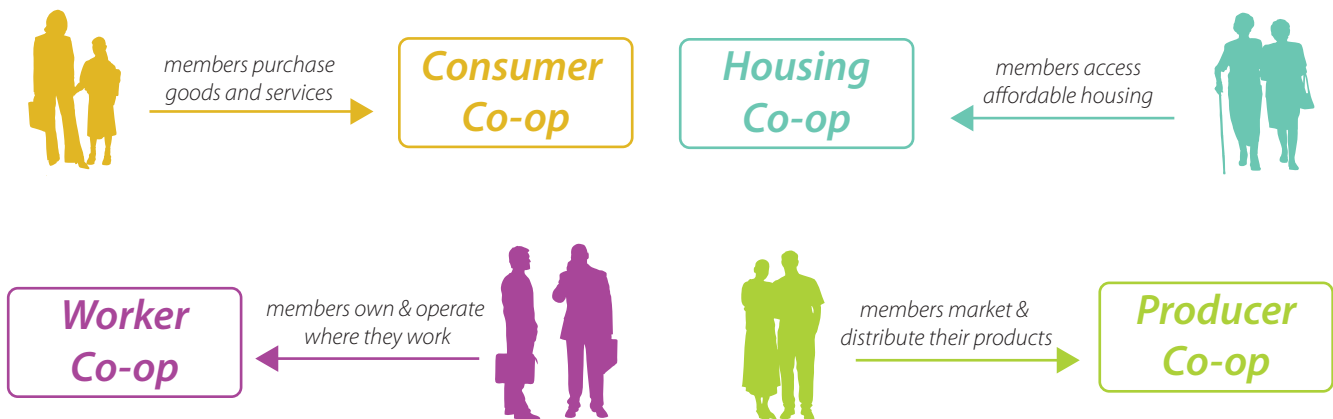


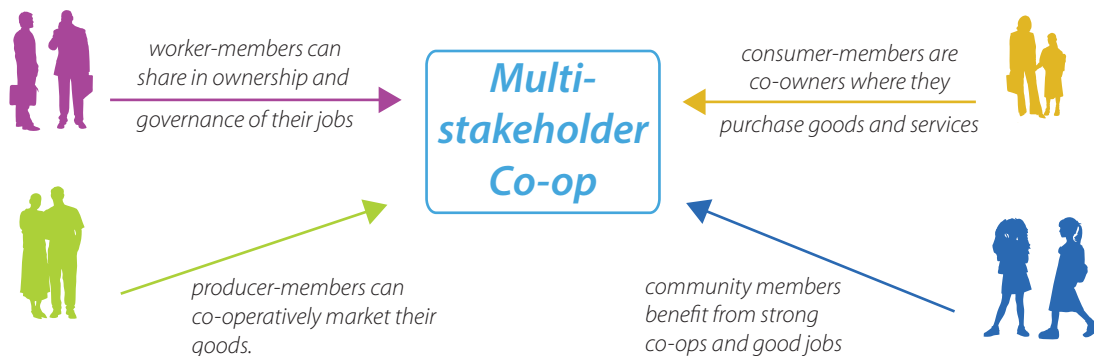
# What is a multi-stakeholder co-op?

*A co-op built on the strengths of different kinds of members*

A **traditional** co-op is made up of members who come together to co-operatively create an organization that can provide services to meet their needs. These needs could be related to purchasing goods and services (a consumer co-op), providing employment (a worker co-op), marketing, selling, or distributing goods produced by the members (a producer co-op), housing (a housing co-op), and other key relationships. Each co-op has one kind of membership (a "class") for members.



**Multi-stakeholder** (or solidarity) co-ops are built on the strengths of different kinds of members. In a retail store, producers, workers, and consumers could come together and build a co-op on their combined strengths - and build a co-operative community enterprise. A multi-stakeholder co-op has multiple classes of members.



Want to learn more?  
Visit [bccacoop.org](http://bccacoop.org)

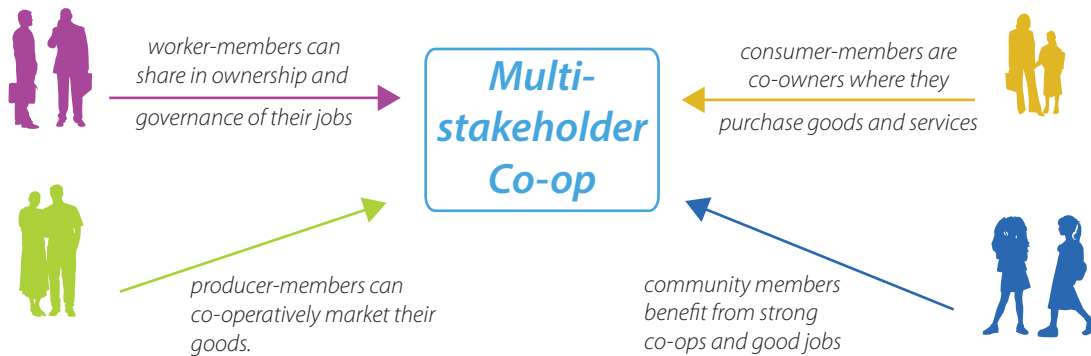


**British Columbia  
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BUILDING A CO-OPERATIVE ECONOMY

# Starting a multi-stakeholder co-op

*Build a co-operative on the strengths of different kinds of members.*

**Why start a multi-stakeholder co-op?** Multi-stakeholder co-ops allow you to build a business enterprise that takes into account the needs of multiple kinds of members. You can build a co-op with the strengths of different kinds of members, making your co-op able to take a different, diverse, and nimble approach to its enterprise idea. Multi-stakeholder co-ops can be more robust, inclusive, and engaging. It's also a great way to give different types of members a say on the Board of your co-op.



**How do you start a multi-stakeholder co-op?** When you're planning out how your co-op will look, you need to think about the different classes of membership and how they relate to your co-op. What kinds of different members will you have, and why are they different? What needs do they have and how will the co-op meet them in a different way? For example, will different member classes have dedicated seats on your Board? Will they have different dues or share requirements? When you explore these questions, you'll be able to identify the rights and obligations that each member class has - and build your co-op with those in mind.

**Challenges for multi-stakeholder co-ops.** There are some challenges these co-ops can face: different classes of members could have conflicting needs. You'll need to balance these through the governance of the co-op and understand how to manage the conflicts that might arise around direction, investment, and other matters. With that in mind, you'll build a powerful co-op. We'll be there to help – get in touch!



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