

Linking, Learning, Leveraging

Social Enterprises, Knowledgeable Economies, and Sustainable Communities

Summary of Proposed Research

Globalization, economic restructuring, and a reconfiguration of the welfare state and its corresponding failure to address the fallout with appropriate policies has led to social and economic exclusion and the emergence of the new poor (Lévesque and Mendell 2004). The lives and livelihoods of countless other ordinary Canadians have also been put under stress by these changes. Response to these challenges was led not by government or by profit-seeking organizations, but by not-for-profits, co-operatives, community economic development organizations, community-based organizations, and other voluntary-sector initiatives that have been collectively labeled the social economy.

Today's social economy has developed primarily in two areas: "as a strategy to combat poverty and social and occupational exclusion—initiatives in response to urgent social needs and critical social situations; and in the creation of new wealth—initiatives in response not only to needs but to opportunities in which neither the market nor the state are effectively engaged" (Lévesque and Mendell 2004, 5). The results have been impressive and innovative, sparking a desire on the part of government to play a more proactive role. As the prime minister said in his response to the throne speech in February 2004: "The people themselves represent a powerful social resource and it is high time that the federal government recognizes this. We intend to make the social economy a key part of Canada's social policy toolkit." What can Canada learn from the social economy's evolution to date—where is the social economy, what is it accomplishing, what does it need—and how can we apply this knowledge in public policy? We have identified five fundamental questions within this overarching inquiry:

- What can we learn from social-economy enterprises about how to build more respectful relationships—with community, the environment, and organizational stakeholders?
- How can these learnings be shared in order to "raise the bar" within profit-seeking organizations?
- What are the best practices with regard to governance models—what can we learn from co-operative organizations; how can this knowledge be transferred?
- What kinds of financing strategies are needed to support the development and expansion of the social economy—what models exist; how well do they function for social-economy organizations? How should we measure social-economy organizations when traditional methods fail to capture the richness of social and economic objectives; what is the impact of social economy activity within the larger economy?
- What have governments done, what should they do—and not do—regarding the social economy?

This research takes advantage of the foundational work, experience, and capacity of the Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR), one of the most successful social science research initiatives in Saskatoon in recent years, and the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives (CSC), internationally recognized for the quality of its teaching, research, extension activity, and publications on co-operative organizations, and recipient of a major SSHRC award for a study on co-op membership and social cohesion, the largest research project on co-operatives ever undertaken in Canada. Based on the success of CUISR and CSC in implementing community and policy-relevant research, we will draw upon a wide range of research methods, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods of participatory action research, strategic cases, focus groups and in-depth interviews, participant observation, surveys, and GIS mapping. The particular mix of methods chosen depends on the specific questions asked and the partners involved.

The anticipated outcomes will include published books, papers, monographs, students trained in community-based research, increased research and organizational capacity of community partners, and refinement and changes in local, provincial, and national policies.

Detailed Description of the Proposed Research

Objectives of the Proposed Research: During the 1980s the impact of globalization, economic restructuring, and a reconfiguration of the welfare state and its corresponding failure to address the fallout with appropriate policies led to social and economic exclusion and the emergence of the new poor (Lévesque and Mendell 2004). The lives and livelihoods of countless other ordinary Canadians have also been put under stress by these changes. Response to these challenges was led, not by government or by profit-seeking organizations, but by not-for-profits, co-operatives, community economic development organizations, community-based organizations, and other voluntary-sector initiatives. The results have been impressive and innovative, sparking a desire on the part of government to play a more proactive role. As the prime minister said in his response to the throne speech in February 2004: “The people themselves represent a powerful social resource and it is high time that the federal government recognizes this. We intend to make the social economy a key part of Canada’s social policy toolkit.” What can Canada learn from the social economy’s evolution to date—where is the social economy, what is it accomplishing, what does it need—and how can we apply this knowledge in public policy? We have identified five fundamental questions within this overarching inquiry:

- What can we learn from social-economy enterprises about how to build more respectful relationships—with community, the environment, central organizational stakeholders; how can these learnings be shared in order to “raise the bar” within profit-seeking organizations?
- What are the best practices with regard to governance models—what can we learn from co-operative organizations; how can this knowledge be transferred?
- What kinds of financing strategies are needed to support the development and expansion of the social economy—what models exist, how well do they function for social-economy organizations?
- How should we measure social-economy organizations when traditional methods fail to capture the richness of social and economic objectives; what is the impact of social-economy activity within the larger economy?
- What have governments done; what should they do—and not do—regarding the social economy?

Context: Communities are often destabilized by the impact of globalization (Bauman 1998; Cameron and Stein 2000; Scholte 2000; Bourdieu and Coleman 1991). Livelihoods and ways of life may be undermined, particularly for remote rural and Aboriginal communities as well as marginalized urban populations. Although globalization has many aspects, a key marker is the increasing domination of market relations over other kinds of social relations. This has created an increased interest in alternative forms of economic development that are more consistent with community values, as well as an increased attention to the nature and importance of social relationships in themselves and as preconditions for economic success. Among the responses to economic problems are community economic development (Douglas 1994) and the development of the social economy (Favreau and Lévesque 1996; Lévesque 1998, 1999; Quarter 1992).

