



50TH ANNIVERSARY PLAN



Who we are and why this matters

The **Regina Open Door Society** was founded on November 17, 1976, when community members in Regina asked a simple but powerful question: what more can we do to help newcomers? Over the past **50 years**, RODS has been a steady place of support, connection, and practical help for people building new lives in our city. Through changing times, and real ups and downs, our purpose has stayed consistent: supporting newcomers and refugees while strengthening welcome and belonging across Regina.

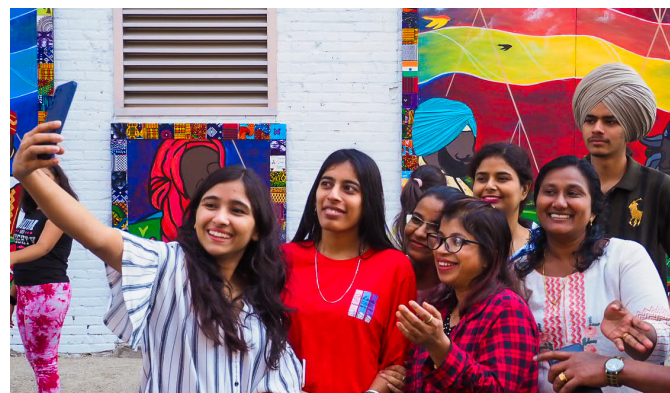
In 2026, we turn 50. This milestone is about people. It's about clients and families who have rebuilt their lives here. It's about staff who show up every day. It's about volunteers who give their time. And it's about partners and community members who have chosen to be part of a welcoming city.

Our goal is to mark this anniversary in a way that feels true to RODS: people-first, community-led, and grounded in welcome. We want the community to better understand the scale of what RODS does, and we want staff, volunteers, clients, and partners to feel proud of what we have built together.

one flagship evening event that brings the story of the past 50 years to life, a small set of "anniversary moments" that extend the celebration into the community, and a storytelling and visibility effort that continues beyond anniversary week.

This celebration will go beyond a single day. We are proposing:

- 01** One flagship evening event that brings the story of the past 50 years to life.
- 02** A small set of "anniversary moments" that extend the celebration into the community
- 03** A storytelling and visibility effort that continues beyond anniversary week.



Goals for the 50th anniversary

This anniversary plan is designed to:



Celebrate 50 years of welcome and the people behind the work



Build staff morale and connection during a challenging year



Honour newcomer and refugee journeys in a respectful and uplifting way



Create strong communications assets that help more people understand RODS (and how to access our services)



Strengthen relationships with partners and the broader community

Who this is for

Newcomers and refugees

(current and former clients)

The broader public and local media

Staff and volunteers

Funders and donors

Community partners and service providers





FLAGSHIP EVENT

50 Years of Welcome: An Immersive Anniversary Experience



Format: evening event, standing/roaming, immersive walk-through (not a sit-down gala)

Target attendance: 200–300

Audience mix: balanced (clients, partners, funders, staff/volunteers, community)

What it is

This flagship event will be an evening celebration where guests “walk through” the past 50 years of RODS. Instead of a traditional program where everyone sits and listens, guests move through a curated set of installations that bring our history and impact to life through visuals, audio, and interactive elements. There will be food and drinks available, but the main focus is the experience and the story.

Venue approach

PRIMARY VENUE LEAD

Conexus Arts Centre (in discussion as a potential venue sponsor)

BACKUP VENUES

2–3 alternate venues with gallery-style flow and capacity (to be confirmed)

Ticketing and access

- Ticketed event for general guests
- **Sponsored ticket option** so clients can attend at no cost
- Light fundraising elements that don’t change the tone of the evening (ex: sponsor-a-ticket, optional donation prompts)



Experience design (high level)

Guest flow

- Welcome zone
- Walk-through experience (installations)
- Short formal moment (10–15 minutes)
- Continued exploring and social time
- Final gratitude/future zone

Installations (proposed; final list confirmed during planning)

We will aim for **6–8 installations**, such as:

- 50-year timeline wall (decade-by-decade highlights)
- Origins of RODS (Nov 17, 1976) and early community story
- Journeys to Regina map wall (broad, non-identifying)
- Voices of Welcome (quotes/audio with consent)
- Impact by the numbers (simple, bold, visual)
- Programs in action (small interactive stations)
- Curated partner spotlight zone (not a full fair)
- Welcome/message wall (guest participation)



Resources required (flagship)

To deliver the flagship event well, we will need support from staff across the organization. These roles will be filled internally. Coordination will be led by the Communications team, working closely with the Executive Coordinator.

Internal roles

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Event Lead | • Ticketing and Guest Services Lead |
| • Experience / Installations Lead | • Logistics Lead
(layout, rentals, accessibility, load-in/out) |
| • Partner/Funder/Sponsor Lead
(including sponsor-a-ticket) | • Volunteer Coordinator
(shifts) |

Budget (flagship)

This will be the most budget-intensive portion of the 50th anniversary plan. We will pursue venue sponsorship and in-kind support, and use ticketing/sponsored tickets to offset costs.

