

Dear Network Members:

Please find enclosed an updated version of the Labour Education and Training Research Network's research and funding framework, "Research Themes and Project Selection" -- developed and distributed within the Network in July, 1997. It is provided to (re)acquaint you with

- 1) the 'tangibles' the Network expects to deliver;
- 2) the framework that guides the Network's research (Section I);
- 3) the procedures and guidelines relating to research proposals and projects (Sections II-V).

First, we aim to accomplish a number of things by the end of this grant. These are to:

- a. Create and gather together a body of focused research on the provision of training;
- b. Publish the research -- in books bearing our imprint, working papers, articles in established journals, and articles in union and other widely read newsletters and magazines;
- c. Contribute to public education, and disseminate the research accessibly both electronically and in print;
- d. Contribute to the labour movement's expertise on the provision of training;
- e. Train a significant number of graduate students.

Second, *we have a 'clustering' of the research topics around a small number of mega-themes.* The objective of this clustering is to turn out at least two books, a number of Working Papers, and the raw material for more popular dissemination and public education.

This clustering of research topics is not meant to limit what the conferences, regional meetings, Speakers' Series and other forms of popular dissemination do. There is also space to fund good projects that do not fit into the clusters. Please see section I for more detail.

Third, we would like to remind you that the deadline for project proposals is now January 31. It has been changed to reflect more closely the research and hiring patterns of those eligible and responsible for research funding. Allowance has also been made for unions and community organisations to submit their own proposals in advance. A preliminary review will be held to offer feedback and the opportunity to develop partnerships with university-college based researchers. The deadline for these advance submissions and preliminary review is January 10. Section II provides more detail.

On behalf of the Research and Executive Committees, we very much look forward to your active participation in the upcoming year of research.

Sincerely,

Carla Lipsig-Mummé
Network Leader

Labour Education and Training Research Network

Research Themes and Project Selection

- I. Research Themes and Topics
- II. Application Procedure and Deadlines
- III. Project Selection and Funding
- IV. Proposal Format (and budget guidelines)
- V. Progress Reports and Research Results

I. RESEARCH THEMES AND TOPICS

Our Network is meant to focus on the *training industry* and how it provides training, rather than on vaguely everything about training. Focusing on the political economy of training as *an industry* sets certain parameters for us, as set out in our grant proposal. Four 'mega-themes' have emerged:

1. The Political Economy of the Canadian Training Industry: Policy in Historical and Comparative Context

There is, first, the policy context in which the provision of training is shaped. Privatisation and devolution are reformulating the historic triangular relationship between the funders of training, the institutions and associations which provide training, and the recipients of training. Topics include:

- 1.1.1. The evolution (history) of State policy
- 1.1.2. Financing: Canadian practice and international alternatives
- 1.1.3. The emergence and contours of the public, commercial and community-associative (unions and community trainers) sectors of the training labour market
- 1.1.4. The evolution of institutional arrangements for the provision of training
- 1.1.5. Where we are now

2. The Training Industry at the Crossroads: Devolution, Privatisation and Fragmentation

The provision of training is increasingly competitive. Providers of training are divided into three sectors: the public, the commercial, and the community-associative sector which includes unions, professional associations and community trainers. Public policy and financing play pivotal roles in this. Commercialised training threatens both public and the community providers. Funding cuts and devolution risk setting public and community trainers in competition with each other. We need to know what role corporate and public policy play in its evolution, what kind of regulation of trainers we need, what the impact of the privatisation of training is likely to be, etc. The range of issues include:

- 1.2.1. Overview
 - a. Two solitudes or many? Devolution in Québec and English Canada
 - b. A critique of the privatisation of training
 - c. Deregulation and re-regulation
 - d. Devolution of training to unions and community-based organisations
- 1.2.2. Providing Training: the Institutions under Pressure
 - a. The two faces of public training
 - b. Unions as trainers
 - c. Community training
 - d. The many faces of private training
 - e. Sectoral councils
 - f. Professional associations
 - e. A training tax and the rise and fall of stakeholder boards (e.g., the Quebec case, OTAB, etc.)

