

University of British Columbia

Social Ecological Economic Development Studies (SEEDS) Sustainability Program

Student Research Report

Fostering Economic Opportunities for Equity-Deserving Food Vendors and Suppliers

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Course Code: LFS 450

University of British Columbia

Date: 19 April 2023

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PRACTITIONER SUMMARY

Goals/Purposes/Methods: This project titled ‘Fostering Economic Opportunities for “Equity-Deserving” Food Vendors and Suppliers’ aimed to explore social and sustainable equity through food procurement at UBC to progress towards an active CFFS at UBC. This was done by conducting a literature review reviewing equity related terminology, current and past procurement policies, and current UBC specific food procurement documents/policies paired with primary research via interviews with various stakeholders involved with UBC Food Services and food sovereignty involved institutes within the Metro Vancouver region.

Key Takeaways: Primary data and analysis identified characteristics such as locally based, smaller scale, leadership, company demographics as characteristics to consider in defining ‘equity deserving’ food vendors. Main challenges and tradeoffs were also identified with the context of working in an economically and ethnically diverse community like UBC. General recommendations were also made in this section from the various stakeholders/interviewees.

Reviewing discussions of currently used “equity” related terminology in academic institutions across a North American context, revealed the discussion of possible responsibility and intention for seeking and pursuit of social equity, sustainability, and other related concepts. Examination of current and past social equity related procurement practices in a North American context specifically in academia, other public institutes, or NGOs was also conducted. These revealed For UBC specific procurement documents, there was trends of lack of transparency, vague wording, and clear lack of integration of equity or related terminology like food sovereignty.

Figure 1: Key Takeaways from Research

Primary Data	Secondary Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local and small scale vendors ○ Main trade-offs and challenges ○ General Recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equity related terminology ○ Current and past practices procurement food practices ○ UBC procurement related document review + analysis

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the current climate emergency continues, institutions across the globe have initiated a variety of plans and strategies to slow down this crisis. For example, the United Nations (UN) has put forth its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), with UBC following suit with its creation of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2030. UBC's plan aims to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, with the goal of reaching zero emissions for buildings and energy supply by 2030 (UBC Campus and Community Planning, 2021). Within CAP 2030, UBC's food systems have been identified as the second highest contributor of GHGs on campus, and subsequently, three draft principles pertaining to Climate Friendly Food Systems (CFFS) have been created (UBC, 2021). The principles are: (1) Reduce GHG emissions, (2) Promote Biodiverse, Resilient, and Regenerative Food Systems, and (3) Promote Just, Sovereign, and Resilient Communities (UBC, 2021). The broad purpose of this project is to serve as a response to the third principle, with the specific objective of identifying and recommending opportunities for equity-deserving food vendors in the procurement practices of UBC. 'Equity-deserving' groups can be defined as "those that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social justice and reparation" (UBC Equity and Inclusion Office, 2021).

The climate crisis is an intersectional issue, in that its effects are disproportionately felt by different individuals and/or groups based on their position within context-specific political and social structures rooted in power (Kaijser & Kronsell, 2013). For example, those who belong to historically and/or currently marginalized and underrepresented groups are at a higher risk of experiencing food insecurity, malnutrition, and livelihood loss as climate change physically disrupts the food supply system (Boyd et. al., 2021; Hivos, 2021). Consequently, creating a more inclusive and just procurement system by bolstering the presence of equity-deserving food vendors can be related to values such as food justice, food sovereignty, and climate justice at UBC and beyond.

In order to achieve these goals, this report will execute an in-depth investigation into the current food procurement process at UBC in relation to equity for historically and/or currently marginalized and underrepresented food business operators. This will be done in two parts: firstly, through conducting a literature review/audit that outlines the current social and policy-based foodscape implemented by UBC and similar institutions; secondly, by conducting interviews with stakeholders involved with food system and food justice in UBC and the metro Vancouver region. The latter will serve as a baseline for defining and promoting business with equity-deserving food vendors for UBC. In particular, the literature review/audit will look for barriers to equity within UBC's policies, as well as potential lever points where change can be enacted within the procurement process.

This project will utilize a Community-Based Action Research (CBAR) approach throughout its entirety. The literature review/audit will consist of searching through existing think tanks and online sources pertaining to UBC, as well as similar organizations that have or are in the process of integrating equity-deserving vendors into food procurement. Secondary resource data was compiled then organized into summarizing documents and broadly assigned into the following categories: Promoting Practices, Equity Deserving Definitions, and review of UBC procurement documents. Furthermore, this will be paired with data from semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders in food security/equity initiatives at UBC and other institutions in the broader metro Vancouver area involved with procurement or food justice. These include knowledge-holders in organizations such as UBC Student Housing and Hospitality, UBC Food Services, UBC Food Hub, and the United Way of BC. These interviews will aim to understand how different stakeholders view the current food procurement system and garner their perspectives on improving equity in the context of the emerging CFFS. Completed interviews were transcribed and assigned codes to undergo thematic analyses. This allowed the researchers to develop a baseline of where UBC Food Services stands regarding the research objective, as well as inform promising practices that can guide the project.

The primary and secondary findings produced from this baseline will inform towards a comprehensive concept of an 'equity-deserving' food vendor in the context of UBC food procurement. It is a goal that identified characteristics and overall recommendations will advise UBC Food Services in creating a metric for measuring successes in incorporating CFFS and implementing CAP 2030.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Full Term
AMS	Alma Mater Society
BC	British Columbia
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CBAR	Community Based Action Research
GHG	Green House Gas
GFS	Gordon Food Services
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
KPU	Kwantlen Polytechnic University
LFS	Land and Food Systems
RFP	Request for Proposal
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEEDS	Sustainable Ecological Economic Development Studies
SFU	Simon Fraser University
UBC	University of British Columbia
UN	United Nations

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH TOPIC

Climate change is a global crisis and food systems are a major contributor to the issue. In fact, food systems create around 21-50% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that directly lead to the earth's warming temperature (UBC, 2021). The impacts that are associated with this are adverse and detrimental to humans and ecosystems everywhere, though it is critical to note that they are unevenly distributed; those who are the most affected by climate change belong to traditionally and/or currently marginalized and/or underrepresented groups (IPCC, 2022). While the complex and intersectional nature of the global climate crisis makes research and solutions in this area difficult and entangled, this project identifies procurement as a linkage between the climate crisis, food systems, and inequity. As such, this project recognizes the opportunity to alleviate climate change pressures by leveraging the purchasing power of the University of British Columbia (UBC) to promote economic opportunities for equity-deserving food business operators. This will be done with the aim of informing the development of the Climate-Friendly Food Systems (CFFS) Procurement Strategy for UBC Food Services. As a self-operated institution, UBC is well-positioned to implement the recommendations that arise from this research. In addition to this, with a 60,000+ student population, the scale of UBC allows it to operate as an exemplary for other institutions of its size to adopt similar practices (UBC, 2021).

1.2 RESEARCH RELEVANCE

The physical changes associated with anthropogenic climate change include factors such as increased temperatures across nearly all land and aquatic areas; extreme weather events; decreasing snow, glacier, and ice cover; and loss of species (UN, n.d.). These changes are inherently related to socioeconomic development, especially given that much of the world depends on natural resources from countries in the Global South (Kaijser & Kronsell, 2013). Within this context, traditionally and/or currently marginalized and/or underrepresented groups are more vulnerable to these changes in that they are affected by historic and ongoing patterns of inequity such as (neo)colonialism (IPCC, 2022). Nevertheless, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projects these changes to worsen for at least multiple decades into the future, as the planet is projected to overshoot a tipping point of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and related global emission pathways (IPCC, 2022).

