

TAMIL COMMUNITY CENTRE

Donor & Member Survey 2026

5

Meetings held

377

Total respondents

7

Questions covered

Mar–Apr 2026

Survey period

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a donor and member survey conducted by the Tamil Community Centre (TCC) across five community meetings held between March and April 2026. A total of 377 respondents, comprising of existing organization members and donors, participated across one membership meeting and four regional donor meetings in Scarborough, Durham, Peel, and York.

Survey Structure

The survey consisted of seven questions covering:

- Community challenges and identity priorities
- TCC mandate rankings
- Cultural and heritage programming preferences
- Diaspora–homeland connections
- Membership eligibility expansion
- Member governance and decision-making mechanisms
- Open-ended recommendations

The central and most consistent finding across all questions is an overwhelming community mandate for heritage preservation, language continuity, and transparent governance. These themes emerged independently across every meeting and across both quantitative rankings and open-ended qualitative responses.

Survey Overview

Meeting	Date	Respondents
Membership Meeting	March 18, 2026	48
Scarborough Donor Meeting	April 1, 2026	111
Durham Donor Meeting	April 9, 2026	53
Peel Donor Meeting	April 22, 2026	76
York Donor Meeting	April 29, 2026	89
Total		377

Note: The Membership Meeting form combined Q2 items 4 & 5 (Intergenerational Homeland + Tamil Language & Culture) into a single option. For Q4 and Q6, combined totals reflect the four donor meetings only; Membership Meeting data is reported separately throughout.

Section 1 — Community Challenges: Strengthening Tamil Identity in Canada

Respondents were asked to rank four community challenges in order of significance. Shown below are the count and percentage of respondents who selected each challenge as their #1 priority.

Aggregate Results — All Donor Meetings

Challenge	#1 Votes	% of Total	Rank
Tamil Language Preservation & Cultural Continuity (2nd generation)	181	56%	#1
Civic Leadership & Tamil Representation in Government	83	26%	#2
Strengthening Collective Identity (Uniting Organizations)	36	11%	#3
Empowerment via Training, Mentorship & Networking	21	7%	#4
Total #1 Votes	321	100%	

Per-Meeting #1 Votes

Challenge	Members	Scarborough	Durham	Peel	York
Tamil Language Preservation & Cultural Continuity	24	61	35	36	49
Civic Leadership & Tamil Representation	3	28	10	23	22
Strengthening Collective Identity	15	11	4	10	11
Empowerment via Training & Mentorship	6	7	4	5	5

Key Finding

Tamil language preservation and cultural continuity was selected as the #1 priority at every single meeting — 56% of donor respondents chose it as their top priority, the most consistent result across the entire survey. Civic leadership and Tamil representation in government was chosen as #1 by 26% of donors, but only 3 respondents (about 6%) at the Membership Meeting selected it as their top priority — suggesting a stronger political engagement orientation among the donor landscape.

Section 2 — TCC Mandate Priorities

Respondents ranked TCC's seven core mandates in order of priority. Shown below are the count and percentage of respondents who selected each mandate as their #1 priority.

Aggregate Results — All Donor Meetings

Mandate	#1 Votes	% of Total	Rank
Uniting the Tamil Community	96	30%	#1
Uplifting the Next Generation	85	27%	#2
Preserving Tamil Language & Culture	78	25%	#3
Intergenerational Connection to Thaiyaham (Homeland)	20	6%	#4
Providing Services for Our Families	18	6%	#5
Education on Tamil Genocide & Eelam Tamil Cause	13	4%	#6
Supporting Our Seniors	8	3%	#7
Total #1 Votes	318	100%	

Per-Meeting #1 Votes

Mandate	Members	Scarborough	Durham	Peel	York
Uniting the Tamil Community	20	37	7	19	33
Uplifting the Next Generation	6	25	16	26	18
Preserving Tamil Language & Culture	—*	28	4	24	22
Intergenerational Connection to Thaiyaham	—*	5	8	2	5
Providing Services for Our Families	2	4	9	2	3
Education on Tamil Genocide & Eelam Tamil Cause	4	7	2	1	3
Supporting Our Seniors	14	2	4	0	2

* The Membership Meeting form combined Items 4 & 5 (Intergenerational Homeland + Tamil Language & Culture) into a single option (#1 votes for combined item: 2).