- 1.2.3. The Labour Market for Trainers
 - a. the changing division of labour for trainers
 - b. Becoming a trainer
 - c. Regulating trainers: Canadian and international experience
- 1.2.4. Canadian Directions in International Perspective

3. Training for What and for Whom? Evaluating the Effectiveness of Canadian Training Provision

Third, we need to know how well each of the three sectors of training providers provides training in the emerging financial and institutional framework. This includes training provided to new entrants to the labour market (the school-to-work transition), to the presently employed, to the “adjusted”, to the traditionally and newly marginalised, etc. This entails linking an evaluation of the effectiveness of each sector of the training market with an evaluation of the effectiveness of training for each of the “recipient” groups listed just above. We can look at:

- 1.3.1. Young Workers:
 - a. School to Work
 - b. School to Unemployment
 - c. Apprenticeship in international perspective
- 1.3.2. Incumbent Workers
- 1.3.3. Marginalisation:
 - a. Laid-off workers
 - b. Older workers
 - c. Women, Workers of colour, Native Canadians
 - d. The new marginalities

4. Training Matters: Best Practices, Training Systems and Alternative Policies

Fourth, we need to identify effective training experiences at home and abroad, propose means to extend their application, and propose alternative public policies. Examples of research topics are:

- 1.4.1. Canadian best practices: case studies
- 1.4.2. Useful experience in other countries: case studies and reflections on the effectiveness of training systems
- 1.4.3. Generalising from “a” and “b”
- 1.4.4. Our proposals for new policies and practices

5. Other Research Topics

The topics discussed are the *priority* areas in which the Network will fund research, but not the *only* areas. The sub-headings under each of the four themes indicate research directions and do not exhaust all the possible topics which may fit within the Network’s research agenda.

Funding is set aside for projects which do not clearly fit within these topics. Proposals for projects of this sort may be submitted at any competition. These research projects will normally be published as Network Working Papers; research funded under the priority topics will be published as part of a Network edited book.

Where necessary, the Network will commission research and/or publications on important topics.

These topics define priority clusters of research projects. They do not limit the topics that may be addressed in other activities like conferences or regional workshops, etc.

II. APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND DEADLINES

2.1. Collaboration between university or college based researchers and unions or community based organisations is encouraged. It should begin as early as possible. Such collaboration should be genuine, however, and the academic partner should take an active part in the design and conduct of the research. Where the academic partner is not an active participant in all aspects of the project, the proposal may be deemed ineligible.

2.2. An important feature of the network's approach involves the production of research results in formats of direct use to unionists. Researchers are encouraged to discuss with unions, from the very start of the research process, how research results might be used in union courses, handbooks, etc.

2.3. The funding body, SSHRCC, stipulates that research funds must be administered by a post-secondary institution. The institution is responsible for paying out, monitoring and accounting for research expenses. This does not disqualify academic-union-community partnerships, but the lead researcher must:

- be a member of the Network;
- hold an academic appointment at a Canadian post-secondary institution;
- be eligible for principal investigator status at that university or college.

2.4. The annual deadline for research proposals is January 31. They are to be submitted to the Network Coordinator by mail. Copies of proposals may be submitted by fax or email to meet the deadline, but an original must be received by mail and must be postmarked no later than January 31.

2.5. Unions and community based organisations initiating projects may submit their proposals for preliminary review before the January 31 deadline, but not later than January 10. The Network Secretariat and/or the Network Research Committee will endeavour to assist the applicant(s) in finding an academic collaborator and in the further development of the proposal if necessary.

III. PROJECT SELECTION AND FUNDING

3.1. Average grant size is \$10,000-15,000. But you may apply for a seed grant of \$5,000 or less in order to attract funding from other sources, and larger projects will be considered.

3.2. You may use your funding for 12 months or 24 months, but you must indicate the length of time you wish at the time of your application. If you are applying for seed money, it has a 12 month time limit.

3.3. During the next two years (1998 and 1999), funding will be available for research projects within all of the mega-topics.

3.4. Priority will be given to projects which reflect the best combination of the following criteria:

- a. Originality, methodology and empirical content of work;
- b. Importance and relevance to policy debates and Network objectives;
- c. Role of unions and community-based organisations, and student training;
- d. Qualification of applicant(s);
- e. Budget.

3.5. The Research Committee will limit its recommendations to three categories:

- a. *Accepted*: budget revisions may be specified;
- b. *Accepted with revisions*: revisions to the budget and, exceptionally, to methodology and scope

may be requested. Applicants will submit their responses to the Network Secretariat (the Network Coordinator and the Network Leader). Discussion and agreement on revisions should be completed by March 31;

c. *Rejected*: Appeals will not be accepted but applicants may submit a revised proposal in the next round of funding.

