



A big boost for co-op research!

In February 2010, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) awarded \$1 million towards a new suite of research projects concerning Canada's co-operative sector. Led by the Canadian Co-operative Association in partnership with four Canadian universities (St. Mary's University, Mount Saint Vincent University, the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Victoria), the research network is funded for a five-year term to conduct research on the social, economic and environmental impact of co-operatives on Canadians and their communities. More than a dozen other co-operative associations, co-ops, credit unions and academic researchers will also participate in this CURA research collaboration.

What is a CURA?

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's Community University Research Alliance (CURA) program supports the creation of alliances between community organizations and post-secondary institutions to foster innovative research, training and the creation of new knowledge in areas of importance for Canada's social, cultural or economic development.

Meet the Co-Directors

In the spirit of partnership between communities and universities, the research network will be directed by one representative of the co-op sector and one university representative.



John Anderson
Principal Investigator and
Community Co-Director

[John](#) is the Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy at the Canadian Co-operative Association. John has a strong history in co-operatives, employment and labour issues, social research, and has authored many papers on a variety of social justice issues.



Dr. Sonja Novkovic
Academic Co-Director

[Sonja](#) is a Professor of Economics at Saint Mary's University and also teaches within the Master's of Management in Cooperatives and Credit Unions program. She has been involved in research on participation in co-operatives and has recently received the Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation's Award of Merit.

measuring the social, economic and environmental impact of co-operatives

Network structure and team

Our research structure consists of four research clusters; three based at Canadian universities at one at the CCA. Each of the **Cluster Leads** below will be working closely with many community and academic partners throughout the duration of the research process. Clusters are currently identifying their **Cluster Co-Leads** that will ensure both a community and university presence at every level of this network.



Atlantic Cluster

Dr. Leslie Brown
Mount Saint Vincent University

[Leslie](#) is a Professor in the Sociology and Anthropology Department at Mount Saint Vincent University. Her teaching and research interests include organizational democracy, co-operatives, community development and social accounting among others. For the past five years, she has served as Director of the Atlantic Social Economy and Sustainability Research Network.



Prairie Cluster

Dr. Lou Hammond Ketilson
Centre for the Study of Co-operatives,
University of Saskatchewan

[Lou](#) is the Director of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives as well as an Associate Professor in the Department of Management and Marketing. Lou has been involved in co-operative research for over 25 years. Lou has served as the Director of the Prairie Node of the Social Economy CURA projects.



Western Cluster

Dr. Ana Maria Peredo
Centre for Co-operative and
Community-based Economy,
University of Victoria

[Ana Maria](#) is the Director of the Centre for Co-operative and Community-based Economy at the University of Victoria. She is also an Associate Professor in Sustainable Entrepreneurship and International Business with a research background in globalization, alternative business models and rural poverty among others.



National Cluster

Quintin Fox
Canadian Co-operative Association

[Quintin](#) is the Director of Consultancy and Training at the Canadian Co-operative Association. He has worked both in Europe and Canada on a number of co-operative, rural development, social research and consultancy projects. He is currently leading the development of CCA's new training and consultancy arm, the Research, Education and Co-operation Hub (REACH).

Projects

Upon applying for this research funding, the applicants determined a number of research projects that would feed into the theme of measuring the impact of co-operatives on communities:

- Social and environmental accounting and reporting practices (SEAR) in co-operatives
- Diagnosing co-operatives for member/employee participation and its impact on performance (CoopIndex)
- Measuring the impact of credit unions on wealth building in communities
- Impact of co-operative housing on household income, skills and capital
- Impact of co-operatives on community
- Infrastructure support for co-operatives
- Measuring the longevity, social and environmental impact
- Co-operative Development Initiative and innovation
- Examining the value and potential of national coop sector federations
- Theoretical advances in economic and management models
- Co-operatives and alternative energy production
- Mapping the history of the Sussex Co-operative, NB, over its 170 year history

**More details to follow on our website
and in the next newsletter**

Many of the projects are just getting underway and establishing research partnerships, but there are a number of active partners already involved:

