



Businesses with a Difference: Balancing the Social and the Economic

Laurie Mook, Jack Quarter, Sherida Ryan

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Market-based social economy firms such as social enterprises, social purpose businesses, co-operatives, credit unions, and community economic development corporations aim to meet distinct social needs while making money. Do these types of businesses have the potential for growth in the modern economy? Are they destined to function only in areas where conventional firms cannot achieve a sufficient rate of return? Or will the role of social economy organizations change as businesses begin placing more emphasis on corporate social responsibility?

Building on the popular 2010 collection *Researching the Social Economy*, *Businesses with a Difference* explores the challenges and opportunities faced by firms that seek a genuine balance between their social and economic objectives. Through international case studies, including comparative analyses, this innovative collection highlights the unique issues that must be addressed when associations are accountable not to investors and shareholders, but instead to ordinary people.

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