B.C.- Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance (BALTA)

Project D11 – Role of Social Enterprise in Employment Services in the British Columbia Context

A. Title of project: Role of Social Enterprise in Employment Services in the British Columbia Context

B. With which BALTA SERC Is this project associated? Or is it a cross cutting project? Cross-cutting project with SERC 3 under the lead auspices of SERC 1.

C. Lead researcher, organization name and contact information:

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D. Names of other researchers and organizations involved:

David LePage
Enterprising Non-Profits

E. Description of project, including objectives, outputs and intended outcomes:

Over the past decade, the development and growth of social enterprise models in communities across Canada and particularly BC has grown in response to the need for employment opportunities for marginalized individuals with barriers to employment (individuals with disabilities, mental illness, addiction, long term social assistance user).

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Social assistance and government programs, as well as training businesses[1] have traditionally played the role of providing employment and training services to individuals from marginalized backgrounds, who faced multiple barriers to employment, and who would otherwise be receiving social assistance. Traditional work environments and work programs prove inefficient in engaging and maintaining this populous employed. Social enterprises have provide an interesting model of employment for marginalized populations, providing certain services traditionally given by employment service organizations or training business, while also running an operationally viable enterprise with a social focus. Aside from physical, mental and societal barriers to employment which marginalized individuals are faced with, Canadian provincial and federal policy bears disincentives for individuals on government assistance programs to engage and pursue more significant amounts of employment. Employment opportunities and strategies in social enterprises such as Potluck Café and Starworks have provided unique opportunities for the marginalized, but policy issues have restrained individuals from easing into full time employment or even part time employment. This impedes progress for the individuals as well as those social enterprises employing them, as they have to function with fluctuating employee levels, while attempting to attain their operational mission. How can policy change enable such barriers to be broken, and providing opportunities for marginalized individuals while at the same time allowing social enterprises to operate at 100%? Social enterprises play a critical role in employment opportunities.

Although the research intends to explore the role that social and government programs, and training businesses have had and will continue to have in the community, it will focus primarily on the role that social enterprises have had on the landscape of employment services within the BC context since their emergence in the past decade. The research will look at the social enterprises operating in this space as well as the political and business landscape; first by identifying the social enterprises that are part of the employment landscape in BC, second by identifying the barriers and opportunities on the ground specifically policy incentives and barriers on the local, provincial and federal level, and thirdly by identifying and understanding the qualitative and quantitative impact and context of the social enterprise(s) through conducting

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[1] This research will distinguish between training businesses and social enterprises. Training businesses are non-profit organizations that form part of the social economy, and whose primary mission is to address the needs of people living in poverty and social exclusion through labour market integration. Social enterprises are revenue-generating businesses with primarily social objectives who provide employment opportunities for the target group, and whose surpluses are reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to deliver profit to shareholders and owners. In addition, a significant goal for most social enterprises is the involvement of the marginalized, and creating capacity and self-sufficiency for individuals, and impacting their communities and lessening reliance on the social safety net, however this element alone can denote a social enterprise.

interviews, surveys, and business analysis on the social enterprises both in urban and rural communities.

The research objectives are to establish:
a) a landscape of employment services for marginalized populations in the BC context, including social enterprises, social and government programs, training businesses (including history, political and social context) both in urban and rural areas; this will be built off of the work being done by the BALTA mapping study.

b) the types of employment services and/or models of employment used within the social enterprise model;

c) understand the breadth of quantifiable impact on marginalized populations within BC;

d) the impact of social enterprises on the employment of marginalized individuals and community (including business, political, and social impacts on the community),;

e) the barriers and opportunities of using social enterprises for employment services, including policy and management analysis and recommendations;

f) role and impact of social enterprise employment in urban versus rural communities;

Outputs
1. Literature review
2. BC Policy Review
3. Report on quantifiable impact
4. Final Report

F. Purpose and significance of the research, including congruence with the strategic research objectives identified for the SERC and BALTA. Why should this project be approved, given BALTA's limited resources? [Refer to the project criteria in the BALTA Workplans and Project Proposals Policy.]

This research project would complement earlier work conducted within the Quebec context (Training Businesses in Quebec), and build a body of work within the BC context which can be used to further the needs of the community. In particular it will build off of the work being conducted through SERC 3 (Social Enterprise Survey), Enterprising Non Profits and CCPA. To date, there is no significant research exploring the impact and spread of the impact of the social enterprise model within the employment services landscape, in particular exploring, the impact that social enterprises are having on employment service consumers, community and business activity, and management of social enterprises. In addition the project aims at identifying policy gaps and/or barriers from both the individual level and the management level, an area of work which is critical to developing opportunities for individuals within the social economy and also the organizations that exist within that economy such as social enterprises.

