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Building a Canadian Business Ethics Research Network

Introduction: (This application has three parts)

Part I: "A Story of Two Journeys", outlines what has been accomplished with SSHRC funding in phase one, the concept paper phase, and phase two, the interim funding phase, set against SSHRC's assessment criteria.

Part II: "Meeting the Objectives of the Strategic Knowledge Clusters Program", addresses a question: "Is it reasonable to expect that a fully functional, well managed, business ethics research network will meet the objectives set out in the announcement of the Strategic Knowledge Clusters Program?" Discerning the correct answer to this question has dominated the work of everyone involved in the development of this proposal through phases one and two, as well as phase three, the preparation of this application.

Part III: Describes in detail the **activities** planned for the network, the **management and governance** structure that will guide the implementation of our plans, the **team of participants** who will provide leadership, and our **budget**.

Part I: A Story of Two Journeys

This proposal and the Strategic Knowledge Clusters program are in many respects stories of two journeys. The journey of the Social Sciences and Humanities Council began in 2003 with a national consultation on future directions for SSHRC. Emerging from that consultation was a decision to launch a strategic research clusters pilot program. York University participated in that consultation and expressed its support for an interdisciplinary and cross disciplinary approach to strategic research, an approach deeply embedded in York's research culture.

In 2004, SSHRC announced a Strategic Clusters Design Grants pilot program. A small national multi disciplinary team of five senior business ethics academics joined with three advisors from government, business and the voluntary sector and responded with a proposal. Our goal was to assess the depth and breadth of research and research expertise in business ethics in Canada. The question guiding the project was a simple one: Could a business ethics research network be reasonably expected to add value to ongoing research activity? Or would it deflect intellectual energy into organizational wheel spinning, a question that was being asked more broadly of the SSHRC program itself. The team consisted of: Wesley Cragg, Philosophy and Business, York University; Fredrick Bird, Religious Studies, Concordia; Len Brooks, Management and Accounting, University of Toronto; Alex Michalos, Social Theory, University of Northern British Columbia; and Noel Simard, Theology, Université St. Paul. The advisory team included: James Cooney, Vice President, International and Government Affairs Placer Dome; Joy Kennedy, Eco-Justice Coordinator, KAIROS; and Kernaghan Webb, a senior policy analyst with Industry Canada. (See attached CVs for more detailed information.)

Following SSHRC's example, we launched our own national consultation. We hosted seven regional workshops: Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto (U of T and York University), Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax. Invitations to participate in a regional workshop were sent on very short notice to over 200 business, government, voluntary and academic sector individuals and organizations. Over 100 were able to participate in day long workshops co-hosted in each case by a university research center and in Calgary by the Sheldon Chumir Foundation. We also experimented with electronic communication tools, began the creation of a database of researchers, assembled a mailing list of more than 250 people, and circulated accounts of each of the regional workshops.

Our Findings were widely circulated for comment in the form of a draft concept paper. They identified three important areas in which a research network could add value, namely, research, capacity building and public dialogue. What also emerged from all our regional workshops and the discussions that followed was the virtually unanimous view that a network would:

- help to raise the visibility of Canadian research and researchers;
- assist in mobilizing and disseminating new knowledge in the field of business ethics; and
- add substantial value to ongoing research activity.

Equally important, our findings indicated a significant reservoir of business ethics research expertise across the academic, business, government and voluntary sectors on which to build.

Following the submission of our concept paper entitled "**Ethics and Business in the New Age of Globalization: Creating a Collaborative Business Ethics Research Network**" (see the twelve page attachment for excerpts), we participated in SSHRC's Knowledge Fair in Ottawa and circulated our findings widely to our mailing list and to organizations, government departments and corporations who had been identified as having a practical or scholarly interest in business ethics. The concept paper was posted on www.yorku.ca/csr, a website that had been developed to communicate the findings of an earlier SSHRC funded research project entitled "Ethics Codes: The regulatory norms of a globalized society?" which are also posted on www.yorku.ca/csr.

We then tested for institutional support by soliciting and receiving bridge funding from York University (\$10,000) and a matching in-kind contribution by the Schulich School of Business while awaiting a SSHRC decision on the future of the Clusters program. We also began to experiment with partnerships and pilot projects.