The urgency of this situation brought forth the conception of the Global Climate Strike, an international movement started by youth activist Greta Thunberg to demand climate action (Fridays for Future, n.d.). On September 27th, 2019, UBC saw the participation of over 5,000 UBC community members in the strike, leading to the endorsement of a Declaration on Climate Emergency on December 5, 2019 (UBC, 2021). Following the declaration, a comprehensive plan—the UBC Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2030—was created to chart the university’s path to net zero emissions for its buildings and energy supply, as well as significantly reducing GHG emissions in specific areas. A target of this plan is to reduce campus food system GHG emissions by 50%, as the UBC food system was identified as the second highest emitter of extended impact emissions after commuting (UBC, 2021). As such, a definition of Climate Friendly Food Systems (CFFS) has been produced by the CFFS Action Team, under which there are three goals attributed to a CFFS: (1) Reduce GHGs emissions, (2) Promote a biodiverse, resilient, and regenerative food system, and (3) Support just, sovereign, and resilient communities (UBC, 2021).

This project seeks to inform the third principle. In doing so, it inherently adopts an intersectional, whole systems perspective to the climate crisis, and situates itself within the context of values such as food sovereignty, food justice, and climate justice. From this understanding, this project acknowledges the differences in relatability to the climate crisis, in that the climate crisis affects different individuals and groups in different ways. Taking into consideration these differences is critical to solving the climate crisis, as the issue— and its consequent solutions— do not and cannot occur in isolation. Thus, this project operates within the understanding that solutions to the issue must prioritize the consideration of social dimensions such as (in)equity and collaboration. The avenue through which this project chooses to represent this is by providing reparations to traditionally and/or currently marginalized and/or underrepresented groups, and consequently operationalizing equitable communities for a more climate-friendly future.

The notion of CFFS within this interdisciplinary and holistic understanding of the global environmental crisis can also be aligned with other UBC sustainability policies and practices. For example, UBC Food Services is centred on its Vision Mission and Values, which states UBC’s commitment to food sovereignty (UBC, 2022). In addition to this, suppliers of goods, services, or equipment to UBC are expected to follow UBC’s Supplier Code of Conduct, which sets ethical performance expectations for suppliers. Moreover, UBC has implemented its Indigenous Strategic Plan, which demonstrates the university’s responsibility to serve equity-deserving groups.

However, it can be noted that there are shortfalls in the policy context at UBC regarding food systems equity. These will be covered later in this report.

External to campus, this project is also in line with larger overarching policies on a municipal and international level. One of these are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) put forward by the United Nations (UN), which is a “blueprint for peace and prosperity” for all countries (UN, n.d.). More specifically, Goal 10 “Reduced Inequalities,” Goal 11 “Sustainable Cities and Communities,” Goal 13 “Climate Action,” and Goal 16 “Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions” are most closely situated with this project. Similarly, the aims of this project support Vancouver’s 2020 Greenest City Action Plan (GCAP), which was created with the purpose of making Vancouver the world’s greenest city (City of Vancouver, n.d.).

Lastly, the relevance of this research is largely bolstered by the considerable scale of UBC and its purchasing budget; in 2022, UBC spent approximately \$15 million alone on food and beverages across its two campuses (K. Poon, personal communications, March 27, 2023). In contrast, food and beverage processors play a significant role in BC’s economy and are the second largest manufacturing sector in the province (Government of British Columbia, 2019). The significant buying power of UBC is reflective of its potential as a research site that can create tangible impacts in the spheres of equity, food, and sustainability — beyond just the campus foodscape itself. Therefore, this project seeks to ignite this change by beginning to investigate these linkages within a campus-based context.

1.3 PROJECT CONTEXT

This research project was commissioned by the Social Ecological Economic Development Studies (SEEDS) Sustainability Program through Land and Food Systems (LFS) 450: Leadership in Campus Food System Sustainability. It operates as a part of a broader response to the Global Climate Strike and as a proponent of the subsequent Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2030 (UBC, 2021). As mentioned above, CAP 2030 targets food systems as a major source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on campus. Thus, to inform this work, a Climate Friendly-Food Systems (CFFS) Action Team has been assembled, and has created a definition of CFFS based on UBC community input: “UBC aims to operate within a climate-friendly, just and accessible food system, which means being committed to operating within planetary boundaries by reducing our GHG food system footprint and enhancing food system resiliency from production to end disposal and recovery, while producing positive outcomes for

people, animals and planet” (G. Stanley, personal communications, Feb. 17, 2023). The three aforementioned goals associated with CFFS are intended to operationalize this definition.

In addition to this, one of the short-term actions associated with the application of a CFFS at UBC is the creation of mandatory CFFS Procurement Guidelines applicable to all food providers. The timeline for this process is to have a completed strategy ready for implementation by 2024 (UBC, 2021). Presently, there is a draft CFFS Procurement Strategy being developed, based on previous student research and existing promising practices. While this strategy does include an action to increase purchases of food products from equity-deserving businesses and suppliers, it falls short in the consideration of metrics or definitions regarding what it means to be an equity-deserving business and/or supplier and procure from them. There is also no mention of the practicality or logistics involved with procuring from equity-deserving businesses and/or suppliers, such as the identification and mitigation of potential trade-offs or barriers that could potentially exist within this process. By consulting with stakeholders involved in the realms of food systems, equity, and procurement, this project fulfills a need to understand the perspectives of the wider community to implement equitable food procurement practices in a more substantial manner.

1.4 PROJECT PURPOSE, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this project is to address principle (3) of UBC’s definition of Climate Friendly Food Systems (CFFS) in promoting just, sovereign, and resilient communities, and inform the development of the CFFS draft Procurement Strategy for UBC Food Services.

The goals of this research are to (1) Promote the operationalization of ‘just, sovereign, and resilient communities’ through analysis of food procurement policies and practices at UBC Vancouver; and (2) To identify opportunities with UBC Food Services to advance equity for historically and/or currently marginalized and underrepresented food business operators through their procurement.

Our research purpose and goals will be advanced through the following objectives:

To conduct a review of existing literature, policy, and informational material from UBC and other institutions and jurisdictions to identify current practices, gaps, and opportunities related to defining and promoting equity for equity-deserving food business operators through procurement.

1. To conduct interviews with key stakeholders in UBC's food system to gather primary data that will inform our understanding of the possible limitations and opportunities within the food procurement practices at UBC Food Services. This will allow us to identify potential lever points where equity-deserving food business operators can be included within the procurement process.
2. To gather available data from UBC Food Services to assess the current policy context in its inclusion of equity-deserving food vendors and highlight areas for improvement when supporting a more equitable food system through procurement.

2. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

2.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The guiding methodology of this project is Community Based Action Research (CBAR). This methodology employs a collaborative approach that situates research within a specific geographic community and involves community members at all stages of the research process (Gullion & Tilton, 2020). CBAR regards community members as equal partners, relying on them to inform solutions and project scope, in addition to acting as active participants throughout the project (Gullion & Tilton, 2020).

The researchers conducted semi-structured interviews to allow for detailed, open-ended conversations with participants to understand the perceptions and experiences of key stakeholders. This project also employed a post-positivist philosophical approach when identifying actionable changes that can be applied to UBC's food procurement strategies (SAGE Publications, 2018). This means that the researchers aimed to work as objective and detached researchers while recognizing that an objective reality is never achievable in practice (SAGE Publications, 2018).

The literature reviews implemented a data-based approach, while the students simultaneously acknowledged their own biases and limitations, and acknowledged that confronting this issue requires deeper, holistic learning. These matters had to be addressed multidimensionally, with numerous paradigms of inquiry, as attempting to resolve matters of equity requires cultural shift, policy change, and systemic reform. The data collected was analysed through thematic analysis, which involves identifying patterns and themes in the data to gain a deeper understanding of the topic. The creation of tables and graphs out of the patterns, themes, and key

findings helps disseminate knowledge and promote institutional transparency. By conducting stakeholder interviews, performing literature reviews, performing textual data audits, reviewing external promising practices, and analysing data, the philosophical basis of the research is both perspective-seeking and truth-seeking. The recommendations for future research will help facilitate the future operationalization of this initial plan, as these recommendations are intended to serve the community and continually involve community member input and assessment throughout its entirety.

