

---

CHANTIERS JEUNESSE

**GUIDE TO  
SUSTAINABLE  
PROCUREMENT**



[www.cj.qc.ca](http://www.cj.qc.ca) / 1 800 361-205 / [cj@cj.qc.ca](mailto:cj@cj.qc.ca)

---



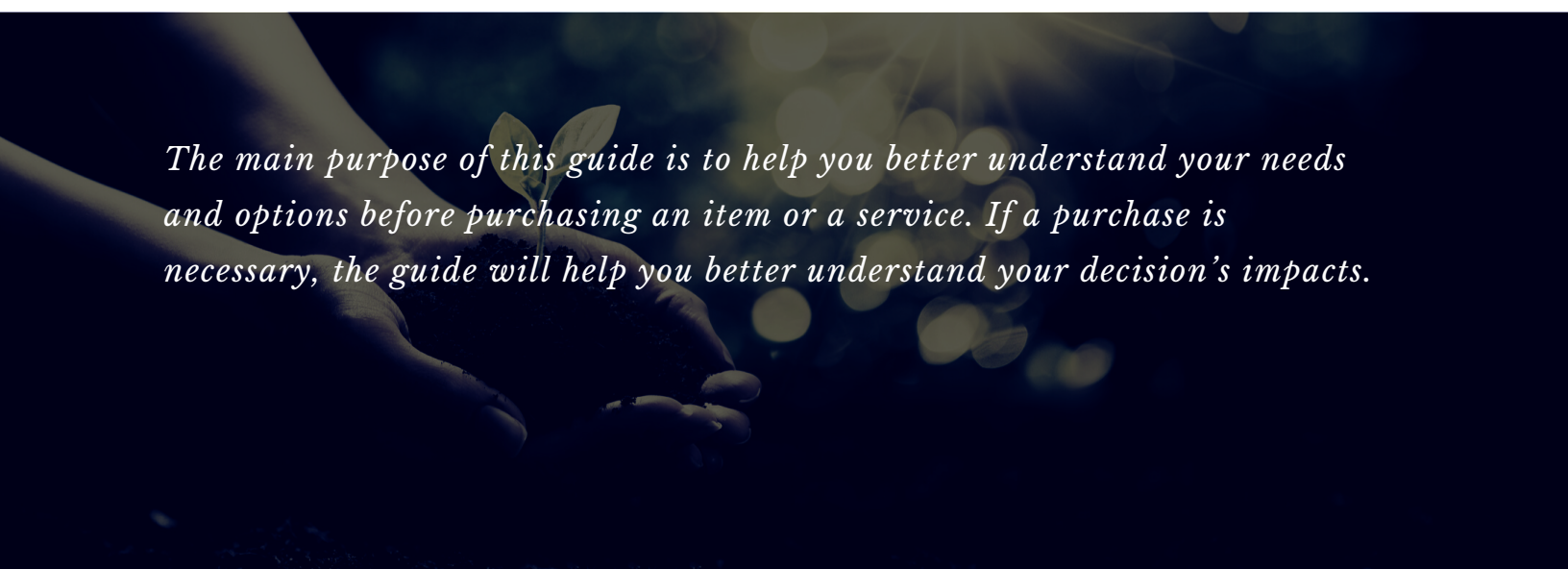
# WHY THIS GUIDE

*to sustainable procurement and development?*

*Prepared by Chantiers jeunesse, this guide to sustainable procurement focuses on questions we should ask ourselves when making purchases. We have to remember that our daily professional and personal decisions have social, economic and environmental impacts.*

## TABLE OF CONTENT

1. Glossary .....	3
2. Better Choices .....	4
3. Fulfilling a Need With an Item .....	9
4. Fulfilling a Need With a Service .....	13
5. Fulfilling a Need With Travelling .....	17
6. Behaviour After Purchasing .....	22



