



# Guide to Social Procurement in Tourism, Hospitality and Events

May 2023



## Acknowledgements

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Thank you to our formal and informal partners in tourism, hospitality, and events, including Explore Edmonton and Connect7, for seeing and being the change in the marketplace that will allow our communities to thrive.



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# About Buy Social Canada

Buy Social Canada is a social enterprise with the mission to advance and grow social procurement. We believe that the purchasing of goods and services is much more than an economic transaction, procurement is a means to build community capital, the foundation of a healthy community, contributing to a local community's social and economic goals.

We bring together purpose driven purchasers and social value suppliers to build business relationships that generate social benefits for communities across the country. We work with community, private sector, and governments to provide training and develop policy and resources. We offer a recognized, Canada-wide social enterprise certification program that opens the door to an emerging social impact network.

## Contact and Feedback

For further information, please contact Buy Social Canada Executive Director Elizabeth Chick-Blount at [elizabeth@buysocialcanada.com](mailto:elizabeth@buysocialcanada.com).

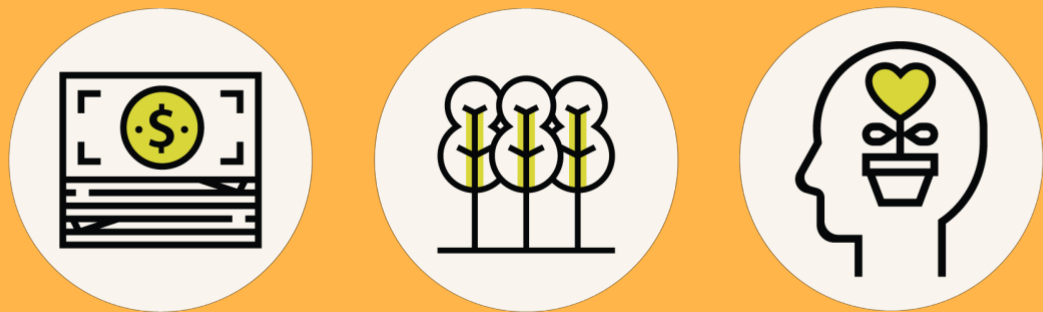


Figure 1 Every purchase has an economic, environmental, cultural and social impact, whether intended or not.



# Introduction

## A welcome letter from Destination Vancouver President & CEO Royce Chwin

Dear colleagues in the tourism community,

I'm pleased to introduce this Guide to Social Procurement in Tourism, Hospitality, and Events, commissioned by Destination Vancouver and created by Buy Social Canada.

Social procurement has the potential to create meaningful change within organizations through the way they source goods and services. It helps organizations to put purpose into practice and asks that their spending decisions consider positive social and community impact alongside price, quality, and environmental factors.

It means building relationships with suppliers and vendors that are committed to ethical and sustainable practices and ensures the long-term success of those businesses, encouraging the creation of more social enterprises.

Through Destination Vancouver's own work on social procurement, we know that local social enterprises are ready and eager to engage in conversations about their products, services, and capacities.

We encourage businesses to explore opportunities to collaborate with these impactful organizations. By partnering with social enterprises, we can drive innovation, enact positive change, and maximize social value.

At Destination Vancouver, our purpose is to transform our communities and visitors through the power of travel. Embracing social procurement can be part of that transformation and contribute to a thriving, inclusive and equitable destination.

Sincerely,



Royce Chwin  
President & CEO  
Destination Vancouver

# What is Social Procurement?

Every purchase has an economic, environmental, cultural and social impact, whether intended or not. Social procurement is about capturing those impacts and seeking to make intentional positive contributions to both the local economy and the overall vibrancy of the community.

Individual consumers are already considering the impact of their purchases by buying products certified as fair trade, local, organic and ethical. By scaling up this growing trend to include tourism, hospitality and events, the potential impact could be tremendous.

Conventionally, procurement was about choosing the supplier offering the lowest price while still meeting technical requirements of providing high quality products or services at minimal risk. Social procurement is about “encouraging a shift towards procurement based on achieving multiple outcomes in addition to maximizing financial value.”<sup>1</sup> It means using your procurement dollars to achieve overarching institutional, governmental, or individual goals such as environmental and social sustainability. When you adopt a social procurement framework, you can seek to maximize the value you receive from your existing purchases.

Social procurement is happening at all three levels of government. Notable examples include Public Service and Procurement Canada [Policy on Social Procurement](#), City of Calgary [Benefit Driven Procurement](#) and the [British Columbia Social Procurement Initiative](#). Institutions and non-profits are aligning their purchasing with their community-serving mandates. Corporations like Chandos Construction and SAP have made commitments to achieve social procurement targets.

Businesses, non-profits and individuals working in tourism, hospitality and events can use this guide to learn about social procurement and how to apply social procurement in a sector where leveraging social value from purchasing can have a powerful and positive ripple effect on communities.

## A note on language

Some people consider sustainable procurement to be focused on environmental considerations and social procurement to be focused on impacts on people. But every purchase has a social, economic, cultural and environmental impact. Buy Social Canada recognizes that people are part of the environment and the actions of each impact the other. Social procurement may include environmental considerations and sustainable procurement may include social value. Our recommendation is to use the language and terminology that resonates for your organization.

**For more key term definitions, use the Glossary on page 41.**

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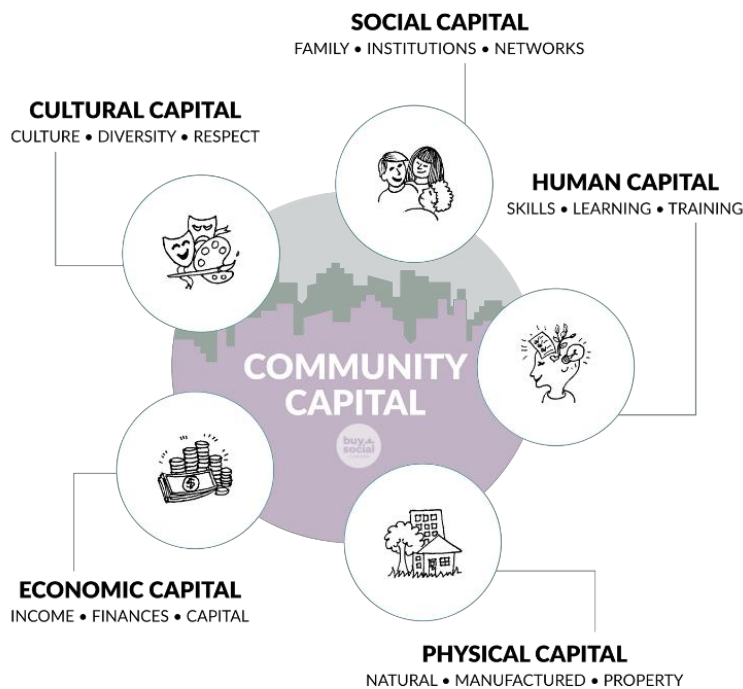
<sup>1</sup> Josephine Barraket, Robyn Keast, and Craig Furneaux, *Social Procurement and New Public Governance* (Routledge, 2016).

