



Friends,

February. The month dedicated to celebrating love in all its forms—including our relationships with family and friends, others and ourselves. Here I am with my partner at my stepson's wedding last year.

And this is also a time to love and cherish our humanity and our natural environment—and those businesses and business leaders using their business as a force for good. This newsletter focuses on aspects of business that I'm loving:

- The Collaboration Economy
- The Purpose Economy
- The Circular Economy

A defining experience for me over the past few months has been my outreach to fifty opinion leaders and influencers across the Canadian business ecosystem to find the purpose-curious and the purpose champions interested in joining a collaboration to accelerate and mainstream social purpose in business. I was blown away by the degree of interest and enthusiasm. It stoked the fire of my heart. I was thrilled when a senior leader of an influential national business association told me she had a "share of heart" for social purpose!

So, this month, spread the love—and embrace the businesses you love for their heartfelt focus on transforming business and society for the better.

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Collaboration Economy

Business-led ESG collaboration: After 20 years advising business on ESG strategies (we called it CSR back then), I am convinced more than ever of the need for businesses to collaborate within their sector or value chain to address their ESG priorities. It is impossible for businesses to tackle their biggest ESG issues on their own; they need to find others with similar constraints and opportunities to move the needle. However, there is a dearth of information and resources to help businesses with this, so I was pleased to join forces with MaRS Discovery District to create this tool: [Business-Led ESG Collaboration: How to Guide for Business](#). It sets out the steps a business can take to establish a successful ESG collaboration with business peers and includes these resources as well:

- [Inventory of 100 Business-Led ESG Collaborations](#) from around the world. Check it out to see if your sector or topic is included and consider joining.
- [Twelve Case Studies of Business-Led ESG Collaborations](#). These examples provide helpful tips and ideas to create or advance your own collaboration with industry peers.



Intersectoral collaboration: From time to time, I advise local governments, most recently the Township of Langley on ESG strategies. In collaboration with Sue Todd of Sustainability Works, I helped this municipality just east of Vancouver create its award-winning [Social Sustainability Strategy](#). A key theme was collaboration, as the goals the council adopted included being a connected, inclusive and resilient community. In a follow-up to that project, the township engaged me, and Junxion Strategy, to create an [Intersectoral Collaboration Assessment Tool](#). This tool helps you determine whether your collaboration is foundational, advanced, accelerating, or transformational. It enables collaborators to identify the steps to creating greater impact in society. If you are involved in a collaboration check out this tool to self-assess your initiative and identify its strengths and gaps.



University collaboration: For five years I advised a group of 30 Canadian university presidents on strategies to accelerate their social impact. They met regularly to raise their collective game, addressing the climate emergency and agreeing on a call to action for universities everywhere to harness their institutional assets to create a better world. Click here for a link to the report summarizing the tools and resources I helped create: [Ten Actions to Accelerate University Social Impact](#). Here is my Sustainable Brands article that puts the presidents' collaboration in perspective: [Post-Secondary's Postscript: Universities Becoming a Greater Force for Good](#). Share it with university leaders you know so they can up their impact!



Purpose Economy

Corporate purpose legislation: For the past year I was actively involved in strategies to make social purpose in business the new normal. For example, I worked closely with the David Suzuki Foundation to publish a report written by two legal experts on public policy reform to make social purpose the default in business. [Bringing Corporate Purpose into the Mainstream: Directions for Canadian Law](#) calls on the Canadian government to amend the *Canada Business Corporations Act* to require businesses to have and disclose a purpose as the reason they exist. This is a nudge strategy that will result in Canadian businesses embracing a purpose to create a better world. It's a great read and full of hope that with legislative amendments businesses will be transformed for good.



Advancing the Canadian purpose economy: I am chairing an initiative to accelerate the Purpose Economy in Canada, the [Canadian Purpose Economy Project](#). We are getting ready to launch four initiatives to engage accountants, investors, associations, and boards to introduce social purpose to companies in their ecosystem. To learn more, sign up for notifications at this [link](#).



Purpose governance: From CSR Governance to ESG Governance to Purpose Governance, I've had the privilege of being on the front lines of Impact Boards for the past 30 years, starting with my role as Chair of Vancity Credit Union in the late 1990s. I'm now the ESG and Purpose Governance subject matter expert for Governance Professionals of Canada. Over the past months I have written two reports for them chronicling the emerging ESG and Purpose mandate for boards. This is essential reading for boards and those who advise them:

- [The Purpose Imperative: Why and How Boards are Embracing Purpose Governance to Drive Value](#)
- [Becoming Fluent in ESG Governance: Putting Inclusion, Purpose, and Climate Governance into Action](#)



Circular Economy

Circular economy: Much as social purpose in business is transforming the economy, so is circularity. Businesses in the future will be fully circular; the only question is the pace and timing of the transition. [Here is a report I wrote](#) for the National Zero Waste Council that chronicles the transitions of six circular business models over five years. It reveals the innovation and collaboration pathway that lies ahead.



Events

Recordings

Want to learn more about social purpose business and how they are transforming the economy and society for good? Listen in to these two recorded webinars I moderated:

- [Take the purpose plunge:](#) How social purpose companies embed their purpose into their DNA
- [Marketing on purpose:](#) How marketing differs in a social purpose company

Upcoming

Cultivating Change: Accelerating the shift to purpose-driven business

As purpose goes mainstream, we have a profound opportunity to reshape the way the world does business. I am co-hosting an inspiring conversation on purpose-based business that will show leading practices you can implement to participate in the purpose economy. This virtual session is produced by the American Sustainable Business Network.

Wednesday, February 15, 2023 1 pm ET Online

[Register for free here.](#)

The ESG Journey: Crafting effective governance solutions to stay ahead of the curve

Want to get up to speed on the ESG boardroom of the future? Attend this day-long session in Toronto sponsored by Governance Professionals of Canada which I'm moderating to dig into emerging boardroom topics such as climate and biodiversity, purpose governance, stakeholder capitalism, and Indigenous knowledge. You will come away with your ESG governance playbook for 2023 and beyond.

Tuesday, March 21, 2023 11 am - 5 pm ET.

Online and In-person, Toronto, Ontario

Visit [gpcanada.org](#) more information and to register. Use this code to save 15%: 2023ESG15.



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