



## WORKER OWNERSHIP REPORT DROP!

### Description

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA-BC) issued a new comprehensive list of policy recommendations on worker ownership for municipal, provincial, and federal governments. These 15 recommendations centre on 4 core pillars:

1. Clearer legislative frameworks for employee-owned firms
2. Tax and public policy incentives
3. Public capital and access to financing
4. Supporting, incubating, and awareness-building institutions

**The report details clear action governments of all levels can take to create an enabling framework for community and worker ownership through policy, funding, and focus.**



In Canada, most might take for granted that the people have a say (via the democratic process) on how we are governed.

However, what do you think about





We then spend most of our  
hours embedded in  
**DEEPLY UNDEMOCRATIC**  
institutions:

**OUR WORKPLACES**

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**So...**

**ISN'T IT TIME WE  
OUR WORKPLACES**







# What's going on

Right now, the federal government is tabling legislation that will create **a new Employee Ownership Trust legal structure.**



This would enable the conversion of owner-owned firms to employee-owned businesses **without an out-of-pocket cost to workers.**

**But this is just a small step in the right direction.**

[Expanding democratic ownership in Canada: policy options](#) recognizes the founding of the Union Cooperative Initiative by a coalition of organizations and the Alliance for Cooperative Development as new regional efforts laying the groundwork for scaling community and worker ownership.

Our growing network of union cooperatives is working. Our cooperatives have provided sustaining and live wage work and community to over 130 precarious gig workers from across Metro Vancouver. **Here are two of our union cooperators in action:**

Gigi Mercado, a freelance artisan, was laid off from her work in the cleaning sector when the pandemic first hit. Gigi starting a fabric mask making initiative out of her closet in her East Vancouver apartment to pay for her medication costs.

Through the UCI, Gigi helped launch SCOOP, the Stitchers Cooperative, with a group of 25 other IATSE and freelance sewing professionals who had lost their work due to theatre closures.



**The Gigi mask making initiative provided over \$100,000 in living wage flexible work to members, a crucial lifeline and community during the height of the pandemic.**

Jack is another precarious worker who joined the UCI Network. Jack, a certified personal trainer, was jumping between precarious jobs at private gyms. Mandatory unpaid overtime, free consulting work, and abusive bosses are the industry norm.

Jack finally landed in the at-home fitness industry through a gig-work platform-style company. The dream of independent practice was quickly shattered by a company that charged Jack and other trainers a long list of fees on top of their "commission." Demands for free work and unpaid new client onboarding were required.

**The owner of the company openly bragged to investors that it was a legalized version of a pyramid scheme. Jack was barely making above minimum wage with additional time costs of travel between clients and maintaining a vehicle.**





Through the UCI, and the help of allied labour lawyers working pro bono, Jack was supported to leave the company and launch the [community fitness cooperative](#) in Burnaby

In the first 6 months of operations, **Jack saw and over \$8000 increase in his take home pay. Jack and other trainers are set to see their wages climb from an average \$35,000 to \$45,000 to \$70,000 to \$90,000 per year.**

Jack shares that his favourite part of working through the cooperative and UCI network is the community and support it provides.

*Jack and Gigi's stories are shared permission*



Ok but,

# Does it work

**YES!**

The evidence suggests  
owned firms have **pro**  
**survival rates** that are  
**better than conventi**

Other benefits include:

reduced inequality

greater job  
satisfaction

greater independence &  
financial health for workers

greater

higher comp







# WHY NOW?

As we find ourselves in an era of **high inequality, stagnant productivity, growing polarization, and out-of-control concentration of wealth** in the hands of a few, the question of *'why should working people be the owners and beneficiaries of the fruits of their labour?'* becomes timely and necessary.



*Your boss is retiring!  
Even if you'll never get to!*

## PLUS...

With an imminent **crisis of succession** and **business owners** who have the right to push for **change**—yet possible—**we can make democratic ownership a reality in Canada.**





So it is time to ask ourselves,

# **WHY SHOULD DEMOCRACY STOP THE WORKPLAC**

**EXPANDING**

**DEMOCRAT**

**EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP**

**IN CANADA:**

**POLICY OPT**

**READ THE RESEARCH PAPER**  
[policyalternatives.ca/employee-c](http://policyalternatives.ca/employee-c)

Read the full report at <https://policyalternatives.ca/employee-ownership>

### **Category**

1. Campaigns
2. Community
3. Cooperatives
4. Unions

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