

Collaborating Partners



Funding Partner

Ontario Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

Rural Social Enterprise Constellation (RSEC)

RSEC is connecting, supporting, and growing social enterprise (SE) in rural Ontario. It's a unique partnership among a diverse network of supporters and doers of rural social enterprise. RSEC connects work that's happening on the ground with policy and strategy at regional and provincial levels. From this, RSEC is developing a more comprehensive look at the scale of social enterprise in Ontario, and what systems can make it stronger. It's part of a broader movement to strengthen the social economy in Ontario.

Why social enterprise?

Helping build sustainability for the nonprofit sector

The concept of social enterprise is not new- local communities have been engaging in social enterprise for decades. And nonprofits across Ontario have already been creating their own revenue streams, with an average of 43% of revenue coming from earned income. Social enterprise for RSEC is a way to help rural organizations and communities identify sustainable ways to continue building strong rural regions together.

Why rural?

Strengthening communities takes a local lens

Rural areas across Ontario face unique challenges when it comes to harnessing economic development, funding and resources. Community builders outside city centres are eager to leverage existing resources and increase SE skills training and capacity, yet there have been barriers to access resources and support needed in rural areas. In addition, the unique voices of rural nonprofits are often unheard in discussions about SE systems and policies. Strategies for rural prosperity need to be rooted in rural contexts and perspectives.

What does RSEC do?

Building social enterprise regionally to impact provincial strategy

By supporting individuals and organizations and their networks and connecting them at the regional level, RSEC is helping regions develop their own systems for support and investment in SE. From this level, provincial strategy and policy can be supported and developed.

For RSEC's first project, the focus is on four regions: Huron Perth, Peterborough-Durham- Kawarthas, Thunder Bay Area, and Greater Simcoe County.

To build regional strategies for SE development, project partners organize online and in-person activities- from conferences, webinars, and coaching, to investor roundtables and workshops across the province- for English and francophone communities. They also support the development of resources like SE funding, provincial research, and an SE database.

How is this connected to the nonprofit sector?

Nonprofits are a socio-economic force in communities

Nonprofit organizations don't often think of themselves as part of local or regional economies- but they are an important driver. As trainers, employers, and stewards of community assets, nonprofits have many roles to play in rural prosperity. RSEC aims to strengthen the nonprofit sector through social enterprise capacity building and fostering support systems.

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Who is RSEC?

A group of regional and local partners

RSEC is a provincial working group of the [Ontario Nonprofit Network](#). It's an evolving and growing group of nonprofit organizations and individuals in regions across the province.

At the heart of this partnership, currently working in four regions, is the Leadership Team:

Canadian Community Economic
Development Network

C. Lang Consulting

Eko Nomos

Huron Business Development
Corporation

Ontario Nonprofit Network

Community Opportunity and Innovation
Network, Inc.

PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise

United Way of Greater Simcoe County

Centre canadien pour le renouveau
communautaire - Canadian Center for
Community Renewal

University of Guelph

The first project builds on important work developed over a number of years by these partners and many rural champions including social enterprises, United Ways, community economic development organizations, Community Futures Development Corporations, municipalities and organizations in the co-op sector.

Special thanks to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for its support of the Rural Social Enterprise Constellation's first project.

For more information: www.theonn.ca/rural-social-enterprise-constellation

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