



Diversity Food Services (DFS) operates multiple food service sites and provides catering across the University of Winnipeg campus. Additionally, DFS has entered into a supplier relationship with a large local health-food chain offering a "To Go" product line and has engaged in several partnerships with other organizations and corporations to provide food services on their premises. DFS employees tend to come from the inner city of Winnipeg, and many are new immigrants, refugees and Indigenous people who have faced barriers in entering the labour market. The operations serve as both a place for training and longer-term employment. As an organization committed to local, sustainable purchasing, DFS is both a social purchaser and a recipient of social purchasing.

FAST FACTS

Location: Winnipeg, MB

Founded: 2009

Sector: foodservices

Annual Revenue (2018): \$3.5M

Parent Org: University of Winnipeg
Community Renewal Corporation &
Supporting Employment and
Economic Development Winnipeg

Website:

www.diversityfoodservices.com

FINDINGS

- The support of parent organizations (in this case two), their resources and connections have tremendous benefit, even for established social enterprises.
- Diversification of services and product lines contributes to growth and stability of the workforce.
- As illustrated in other cases, champions who believe in the social mission of the social enterprise are critical in making success a reality.
- DFS's commitment to environmentally and socially conscious consumer trends benefits their business.
- In contrast to most research, several of DFS's customers rank their social mission as very important whereas most research in social purchasing suggests customers are primarily concerned with cost, service and quality.
- After initial start up and investment, social enterprises can be self-sustaining.

Selling Social: Experiences of Social Enterprises with Social Procurement and Social Purchasing presents the findings of a three-year (2017-2020), pan-Canadian research project detailing experiences with social procurement and social purchasing from the perspective of social enterprises, as well as their organizational purchasers. These 19 profiles highlight the cases presented in the book and illustrate unique features that make them of interest to practitioners, scholars and students of the social economy.

This research is supported in part by funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

For further information:

contact: jennifer.sumner@utoronto.ca **or visit:** https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/clsew/Research/Social_Procurement_Project.html