



NL WORKFORCE
INNOVATION
CENTRE



Ideas. Innovation. Impact.



NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 Report

Social Enterprise

The slide decks found within this NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 Report are updates from research projects that are funded by the NL Workforce Innovation Centre (NLWIC).

Established in 2017 by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and administered by College of the North Atlantic, NLWIC has a provincial mandate to provide a coordinated, central point of access to engage all labour market stakeholders about challenges, opportunities and best practices in workforce development.

The Centre's goal is to promote and support the research, testing and sharing of **ideas** and models of **innovation** in workforce development that will positively **impact** employability, employment and entrepreneurship within the province's labour force and particularly underrepresented groups. Funding for NLWIC is provided by the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills (IPGS) under the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement.

Nineteen of 20 research proponents presented their slide decks during the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 on October 5, 2021 to provide updates on their NLWIC-funded research projects. One was presented at a Government Stakeholder Briefing on July 29, 2021.

In keeping with NLWIC's mandate for innovation dissemination, any use of this NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 Report or the slide decks found within is required to adhere to the intent, language and use of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike license [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0]. These uses may include: (1) adoption as new policy, program, service delivery model, and/or practice, (2) replication where possible; and/or (3) scale-up to improve the quantity and/or the quality of the workforce available to any or all labour market stakeholders.

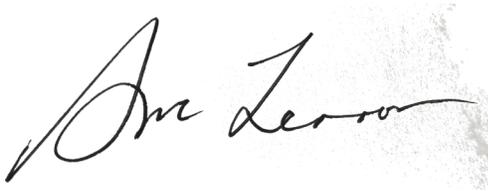
This means any party can use, re-distribute, remix, adapt and build upon this report, as long as: (1) appropriate attribution is provided to IPGS; i.e. Copyright ©IPGS 2021, and (2) Logos are used for the research proponents, NLWIC, the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Government of Canada. Any new creations that utilize this report must be licensed under identical terms. These materials may not be used for commercial purposes. Some of our deliverables and materials may have been adapted from third-party copyright holders who are not affiliated with NLWIC or IPGS. Where any third-party copyright information has been identified within this report or the slide decks within, you will need to obtain permission from those concerned. When utilizing and/or sharing these materials, we ask that you notify us via email at nlwic@nlwic.ca so we can track the reach and use of our materials.



Acknowledgements

On behalf of NL Workforce Innovation Centre (NLWIC), I would like to acknowledge the innovation, expertise and passion of everyone who has contributed to the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021, with a special thank you to the following:

- NLWIC Team
- Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills Team
- NLWIC-Funded Research Proponents
- Marketing, Communications and Recruitment Team,
College of the North Atlantic



Sharon McLennon
Director, NL Workforce Innovation Centre
College of the North Atlantic



Table of Contents

To jump ahead to a particular section of the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 Report, click on the research project proponent, project title or page number below.

To return to the Table of Contents from any page of the Report, click on the NLWIC icon on the bottom left of each page.

Introduction..... 5

Social Enterprise

Choices for Youth – *Applied Research on Supportive Training, Social Enterprise and Employment First Practices for the Future of NL* 8

Community Education Network for Southwestern NL – *Workforce Innovation Through Social Enterprise* 18

Corner Brook Status of Women Council – *A Community-Minded Social Enterprise: An Inquiry for Viability* 30



Introduction

The NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 was a virtual event held on October 5, 2021 to give Research Proponents the opportunity to provide updates on their NLWIC-Funded Research Projects. There are 20 research projects funded to date by NLWIC following two Calls for Proposals in 2017 and 2018 and totaling \$7,663 million.

Each research projects deals with one or more of the following sectors: Agriculture, Aquaculture, Community Organizations, Employment Services, Forestry, Health, Technology, Tourism, Training & Education, Mining and Social Enterprise.

They also explore the challenges and opportunities of the following underrepresented groups in Newfoundland and Labrador: Immigrants, Indigenous Peoples, Refugees, Women, Youth, Persons with Disabilities, Older Workers and Persons in Rural & Remote NL.

