

Personal Statement by Pierre Madden
Running for Volunteer Coordinator post

Basic income is all about faith in humanity. When freed from the necessity of employment, people want to work for free to make the world a better place. They volunteer.

Greeting those who already have some freedom to donate their time and making them feel useful is of vital importance to any organization. I know from painful experience that many offers to help are wasted because of a failure to follow up. Integrating new members who want to participate in the life of the organization is the only way to permit the organization to thrive. No one should have to see their generous offer to help met with stony silence. I pledge never to let that happen.

I *bumped into* basic income in 2016 and immediately thought: “That’s for me!” My goal ever since has been to implement Basic Income in Canada in my lifetime. Although I have been involved in the technical details such as definition, financing, etc., what motivates me is that my father would have lived ten years longer if he had had UBI.

We must rely on the people alive today, with their prejudices and values, to make UBI a reality, so I don’t propose appealing to those already convinced or trying to convince more. Overcoming, or rather bypassing, visceral, ideological opposition is our challenge. It’s all about owning the narrative by framing the issue. For more info, see BasicIncomeMontreal.org. Volunteers are uniquely positioned to contribute to this undertaking in their communities and the world at large.

All through my career, I have mostly worked in staff positions. The people I worked with did not report to me, and I could not give them orders. Isn’t that the perfect description of working with volunteers, people looking for a cause, not a job? They will help only if they trust you and believe that what you are asking will make a meaningful difference. The ability to build trust is my core skill.