



Buy With Impact

Buy Social Canada Social Procurement in Canada 2023 Snapshot

12 Social Purchasing Partners and Engage Members who responded to our survey

75%

Have a Social Procurement Policy

25%

Developing a Social Procurement Policy

33%

Track social procurement spend

50%

Developing tracking for social procurement spend

33%

Publish public reports on social procurement implementation

Key Challenges

Finding suppliers

Staff time and capacity

Competing priorities

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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. Purchasing is a means to build community capital, the foundation of a healthy community, and to contribute 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 intermediaries and stakeholders, private sector companies, 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:
info@buysocialcanada.com

Executive Summary

The progress of social procurement across Canada is unprecedented and encouraging. People and organizations are working together to add value to procurement in multiple ways; through social procurement, Indigenous procurement, sustainable procurement, benefit driven procurement, and more. Purchasers are increasingly seeking out social value suppliers like social enterprises, diverse-owned businesses, Indigenous businesses, and social purpose organizations to buy from.

As part of the 2024 Buy Social Canada Purchasing Partner renewal process, we asked our Engage Members and Social Purchasing Partners to share updates and stories from their social procurement journey. We heard from 12 organizations about their impacts and experiences in 2023.

Our Social Purchasing Partners and Engage Members are verified social purchasers, prioritizing social procurement, sustainable leadership, and contributing to the social and environmental wellbeing of community. The following organizations responded to the survey:



2023 Buy Social Canada Social Purchasing Partners



2023 Buy Social Canada Engage Members



The responses from our 2023 Social Purchasing Partners and Engage Members show continued movement along the journey to design, implement and measure social procurement goals and outcomes as they work with Buy Social Canada. Ongoing testing, learning and improvement are critical to the success of a social procurement practice. Our partners are at different stages of this journey. Some are far along in their journeys, and focussed on improvement, while others are working with us on pilots and developing policy. Culture change and internal education is a constant priority no matter where organizations are on the journey.

Shared challenges from survey respondents include finding social value suppliers selling the goods and services they want to procure, staff time and capacity, competing priorities, internal staff knowledge and resistance, and determining what and how to measure.

Compared to the [2022 Buy with Impact Report](#), we are encouraged to see more organizations publicly reporting on outcomes. We hope to see this practice continue to grow in future.

There is a strong foundation for the growing movement for social procurement in Canada. Our partners remain optimistic about what's possible through social procurement and are committed to championing the movement to buy with impact.

We look forward to sharing more data and insights next year when we publish the next annual Buy with Impact update.

The Social Procurement Journey

We often speak about the journey that organizations are on as they design and implement social procurement.

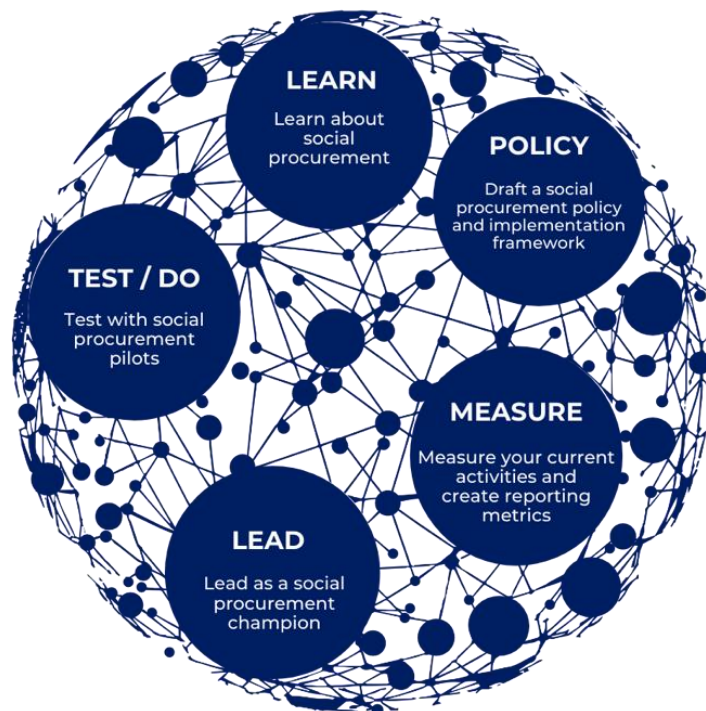
The journey to embed social procurement in your organization is not linear. Depending on a range of factors, including your organization's priorities, size, capacity, and prior understanding of social procurement, you may choose to take on a number of these activities at once or in an order that makes 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.