During the event, each research proponent was given eight minutes to present an update on their Research Project. This included a project overview, early learnings if the project was still in progress or findings if the project was completed, as well as impacts on the project team, organization and participants.

This modified Report is focused on the three projects that fall under the Social Enterprise category. It contains a summary of each Research Project followed by the slide deck presented at the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021. There have been no edits of the slide decks by NLWIC.

NL Workforce Innovators





SOCIAL ENTERPRISE





Research Project: *Applied Research on Supportive Training, Social Enterprise and Employment First Practices for the Future of NL*

Choices for Youth (CFY) is committed to building programs, systems, and opportunities that are focused on providing individualized support for young people, celebrating who they are, and working together to unlock their potential to build a brighter future.

According to the latest numbers from Statistics Canada, unemployment has risen to 15.5 per cent in Newfoundland and Labrador. Specifically, the unemployment rate for youth ages 15-24 is 17.1% (Statistics Canada, July 2018). Compared to the Canadian unemployment rate at 11.1%, this statistic presents many questions that requires valid research and community engagement.

After more than 25 years on the ground, CFY recognizes there are many barriers to vulnerable young people entering and being successful in the workplace. Mental health challenges, substance use issues, criminal justice issues, literacy and learning disabilities and behavioral issues are all on that list. We further recognize that there is a large correlation between poverty, the social determinants of health, adverse childhood experiences, and unemployment.

By exploring the impact that social complexities and inequities have on educational and employment participation, we can validate policy and programmatic approaches to assisting youth and emerging adults to achieve success in the labour market. This work will also connect the changing realities of work and explore leveraging youth skills in a modern economy.

This project aims to analyze options for education, training and work to gain a stronger understanding of how it relates to changing economic and social conditions of the 21st century, particularly in the context of marginalized youth and emerging adults in our province. We want to understand how the future changing nature of work and the rapid social changes experienced by our most vulnerable youth are influencing educational and labour market engagement.

This applied research project will test the fidelity of the CFY Employment First approach in St. John's and three other rural locations through the modernization of traditional labour market development training options, built specifically for youth with the social determinants of health embedded in program design; providing supportive employment opportunities through social enterprise; and measuring the impact of individualized case management on youth labour market attachment in both supportive and competitive employment environments.



Applied Research on Supportive Training, Social Enterprise and Employment First Practices for the Future of NL



Primary Research Questions:

- What are the common principles/elements of successful labour market engagement efforts, and can these be adapted to different jurisdictions in Canada interacting with marginalized youth?
- What is the relationship between social inclusion and employability for marginalized youth in Newfoundland and Labrador?
- When given dedicated social supports based on a timeframe reflective of their needs, such as access to safe and appropriate housing, income, nutrition, social and health supports, does employment and training programming attain better outcomes for youth when compared to traditional employment programs?
- What outcomes can social enterprise models achieve when employing youth who face multiple barriers to employment? What impact does social supports have on their employment success?

Who

Research led by Choices for Youth.

Where

St. John's

When

October 2019 – April 2022

Research Project Updates

The following slides were presented at the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 on October 5.



EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE



CONSTRUCTING PATHWAYS TO
EMPLOYMENT FOR MARGINALIZED YOUTH

PURPOSE

To help youth aged 16-29 to
achieve their personal goals of
further education and
competitive employment.



HOW WE WORK

TRAUMA INFORMED AND RECOVERY
ORIENTED PRACTICE

HARM REDUCTION

HOUSING FIRST FOR YOUTH

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & POSITIVE
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



PROGRAM DESIGN

WE BELIEVE EVERYONE HAS POTENTIAL



TRAINING

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
& CHOICE



YOUTH

EMPLOYMENT
CHOICE & OPPORTUNITY



SUPPORT

INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT
TO MEET BASIC NEEDS,
BUILD CONFIDENCE, &
ASSISTANCE TO DESIGN
FUTURES

TRAINING



Sector Specific



Exposure



Education



Power Skills

CORE
CURRICULUM

Housing
Person
Career
Finances
Leadership

SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

Focusing on the whole person and meeting them where they are.



