

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

SERC 3 Work Plan – 2010-2011

(Revised April 18, 2010)

NB: This plan covers SERC 3's plans/intentions for the balance of the period of SSHRC funding for BALTA's program. It covers the 2010-2011 fiscal year and a few further months into 2011, concluding in summer or early Fall 2011, depending on what final date is set for wrap-up of BALTA activities. The plan was developed by the SERC 3 co-chairs with input from SERC 3 members and BALTA's coordinator.

TO: BALTA Steering Committee and SERC Co-Chairs
FROM: Jorge Sousa and David Lepage, Co-chairs SERC 3
DATE: April 18, 2010
SUBJECT: BALTA Planning for 2010-2011

Please accept this document as our response to the request for a brief proposal/input from SERC 3 related to the BALTA planning process for 2010-2011. Over the past year members of SERC 3 have been quite active in a variety of areas, including engagement, publishing and presenting. An important consideration for members of SERC 3 is to address the question on how to best leverage the resources and research constructed by BALTA to support and strengthen an infrastructure supporting the Social Economy. As BALTA enters into the final year of work we are proposing to focus the SERC 3 work plan on engagement activities as well as being able to respond through selective research to gaps in knowledge that are identified through the dissemination and engagement initiatives. As will be shown below the expenses proposed from SERC 3 are targeted for student funding, publication and engagement activities that will include different sector and academic partners.

In total we are requesting \$30,000 for the new initiatives for the 2010-2011 year plus \$7,755 already committed to wrap up projects in process.

1. Research in process, projected completion dates and budget resources already approved but needing to be carried forward into 2010-2011 budgeting

At this point we have 4 projects in process that we project to have wrapped up by July 2010.

- C9 – CED and Social Economy Policy Inventory in BC and Alberta – Phase 1
- C10 – Municipal Government Support of the Social Economy Sector
- C16 – Survey of Social Enterprises in Alberta and British Columbia
- C17 – Building a Supportive Environment for Social Enterprise: Synthesis of SERC 3 Research

Project C15, Taking Social Embeddedness into Account in Monitoring the State of the Social Economy and Community Resilience, is also in process, but has been on hold. We hope that the project will be completed by Fall 2010.

These projects will require some BALTA staff support re dissemination. Budget resources have largely been expended, with the following exceptions carried over to 2010-2011:

Project	Students	Support Costs	Travel	Dissemination	TOTALS
C9					\$0
C10		\$150		\$150	\$300
C15			\$1,200		\$1,200
C16	\$5,305	\$200		\$500	\$6,005
C17				\$250	\$250
TOTALS	\$5,305	\$350	\$1,200	\$900	\$7,755

2. Further research for the coming year

At this point we are not planning on initiating new primary research for the final year of the BALTA project. We feel that our time can be better spent on exploring ways that will make the best use of the existing research findings as well as indentifying any potential gaps in knowledge that might need to be addressed through selective supplemental research. Our specific focus will be to develop practitioner and academic friendly resources through broad engagement activities and information collection. We feel that a significant amount of information has been collected through our research projects, and we believe that efforts are best utilized towards making that information useful for a wider group through engagement-oriented activities. Therefore, in the remaining BALTA working time frame our plan emphasizes a focus on a greater integration of the existing BALTA research into developing an infrastructure that is supportive of the social economy.

A key part of the tasks introduced in this section will be to explore the implications and possible leverage points that will allow us to maximize the academic learnings and community applications of the research to date. An integral part of this task will be to name or identify key constituencies or target groups that BALTA should be working with. In order to make this task more feasible and focused, we will designate a set of priorities areas for developing or building on resources. Examples of those areas include procurement activities, housing, social enterprises and financing options. This could then potentially lead to some modest research oriented towards gap analysis, analyzing where BALTA research findings can add to what already exists within the social economy.

It is also likely that some of the new research would take the form of action research in partnership with specific social economy sector organizations to build upon the existing research findings and co-construct implementation strategies to use existing and additional research findings to strengthen social economy infrastructure.

Although some of the specific definitions of activities are limited at this time, there are some identified near term dissemination and publication opportunities listed in this SERC 3 work plan. For instance, the classification framework from project C9 and the Social Enterprise Summit Framework utilized in project C17. Furthermore, we believe that the outcomes of project C16

will provide an information base that will be used to promote the social enterprise model across sectors within the social economy. These further activities include public policy applications, a base for further research and analysis of the sector, and practitioner evidence for funders and investors. We cannot be more specific on which further applications and utilization SERC 3 will pursue until access to the final research is available, likely in the fall of 2010.

Finally is it our intention to be prepared to respond to different engagement activities to be able to leverage these funds with other potential partners. We anticipate that there might be research opportunities from the different engagement activities; the BALTA co-sponsored Edmonton symposium on Working in the Social Economy is one example, where we would be able to leverage BALTA funds proposed in this section to work with other partners on small-scale projects.

We will explore opportunities to assess, integrate, and apply BALTA research into accessible resources that address the need for accessible applications by practitioners and academics. Resources can inform actions to popularize relevant research for different constituencies and mobilize dissemination through their newsletters etc. As we work with targeted constituencies we will be building relationships and can be testing the interest in coming together across each province to advance the Social Economy by gathering their ideas and perspectives on how to more effectively advance the Social Economy.

In terms of potential allocation of funds, we will want to hire up to two students for short term contracts The student(s) will identify the application gaps, and highlight potential constituent interests and needs. The students will explore available resources found in the field and work with later named supervisors to determine how best to build on existing BALTA research that will result in usable resources. We realize the development of resources will require at least one senior and knowledgeable student. We are requesting \$10,000 for the purpose of hiring at least one student and to allocate funds for the purpose of leveraging participation from other sector partners.

