Enterprising Non-profits Adds a Newsroom

Image

Social enterprise program to build social enterprise ecosystem in Canada – one story at a time

This week the first news articles of a new Canadian online media service will hit the wires. The articles are coming from a newsroom operating on behalf of Enterprising Non-profits Canada (ENP-CA), a unique, collaborative program that promotes and supports social enterprise development and growth in Canada. The intent for the newsroom is to help build a healthy social enterprise ecosystem in the country, ENP program manager David LePage says.

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, a new article will be published.

David LePage

From social enterprise public policies to academic programs to individual social enterprises, the various players and activities on the Canadian social enterprise scene will be covered over time — story by story — through the news service.

"Each story is a critical component of building a healthy ecosystem for social enterprise," David says, noting a key indication the social enterprise system is healthy is if local enterprises are thriving. For them to thrive, they require business skills and planning, financing, supportive public policy and people buying from them. News stories on what's emerging and possible on each of these fronts can help grow knowledge and engagement.

"Stories are a very natural human way to share and build information and keep and build culture," David says.

On the consumer front, for example, ENP-CA would like to see more Canadian citizens, businesses and governments realizing that if they purchase from a social enterprise, not only can they get a good product at a competitive price, but they're also contributing to the community.

"Through stories we can build a knowledge in the community of what social enterprise is, its importance and how you as a purchaser can contribute to its success," David says.

The social enterprise system is quite early in its evolution in Canada right now, and there is ample room for more awareness and engagement, according to David.

[Axiom News](#) is delivering the ENP-CA news service. In its work on the first stories for this effort "we were discovering the diversity and depth of social enterprise in Canada," says CEO and founder Peter Pula.

"Connecting with people from across the country has shown us how rich the social enterprise ecology already is. This is an energizing discovery.

"With this three-year project in sight, we have the opportunity to amplify this new narrative," Peter says. "That people in communities are working together to bring local capacity to life, well, these are the most important stories to share."

The hope is that over time — "as we share all the small stories about day-to-day challenges and successes" — readers can learn from and connect with one another.

The referenced media source is missing and needs to be re-embedded.

Members of the Axiom News team from the Peterborough, Canada office. From left,
Lisa Bailey, Michelle Strutzenberger,
Yvonne Hollandy, CEO Peter Pula and
Deron Hamel. Missing, Natalie Hamilton, Camille Jenson, Jennifer Neutel, Jeanne Pengelly and Kim Wilson.

As our dominant economic actors increasingly struggle with reaching the limits of their models, social enterprise is an increasingly important way to build community, Peter adds. "The more we can learn from each other, the faster we can develop capacity, locally and nationally, to respond to those changes.

"Social enterprise is undeniably a building block of a more intimate and resilient civil society."

The work of the ENP-CA newsroom over the next few years will be to get in touch with as many people who are doing the work as possible and to share their stories. Most of these stories will try to capture the latest lessons learned, motivations, elements of success, and plans for next steps.

They'll be short stories as the goal is to publish news as it develops.

"(It's) sort of an 'open while under construction' approach to building a bigger story," Peter says.

"Practice has to precede theory, so we will be sharing the stories as they happen, then figuring out what can be learned from them as a whole later."

You can comment on this story below, or e-mail [michelle(at)axiomnews.ca](mailto:michelle@axiomnews.ca).

A version of this article was originally written for the [Enterprising Non-profits Canada](#) news service. This repost, for which we received permission, follows the style guidelines of the original post. To learn more about generative newsroom options for your organization or community, please contact [peter(at)axiomnews.ca](mailto:peter@axiomnews.ca).