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Welcome to the 4th newsletter in our series introducing the work of Inspiring Communities! In this edition we're exploring our 3rd (and most recent) strategic pillar: [learning](#). Now, more than ever, we're aware of the need for changemakers to become systems leaders. Climate change, social inequities, political tensions, fiscal realities - and now, COVID-19 - are testing conventional systems and behaviours. There is an opportunity in front of us to do things differently - to reshape our economy, education and healthcare practices, how social services are delivered, and our relationship with the natural environment.

We believe that to take advantage of this opportunity we need to collectively invest in the development of systems leadership skills, including the ability to: work in nonlinear environments that are unpredictable; be adaptive; develop trusting relationships with diverse groups; see the interconnectedness of things; and, identify patterns. We need leaders from many places who can examine problems from multiple angles and mobilize others in the pursuit of change.

Inspiring Communities is still a relatively new organization. We're learning every day and have begun to share some of our reflections - you'll see a sample in the links below. We are also investing right now in a virtual learning platform where we'll be able to offer online gatherings, courses, discussions and resources (some of you will remember Wayside - we're making some adjustments and will be re-launching with a new look very soon!).

Over the next year and beyond, we'll be further developing the learning arm of our work that will aim to provide opportunities to build and share systems leadership in our region. We look forward to sharing with you as we evolve!



Annika Voltan, Executive Director

The Oxymoron of Abundance and COVID-19

We're seeing opportunities for abundance and collaboration show up despite (and in

Nourished by These Stories

Susan Szpakowski shares [midway reflections on The Narrative Project](#), a collaboration between How We Thrive and

response to) the COVID-19 pandemic here in Atlantic Canada. Annika Voltan explores these possibilities [in a new post](#) as we capture our learning from this time.

WeavEast. Find out what the team is learning about how we can "choose the stories we live by" in our region. [Find out more](#) about the Narrative Project.

Learning across Partnerships

Sometimes we end up with more questions at the end of a process than the beginning. The NS GovLab team reflects on their experiences in the article: [Applying Principles in a Social Innovation Lab](#).

They explore how discomfort and tensions can arise within and across principles, and how prototyping, experimenting and iterating guides their work.

We are working in partnership with NS GovLab on the [NS Network for Social Change](#).

In case you missed it!

What does it mean to craft and curate a social innovation ecosystem in a given region? We shared some of the [Unique Challenges for Social Innovation in Atlantic Canada](#) earlier this year with our colleagues at Social Innovation Canada.

People from all over the Atlantic region are coming together to connect, share stories and make them stronger. [Upcoming Sessions](#)

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