



SARCAN is a recycling social enterprise with a mandate to provide meaningful employment opportunities for people living with disabilities across the province of Saskatchewan. Since its inception, SARCAN has maintained an exclusive contract with the provincial government to administer its recycling program of non-refillable beverage containers. They now also recycle refillable beer bottles, leftover household paint and end-of-life electronics through negotiated contracts with manufacturers and retailers. SARCAN provides competitive wages for its hybrid workforce and tailors wraparound support to suit individual employee needs. For most, this involves training, skill development, coaching and mentoring.

## FAST FACTS

**Location:** Saskatchewan  
**Founded:** 1998  
**Sector:** recycling  
**Annual Revenue (2018):** \$38M  
**Parent Org:** SARC  
**Website:** [www.sarc.ca](http://www.sarc.ca)

## FINDINGS

- SARCAN is an anomaly among social enterprises across Canada for its size of operation and longstanding procurement arrangement with the provincial government.
- Even so, it reports finding contract bidding to be difficult given a lack of in-house expertise on (social) procurement and because organizational purchasers do not always recognize the social benefits and are primarily preoccupied by price.
- Through extensive relationship building SARCAN has developed and then diversified its revenue strategy from grants to commercial activity, even though the revenue source remains one and the same (i.e., government).
- This case demonstrates the importance of decisive and systematic action on the part of the government in establishing successful procurement arrangements with social enterprises.

***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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**For further information:**

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