*The main purpose of this guide is to help you better understand your needs and options before purchasing an item or a service. If a purchase is necessary, the guide will help you better understand your decision's impacts.*

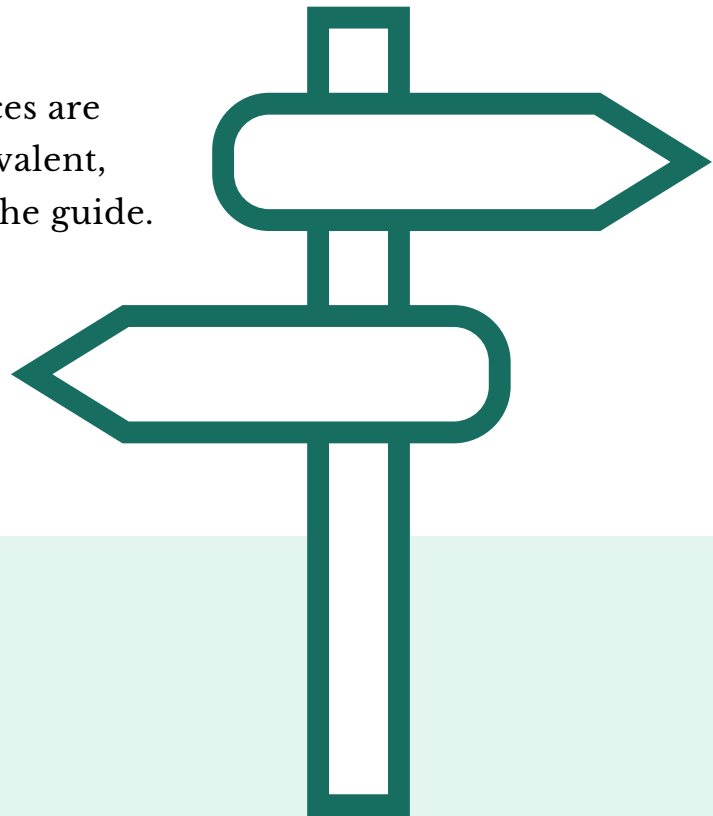
# NOTICE TO READERS

**These are only guidelines.**

It is sometimes difficult, or rather impossible, to follow all recommendations on sustainability. We simply have to make the best decision based on our values, our restrictions and the context.

**This is the first edition, which will be improved and reassessed.**

The majority of the references and resources are Québécois. If you know the Canadian equivalent, please share it with us, so we can add it to the guide.



# LINGUISTIC HELP

*Before reading this guide, take a few moments to familiarize yourself with these words.*

- **Need:** Something missing that is essential
- **Item:** A material good that we can possess
- **Service:** Work related to someone serving customers
- **Travelling:** Having to travel, for example, in a professional context
- **Sustainable development:** Approach to economic development with a long-term perspective that takes into account environmental and social concerns
- **Social, economic and environmental impacts:** Any positive or negative change wholly or partially resulting from an organization's activities, products or services

## *Examples of impact*

**Social:** Promote fairness, social integration, diversity and mutual help

**Economic:** Promote local entrepreneurship and cooperation

**Environmental:** Minimize greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, conserve biodiversity

# GREENER CONSUMPTION

*To make better choices, it is important to know what is available. Here is a list of logos that identify organic, fair-trade and sustainable products.*



I prioritize **organic products** because chemicals and pesticides affect not only consumers but also the whole production line. This type of pollution also impacts workers, the environment and the surrounding population.



## GOTS

The organic textile GOTS is a world benchmark when it comes to organic fibre testing. The process takes into account social and environmental components and is based on an independent certification of the whole supply chain.

Source: [Global Organic Textile Standard](#)



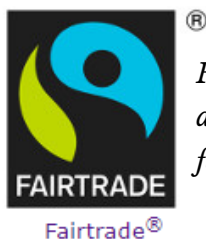
## Canada Organic

This logo is placed on products that are made of at least 95% of organic ingredients and that meet Canada Organic Regime's certification standards.