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT



We believe that social enterprise is an effective mechanism for workforce development

→ *Big Question*

**HOW MIGHT WE
CREATE
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVES THAT
WORK FOR
VULNERABLE YOUTH?**





NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR INNOVATION CENTRE



IDEAS



IMPACT



INNOVATION

COMMUNITY RESEARCH



DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION



15 CONSULTATIONS
YOUTH SURVEY



PILOT PROGRAMMING
PROGRAM EVALUATION

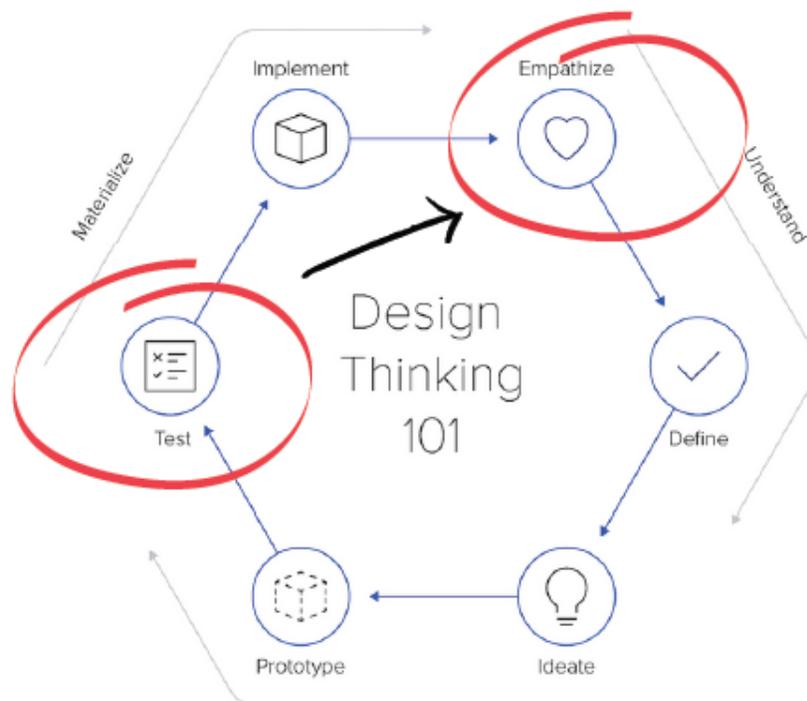


BUT THEN..

STOP

**COVID-19 CHANGED
EVERYTHING.**

**A PIVOT IS A CHANGE IN STRATEGY,
NOT A CHANGE IN VISION**



➔ THINGS HAVE CHANGED FOR YOUTH IN NL

Between April 27 - June 7, 2020 we heard from 486 participants :

364 completed online surveys 87 completed paper surveys 35 engaged in online Zoom consultations



Mental Health is a Top Concern and Accessing Support is a Challenge



Poverty is a Growing Concern



Youth are Experiencing Major Setbacks



Youth are Struggling to Access Education



Youth See Opportunities to Change Systems



17% have dependents



13.5% self-identified as a person with a disability



9.5% self-identified as Indigenous

8% self-identified as a new Canadian

6.5% self-identified as a minority other than Indigenous



61% of youth surveyed were unemployed at time of survey completion

36% of youth surveyed were underemployed at time of survey

NEXT STEPS

Launch Cross Provincial Survey

Launch Pilot Programs

- Labrador
- Bonavista, NL
- Carbonear, NL

Publish Research and Community Toolkit





Research Project: *Workforce Innovation Through Social Enterprise*

Social Enterprise is a catalyst for social and economic empowerment and inclusion. It is defined as a non-profit initiative that produces and sells goods or services in a business-like model in the market economy, but they manage their operations and redirect their surpluses in pursuit of social, community, cultural or environmental goals.

