

The Canadian Social Economy Research Partnerships (CSERP)

CSERP consists of six regional research centres across Canada (Québec, Atlantic, Southern Ontario, Prairies and Northern Ontario, BC and Alberta, and the North) and a facilitating Hub - the Canadian Social Economy Hub. The Research Partnerships reach out to practitioners, to researchers and to civil society, through the research centres and their community partners. The shared vision of the Research Partnerships is to build collaboration between researchers and practitioners to better understand and encourage initiatives at the local, provincial and national levels so that the Social Economy and its related approaches will be more widely understood and applied in Canada. The project is funded through a series of grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

Regional Research Centres

Atlantic

www.msvu.ca/socialeconomyatlantic

Québec

www.aruc-es.ca

Southern Ontario

sec.oise.utoronto.ca

Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Northern Ontario

www.usaskstudies.coop/socialeconomy

Northern

dl1.yukoncollege.yk.ca/sernnoca

British Columbia and Alberta

www.socialeconomy-bcalberta.ca

The Canadian Social Economy Hub (CSEHub)

The Canadian Social Economy Hub (CSEHub) is located at the University of Victoria and is co-directed by **Ian MacPherson** and **Rupert Downing**. CSEHub undertakes research in order to understand and promote the Social Economy tradition within Canada and as a subject of academic enquiry within universities.

CSEHub is a Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) between the University of Victoria, represented by its principal investigator, and the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet), represented by the designated co-director. CSEHub is directed by the two organizations and their representatives, with the advice and input of a board of representatives of regional nodes and national partners of the Canadian Social Economy Research Partnerships (CSERP).

CSEHub Board Members

- Canada Research Chair on the Social Economy
- Canadian Co-operative Association
- CIRIEC Canada
- Co-op Secretariat
- Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité
- SSHRC-CRSH
- Imagine Canada
- HRSDC-RHDSC
- Le chantier de l'économie sociale
- The Community Economic Development Technical Assistance Program
- Women's Economic Council
- The 6 Regional Research Centres

The Canadian Community Economic Development Network

www.ccednet-rcdec.ca

CCEDNet is a member-driven organization that seeks to increase the scale and effectiveness of community economic development.

The membership is made up of community-based organizations, co-operatives, social enterprises, practitioners, active citizens, researchers, and other organizations from every region of the country.

The Social Economy in Canada



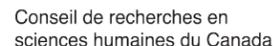
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Questions? Please Contact Us

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WHAT IS THE SOCIAL ECONOMY?

There are many definitions used by practitioners and others interested in the Social Economy. The Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet) National Policy Council has the following definition:

“The Social Economy consists of association-based economic initiatives founded on values of:

- **Service to members of community rather than generating profits;**
- **Autonomous management (not government or market controlled);**
- **Democratic decision making;**
- **Primacy of persons and work over capital;**
- **Based on principles of participation, empowerment.**

The Social Economy includes: social assets (housing, childcare, etc), social enterprises including co-operatives, credit unions, equity and debt capital for community investment, social purpose businesses, community training and skills development, integrated social and economic planning, and capacity building and community empowerment. The Social Economy is a continuum that goes from one end of totally voluntary organizations to the other end, where the economic activity (social enterprise) blurs the line with the private sector.”

To provide a context for studying the Social Economy, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada introduces the Social Economy as follows:

“In recent years, in both North America and Europe, there has been increasing interest in what is known as the ‘Social Economy,’ for which some authorities use the term ‘community economic development.’

The social economy refers to those enterprises and organizations which use the tools and some of the methods of business, on a not-for-profit basis, to provide social, cultural, economic and health services to communities that need them. The social economy is characterized by cooperative

A Sample of Current Social Economy Projects at Research Centres Across Canada

Mobilization on Food Security Social Economy and Sustainability Research Network

www.msvu.ca/socialeconomyatlantic

This exploration of school-based food security project includes the review and description of school gardens, farm to school programs and sustainable purchasing policies. These three strategies are used by public schools to procure food within sustainable food systems.

Mapping the Social Economy in Northern Canada Social Economy Research Network of Northern Canada

dl1.yukoncollege.yk.ca/sermnoca

By determining the number and types of organizations that are currently active in the North, this project is recording the impact and importance of the Social Economy throughout the region. The researchers are conducting a survey of non-profit and voluntary organizations, co-operatives, credit unions and other social economy organizations in the Northwest Territories, Yukon, Nunavut, Nunavik and Labrador. The questionnaire will assist in determining the characteristics of these organizations, including locations, activities, size, employment, membership and structure.

Social Accounting for Social Enterprises Social Economy Center

sec.oise.utoronto.ca

Through the development of a social accounting model with a national charitable organization, this community-university research partnership aims to create a process that can be applied to other social enterprises. The social accounting model is intended to be used as a reporting tool in annual reports and for key stakeholders including staff, volunteers (as well as boards of directors), government agencies, funding partners and the community at large. The project employs participatory and reflective research methodology.