Social economy is a term for which multiple definitions exist, reflecting and inviting diverse theoretical approaches (Schragge and Fontan 2000; Vaillancourt and Tremblay 2002). Social economy is used most commonly in Europe, and more recently in Québec, to describe a variety of socio-economic initiatives addressing new opportunities and needs—initiatives clearly distinguished from those associated with the public or private sector. In Anglophone Canada, the term “third sector” is most frequently used as a synonym for social economy. Those who prefer “social economy” to “third sector” or “nonprofit” consider democratic practice and stakeholder participation (rather than the lack of profit) to be key distinguishing characteristics underlying the actions of these organizations, thereby including

co-operatives and mutual societies (Quarter 1992; Lévesque and Malo 1992; Schragge and Fontan 2000; Lévesque and Mendell 2004).

Social-economy enterprises direct organizational and community resources to the pursuit of social and community goals, providing flexible and sustainable tools to assist communities to achieve their own objectives in the areas of job creation and skills development, the environment, social support networks, economic growth, and neighbourhood revitalization. Today's social economy has developed primarily in two areas: "as a strategy to combat poverty and social and occupational exclusion—initiatives in response to urgent social needs and critical social situations; and in the creation of new wealth—initiatives in response not only to needs but to opportunities in which neither the market nor the state are effectively engaged" (Lévesque and Mendell 2004, 5). Social-economy enterprises frequently grow out of broad-based community development strategies that involve a range of local partners—citizens, government, voluntary sector, learning institutions, and business (Fairbairn 2004c). Such enterprises exist across Canada built on the tradition of co-operatives and nonprofit community enterprise as well as other innovative approaches (Quarter 1992; Lévesque and Malo 1992; Schragge and Fontan 2000; Vaillancourt and Tremblay 2002; DeSantis et al. 2003).

Co-operatives have developed widely in Canada in numerous kinds of communities (MacPherson 1979; Fulton 1990; Fairbairn, MacPherson, and Russell 2000; Fairbairn 2001). They have proven to be a sustainable model for rural development (Fairbairn et al. 1991; Fulton and Hammond Ketilson 1992; Hammond Ketilson et al. 1992; Hammond Ketilson et al. 1998; Gertler 2004) and play an exceptional role in northern communities (Hammond Ketilson and MacPherson 2001). Newer types of co-operatives such as those involved in health, housing, childcare, and neighbourhood development address the economic needs of low-income and other urban as well as rural groups. Our project will focus on these new initiatives. The distribution of co-operatives—their historical strength in rural communities and their new role in some indigenous and marginalized urban populations—is not accidental. It reflects the degree to which they developed by making use of social cohesion (DeSantis et al. 2003), both exploiting it and fostering it, as well as democratic structures and processes in order to thrive in settings where other forms of enterprise could not succeed so well (Fulton and Hammond Ketilson 1992; Hammond Ketilson et al. 1998; Hammond Ketilson and MacPherson 2001; Fairbairn and Russell 2004).

In the context of the proposed project, we focus on the social economy as grassroots in origin and emphasize local innovation, understanding, and theory making. Democratic practice, citizen participation, and meaningful engagement are key. Social cohesion is about membership—citizenship in a state, residency in a geographic community, participation in a network or culture. Membership-based associations appear to constitute important sites where social capital is created and renewed (Putnam 2000). We consider the social economy to be a site of possibilities governed not by exclusionary either-or logic and "monopolies of knowledge," but an inclusive both-and perspective of mutual education and public understanding learning from effective practices in all cultures. We recognize the importance of movement and access, relations and networks (Shragge and Fontan 2000; Chouinard and Fairbairn 2002; Fairbairn 2004; Findlay and Findlay 1995).

Relevance: Social-economy enterprises are embedded in communities, often multiple communities of place and identities or interests, and these communities are themselves embedded within institutional contexts. Such enterprises, then, are continually negotiating boundaries that would circumscribe who they are and can be, whom they may represent and serve, what they can do and how, and with whom they can forge links. In this context, the growth and vigour of the social economy depends on the innovation, improvisation, and collective intelligence of its key players. Competitors for resources must become partners; providers of resources must reduce barriers; and all must maintain critical vigilance about their roles and responsibilities in a social economy that is plural and potentially transformative.

Social economy enterprises are themselves innovative partnerships, and they readily partner with other organizations. There is no single template for productive research partnerships. Each requires new approaches to collaboration, new ways of honouring identities and building relationships, new ways of

inhabiting institutional and other spaces, new ways of engaging with the privileges and priorities of centre-periphery/hinterland-homeland relations (Coates 2001; Davis 1971). The work of effective partnering is never easy, but with vigilance, the social economy can make a place for new ways of doing things—and new forms of relationship connecting healthy people and vigorous, sustainable economies. The social economy can help us move from principles of scarcity to celebrating our diversity and ending practices that waste, neglect, or discard rich resources of people and knowledge.

