



EthniCity Catering is a multicultural company serving Calgary. What began as a cooking collective in a church basement designed to alleviate isolation for newcomer women quickly evolved into a 'low key' caterer with a truck to its current operation with an 800-square-foot commercial kitchen. EthniCity is part of its parent organization's employment training and integration services. The goal is to provide newcomers with training alongside Canadian work experience, an introduction to Canadian work culture, and food safety certification to help newcomers secure employment in the broader community upon program completion. Kitchen helpers, as they are called, also take courses to enhance their English, financial planning and computer literacy skills.

## FAST FACTS

**Location:** Calgary, AB

**Founded:** 1998

**Sector:** foodservices

**Annual Revenue (2019):** \$206K

**Parent Org:** Centre for Newcomers

**Website:**

[www.ethnicitycatering.ca](http://www.ethnicitycatering.ca)

## FINDINGS

- Innovation can help balance the tensions associated with growth in a social enterprise - in this case, a shortage of multicultural caterers in Calgary allows EthniCity a niche market.
- Unlike some of the social enterprises presented in this project, EthniCity features its social value prominently in its promotional materials. While customers value the social mission, they support EthniCity first and foremost for the quality of product and service.
- Strong leaders with an ambitious vision and entrepreneurial attitude are tied to the capacity and willingness of a social enterprise to expand.
- Like most social enterprises, EthniCity is interested in preparing procurement bids but doesn't have experience in the extensive process - true bidding accessibility for social enterprise may require a restructuring of the bidding process itself.

***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.

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