These practices all work to operationalize CBAR, as its primary principles aim to highlight the relevance of community-defined issues and seek balance between research and action that benefits both the community and science (Holkup et al., 2004). Publishing the contextualized equity definition, criteria/strategy, and final report serves to disseminate knowledge gained from this project to all involved partners and community members—a key component of CBAR (Holkup et al., 2004). Using CBAR methodologies provided a more nuanced understanding of the barriers and opportunities related to advancing equity in the food system through procurement at UBC Food Services.

2.1 RESEARCH METHODS

The research methods employed for this project adopted a mixed-methods approach. The project timeline began with the literature review, followed by the data audit, interviews, and draft of the criteria guidelines, as well as the draft of the contextualized definition of ‘equity-deserving.’ This report provides an actionable strategy that the university can implement to work towards the goals outlined by the third principle in UBC’s Climate Friendly Food Systems, which aims to bolster just, sovereign, and resilient communities (UBC Campus and Community Planning, 2021).

2.2.1 SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION RESEARCH METHODS

The secondary data collection process for this project consisted of several steps focused on highlighting gaps in knowledge and current practices, as well as identifying areas of improvement that serve as points where UBC can implement actionable change. Firstly, to examine and assess the societal context and intersectionality of climate justice in this project, we reviewed the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals and the city of Vancouver’s Greenest City 2020 Action Plan (GCAP) (United Nations, 2016) (Vancouver, 2020). These documents were

chosen, as they were deemed some of the most relevant and comprehensively developed goals and action plans related to the project. The goals and objectives outlined in these documents were extracted and used to inform the contextual assessment of this project.

Following the broader societal contextual analysis, we examined and assessed UBC's current goals, strategies, and social and financial influence to inform the scope of this project in the context of UBC. The Climate Action Plan 2030 (CAP 2030) served as the primary baseline for analysis, in addition to the preliminary draft of the Climate Friendly Food Systems (CFFS) procurement strategy (Support Climate-Friendly Food Systems, 2023). UBC's Supplier Code of Conduct and Food Vision and Values were also assessed to inform the contextual assessment of this project (Our Vision and Values, 2022). These documents were selected as they are directly related to the purpose, goals, and objectives of this project, and make up the small proportion of documents and strategies publicly available that address equity and procurement in UBC's food system.

Next, internal definitions around equity from UBC's Equity and Inclusion Office were reviewed (UBC Equity & Inclusion Office, 2021). Statements explaining the connotative differences between 'equity-seeking' and 'equity-deserving' were assessed and used to support the recommendations of new drafted glossary definitions. The objective of the literature review was to assess Canadian sources that define and contextualize the term 'equity-deserving.' From this review, potential criteria for the term was established, allowing us to distinguish equity-deserving food vendors, and subsequently provide a strategy that UBC can implement. These criteria will be used to identify the limitations and strengths of certifications, diversity, ethics, accessibility barriers, and environmental factors. Glossaries, equity-focused documents, and transcribed addresses from the University of New Brunswick, University of Toronto, University of Calgary, Queen's University, the Canadian Kinesiology Alliance, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, and Red River College were assessed and summarized to help compile key attributes and provide a comprehensive assessment of other institutions' current inclusion of equity-based terminology. Other Canadian academic institutions were selected as the baseline of comparison, as they are the most similar organizations to UBC, and therefore can provide examples of the most transferrable and relevant practices. These findings were compiled to help situate UBC's current definition of 'equity-seeking' in the context of the food system and to help draft the proposed contextualized definition for UBC.

Internal documents provided by the UBC, including the Request for Proposal (RFP), Supplier Code of Conduct, and UBC's Food Vision and Values, were then reviewed to assess areas where the project team could influence and advise actionable change. The selection criteria for this approach included relevance to the project's objectives and document availability and accessibility. These three primary documents outline food procurement practices, intake and onboarding processes, and ethical and legal commitments relating to UBC's food procurement system. The audit of available data from UBC Food Services was conducted to assess and develop a baseline of current UBC contracts that include historically and/or currently underrepresented and/or marginalized producers and food business owners. UBC Food Services' Food Procurement Request for Proposal (RFP) served as the initial point of assessment. The document assessment began with multiple read-throughs, drafted summaries of key findings, summaries of the document's purpose and how they involve different parties, followed by key word searches of terms such as 'equity,' 'fair,' 'food sovereignty,' 'just,' etc. to note the presence and frequency of these terms -- or lack thereof. Critically examining the RFP, Food Vision and Values, and Supplier Code of Conduct allowed us to identify the points where this project can advise actionable change. This approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the current foodservice bureaucracy and informed the development of strategies to foster economic opportunities for equity-deserving food vendors and suppliers at UBC.

Finally, a literature review was conducted to identify promising practices related to advancing equity for equity-deserving food business operators from other academic institutions, NGOs, and non-academic public institutes to serve as a baseline of comparison against UBC's current policies and practices. The selection criteria for this approach included relevance to the project's objectives, credibility of the source, and institutional and contextual similarity. We specifically searched for sources or organizations based in North America, as these organizations are situated in the most similar societal and regional contexts, which could make the adoption of these practices more efficient and scalable to UBC due to their similarity. We also focused on identifying large-scale operations to ensure that the practices identified also have the capability to scale to UBC's size and needs. Key words used for the search included 'equity deserving food vendors,' 'university food services,' 'economic opportunities,' 'sustainable food systems,' 'equitable procurement,' and other variations of similar terminology. Across the institutions selected to inform our promising practices, we examined their infrastructure, certification requirements, diversity, purchasing data, social impact, and direct and broadline distribution systems. The sources

ranged from sustainable procurement strategies, action plans, goals, certifications, procurement practice audits, procurement policies, to purchasing programs. A total of seven sources were selected for comparative review, and for each source assessed, we summarized key takeaways and recommendations that could transfer and scale to UBC's food system.

Overall, the intention of the secondary data collection process was to gather information from credible sources to inform the project's objectives and strategies. The different types of secondary data collected included literature reviews, textual data audits, internal and external definition searches, and promising practices searches -- all of which were analyzed to inform actionable change and foster economic opportunities for equity deserving food vendors.

2.2.2 PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION RESEARCH METHODS

The primary methods involved hosting semi-structured stakeholder interviews. The objective of hosting these interviews was to gather input on the possible limitations, opportunities, resources, and strategies related to UBC Food Services procurement practices. The sample characteristics include key individuals that are on- and/or off-campus stakeholders who are affiliated with food procurement and policy, equity-seeking food businesses, represent and can liaise with historically marginalized communities, and/or demonstrate experience in implementing ethical and sustainable food procurement practices. Some of these targeted groups included UBC Food Services, the UBC Equity and Inclusion Office, the UBC Office of Indigenous Strategic Initiatives (OISI), UBC Central Procurement, UBC Wellbeing, UBC Student Housing and Hospitality, the Vancouver Farmers' Market, and the City of Vancouver's office of Supply Chain Management. The individuals belonging to these groups were initially identified with stratified non-random sampling methods and others were subsequently recruited through snowball sampling methods based on the recommendations of the primary clients and their proximity to UBC's food procurement channels. The sample size depended on client group availability and the number of clients referred through snowball sampling.

The sampling choices and recruitment strategies were deliberate, as the selected individuals were selected based on their ability to help identify knowledge gaps, points of actionable change, and provide diverse perspectives about UBC's food procurement practices. Client contact was initiated through email. We requested to interview 29

individuals, with the understanding that the response rate would be limiting, by sending out our scripted project description and interview advertisement (see Appendix A). We planned interviews with 11 individuals (38% response rate with interest to schedule; $n = 11$), and completed 9 interviews (31% completion rate; $n = 9$). One of the interviews did not occur due to scheduling conflicts, and one did not occur due to the lack of a follow-up response from the intended interviewee. 7/9 interviews were scheduled video calls, and 2/9 interviews were scheduled phone calls. We completed interviews with individuals from UBC Student Housing and Community Services, AMS Sustainability, the AMS Food Bank, UBC Food Services, UBC Central Finance/Procurement, the UBC Food Hub, Kwantlen Polytechnic University Institute for Sustainable Food Systems, United Way BC, and SFU Food Initiatives (See Appendix D).

