



NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

SOCIAL PROCUREMENT SUMMIT 2022

2023 RECOMMENDATIONS

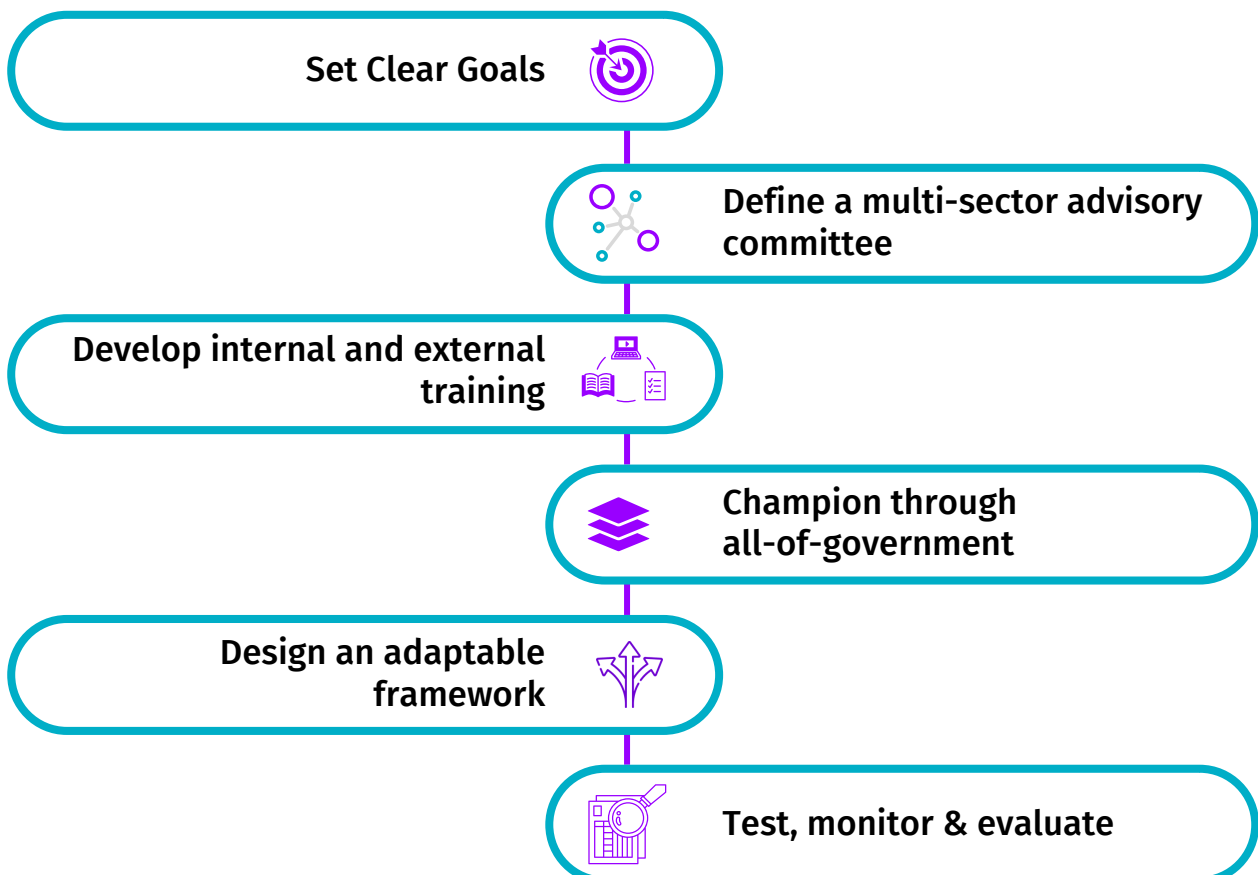


N.L. SOCIAL PROCUREMENT SUMMIT 2022

2023 RECOMMENDATIONS

The provincial government wields buying power and influence throughout the province. Approximately \$2 billion in goods, services, and construction services are purchased annually by the provincial government. Leveraging this buying power for the good of the province is key to social improvement and creating positive change in the province.

In November 2022, the [N.L. Social Enterprise & Innovation Coalition](#), in collaboration with [Buy Social Canada](#) and supported by the [Office of Public Engagement](#), brought together 89 leaders across 45 agencies to discuss what social procurement could look like in Newfoundland and Labrador. From that discussion, several fundamental principles emerged that can help inform the provincial government's social procurement policy. These recommendations are listed below.



RECOMMENDATIONS

"I would love to see the government perspective shift from, "we have to buy something so where am I going to buy it"; to "these are the goals that we need to achieve in order to support our Province -- who is going to help that?"." Roseanne Leonard, N.L. Association of Community Business Development Corporations

01. Set Clear Goals



Adding social value to purchasing strategies is just the first step in a social procurement mindset. There is a need to develop community capital by determining clear goals that will guide budget definition and spending; and, therefore, serve as a mechanism to address inequities.

