

[View this email online](#)

November 2021 | Quarterly Newsletter

The Vista Ahead

“Some lessons can only be learned after earnest but beautiful failures.”

[The Vista - C. Dale Young](#)


I started in this role in April of 2021, and while it feels like that was last month, when I think about all we have done this year, it seems much longer ago.

One of the first things I did in taking on this role was seek input; I was advised about the importance of taking the time to listen. To apply a beginner’s mindset to the work of leading this organization; to see in a new way what can only be seen and experienced in the newness of the first 90 days (or six months).

And so I began my ‘listening tour’: I asked questions inside the organization and spoke individually with all the IC team members. I also asked for input from you, the people who care about our work. Next, our board and staff have come together to reflect upon and evaluate (i) where we have been, (ii) what we have learned, and (iii) where our mandate is calling us to next.

What remains true and constant is that we are a systems change organization: (but) what does that mean for us here and now in Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada? What can we draw from the lessons that life, throughout this pandemic, has taught us about the needs of the most marginalized?

What also remains true and constant is that this work is long term. We go slow to go long. While this human-scale speed is humbling, it is necessary. We embrace the

 lessons we have learned from our successes and failures... especially our failures. We have documented a few of these in **various ways** on **our blogs**, and below in our reflections. We have learned that the means (processes + teams) matter just as much as the ends.

We are nearly at the end of our journey to set strategic direction. We created an operational plan for this year to serve as a bridge between what was and what could be. We expect to head into the new year with our signposts re-established, and a roadmap in hand. We look forward to sharing this work with you. We invite you to engage with us in our lessons learned, and share your own reflections if you have them. (See invitation below!)

We believe that change is needed, it is possible, and it is beautiful. We invite you to stay tuned for the coalescing vision of a changed society we are travelling towards.

Warmly,

image

Louise Adongo, Executive Director

*We welcome your thoughts, questions, reflections and feedback. Click below to add to our Jamboard. Or share your thoughts **[with this survey.](#)***

Contribute to our JAMBOARD

*Leadership team: Louise Adongo, Cari Patterson, Kristen Faulkner and Tyler Colbourne. **[Learn more on our website.](#)***

Innovation for local impact & learning for systems change

We are a nonprofit organisation dedicated to systems change. Working across Nova Scotia, with tools and processes like collective impact, collaboration, developmental evaluation and theories of change, we aim to make a positive impact on communities. We collaborate to learn and share knowledge in the Atlantic Region as well as more broadly across the ecosystem of [social innovation](#).

We have experimented along the way. Highlights are captured below:

our inception | community-level collective impact initiatives in Digby and on the Northside of Cape Breton were instigated to try a new way of approaching systems change.

how we first grew | Dartmouth North collective impact initiative Between the Bridges joined us, bringing more insight and capacity for impact into our collaborative structure.

how we reach out across the region | we fostered an Atlantic-wide network of changemakers through WeavEast.

how we build evaluative capacity | we created a network of Developmental Evaluators across the region.

how we partner | we created the Nova Scotia Network for Social Change with NS GovLab.

how we learn | we continue to refine our approach to learning (e.g. through experimenting with hosting content on Wayside, a technology platform for learning and collaboration).

how we are supported | a group of provincial deputy ministers collaborates on our unusual cross-department funding; we also receive support from foundations and grantmakers committed to social innovation.

Systems change is hard. And beautiful. And possible. Change is a constant, and our new normal.

Our People: Updates

Welcome to new Project Lead

We are pleased to welcome Erika Rolston as new project lead for Turning the Tide in Digby. [Check Erika's bio on our website.](#)

Board of Directors

Joanne Linzey has stepped down as Board Chair and will be a general member of the board. Mary Ellen Gurnham, having wrapped up her work supporting Public Health, has stepped forward as Board Chair between now and March 31, at which time the board will vote in new officers. We are so grateful for Joanne's leadership over the last few years, and look forward to working with Mary Ellen for the near future.

[View our board on our website.](#)

Board Changes in 2021

Additions: John Gunn (Treasurer), Sue LaPierre

Roles: Mary Ellen Gurnham (Chair) and Jill Provoe (Vice Chair)

Board Members joining in January 2022: Charmaine Millaire, Shantia Russell, Mohamad El-Chafehi

News & Views

Follow the links below to catch up on news you may have missed!

[October 5, 2021 – Northside Community Coalition Launches](#)

[September 14, 2021 – 9 Social Innovation Projects Funded](#)

[September 5, 2021 – Community Change through Elections](#)

[July 12, 2021 – Systems Change in a Difficult Time](#)

[April 7, 2021 – Inspiring Communities Welcomes New Executive Director, Louise Adongo](#)

 image

Reflections

Lessons in Weaving a Network

WeavEast has been a rich experiment in trying to build, or weave, an Atlantic network of changemakers. "Trying" is the operative word. WeavEast was built on big dreams and beautiful intentions, and these were not realized to the extent that WeavEast's founders might have hoped.

We have learned hard, deep lessons, which we have been actively harvesting over the last six months. [We invite you to review these with us in this reflection.](#)

PhD Chronicles

Research and Evaluation Director Cari Patterson has shared some of her journey in her studies through the Community Psychology PhD Chronicles, [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#).

Reports from Community Initiatives

[Between the Bridges](#) (Dartmouth North)

[Turning the Tide](#) (Digby and Area)

[Northside Rising](#). (Sydney Mines, North Sydney and Area)

Digital Equity & Inclusion

The pandemic has made clear that digital access, equity and inclusion are key and critical issues for communities in our province. On November 2, [Louise Adongo](#) and [Matt Spurway](#) (of Between the Bridges) took part in [Dismantling Digital Barriers](#), a two-day conference hosted by the Future of Good. Throughout the event, the conversations dug into the many barriers including availability of high speed internet in rural and northern areas of the country, cost, confidence, skills, accessibility for those with visual or other impairments; and the cascading effects of this as everything from grocery shopping to bill paying is increasingly done in the digital space. Matt presented on Dartmouth North-based initiative [GEO \(Getting Everyone Online\) Nova Scotia](#), a collaboration led by the Public Good Society.

Other Collaborations & Partnerships

Summer 2021

Capacity Building Learning Series with the [Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia](#)

September and ongoing

[Art of City Building 2021](#) with Develop NS, Canadian Urban Institute

[SEWF](#) - through our relationship with Common Good Solutions, we helped promote and host the Nova Scotia local community hub discussions during this big international event.

October and ongoing

[Tamarack RECONNECT](#) Executive Director Louise Adongo served as an emcee for this 2-day conversation about rebuilding social connection within communities.

[Atlantic Black Policy Conference](#) (*next conference in PEI*)

with the Black Cultural Society of PEI, the Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute, ANDSPAD, GameChangers902 and Tribe Network



Inspiring Communities PO Box 50007, Southdale PO Dartmouth NS B2Y 4S2 CA

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage preferences](#)