Estimated direct cost: up to **\$25,000** (does not include sponsorships, in-kind donations, or ticket sales)

Anniversary Week Moments

These are smaller activities designed to extend the celebration beyond the flagship event without requiring large budgets.

Open House

50th + new location showcase

We propose a structured open house with mini tours and simple displays. If timing works, it can also showcase the Smith Street location.

Recommended timing: the week after the flagship event (to avoid competing demands and allow flexibility if move timing changes).

Scale options: current location open house, partner-only tours, or a smaller staff/partner showcase if space readiness is limited.

Airport Activation

November

We propose a month-long activation at the airport in November that recognizes that “**welcome begins here.**” This would be a visual storytelling installation (panels/signage/multilingual welcome messaging) that reflects the arrival journey and RODS’ role in welcoming newcomers.

Budget (moments)

We are requesting **up to \$6,000** for printing and reusable display materials to support the open house and airport activation.

Note: we have in-house graphic design capacity, so there are **no design, photography, videography, or web update costs** included in this request.

Budget covers:

Airport print assets
(panels, multilingual visuals,
mounting supplies)

Reusable display supplies
(foam core/backing, stands if needed,
storage)

Open house materials
(wayfinding, panels, welcome
wall materials)

Swag items printing

YEAR-LONG VISIBILITY

Storytelling campaign + light brand refresh

We propose launching a **“50 Years of Welcome”** storytelling campaign during anniversary week that continues beyond the week. This will keep the 50th visible over time using a mix of simple, engaging formats (throwbacks, photos, short videos, quotes, occasional longer stories) and can adapt to current social media trends.

In conjunction with this, we propose a **light brand refresh**. This is not a rebrand. We are not changing RODS’ identity. The goal is to make small updates that improve clarity and consistency across our materials.

What this includes (examples)

Subtle logo refinements
(spacing/typography; more timeless and welcoming)

Supporting colours for consistent use across programs

Refreshed templates
(social, posters, presentations)

Why this makes sense now

It supports a strong anniversary-year storytelling launch

It aligns our communications with strategic planning themes

It reduces ad-hoc design needs across teams

Capacity and cost

We have two skilled graphic designers in-house. This work can be completed professionally without typical agency costs. We are in early-stage planning and will bring forward options and a rollout plan.



Communications plan (high level)

Our communications plan will help people understand who we are, why RODS exists, and what 50 years of welcome has looked like in real life. We want the 50th anniversary to feel people-first and story-led — not just a list of events. We also want to build long-term visibility that carries beyond anniversary week.

This will be delivered through:

A “**50 Years of Welcome**” storytelling campaign that shares human stories, then-and-now moments, and community impact in a simple, engaging way

A **light brand refresh** that strengthens consistency across our materials (small updates only, not a full rebrand), giving us a clean, modern set of templates and assets to use throughout the anniversary year

Key messages (story-led)

- **50 years of welcome, built by community:** RODS has grown through collaboration with partners, volunteers, and community members
- **Belonging matters:** newcomers and refugees belong here, and welcome is something we build together
- **Impact you can see:** RODS supports settlement, employment, language learning, youth, and community connection — and the work has shaped lives and strengthened Regina
- **Gratitude:** this milestone belongs to clients, staff, volunteers, partners, and funders who have made the work possible
- **Looking forward:** the 50th is also a moment to reflect on what’s next and what it takes to keep welcome strong

Channels and approach

Website: a simple landing page (or updated page) that tells the 50-year story, lists anniversary activities, and includes key ways to participate

Email: targeted updates for staff, partners, and supporters (clear, practical, and timely)

Partner toolkit: ready-to-share copy and graphics so partners can help amplify anniversary messaging without extra work on their end

Social media: a pre-week build + week-of coverage, using a mix of throwbacks, photos, short videos, and quote-style posts (trend-friendly and easy to maintain)

Media outreach: a values-based story pitch focused on community impact and the 50-year milestone (timing dependent) Media outreach: a values-based story pitch focused on community impact and the 50-year milestone (timing dependent)

Scale-down options (if capacity tightens)

We recognize 2026 is a challenging year. If needed, we can scale down while protecting the heart of the celebration by:

- reducing the number of flagship installations (8 → 6 → 4)
- simplifying hospitality (light snacks/coffee only)
- limiting external vendors by using print-based displays and in-house support
- narrowing partner participation to a curated set
- shifting the open house format based on location readiness

Board decisions requested

01 Endorse the overall structure (flagship event + moments + year-long visibility)

02 Approve the flagship direct-cost estimate (up to \$25,000, offset by sponsorship/ticketing where possible)

03 Approve the anniversary moments printing budget (up to \$6,000)

04 Support leadership-level outreach for venue sponsorship and key in-kind partners