Specific Goals: The proposed project will develop comprehensive profiles of social-economy organizations, **highlighting innovative organizational structures, internal and external processes for community and member engagement, effective financing strategies, and comprehensive measures of organizational and community outcomes.** Research on **membership, membership engagement, and organizational processes and planning** is critical to the social economy. We will conduct this research with an eye to producing conclusions and models for best practices that can be widely applied. Research is also needed on whether such models and practices need to be rethought or adapted to fit **different cultural contexts** such as Aboriginal communities. Our research will build from our past studies to look at other organizational models and their lessons (Fairbairn 2003a; Fairbairn 2003b; International 1995).

Governance questions are increasingly important because of competitive pressures and new demands for accountability. Social-economy organizations are subject to these pressures and will need to be firm in holding to their basic principles and missions. Indeed, one effect of the creation of social-economy organizations, often intentional, is to increase standards of conduct and performance in a sector—to “raise the bar” for organizational practice and quality of service. Voluntary engagement, democratic practice, and the integration of different stakeholder interests are linked to the defining characteristics and purposes of the social economy. If engagement, democracy, or stakeholder relations fail, social economy fails, even if organizations succeed as services or businesses. Rather than having only a regulatory function (for example, to control waste or prevent scandal), governance in social-economy organizations has a positive function of promoting individual and group development. Good governance and democratic stakeholder involvement develop leadership (human capital), networks, norms of trust and collaboration (social capital), and senses of common purposes among diverse stakeholders (social cohesion) (Fairbairn 2004a; Gamm and Putnam 1999; Jenson 1998; Lévesque and Ninacs 2000; Putnam 2000, 1993a, 1993b).

Conventional research on corporate governance has emphasized questions of control, legal responsibility, shareholder interests, incentives, and maximization of results. While relevant in some cases, this **literature is narrow for use with social-economy organizations.** In particular, a focus on simple outputs and efficiencies often leads to low-quality outcomes when delivery of public goods is involved (Stein 2001). **Research on governance in co-operatives is helpful because co-ops are in many respects the most highly institutionalized segment of the social economy—they have identified governance problems and distinctive approaches.** An important component of the proposed research is to study such approaches to the **roles of volunteer directors and volunteer boards** in working with professional managers, and to **codify for social-economy organizations the best practices and resources** that exist, as well as the particular competencies needed by directors and the appropriate forms of education for them (Alexander and Weiner 1998; Brown and Iverson 2004; CCA; Chapman 1986; Chaves and Sajardo-Moreno 2004; Crane, Matten, and Moon 2004; Malo and Vézina 2004; McClusky 2002; Reiss 1990; Spear 2004; Webb 2004).

Well-functioning social-economy organizations pursue human and social development as part of their own success. In so doing, they contribute to wider policy goals. But routine governance that is adequate for other purposes may not achieve these wider aims. For example, unless diversity among stakeholders is represented in governance, it is difficult for a social-economy organization to bridge between different categories of stakeholders and promote their effective collaboration. The roles and

importance of **leadership/ representational diversity** (de Clercy and Hammond Ketilson 2004) and of the functioning of **multistakeholder boards** are two significant themes of special importance in the social economy that this project will investigate. A third theme is the interface between **voluntary boards and public authorities**, as for example in the health sector: what are their respective roles and strengths? How can they work together effectively (Brooks 2002; Calton 2003)?

The social economy impacts communities and individual participants and their families in numerous ways. The ability to **measure and evaluate not just traditional business achievements, but also nontraditional economic and social benefits and their impacts on participants, customers, and the surrounding community** is important to strengthen social enterprises and the social-economy as a whole. Researchers are beginning to understand and document the full panoply of outcomes and impacts from achievements of the social economy, particularly from co-operative and community-based businesses. Such analysis requires an expanded notion of economic impacts and outcome measurement, and the creative use of interdisciplinary, and possibly newly designed, tools. Social auditing and social accounting methods are increasingly being used to help measure the human as well as the economic inputs to, outcomes of, and benefits from, not-for-profit organizations and co-operatives (Quarter et al. 2002). The proposed project will **develop an inventory of existing methods and develop new approaches and toolkits for measurement** of the social economy.

Finally, we will examine the roles of governments (federal, provincial, municipal, First Nations) with regard to the social economy. Social-economy institutions/organizations can be important vehicles for the mobilization of local capacities to design, develop, and deliver policies and programs appropriate to local conditions and problems. They are well positioned to mediate local interests and are a basis for community initiatives both in terms of lobbying or working with governments and acting through their own governance structures. Frequently, social-economy organizations have the credibility and experience to broker innovative solutions and to bring disparate local actors together around broad collaborative initiatives. If the social economy is more than simply a category of miscellaneous enterprises, this is because the organizations within it recognize and pursue common interests. Networking among social-economy enterprises is a way in which public space is redefined, citizens respond to policy initiatives, and new policy approaches may be raised or tried. **Research is needed on how the social economy can and should come together in this region, how it can serve as a policy seedbed, and how it can advocate and lobby for its interests.** The proposed project will examine the roles of governments (federal, provincial, municipal, First Nations) with regard to the social economy.