In the fall of 2005, a Strategic Clusters Interim Grants competition described as a "SSHRC Transformation Program" was launched. We submitted a proposal, and when we learned that our project would receive funding (\$25,000), we entered Phase Two of our network project, an exploratory and experimental phase focused on evaluating whether a business ethics research network would be likely to achieve the objectives set by SSHRC for strategic research clusters/networks.

In early January, 2006, an expanded network leadership workshop was held in at the Haskayne School of Business in Calgary to evaluate progress and strategic alternatives. A network coordinator with extensive management experience in the public, private, voluntary and academic sectors, was appointed on a part time basis, and a first newsletter outlining our plans was circulated. We then proceeded to test for our capacity to achieve network objectives with several initiatives.

1. A private sector partner, ARC Financial, a Calgary investment firm, was persuaded to match the \$25,000 SSHRC Interim cluster grant which provided encouraging evidence that a business ethics research network had the capacity to "lever (private sector) financial support from partners and other sources", one of SSHRC's Strategic Knowledge Cluster Grant funding criteria.
2. We assembled a small cross disciplinary, cross sectoral cluster of researchers, submitted a Research Development Initiative (RDI) proposal, and received funding for a research project designed to lay the foundations for further research on "Ethics at the interface of business and healthcare". This was a subject area of national importance that we had learned, in the first phase of our study, was not receiving the research attention it merited on the part of business or healthcare ethicists. Our intention was to use this study as a pilot for the purpose of testing the capacity of a business ethics research network "to foster innovative research agendas", "add value to existing research projects", "develop new research opportunities" and "lever financial support" for innovative and collaborative research projects.
3. A pilot, capacity building electronic case study project, involving a geographically dispersed team led by Loren Falkenberg, Haskayne School of Business (University of Calgary) was launched. The goal of this project was to evaluate the web to as a tool for creating case studies that explored the ethical dimensions of complex strategic business decisions from multiple stakeholder perspectives. Initial research had identified web based case studies as of significant potential value for mobilizing and transferring knowledge between and among business, government, voluntary and academic researchers and users.
4. We joined forces with a newly formed, Calgary NGO called the Canadian Ethics Leadership Forum, or CELF, to draw business leaders into public dialogue with communities around ethical leadership issues. We were intrigued by CELF's innovative experimentation with advanced electronic tools designed to map and track publicly, but anonymously, the impact of discussion on the values of participants in workshops, conferences and public meetings.
5. We initiated the development of a website designed to:
 - facilitate the work of the network;
 - raise the profile of Canadian research nationally and internationally;
 - foster knowledge mobilization and knowledge exchange; and
 - enrich public dialogue.

Our website like our network is a "work in progress". The results to date can be found at www.businessethicscanada.ca or www.CBERN.ca, our two domain names.

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Part II: Meeting the Objectives of the Strategic Knowledge Clusters Program

Central to this application and the work that has preceded it is a question: "Is it reasonable to expect that a fully functional, well managed, business ethics research network will meet SSHRC Strategic Knowledge Grant objectives?" Answering this question is of crucial importance to the CBERN Project Director, Dr. Cragg, and all those who have participated one way or another in the development of this proposal. If CBERN does not have this outcome, it will have been a colossal waste of time and money on everyone's part. Clearly this question must be answered carefully and thoroughly.

Determining the capacity of this project to meet SSHRC's cluster grant objectives requires answers to a series of questions:

1. Are the issues to be addressed by this network of importance to Canadian society?
2. Is there a sufficiently rich pool of research expertise in Canada to warrant the creation of a research network of this nature?
3. Is there an identifiable need for a network of the kind being proposed?
4. Is the need widely recognized and does this matter?
5. What are the challenges/obstacles to be addressed if the network is to be successful?

These questions guided the national consultation and the research which led to the preparation of our concept paper (www.yorku.ca/csr). They have also guided the preparation of this grant application.

Answers to the first four questions are set out in our concept paper, excerpts of which are appended to this application. The fifth question is of particular importance for understanding the strategy that will guide the development of our network. We propose, therefore, to address it in some detail in what follows.

Obstacles and challenges: We have identified four key issues to which creative and innovative answers will have to be provided if the network we are proposing is to be successful.