# Why Social Procurement?

## Build Community Capital

Community capital is at the heart of social procurement because the health of a community is not measured by economic value alone. Healthy communities are rich in human, social, cultural, physical, and economic capital.<sup>2</sup> By building relationships between social value suppliers and purchasers, Buy Social Canada is leading the movement for community capital creators across the country.

You are invited to be a part of the community capital creator movement as you learn about and begin to implement social procurement.



**Figure 2** Buy Social Canada Community Capital diagram.

<sup>2</sup> Simon Fraser University, "Community Capital Tool," Centre for Sustainable Development, accessed June 25, 2018, <https://www.sfu.ca/sustainabledevelopment/Engagement/community-capital-tool-launched.html>.



When you practice social procurement, you intentionally create community capital based on the needs of the local community. Through multi-stakeholder engagement processes, communities can identify the social, economic, cultural, and environmental issues that are important to them. Social procurement has the flexibility and capacity to target community related needs or help fill a perceived gap.

### **Social procurement allows organizations to put purpose into practice:**

- **Best value:** Social Procurement is about *adding* a social value consideration alongside price and quality considerations. Achieving a social value from your purchase achieves the *best value* for your money.
- **Increase your social value as a supplier:** Many organizations wear two hats, existing in the marketplace as both purchasers and as suppliers, when responding to bids or looking to attract new clients or customers, being able to evidence your own social value through your social procurement activities gives you a competitive edge in the marketplace.
- **Employee engagement:** The younger generations of our workforce are extremely motivated by feeling as though they are part of something greater than themselves and are part of a solution to a larger problem.
- **Be part of designing the future:** This is not a fad, but an evolving trend, so now is the time to lean in, bring your business acumen to the table, and add your voice to the process of designing the future of procurement.

### **Social procurement supports the tourism, hospitality and events sector with:**

- Confidence in making a significant and impactful contribution to the community
- A competitive advantage with clients who want a positive legacy
- Increased community visibility and brand loyalty
- Enhanced engagement and enthusiasm from employees
- Verification of your commitment to stakeholder engagement and alignment
- Expanded choice of suppliers beyond the usual suspects
- To go beyond corporate social responsibility and leverage your purchasing power

Many organizations care about supporting their communities. One major cruise line recently announced a \$15,000 donation to a local charity. But imagine instead of that generous donation, the Vancouver cruise industry brought social enterprises and other social value suppliers into their supply chains.

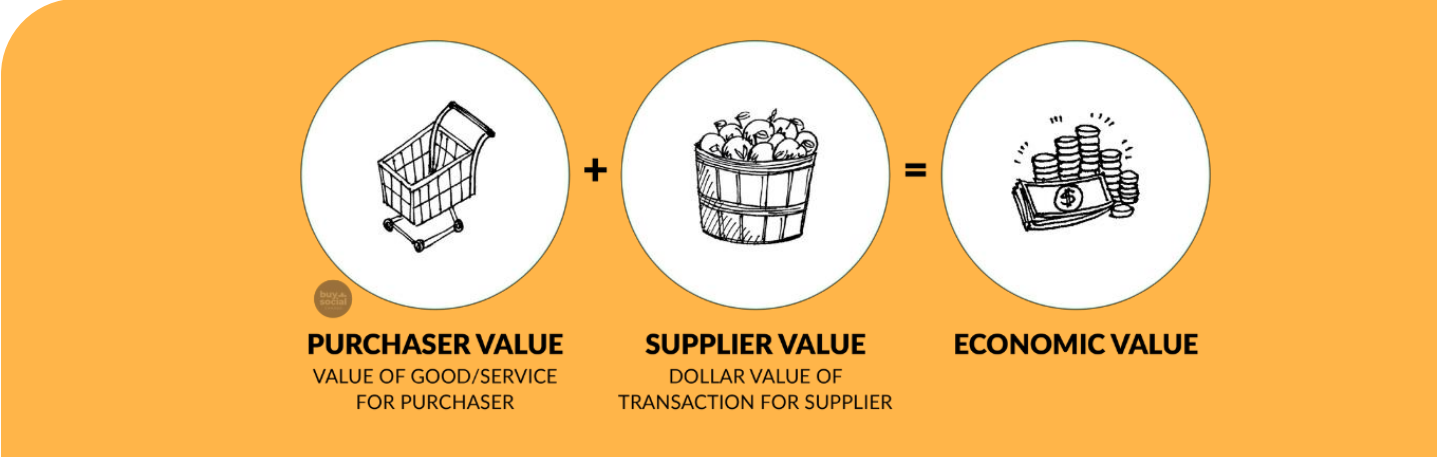
In 2023 Vancouver will see 340 cruise ships with a total economic impact of \$51 million. Just 1% of that purchasing power to social value suppliers would be \$510,000. That's a significantly larger impact and one that is more resilient than donations.

As social procurement interest grows in tourism, hospitality and events, there is a need to have a framework to support the inclusion of adding social value to the purchasing of goods and services.

Move beyond ad hoc projects and donations with a comprehensive program of policy, process, and tools that become integral to the way you do business. The social procurement journey includes the key components of learn, policy, test/do, measure and lead to ensure your purchasing can support people and communities.

