



The Magazine of Social
Entrepreneurship

Select Page



Innovative Gathering for Social Entrepreneurs Celebrates 25 Years & Goes Virtual With New Partnership

Oct 2, 2020

A quarter of a century ago, the idea of a “social venture” – that a business could be based on social mission and impact – was considered radical by many. In 1995, a group of entrepreneurial dreamers gathered on the remote island of Cortes, BC to share challenges, successes, and experiences with peers in an atmosphere of trust and goodwill. Building new partnerships on intimate forest walks or problem solving under the stars in ocean-front hot tubs was a stark contrast to the dry and competitive style of conventional networking.





This event became the heartbeat of Social Venture Institute (SVI), a connected network of business leaders who are dedicated to generating positive social and environmental impact through their ventures. Since then SVI has provided over 3,000 innovators the opportunity to strengthen their business skills, make connections, and rejuvenate their passion and vision. The gatherings have expanded from Hollyhock, the centre on Cortes Island, to regular convenings in Vancouver, the Bay Area, and Banff.

“As we’ve grown over the last 25 years, I have seen how we have contributed to the wider global movement of socially responsible entrepreneurship,” says Pam Chaloult, producer of SVI Bay Area which is for women and femme-identifying people only.

Chaloult’s claim is well supported by the number of successful ventures that have been birthed through or supported by the SVI community. Examples of SVI alumni include *Seventh Generation* (eco-friendly cleaning and personal care supplies), *SPUD* (local and organic food delivery), *Aisle* (reusable menstrual products, formally known as Lunapads), and *Stonyfield Farms* (organic yogurt and dairy products).

Fall 2020 marks the 25th anniversary of SVI gathering on Cortes Island, unexpectedly coinciding with the global COVID-19 pandemic. “Any agile business leader knows there can be opportunity found amidst

challenge,” says Joel Solomon, SVI founding producer. “As we find ourselves facing the unique challenges of today’s world, we are being asked to re-envision and step into something new.”

This year’s gathering will now be virtual, and organized in collaboration with the producers from the Bay Area and Banff. “SVI has always been about connection across sectors, so it’s exciting to also be bringing together leaders from different locations through the virtual format,” says Philip Lozano, producer of SVI Banff. Unlike your regular zoom webinar, “SVI 25” will be chock full of opportunities for spontaneous connections and creative engagement.

At a time of recession and great social need, SVI is also orienting towards supporting a just and green economic recovery. “We have proven that business can be a force for good, and with a quarter century of practice and community behind us, we know we have a role to play in supporting leaders who are navigating this challenging time,” says Solomon.

SVI 25 will take place on Oct 13-16. You can learn more and apply to attend at hollyhock.ca/svi

About Hollyhock:

Hollyhock creates, curates, and hosts inspiring and meaningful experiences that provide both the inner and outer skills for personal growth and social transformation. Founded in 1982 as a project of Greenpeace activists and human potential movement leaders, each year Hollyhock hosts over 100 programs on topics such as social innovation, wellness, and creativity. The Hollyhock campus on Cortes Island is located in the traditional and ancestral territories of the Klahoose, Tla’amin, and Homalco Nations. Hollyhock also hosts programs in Vancouver and virtually. Learn more at hollyhock.ca

About Social Venture Institute:

Social Venture Institute offers mission-based entrepreneurs an opportunity to share challenges, successes, and experiences with peers in an atmosphere of trust and goodwill. SVI has provided thousands of entrepreneurs the opportunity to strengthen their business skills, connect with other leaders, and rejuvenate their passion and vision. SVI gatherings are regularly hosted at Hollyhock, in



Vancouver, the Bay Area, and Banff, and as of 2020, virtually. The SVI network also includes a listserv and other informal gatherings hollyhockleadershipinstitute.org/svi

Recent Posts

The Work to Build Back Better: social ventures & the new economics

From Crisis to New Economic Models: Jasper van Brakel of RSF Social Finance

Innovative Gathering for Social Entrepreneurs Celebrates 25 Years & Goes Virtual With New Partnership

How E-Commerce Can Help Reduce Food Insecurity

Think Slow, Act Fast: 5 Tips for using research and knowledge to maximize impact

Categories



Recent Posts

- The Work to Build Back Better: social ventures & the new economics
- From Crisis to New Economic Models: Jasper van Brakel of RSF Social Finance