1. The first is the problem of fragmentation, segmentation and compartmentalization of research and researchers, an obstacle to

interdisciplinary research that SSHRC is attempting to counter with its cluster grants program and a phenomenon that has received the attention of journalists (Michael Higgins, *Globe and Mail*, Oct. 23, 2006), distinguished academic commentators (e.g. Alistair MacIntyre, 2006), the Social Science and Humanities Research Council and our own concept paper (supplementary reading, pages 9 to 12.).

2. A second serious challenge revolves around conflict of interest or conflict of interests. This problem is not explored in our concept paper but has emerged from subsequent dialogue as the network has developed. Research has shown, for example, that medical research findings can be influenced by who is funding the research. The Steifox study (1998) illustrates the problem. This study looked at industry funded studies of calcium channel blockers for high blood pressure and compared their results to industry independent research on the same class of drugs. There was a huge difference: those funded by industry were overwhelmingly likely to find that the drugs were safe; those not funded by industry mostly came to a critical conclusion on the safety issue.

This is not an isolated problem. We have seen the impact that conflict of interest problems can have on a prestigious Canadian medical journal. It is a subject of serious discussion in CAUT. (For a case involving business ethics, see www.caut.ca/en/issues/academicfreedom/educ-report-lettersize.pdf, and www.caut.ca/en/bulletin/issues/2006_jan/educ.asp.) It is an issue that connects to concerns with which NGO's wrestle in evaluating engagement and partnership proposals (for example this network) with the private sector or government. It is a concern that connects to worries about the objectivity of research undertaken by academic researchers who engage with business as consultants, business ethics consultants, for example.

The problem is a complex one. If networks like this one are to be self sustaining, one of the criteria to be used in evaluating the Cluster Grant applications, then private sector funding is essential. Equally important, however, is the fact that if networks like the one being proposed here are to mobilize knowledge effectively, the knowledge mobilized must be seen as credible by the public, by research colleagues and by its users.

Business leaders with vision know that business and society generally need access to research and researchers who are genuinely free and motivated to speak truth to power. Accurate information and high quality, reliable research is an essential to "due diligence". It connects directly to both the moral and the legal responsibilities of corporations, their managers and their boards of directors. This is particularly true of issues, decisions and activities with significant ethical dimensions because of their potential impact on the wellbeing of individuals and communities.

3. The competitive nature of both business ethics and the academy poses challenges for a network designed to be open, cooperative and transparent. The intellectual environment in our universities has become increasingly competitive affecting appointments, promotions and incomes in significant ways. Protection of one's intellectual property is not just a theoretical problem for academic researchers. It raises serious ethical issues when cooperation in the sharing of ideas is advanced or advocated.

The problem can be exacerbated by the opportunities for earning income as a consultant. Business ethics consulting today is common and can be financially rewarding. There is competition for consulting opportunities. Research activity can provide a competitive advantage that can militate against sharing research findings or research tools. Competitive considerations can also operate as a constraint for corporations where confidentiality agreements are common and opportunities for gaining competitive advantage valued.

4. There is a final and significant challenge that the network will face which, unlike the preceding three challenges, is probably unique to a cluster focused on business ethics. It has to do with a management and economic paradigm that is deeply entrenched in private sector management, private sector finance and economics. The paradigm is a complex one. It assumes that the sole or primary obligations of management is to maximize profits for shareholders and owners. It is intimately related to the view that the genius of "the market" is its ability to convert the private, self-interested pursuit of profits into public benefits. In popular culture, the view that business people are concerned only with profits finds expression in the view that "business ethics" is an oxymoron. It is a paradigm that leads some to associate business ethics with philanthropy. It is responsible in no small measure for the proliferation of alternative languages whose normative/ethical content is disguised and therefore more palatable. In the hands of business ethicists, ethics consultants, and managers responsible for shaping corporate policies, it leads to a belief that the language of ethics has no place in business unless business ethics can be shown or assumed to contribute to profit maximization.

There is no question that ethical business practices can contribute to the financial success of a business. That is to say, there is an obvious sense in which good ethics often is good business. However to justify business ethics and business ethics research for its profit-maximizing value is both pragmatically and ethically problematic. From a pragmatic perspective, it creates the danger of diverting research energies into establishing its truth, a goal which experience and common sense suggest is unobtainable. In an imperfect world, it is highly unlikely that doing the ethical thing will always be profitable. There are too many-counter examples. From an ethical perspective, it reduces ethics to the status of tool or strategy, whose value resides in its capacity to contribute directly or indirectly to the bottom line.