Key Finding

The top three donor priorities — Uniting the Tamil Community (30%), Uplifting the Next Generation (27%), and Preserving Tamil Language & Culture (25%) — are clustered within a close range, indicating near-equal importance. Particularly noteworthy is the divergence on senior support: at the Membership Meeting, 14 respondents (about 30%) selected it as their #1 priority, while only 8 donor respondents (3%) did so. This reflects a fundamental difference in how members and donors conceptualize TCC's role: members view it as a community service provider, while donors view it primarily as an identity and cultural institution.

Section 3 — Cultural & Heritage Activities

Respondents ranked four cultural and heritage activities that TCC should offer. Shown below are the count and percentage of respondents who selected each activity as their #1 priority.

Aggregate Results — All Donor Meetings

Activity	#1 Votes	% of Total	Rank
Tamil History & Heritage Exhibitions (Museum/Archives)	145	46%	#1
Documenting Migration Stories of the Tamil Diaspora	80	25%	#2
Cultural Programming (Thai Pongal, Tamil New Year)	63	20%	#3
Intergenerational Storytelling & Oral History Projects	28	9%	#4
Total #1 Votes	316	100%	

Per-Meeting #1 Votes

Activity	Members	Scarborough	Durham	Peel	York
Tamil History & Heritage Exhibitions	21	50	19	33	43
Documenting Migration Stories	17	26	13	17	24
Cultural Programming (Festivals)	8	20	15	14	14
Intergenerational Storytelling & Oral History	2	11	5	7	5

Key Finding

Tamil history exhibitions and museum/archival spaces were selected as the #1 priority by nearly half of all donor respondents (46%) — the only cultural activity to rank first across all five meetings unanimously. The strong second selection for documenting diaspora migration stories (25%) reinforces that the community is seeking permanent, structured repositories for Tamil heritage rather than one-off programming events. Open-ended responses reinforced this theme with specific calls for Tamil-language libraries and documentary education initiatives.

Section 4 — Strengthening Diaspora–Homeland Connections

Respondents selected the single option they considered most significant for how TCC should strengthen connections between the Tamil diaspora and the homeland. Results reflect the four donor meetings only.

Aggregate Results — All Donor Meetings

Option	Count	% of Total	Rank
Initiatives to Preserve Homeland History, Culture & Traditions	163	47%	#1
Empowerment & Training Led by Diaspora Expertise	69	20%	#2
Cultural Exchange Programs with Homeland Institutions	60	17%	#3
Remembrance & Commemoration Events (e.g., Tamil Genocide Remembrance)	55	16%	#4
Total Responses	347	100%	

Per-Meeting Breakdown

Option	Scarborough	Durham	Peel	York
Preserve Homeland History, Culture & Traditions	52	30	35	46
Empowerment & Training — Diaspora Expertise	25	7	11	26
Cultural Exchange with Homeland Institutions	13	11	17	19
Remembrance & Commemoration Events	21	13	12	9

Key Finding

Preserving homeland history, culture and traditions was selected by nearly half of all donor respondents (47%), commanding a clear lead over all other options. This result is directly consistent with the findings of Q1 and Q3 and reinforces the community's prioritization of lasting heritage infrastructure over programming or engagement events. Commemorative activities, while culturally significant, ranked last, suggesting the community views preservation as a higher-order need than remembrance alone.

Section 5 — Membership Eligibility Expansion

Currently, TCC membership is limited to registered non-profit organizations serving the Tamil community that have been incorporated and operating for at least two years. Respondents were asked whether TCC should expand eligibility to include registered and non-registered community organizations or informal groups.