Source: [Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#)



Buying certified products is a key element of making sustainable purchases. Different certification systems recognize different types of responsible trade businesses and good practices.



*Fairtrade qualified products are an excellent choice for fair-trade products.*

### Fairtrade

This is an ethical logo that indicates if the product is made by a fair-trade business that empowers farmer organizations and small businesses.

Source: Fairtrade



### Fair for Life

Fair for Life promotes a fair-trade approach that allows producers and workers who are disadvantaged on a socio-economic level to access more social and economic benefits.

Source: Fair for Life



### FSC

This label identifies products made from fibres coming from FSC certified forests where illegal exploitation, forest degradation and deforestation in certified zones are forbidden.

Source: Forest Stewardship Council



### CSA

The CSA norm guarantees that the raw material comes from businesses that meet various social, economic and environmental criteria when sustainably harvesting a forest.

Source: CSA Forest Standards

# DECIDING BASED ON OUR VALUES

*Making a good choice is making a choice that is consistent with our values. So, it is important to ask ourselves what types of businesses we want to support.*

At Chantiers jeunesse, community and social justice are quite important values, hence why they are taken into account when we make choices as consumers. For instance, we will buy locally and partner up with Indigenous businesses.



I prioritize **local products** because it reduces GHG emitted from transportation. It also helps local businesses thrive and supports knowledge acquisition and local expertise.



## Le Panier Bleu

This registry of local businesses in Quebec was created during the COVID-19 crisis to help people buy locally while supporting small businesses in the province.

Source: [Le Panier Bleu](#) (in French only)



## Ma vie Made in Canada

It is a documentary series made by a Québécois journalist who wanted to take up the challenge of only buying items made in the country. On the website, you will be able to find a list of Canadian products available each season.

Source: [Ma vie Made in Canada](#) (in French only)



I prioritize purchasing items and services from **Indigenous businesses** because I want to support their expertise and economy.

### Supporting Indigenous businesses means:

- creating jobs and encouraging them to invest, train employees and give entrepreneurial mentoring in their communities. Indigenous businesses have unique sets of skills and occupy an important place in the economy, communities and social fabric.
- supporting, sharing and better understanding the cultural aspects and heritage of the First Nations, Métis and Inuits. This especially applies to caterers, artisans and tourism businesses.
- laying the foundation to renew relationships with Indigenous communities.



*To create interpersonal relationships with Indigenous communities, Chantiers jeunesse relies on open-mindedness, helping the youth reach their full potential and empowerment. This method goes beyond volunteer projects—it also applies to Indigenous businesses and entrepreneurs when we give them our support. We encourage you to do the same.*



# KNOWING OUR OPTIONS

Here are some resources that might be helpful when making a purchase.

## Indigenous Business Directory

*Published by the government of Canada*

## The Story of Stuff

*An object's journey from beginning to end*

## Guide to Sustainable Promotional Products

*Published by Equiterre*

## What does “cradle to cradle” mean?

*Sustainable production from this generation to the next*

## Directory of Eco-conscious Providers (Répertoire des fournisseurs écoresponsables)

*An initiative by Conseil québécois des événements écoresponsables (Québécois Council for Eco-conscious Events)*

## GOOD Habit

Be aware of the social economy enterprises in your area. Access the list [here](#).



## What is a social economy enterprise?

*Source: ECPAR*

For reference purposes, in Quebec, according to section 3 of the *Social Economy Act*, a social economy enterprise is an enterprise:

- whose purpose is to meet the needs of its members or the community;
- which is operated by a cooperative, a mutual society or an association endowed with legal personality (non-profit organization);
- who reinvests the majority of its profits to achieve its social goal.



# DO I HAVE TO BUY?

*What do I need? Can I satisfy this need  
WITHOUT buying a material good?*

## Thought Experiment

*Can a need for exposure be satisfied without buying promotional items? Can we get exposure by being more present in the public eye?*

If the need has to be fulfilled by a material good, you should think of different ways of satisfying it **without buying**.