We are thus requesting that \$10,000 be reserved for this purpose. Specific project proposals would be brought to SERC 3 and the steering committee for approval prior to any spending.

3. Publishing plans and required support from BALTA

At this point we are planning a number of initiatives with respect to publishing and dissemination of existing SERC 3 research. First, we are sponsoring a Special Edition Journal of the *Canadian Review of Social Policy* as a SERC 3 initiative. Jorge Sousa will be co-editing this journal and we are requesting release time support of \$6,500 for Jorge. A second initiative is to support a SE HUB initiative of co-editing a special edition of the Journal *Canadian Public Policy*. Jorge Sousa and Rupert Downing will be the co-editors. For the second initiative there will be at least one article from a BALTA researcher appearing in that journal and BALTA has agreed to make a \$500 contribution to that initiative. We are also anticipating a few of the completed projects to follow through on publishing their findings, including C9, C10 and C16.

Stewart Perry has also been very active on the publishing front. He is collaborating with Garry Loewen on a piece coming out in the last print issue of *Making Waves*. Stewart is also collaborating with Sean Markey on converting their research report from project D5 on Credit Unions into a submission to an academic journal. Stewart is also working with Rankin MacSween as a collaborator on a book about New Dawn Enterprises.

We plan to work with the leads of the completed projects to publish their existing work as well. We will also be working towards continuing to publish in newsletters of various associations.

The total support we are requesting from BALTA for these activities is \$7,000 (\$6,500 release time funding and \$500 publishing contribution).

4. Proposed plans to engage specific target sectors and support strengthening of the sector

In addition to the formal academic publications there will be several presentations occurring at ANSER 2010, which will include appearing in the conference proceedings. We are proposing to support David Lepage with \$1,500 to attend and present at two conferences (already approved), ANSER and The Purchasing Management Association of Canada. We are also partnering with the Work and Learning Network from the University of Alberta and the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (ECVO) in a one-day symposium titled *Working in the Social Economy*. The symposium is scheduled for April 27th. We are requesting \$500 as BALTA's contribution to this partnership (already approved). In total, for the items identified above we are requesting \$2,000.

As part of SERC 3's proposed plans for the upcoming years we want to identify a basic outreach and engagement strategy through a series of events in both provinces. This would consist of targeting sectors for versions of 'days of learning'. We would also do some analysis of who could benefit from the BALTA research to facilitate targeting of our efforts. The focus of our efforts would be to engage community partners in activities aimed at presenting findings of BALTA research as well developing practitioner oriented resources. We have identified two certain events: the partnership referred to above and partnering with Enterprising Non-profits in their November 5th day of learning where project C16 could be presented by Peter Hall and Peter Elson.

We also plan to line up several other events that will result in working with suitable sector partners in several locales. We have identified other potential partnering opportunities for other "Days of Learning" that could both profile and build on BALTA's findings. Some possibilities include:

- Mount Royal University is hosting the Canadian Council for Small Business & Entrepreneurship (CCSBE) conference October 28-30 and BALTA member Peter Elson is involved with this event. This is a scholarly conference and there will be a dedicated stream on social enterprise so it will be a great venue to get both national and western exposure for relevant BALTA research.
- Ana Maria Paredo and The Centre for Co-operative and Community-Based Economy at the University of Victoria is a potential partner for something in Victoria.
- George Penfold's work with partners in the Kootenays provides potential for some kind of event there.

The hope is to participate in other organization's events or organize events that reflect BALTA's collaborative nature both within and across BC and Alberta. For these sponsorships and potential activities we are requesting \$11,000 for this item. The amounts included are geared towards sponsorship of these activities as well as travel for researchers and students to participate.

The total support we are requesting from BALTA for these activities is \$13,000, with these funds covering a range of travel and conference/meeting costs.

5. Other initiatives relevant to BALTA's remaining program

One key suggestion from SERC 3 at the Calgary symposium was that this final stage/phase of BALTA would begin with an examination of the existing SERC framework that has been the basis of the research to date. And if the ‘legacy’ contribution is the intended key final outcome, then we believe that it would be better to address the limitations of our organizational structure if we are to work on legacy. We wonder, if we don’t collapse into a single entity/effort, how will we construct a final integrated process that is coordinated?

If restructuring of the SERCs isn’t an option at this point, our request is that as we move into the final plans for each of the SERCs we include a discussion by members of the steering committee and the co-chairs to explore ways in which we could begin to identify and synthesis joint learnings. A joint discussion would be aimed at strategically deciding how best to efficiently and effectively structure a concerted effort to develop useful resources in both academic and non-academic contexts. The human capital available in SERC 3 is quite limited so we believe that in order to effectively undertake the work, it is important to work across SERCs for practical reasons as well.

6. Total Resources Requested from BALTA

Based on what we have described above we are requesting \$30,000 in new funding for the different initiatives for the upcoming year plus the \$7,755 already approved for existing projects as detailed on page 1. Since the activities outlined in this document are likely to come from different pots we would be happy to provide detailed budgets should this proposed plan be approved. The following table provides an overview of what the funds will be used for.

	Release Time	Travel	Students	Support costs	Sponsorships, Dissemination, etc. (will include further travel expenses)	Total
Funds already approved for current projects		\$1,200	\$5,305	\$350	\$900	\$7,755
Further Research			\$10,000			\$10,000
Publishing	\$6,500				\$500	\$7,000
Engagement		\$9,000			\$4,000	\$13,000
Total Requested	\$6,500	\$10,200	\$15,305	\$350	\$5,400	\$37,755