



# Buy Social Canada's Social Procurement Policy

## Walking the Talk on Social Procurement

### Policy Statement

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

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 Purpose

This Policy confirms Buy Social Canada's commitment to building community capital through our purchasing of goods and services.

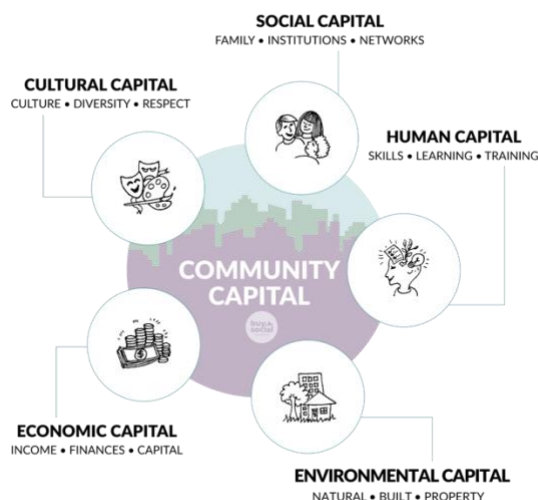


Figure 1. Buy Social Canada Community Capital Diagram



## Policy Scope

This policy applies to the procurement of goods and services by all members of the Buy Social Canada team and any organization's Buy Social Canada contracts to purchase on our behalf.

## Policy Application

At Buy Social Canada we implement social procurement by purchasing goods and services from social enterprises whenever possible. 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, small local businesses, Indigenous businesses, diverse businesses, non-profits, and social purpose businesses. This includes looking at the organization's employment practices and their own supply chains.

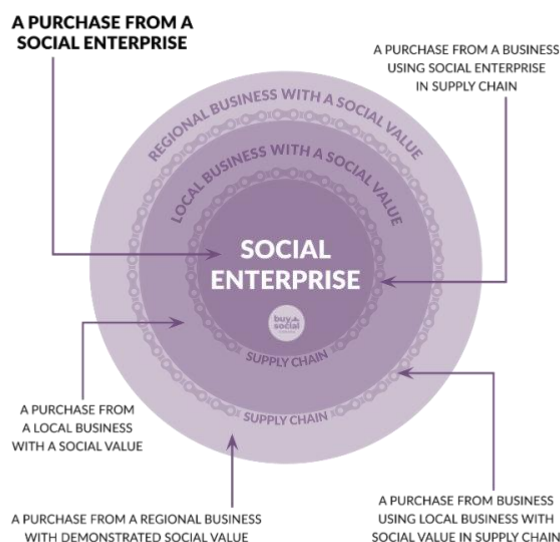


Figure 2. Buy Social Canada Concentric Circle Diagram

We commit to publicly reporting on our addressable spend, which is defined as all expenses excluding wages and taxes, via a dedicated blog post at the beginning of each year.



We track and report based on two categories of social procurement spend:

- **Social Enterprise Spend:** Purchases from certified social enterprises
- **Other Social Spend:** All social spend other than social enterprises. This includes:
  - Social Co-operatives – As per the business' information available on their website
  - Small Local Business – We are defining small local business as: An independent business, local to where you are making the purchase, with less than 50 employees over all their locations. Franchises are excluded from our local small businesses definition (such as a "local" Tim Hortons, Staples, Starbucks).
  - Indigenous Business – Indigenous owned, as per the business' information available on their website
  - Diverse Business – Includes Black-owned, women-owned, as per the business' information available on their website
  - Non-Profit – As per the business' information available on their website
  - Social Purpose Business – As per the business' information available on their website

## Net Zero Challenge

Buy Social Canada is proud to be a confirmed [Net-Zero Challenge Participant](#).

In order to meet our goal of Net Zero by 2030, we need to track our carbon emissions. Carbon emissions of our business activities are entered in a calculator developed internally, and in collaboration with IGNITE – an Eco Canada initiative.

Each team member is asked to report on their emissions and seek to minimize emissions when traveling for work:

1. Choose carbon neutral options, or green/low carbon options when available.
2. Track travel emissions by completing the Travel Tracking tab of the employee expense reporting tracker, which details information such as means of transportation, route, and total kilometres traveled and carbon offset purchased.
3. Carbon offset should be purchased for all flights, whenever it is offered.



## Examples of previous social procurement activities

**Office space:** We rent our office space from Realize Solutions Co-op (<https://realizesolutions.ca/>), a social enterprise and certified B Corp consulting firm that supports purpose-driven organizations with organizational design and business management.

**Event space:** We look for social value spaces to host events across Canada. For example, hosting events in Vancouver at 312 Main (<https://312main.ca/>), in Calgary at Platform Calgary (<https://www.platformcalgary.com/>), or in Toronto at Center for Social Innovation (<https://socialinnovation.org/>), all non-profit social enterprises creating space for community building and innovation.

**Office Supplies:** Our shared office supplies are sourced through Mills Office Productivity (<http://mills.ca>), a socially-conscious and locally-based supplier who is actively engaged within the community, particularly through social hiring, social procurement, and social finance.

**Catering:** Whenever possible, our events are catered by local social enterprises. In Vancouver, we frequently work with Potluck Café Society (<https://www.potluckcatering.org>) and HAVE Culinary Training Society (<http://www.have-cafe.ca>). 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 (<https://www.centrefornewcomers.ca/ethnicity>), a social enterprise creating skills training and job opportunities for immigrants and newcomers.

**Health benefits:** We purchase our team's health benefits coverage from GreenShield (<https://www.greenshield.ca/en-ca>), a certified social enterprise and national non-profit health benefits provider dedicated to creating better health for all.

**Artwork and gifts:** We buy gifts from social enterprises and diverse-owned businesses across Canada. Enterprises include Circle of Eagles Trading Post (<https://circleofeaglestradingpost.ca/>), Enterprising Women Making Art (<https://atira.bc.ca/what-we-do/program/enterprising-women-making-art>), and Smashing Good Piñatas (<https://smashinggood.ca/>).