



Summary of Fall 2021 Reconvene Gathering

Created January 2022

About The Fall Gathering

On November 22, 2021, the ecosystem gathered around the purpose of

- Reconnecting the Alberta social economy ecosystem
- Reconnecting with each other
- Reconnecting with AB Seed
- Identifying the trends in the ecosystem.

This was the first time the broader ecosystem has reconvened since the Fall of 2019, when we hosted the original "Red Deer 60" meeting in response to the Social Finance Fund announcement. This original meeting is when the idea of forming a collective or collaborative in Alberta really started to gain traction. A lot has happened between now and then, including the creation of AB Seed.

Who was in the room?

We had over 50 participants throughout the event, all from diverse areas of work. Below you'll see a quick snapshot of some of who was in the room.



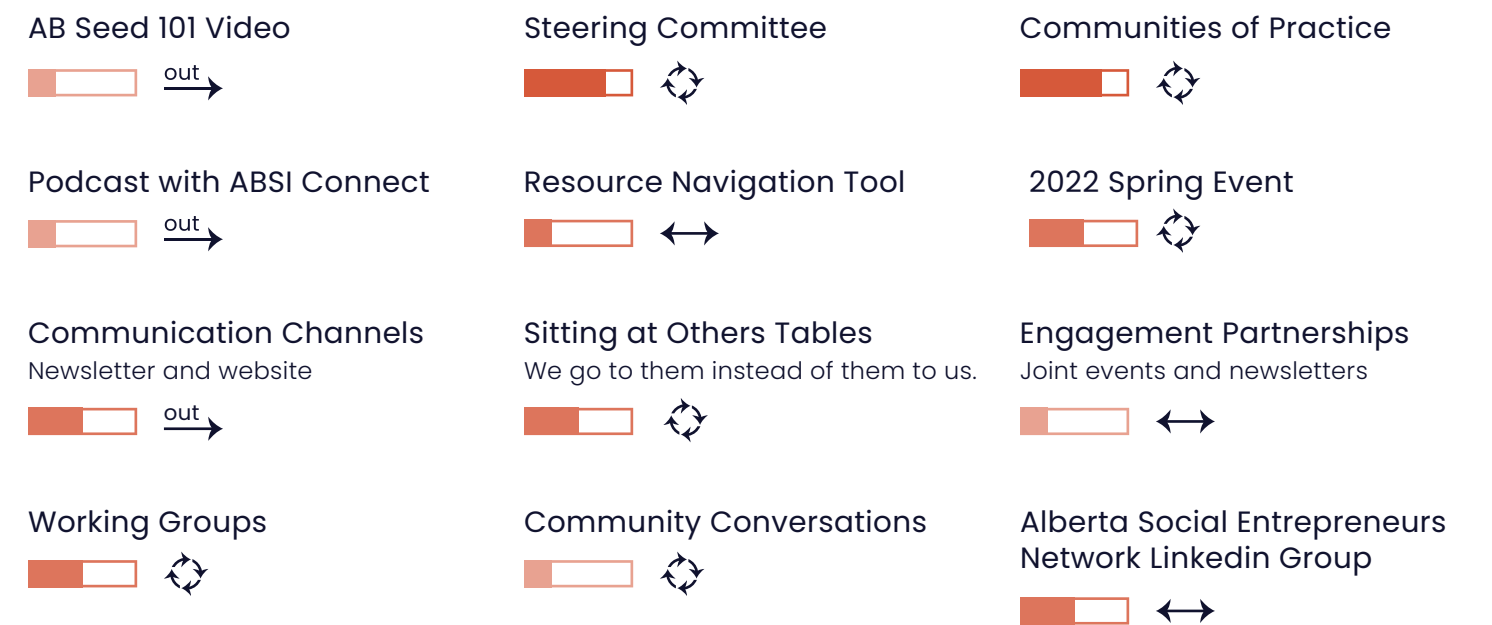
What follows is a summary of what was discussed during the 2021 reconvene event!

About AB Seed

AB Seed (Alberta Social Economy Ecosystem Development) is a collaborative of social enterprise and social finance leaders seeking to develop a strong social economic ecosystem in Alberta. We are building the ecosystem by enhancing collaboration, communication, and strategization of leaders and contributors working in the social economy. We exist to increase the scale of these communities' impact and improve social outcomes for all Albertans. Ultimately, we want Alberta to be the best place to start and grow a social enterprise.

Engagement Activities

AB Seed facilitates engagement in the ecosystem through many different mechanisms. Below are some of the current areas of focus.



Legends

Progress Made

- Idea formed, not started
- Idea started, not quite implemented
- Idea mostly established, well under way, working on improving, or growing
- Idea established and a well oiled machine

Direction of Information Flow

- Information flowing either out from AB Seed or in to AB Seed
- Information flowing back and forth between organizations
- Multiple organizations/members who are informing and being informed by one another

Trends Analysis: The WAVE

What are some events and things you have observed that are currently going on in Alberta's social economy ecosystem? Include things that are just starting, things that have gone on for a long time, things that are really working well, things that seem to be holding or pulling us backwards.

Horizon

What's emerging on the horizon?

Re-imagining models and structures

- Legal and Organizational Structures
- Post COVID-19
- Policies and Regulations

Language and Definition Challenges

- Missed Inclusion Opportunities
- Misconceptions about Social Enterprise

Broader Representation and Inclusion

- Diversity and Inclusion
- Regulatory Structures
- Decolonization

Government Involvement

- Legislation
- Government Partnerships
- Funding

Community Level Supports

- Community Impact
- Getting Together

Swell

What's building momentum?

