

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

Project Proposal – Project A1-2007

A. Project Title

Innovative Use of Housing Co-operative Assets

B. Brief description of project and project objectives, outputs and proposed outcomes

The “Innovative Use of Housing Co-operative Assets” project consists of an examination of the potential for the use of fully mortgaged housing co-op assets to leverage funding or financing for co-op housing or other social economy purposes. The project will encompass two main phases:

- I. base data collection and analysis
- II. development and testing of a model for leveraging housing co-op assets

Phase I will be carried out from April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008. Phase II is dependent on positive findings from Phase I and will be carried out from April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2010. This second Phase will be subject of a subsequent Work Plan/Annex A.

Phase I has the following components:

- a literature review;
- key informant interviews
- a scan of current housing co-ops in British Columbia and Alberta to assess
 1. the amount of current assets
 2. when these assets will become fully mortgaged
 3. the plans that housing co-ops have for these assets, including maintaining current housing management practices (i.e., maintenance, subsidy) and
 4. the potential for using these assets for the development of new co-op housing (either as a separate structure or an intensification of the current structure) or for other social economy purposes
- an assessment of the potential for these assets to be leveraged.

These components will be researched concurrently during the study, to take place from April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008.

Project objectives

- To complete a current state analysis of similar initiatives underway internationally
- To determine the amount of housing co-op assets that currently exist in B.C. and Albert
- To identify when these assets would become fully mortgaged
- To determine the options that housing co-ops perceive for the use of these fully mortgaged assets

- To determine if potential exists for using these assets for developing new co-op housing (either as a separate structure or an intensification of the current structure) or for other social economy purposes .
- To identify possible partnerships in leveraging assets for these purposes
- To identify, describe, and analyze specific examples where housing coops (or other similar housing projects) in B.C. and Alberta have successfully used their capital assets to support social economy goals - this could include project profiles and/or some full case studies.

Outputs

- A research report outlining these findings will be produced and will be disseminated through the BALTA network and web site.
- A research paper will be published in either or both of an academic journal and a practitioner targeted publication.
- A presentation or presentations will likely be made, based on the above paper, including either or both of an academic conference or tele-seminar.

Outcomes

- Increased understanding of the potential role that housing co-op assets can play in leveraging opportunities for growth in the co-op housing and the social economy sectors.
- Increased knowledge of models that demonstrate innovative approaches to utilizing these assets to contribute to social economy activities.
- Increased awareness of the value of these assets in BC and Alberta.

Timeline

- The project will begin in April 2007 and end March 31, 2008

C. Purpose and significance of the study, including congruence of the proposed research with the over-all strategic research objectives identified for the SERC and BALTA

The purpose of the study is to provide well researched data on the potential for leveraging housing co-op assets for various purposes in the social economy.. We anticipate that these assets represent a sizeable amount, and could therefore provide support for maintaining current housing co-op projects or could be a source for potential development financing for further co-op housing development.. The study will also assess the potential for applying these assets for social enterprise purposes. The use of these assets in this capacity would help alleviate the difficulties currently experienced in the social economy of a) securing social enterprise venture capital and/or b) the dependence on government programs for social enterprise start-ups.

This project forms part of the goals of BALTA and SERC-1 to map the extent, scope, impact and characteristics of human services and affordable housing social enterprise activity in the region and to examine successful innovations in other settings that would be relevant here. The project will also explore key issues, opportunities and constraints of this potential source of social enterprise development financing.

D. Will this project be lead and managed by a SERC member or members or will it require a request for proposals?

The project will be lead and managed by SERC members.

E. Lead researcher, organization name and contact information (when known)

Carol Murray, Same Page Strategies

Tel: 604-251-7959

spstrategies@telus.net

F. Names of other researchers and organizations involved (when known)

John Restakis, B.C. Co-operative Association

Jenny Kain, City of Edmonton

Bob McKeon, Newman Theological College

G. Will the project involve hiring one or more student researchers? Will they need to be recruited or have they already been identified?

Student researcher(s) will be recruited and hired for the project. Although there is some advantage to hiring local students to develop case studies of current projects in B.C. and Alberta, the project will use the research skills of a senior student who potentially will use the data collected as the basis of a graduate thesis.

H. Brief description of project roles and responsibilities for project participants (lead researcher, other researchers, student researchers, partner organizations).

Lead researcher will oversee student researcher recruitment, develop project parameters, supervise student researcher(s), ensure budget compliance and assess and monitor work of student researcher(s).

Other researchers will provide background documents, suggestions for case studies, assistance with assessment of student researcher, and project input and feedback where applicable.

Student researcher(s) will identify projects to be examined, collect data on case studies, assess success factors, collect data on value of housing co-op assets in B.C. and Alberta and prepare draft and final research reports.

The research paper will be a collaboration of the lead researcher, the student and potentially other researchers. Ideally, much of the writing will be done by the student. Ideally, the student will also be involved in any presentations.

I. Indicative Budget

Information can be both dollar figures and anecdotal.

Category	Requested of BALTA	Other Contributions
Student salaries & benefits	\$10,000	
Researcher Release Time		10 days @ \$800/day for project supervision & management = \$8,000

Research Support Costs	\$1,000 for supplies, printing, telephone, purchasing publications	
Knowledge Dissemination	BALTA will be asked to organize a tele-seminar to share research results and discuss implications, with the costs of this being covered from BALTA's dissemination resources.	
Travel	\$3,000 for travel to housing co-ops in Albert and B.C. that are subjects for case studies	
TOTALS	\$14,000	\$8,000