3.6. The Research Committee submits its recommendations to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is responsible for final decisions and for announcing the results.

3.7. The Executive Committee will advise applicants of the results on March 1.

3.8. Funds will be released in April so that research may commence May 1.

IV. PROPOSAL FORMAT (and budget guidelines)

4.1. Applications should include a one page cover page and a proposal of five pages maximum.

A. Cover page should include:

1. Title and précis (maximum 100 words) of the proposed research project.
2. Name, signature and contact information (phone and fax numbers; postal and email addresses) of the lead researcher.
3. The name and title of the administrative officer of your institution responsible for the administration of this grant.
4. If this application requires approval by your Office of Research (or equivalent), append the appropriate name, title and signature.

B. Proposals (maximum of five pages, including an itemised budget) should include:

1. A Working Paper (or book chapter) title.
2. A statement of the research issue to be investigated, a summary of its policy and/or practical significance, and identification of the most relevant 'mega-theme'.
3. Relevant literature review.
4. A description of research methods.
5. Collaboration and student training:
 - a) Specify collaboration planned within and among universities, colleges, unions, community groups;
 - b) Explain the respective roles of academics, and unions/community organisations within the project;
 - c) Identify the extent and type of student training to be provided.
6. Bibliographic references where appropriate.
7. Research schedule and proposed completion date.
8. A paragraph outlining the applicant(s)' qualifications.
9. An indication of which annual Network Conference you expect to present your paper (2000, 2001)
10. A budget (maximum of 1 page), using the following categories:
 - a) Salaries (including benefits) -- students
 - b) Salaries to others (including benefits)
 - c) Professional and technical services/contracts
 - d) Equipment
 - e) Materials, supplies and other expenditures
 - f) Travel
 - g) Total

4.2. As the reporting agency, York University mileage and per diem guidelines should be used in the calculation of travel expenses. York allowances for: mileage is \$0.27/kilometre; per diem, a maximum of \$44/day if accommodations are receipted and reimbursed separately; per diem, a maximum of \$58/day if accommodations are included.

4.3. SSHRCC research funding is governed and monitored according to rules and regulations to ensure that recipients do not gain personally from research funds. It is also intended to support training of graduate students in research. The Network is similarly committed to the use of students as research assistants to prepare them as part of the next generation of labour researchers and activists.

4.4. Unfortunately, SSHRCC does not permit direct payment to independent collaborators or to research consultants. However:

- a) In some cases, independent collaborators may be retained as research assistants to an academic researcher who is a Network member and based at a post-secondary institution. In that event, the member who is an independent collaborator must withdraw from the Network for the duration of the research assistantship.
- b) In exceptional cases only, the Network may permit research consultants to be retained for research projects. If the research consultant is a member of the Network, they must withdraw from the Network for the duration of their consultancy.

4.5. SSHRCC does not allow research funds to be used to defray the staff and/or research costs of trade union or community based partners.

4.6. Further information on eligible and ineligible research costs may be obtained from the Network Coordinator.

V. PROGRESS REPORTS AND RESEARCH RESULTS

5.1. Projects should be completed within 12 months of receiving funding (or 24 months if specified in the application). Each lead researcher should provide a written progress report six months after their project has received funding. It should indicate the current status of the research project. If delays have been experienced, the report should also indicate the expected date of completion.

5.2. Lead researchers should ensure that the Office of Research Accounting (or equivalent) at their post-secondary institution submits a "Statement of Account" to the Network Secretariat as soon as possible after March 31, SSHRCC's fiscal year end. The Network is required to report on the status of Network and research funds as of that date. Progress reports will facilitate the formal extension of funding beyond March 31. Due to SSHRCC restrictions, however, only in rare cases can funding be extended past more than one March 31 reporting date.

5.3. Each funded project should result in a Working Paper and be suitable for consideration as a chapter in an edited book. A diskette of the final version of the Working Paper or book chapter should be given to the Network Secretariat within six months of the completion of funding.

5.4. The applicant retains copyright of the Working Paper, but copyright for articles included in books remains with the publishers of the book. For all publications resulting from Network funded research, the researcher must acknowledge the Network and SSHRCC.

5.5. Each researcher receiving funding from the Network is expected to present her/his research results at the most appropriate annual Network conference.

5.6. On completion of their research, researchers should write a 500 word résumé of their research results. It should be suitable for reprinting in union and community newsletters and other publications.