Measurement and Models

- Outcomes
- Digital Context

Post Secondary and Training

- Curriculum
- Curiosity
- Work Integrated Learning

EDI and Equity Seeking

- Internal Policy
- Political Environment
- Inequality

Shifting Understandings - Narratives and Language

- Grassroots Approach
- Sharing Stories
- Unintended Benefits
- Shared Language

Finances/Investment

- Social Financing
- Community Based Investing
- Impact/Ethical Investing
- Government

Social Procurement

- Municipalities Driving Demand
- Growing and Increased Responsiveness

Rural Focus

- Support Local
- Increased Access

Sustainable Development Goals

- Climate and Social Outcomes
- Social Resiliency

Crest

What's happening right now, but could be fading away soon?

System Change

- Large Institutions
- Changing Role of Charity
- Digital Transformation
- Social Procurement
- COVID-19

Alberta Network

- AB Seed
- Social Economy
- Communities
- Government of Alberta

Impact Measurement and Evaluation

- Support Pivoting
- Evaluating Impact
- New Tools
- What matters to end user?

Funding and Investments

- Moving Towards Social Enterprise Model
- Land Investments
- Investment Readiness

Trough

What's not working well? Outdated? Disappearing?

Models and Mindsets

- Changing Mindsets Around Making Profit
- Funding to take risks
- Status Quo
- ESG Movement

Alberta Collective Ecosystem Activity

- AB Seed
- Social Economy

Social Enterprise Startup and Scaling

- Slow Growth for Social Enterprise

Business Skill sets

- Diversity
- Non-profit Skills and Processes
- Structures and Traditions

Addressing the ESG Movement

- Capital
- Connecting
- ESG movement
- Social Sector

Undertow

What are the deep patterns causing trouble? Where is caution needed?

Communication and Definitions

- Communication
- Value of Definitions

Rigid Attitudes and Fixed Mindsets

- Silos
- Competitiveness
- Mindsets

Inequities and performative engagement

- Rural vs Urban
- Existing vs Emerging Organizations
- Inequality

Government and Legislation

- Slow Speed
- Policy and Regulatory

Impact Measurement

- Impact Measurement
- Effective Indicators

Organizational models

- New Models
- Distinction Between Models

Uncontrollable Events

- COVID-19
- Economy
- Natural Disasters

The WAVE Trends Analysis – Reflections

What stands out to you?

- Language and Definitions
- EDI Efforts and Initiatives
- System and Process Changes
- Learning and Capacity-Building Opportunities

What are you worried / concerned about?

- Green Washing
- Exclusive, Inaccessible Practices and Language
- Shifting Models and Rethinking Charities
- Measurement & Sharing Outcomes
- Capacity Building
- Funding Criteria & Management
- Renewable Energy & Social Innovation / Social Enterprise

What are you hopeful about?

- Societal Change
- Conversations
- Unity and Collaboration
- Equity Seeking Groups Involvement
- Social Ecosystem Investment

What insights are you taking away about the ecosystem?

- Keep Working
- Growing Interest in the Social Economy
- Semantics
- Future Areas of Work

So What Now What?

We asked folks to answer these two questions given the trends identified in the wave analysis. What follows are the themes that emerged from peoples responses.

What's one next step you hope to take personally?

- 14x** Connect better and more broadly with organizations and people within the ecosystem, outside our existing networks and echo chambers
- 8x** Creative thinking, experimentation, resourcefulness, and new solutions
- 4x** Navigation of resources
- 3x** Increase knowledge and understanding of what is happening
Language

What's one next step you'd like to see this ecosystem take collectively?

- 11x** Language and definitions
- 9x** Broader representation and engagement within diverse groups
Government relations, lobbying, advocacy
- 8x** Understanding and expanding resources
- 7x** Regular events
- 4x** Strategic role of AB Seed and ABSI Connect
Encourage more and other investors
- 3x** Collaboration and strategic planning
Capturing and sharing stories and examples

Cascading Chat

As the tide goes out and dusk falls upon the session... what is left on the beach for you? What are you leaving the session with today?

Hope for new collaborations and mentorship

Connecting one on one with more fellows

Network and brilliant insights!

Connection, deeper understanding, so much to do

Hopefulness for this ongoing work in Alberta

Energy to collaborate

New ideas

How do we help others understand the possibilities of social innovation, social enterprises, community benefit agreements, etc

Holding tensions (horns of the dilemma)

Excitement to read over all the different trends and feedback!!

Expanding circles of impact

Idea for me to ponder: how can we incorporate more decolonizing practices + inclusivity practices into the work that's being done in the ecosystem

So many great conversations and connections to be made.

A treasure map, I am I willing to dig deep enough to get it.

Lots of like minded people!

There are so many great intentions, and everything starts with intention. So great to see and join.

How do we best keep all here involved in AB Seed.

Great network

Desire for AB Seed to share collective social enterprise stories - amplify action storytelling

Footprints

A large conch shell that, when listening, echoes the collective voices in envisioning a successful social enterprise and economy future.

Connections

Energy

Need for common language and the "right dose" of definition for the ecosystem (social innovation, social economy, social enterprise)

Next steps

A growing group of like minded people

Discovery of the ecosystem never ends

Finding new network connections & thinking about new ways to do "charitable work."

Reluctance to change is a great frustration and often disappointment.

Looking out at the waves and feeling energized by all the great work/projects on the way in

Great connections, & mostly optimism.

Lots of like minded people

Great connection, good to see familiar faces, and great to put some faces to new names.

Connecting with different people regarding the social economy, not the usual suspects

Seeds of new conversations for future.

Seashells - whispers of an ecosystem

Common language that is inclusive

Re-inspired hope for real transformation led by Indigenous leaders.

INNOVATE ... willingness to change! Thank goodness we continue to have to change our clocks 2x/year... we CAN ADAPT!

Incredible connections - just what I needed