All interviewees were provided with informed consent forms (see Appendix C) prior to the interviewer starting the recording and initiating the interview process. The interviews were hosted by one designated group member at a time, with all group members taking on the interviewer role at least once. Each interviewer followed the same drafted interview script to streamline the process, maintain consistency, and minimize bias with question choices (see Appendix B for full interview script). To minimize bias across audio transcript analyses, a scribe was present for the video calls to take notes of key takeaways and notes of any details that may not have translated to the audio transcript. These details include facial expressions, body language, tone, and demeanour. All 9 interview audio files were transcribed. Once the interviews were transcribed, filler words such as ‘um,’ ‘uh,’ and ‘like,’ were removed from the text file using the automated transcription tool. The transcriptions were then exported to Google Docs. The text was compared against the key takeaway notes taken by the scribe to draft a compiled summary of main points and to identify common themes, sentiments, recommendations, statements, and ideas throughout the interviews. Results were organized into tables and graphs to help depict trends, common themes, and key takeaways. These visuals help disseminate knowledge and increase transparency to further incorporate Community Based Action Research into the project. The condensed summaries also served to inform the recommendations for action and overall key takeaways of this project.

2.3 Methods of Administration

The methods of administration throughout the primary data collection process were deliberate and tailored to the structure and goals of this project. The data collection timeline began with the project description and

interview advertisement being emailed to 29 individual advertisement channels on March 15th and 16th of 2023. 11 interviews were scheduled between March 24th and March 31st of 2023, with 9 being completed within this time frame. The specific data collection timeline is exhibited in Appendix D, which displays the specific data collection timeline organized by interviewee organization, and the interview date, time, duration, progress, and format. Data were collected through Zoom (see Appendix E, Section A), as the 7 video call interviews were hosted through this platform and recorded using Zoom's internal recording software. The 2 phone call interviews were hosted on a personal cellular device and simultaneously recorded with a personal computer microphone. All 9 audio recordings were transcribed using Descript (see Appendix E, Section B), and subsequently transferred into Google Docs for summarization (see Appendix E, Section D). After the summarization and thematic analysis, the results were drafted and imported into Google Sheets to create tables and graphs (see Appendix E, Section E).

Data were collected through individual interviews, as we believed that open-ended discussions would provide the most detailed and informative results. We did not conduct focus groups, as scheduling conflicts were limiting. Focus groups would have also been more constrained by time, as we would not have been able to gather data on each individual's response to every question posed. We chose to host interviews rather than sending out surveys, as we believed that the interview format would be better suited to develop relations with the interviewees, to assess their demeanour and tone, and to gain a better understanding of their true opinions and recommendations. We also preferred the interview format to surveys, as we believed that individuals would provide more in-depth responses when verbally prompted due to the ease of conversational speaking compared to written prompts. The interviews were hosted online, as in-person interviews posed too many scheduling difficulties with both the interviewer and interviewee. The online format also permitted easier recording processes that immediately produced audio files for transcription. Overall, the methods of administration were specific and catered to the needs and desired deliverables of the project.

3. RESULTS

Introduction

The objective of this report is to present the findings of primary data collected on the search for equity for vendors at the University of British Columbia (UBC). The primary data was collected through individual

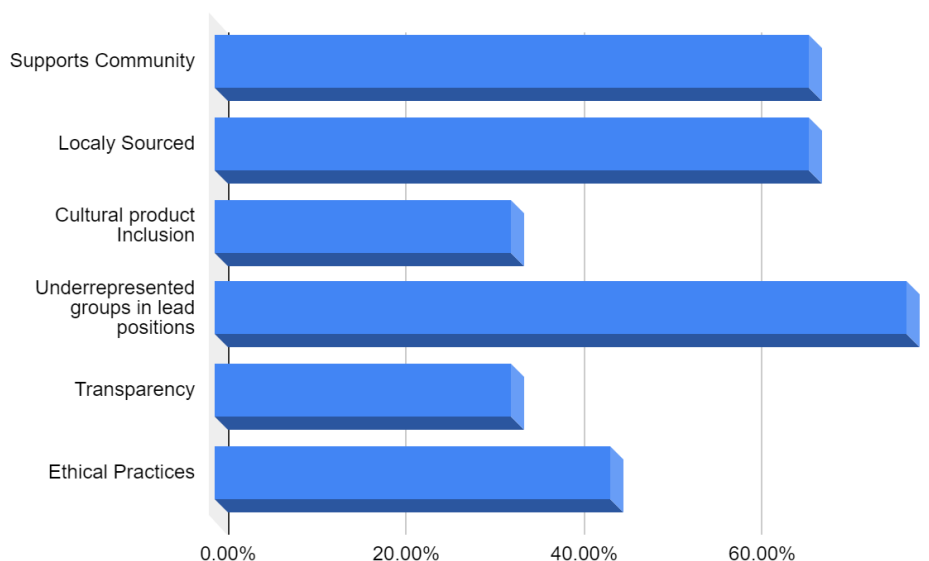
interviews with stakeholders in the UBC food procurement system, and the data presented here is based on the responses received and the overall analysis based on the secondary research conducted by the primary investigator team.

Primary Research Results

Diagram 1: Traits and Characteristics

The first diagram shows the percentage of stakeholders in the UBC food procurement system who believe certain traits and characteristics are essential for equity. The top three variables in this diagram consist of underrepresented groups in lead positions, supporting the community, and locally sourced products. The findings suggest that stakeholders believe that equity requires diverse representation in leadership positions, a focus on community, and making sure the products are from local sources.

Figure 2. Primary Data: Traits and Characteristics.



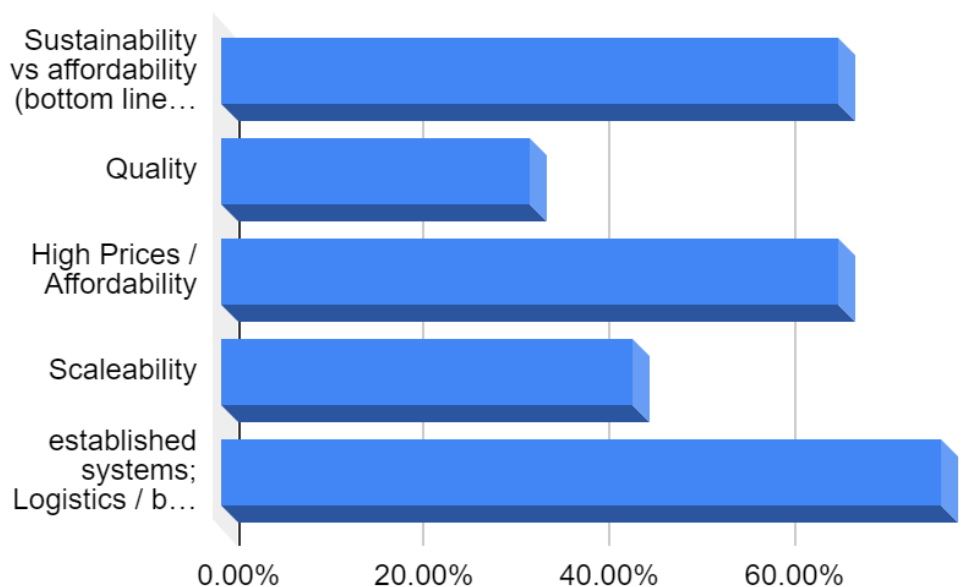
(Source: Appendix F, Section C. Primary Data Tables)

Diagram 2: Tradeoffs/Barriers/Limitations

The second diagram displays the tradeoffs, barriers, and limitations faced by vendors in achieving equity. As evident by the research, the top three variables in this diagram are as follows: established systems/logistics/bureaucracy, scalability, and sustainability vs affordability. This suggests that vendors face

challenges in navigating established systems, logistics, and bureaucracy. Additionally, they struggle with finding a balance between sustainability and affordability. This relates to their belief that locally sourcing products is a vital facet of equity.