The Goal of the Workforce Innovation Through Social Enterprise Project is to facilitate evidence-based research and analysis and to disseminate resources and practical tools which encourages and supports Social Enterprise growth in Newfoundland and Labrador as an innovative tool for addressing workforce challenges, supporting rural sustainability, encouraging small business enterprise, and building a stronger economic foundation for the future.

This goal will be accomplished through collaborative partnerships and stakeholder engagement, applied research, piloting and evaluation, data analysis and documentation, as well as knowledge mobilization and dissemination of information and practical tools and resources.

The Community Education Network (CEN) for Southwestern Newfoundland is a non-profit community-based organization with 27 years experience working collaboratively with community and government partners to affect positive change for individuals, families and communities. CEN and its Associate Organizations, the Community Action Committee Family Resource Program and the Community Youth Network, facilitate an array of community-based services including: prenatal support; programs for young children and their parents/caregivers; licensed preschool/childcare programs; programs and activities for youth; mental health and addictions youth outreach services; adult basic education; career and employment programs; violence prevention initiatives; and housing support services.



Workforce Innovation Through Social Enterprise



Primary Research Question:

- What practical and innovative Social Enterprise opportunities exist in Southwestern Newfoundland which can address workforce challenges, provide training and employment opportunities, support community sustainability and build a stronger economic foundation for the region, as demonstrated and evaluated in a pilot study?

Who

Research led by Community Education Network.

Where

Southwestern Newfoundland

When

October 2019 – March 2022

Research Project Updates

The following slides were presented at the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 on October 5.



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Bernice Hancock- Executive Director
Ian MacDonald- Project Coordinator

Community Education Network and Associates
Workforce Innovation Through Social Enterprise
January 2020- March 2022
Currently Ongoing



A non-profit organization, established in 1991 as the Port au Port Community Education Initiative

Mission to create a learning culture through a lifelong learning process which promotes personal enrichment and healthy, sustainable communities.

CEN Collaborative: Community Action Committee and Community Youth Network

Workforce Innovation Through Social Enterprise

Workforce Innovation Through Social Enterprise

Primary Research Question:

What practical and innovative Social Enterprise opportunities exist in Southwestern Newfoundland which can address workforce challenges, provide training and employment opportunities, support community sustainability and build a stronger economic foundation for the region, as demonstrated and evaluated in a pilot study?

Research Learnings to Date

Workforce Innovation

- Social enterprises should include an employee base with a diverse range of needs and employment barriers.
- Identifying and understanding specific barriers, and providing support to remove such barriers, should be a priority, before and during, workforce engagements.
- A bridging agency can provide employment guidance.

Community Collaboration

- It takes the parent organization, as a whole, to make the social enterprise work; building formal collaborations with other social enterprises, and continued assistance, are very important to the success of the subsidiary earned-income social enterprise.

Financial Support

- New and existing social enterprises need support from a diverse range of funding sources. Financial support from the government, as well as subsidy programs, are necessary to increase capacity and engage people in the community to work.

Networking

- A grassroots, collective decision-making approach to operating a social enterprise or developing a project, empowers participants and community members. Business opportunities and visibility can be expanded by regular conversations within the community, such as town halls and networking events. Surveys and development evaluations can be used to gauge Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for trained workforce as well as community impact.

Gaps in Research

- Hybridity exists in the field of social enterprise which can limit establishing clear classifications of social enterprise.
- One of the gaps identified in the research was the lack of discussion on barriers that exist Southwestern Newfoundland and Labrador.