Work with Buy Social Canada to take advantage of our decade of experience with social procurement implementation, and get support for your organization with tools, training, and coaching as you go on your social procurement journey.

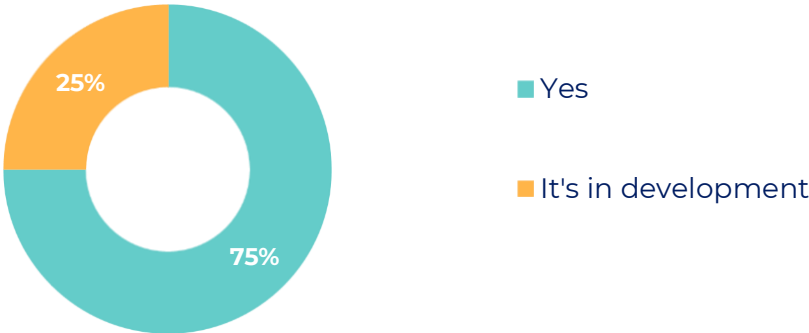
It's never been easier to buy with impact and Buy Social Canada can show you how.

Figure 1 Buy Social Canada Social Procurement Journey diagram

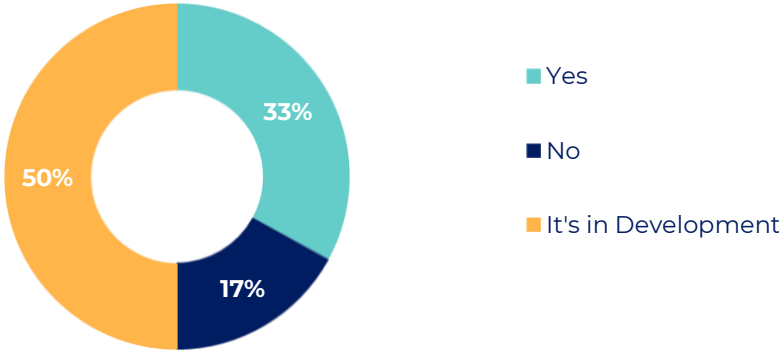


Key Findings

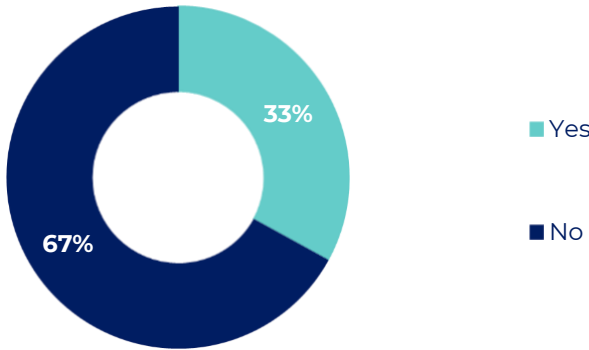
Does your organization have a social procurement policy?



Do you track your organization's social procurement spend?



Do you publish any reports on your organization's social procurement implementation to the public?



Examples of Public Reporting

Bird Construction

Engage Member Bird Construction shares an annual [Sustainability Overview](#) to report on a mix of data and stories related to their organizational finances, employment, sustainability, Indigenous relations, community reinvestment, and health and safety.