Figure 3. Primary Data: Trade-offs/Barriers/Limitations by Percentage

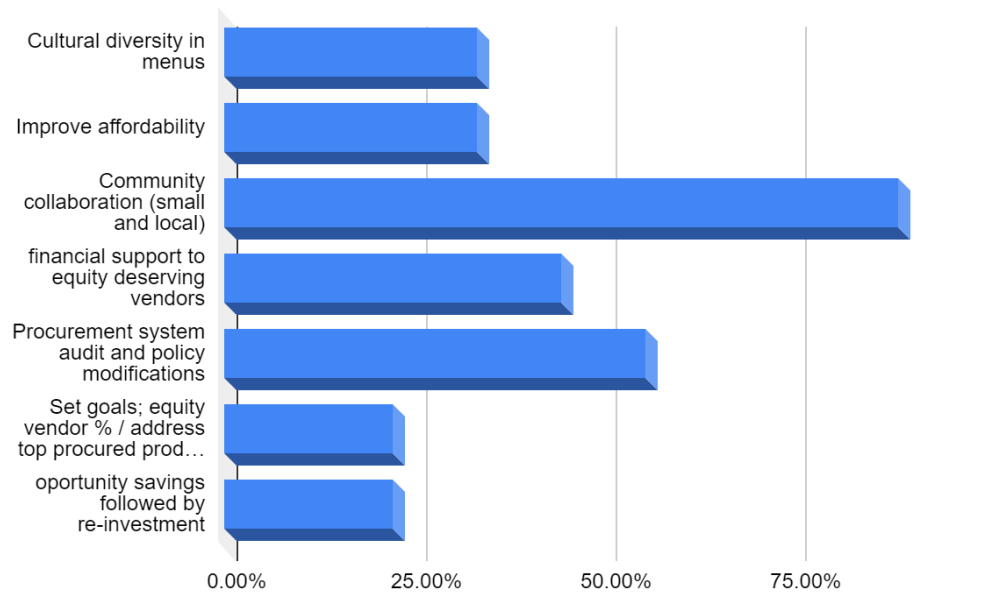


(Source: Appendix F, Section B. Primary Data Tables)

Diagram 3: Recommendations

The third diagram presents recommendations for achieving equity for vendors at UBC. The top three recommendations in this diagram are community collaboration (both small and local), cultural diversity in menus, and financial support to “equity deserving vendors.” The findings suggest that stakeholders believe that equity requires collaboration, diversity, and financial support.

Figure 3. Primary Data: Recommendations by Percentage



(Source: Appendix F, Section A. Primary Data Tables)

Key Takeaways:

Based on the primary data collected, the findings suggest that equity for current vendors at UBC requires diverse representation in leadership positions, a focus on community, locally sourced products, collaboration, cultural diversity in menus, and financial support. Additionally, vendors face challenges in navigating established systems, logistics, and bureaucracy while finding a balance between sustainability and affordability, as well as with the scalability of the commercial aspect.

As shown in Diagram 1, the percentage of Stakeholders who believe certain traits and characteristics are essential for equity is presented. The top three variables in this diagram are underrepresented groups in lead positions, supporting the community, and locally sourced products. Additionally, Diagram 2 displays the tradeoffs, barriers, and limitations faced by vendors in achieving equity. The top three variables in this diagram are logistics, commercial aspects, and the battle between sustainability and affordability. Finally, Diagram 3 presents the top recommendations for achieving equity for vendors at UBC, with the top three being community collaboration, diversity in menus, and financial support for vendors that have put forth more effort to be equitable and sustainable.

Secondary Research Results

The UBC food system has specific legal policies and processes that vendors must comply with to become a vendor. The primary goal of the UBC food procurement system is to provide sustainable and healthy food that promotes the wellbeing of the university and its community of students, staff, and faculty. The documents used in the procurement process include Request for Proposal (RFP), Food Service Mission and Values, and Supplier Code of Conduct. These documents were audited, and the following secondary results were found:

Document 1: Request for Proposal (RFP)

The RFP refers to the Supplier Code of Conduct that vendors are expected to comply with. The document also refers to sustainability principles. However, the links to these documents are broken. The word ‘equity’ is only mentioned once in the RFP and is associated with a compensation policy to UBC from vendors who do not comply with the agreement.

Document 2: Food Service Mission and Values

The Food Service Mission and Values document mentions "equity" only once. It highlights UBC's commitment to sustainability, food security, and the development of a climate-friendly food system. However, there is a gap in specificity regarding what "equivalent" means in their definition of sustainable seafood. Moreover, this document does not define what equity or food sovereignty is and what it looks like.

Document 3: Supplier Code of Conduct

The Supplier Code of Conduct aims to ensure healthy and safe workplaces for people who are making products for UBC. The code outlines human rights, environmental, and legal requirements that suppliers must comply with. Again, the code does not define equity or food sovereignty.

Key Takeaways:

These documents reveal gaps and the general points of consideration for UBC Food Service-related procurement. Strategies of how ‘equity deserving’ vendors were identified were not included. Throughout the documents, there was use of vague language such as “equivalent” to specific equity related certifications. There was also little to no mention or use of the word “equity” or related terms in these documents.

4. DISCUSSION

Secondary Data Analysis: Literature Review, Procurement Documents, and Equity Terminology

Secondary data collection findings reviewed the variety in terms of seeking equity in a procurement setting across just an academic or public institute realm as well as how much UBC values or considers equity in the food procurement process via key documents within the UBC Food Service procurement process.

In terms of procurement and social equity in the academic or large public institute realm, it was largely discussed the tradeoffs, limitations, and general considerations when feeding a large body of people or community and meeting the specific needs of that specific community is the main challenge. This aspect, from the UBC-specific perspective, is discussed more in the following primary research analysis section. Other Canadian universities within the last few decades have developed some form of social or environmentally sustainable procurement practices including outlined specifics of quantifiable demographics or applying clear timelines in terms of policy review and analysis which integrates some qualities that are mentioned in the primary data analysis. Other Canadian universities have also outlined specific equity related procurement terminology such as “diverse vendor” creating a baseline in what they may be seeking while promoting equity (York University, 2020). For example, York University in their “Social Procurement Policy” outlined “equity seeking community” and “diverse vendor” while also including assessment timelines to add foster “inclusive growth” (York University, 2020). Other major universities in the country also pursuing procurement-based equity implies the urgency and increasing recognition to act in rectifying injustices within the Canadian food system, the relative global food system, and the overall supply chain. The university’s lack of procurement-based terminology related to equity may also imply the lack to need to specify despite the unique aspects of the food.

Other public institutions or NGOs listed clear goals and values in how they envisioned equity within their processes through the goals to strengthen displaying these values which leads to the discussion of the lack of noticeable presence of the term ‘equity’ in multiple UBC procurement-based documents such as the RFP, the Supplier Code of Conduct, or UBC Food Services’ Vision and Values statement document. The noticeable lack of specified use of the term ‘equity’ throughout these documents compared to other universities’ social or environmentally sustainable procurement policies could be seen as less prioritization or responsibility if not physically included or alluded to; this lack of clarification can be seen as a gap or area of improvement as well. Furthermore, this lack of clear intentional inclusion on “equity” in standard procurement processes in UBC

documents also lessens the projected image and visibility of UBC's commitment to broader food sovereignty and contribute an environment for CFFS to exist and develop.

The framing of equity and related terminology also pose an interesting discussion of intention, commitment, and responsibility. "Equity seeking" visually is the closest outlined terminology to "equity deserving" in the UBC equity related glossary (UBC Equity and Inclusion Office, 2021). In the Canadian context, there is a grouping replace of "equity seeking" with "equity deserving" as the latter moves more of the responsibility towards those in the dominant position to rectify inequitable aspects of systems like the food system or any impacted systems within the settler colonial society that is Canada. Moving the responsibility towards those in the socially dominant position in a terminology aspect is also necessary as it implies "equity" as a right rather than something those who are disadvantaged have the responsibility to seek or pursue (Tetty, 2019). As mentioned prior, UBC within the province holds an extremely powerful position in procurement; with this, the university is then the one to have to seek opportunities, reduce barriers, and create the general environment that promotes and actively practices equity internally and with external partners.