- Peter Hough, Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation
- Dr. Luc Thériault, University of New Brunswick
- Prof. Ian MacPherson, Professor Emeritus, University of Victoria
- Dr. J.J. McMurtry, York University
- Wendy Keats, Co-operative Enterprise Council, NB
- Elizabeth Hicks, Mount Saint Vincent University
- Prof. André Leclerc, Université de Moncton
- Co-op Atlantic
- Dr. Ryszard Stocki, Wyższa Szkoła Biznesu - National Louis University, Poland



The Honourable Gary Goodyear, the federal cabinet minister responsible for SSHRC, announces funding for the Network at the National Summit on a People-Centred Economy

At the National Summit on a People-Centred Economy in Ottawa on May 30, more than 300 people heard the Honourable Gary Goodyear, Minister of State (Science and Technology) announce the SSHRC funding for the Measuring the Co-operative Difference Research Network. Carmen Charette, Executive Vice-President of SSHRC, also offered congratulations to the Network. See the Industry Canada press release: <http://www.economy.ca/eic/site/ic1.nsf/eng/05602.html>



Left to right: Peter Hough, Dr. J.J. McMurtry, Quintin Fox, Dr. Lou Hammond Ketilson, Prof. Ian MacPherson, John Anderson, Minister Goodyear, Carmen Charette (SSHRC), Dr. Sonja Novkovic, Erin Hancock.

Launch of the Network

At the Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation (CASC) conference in Montreal on May 3, the research network was launched to colleagues, academics, practitioners, government representatives and students. The enthusiasm for a new wave of energy into co-op research was shared throughout the audience.

"This will help better define the impact of co-ops on communities and the Canadian economy---gathering tangible evidence of the value added of co-operatives."

-John Anderson, Principal Investigator for the network and Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy for the Canadian Co-operative Association



Co-Directors and Cluster Leads launching the Network during the Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation meeting in Montreal. Left to right: Dr. Sonja Novkovic, John Anderson, Dr. Leslie Brown, Dr. Lou Hammond Ketilson, Stuart Wulff (on behalf of Western Cluster), Quintin Fox.

Overarching research questions

- ❖ What is the precise nature of the co-operative difference?
- ❖ How can it be fostered?
- ❖ What are the effects of the co-operative difference on the co-ops' performance, their members and the broader community?

Thanks to partners who helped support the initial application:

- Advantage Credit Union (SK)
- Affinity Credit Union (SK)
- Alberta Co-operative & Community Association (AB)
- BC Co-operative Association (BC)
- Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation
- Conseil québécois de la coopération et de la mutualité (QC)
- Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité
- Co-op Atlantic
- Co-operative Enterprise Council (NB)
- Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada
- Credit Union Central of Nova Scotia (NS)
- Co-operative Management Education Co-operative
- Co-operatives Secretariat
- Federated Co-operatives Ltd.
- Harrop-Procter Community Co-operative (BC)
- Manitoba Co-operative Association (MB)
- Newfoundland-Labrador Federation of CO-operatives (NL)
- Nova Scotia Co-operative Council (NS)
- Ontario Co-operative Association (ON)
- PEI Co-operative Council (PEI)
- Quint Development Corporation (SK)
- Saskatchewan Co-operative Association (SK)
- South Islands Regional Co-op Council (BC)
- Sustainability Solutions Group
- The Co-operators Group Limited

- United Community Services Co-op (BC)
- Upper Columbia Co-operative Council (BC)
- Victoria Community Health Co-op (BC)

Thank you!

If you are a partner and are not listed here, please contact us. If you would like to become more involved in the network or a particular project, please contact Erin Hancock.



Website coming soon!!!!

www.cooperativedifference.coop

The Measuring the Co-operative Difference Research Network website will be launched by August 3rd. This website will feature:

- Regular updates on research activities and findings
- Notice of events related to co-op research
- Updates from each of the clusters on regional activities
- Publications
- News



Measuring the Co-operative Difference



RESEARCH NETWORK

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