that include – but aren't limited to – freedom of association, collective bargaining, forced or compulsory labour, child labour, discrimination, health and safety, living wages, and working hours.

The CCSN works with unions to assess whether their campaigns may be advanced through investor engagement based on a set of criteria developed by its [advisory board](#) of union representatives. These criteria enable us to assess whether acting on a request would a) secure lasting improvements in workforce conditions, b) align with the fiduciary duty of trustees, and c) involve companies represented in the portfolios of trustees participating in the CCSN.

To find out more, discuss how the CCSN can support your work or request assistance with a specific campaign, please reach out to: [Jacob Leibovitch](#), Program Officer, Capital Strategies.