Primary Research Analysis

From the primary data collection, 3 main ways of categorizing interviewee feedback and response were identified those being 'traits/characteristics' (of equity-deserving food vendors), 'tradeoffs/barriers/limitations,' and 'recommendations.' Each section illustrates and extends into general needs and possible directions the university can specifically delve into or consider integrating social equity in the food procurement process within UBC food services and the overall UBC food system. Response and data from primary data collection also imply the dominating authority and level of control the global food system has on even envisioning or pursuing the solutions for equity in a local or specified institution context.

For 'traits/characteristics,' referring to desirable traits or character pre-requisites of what could be considered 'equity deserving' food vendor, evidence of supporting community, minority representation via ownership or via notable leadership positions within the organization, and locally based were the most mentioned across interviews. Other traits mentioned in lesser prominence were transparency, including cultural products, and integration of ethical workplace practices. Locally based, transparency and integration of ethical workplace practice can be referred to the increasingly apparent injustices throughout the chain of production and supply that create and

deliver food as mentioned in an interview. The lack of transparency is also discussed in some secondary literature that mentions the ethical qualms with food system concepts like rebates which are also used within UBC food service procurement via its procurement-based relationship with large suppliers like Gordon Food Services (GFS) (K. Poon, personal communication, March 27, 2023). This also contributes to the also very prominent and consistent emphasis on investing in a more local-based form of procurement.

‘Tradeoffs/barriers/limitations’ in primary data mainly highlighted internal aspects of procurement that are vital in considering when exploring a more socially equitable procurement or adjusting or developing a revised process of procurement that evidently prioritizes equity throughout. The tradeoffs, barriers, and limitations that were mentioned directly acknowledged the needs of UBC food services and the main group they feed – a socioeconomically and ethnically diverse student population. Within this category, prominent themes were ‘sustainability vs affordability,’ ‘high prices vs affordability,’ and ‘established system logistics/bureaucracy, and demand.’ These themes again relate back to issues reiterated by the global food system and the stress of a localized food system highlighted throughout the project in the literature review and primary data collection. Through the most prominent themes within this primary data response category, convenience, and economic benefits of large multinational or non-local suppliers created by the global food system are highlighted; it also highlights the increasingly popular viewpoint that local is more environmentally sustainable compared to a non-local or non-regionalized food (Brunori, 2007). The previously mentioned concept of a hybrid supplier model could also be further exercised and modified in the UBC context, as UBC Food Services currently already utilize a hybrid model supplier system as mentioned by an interview with a major UBC food service stakeholder (K. Poon, personal communication, March 27, 2023). Specific needs and demands of the socioeconomically and ethnically diverse student population were also mentioned in a few interviews with the discussion and highlighted as one of the main points of consideration and contention in the highlighted themes of the category possibly implying the necessity of student involvement or feedback. This is also further supported by the increasing calls for action for food affordability on campus and the increased and almost overwhelming use of food security-based resources on campus but also highlights how some wants of the student body may not align with the capabilities and goals of the campus.

The final category encompassed recommendations for developing and integrating a more equity-driven food procurement process within UBC. The most notable theme is “community collaboration (small and local)”

which again reaffirms the need for support and further development of local networks and increasing support for a more localized food system. This also correlates to both main goals of the project of promoting just, sovereign, and resilient communities and creating opportunities for said communities. This, in collaboration with working with organizations or vendors that are headed by or have people from underrepresented communities in positions of power within the overall company directly informs on how to better serve or mitigate barriers within the procurement process, especially with a large client like UBC food service. For general procurement on campus, compiling feedback from smaller and local suppliers has begun as noted in an interview and spreading this practice into food related procurement may also be beneficial (S. Del Rosario, personal communication, March 30, 2023).

Unexpected Findings

During the project data research, a few unexpected findings arose. In the primary data collection, the importance of investing in the local economy via sourcing from local suppliers or vendors was stressed by multiple interviewees from different sectors. This unexpected prominence of this topic also expanded into some discussion in the interviews around the benefits and issues related to moving towards or aiming towards only sourcing from local vendors, suppliers, or food growers; it also implied and revealed the lack of support or general maintenance/development of a connecting network for local medium or small suppliers, growers, or vendors.

Data Limitations

With some logistical issues, this project was met with numerous data limitations. First, in the primary research, the sample size was limited to $n = 9$ with 'n' being the number of stakeholders interviewed. Although a more extensive and varied list of potential interviewees was accrued, with the limited response, most interviewees were directly or indirectly employed via the UBC food system which may have intentionally or unintentionally influenced some feedback received in interviews. Furthermore, as much of the limited sample size was dominated by direct UBC food service stakeholders, some representation from broader equity concentrates stakeholders or suppliers/vendors themselves was lacking.

The project was also faced with overall time limitations. Due to the course timeline and communication logistics, conducting primary and secondary data research was condensed into a 1 to 1.5-week time period which may have impacted the response of some potential interviewees, limited depth and extension of interviews, and restricted review of existing literature on social equity-based procurement. Other forms of primary research data collection were also not possible due to time constraints.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

SHORT TERM:

Recommendation #1: Implement a Clear Definition of ‘Equity-Deserving Vendor’ to Assess Current Contracts.

The preliminary research associated with this project is supported by the secondary research findings, in that there is no clear definition or metric identified in UBC policy or practices for the term ‘equity-deserving’ in the context of food systems. This poses an obstacle to the development of a CFFS Procurement Strategy, notably in relation to the establishment of a baseline. For this reason, we suggest that the CFFS Action Team utilize the findings from this project to create meaningful and intentional criteria for the inclusion of equity-deserving food businesses and/or suppliers.

From there, it will be critical to assess current contracts with UBC Food Services to gauge the presence of equity-deserving businesses and/or suppliers, as well as identify areas for improvement. It will be key to look for opportunities for contract unbundling and revised contract weighting (e.g. placing more emphasis on the social impacts of a business/supplier) to work towards solutions to the barriers and limitations to equitable procurement found in the primary research. Similarly, it will be beneficial to reassess current budgets to consider whether it is possible to subsidize procurement from equity-deserving businesses and suppliers, given the universality of viewing cost as a barrier to equitable procurement. It can be noted that a third-party organization such as the Center for Good Food Purchasing can be considered to kickstart this process in assessing the equitability of UBC’s procurement system at present.

Recommendation #2: Establishing Different Pathways for Equity-Deserving Businesses and/or Suppliers.

In the primary research, a common thread that appeared amongst many interviewees was the understanding that the current procurement process is complex and bureaucratic. This can serve as a barrier for equity-deserving businesses and/or suppliers who are often smaller businesses that are limited in their capacity to engage in these types of systems. As such, we recommend that UBC Finance, Student Housing and Hospitality, and others who are

involved in procurement consider alternative pathways to approaching and doing business with equity-deserving businesses and/or suppliers. Examples of pathways include creating a shorter and simplified RFP process for equity-deserving groups and conducting ‘Meet the Buyer’ events. In the latter, businesses and/or suppliers and UBC staff can meet and exchange ideas to better understand the needs of one another to collaborate in a more personal and informed manner. Through stakeholder meetings like these, UBC can begin to work on a more community-based level— as per many of our interviewee's recommendations.

Recommendation #3: Creating an Inventory of ‘Equity-Deserving’ Food Businesses and/or Suppliers.

The creation of an inventory of equity-deserving food businesses and/or suppliers who can fulfill contracts would allow for a more streamlined process for including these groups in procurement. While this would be contingent on the fulfillment of Recommendation #1, this could be especially useful for those operating in procurement when renewing contracts. Also, this would place more priority on procuring from equity-deserving groups when considering contracts, and lower barriers to supplying.

LONG TERM:

Recommendation #4: Continual Revisions to Assess Opportunities.

In the research yielded from this project, many interviewees emphasized that it would be important to continually monitor and revise UBC procurement-related policy and current contracts to better include equity-deserving businesses and/or suppliers. This process can contribute to greater transparency and accountability concerning UBC’s goals. In conjunction with this, recurring audits of the equitability of UBC’s foodscape can ensure that opportunities for equity-deserving businesses/suppliers are being optimized at every level.