Proposed Research Activities: We examine this complex institutional field through five lenses: social enterprise development; financing strategies for social enterprise development; governance of social-economy enterprises; measuring and mapping the social economy; and developing policy frameworks for the social economy. These lenses, which define the research clusters, may be used in combination, serially, or separately, depending upon the particular context.

Cluster 1—Social Enterprise Development: Our approach to the social economy focusses on relationships—among the stakeholders of social enterprises; between the enterprises and public regulatory institutions; with other social enterprises; with the broader civil society; and with private-sector enterprises. Moreover, we understand that these relationships shape and are shaped by complex discursive and material practices. This means that a range of actor-centred (Markusen 2003; Long 2001) and structural methodologies are contemplated.

At the core of our approach are comparative institutional (ethnography) analyses of the sector and strategic cases, and possibilities for community partners and investigators to engage in face-to-face dialogue about the opportunities and barriers identified in the analyses. The institutional analysis will focus on a range of social enterprises—co-operatives of various kinds, neighbourhood development organizations, health and social care, and cultural organizations. Wherever possible, we will analyse strategic clusters of social enterprises. For example, we plan to jointly study neighbourhood-based

enterprises and identity-based (Aboriginal, for instance) enterprises in different socio-economic settings such as second-tier cities and rural areas. In doing this we will attend to the tensions between hinterland and homeland conceptions of socio-economic space (Coates 2001; Davis 1971) and investigate the roles of social enterprises in promoting more forms of social integration.

We will collect a common set of data: legal form, purpose, governance, organizational structure, products or services, work processes and employee practices, client profile, financing, and so on. In addition, we will **investigate the networks of relationships** in which leaders and staff (or members, in the case of worker co-ops) engage, using both qualitative and structural methods (Campbell and Gregor 2002; Carroll 2004; DeVault and McCoy 2002; Grahame 1998; Smith 1987; Krebs and Holley 2002). Finally, we will **highlight the cultural and social values that inform practices** within the enterprises, including the development of business plans, as well as how those values are reflected in enterprise outcomes. Newhouse (2004), for example, discusses the values that should characterize Aboriginal economic development, and Nembhard (2003) focusses on culturally and situationally appropriate outcome assessments to complement conventional economic measures (see section measurement).

The second core element of our approach is deliberative dialogue (Simpson 2001; Buchanan and O'Neil 2001) among participants in the case-study analyses. Deliberative dialogue has been used in many settings to enable participants from diverse viewpoints to work through the contradictions of the fundamental issues confronting them in order to arrive at some common ground for moving forward. This action-oriented approach to the research will provide a unique opportunity, not to create a homogenized conclusion to our work, but rather to enhance understanding of policies and effective practices, as well as to confront the issues that limit the capacity for building appropriate alliances.

Cluster 2—Financing Strategies for Social Enterprise Development: Because social-economy enterprises direct their activities toward dual goals—social and economic—finding appropriate funding sources can be problematic. Access to core funding as opposed to start-up or project-based is an ongoing issue. Many of these enterprises go from grant deadline to grant deadline in search of sustainable funding. The research in this cluster will use two methods to examine the issues around financing strategies for social enterprise development: the comparative institutional analyses of strategic case studies and deliberative dialogue (see detailed description above) and comparative, cross-sectional surveys.

We will focus specifically on the challenge of funding the social economy, **reviewing the spectrum of current and potential funding mechanisms**. We are interested particularly in the persistent complaint that project-based funding is ineffective and distortionary, especially for organizations delivering social services to highly underprivileged clients (Canada West Foundation, August 1999, Sept. 1999, 2000). We aim to **identify a set of core policy objectives** and link these to viable alternative proposals for funding social-economy organizations, drawing upon comparative cross-national research.

Cluster 3—Governance of Social-Economy Enterprises: The nature of democracy in voluntary organizations is under examined. Many organizations nominally follow democratic practices but have not reflected on or sought to make integral the underlying values and relationships of democracy. Co-operatives make this problem overt because they are formally pledged to democratic practices and yet often perceive themselves to be deficient in democracy, as reflected, for example, in low turnouts. Many people feel that co-operative democracy itself needs some rethinking. A fresh investigation of **democratic practice as it relates to the social economy** can contribute to new and mutually beneficial linkages between the older and newer parts of the social economy. Our interests in this research are to highlight examples of innovative, alternative, or experimental approaches to stakeholder involvement inspired by democratic values and principles. Such approaches could take quite different forms from conventional democratic practice such as attendance and voting at meetings (Fairbairn 2004b; Parker 2002).

Given the multifaceted significance of governance issues for the social economy, it is surprising how little research has been done. Existing studies of member involvement, stakeholder perceptions, and

social-economic impact provide a basis on which governance-related tools can be developed (Black and Härtel 2004; Côté and Fairbairn 2003; Oketch 2004; Simmons 2004; Southwood 2003). Using comparative institutional analyses of strategic cases and surveys, this cluster will focus on research regarding measurement of good governance and its impacts, and the development of tools for assessment and self-assessment of democratic and governance practices. The research will establish norms and benchmarks against which governance practices, in the context of the social economy, can be judged.