Instrumentalizing ethics disguises the fact that debates about corporate responsibility, or triple bottom line reporting or sustainability or responsible investment are profoundly moral debates. They have to do with what it is reasonable to expect of business in a world like our own where economic wealth is so unequally shared, where climate change poses serious social, economic and environmental risks, and where unsustainable patterns of economic development carry such serious implications for the wellbeing of future generations and the world in which we live.

At a theoretical level, what is at issue here is the relation between ethics and economics. Is ethics the handmaiden of economics? Or is economics the handmaiden of ethics? This question lies at the very heart of the sustainability debate as Jonathon Porritt points out in *Capitalism as if the World Matters*. It is equally central to the pursuit of economic development as Amartya Sen points out in his influential book entitled *Development as Freedom*.

At a management level, what is at issue here is the nature and purpose of the modern shareholder-owned corporation. At a practical level, what is at issue is the nature and scope of the ethical responsibilities of corporations and how best to ensure that those responsibilities are carried out.

Each of these four challenges will have to be addressed by the network we are proposing to develop. Each constitutes an obstacle, a challenge and an opportunity. If this network can create an environment in which these issues can be productively addressed, its contribution will extend well beyond the field of business ethics.

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Part III: Activities and Impacts

A) Focus and Scope of Network Activities

CBERN's purpose is to facilitate, support, and encourage the enhanced understanding and critical evaluation of the role of ethics in business. "Business ethics" for our purposes is defined broadly to include the interplay of the full range of practical and theoretical themes that are central to understanding the nature and scope of the responsibilities of business globally and locally. Inquiry will extend to consideration of the roles and responsibilities of business, government and civil society in determining and evaluating the ethical responsibilities of business as well as the appropriate allocation of responsibility for ensuring that those responsibilities are carried out. It will also include the examination of the ethical standards that should guide stakeholders and other participants as these issues are examined and debated.

The network will engage the full range of approaches and theories variously identified by expressions like: corporate social responsibility; corporate responsibility; corporate citizenship; corporate governance; triple bottom line reporting; economic, social and environmental sustainability; and responsible and socially responsible investment. The unifying theme, however, will be ethics, ethical values, ethical principles, the relation of ethics and economics, and the role of ethics in guiding business conduct and the regulation of business conduct in today's world locally and globally.

Our goal is to create what might best be described as a contemporary "agora", an intellectual marketplace where scholars, civil servants, business people, NGOs and the public at large, can gather to discuss, debate, explore, apply and research the themes in business ethics that they deem to be important. Our "agora" will be modelled on the agora of classical Athens, a marketplace where people met to exchange things of value and to discuss and debate the issues of the day. The network will welcome and encourage the participation of scholars from across the humanities and social sciences but also the sciences and professional and management schools and faculties. It will welcome the active engagement of voluntary sector, government, business and aboriginal participants, as well as organizations, firms, government departments, corporations and First Nations. It will seek to raise the profile of Canadian business ethics research and research applications locally and globally by engaging and working cooperatively with individuals, organizations, corporations, research centres and networks with similar goals and objectives locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

B) Knowledge mobilization

Our national consultation and related research has identified three important, interrelated functions or purposes for a business ethics research network: **research, capacity building, and public dialogue**. The tasks we have set for ourselves for each are:

- to facilitate, support and encourage the activities of individuals and groups engaged in research, capacity building, and public dialogue with a view to raising the profile of those activities nationally and internationally and maximizing their theoretical and practical social and intellectual impact;
- to model and explore creative and innovative initiatives;
- To stimulate and create "think tank" opportunities for critical reflection.

CBERN's website Home Page provides a visual overview and summary of the network and its three functions. In what follows each of these functions is described in turn.

Research: Our engagement and research strategy has four components.

i) As illustrated by the Home Page of our website, we are building a fully accessible research data base that will have a number of important features. When fully populated, our website will include a comprehensive picture of Canadian business ethics research. Active researchers will be profiled along with their coordinates, research interests, publications, research projects, and research findings.