Aggregate Results — All Donor Meetings

Response	Count	% of Total
Yes — Expand Eligibility	178	61%
No — Keep Current Criteria	113	39%
Total Donor Meeting Responses	291	100%

Per-Meeting Breakdown

Meeting	No	Yes	Total	% Yes	% No
Membership Meeting	29	19	48	40%	60%
Scarborough	43	55	98	56%	44%
Durham	23	25	48	52%	48%
Peel	18	49	67	73%	27%
York	29	49	78	63%	37%

Key Finding

A clear majority of donor respondents (61%) support expanding membership eligibility, with the strongest support in Peel (73%) and York (63%). However, the Membership Meeting, comprising existing member organizations, opposed expansion by 60%. This divergence is analytically significant: existing members, who hold voting rights, are protective of the current criteria, while donors and community participants favour broader inclusion. Qualitative feedback consistently emphasized the need for rigorous legitimacy verification mechanisms before any expansion is implemented, suggesting that support is conditional rather than unconditional.

Section 6 — Member Governance & Decision-Making Involvement

Respondents selected all governance mechanisms they would like Member Organizations to participate in. Multiple selections were permitted. Results reflect the four donor meetings only (total respondents: 329).

Aggregate Results — All Donor Meetings

Governance Mechanism	Endorsements	% of Respondents	Rank
Frequent Transparent Financial Reporting	238	72%	#1
Participate in AGMs with Voting Rights	228	69%	#2
Share Major Decisions at Semi-Annual Meetings	211	64%	#3
Regular Advisory Committee with Member Org Participation	202	61%	#4
Online Portal for Ongoing Feedback & Communication	184	56%	#5
Minimum 2 Member Org Representatives on Each Committee	137	42%	#6

Per-Meeting Breakdown

Mechanism	Scarborough	Durham	Peel	York	Total
Frequent Transparent Financial Reporting	79	41	49	69	238
AGM Participation with Voting Rights	75	45	46	62	228
Semi-Annual Decision-Sharing Meetings	71	38	42	60	211
Regular Advisory Committee	64	29	47	62	202
Online Feedback & Communication Portal	66	29	42	47	184
Min. 2 Reps per Committee	48	20	32	37	137

Key Finding

Transparent financial reporting was the most-endorsed governance mechanism, selected by 72% of donor respondents, a finding that directly mirrors the top theme identified in Q7 open feedback. The high endorsement of AGM voting rights (69%) and semi-annual decision-sharing (64%) indicates a strong preference for structured, system-wide participation. The relative underperformance of mandatory committee representation (42%) suggests respondents value access and transparency over structural entrenchment, preferring broad visibility into decision-making rather than guaranteed participation via committee involvement.

Section 7 — Open Feedback: Strengthening TCC

Respondents were invited to share open-ended recommendations to strengthen TCC's governance, communications, programming, community engagement, and operations. The following eight themes were synthesized from written responses across all five meetings, presented in order of frequency.

1. Transparency & Financial Accountability

The single most frequently raised theme across all meetings. Respondents called for quarterly and half-yearly financial updates to be published online, competitive tendering processes for large contracts, and a formal expectation that donors be treated as stakeholders with access to regular reporting. Several respondents drew comparisons to the reporting standards of publicly listed companies and government agencies.

2. Youth & Next-Generation Engagement

A recurring and urgent concern was the ageing demographic of attendees at donor meetings. Respondents called for active outreach to Canadian-born Tamil youth through social media, partnerships with university Tamil student groups, Tamil book clubs, film nights, and dedicated youth programming. The consensus was that second-generation engagement requires deliberate, proactive effort before disengagement becomes irreversible.

3. Governance Reform & Leadership Rotation

Multiple respondents across all five meetings urged the introduction of formal term limits, elected boards, transparent nomination processes, and structural separation of powers. Concerns were raised about the risks of power concentration, with several respondents citing the governance failures of other Tamil-diaspora organizations as cautionary precedents.