**Join us as we explore how you can move from procurement focused on economic value...**

**Figure 3** Conventional procurement process



**To procurement focused on community value.**

**Figure 4** Social procurement adds social value to existing purchasing





## Why Tourism, Hospitality and Events?

Social procurement is part of a wider movement in the tourism, hospitality and events sector that recognizes that while tourism is a powerful economic driver, not all people and communities feel this impact equally or positively. The addition of social procurement to the tourism, hospitality and events sector will help address challenges like over-tourism, loss of affordability, greenhouse gas emissions from air travel, congestion and labour shortages.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a major shock to the sector and highlighted some of these existing challenges. Since the sector relies on travel and meeting in person it was one of the hardest hit. As the sector reshapes itself post-pandemic, there is a need to build back better.

This growing movement acknowledges the importance of social and environmental sustainability, regenerative practices and community wellbeing. Not only do businesses and communities want this change, so do clients and travellers.

Social procurement is just one piece of the puzzle to support the tourism, hospitality, and events sector.

There are many initiatives working to add positive intention to the supply chains and impact of the tourism, hospitality and events sector. Here are examples of purchasing and sustainability initiatives in tourism, hospitality and events:

- [Indigenous Tourism BC](#)
- [Inclusive Procurement Guide](#) by Canadian Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
- Sustainability Guides including [Sustainable Supply Chains](#) by International Olympic Committee
- [#MEET4IMPACT](#)
- [Global Destination Sustainability Movement](#)

Opportunities exist in the supply chains of destination marketing organizations, tourism associations, resorts, transportation companies, event planning and small businesses to put aspirational, community goals into action. By purchasing from businesses that contribute to community capital, the tourism, hospitality and events sector will help to create more community capital.

This Guide will act as your starting point for your social procurement journey, with how-to information in the following sections.

## Vancouver Social Procurement Ecosystem

In Vancouver, Destination Vancouver is one player out of many who work together to foster a supportive ecosystem. All of these pieces work together to collaborate and create a thriving social value marketplace.

- Social enterprises – Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside is one of the most highly concentrated areas with social enterprises in the world. Some of these social enterprises include Clean Start, Potluck Catering, Just Potters, Binners Project, Mission Possible, HAVE Café and Catering, Budgie Box, Embers, and Skwachays.
- Community organizations – Exchange Inner City
- Purchasers – Destination Vancouver, Novex Delivery Solutions, Clark Builders
- Government policy – Vancouver CBA
- Intermediaries – Buy Social Canada
- Social Procurement Roundtable - Hosted by Buy Social Canada and Exchange Inner City to bring suppliers and purchasers together to build relationships and share opportunities.

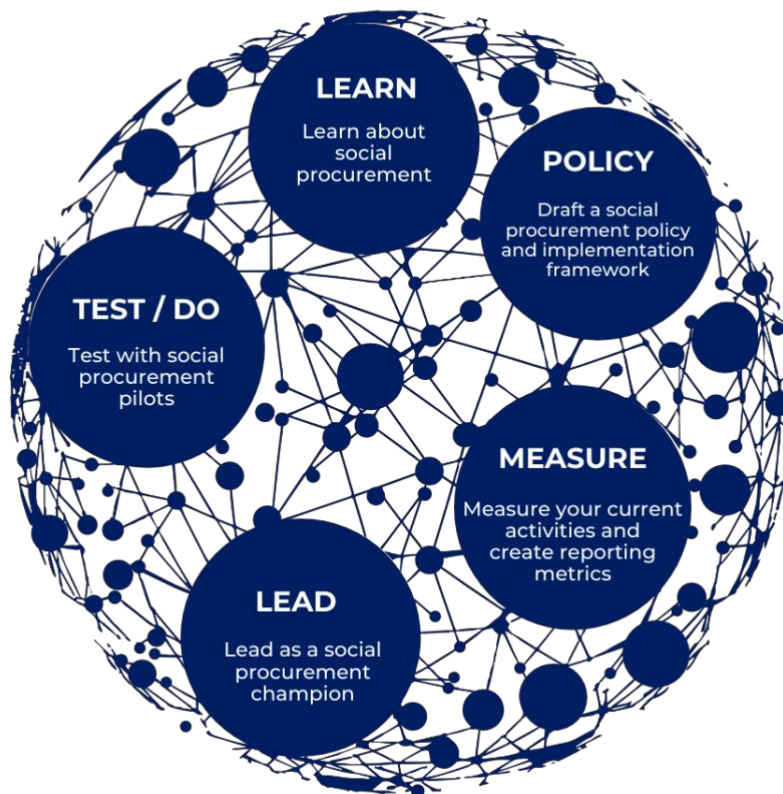
# The Social Procurement Journey

The journey to embed social procurement into your organization is not linear. Depending on a range of factors, including your organization's priorities, size, capacity and prior understanding of social procurement, you may choose to take on a number of these activities at once or in an order that makes sense to you. Whichever order you choose, the elements of learn, policy, test and do, measure and lead are key to the long-term success of social procurement at your organization.

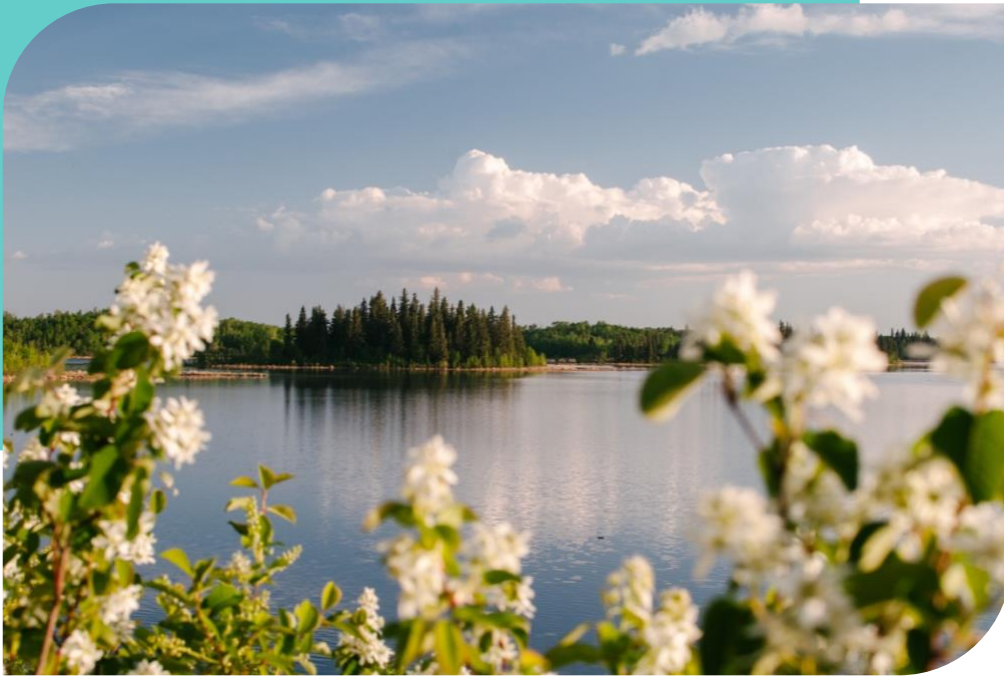
Let's explore what each of these steps can look like and what action can be taken to implement a robust and impactful social procurement program.