Recommendation #5: Creating Space for Equity-Deserving Groups in Leadership.

In recognizing that creating a more equitable food system is a comprehensive and bottom-up process, we recommend that over time, UBC creates space for equity-deserving groups in its leadership. While consulting with and including equity-deserving groups in procurement is important, it is crucial to center equitable practices within institutional leadership to truly implement sustainable change.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While this project was able to highlight many key areas pertaining to equitable food procurement at UBC, the novelty of this project also lent itself to the identification of many avenues for future research. For one, we felt that moving forward, it will be crucial to interview more equity-deserving food vendors within BC. This would allow UBC and its proponents to further understand the perspectives of equity-deserving groups, as well as what is needed to best support meaningful and intentional procurement practices for equity-deserving groups. Similarly, we suggest that UBC collaborate more with groups on campus directly operating in the spheres of climate justice, food sovereignty, food justice, equity, and inclusion to better link the perspectives of those utilizing intersectional lenses to practical food and procurement knowledge. Lastly, we suggest doing a thorough investigation into promising practices around equitable food procurement at other institutions of a similar size and scale to promote their applicability to UBC.

6. CONCLUSION

This project aimed to foster economic opportunities for ‘equity deserving’ food vendors and operators under the overall UBC CAP short-term goal to develop aspects of CFFS including procurement strategies. As outlined in CAP 2030, food systems were the second highest emitter of GHG on campus and rectifying climate-based issues requires interdisciplinary solutions including those that employ and pursue equity in the food system. This project conducted combination of primary and secondary research comprising on interviews with stakeholders within and outside of the UBC food system, reviewed current literature on social and equity-based procurement and equity related terminology, and reviewed current UBC Food Services documents directly related or impactful on the process of procurement. From analysis of primary data, the main prominent therefore most relevant points of consideration for the pursuit of procurement-based equity were through vendor characteristics/traits, trade-offs/barriers/limitations, and general recommendations. From the analysis of secondary and existing literature, the intention and possible implications of terminology were explored as well as the current or past practices with equity-related procurement in a Western or settler colonial context. In addition, there was a lack of notable presence of ‘equity’ within UBC-related food procurement leading to some of the recommendation. The main recommendations from this project are to clearly define and communicate ‘equity deserving’ food vendors and operators and possible routes of action provided by UBC to increase accessibility and therefore equity in

procurement at UBC. Additional recommendations, heavily feature the need for more active and engaged communication from UBC towards students and ‘equity deserving’ food vendors and commitment to create spaces for these vendors and reflection/assessment from the university. This project also recommends that UBC continually creates space for equity-deserving groups across leadership positions, continually assesses opportunities to support equity-deserving food vendors and suppliers, and continually assesses the amount of equity-deserving food vendors and suppliers hired with the intention of gradually increasing this amount. Moving forward, UBC should advance their pursuit of social equity and climate solutions via the food systems and to promote just, sovereign, and resilient communities.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Project and Interview Advertisement

Hello [____],

We hope this email finds you well. We are a team of undergraduate students in the faculty of Land and Food Systems at the University of British Columbia. We are partnered with [SEEDS Sustainability](#) and UBC Student Housing and Community Services to create a **food procurement strategy that is more inclusive of equity-deserving food business operators**. This will be considered in the implementation of the novel [Climate Friendly Food Systems](#) (CFFS) Procurement Guidelines at UBC, as a part of the campus Climate Action Plan (CAP) for 2030.

UBC's Food Services' budget is currently in the millions; in 2019, the budget exceeded [\\$10 million](#). As such, we believe that this project has the potential to make a significant impact on the food community in and outside of campus by setting precedence for the integration of more equitable food procurement practices.

The main objectives of this project are to:

- Identify procurement practices that promote equity for food business operators
- Conduct a textual data audit to identify promising procurement practices related to advancing equity for equity-deserving food business operators
- Conduct semi-structured stakeholder interviews to gather input on possible limitations, opportunities, resources, and strategies related to UBC Food Services procurement practices.
- Draft contextualized equity-deserving criteria and provide a strategy that the university can implement to advise points of actionable change

As a part of our research, **we are hoping to interview key stakeholders operating within spheres of equity, procurement, and food justice to inform our research objectives**. We are hoping to meet for 45 minutes to an hour, and would greatly appreciate the opportunity to learn more about your insights, experiences, and opinions regarding the goals of this project. We intend to host our interviews (or focus groups) throughout the weeks of **March 20-31st via Zoom**. If there is a more suitable date, please inform us of your availability, and we would be more than happy to accommodate your schedule.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions, comments, or concerns. Thank you so much for your time and consideration!

All the best,

Katya Benard, Kei Poon, Sakura Del Rosario, Jose Angel Perez

Appendix B

Interview Script

Introduction:

Hello, and thank you for participating in this interview. Our team is collaborating with UBC Food Services and SEEDS to investigate the food system at UBC, aiming to identify ways to improve equity for vendors, producers, and customers. We are interested in contextualizing and developing our understanding of the characteristics of equity deserving food vendors, and we believe that your insights will be valuable in developing a criteria framework for this purpose. [Introduce ourselves].

Please let us know if you do not feel comfortable answering any of the questions-- we want to make this process as accommodating as possible, so feel free to answer as little or as much as you would like. Along this same vein, if for any reason you would like to stop the interview, just let us know and we can do so.

If there is anything else we can do to accommodate your needs before, during, and after the interview, please let us know, and we will try our best to do so! It is important to us that our interviewees feel respected, seen, and heard throughout this process.

Questions:

1. **What would an equitable food procurement system/equity deserving food vendor look like to you?**
 - Are there specific characteristics or qualifiers that frame an equitable food vendor?
2. **How do you think we can make actionable change within UBC and the larger Vancouver metro region to improve equity for food vendors?**
 - What are the specific areas in procurement where equity can be improved for food vendors?
 - What changes need to be made in your eyes?
 - Have any changes been successfully implemented?
3. **Are there trade-offs we should consider in the pursuit of equity in the food system?**
 - How do you think UBC should balance their sourcing of food between international and local suppliers given its current goals?
4. **Are there specific actions that UBC should take in approaching local vendors and building a procurement-based relationship with them to ensure equity?**

Supplemental Questions (for UBC Specific Interviewees):

5. Are you familiar with the concept of a Climate Friendly Food System (CFFS)?
 - If so, what is your understanding of the Climate Friendly Food System (CFFS)?
 - What do you envision within the CFFS or think would be crucial to have an effective CFFS at a large institution like UBC?
 - What makes something a CFFS?
 - If needed, briefly outline CFFS [enter CFFS outline]
6. What does the UBC food procurement system look like? (within your current general understanding)

Conclusion:

Thank you for sharing your valuable insights with us today. Your input will help guide the direction of our project, and develop a criteria framework for equity deserving food vendors at UBC. We believe that creating a more sustainable and equitable food system is important for mitigating the impacts of climate change, promoting overall health and well-being, and serving as a model for other institutions and jurisdictions.

Appendix C

Informed Consent Form

CAMPUS FOOD SYSTEM SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT: INFORMED CONSENT

STUDY TEAM: *Who is conducting the study?*

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

Liska Richer, Instructor, Land and Food Systems 450 class, Faculty of Land and Food Systems
 Email: liska.richer@ubc.ca
 Tel: 604.822.3270

INVITATION AND STUDY PURPOSE

You are being invited to take part in this research study because you are affiliated with the UBC food system. We want to learn more about the sustainability of the campus of the food system. This study will help us advance our knowledge and learn more about ways to enhance the sustainability of the campus food system.

STUDY PROCEDURES: *How is the study done?*

This study is being carried out by students within their course on “Land, Food and Community III” (LFS 450) in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems. If you agree to participate, you are being asked to participate in either an interview or focus group (online, phone or in-person), or questionnaire (electronic or in-person). It is estimated that your time commitment will range from 5 minutes to 1 hour, depending on what you are participating in. You will be given either an electronic form to answer or be asked verbally a set of questions in-person. For online interviews or focus groups, you will be sent a link to a Zoom meeting. Please log in using a nickname or a substitute name or research code which will be given ahead of time by the research team. You can participate with your camera on or off, and can mute your microphone (if cases where it is not needed).