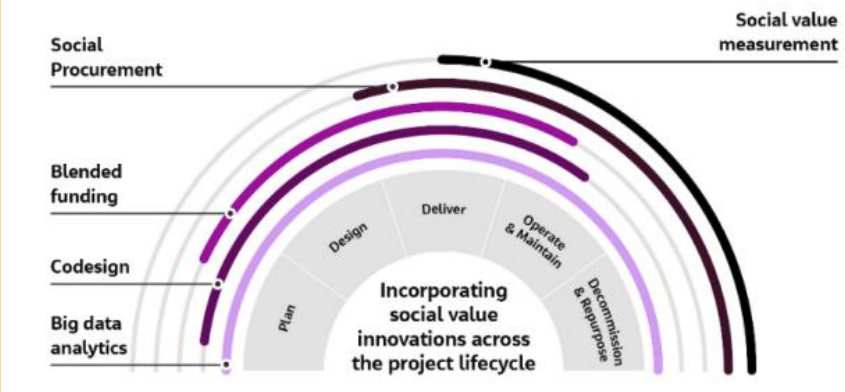
Highlight: Over \$62 million spent with Indigenous businesses in 2023.



Jacobs

Social Purchasing Partner Jacobs has released an annual [ESG Disclosure](#) since 2019. These reports share in-depth data related to a wide range of targets and impact areas under each pillar of their Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) performance to keep stakeholders informed.

Figure 6. Jacobs Social Value Blueprint



Highlight: \$33 Million spent in Canada on small or diverse-owned businesses in fiscal year 2023.

Destination Vancouver

Buy Social Canada worked with Social Purchasing Partner Destination Vancouver to publish their first annual [Tourism, Hospitality and Events Social Procurement Survey and Report 2023](#). The report draws from a survey of Destination Vancouver's members to learn more about how businesses in the tourism sector perceive social procurement, who is already practicing social procurement, and to recognize the social value they create as suppliers. This report will be released again in 2024.



Highlight: 67% of Destination Vancouver members surveyed practice social procurement.



Chandos Construction

Buy Social Pledge Leader Chandos Construction published an [Impact Dashboard](#) on their website in 2023 to prominently display data from their social, environmental and cultural initiatives. The dashboard also shares metrics against their stated goals to increase accountability and show areas that are still aspirational.

Highlight: \$4 million in social procurement spend in 2023.



British Columbia Social Procurement Initiative

Purchasing that benefits people, planet, and community.

[British Columbia Social Procurement Initiative](#) (BCSPI) is a Buy Social Canada initiative that fosters positive social, environmental, cultural, and economic impact across British Columbia through social procurement collaboration. Buy Social Canada's experts support local governments and institutional purchasers to make the money they spend do more for their community. Through the initiative, BCSPI members can build capacity through resources and community support to implement purchasing that achieves community goals.

From 2018 to April 2024, BCSPI was a public sector initiative operated by Scale Collaborative, with service delivery partners Buy Social Canada, Presentations Plus, and the Vancouver Island Construction Association. In 2021, the Coastal Communities Social Procurement Initiative (CCSPI) received 3-year funding from the Government of British Columbia to expand its membership across the province and became BCSPI. With the end of this funding, BCSPI transitioned to a fee-for-service model managed by Buy Social Canada with the goal to continue to support the initiative's important work.

To date, BCSPI has trained over 200 member staff and attracted over 600 participants to social procurement training and webinars. Member governments and organizations have leveraged over \$750 million in social procurement spend and undertaken over 1,000 pilot projects.

Read the [BCSPI Annual Impact Report for 2022-23](#) to learn more about the impacts and outcomes generated through BCSPI.

As of spring 2024, there are 35 communities in BCSPI.



Are you a public sector purchaser in BC? [Become a BCSPI Member.](#)

Stories of Success

Stakeholder Engagement

Buy Social Canada supports Social Purchasing Partners and Engage Members to engage internal and external stakeholders, including current and potential suppliers, staff, and community. Some organizations are focused on internal culture change, consultation and education, while others are looking to find and support suppliers to engage with their procurement programs.