Cluster 4—Measuring and Mapping the Social Economy: When we examine co-operatives within the context of the social economy, we learn that the outcomes most co-operatives report in addition to general business measures such as jobs, wages, revenues, assets, debts, and inventory, are: a well-trained board of directors, education and training of members and sometimes of the broader community; the provision of affordable and reliable goods and services; and the establishment of a stable business in a community. We also find that the commitment to democratic participation, economic co-operation, and the provision of specific, affordable, high-quality goods and services are what make co-operatives different from other businesses. Such practices also spill over into other community activities and capacities. Additional benefits from co-op businesses include meaningful work and livable wages; asset ownership and wealth creation; education, training, and skill development; leadership development; civic and political participation; and policy and legislative advocacy (Nembhard 2004; Nembhard 2002; Nembhard and Blasingame 2002). Social accounting has added to the discursive space for debate opened by the cracks and contradictions in dominant institutions (Boyce 2000; Henriques 2000), making for new understandings of Aboriginal peoples' struggles and shared interests in ecological and other survival (Blaser, Feit, and McRae 2004). Economists are also developing new methods to examine and calculate multiplier effects and the positive externalities and spillovers gained by communities from the presence of specific kinds of economic activity. All these tools are beginning to be brought to bear on the study of the social economy and all its effects.

Building on the methods of social accounting and social auditing, and studies that have measured the impact of co-operatives on community (Hammond Ketilson et al. 1998) we will **explore new ways of measuring the contributions of social enterprises locally, regionally, and to social and economic life more broadly**. One group of researchers in this cluster will comprise a Canadian-based team working within the context of an international consortium to **develop a measurement toolkit**.

A key interest in the study of social economy is the impact of these organizations on both the economic vitality and the quality of life in the communities or regions where they operate. One direct way to assess the impact of social-economy organizations is through patterns of population growth and migration. If social-economy organizations improve the quality of life and economic vitality, this may be reflected through higher net-migration. A detailed quantitative analysis of the relationship between social economy and other economic indicators can reveal the nature of this relationship and will have policy implications with respect to support for the social economy. The reverse question is also important: namely, what are the underlying conditions that strengthen social-economy organizations? We will use **geographic information systems (GIS) to map and to spatially assess the socioeconomic outcomes and the underlying patterns of social-economy location**. The resulting maps will facilitate **knowledge mobilization and dissemination processes** to community partners and policymakers.

Cluster 5—Developing Policy Frameworks for the Social Economy: To help ensure that Canada's governments can support and interact with the social economy via the best possible public policy mix, we will focus our research efforts in three areas. We will undertake a **broad survey of the region's social economy** towards creating a holistic, nonpartisan perspective on the current state of affairs. Extant work is fragmented and incomplete owing in part to varying definitions that have excluded key enterprises such as co-operatives and some charities (Phillips 2003; Wagner, de Clercy and Shepstone 2005). We will describe and assess the social economy in several ways, including measuring its economic contribution, quality-of-life impact, and aggregate level of current government funding

support. This data set will provide a more standardized basis for studying the region’s social-economy character for all our researchers.

We will **review the existing regulatory frameworks affecting this region** at all three levels of government, with a view towards identifying gaps as well as areas of overlap and multiple governmental interest (Kaufman and MacPherson 2001). Then we will focus on two specific regulatory issues: how existing and potential taxation instruments may be used to reward and increase voluntary behaviour; and what sort of regulations can address the liability insurance crisis permeating voluntary organizations. Many partner organizations are deeply interested in these two specific areas and seek immediate remedies for trenchant market failures. In view of the power of regulation to change behaviour, we will also evaluate the regulatory approaches of select countries to answer whether there are potential policy innovations and new legal forms that can benefit Canadians (Salamon and Anheier 1997).

Finally, to inform the studies described above as well as the project’s overarching goals, we will **undertake a broad consultation exercise and survey key social-economy actors, organizations, and citizens** for their specific views on what public-sector programs and policies are most appropriate to support the social economy. There is a pressing need to ensure that government policy is informed by the views of citizens and third-sector representatives (Canada West Foundation 1999). Much of this research will focus on examining what sort of policy interventions are most favoured by whom. For example, what sorts of organizations and citizens favour direct government funding of social-economy enterprises? What sorts of policy objectives are widely supported or opposed? What do citizens expect of their governments in this policy area?

