

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

Project Proposal – Project C18-2009

A. Title of project:

Procurement Policy and Market Development for the Social Economy: expanding the market opportunities for social enterprise, co-operatives, and other social economy businesses.

B. With which BALTA SERC Is this project associated? Or is it a cross cutting project? SERC 3

C. Lead researcher, organization name and contact information:

**David LePage, Enterprising Non-Profits – enp
Academic Partner: Centre for Sustainability and Social Innovation, Sauder School of Business, UBC
Academic Professor: Dr. James Tansey**

D. Names of other researchers and organizations involved:

**BC Social Enterprise Summit Planning Group
Dr. JJ McMurtry, York University agreed to consult on the project
Peter Roundhill, MBA, enp
Amanda Polak, Sauder MBA**

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

There is a growing knowledge and compilation of the social economy sector. Within the sector there is a significant component that is engaged in the market place as producers of goods and services. This includes small rural social enterprises like CLBC and the Right Stuff in Trail; larger initiatives in urban areas, like Kids in the Hall in Edmonton and Starworks in Vancouver; small and large co-operatives in many sectors, health care, fuel, food, etc.

The most effort to date has been on collecting data and information on the sector as entities, who are they and what do they do. The purpose of this research would be to look at the social economy businesses within the marketplace supply chain. What do they produce (supply) and who purchases (demand) and how to strengthen the market relations for social economy / social enterprises in BC and Alberta.

There are existing cases of government purchasing policy (Prince George, BC prison contracts with social enterprise that employs persons with disabilities to manage canteen services) and private sector sustainable purchasing practices (software company Business Objects purchases \$250,000 in catering from two Vancouver Downtown Eastside social enterprises) that need

to be examined, possibly as case studies, but also the principles of building and maintaining the relationship and the potential for replication.

This research will build upon work in other Canadian contexts, such as the Quebec government purchasing model, the Ontario Poverty reduction policy on government purchasing, and Manitoba's CED lens on purchasing. It will also utilize the work that enp is completing on contract with Vancity regarding purchasing policy. The non-profit sector in BC has initiated a Purposeful Purchasing initiative which will be included in the research.

Project Elements:

- 1) Building on previous work of enp in this area, a survey and categorization of existing literature on sustainable purchasing, focusing on social outcomes and inclusion of social enterprise in the supply chain
- 2) Collecting and review of existing BC / AB research and intermediaries working in the social economy from a market development role
- 3) A survey and scoping of market development examples in different product / service sector markets where social economy enterprises are engaged
- 4) Identify and define best practices in policy and practice of market development

Outputs:

- 1) A survey and categorization of existing literature on sustainable purchasing practices and policies
- 2) An annotated list of existing BC / AB market development activities
- 3) An annotated listing of examples and analysis of product / service market development opportunities that can be transferred to other enterprises and purchasers
- 4) A survey that collects data on market activity in the social economy
- 5) List of best practices used in social economy market development, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally
- 6) Web based searchable resource library posted on enp's website

Outcomes:

- 1) A better understanding of the market position and opportunities for social economy enterprises in multiple product / service sectors
- 2) Models and practices for social economy enterprises to use in improving their market engagement
- 3) Policy and practice examples that can be implemented by purchasers in creating a stronger market opportunity for social economy enterprises, such as RFP practices, community benefit agreements, etc.
- 4) Searchable database of resources which can be maintained and updated

- 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.]

Examining the social economy within the market place and the supply chain is a growing field of analysis from many perspectives: Corporate Social Responsibility, sustainable purchasing, and market development for suppliers are a few.

Adding this element and information to our collective information on the social economy in BC and Alberta would complement other research on the sector and its role. Also, within the legacy discussion, having market development principles and best practice models will be supportive of the practitioners market engagement.

This project will directly meet BALTA priorities in a number of areas.