“For small businesses, how this gets implemented might be very different than in larger corporate sector. Even though it's smaller purchases, there's still value in them... It's not necessarily a burden on businesses, we're recognizing the value they're creating through hundreds of small decisions.”

– Gwendal Castellan, Destination Vancouver



**Figure 5** Buy Social Canada Social Procurement Journey diagram



## Learn

Learn about social procurement

### Get started

Many organizations start with learn. You have already begun learning about social procurement by reading this guide. Congratulations! For a more detailed breakdown of the what, why and how of social procurement read the Buy Social Canada [Guide to Social Procurement](#).

### Training

Engage in learning activities with your team and incorporate change management into your social procurement process. Offer workshops and trainings for procurement staff, business units and anyone else who purchases for your organization. A one hour Why, What and How of Social Procurement webinar is a great place to start.

An in-depth and hands-on workshop with engagement can include discussion of your social procurement goals, what you purchase, your purchasing process and what could be possible.

Later in your journey incorporate training on how to implement your policy and use social procurement tools.

Buy Social Canada offers a range of packaged and custom training. For more information contact [info@buysocialcanada.com](mailto:info@buysocialcanada.com).

# Resources

The Buy Social Canada [free resource library](#) includes a wealth of information, tools, research and case studies.

Type	Resource
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guide to Social Procurement</li> <li>Social Procurement in Construction and Infrastructure Projects</li> <li>Guide to Social Procurement in Tourism Hospitality and Events</li> <li>Marketplace Revolution by David LePage</li> </ul>
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Value Menu for Goods and Services</li> <li>Social Value Menu for Community Benefit Agreements</li> <li>Social Value Menu for Community Employment Benefits</li> </ul>
Public sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trade Agreements Primer</li> <li>Local Briefing Note Medium</li> </ul>
Training and courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Social Procurement</li> <li>Social Procurement Implementation</li> <li>Social Procurement in Construction</li> <li>Social Procurement Professional Certificate</li> <li>Procurement for Social Value Suppliers</li> <li>Storytelling for Social Value Suppliers</li> </ul>
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voices of Industry: A Paradigm Shift in CBAs</li> <li><a href="#">Destination Vancouver Tourism, Hospitality and Events Social Procurement Survey and Report 2022</a></li> <li>Downtown Eastside Social Enterprise Impact Report</li> </ul>

Buy Social Canada hosts a Canada-wide Community of Practice meeting online quarterly. This is an opportunity for those interested or engaged with social procurement to connect and learn together. These meetings are free to join. To join the Community of Practice please contact [info@buysocialcanada.com](mailto:info@buysocialcanada.com)

Since the journey is non-linear, a constant mindset of learning and adaption means opportunities to iterate will be a continuing part of your journey. Even failure with a learning mindset is an opportunity to grow and improve.



## Policy

### Draft a social procurement policy and implementation framework

### Strategic Goals

The first step to a strong policy is clear, well-developed and community-aligned strategic goals. With social procurement you need to start with what you are trying to achieve, and then you can determine the path you will take to get there.

You likely already have some strategic organizational documents that you can look to get started. Look to your vision, mission, value, business plan or strategic plan for community focused goals. If you don't have these documents, take it back to basics. What is your organization's purpose? Why do you exist and what do you want to achieve? The next step is to connect your purpose, vision or mission to community based goals that you want to achieve through all aspects of running your organization.

One possible goal is to prioritize purchasing from social enterprises to maximize community capital. Other examples of potential goals include:

- Local or community economic development
- Indigenous reconciliation
- Decreased poverty
- Sustainability
- Diversity
- Skills development



The Buy Social Canada [Social Value Menu](#) can help you draft your social procurement policy by guiding you through the process to identify what your organizational objectives are and how you can tie them to procurement.

## What is social enterprise?

A social enterprise is a business that sells goods or services, embeds a social, cultural, or environmental purpose into the business, and reinvests the majority of profits into their social mission.

“Social enterprise is a business model designed and operated to transform the economy and our communities.”

– David LePage, Marketplace Revolution

Certification verifies that the social enterprise structurally prioritizes community impact over shareholder wealth. It is a business that is using the marketplace for good and putting its money where its mouth is. Find Certified Social Enterprises to buy from in the [Buy Social Canada Social Enterprise Directory](#).



## Put Purpose into Policy

### Buy Social Canada Social Procurement Policy

**Purpose:** Our mission at Buy Social Canada is to contribute to building healthy communities across Canada. One of the ways we work towards our mission is by implementing social procurement at Buy Social Canada to build community capital through our own procurement practices.

**Policy:** At Buy Social Canada we implement social procurement through purchasing our goods and services whenever possible from social enterprises. When a social enterprise is not available to provide the good or service, we will use a concentric circle approach to look at the social, cultural, and environmental value of other available organizations, such as social co-operatives, local independent businesses, Indigenous businesses, and diverse-owned businesses. This includes looking at the organization's employment practices and their own supply chains.

**Practice:** Whenever possible, our events are catered by local social enterprises. In Vancouver, we frequently work with [Potluck Café Society](#) and [HAVE Culinary Training Society](#). Both caterers are committed to workforce development and low barrier employment for residents of Vancouver's inner city. In Calgary, we've purchased catering from [EthniCity Catering and Café](#), a social enterprise creating skills training and job opportunities for immigrants and newcomers.

See more in Buy Social Canada's [social procurement policy](#).