Cluster	Researchers	Sites	Key Partners*
1. Social enterprise development	Bell, Bourgeois, Broad, Blondeau, Clarke, Coker, Gertler, Findlay, McKay, Peters, Stirling, Waygood, Wuttunee	N.ON SK MB BC	BCCA, CACRL, CDSS, CICOPA, CVWC, CWCF, CWDI, MCC, OCA, ONWA, SCA, SEED, SFNWC, SIR, SRD, TRIBE
2. Financing strategies for social enterprise development	Broad, Chicilo, Ferguson, Fulton, Goddard, Herman, MacPherson, McKay, Wuttunee	N.ON MB, SK BC, AB NWT, NU	ACL, ACU, CACRL, Co-ops Sect, CPL, CUCM, SaskCentral, SCCD, SIR, SRR, SRD, SCU, VanCity
3. Governance of social-economy enterprises	de Clercy, Fairbairn, Guy, H. Ketilson, Marchildon, Oleson, Reynolds, Usiskin	SK, N.ON MB US	CCA, MCC, OCA, SCA, QUINT
4. Measuring and mapping the social economy	Bouchard, Brown, Carter, Guy, H. Ketilson, MacPherson, Nembhard, Olfert, Partridge, Peters, Quarter	N.ON, PQ SK, MB BC, US NWT, NU	ACL, BCCA, Co-ops Sect, CHSA Cooperation Works, OCA, QUINT, SaskCentral, U. Wpeg, VanCity
5. Policy frameworks for the social economy	de Clercy, Fairbairn, Ferguson, Goddard, Marchildon, Usiskin, Waygood	National MB, SK AB	CCA, CDSS, CHSA, Co-ops Sect, MCC, OCA, QUINT, SCA, SCCD, SIR, SRD

* See end of this document for key to acronyms.

Summary of Method: This combination of approaches will produce multidimensional and interdisciplinary case studies in defined contexts. To promote effective research partnerships and integration, we will cluster case studies throughout the project according to subregion and issue.

Context will be provided by profiling the organization and its relevant community in each case. Historical profiles of the organizations and key-informant interviews within social-economy organizations and public agencies will supply basic information. Economic and organizational challenges facing the organization and its community will be analysed in connection to its location

within the social economy and the new opportunities or requirements for innovation that these entail. Questions of gender, ethnicity, age, and income are particularly important categories of research and analysis, as these can be expected to influence greatly individual experiences and utilization of social-economy organizations. In some instances we will conduct cross-sectional surveys with social-economy organizations, community groups, and policymakers. The surveys will be self-administered (mail, Internet) or administered by a trained researcher, research assistants, or staff or volunteers of partner organizations, according to the needs of the particular group concerned.

Surveys will be complemented by selective focus groups using a collaborative methodology appropriate to social-economy organizations. Where possible, and with the assistance of the organization, members and clients will be brought into focussed discussion groups that will meet multiple times, working through a process to investigate an issue, and make recommendations to their organization and to the project. This turns the focus-group method into fully collaborative, participatory action research involving the social enterprise and its members and employees in study, feedback, and reflection on the research design and the results as the work is conducted. For all aspects of research, standard ethics approval will be obtained beforehand. In addition, research design and conduct will be negotiated with and approved by partners before research is conducted.

Direction of Research Areas and Communication: The research network will be co-managed by Lou Hammond Ketilson, director, Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, and acting co-director (academic), Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR), and Kate Waygood, co-director (community), CUISR. The co-directors will work closely with each research cluster to oversee activities and progress. Each cluster will nominate a community and academic co-ordinator from among the research team to oversee cluster activities and progress, and will have its own entitlement to resources, including one to two graduate student researchers per cluster. Cluster teams will conduct workshops and planning meetings in or near the research sites to facilitate greater input by local partners into research design and direction (see section 6. Partnerships and Alliances for more detail).

Evaluation of the Northern Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan Regional Node

Evaluation will be conducted at the cluster as well as at the overall project level. Inventories of outcomes will be developed on an annual basis for sharing with all partners. Five key performance indicator categories have been identified:

1. Research (research projects and publications, community consultations, partnerships, awards to community and university researchers)
2. Training (student progress, awards to students, community research liaison, televised/distance education workshops, workshops, curriculum development and delivery)
3. Knowledge Sharing (between and among social enterprise organizations and research team members; research communications, media coverage, conferences, publications, newsletters, electronic publications, web-based discussion sites)
4. Community Impacts (development of practitioner-oriented resources/practices, i.e., enterprise development, governance practices, development of new financing strategies)
5. Policy Impacts (impact on local, provincial, federal, and First Nations government policy formation and programming; development of policy analysis and communications capacity within social-economy organizations)

Assessments of the quality of the community-university partnership will be conducted in an ongoing manner and specifically at the end of each year by soliciting feedback from both community and university partners regarding the following areas: opportunities for genuine input into shaping and managing the research program; relevance of research program to perceived needs and priorities; and value of outcomes gained from participating in the research partnership.

A thorough assessment of all aspects of the research network and its outcomes will be conducted midway through year three. The use of the deliberative dialogue techniques will help to ensure a more continuous form of feedback, evaluation, and joint problem solving.

Description of Team

Our large team is characterized by its diversity, interdisciplinarity, and extensive research experience. We have assembled a fine collection of committed community representatives and scholars from many geographic locations, traditions, and disciplines. We have brought together a set of people with diverse skills and experiences who share a common commitment to studying our region's social economy.