Pilot Learnings to Date

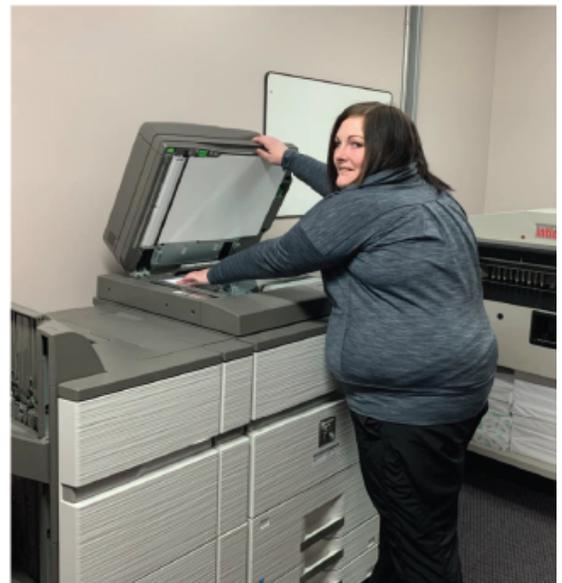
Employment Training

- On-the-job technological tools are key to skills advancement, improved productivity, and increased sales/revenue which was particularly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Lack of necessary training and resources for employers to effectively tend to the needs of an individual experiencing barriers to employment. For example: mental health training, soft skills training etc...
- Partnerships are the key to success and finding the right partner(s) is essential.

Impacts

Impacts

- Increased networking on a local, regional, national and international level for both team and organization
- New untapped business experience for the organization and other partner organizations
- Employment opportunities for people with employment barriers
- The ongoing pandemic had both a positive and negative impact on the piloting of social enterprise.



Recommendations

Recommendations

Government

- Support social enterprise research and provide the funding to nurture social enterprise growth in the province.

Training providers

- Provide training and accommodate individuals facing employment barriers.

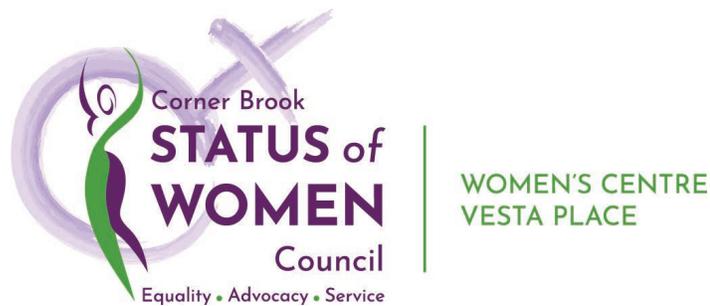
Community

- Provide necessary training for staff and volunteers to build a supportive environment for employees with employment barriers.

Potential Research Question

What are the specific employment barriers faced by individuals living in rural communities; how are they currently being addressed, and how can employment supports be improved through social enterprise?





Research Project: *A Community-Minded Social Enterprise: An Inquiry for Viability*

The Corner Brook Status of Women Council is a not-for-profit organization that has been established in Corner Brook, NL since 1974. It has a reputation for community development and leadership because it believes it is responsible to and must be responsive to the larger community. It operates the Corner Brook Women's Centre, Vesta Place Supportive Housing and supports other community initiatives such as Pride and Camp Ohana. We are governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. It's mandate is "to help improve the status of women". We do this work through providing direct services, information and referral, community leadership and advocacy for women and families.

This project will explore the conditions necessary for the success of a social enterprise in the Crestview area of Corner Brook. The Crestview area of Corner Brook is mainly comprised of individuals and families living in subsidized housing provided by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC). The Corner Brook Status of Women Council has put forward a proposal to NLHC to repurpose one of the vacant buildings in the area. It will include supportive housing units, as well as space for a social enterprise. Social enterprises are innovative businesses that boost the well-being of communities through the sale of goods or services, while advancing social goals. It provides an opportunity to diversify economic production.