4. Tamil Language Preservation

Consistent demand for free Tamil-language classes, bilingual (Tamil and English) communications in all official TCC correspondence, Tamil-language library collections, and structured teaching programs for children. Several respondents noted that a Tamil community centre that communicates exclusively in English fundamentally undermines its own mandate.

5. Communications & Community Outreach

Requests for regular newsletters, Town Hall meetings, updated website content, social media marketing, and improved event publicity were widespread. A number of respondents noted that they had only recently learned of TCC's existence and urged deliberate grassroots outreach to working-class and non-English-speaking Tamil community members who remain largely unaware of the organization.

6. Heritage, Culture & Remembrance

Calls for a Tamil cultural library, dedicated archival spaces, Maaveerar commemorations, Tamil genocide documentation initiatives, traditional arts programs, and intergenerational cultural events was strongly suggested as critical programming/services to be rendered. Some respondents recommended that TCC actively pursue government heritage funding to support the development and maintenance of these facilities.

7. Inclusivity & Community Unity

Respondents expressed a range of views on TCC's membership scope, with some advocating for an exclusive focus on Sri Lankan Tamils and others calling for broader Tamil inclusion. Despite these differences, there was

consistent agreement on the importance of avoiding factionalism and treating all community members equitably. The mental health and wellbeing of Tamil youth was also identified as a significantly underfunded priority.

8. Facilities & Infrastructure

Practical suggestions for the planned TCC building included adequate parking provisions, an event hall with revenue-generating rental capacity, phased construction roadmaps (Phase 1 and Phase 2) with clear milestones, and regular progress updates for donors. One respondent advocated that the building's architectural design should reflect Tamil cultural aesthetics rather than defaulting to a generic institutional structure.

Conclusions & Strategic Recommendations

1

Establish Tamil Language as a Foundational Institutional Commitment

Tamil language preservation was selected as the #1 priority in Q1 at every single meeting — the only result in the survey to achieve complete geographic unanimity. TCC should treat the delivery of free Tamil-language classes, bilingual official communications, and a Tamil library collection as non-negotiable baseline commitments rather than aspirational future goals.

2

Activate a Youth Engagement Strategy Immediately

The donor demographic skews significantly older, and open-feedback responses across all five meetings flagged youth disengagement as urgent. A dedicated youth strategy, including social media campaigns, university Tamil-group partnerships, and age-specific programming, should be activated in the near term, before second-generation Canadians disengage from TCC entirely.

3

Prioritize Heritage Infrastructure as the Primary Justification for the TCC Building

Tamil history exhibitions and museum/archival spaces were the #1 choice for 46% of donor respondents in Q3, ranking first across all five meetings. Preservation of homeland history, culture and traditions won Q4 by a 47% plurality. The community mandate for a permanent, physical home for Tamil heritage is unambiguous and constitutes the strongest available rationale for the planned TCC building campaign.

4

Implement Transparent Financial Reporting as a Baseline Commitment

Transparent financial reporting was the top-ranked governance mechanism in Q6 (endorsed by 72% of donor respondents) and the single most-cited theme in Q7 open feedback. Quarterly financial updates published online should be treated as a foundational operational commitment, not a future enhancement. Respondents have explicitly framed this as a condition of trust.

5

Design a Tiered Membership Expansion Framework

Approximately 61% of donor respondents support expanding membership eligibility, but the Membership Meeting itself opposed expansion (60% No). Open-feedback responses called for rigorous legitimacy verification. A tiered model, distinguishing between associate membership and full voting membership, with annual review mechanisms may reconcile these two positions and enable inclusive growth without compromising governance integrity.

6

Establish and Publish a Formal Governance Framework

Calls for elected boards, term limits, transparent nomination processes, and structural checks and balances were raised across all five meetings. TCC should proactively develop and publicly release a governance framework, including leadership rotation policies and conflict-of-interest rules, to build institutional credibility and demonstrate accountability to the community from the outset.

This report was prepared from questionnaire responses collected across five TCC community meetings held between March and April 2026. Figures reflect valid responses per question. For the complete dataset, please contact TCC Administration.