In the Buy Social Canada Social Procurement Strategy Process outlined [on page 21](#), the Strategic Goals are the starting point to design your policy and implementation framework. The next steps include identifying social value objectives across four key opportunity areas. Putting this into practice requires a review of the different procurement processes you use and what social procurement tactics work for your organization. Finally, you need to identify measurable and reportable metrics to track your success and challenges and help to hold yourself accountable.

## Social Procurement Opportunity Areas

Once you have identified your community strategic goals, you connect them to tangible areas with outcomes or social value objectives that can be asked for and measured in the procurement process.

These are the four key social procurement opportunity areas:

- Employment
- Skills and Training
- Social Value in the Supply Chain
- Community Development

Here is an example of how to apply a goal to the opportunity areas.

**Community Strategic Goal:** With a goal of Indigenous reconciliation, you could have the following social value objectives across the four key social procurement opportunities areas:

- **Employment:** Employment of Indigenous peoples
- **Skills and Training:** Apprenticeships for Indigenous peoples
- **Social Value in the Supply Chain:** Direct contracting and subcontracting with Indigenous businesses
- **Community Development:** Engagement with local First Nations

## Tactics

The social procurement tactics are where you apply your social value objectives and can be influenced by your regulatory structure. For example, you may have internal thresholds for credit card purchases and competitive bids that impact which tactics are used. When you incorporate social procurement tactics it is best to consider the purchase budget, what you are buying, and how the decision to purchase is made. Social procurement tactics include but are not limited to:

- **Below threshold purchasing:** These are purchases under the low dollar spending limit (say \$1,500). The purchaser can choose who to buy from and can prioritize businesses aligned with the social value objectives.
- **Social Value RFX Questionnaire:** For competitive purchases where bidders will respond to a bid (aka RFX) you can ask and evaluate questions related to your social value objectives. For instance, if your strategic goal is Indigenous reconciliation, in your RFX you could ask, “Are you an Indigenous business?”
- **Community Benefit Agreements:** Also known as CBA, is a legally enforced agreement on construction, infrastructure and development projects for specific social value outcomes like hiring, training, or procurement that ensures projects enhance social, cultural, environmental and economic opportunities for community.

## Reporting Metrics

The next step is to ensure you have realistic and appropriate reporting metrics for your social procurement policy and framework. Consider what the key indicators are that you want to measure for your program overall and for specific social value outcomes from contracts, like employment of people facing barriers.

You can learn more about measurement in the [Measure](#) section.

The process doesn't stop here. It will always be evolving as you incorporate feedback from your data collected, integrate your learning mindset, and iterate and improve your program over time.



## Social Procurement Strategy Design Process

This chart shows the stages of social procurement strategy design. The chart includes the above steps for policy and implementation which include defining strategic goals, identifying objectives in the four key opportunity areas, and deciding which tactics and metrics you will use to implement and evaluate social procurement success.



Figure 6 Buy Social Canada social procurement strategy design flow chart.

## Stakeholder Engagement

Social procurement is about breaking down silos to create connection and community value. When developing your policy and goals, it is strongly encouraged to conduct stakeholder engagement. Not only does this mean more perspectives are incorporated into your goals, but it also means more people will have awareness of your social procurement work and want to support your efforts.

Internal stakeholders, which could include your team, leadership, board, investors and owners, are key to engage with as they will be the people who will have to implement and follow the policy. Bringing them into the policy development conversation helps to create a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for the process and outcomes.

External stakeholders include your existing suppliers, customers, business associations, community organizations and the community members that your social procurement program hopes to serve. The saying “nothing about us without us,” holds true. Make sure that the community goals you are drafting reflect the community. Take the time to connect and talk to people in your community so they can contribute to shaping your goals.

The scale of your community engagement will vary depending on the type and size of organization. For smaller organizations who may not have time or budget to conduct your own external stakeholder engagement, opportunities to connect and engage with social and local businesses can include attending local council meetings, looking for local social enterprise networks or attending Business Improvement Area (BIA) meetings to hear what challenges, goals and objectives local community members and businesses are sharing.

### Case study

In Scotland, tourism social procurement examples are focused on social enterprises and community tourism suppliers. The [Scottish Community Owned Tourism Network](#) is a network of community tourism enterprises which are owned and operated by the communities they serve. All profits from these businesses are reinvested back into local services, generating immediate and long-lasting benefits for the host community.

## Implementation Plan

Once you have your goals, review your current processes. Examine the systems that are already in place to support people to purchase at your organization. Consider how social procurement can be successfully integrated into these existing systems.

Where you perceive gaps, you can design tools that will support your team members to successfully implement social procurement. Some examples of tools that can be helpful include:

- **Tools to identify social value suppliers** such as existing diverse supplier lists, the [Buy Social Canada Certified Social Enterprise Directory](#), have a standing Request for Information for vendors to share their social value with you or create a vendor registry form on your website. See an example with York University's [Social Procurement Vendor Portal Directory](#).
- **Social value bid questions** such as a consistent Questionnaire where the same questions are asked in every bid or a menu of questions for purchasers to pick and choose from. See an example with City of Calgary's [Benefit Driven Procurement Leadership Questionnaire](#).

The process updates and tools can be a part of your implementation plan, a roadmap that shows how social procurement will go from policy to action at your organization.



## Test and Do

### Test with social procurement pilots

### Make the Shift

This step is about rolling up your sleeves to buy with impact. You will need to have some idea of a goal to get started with the test and do element. Your goals could be as simple as buying from a social enterprise or a small, independent, local business. Regardless of the size of your spend there are direct and indirect opportunities for you to leverage a social value from your purchasing.

Review what you currently buy and assess the opportunities to increase the social value of your purchasing. Some low hanging fruit purchased by both large and small organizations includes catering, cleaning and gifts. Gifts in particular are a great opportunity to support small, diverse businesses or social enterprises. If you're having an event, instead of giving out something that is mass produced, consider giving something made by a social enterprise.



For the Buy Social Canada Social Procurement Champion Awards we have had beautiful wooden plaques made by [Wood Shop](#) and mugs made by [Just Potters](#). Both organizations are Certified Social Enterprises that employ people facing barriers.