Information will be linked to related entries in other internal website pages and to external websites and data bases. The website will also include a comprehensive data base of SSHRC and CIHR funded, business ethics related research projects.

We envisage a "website of websites" or a website cluster in which "satellite" websites with different levels of restricted access can be used to store data, organize virtual research team meetings, profile research activity and facilitate the dissemination of research findings. We have formed a partnership with ABEL (Advanced Broadband Enabled Learning) to provide the technology and technological assistance that will allow us to develop highly innovative approaches to the use of electronic communication tools for supporting all three Network nodes or areas (See below under **Implementation and Management** and also ABEL's Partnership letter attached to this application).

As a pilot, but also a demonstration project, we are discussing sharing responsibility for maintaining and developing a very sophisticated "orphaned" website with one of our Partners, the Social Investment Organization. The website was developed by a major SSHRC funded project called "Pensions at Work" for which funding has now ended. Assuming responsibility for this website will allow us to test and expand our capacity for maximizing the value of research projects whose funding has ended, develop a better understanding of the skills required to add value to existing research projects efficiently and effectively, and explore the value of building an intelligently linked website cluster or "website of websites". It will also give us a foundation from which to facilitate and encourage new and innovative "Responsible Investment" research agendas.

ii) Our national consultations both illustrated and identified the value of face to face meetings that allow for the exchange of ideas and the exploration of issues and proposals regionally and nationally. We propose to work with Research Centres and other Network Partners to encourage and support regional workshops across Canada. (See our budget for details). We plan also to hold a national conference that will bring members of the network together annually to share ideas, proposals, research findings, and working papers, and to participate in shaping network activity. Our annual conference will be held in rotation with the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences and the annual meetings of the Administrative Studies Association of Canada. Planning is also in the initial stages for hosting the North American meeting of TABAC, the Trans Atlantic Business Ethics Conference in 2010. The North American founder of TABAC, George Brenkert, who is also recently retired as Editor of *Business Ethics Quarterly* has joined our network as a collaborator. We see this as just one of the many opportunities the network will create for raising the profile of Canadian business ethics research internationally.

iii) Four research subjects have been identified as initial research themes for the Network: business and human rights; business and spirituality; responsible investment; and ethics at the interface of business and healthcare.

a) As described in Part I of this application, we have tested the capacity of the network to generate innovative research projects by applying for and receiving a Research Development Initiative grant to explore the ethical values that do, as well as the ethical values that should govern the intersection of business and healthcare. This pilot project will allow us to both explore and model the capacity of CBERN to develop new and innovative research proposals and to find alternative funding sources (e.g. CIHR) for that research.

b) Our national consultation uncovered country-wide, cross disciplinary but badly fragmented interest and expertise in business and spirituality. This is an example of current research activity, widely regarded as important, to which substantial value could be added through effective networking. To this end, we have begun to build a data base of business and spirituality research projects as a first step toward the goal of facilitating and encouraging research in that area. We are currently laying the foundations required to extend our network to include Aboriginal involvement with a view to facilitating access to aboriginal wisdom and insights on the part of the network participants. Our work in this regard will be guided and supported by Glenn Nolan and key members of the Missanabie Cree First Nation Council, one of our Partners and Paul Wilkinson, who has more than 30 years of experiences working with First Nations and whose firm is also a Partner (see the letters of support).

c) Our assumption of responsibility for the "Pensions at Work" website is designed to lay the foundations for the support and encouragement of innovative research on the theme of socially responsible investment. Canada has a strong and growing SRI community. SRI assets have grown from \$51 billion in 2002 to \$65.5 billion in 2004 (<http://www.socialinvestment.ca/SIReview04-original.pdf>). Canadian SRI funds are leaders in the field of shareholder activism and corporate engagement, and are advocating for stronger corporate responsibility on a wide range of issues, including climate change, human rights, economic development, biodiversity, sweatshops and global standards.