- Increase the understanding of how social economy enterprises are engaged and can effectively increase the reciprocity, solidarity and sustainability of the supply chain**
- Increase the understanding of the social economy involvement, participation, and opportunities in the private and public sector market place**
- Provide access to relevant literature and research on how the social economy interacts with the private and public economy along the supply chain in a variety of product / services sector**
- Increase the effectiveness and success of social economy enterprises to expand market penetration, increasing their social, environmental and cultural impacts in communities**
- Identify best practices and public policy implications of supply chain decisions and the social economy**
- Identify how public and private investment in social economy can be increased, effectively building a stronger social economy enterprise infrastructure**

G. Will the project involve student researchers in a paid or unpaid capacity? UBC MBA student, Amanda Polak will be responsible for the deliverables outlined in item E “Outputs”. Payment for time has been agreed upon between BALTA and CSSI, and will be split between those two organizations. Amanda is currently completing her MBA specialization in Sustainability. The work accomplished through this research will complement her academic training. 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.

Enp will work with an academic partner to identify a student to be paid (up to \$5000, co-funded by BALTA and enp matching cash contributions) to take on the project. Enp will provide support and supervision in collaboration with academic lead on an in-kind basis.

H. Research activities, plan of work and timetable:

June and July:

- **Definition of the process and outcomes in collaboration with academic and practitioners (social economy enterprise managers) – includes meetings and conference calls with key informants and stakeholders**
- **Review and adaptation of existing research – enp has done some preliminary supply chain and market development research for a separate project**
- **literature and policy review of sustainability supply chain in private and public sectors**
- **completion of data collection and initial analysis of research and data.**
- **Key interviews as required**

September and October:

Write up the research results on the market policy and practices

- **identifying existing opportunities that could be scaled or replicated**
- **identify the challenges in market development from purchaser and supplier roles**
- **public policy implications**
- **private sector role**

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.

- **Submit articles to 2 journals for publication**
- **Present at a minimum of 2 conferences**
- **Website and electronic distribution of final documents, enp and Sustainable Purchasing Network**

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).

- **The research will be a valuable addition additional tool for the work of the Social Enterprise Market Initiative that is building a stronger market place for social enterprise.**
- **Publish the final report on enp website**
- **Distribute through appropriate supply chain organizations, such as Sustainable Purchasing Network and the PWGC Office of Small and Medium Size Businesses**
- **Present at a minimum of 2 practitioner conferences, including the Canadian Social Economy Summit in 2010.**
- **Distribute to appropriate related social economy and social finance networks, including Social Enterprise Council of Canada, Centre for Social Innovation and Causeway**

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.)

Amanda Polak (MBA Researcher) will be supervised by both CSSI Managing Director and Enp Director David LePage. Enp will provide appropriate time and resources, cash and in-kind, to insure that the project can be accomplished effectively and the materials produced can be utilized both academically and by practitioner communities. Specific evaluation will include the following:

- a. An end of project evaluation involving project partners and participants to assess extent to which project objectives, outputs and outcomes have been realized
- b. Project final report to SERC 3 and BALTA confirming results
- c. Student evaluations by both the student and supervisor using BALTA approved formats, as well as evaluation from the CSSI side
- d. Medium term follow-up report, 6 - 12 months after project completion, involving a sample of organizations to obtain their assessment of project results including impact of outcomes and potential for further project impact

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.

Primarily using existing research and other SSHRC project information. There may be some key informant interviews.

M. Budget and Contributions

Category	Requested of BALTA	Other Contributions
Student salaries	\$3200	\$2500 cash (ENP) \$3,300 cash (CSSI)
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)	\$ 599	\$594 cash (CSSI)
In-Kind Contribution		\$8,000 David LePage, 10 days @ \$800 per day for student supervision and research \$4,000 Peter Roundhill, 5 days at \$800 research \$4,000 Academic Partner, 5

		days at \$800 for research design and support
Research Support Costs (e.g. supplies, communication costs)		\$250 in kind from enp for copying and office supplies
Knowledge Dissemination		
Travel		
TOTALS	\$3,799	\$22,644

Budget explanation: total \$22,549

Student salaries & benefits – The project is being co-funded by BALTA/SSHRC, ENP and CSSI. BALTA/CCCR and CSSI will both have employment contracts with the students (the ENP funds will flow through BALTA/CCCR). CCCR overhead costs are calculated at 10.5%; CSSI overhead is calculated at 18%.

Researcher release time

In-kind: \$8,000 David LePage, 10 days @ \$800 per day for student supervision and research
\$4,000 Peter Roundhill, 5 days at \$800 research
\$4,000 Academic Partner, 5 days at \$800 for research design and support

Supplies & other \$250 in kind from enp for copying and office supplies

Knowledge dissemination