We then ask ourselves the following questions:



*Can I  
rent?*



*Can I  
borrow?*



*Can I  
repair?*



*Do we have  
the resources  
internally?*



*Are there  
creative  
solutions?*

If upon reflection, you answered **NO** to all of these questions, go to page 11: Yes, I have to buy.

**Example:**  
*How can I use what I already have, but in smaller quantities?*



# EXAMPLE

**What do I need?**

*To offer work clothes to the volunteers*

**Can I satisfy this need WITHOUT buying a material good?**

*No, because they are not simply work clothes—they are also a work uniform. Our goal is to create a sense of belonging.*

If the need has to be fulfilled by a material good, you should think of different ways of satisfying it **without buying**.

**We then ask ourselves the following questions:**



*Can I rent?*

**No**



*Can I borrow?*

**No**



*Can I repair?*

**No**



*Do we have the resources internally?*

**No**



*Are there creative solutions?*

**The volunteers bring their own second-hand shirts, and we screen print Chantiers jeunesse's logo on them.**

If upon reflection, you answered **NO** to all of these questions, *go to page 11: Yes, I have to buy.*



# YES, I HAVE TO BUY

*Before buying, I compare different options based on the types of purchases and impacts.*

At Chantiers jeunesse, we prefer to have a social impact on the community with our purchases.



## Social IMPACT

- Buying locally
- Buying from a social integration business
- Buying from an Indigenous business
- Buying from a social economy enterprise



## Economic IMPACT

- Buying locally
- Buying in bulk
- Buying from a cooperative



## Environmental IMPACT

- Buying locally
- Buying fair-trade
- Buying second-hand
- Buying items with organic materials
- Buying recyclable items
- Buying reusable items



**Think about storage!** Can you easily store the item in the storage space that you have?

Indeed, buying an item requires a space to store it.

It is possible that the space you have is limited and that you might need to think about another storage space, which would result in additional monetary and environmental costs.





# EXAMPLE

*If I decide to buy organic cotton shirts made in Montréal, the shirts will be more expensive, but the positive impacts will be greater.*



**Buying locally** has social, economic and environmental impacts because it:

- supports local entrepreneurs;
- gives a boost to the local economy;
- promotes sustainability;
- minimizes transportation.

Using **products made of organic textiles** has a great environmental impact because textile production is one of the most polluting industries. Also, it has negative effects on the workers and the surrounding population.

*Yes, the shirts might be more expensive, but we also have to take into account the expenses related to the creation of the item and add them to our sustainability formula.*





# DO I HAVE TO BUY?

*Rethink your need. Which need does the service satisfy? Is this service the most sustainable way to meet this need or are there other solutions?*

**Examples of needs that might require a service:**

Food, events, promotion, communication

If the need has to be satisfied with a service that has a negative impact, it is important to be aware of it and to know about the:



*Positive impact  
vs.  
negative impact*



*Impacts on the  
community*



*Environmental  
consequences*



*Other options*

Do not hesitate to give suggestions to your providers to help them improve their sustainability practices.





# EXAMPLE

**Which need does the service satisfy?**

*To provide healthy food to our volunteers during their training session while respecting our budget and sustainability policies*

**The chosen service is:** *a vegetarian caterer.*

**Is this service the most sustainable way to meet this need or are there other solutions?**

*Yes, because by providing a meal, we allow everyone to participate in the training session.*

*Having to pay for a meal could limit some people's commitment.*

*Yes, because instead of having deliveries from different caterers, only one trip is needed to feed the whole group.*



*Positive impact  
vs.  
negative impact*



*Impacts on the  
community*



*Environmental  
consequences*



*Other options*

**Positive:**

- Support towards the local economy
- Healthy meal
- Support towards the local economy
- Healthy meal
- Food waste
- GHG emitted during delivery
- Use of pesticides?
- Bring our reusable containers to the caterer
- Pick up our food by bicycle
- Choose a social integration business
- Choose organic and local products

**Negative:**

- Recyclable containers?
- Local produce?
- Service fees

# YES, I HAVE TO BUY



Take your time to choose a service provider that respects the values of sustainable development and promotes the 4Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Recover).