**Some of the most common opportunities for social purchasing are:**

- Corporate gifts and swag
  - Thank you presents
  - Holiday gifts
  - Awards
- Catering
  - Snacks and meals for meetings and events
  - Coffee beans
- Cleaning and recycling services
  - Garbage removal
  - Waste sorting
  - Graffiti removal
  - Window cleaning
  - Janitorial services
- Staffing and labour
- Office supplies and printing
- Other services
  - Landscaping
  - Building maintenance
  - Renovations
  - Painting

# Ask Questions

In formal bids, such as Requests for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Quotes (RFQ), and in less formal purchases include questions that are related to your goals. The [Buy Social Canada Social Value Menu](#) has templates for questions to include in bids, or language used in an email or phone conversation when sourcing for a direct award.

As you incorporate social value questions into your bid process it can be helpful to simplify your RFP process and make it easier for social enterprises and small businesses with fewer resources and staff to bid and compete.

The opportunity for social value may not be with your direct supplier. Encourage your major suppliers to examine their supply chains to find space to subcontract to social value suppliers. Your accounting firm may not be a social enterprise but may need catering and janitorial services that could be purchased from a social enterprise.

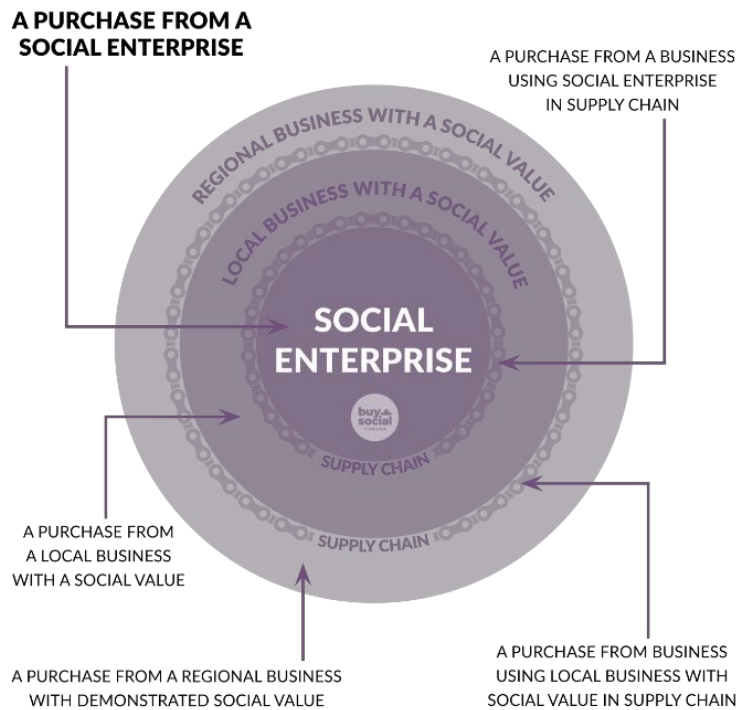


Figure 7 Buy Social Canada Concentric Circle diagram.

## Test and Do in Action

There are multiple social enterprise hotels that can be part of a social procurement tourism strategy. [YWCA Hotel](#) in Vancouver sets aside some rooms for women in need; the revenue from the hotel supports their programming and housing for single moms and families. [Skwachays Hotel and Gallery](#) is run by the Vancouver Native Housing Society, the largest Indigenous non-profit housing provider in BC. Each room in the hotel has been designed by an Indigenous artist. The revenue from the hotel and gallery support housing for Indigenous artists who live in the building next door. Other examples of social enterprise hotels include the [Inn at Laurel Point](#) in Victoria and [Fogo Island Inn](#) in Newfoundland.

Fuse events is a UK social enterprise event management company that incorporates other social enterprises into their event supply chains. Fuse layers social value into its supply chain and helps others to do so. [Here](#) they list a wide array of social enterprises with which they work. They host an [awards event](#) with Social Enterprise UK where the entire supply chain is social enterprises.



## Make Yourself Available

Many social value suppliers are actively working hard to find clients. So, make yourself available to them. It is a great option to have a page on your website that describes the types of goods and services your organization buys and to provide an email or web form for organizations to share with you what they offer and their social value.

Be clear and create a way to connect with you, saving time and effort for everyone.

## Document and Learn

The mindset of continuous learning from the learn phase applies to test and do as well. Document what happens when you incorporate social value into your purchases. Are there any challenges, opportunities or successes? Document and share these to help improve your social procurement program.

Document and record when you identify a new example of social value in your purchases. For example, for data collection add simple integrations to your existing financial systems to record what has been spent through your social procurement activities. This could be adding a custom field to a vendor profile form, a purchase order form or an expense report that indicates if the business is a social enterprise or social value supplier. Collecting and documenting this information will help as you move on to measurement and reporting.

For more insights on measurement, let's look at the next step on this social procurement journey.



## Measure

**Measure your current activities and create reporting metrics**

### Set a Baseline

A great way to get started is to measure what your organization is already doing. Run a social procurement audit and establish a baseline of your current spend to help you identify your targets, goals and priorities related to social enterprises and other social value suppliers.

Use a survey to ask your current suppliers if they self-identify or are certified as a social enterprise, diverse-owned business, Indigenous business, local business, small business or if they have any sustainability certifications. This will help you learn about the social value that your suppliers already are helping to create.

If you don't have this information or it's too challenging to gather, you can still start! You can set your baseline at zero and use the first year to see where you are at. Remember, our mindset is always about learning, growing and not being afraid to try.

## Track your Outcomes

To measure the progress and success of social procurement initiatives decide key metrics to track. This can be as simple as tracking data on your procurement spending. Which metrics you track will depend on your social procurement goals.

Social Procurement Goal	Measurable Outcome	Trackable Metrics
Local or community economic development	Economic opportunities for local and social enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$ procured from local and social enterprises</li> <li># of contracts awarded to local and social enterprises</li> </ul>
Indigenous reconciliation	Economic opportunities for First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$ procured from Indigenous businesses</li> <li># of hours of Indigenous employment</li> </ul>
Decreased poverty	Low barrier income generating employment opportunities for residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$ procured from social enterprises with social hiring and training missions</li> </ul>
Sustainability	Decreased carbon footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># reduction of carbon emissions</li> </ul>
Diversity	Supplier diversity (Procurement from minority-owned businesses)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$ total procured from minority-owned small businesses</li> </ul>
Skills development	Support for apprenticeship programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># training hours for apprentices</li> </ul>

## Report Annually

Publish the outcomes of your social procurement program to show internal stakeholders what has been achieved, create space for reflection and iteration and ensure that your program is data-driven.