[AtkinsRealis](#) is meeting with diverse owned businesses to include in their supply chain, and [City of Brampton](#) is focused on matchmaking suppliers with internal purchasers to increase their social procurement spend. [City of St. Albert](#) is also promoting the value of social procurement to community.

Resource Development

Internal resources and tools are important for social procurement implementation. In 2023, [Clark Builders](#) began developing a Pilot Project Guide to Social Procurement for project start-up meetings, to ensure more seamless social procurement integration.

Education

Buy Social Canada provides a wide range of educational opportunities for Social Purchasing Partners and Engage Members, including regular or private cohorts of the [Social Procurement Professional Certificate](#), exclusive quarterly [Community Learning to Advance Social Procurement](#) (CLASP) events, and presentations on social procurement 101 and 201.

[Open Door Group](#) organized its first private cohort of the Social Procurement Professional Certificate course in collaboration with Buy Social Canada. 21 staff members completed the course.

Construction

Construction remains an area of opportunity and growth for social procurement. Social Purchasing Partners and Engage Members are implementing social procurement through Community Benefit Agreements (CBA) on projects, and through their leadership on construction sites.

[Delnor Construction](#) has partnered with Buy Social Canada to deliver on a CBA in Edmonton, and [Chandos Construction](#) remains a leader in the construction sector as they find chances for social, local, Indigenous, and green procurement and hiring on their projects.

Chandos has partnered with Buy Social Canada to support them on a [voluntary CBA](#) for a BC Housing project in Vancouver, and frequently works with Certified Social Enterprise EMBERS Staffing Solutions to source labour on projects like the [Maple Grove Elementary School](#).

Tourism

Tourism is a growing sector for social procurement innovation and implementation. In addition to committed Social Purchasing Partners and Engage Members, we saw [4VI](#) – the destination management organization for Vancouver Island – become a Buy Social [Canada Certified Social Enterprise](#) in 2023 to “ensure travel is a force for good. Forever.”

Social Purchasing Partner [Destination Vancouver](#) is widely promoting social procurement amongst their members and more broadly in the tourism sector through annual surveys of their members and resource development. They worked with Buy Social Canada last year to create the [Guide to Social Procurement for Tourism, Hospitality and Events](#), which is shared publicly on Buy Social Canada’s website.

[Explore Edmonton](#) is also working with Buy Social Canada to include social and environmental weighting on RFPs, and deliberately support social value suppliers with their low value purchases.

Advance Social Procurement with Buy Social Canada

There is a strong foundation for the growing movement for social procurement in Canada. Committed Social Purchasing Partners, clients, and many others are championing practices that prioritize community and environment in procurement. We see positive impact in communities as a result, while also telling the market to prepare for a new normal where best value is more than just lowest price, and all businesses are encouraged to buy and sell with impact.

Buy Social Canada has 10 years of experience working with purchasers to design and implement social procurement. Work with us to take advantage of our expertise, and get access to exclusive tools and resources, educational opportunities, and coaching and consulting support.

Take the next (or first) step on your social procurement journey with Buy Social Canada.

- Become a [Social Purchasing Partner](#).
- Contract us for custom [consulting support](#).
- Work with us to [implement social procurement and community benefits in construction](#).
- Register for the [Social Procurement Professional Certificate](#).
- Connect and [share learnings with peers](#).
- Read our [library of free resources](#).



**Social
Procurement
Leaders**

Work with Us

Buy Social Canada is ready to work with you to design and implement social and sustainable procurement in your organization. Contact us to learn more.

info@buysocialcanada.com

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the people and organizations who are working to implement social procurement.

Special thanks to our Social Purchasing Partners and Engage Members who responded to the Partner Survey and took time to share additional stories and information with us. Your leadership and action on social procurement are part of the marketplace revolution, creating positive change in our communities.

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