This project will help us engage the local community to determine the direction of the social enterprise. Social enterprises have been identified by the provincial government as an innovative means of increasing the well-being of the community through economic development that also furthers social, cultural or environmental goals. It is, in essence, a hybrid model that has both economic and social domains. Our social enterprise will be a business utilized and supported by those living in the area. We also hope to employ some local individuals who may have faced barriers to employment. This area has a higher than average unemployment rate and may face barriers that include low literacy levels, poverty, lack of transportation, episodic homelessness, childhood trauma, addiction, mental health concerns and more. We wish to create a supportive employment environment that will provide skills and training for individuals to be successful in the workforce while also contributing to sales and financial stability for our organization. This dual focus is central to our project which seeks to research the appropriate type of business for the community as well as the local barriers to employment. This we hope will lead us in the development of a successful business plan as well as employee skill building to help those employed remain employed and experience ongoing success and growth. If determined to be a viable option, the profits from the social enterprise may help to provide funding for events, programs and activities of the Corner Brook Status of Women Council and assist with long term sustainability of the organization. This would be seen as a possible long term outcome of this project.

Vine Place Community Centre (VPCC) is situated in the Crestview area and has established relationships within the neighbourhood. They will help us to engage the community to voice their needs, concerns and opinions so that the best possible business options for success are solicited. This partnership seeks to ensure that time is taken to understand the local needs and how they might best be addressed as well. In addition, the project coordinator will work with VPCC 's Community Employment Facilitator to develop skill-building workshops that will engage and maintain employability for those living in the area.



Primary Research Question:

- What elements must be considered for the viability of a social enterprise in the Crestview area? This will consider the type of business that may be supported by local residents, the difficulty in establishing the business, and the longer term viability. In addition, it will consider the types of employment that may be generated and employability needs of the residents of the area so that this project can employ some local individuals. This will consider how these barriers may be addressed to provide the best opportunity for success for the present and the future.

Who

Research led by the Corner Brook Status of Women Council.

Where

Corner Brook, NL

When

October 2019 – February 2021 **This research project is completed.*

Research Project Updates

The following slides were presented at the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 on October 5.

A Community-Minded Social Enterprise: An Inquiry for Viability

Corner Brook Status of Women Council

Presenter: Paula Sheppard Thibeau

Project dates: October 2019-Feb 2021

Project status: Completed

- Project title: *A Community-Minded Social Enterprise: An Inquiry for Viability*
- *Research question:* "What elements must be considered for the viability of a social enterprise in the Crestview area?"
- Please note that Crestview is an area of Corner Brook that is home primarily to residents of NL Housing corporation with few services within its neighbourhood.

Focus

- The focus of the project has been on individuals from the Crestview neighbourhood who have traditionally been underemployed, experienced poverty, and/or homelessness. Central to this project is the idea that while any goods or services that arise from this venture may be utilized by the wider community, it must benefit those within the neighbourhood.
- Therefore a great deal of time was taken to engage community members and build trust

Findings

- There were a wide range of wants and needs for a business that were put forth. Many of these centered on physical storefront locations including bakeries and cafes, arts and crafts stores, and thrift store concepts.
- Other research delved into the barriers people encountered in gaining employment, and what skills they thought were considered essential to being hired and being considered a “good employee”.
- It was realized that the types of storefront businesses being discussed were already in existence in some form within the city. The issues many residents had, and outlined as a barrier to many everyday activities, was access. Further exploration through surveys indicated respondents found transportation to be a barrier to employment, healthcare, education and everyday activities.
- Due to the recognition that transportation as a barrier to access to services, the project pivoted its focus to a Community Transit Enterprise concept, as a way to help minimize and alleviate those barriers; help improve the daily lives of residents by increasing access and engagement and creating sustainable positive change.

Opportunities

- Ongoing dialogue with the city who provide current public transit
- Draft business plan developed for community transit model that will complement current offerings
- Working with a business consultant with experience in rural transit models
- Exploring funding opportunities for purchase of vehicles

Thanks

- To the residents of Crestview area for sharing their insights and knowledge
- To our steering committee members for their guidance
- To NLWIC and its funding partners, for funding this project and allowing us to explore this topic and future social enterprise endeavour



Follow Us. Follow Our Research Projects. Engage.



facebook.com/NLWIC



twitter.com/NLWIC



instagram.com/nlwic_cna



linkedin.com/company/nlwic



nlwic@nlwic.ca



709.289.3011



nlwic.ca



NL WORKFORCE
INNOVATION
CENTRE

cna