This could be a report to your executive, senior leadership team or employees. If you take the next step to share your report publicly, then you are entering into the Lead phase of your social procurement journey.



## **Lead**

### **Lead as a social procurement champion**

## **Tell your Story**

As we said before, social procurement is non-linear. While data and measurement are an important part of a robust program, stories make space for complexity, nuance and the driving force of social procurement, the impact our purchasing can have on people and communities.

You can tell the story of your organization's social procurement journey or of the impact of a specific purchase or contract. These stories build awareness and help people learn about what can be possible.

See the Destination Vancouver case study on page 33 to learn from their story.

As you tell the stories of your social procurement activities, consider your spheres of influence and potential collaborators. One business may not feel that they are making a significant impact but consider the other businesses in your sector. You can come together and leverage your collective purchasing to increase your impact.

## **Report Publicly**

Measure connects to the lead phase when you take your report a step further and share it publicly. As social procurement develops, a lot of focus is on process.

Things like having a policy, providing training, adding social value considerations to bids are all important process steps. But we can't lose sight of the why of social procurement which is to create community capital. To showcase the why we must track and report on outcomes. When this is shared publicly it builds momentum and awareness of what can be possible. Public reporting is the gold standard for social procurement leaders who are willing to showcase both successes and challenges.

## Make a Commitment

Make the Buy Social Pledge to inspire and drive your team towards social procurement outcomes. Buy Social Pledge Leaders Chandos Construction and SAP have both made commitments towards achieving social procurement goals. This has resulted in training for staff, investment of resources and opportunity to showcase social procurement to stakeholders and clients.

## Encourage Others

Make social procurement part of your organization's community capital creation and encourage others to do the same. Imagine what could be possible with more and more organizations practicing social procurement. Social procurement is part of the new normal as we work together to shift our economies to align with our community needs and goals.

### Social Procurement is an International Movement and it's Growing

The impact of the tourism sector on the economy, visitors, community and environment is the foundation of the [New Zealand Tourism Sustainability Commitment](#) which aims to see every New Zealand tourism business committed to sustainability by 2025. Developed by industry for industry, it sets out 12 commitments that businesses can work towards. One of the business commitments is "sustainable supply chains" which is inclusive of social and environmental sustainability.

As of publishing there are 1,821 businesses who have made this commitment.

Case study







# Social Procurement Leaders in Tourism, Hospitality and Events

## Destination Vancouver

Destination Vancouver, Vancouver's destination management organization, has been a champion of social procurement for several years in Vancouver, showing leadership in both their internal practices and the sector.

### Build a social value culture

Destination Vancouver's Manager of Sustainable Destination Development Gwendal Castellán began attending the Buy Social Canada Vancouver Social Procurement Roundtable in 2017, meeting local social enterprises and other social purchasers, and sharing opportunities.

From his participation in these roundtables, Destination Vancouver began its first social procurement practice: purchasing swag and goodies from local social enterprises for their annual Christmas Lunch goodie bags and centrepieces. Now, four years later, the "social enterprise gifts have become integrated in how that event runs," says Castellán. They have also layered in social value by contracting a local social enterprise, [Budgie Box](#), to support in the set-up and styling of the centrepieces at this recurring event.

In 2021, Destination Vancouver signed on as a Buy Social Canada Social Purchasing Partner to develop a corporate sustainable procurement policy.

Staff have been trained on social procurement since Spring 2022, and they are now looking to put together an internal working group to implement social procurement with their teams in the future.

“There’s a lot of socializing that’s been happening” amongst their team, says Castellan.

“People are thinking along those lines, coming with questions. But we need to build out the supports to make it easy to do, and to improve on our ability to report on total financial and social impacts.”

Outside of the formal policy which will be adopted in future, Castellan and his colleague Susan Graham, the Client Manager for Convention Services, say there is a good level of awareness amongst staff for social enterprise and other social value and local businesses to choose from for their small internal spends, including Certified Social Enterprise catering companies like [Potluck Catering](#), [HAVE Café](#) and [DICED](#). The team at Destination Vancouver purchases client gifts from social enterprises, Indigenous businesses and other social value suppliers and supports clients to do the same through the supplier recommendations Destination Vancouver provides.

## Look outward

Taking their leadership to the next level, Destination Vancouver wants to be a role-model and educator for the industry. They are acting as a liaison for their members, and they are sharing resources and stories to increase the positive impacts of tourism in their local community. To start this process, Destination Vancouver contracted Buy Social Canada to conduct a survey of members (hotels, restaurants, attractions and more) and share the key takeaways.

In addition to getting a sense of what members already knew or were doing to implement social procurement, the survey results also gave Destination Vancouver more information to be able to communicate the social value outcomes generated by their members. Many members are small and medium-sized local businesses, who want to make sure their business activities impact the community for the better. [A report](#) of the key findings shows that many members already think about their impact in the community and some members are using social procurement as a tool to increase community benefits from their activities.

Destination Vancouver’s attendance at the social procurement roundtable in Vancouver has allowed opportunities to be shared with social enterprises, and relationships to be built that have been strengthened over many years of commitment to social procurement.

Destination Vancouver members can also [attend the roundtable](#) if they want to build relationships with suppliers and share opportunities in the sector.

Castellan is hopeful about how this next step in their journey will “create opportunities in Metro Vancouver,” as more businesses recognize their own value, and work towards achieving their social value goals.

“For small businesses,” he clarifies, “how this gets implemented might be very different than in larger corporate sector. Even though it’s smaller purchases, there’s still value in them... It’s not necessarily a burden on businesses, we’re recognizing the value they’re creating through hundreds of small decisions.”

When thinking about the broader sector, Susan Graham, Convention Services Client Manager, is also hopeful:

“This is a multi-year project, but over the next couple of years I’d like to see more tourism industry organizations adopting and bringing forward their goals and objectives for social procurement, so that it’s seen as something that is engrained in people’s business practices. That it’s not just a nice to do but a need to do.”



## 4VI

[4VI](#), formerly Tourism Association of Vancouver Island, made headlines in 2022 when [they announced](#) they were “transitioning from a destination management organization (a traditional business model in the tourism industry) to a social enterprise called 4VI, a business created to ensure that travel is a force for good for Vancouver Island – forever.”

