

Uncovering Research Potential of Administrative Data on Charitable Foundations in Canada

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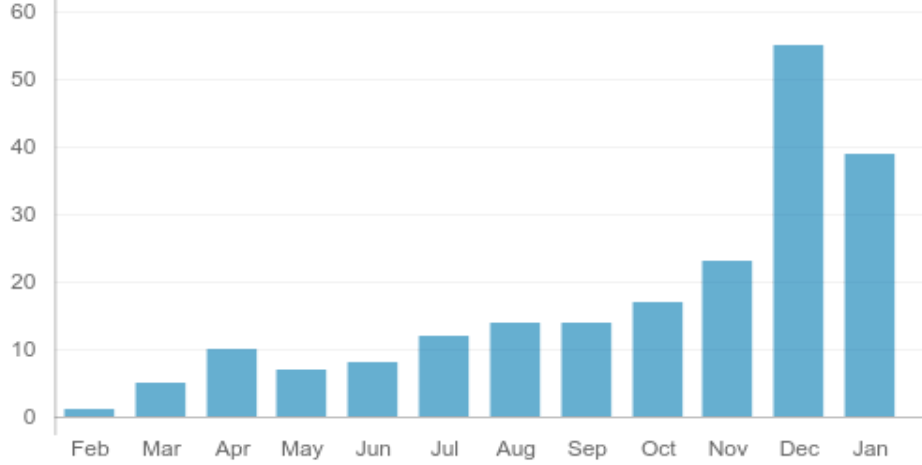
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ABSTRACT

This is the first study of its kind to assess the untapped research capacity of administrative data on Canadian foundations. More than twenty years of records collected by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) for the entire population of foundations is publicly accessible to researchers. Canadian data offers greater opportunity for nuanced analysis of the charitable foundation sector than information from the comparatively small sample available for U.S. foundations. Despite the richness of Canadian data and the potential it has to inform grantmaking and administrative practices of foundations, the academic community has paid little attention to this wealth of statistical information. This article explores some of the questions that this data can potentially answer. Consultations with foundation representatives help illuminate the directions that the foundation sector would like researchers to pursue with this data.

Ceci est la première étude de son genre à évaluer comment certaines données administratives pourraient contribuer à la recherche sur les fondations caritatives canadiennes. En effet, plus de vingt ans de données accumulées par l'Agence du revenu du Canada pour la population entière des fondations sont maintenant accessibles aux chercheurs. Ces données canadiennes représentent une occasion exceptionnelle pour effectuer une analyse nuancée du secteur des fondations caritatives, occasion qui est meilleure qu'aux États-Unis, où l'échantillon est relativement petit. Malgré la richesse des données canadiennes et leur potentiel d'améliorer l'octroi de bourses et l'administration des fondations canadiennes, la communauté académique a porté peu d'attention jusqu'à présent à cette manne de statistiques. Cet article-ci en revanche explore quelques-unes des questions auxquelles ces données pourraient porter des réponses. En outre, des consultations faites auprès des représentants de certaines fondations aident à signaler les directions que le secteur pourrait prendre grâce à ces données.

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