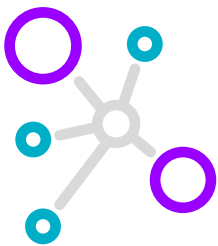
It is essential to move from procurement as simply a compliance function to one that actively supports broader public sector goals. To this end, it is critical to shift the mindset from ‘we need to buy something; where do we buy it to ensure compliance?’, to ‘how can we develop a whole supply chain with an intrinsic social value that will directly contribute to achieving the province’s goals?’

Hence, a crucial step to building the foundations of a social procurement ecosystem is to define the goals and indicators and treat purchasing as a strategic function rather than an administrative function. To this end, procurement goals should be established to meet compliance requirements and empower various departments to align their purchasing needs with strategic goals.



“Willingness on the purchaser's part to listen to the opportunities that could be created is one of the biggest shifts in social procurement from traditional procurement. It is a collaborative approach to create community value” – [David LePage, Buy Social Canada.](#)

02. Define a continuous multi-sector advisory committee.

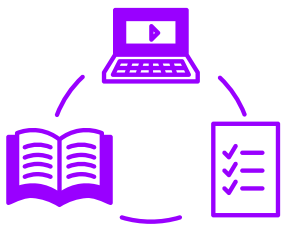


As an ecosystem, it is vital to engage multi-sector stakeholders continuously. Developing a multi-sector advisory committee will promote collaboration and enable the successful implementation of a social procurement framework. Having a committee testing and championing the design and implementation will allow the integration of a change management strategy and understanding of critical touchpoints throughout the supply chain.

Such an environment becomes an element of cooperative tissue, in which cooperating and competing together becomes a tool to meet the needs of scale, government, and the private sector, resulting in community resilience.



03. Put forward an internal and external training program



In order to achieve the greatest potential of a social procurement ecosystem, it is crucial to develop programming for internal (public) and external audiences. A deep understanding of social value and how it is embedded in the supply chain is vital to maximizing the advancement of community capital.

Multi-level engagement and championing are critical for successfully adopting and implementing a social procurement culture and strategy.

“Social procurement is not just for non-profits and social enterprises. I’d argue that social procurement should be applied to all kinds of business models, including for-profits. What matters are things like the value systems, orientation around impact, working with equity-deserving groups, and supporting the strength of local economies. It is critical that we are inclusive in our application of social procurement to recognize the contributions and capabilities across a diverse set of organizations that create social value.” - [Ayon Shahed, Seafair Capital](#)

04. Champion through all-of-government.



Social value should be baked into public purchasing processes for every provincial and municipal government department. Currently, departments have the option to purchase with social value in mind; however, the ability to evaluate the impact and the financial incentive to invest in this way needs to be championed across all government departments.

An all-of-government approach to social procurement would increase social impact and innovation in our province while meeting the procurement needs of government departments. It is necessary moving from optional to mandatory social procurement policies.

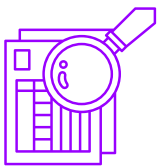


05. Adaptable in application.

Community needs and province priorities are continuously evolving; therefore, a policy designed to be descriptive in outcomes, not prescriptive in the application, will result in a flexible framework with the capacity to adapt at diverse governmental levels, times, and priorities.



“We talked about the need to tell compelling stories, yes have the indicators, yes evaluate, but also tell the really compelling stories that you resonate with government, resonate with the private sector, and really tell the story of our impacts, collaborate, so that we can best scale” – Jen Crowe, Choices for Youth.



06. Test, monitor & evaluate

As a living ecosystem, social procurement can evolve and adapt accordingly. However, to guide its efforts, testing, monitoring, and adjusting it as needed is recommended.

As goals are set, corresponding indicators should be developed. Impact measurement should include qualitative, quantitative, and storytelling. Social value can be experienced in diverse manners, and its evaluation should adapt appropriately.

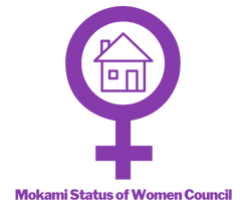


“Procurement is typically seen as this economic transaction, and now, by embedding social value, we're changing it into a tool to build community” - David LePage, Buy Social Canada.

Advocating for the Advancement of Social Procurement in N.L.



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The N.L. Social Procurement Summit was possible through the support provided by Memorial's Office of Public Engagement Accelerator Fund and the expertise of Buy Social Canada.

Buy Social Canada

Buy Social Canada is a social enterprise that believes that procurement is more than an economic transaction; it contributes to community social and economic goals. They see opportunities for social procurement at all levels in the marketplace, and thus unleash the transformative power of the market - to buy and sell with impact.



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