



Business of Good

Pioneering social entrepreneurs' group with B.C. roots turns 25

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Suzanne Siemens is co-founder and CEO of Vancouver-based Aisle, a Social Venture Institute alumnus that makes reusable menstrual products

Social Venture Institute, which has lent a hand to some 3,000 innovators, marks a quarter century of supporting responsible businesses

What do B.C., Alberta and California have in common? No, that isn't a joke.

The answer is Social Venture Institute (SVI), which describes itself as a network of business leaders who are dedicated to making a positive social and environmental impact. Launched long before socially responsible capitalism went mainstream, the organization celebrates its 25th anniversary this year with a virtual get-together from October 13 to 16.

SVI got its start in 1995, when a group of entrepreneurs gathered at [Hollyhock](#) on B.C.'s Cortes Island. Over the years, their meetings expanded to Vancouver, the Bay Area and Banff.

So far, SVI has worked with and supported more than 3,000 innovators. Among its alumni: [Aisle](#), a Vancouver-based maker of reusable menstrual products; Vancouver-headquartered food delivery service [SPUD.ca](#); and U.S. outfit [Seventh Generation](#), which specializes in eco-friendly cleaning and personal care supplies.

As it marks its milestone against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, SVI 25 aims to support what it calls 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," founding producer Joel Solomon said in a statement.

Besides networking, workshops and one-on-one coaching, this year's event features guest speakers Adnan Durrani, founder and CEO of U.S. natural food brand [Saffron Road](#); and Karina Birch, CEO of Canmore, Alberta-based [Rocky Mountain Soap Co.](#)

For more details on SVI 25, and to apply to attend, [click here](#).