*To know who are the eco-conscious providers in the province of Quebec, search the [directory](#) compiled by the Conseil québécois des événements écoresponsables (Québécois Council for Eco-conscious Events).*

*Here are some types of providers who have a positive impact on different levels of sustainable development.*



## Social IMPACT

- Local provider
- NPO
- Social economy enterprise
- Cooperative



## Economic IMPACT

- Fair-trade provider
- Provider that meet multiple needs
- Local provider



## Environmental IMPACT

- Local provider
- Active transportation

*If some products are associated with the service, pretend that you are purchasing them and ask yourself the same questions (e.g., food from a caterer).*



# EXAMPLE



**I am looking for a caterer who has positive impacts on every level. If this is impossible, I choose a caterer that has the same social priorities as me.**

*I research different caterers in my city who are social economy enterprises. I respect my budget and my group's food restrictions.*



**Social  
IMPACT**



**Economic  
IMPACT**



**Environmental  
IMPACT**

I decided to go with a social integration business to prioritize the social impact it would have on the community. They do not use organic produce but have a vegan menu.

I also asked if they could use my reusable containers, but they refused. However, they said they would think about it for the future.



# CHOOSING A MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

Travelling makes meetings, exploration and learning experiences possible, but it also has negative impacts on the environment. So, it is important to ask multiple questions before choosing the most eco-conscious means of transportation:

- How many people are travelling?
- What is the distance to cover?
- How many trips do I have to make?
- What is the distance to cover between trips?
- How long is my stay?

Several choices are available based on your answers. They are ordered according to their GHG emissions:

## Short distance

- Active transportation
- Public transit
- Carpool
- Car

## Long distance

- Active transportation
- Train
- Bus
- Plane
- Carpool
- Car

### Choosing the best means of transportation



Time?  
GHG?  
Price?  
Flexibility?  
Safety?  
Accessibility?



*It is not always possible to choose the greenest option, but knowing the pros and cons of our choice makes it easier to evaluate its benefits and consequences.*



# EXAMPLE

To choose a means of transportation for 15 volunteers who are travelling from Toronto to Montréal for a two-day training session

- How many people are travelling? **15 people**
- What is the distance to cover? **600 km**
- How many trips do they have to make? **They will not need to travel when in Montréal.**
- What is the distance to cover between trips? **0**
- How long is their stay? **3 days**

## Long distance

- Active transportation
- Train
- Bus
- Plane
- Carpool
- Car



### *Choosing the best means of transportation*



Time? **Plane**

GHG? **Active transportation or train**

Price? **Bus**

Flexibility? **Plane**

Safety? **Train**

Accessibility? **Train**

I decided to book train tickets for the 15 volunteers because even if it takes longer, the difference in GHG emissions is too big to justify plane tickets. The train schedules align with the volunteers' availabilities, so they are happy to take the greenest option.



# CARBON OFFSET

An easy way to take action against GHG emissions is to offset them. Offset programs do not cancel the negative impact of GHG but support greener approaches and solutions.

## Types of offsetting:

- **Tree planting**

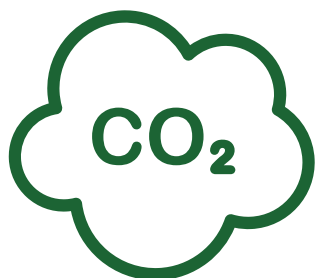
It is important to inform yourself about the follow-up after the planting. Where are the trees planted? For how many years are the trees taken care of? Are the dead trees replaced?