G. Will the project involve student researchers in a paid or unpaid capacity? If yes, will they need to be recruited or have they already been identified? Briefly describe the roles and responsibilities of students involved in the research project, the skills/experience they will acquire, and how this will complement their academic training. Explain as well how adequate supervision and support of the student will be ensured.

One paid graduate student researcher will be recruited with a commencement date of June 1, 2010. The student will be housed at the ISIS Research Centre at the Sauder School of Business. A research centre which runs graduate internship and fellowship programs yearlong to provide graduate students with active research experience. Students physically work from the centre, which is located in downtown Vancouver. The student will be supervised by the Managing Director Joanna Buczkowska, and will participate in all team and group meetings at ISIS.

H. Research activities, plan of work and timetable:

a) a landscape of employment services for marginalized populations in the BC context, including social enterprises, social and government programs, training businesses (including history, political and social context) both in urban and rural areas;

b) the types of employment services and/or models of employment used within the social enterprise model;

c) understand the breadth of quantifiable impact on marginalized populations within BC;

d) the impact of social enterprises on the employment of marginalized individuals and community (including business, political, and social impacts on the community),;

e) the barriers and opportunities of using social enterprises for employment services, including policy and management analysis and recommendations;

f) role and impact of social enterprise employment in urban versus rural communities;

June 20: Literature Review
June 30: Identification of types of employment SE's in BC, and quantity of organizations, and programs
July 05: Social Enterprise employment impact metrics identified
July 15: Policy Analysis
July 30: Urban vs. Rural Community Social Enterprise employment
August 15: Social Enterprise employment impact report
September: Final Report

I. Describe plans for communicating research results within the academic community. Indicate audience and specific output(s) i.e., refereed journal articles, conference presentations or other appropriate channels.

    a. Online communication strategy
        a. ISIS Website
        b. Sauder and UBC Website
        c. Appropriate Blogs and Websites
    b. Journal (TBD)
    c. Conference Presentations:
        a. CCEDNet
        b. ASPECT (BC employment training non profits association)

J. Describe plans for communicating research results outside the academic community to practitioners, policy makers, and other people for whom the research results could be significant. Indicate audience and specific output(s).

Audience: External stakeholders such as social enterprise and non-profit organizations, marginalized populations which are included in this research, policy makers (i.e. government bodies),

    a. Online communication strategy
        a. ISIS
        b. Enterprising Non Profits
        c. Social Enterprise Council of Canada
        d. BALTA
        e. BLOGs
    b. Journal (TBD)
    c. Conference & Presentations
        a. CCEDNet Conference
        b. ASPECT (BC employment training non profits association) Conference
        c. HRSDC/Disabilities Staff
        d. Provincial Ministries

K. Describe your plans for monitoring and evaluating your research project. Feel free to consult with BALTA's Coordinator on designing possible approaches. (Note that monitoring and evaluation are extremely important both for ensuring the success of the project as well as satisfying reporting to SSHRC.)

The research intern (Samantha Shamash) will work closely with the Managing Director of ISIS to develop the research plan, methods, objectives, and final deliverables. The intern will meet on a weekly basis to update the status of the project to the MD, as well as participate in larger scale weekly meetings with the ISIS team. The work progress will be evaluated on a bi-monthly basis, making sure that determined target deliverables and dates are met on time and with ample quality.

L. What are the research tools you propose to use in your project?
NOTE: If your research involves human subjects, you MUST provide copies of your proposed research tools (as well as your research plan) prior to

commencing research. Please see the document *"BALTA Ethical Review Process – Simplified"* for information about ethical review requirements.
a) literature review
b) research survey of the BC landscape
c) stakeholder interviews
d) policy analysis

M. Budget and Contributions

Category	Requested of BALTA	Other Contributions
Student salaries	$6,000	$3,000 (ISIS)
Student benefits/overhead costs (if the student will be a CCCR hire, add 10.5% of the student salaries amount; if the student will be employed by another institution, add the relevant amount)		
Researcher Release Time		
Research Support Costs (e.g. supplies, communication costs)		$1,000 (in kind) ISIS $1,000 (in kind) ENP
Knowledge Dissemination		
Travel	$2,000	$1,000
TOTALS	**$8,000**	**$6,000**

Budget explanation

Student salaries & benefits $3,000/month for 3 months for a total of $9,000 for the period.

Travel: Travel budget includes the possibility of conducting interviews with relevant organizational stakeholders in the coastal, kootenay and northern regions of BC.

Supplies & other: In kind through ISIS and ENP to aid in managing the project, providing space and resources.