The team's composition is predicated, first, upon a core set of scholars and community representatives drawn from the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives (CSC) and the Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR). This unique research centre alliance brings together experienced partners who have collaborated on similar large-scale, multi-year social science research projects in the past. This core group includes ten people: Kate Waygood; Len Usiskin; Lou Hammond Ketilson; Brett Fairbairn; Martin Chicilo; Rose Olfert; Louise Clarke; Michael Gertler; Isobel Findlay; and Cristine de Clercy. In addition to their particular research interests, these individuals bring their experience as research partners to the project. Given the complex issue mix addressed in our proposed research agenda, this core group's role in unifying and leading the team's research momentum is invaluable.

The second basis for team member selection arose after discussions with potential community and partner organizations that generated the key research questions and so produced our five research clusters. Drawing partly upon both centres' extant community and university networks, we identified and recruited particular people with specific skill sets to facilitate research objectives in each cluster. At the same time, our search introduced many new investigators to the project. This group includes Lynne Bell; Marie Bouchard; April Bourgeois; Gayle Broad; Leslie Brown; Thomas Carter; Murray Fulton; Ellen Goddard; Denyse Guy; Roger Herman; Ian MacPherson; Angus McKay; Brian Oleson; Mark Partridge; Evelyn Peters; Jack Quarter; Robert Stirling; and Wanda Wuttunee.

The third basis for team member selection arose when we reviewed how well our team members fit the needs of each research cluster and identified gaps as our research agenda evolved and as partners and scholars added new, exciting questions to our collection. This group includes Lori Blondeau; Cindy Coker; Peter Ferguson; Jessica Gordon Nembhard; Gregory Marchildon; and Anne Reynolds.

We are very pleased with the excellent group we have assembled, and we are ready to begin this project. Below we summarize each team member's specific area of planned contribution to the project by indicating their main cluster assignment, location, position, areas of interest and/or research expertise. (Note that a few researchers plan to undertake study in additional clusters beyond their primary choice, but this information does not appear owing to space constraints.)

Cluster 1—Social Enterprise Development

Lynne Bell, University of Saskatchewan (co-applicant), is exploring linkages between art and activism, and art and colonial consciousness. She has partnered with TRIBE to showcase Aboriginal artists.

Lori Blondeau, (co-applicant), is director of Canada's Aboriginal arts organization, TRIBE, and an international performance artist. She explores the influence of popular media and culture on Aboriginal self-identity and is currently examining the impact of colonization on lifestyles of Aboriginal women.

April Bourgeois, (co-applicant), works at *Planet S* magazine in Saskatoon and serves as Vice-President West of the Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation and Vice-President of CICOPA Americas.

Gayle Broad, Algoma University College (co-applicant), is in the Community Economic and Social Development Program, with further expertise in sociology and social welfare and poverty issues.

Louise Clarke, University of Saskatchewan (co-applicant), specializes in industrial relations and organizational behaviour, with further interests in Aboriginal issues and community economic development. She was an organizer for a 2002 SSHRC-funded conference titled “Value(s) Added: Sharing Voices on Aboriginal Community Economic Development.”

Isobel Findlay, University of Saskatchewan (co-applicant), is a humanist trained in language and literary study, now working in a department of management on Aboriginal business and postcolonial models of the firm. She was an organizer for a 2002 SSHRC-funded conference titled “Value(s) Added: Sharing Voices on Aboriginal Community Economic Development.”

Michael Gertler, University of Saskatchewan (co-applicant), studies the sociology of co-operation and rural development.

Angus McKay, Community Action Co-op Regina Ltd. (co-applicant), works in community capacity building, leadership development, and community economic development with Aboriginal peoples.

Evelyn Peters, University of Saskatchewan, Canada Research Chair in Identity and Diversity: The Aboriginal Experience (co-applicant), studies urban social geography, Aboriginal urbanization, and self-government.

Robert Stirling, University of Regina (collaborator), cross-appointed to Sociology and Social Studies, and Political Science, studies prairie rural community renewal and farm communities.

Len Usiskin, executive director of QUINT Development Corporation (co-applicant), actively works to strengthen and build community economic development in Saskatoon’s core neighbourhoods.

Wanda Wuttunee, University of Manitoba (co-applicant), brings research expertise in Aboriginal culture and business management.

Cluster 2—Financing Strategies for Social-Enterprise Development

Thomas S. Carter, University of Winnipeg, Canada Research Chair in Urban Change and Adaptation in the Institute of Urban Studies (co-applicant), is also director of the Winnipeg Inner-City Research Alliance.

Martin Chicilo, community development manager with the Saskatoon Credit Union and board member/treasurer for Community First Development Fund (co-applicant), regularly presents on the co-operative development business model.

Peter Ferguson, University of Saskatchewan (collaborator), is a political scientist studying policy, research methods, and data manipulation and analysis.

Murray Fulton, University of Saskatchewan (co-applicant), is an agricultural economist and a leading authority on current changes in agricultural co-operatives.

Roger Herman, University of Saskatchewan (collaborator), is a research officer with Centre for the Study of Co-operatives specializing in co-operative education and diffusion of innovation.