d) Business and human rights is emerging as one of the most important and controversial themes in business ethics. Initiatives designed to define the human rights responsibilities of business in global markets are under way nationally and internationally. The United Nations Draft Norms are a striking international example. (See our bibliography for references.) Here in Canada, the Department of Foreign Affairs has launched a series of "National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility and the Canadian Extractive Sector in Developing Countries". The pressure for this initiative came from a Parliamentary Committee Report that focused specifically on mining and human rights. Several of our co-investigators, collaborators and Partners are actively engaged in these discussions. James Cooney (a collaborator and a participant in all phases of the development of our network) and Talisman's CSR director, Reg Manhas, (Talisman is a project Partner) are on DFAIT's Roundtable Advisory Committee. Wesley Cragg, Donna Kennedy Glans (a collaborator), and Eugene Ellman, CEO of the Social Investment Organization, (the SIO is a project Partner) have all actively participated in the public hearings and presented written submissions. Several of our co-investigators, collaborators and Partners, for example, the North-South Institute (see their letter of support) have resource extraction as a focus of expertise, experience and research and are looking to CBERN to add value to their work in this area

On a related but distinct note, impact and benefit agreements (sometimes called participation agreements) between resource

industries and First Nations use ethical principles to structure business relationships. This is an area in which Canada is a world leader, a fact not well known in the business ethics community. A number of Partners including the Misanabie Cree First Nation have indicated strong support for CBERN in light of its potential value in mobilizing this kind of knowledge more effectively.

iv) Our research has identified a “think tank” role for CBERN. Supported by several previous SSHRC strategic research grants, Dr. Cragg has organized several high level, expert, three day workshop/retreats focused on exploring issues of strategic social, economic and environmental importance. (See for example “A Canadian Vision and Next Steps National Agenda” at www.yorku.ca/csr.) We propose to build on this experience to explore the kinds of issues identified as of central importance for this network in Part II above, as well as challenging issues identified by network participants and Partners. Experience suggests that workshop/retreats of this nature will be of considerable value in mapping innovative research agendas.

Two workshop/retreats are currently being planned. The first is being organized by the “Ethics at the business/healthcare interface” project and will bring together leading healthcare and business ethics thinkers for three days of intensive dialogue. The second retreat will focus on business and human rights. The goal of this second high level workshop/retreat will be to explore how to encourage the interactive engagement of business, government and voluntary sector leadership with research scholars on this important but very contentious subject. There is a real opportunity to bring a unique Canadian perspective to national and international deliberations on both these crucially important topics and to map out research agendas that would maximize the contribution that Canadian researchers are in a position to make.

Capacity building: Our national consultation and subsequent research has identified a pressing need for capacity building. Private sector corporations and professional firms are increasingly interested in building the capacity to identify more effectively the proper role of ethics in their operations and to build ethical values into their organizational cultures. Voluntary sector organizations need similar resources if they are to engage effectively and credibly in the evaluations of corporate conduct. The public is pushing government to develop effective tools for raising the ethical standards of business conduct through voluntary self regulation but also through improved regulatory and legislative controls. There is increasing pressure for more courses and better training in ethics on the part of universities and community colleges which in turn will require opportunities for graduate studies in business ethics and continuing research.

Ethics is now acknowledged both nationally and internationally to be of central importance if market economies are to accomplish the goal of economic development with benefits that are fairly distributed and fairly shared nationally and internationally. Corporations, governments and NGOs are increasingly focused on understanding and implementing ethical frameworks as guides to commercial activities. Yet there are virtually no programs in Canada designed to develop research capacity or the capacity to convert research into practice. Virtually everyone in government and the private and voluntary sectors who is engaged with these issues has acquired competence in business ethics informally.

One of the basic goals of our network is to address these shortcomings. We are building a website (www.businessethicscanada.ca) that will include comprehensive information about “Tools”, “Teaching Resources”, “Cases” and “Programs”. We propose to use the network and the website to encourage and support innovative developments in all four areas.

Full development of the Capacity Building component of our website awaits adequate funding. Nonetheless, we have been able to take a few small steps, focusing particularly on collecting readily accessible information on “Tools” of value for both teaching and research purposes. What we have entered to date, however, illustrates the possibilities. Flowing from a SSHRC funded project on “Ethics Codes: the regulatory norms of a global society?” is a comprehensive compendium of ethics codes that is being widely cited and used nationally and internationally. Research emanating from the SSHRC funded “Pensions at Work” project resulted in the creation of a “Guide to Instruments of Corporate Social Responsibility” that is also being widely cited and used. Both will be available through our CBERN website.