### Shift the business model

Formed in the 1960s, 4VI was originally known for print marketing. During the pandemic, the organization saw a need to reorient how they worked with local businesses in the industry while finding new ways to fund their own organization.

Their old vision, to increase economic benefits from tourism to the region and make Vancouver Island an internationally preferred getaway destination was “entirely economically focussed,” says Calum Matthews, VP of Sustainability and Strategy. As a social enterprise, their new mission is “to ensure travel is a force for good.”

As a social enterprise, they are taking on contracts and partnerships to promote and advise local communities, businesses and organizations, and reinvesting profits into direct activities to help Vancouver Island stay balanced, supporting local non-profits, making non-traditional investments in conservation and DEI initiatives, and more.

They've restructured their governance to meet the social enterprise model. Their stakeholders are no longer just tourism industry businesses, but now include all residents of Vancouver Island.

### Positive reception

Matthews says that staff and their board of directors received this organizational shift easily, and that many of their stakeholders have also been on board from the start.

Some industry stakeholders have been more resistant, arguing that 4VI has changed their role in the system without permission. Matthews is quick to clarify that they are still doing the same work they've always been contracted to do by Destination BC, "we're just doing more now." Recently, he adds, "even some of the sceptics are starting to come around."

Beyond BC, Matthews says the reception has been overwhelming. Their team has been interviewed and asked to share lessons learned on public stages throughout Canada and internationally.

As an organization, they are still working on developing a more formal procurement policy and including social and sustainable criteria on RFQs and RFPs. In the meantime, they have a strong internal practice which prioritizes contracting with Indigenous and women-owned businesses and emphasizes local procurement on Vancouver Island.

## **What's next**

In future, 4VI plans to share annual impact reports about where the money is going and what they've achieved, being transparent on their activities and impacts. They also hope to support small businesses in the industry to do this in their purchasing as well.

Matthews shares why 4VI was inspired to make the shift to become a social enterprise:

"The tourism system is out of balance right now. If we continue down the same path, we're going to have problems. Every organization in the tourism space needs to look at how travel can be a force for good and how they can contribute to that."



## Indigenous Tourism BC

[Indigenous Tourism British Columbia](#) (ITBC) is “a non-profit, Stakeholder-based organization committed to the continued growth of a sustainable, authentic and culturally rich Indigenous tourism industry in British Columbia.”

They are committed to ensuring that the social and financial impacts of tourism, one of British Columbia’s largest industries, have benefits for Indigenous communities and entrepreneurs and contribute to economic reconciliation.

Internally, “Indigenous Tourism British Columbia (ITBC) ensures procurement from Indigenous suppliers whenever possible,” says ITBC Board of Directors Chair Brenda Baptiste.

Externally, ITBC offers other purchasers and visiting travelers a [directory](#) of Indigenous owned and led businesses, and verifies culturally appropriate Indigenous experiences with the [Authentic Indigenous](#) designation.



## What's next?

The tourism, hospitality and events sector is abundant with opportunities to leverage purchasing to create community capital. The social procurement journey for your organization can start today. Pick one or two actions from the elements shared in this guide to make small shifts that will have lasting ripple effects. It may seem daunting. The change in culture for your organization may be large or it may be small. But we all start somewhere, so take the first step.

## Here are some ideas for actions you can take now:

### Learn

- Get started with reading about social procurement.
- Host a webinar or training course to your team at the beginning of your journey and throughout to cultivate a learning mindset.
- Explore a wide area of open source resources.

### Policy

- Set your community strategic goals.
- Conduct internal and external stakeholder engagement.
- Write an Implementation Plan.

### Test and Do

- Make the shift towards social value suppliers in your purchases.
- Ask questions to potential suppliers about their social value.
- Document your pilots and share what you learn.

### Measure

- Review your current and past purchasing to set a baseline.
- Measure and track your social value outcomes.
- Report annually on what you've achieved.

### Lead

- Tell your story so others can be inspired.
- Report publicly to create accountability and awareness.
- Make a commitment to buy with impact.
- Encourage others to adopt social procurement.

If you need support or have any questions, Buy Social Canada is here to help. You can reach us at [info@buysocialcanada.com](mailto:info@buysocialcanada.com).



# Glossary

**Community Capital:** The health of a community is not measured by economic value alone. Community capital consists of the five main types of capital: social capital, human capital, cultural capital, economic capital, and physical capital. Building community capital is the means for creating healthy communities.

**Diverse supplier:** A historically under-represented businesses, in particular minority-owned, women-owned, Indigenous-owned, 2SLGBTQ+-owned, veteran-owned vendors, persons with a disability-owned or others.

**Employment barriers:** A spectrum of factors relating to physical health, mental health, social exclusion, limited education and skills, language and cultural differences or other obstacles to engaging in a traditional employment opportunity, which requires workplace, work environment or work expectation to accommodate successful participation in the workforce.

**Equity deserving groups:** Also known as Equity seeking groups. Groups who have historically been denied equal access to employment, education, and other opportunities and includes, without limitation, the following: members of an Indigenous community; members of a visible minority group; immigrants and refugees; people with recognized disabilities; racialized communities; women; members of the LGBTQ2S community; low-income residents; people with mental or physical health barriers; people facing employment barriers, unemployment or underemployment; and others experiencing barriers to economic opportunity and participation.

**RFx:** A catch-all term that captures all references to Request for Information (RFI), Request for Proposal (RFP), Request for Qualification (can be used to refer to Request for Quote) (RFQ), and Request for Bid (RFB).

**Social Enterprise:** A business that sells goods or services, embeds a social, cultural or environmental purpose into the business, and reinvests the majority of profits into their social mission.

**Social Procurement:** Every purchase has a social, economic, and environmental impact. Social procurement is about using your existing purchasing to capture those impacts to achieve overarching institutional, governmental, or individual goals that helps shape inclusive, vibrant and healthy communities.

**Social Value Supplier:** A business who incorporates social value into their business in order to create impact in their community. Examples could be social enterprises, diverse-owned businesses, social purpose organizations and local businesses with social value.



**Social  
Procurement  
Leaders**

## **Get in Touch**

Have some questions or need information on how you can be involved or how our services can support your social enterprise or social procurement efforts? Reach out and connect with us.

**[info@buysocialcanada.com](mailto:info@buysocialcanada.com)**