Cluster 3—Governance of Social-Economy Organizations

Brett Fairbairn, University of Saskatchewan (co-applicant), is a historian of co-operatives, co-operative thought, and democratic politics. He is head of the Department of History and the principal investigator of the SSHRC project entitled Co-operative Membership and Globalization.

Denyse Guy, (co-applicant), is an experienced consultant, adult educator, and trainer in organizational leadership and business development in both the co-operative and non-profit sectors.

Brian Oleson, University of Manitoba (co-applicant), is Agribusiness Chair in Co-operatives and Marketing in the Department of Agriculture and Food Sciences.

Anne Reynolds, University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives (collaborator), provides leadership and training for the Cooperative Education Alliance, and has a research interest in new co-operatives and co-operative development, co-op member satisfaction and loyalty, and rural housing co-ops.

Cluster 4—Measuring the Impact of Social-Economy Organizations

Marie Bouchard, University of Québec at Montréal (co-applicant), is Canada Research Chair on the Social Economy and is with the Centre de recherche sur les innovations sociales (CRISES).

Leslie Brown, Mount Saint Vincent University (co-applicant), is a sociologist specializing in co-operative democracy and participation, social auditing, and social responsibility in co-operatives.

Lou Hammond Ketilson, University of Saskatchewan (principal investigator), is director of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives and co-director (academic) of the Community-University Institute for Social Research. She has research interests in community economic development, policy, gender, leadership, and Aboriginal co-operative development.

Ian MacPherson, University of Victoria (co-applicant), is a world authority on co-operatives, a historian of Canada, and director of the B.C. Institute of Co-operative Studies.

Jessica Gordon Nembhard, University of Maryland College Park (co-applicant), is an economist in Afro-American Studies and with The Democracy Collaborative. She works in democratic community-based economic development, alternative urban development strategies, and co-operative economics.

Rose Olfert, University of Saskatchewan (co-applicant), is an agricultural economist specializing in regional economics and rural development.

Mark Partridge, University of Saskatchewan (co-applicant), is Canada Research Chair in the New Rural Economy in the Department of Agricultural Economics with expertise in rural development.

Jack Quarter, University of Toronto (co-applicant), is a leading authority on Canada's social economy and focuses on workplace and economic democracy, co-ops, nonprofits, and community development.

Cluster 5—Policy Frameworks for the Social Economy

Cristine de Clercy, University of Saskatchewan (co-applicant), is a political scientist and public policy analyst; she studies leadership, democracy, and federated organizations, and is an expert regarding public opinion polling.

Cindy Coker, executive director of SEED Winnipeg, Inc. (collaborator), is a longtime community economic development advocate for Aboriginal and urban sectors as well as women. She has expertise in development, organizational governance, and worker-owned businesses.

Ellen Goddard, University of Alberta, Co-operative Chair in Agricultural Marketing and Business in the Department of Rural Economy (co-applicant), has research interests in agricultural marketing, trade and policy, consumer demand for foods in Canada, and co-operatives.

Greg Marchildon, University of Regina, Canada Research Chair in Public Policy and Economic History (co-applicant), is also a fellow at the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University.

Kate Waygood, University of Saskatchewan (co-applicant), is community co-director of the Community-University Institute for Social Research. Her interests include urban neighbourhood rejuvenation and stability, community development of non-profit organizations, housing, and social planning. She was for many years a community activist on Saskatoon's city council.

Research Partners

ACU	Assiniboine Credit Union, Winnipeg
ACL	Arctic Co-operatives Ltd.
CPL	Caisse Provencher Ltée., St. Agathe
CUCM	Credit Union Central of Manitoba
MCC	Manitoba Co-operative Council
SEED	Supporting Employment and Economic Development (SEED) Winnipeg, Inc.
U. Wpeg	University of Winnipeg
CACRL	Community Action Co-operative Regina Ltd.
CDSS	Community Development Society of Saskatchewan
CHSA	Community Health Services (Saskatoon) Association
CVWC	Co-op Ventures Workers Co-operative
CWDI	Common Works Development Institute Inc.
QUINT	QUINT Development Corporation, Saskatoon
SaskCentral	Credit Union Central of Saskatchewan
SCA	Saskatchewan Co-operative Association
SCCD	Saskatchewan Council for Community Development
SCU	Saskatoon Credit Union, Saskatoon
SFNWC	Saskatchewan First Nations Wholesale Co-operative
SIR	Saskatchewan Industry and Resources
SRR	Spruce River Research
SRD	Saskatchewan Rural Development
TRIBE	TRIBE Inc., Saskatoon
OCA	Ontario Co-operative Association
BCCA	British Columbia Co-operative Association
VanCity	VanCity Savings Credit Union and its Group of Companies
CCA	Canadian Co-operative Association, Ottawa
Co-ops Sect	Co-operatives Secretariat, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
CWCF	Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation
CICOPA	International Worker Co-op Federation, CICOPA
Cooperation Works	Cooperation Works, USA
STC	Saskatoon Tribal Council
KIN	Kin Canada
ONWA	Ontario Native Women's Association
C-RERL	Canada Rural Economy Research Lab