

A Dream for a Generative Media Co-op in Calgary

Image



‘There is a lot of untapped energy and capacity in Calgary to make this happen,’ founder says

From choosing to live in cohousing to investigating how church buildings might become community hubs, Sarah Arthurs’ life and work pulses with the themes of community and innovation.

That may be why she was drawn to the concept of Generative Journalism when she first came across it in 2012. It was the International Year of Co-operatives, and Sarah eventually found a way for Generative Journalism to be used to shine a light on the co-op model.

Generative Journalism at its essence is intended to generate new possibilities across an ecosystem through the art of media making.

Sarah's experience of working with Axiom News, the pioneers of Generative Journalism, and seeing the impact of the stories on the movement and energy of the co-operative sector during that year inspired her.

So much so that she eventually gathered a small group of supporters/steering committee members, funding and other resources to launch what is now New Scoop.

The intention is for New Scoop to create and share stories of Calgary as a thriving city, using the Generative Journalism approach. A related goal Sarah holds as very important is for the initiative to become a not-for-profit, multi-stakeholder co-op consisting of individual, organizational and worker members.

A number of individuals and organizations have already signalled an interest in becoming members and/or are committed to supporting New Scoop financially or otherwise.

Currently, there's a strong need to build the worker member side of the effort.

New Scoop welcomes those with skillsets in the areas of writing and editing, social media, event planning and administration to consider becoming worker members.

To date, New Scoop has relied on the infrastructure that Axiom News as an established entity based in Peterborough, Ontario provides. This has enabled the Calgary entity to move forward as far as it has. But the goal now is to embed the New Scoop work more directly in Calgary.

"There is a lot of untapped energy and capacity in Calgary beyond myself to make this happen," Sarah says.

"If we're going to move further, we should and we can take advantage of the capacities of the people in Calgary."

Sarah hopes over the next several months to connect with a few Calgarians who are as excited and committed as she is about New Scoop, and who offer different skillsets to her own. "The synergy that we could get from that would be tremendous," she says.

New Scoop is currently exploring options for training skilled journalists and writers in the Generative Journalism approach.

The initiative is also changing how people can become involved. Individuals can now subscribe, for a monthly fee of \$8.99, to receive the New Scoop e-news as well as invitations to attend New Scoop social lunch and learns.

For those interested in becoming New Scoop members, a yearly membership fee of \$25 provides an opportunity to join the yet-to-be-formed co-op and take part in the governance to the level they are comfortable with and prefer.

New Scoop has also received invitations to join in co-hosting events that relate to and support themes it is following through the news. Sarah hopes to see at least a few of those opportunities come to fruition in the next few months.

Reflecting on what's transpired to date, Sarah says she's especially energized by the quality of the stories that New Scoop has covered.

As one example, New Scoop has begun to follow the energy that's surfacing in Calgary across some faith communities who are seeking to become more embedded and permeable in their communities. These faith groups are seeing the limits of the activities that they have been undertaking and want to find new ways to continue in their mission of loving their neighbours.

New Scoop also has a strong interest in continuing to tell the co-op story – as a community-based business model and way to diversify the city's economy.

“The stories that we're telling are important stories from the perspective of creating a city that is inclusive, kind, creative, thriving, resilient,” Sarah says.

“There is a sense that the internal validity of some of the stories that are coming out – that they are powerful and they are important and they are good and people are doing important things.

“And my belief is that as more people know about them, that things will get scaled up, that there will be more, that people will be able to take further steps, they'll have courage to start new things, that it will raise the whole bar of possibility.”

To learn more about New Scoop, click [here](#).

If you're interested in connecting directly with Sarah to explore options for becoming involved with New Scoop, including as a worker member, please e-mail her at [sarah\(at\)newscoopyyc.coop](mailto:sarah(at)newscoopyyc.coop).

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