STUDY RESULTS

The results of this study will be reported in course based undergraduate reports and will be published in the SEEDS Sustainability Library and UBC cIRcle Digital repository.

SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR IN-PERSON RESEARCH DURING COVID-19

COVID-19 Vaccination and Proof of Vaccination:

Researchers in this study are required to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 in order to conduct in-person research. Vaccine requirements for in-person research are in place across the university to ensure researcher, research participants and general public safety.

COVID-19 Health Check:

On the day of an in-person research activity, the student researcher will conduct a COVID Health Check with you, by asking these health questions verbally. Your responses will not be recorded. If you answer in a matter that appears to demonstrate that you have symptoms of COVID, the research event will be postponed and rescheduled at a later date.

In addition, all researchers engaged in in-person research will be required to complete a [COVID-19 Health Check](#) on the day of any in-person research event. If they answer in a matter that appears to demonstrate symptoms of COVID the research event will be postponed and rescheduled at a later date.

Masks and Physical Distancing

The researcher(s) will be required to wear a mask and maintain physical distancing and will ask you and any other research participants to do the same.

Notice of COVID-Related Risks during Research:

The student researcher(s) have provided you with [Notice of COVID-Related Risks during Research](#). It is important that you read this prior to providing consent.

POTENTIAL RISKS OF THE STUDY

We do not think there is anything in this study that could harm you or be bad for you. Some of the questions we ask might upset you or seem sensitive or personal. Please let one of the study staff know if you have any concerns. You do not have to answer any question if you do not want to.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

You may be helped in this study by findings contributing to the advancement of a more ecological, economic and social sustainable food system. In the future, others may benefit from what we learn in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your answers will remain anonymous unless you provide written permission (below) to the UBC student conducting the interview or survey, to disclose your name, working position or any other information revealing your identity in any possible future use of the information you provide. If you are participating in a focus group, please note that only limited confidentiality can be offered and we encourage participants not to discuss the content of the focus group to people outside the group; however, we can't control what participants do with the information discussed. All documents will be identified only by code number and kept in a locked filing cabinet. Subjects will not be identified by name in any reports of the completed study.

PAYMENT

We will not pay you for the time you take to be in this study.

CONTACT FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY

If you have any questions or concerns about what we are asking of you, please contact the Principal Investigator.

Principal Investigator:

Liska Richer, Instructor, Land and Food Systems 450 class, Faculty of Land and Food Systems
E-mail: liska.richer@ubc.ca Tel: 604.822.3270



Liska Richer
Principal Investigator, January 2023

CONTACT FOR COMPLAINTS: *Who can you contact if you have complaints or concerns about the study?*

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1- 877-822-8598

PARTICIPANT CONSENT AND SIGNATURE PAGE

Taking part in this study is entirely up to you. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part, you may choose to pull out of the study at any time without giving a reason and without any negative impact on your employment, or class standing.

Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records. Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Participant Signature Date

Printed Name of the Participant signing above

Appendix D**Table 1**

Table 1.

	Interviewee Organization	Date	Time	Completion	Format
1.	UBC Student Housing and Community Services	3/24/2023	10:30-11:00 AM	Completed	Phone call
2.	AMS Sustainability	3/24/2023	10:30-11:45 AM	Completed	Zoom
3.	UBC Food Services	3/27/2023	10:00-11:00 AM	Completed	Zoom
4.	AMS Food Bank	3/27/2023	3:00-3:45 PM	Completed	Zoom
5.	UBC Central Finance/Procurement	3/28/2023	10:00-11:00 AM	Completed	Zoom
6.	UBC Food Hub	3/28/2023	1:00-2:00 PM	Completed	Zoom
7.	UBC Global Resource Systems Program Administration	3/29/2023	9:30-10:30 AM	Not completed	Not applicable
8.	KPU Institute for Sustainable Food Systems	3/30/2023	9:00-10:00 AM	Completed	Zoom
9.	United Way BC	3/30/2023	1:00-2:00 PM	Completed	Zoom
10.	Vancouver Food Forest	3/30/2023	Not applicable	Not completed	Not applicable
11.	SFU Food Initiatives	3/31/2023	2:00-3:00 PM	Completed	Phone call

Display of specific data collection timeline organized by interviewee organization, date, time, interview progress, and format.

Appendix E

Tools and Software

Section A.

Zoom:

Zoom is a video conferencing application and software that allows users to participate in virtual meetings, webinars, online events, etc. Zoom offers features such as screen sharing, virtual backgrounds, recording, and chatting. Zoom is available for free with limited features and is a popular tool for remote communication and collaboration.

Zoom was used in this project to host and record stakeholder interviews.

Section B.

Descript:

Descript is a video and audio editing software that allows users to edit and collaborate on media files. Descript uses AI-based technology to transcribe and edit audio and video files.

Descript was used in this project to transcribe Zoom and computer audio recordings. This software was also used to automatically remove filler words and export the interview transcriptions to Google Docs.

Section C.

Google Drive

Google Drive is a cloud-based storage and file sharing platform that allows users to store, access, and share files.

Google Drive was used as the primary sharing platform for this project. All non-confidential information was stored in group folders, including our presentations, spreadsheets, notes, etc.

Section D.

Google Docs:

Google Docs is an online word processing software that allows users to create and collaborate on documents in real-time.

Google Docs was used in this project to format, style, edit, and collaborate on documents.

Section E.

Google Sheets:

Google Sheets is an online spreadsheet software that allows users to create and collaborate on spreadsheets.

Google Sheets was used in this project to create charts and graphs.

Appendix F Primary Data Tables

Section A. Recommendations

Interviewee Organization	Cultural diversity in menus	Improve affordability	Community collaboration (small and local)	financial support to equity deserving vendors	Procurement system audit and policy modifications	Set goals; equity vendor % / address top procured products	opportunity savings followed by re-investment
KPU Institute for Sustainable Food Systems			1				
UBC Central Finance/Procurement			1		1		
UBC Food Hub	1	1		1			1
UBC Food Services		1	1	1			1
AMS Sustainability			1		1		
SFU Food initiatives	1		1		1		1
UBC Student Housing and Community Services			1		1		
United Way BC			1	1	1		1
AMS Food Bank	1	1	1	1			
Total:	3	3	8	4	5	2	2
Percentage:	33.33%	33.33%	88.89%	44.44%	55.56%	22.22%	22.22%

Section B. Trade-offs/Barriers/Limitations

Interviewee Organization	Sustainability vs affordability (bottom line #1)	Quality	High Prices / Affordability	Scalability	established systems; Logistics / bureaucracy/ demand
KPU Institute for Sustainable Food Systems	1		1		
					1

UBC Central Finance/Procurement				1		1
UBC Food Hub	1		1	1		1
UBC Food Services		1	1			1
AMS Sustainability	1			1		
SFU Food initiatives		1				1
UBC Student Housing and Community Services	1		1			1
United Way BC	1		1	1		1
AMS Food Bank Coordinator	1	1	1			
Total:		6	3	6	4	7
Percentage:		66.67%	33.33%	66.67%	44.44%	77.78%

Section C. Traits/ Characteristics

Interviewee Organization	Supports Community	Locally Sourced	Cultural product Inclusion	Underrepresented groups in lead positions	Transparency	Ethical Practices
KPU Institute for Sustainable Food Systems				1		
UBC Central Finance/Procurement	1			1		1
UBC Food Hub	1	1			1	
UBC Food Services	1	1		1	1	1
AMS Sustainability	1	1				
SFU Food initiatives	1	1	1	1		1
UBC Student Housing and Community Services		1		1	1	1
United Way BC			1	1		
AMS Food Bank	1	1	1	1		
Total:	6	6	3	7	3	4
percentage:	66.67%	66.67%	33.33%	77.78%	33.33%	44.44%