Housing and the Social Economy L’Alliance de recherche universités-communautés en économie sociale et le Réseau québécois de recherche partenariale en économie sociale

www.aruc-es.ca

The focus of this research project is the many aspects of collective housing. In particular, the researchers are examining the economic and social value of collective housing and rural housing projects, and developing case studies of co-operative and not-for-profit housing projects.

A Framework relevant to policy research in the fields of Community Economic Development and the Social Economy BC-Alberta Research Alliance on the Social Economy

www.socialeconomy-bcalberta.ca

This project is developing a classification framework for analyzing public policies that support Community Economic Development and the Social Economy, and conducting an inventory of federal and provincial legislation, policies, programs and initiatives in British Columbia and Alberta.

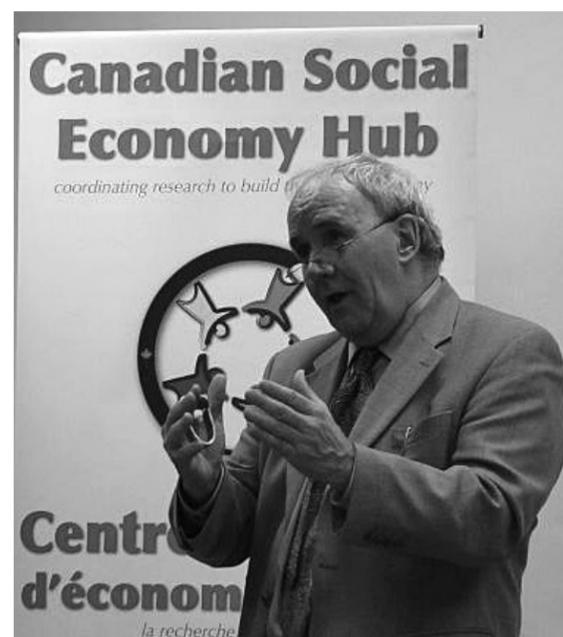
Governance of the Social Economy Linking, Learning, Leveraging: Social Enterprises, Knowledgeable Economies and Sustainable Communities

www.usaskstudies.coop/socialeconomy

What is good governance? How can you improve governance and the democratic process in social enterprises? How can these issues be measured and analyzed? These questions and more form the basis of the research for this project. The researchers are highlighting some of the new and traditional ways in which organizations have worked to be inclusive in their operations and then using these to establish benchmarks from which good governance can be assessed.

enterprises, based on principles of community solidarity that respond to new needs in social and health services, typically at the community or regional level.

Social economy enterprises exhibit distinctive forms of organization and governance such as worker co-operatives and non-profit organizations. Such organizations produce goods for and deliver services to the public.”



Knowledge Mobilization in the Social Economy

Social Economy Student Network - This online community serves as a forum for academic dialogue among post-secondary students, information dispersal and education on the Social Economy. For more information, please see the SESN website at: www.socialeconomy.info

Telelearning Sessions - These phone-in lectures facilitate access to current Social Economy research and practice, featuring a wide variety of interesting speakers and topics; those who miss out on the live sessions can download them as MP3 files from the Canadian Social Economy Hub website.

Academic Societies - These organizations provide opportunities for researchers to discuss issues of common research and to present their current areas of research. Societies that are relevant to Social Economy research include the Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation (CASC - www.coopresearch.coop), the Association for Nonprofit and Social Economy Research (ANSER - www.anser-ares.ca), and the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research and Information on Community Enterprises (CIRIEC Canada - www.ciriec.uqam.ca).

Researcher of the Month Profiles - In an effort to provide accessible insight into current social economy research, CSEHub regularly asks social economy researchers key questions about their work, and posts these mini-interviews on their website, along with short biographies of the researchers and relevant links to the projects or institutions with which they are associated.

Speaker Series, Lectures, and Forums - Research centres often host occasional speakers as well as regular lecture series. Some of these are webcast live via the Internet to enable participation throughout the national community of Social Economy researchers and practitioners. Frequently, these learning opportunities are made available on-line.

Examples of Social Economy organizations in Canada

Nanaimo Foodshare

www.nanaimofoodshare.ca

This organization works to increase food security and economic self-sufficiency through developing small-scale businesses, distributing locally grown produce, and more.

Atkinson Housing Co-operative

www.coophousing.com/development/development_atkinson.asp

This former public housing project was the first in Canada to convert to co-operative management by tenants.

Haween Enterprises Inc.

www.haween.com

A social enterprise, this company employs new Canadians who have participated in training programs and social support through a sister organization.

APEX Credit Union

www.apexcu.com

Founded in 1940 to serve provincial employees, this community financial institution now has open membership and is the fastest growing credit union in Alberta.