As detailed in Part I above, we have also initiated a capacity building case writing cluster led by Loren Falkenberg (Haskayne School of Business), a co-investigator in this project. The purpose of this project is to explore the potential for creating case studies that use electronic stakeholder data bases and websites to provide a comprehensive, realistic and unfiltered picture of the issues in play. We anticipate that developing electronic case studies of the kind envisaged will be expensive. Two of our Partners, CELF and Integrity Bridges, are playing an integral role in this project. One of our corporate Partners, Talisman, has expressed an interest in providing financial support.

In addition to building a data base around the headings listed above and initiating an exploration of the potential value of electronic case studies, our strategic plan for this area of the network is to facilitate, encourage and publicize:

- Professional development for academics with a view to building teaching and research capacity;
- Executive development opportunities in business ethics;
- Graduate studies development;
- Fundraising for scholarships and bursaries to support graduate studies in business ethics;
- Mentoring for students interested in business ethics as a field of study;
- Connections for graduate students to cross-disciplinary and cross sector research projects;
- Research opportunities.

We expect our Partnership with the Advanced Broadband Enabled Learning (ABEL) Research Centre at York University to add significant value to our capacity building activities. (See the ABEL Partnership letter for further information about this partnership.)

Capacity building is integrally related to knowledge creation, knowledge mobilization and knowledge transfer. It is central to building a viable network that has long term viability. It is also one of the benefits that will flow from a strong research base supported by a strong network. Our goal in defining capacity building as one of the three primary functions of our network is to provide the foundations for long-term, interactive cross disciplinary, cross sectoral engagement, and the foundations for high quality business ethics research and scholarship in the medium and long term.

Public dialogue: We propose to promote knowledge mobilization and knowledge transfer by facilitating, supporting and encouraging innovative and creative approaches to public dialogue. Our first step in this direction is to provide a comprehensive picture of events taking place across Canada that focus on business ethics or business ethics related topics. Our website will provide basic information about Canadian organizations engaged in promoting public dialogue on business ethics and the events they are organizing, including speakers and topics, with links to event organizer websites for access to further information about those events, their organizers and participation details. Accomplishments to date can be viewed on our website, www.CBERN.ca under "Public Dialogue".

We are actively engaged with the Canadian Ethical Leadership Forum (CELFF), one of our Partners, to explore the use of tools developed by another of our Partners, PDK Consulting, to facilitate participation and idea exchange in large public gatherings and smaller workshop settings. (This initiative is described in more detail in Part I above.)

We are planning to invite NGOs and other groups who are actively engaged in organizing conferences, panels, public presentations, debates, roundtables, and workshops, to a national workshop designed to explore the value that might be added to the quality of public discourse through a more cooperative and collaborative approach to meetings of this nature.

We propose to publish a quarterly newsletter that will be circulated to our mailing list and posted to our website. We will compile an annual "state of the art" report on business ethics in Canada. (Reports of this nature are common in other countries.)

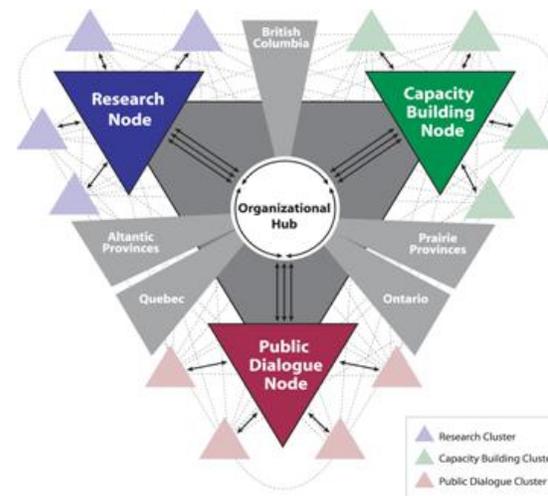
We will provide a comprehensive annual report of our activities which will review expenditures and budgets, and engage network participants in planning CBERN's activities. And we will post our annual report on our website and present it at an annual meeting, to be held in conjunction with our Annual Conference, to facilitate critical scrutiny of network activities and participation in Network planning and development.

The configuration of collaborators and Partners invited to join this project and provide leadership in the evolution of our network has been carefully designed to provide the expertise and leadership the network will require to meet our Public Dialogue objectives. Our partnership with York University's ABEL Research Centre will play a central role in mobilizing this expertise and experience.