- **Research funds**

It is important to inform yourself about who leads the research, what type of research it is, what its objectives are, etc.

- **Funding for sustainable development projects**

It is important to inform yourself about the types of projects and their impacts.



## Program used by Chantiers jeunesse:

### ECOTIERRA offset program — UdeS

*Buying carbon credits includes:*

- a certified carbon offset credit;
- a tree planted on the campus of Université de Sherbrooke;
- a contribution of up to 20% of the credit amount to the development of renewable energy at Université de Sherbrooke;
- a contribution for internship funding and scholarships related to the study of climate change and carbon offset.





# AND I NEED HOUSING

Choose an accommodation provider that contributes to the sustainable development of the community (locals/individuals) instead of large chains or businesses that make finding rental housing hard for the locals.

Take into account these elements when choosing a place to stay:



## Example of an eco-conscious housing

*HI Hostel is an NPO that has sustainability policies. These hostels are found across Canada.*



## Directory to consult

*On the website of the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, you will find a directory of Indigenous housing businesses across Canada.*



## Social IMPACT

- Local owner
- NPO
- Social economy enterprise
- Cooperative



## Economic IMPACT

- Economic benefits for the local population



## Environmental IMPACT

- Location that has sustainability policies
- Location close to your event, which will minimize transportation



# EXAMPLE

I will be in Trois-Rivières for 3 days to visit several organizations and set up a kiosk at the university.

I looked up places where I could stay and based on my budget, these are my options:

- a family-run inn;
- a motel chain;
- an apartment available to rent online.

I take into account the impacts of my housing choice.

To evaluate the impact of an online rental, I can ask myself these questions:

- *How many properties are managed by a single person?*
- *How many rooms are available to rent in a building, meaning at the same address?*
- *Will I add pressure to an already high-risk area of the local rental sector by renting this room?*

I choose the **family-run inn** because this will have the most positive impacts on sustainability.



## Social IMPACT

- Support towards a local business
- Support towards a family-run business



## Economic IMPACT

- Economic benefits for the local population
- Support towards a small business



## Environmental IMPACT

- Location close to your event, which will minimize transportation



# I MADE A PURCHASE. NOW WHAT?

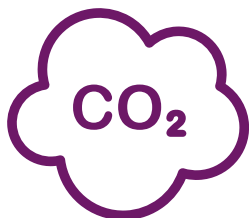
*Eco-conscious behaviour includes taking into account all consumption steps from start to finish.*



If I bought an item that I did not use completely or that can be reused, can I share it with other organizations?

## Resources:

- Donation centres
- Community centres
- Food banks
- Shelters



If GHG were emitted, I can offset them.

To help you research which carbon offset program to choose, read this guide published by the David Suzuki Foundation and its partners.

[Purchasing Carbon Offsets: A Guide for Canadian Consumers, Businesses and Organizations](#)

*It is important to do research and find a certified program that meets your objectives (tree planting vs. research funds, local vs. international).*



# I MADE A PURCHASE. NOW WHAT?

*Eco-conscious behaviour includes taking into account all consumption steps from start to finish.*



If I have to get rid of an item, which is the greenest way to do so?

**Resources in Quebec (*in French only*):**

- [RECYC-QUÉBEC](#)
- [Éco-quartiers \(eco-districts\)](#)



If I have suggestions about improving sustainability and maximizing its positive impacts, I can share them with my providers and partners.



If I produce trash that cannot be reused, recovered, recycled or composted, I evaluate these products' importance and the amount of trash produced.



---

# GUIDE TO SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

*Updated on April 6, 2020*



4545 Pierre-De Coubertin Avenue  
Montréal (Quebec) H1V 0B2



QR code for download

Share your comments and suggestions  
with us here:

*[www.cj.qc.ca](http://www.cj.qc.ca) / 1 800 361-2055 / [cj@cj.qc.ca](mailto:cj@cj.qc.ca)*

---