We anticipate that the network will have a significant impact on the quality of Public Dialogue by facilitating knowledge transfer and knowledge mobilization. This in turn will result in a higher profile for business ethics research in Canada.

C) Implementation and Management:

The network will be managed from a hub supported by a professional staff with the office facilities, equipment, skills and experience required to build and support the activities of an interactive, dispersed network of collaborators, partners and participants. The hub will facilitate, coordinate and support the activities of the network.



Bronwyn Best has been appointed Project Manager [previously Network Coordinator], and will work under the direction of the Project Director, Dr. Cragg. Bronwyn Best has extensive experience working with the government (DFAIT), the private sector (The Chamber of Commerce) and the voluntary sector (National Coordinator and Secretary of Transparency International Canada.) She will be responsible for the day to day operations of the Network. Bronwyn Best is a Schulich School of Business MBA graduate.

Our budget makes provision for a communications and website manager working under the supervision of the Network Coordinator. This person, who has not yet been selected, will work with ABEL and the network to build a fully functional, flexible, easy to navigate website.

The task will be challenging as what we envisage is not simply a website but a cluster of websites or a central website linked to satellite websites, each designed to meet the needs of its users and each linked creatively to the other websites in the cluster. For example, we anticipate that the "Pensions at Work" website will become a CBERN satellite website. Our communications and website manager will be responsible for participating in the development of that website in collaboration with network participants with a particular interest in responsible investment, the Social Investment Organization and other interested partners.

Our budget also makes provision for a secretary working under the direction of the network coordinator who will provide support services for network staff, the Project Director and the activities of the network.

Because of her extensive experience in government, business, and the voluntary and academic sectors, Bronwyn Best will have specific responsibilities for guiding the activities of the Public Dialogue node of the network. Dr. Cragg will assume specific responsibilities for guiding the development of the Research Node. Dr. Falkenberg (Haskayne School) will assume responsibility for case study development. Responsibility for the other capacity building activities will be assumed in the first instance by Dr. Cragg but allocated to co-investigators and collaborators as tasks are identified and leadership emerges. Our budget makes provision for both centralized and decentralized support for network activity in all three areas of research, capacity building and public dialogue.

The management design just described assumes that clusters will form around each node. These clusters might be discussion groups, research teams engaged in SSHRC funded research projects, for example, "Ethics at the Interface of Business and Healthcare", project planning teams developing research project proposals, or groups planning a conference or workshop or a professional development program.

From the positive response to our regional workshops, we anticipate that regional networks will also form to encourage and support research on a regional basis. The regional networks might supplement the work of the national hub or form around one or more of the three program nodes.

D) Participants

In many respects, conveying an accurate and complete picture of the project participants is the most difficult aspect of this application. All the participants and partner organizations and corporations are leaders in the field of business ethics. All have been chosen for their ability to contribute to ensuring that CBERN achieves its objectives. Each has multiple qualifications that intersect in a variety of ways with the task of building an innovative, creative and useful business ethics research network.

As the CVs included with this application demonstrate, the academic profiles of participants model the character of the network we are building. Their scholarly qualifications and research are interdisciplinary. Many have business and/or government and/or voluntary sector experience.

All co-investigators have been involved with the development of the concept or the network itself over the past two years. All see ethics as having a central role in understanding the responsibilities of business in our globalizing economy. They also see this project as adding considerable value to their efforts to understand what that means and how best to put that understanding into practice in a complex highly competitive global marketplace.

Despite its limitations, in describing the qualifications of the participants, we shall use the traditional SSHRC categories of: principal investigator, co-investigator, collaborator and partner.

Project Director: Dr. Cragg has managed several large multi disciplinary SSHRC funded research projects. One of the more recent projects, "Ethics Codes: the regulatory norms of a globalized society?", resulted in a book, 21 published articles, a comprehensive compendium of international ethics codes widely distributed nationally and internationally, media reports, guest editorials and two high level, national, multi stakeholder, multi sector, invitational retreat/workshops. He is the Founding Chair and President of Transparency International Canada, an NGO that has a multi sector board. (TI is a global anti corruption coalition with chapters in over 90 countries world wide.) He was appointed the founding director of the Business Ethics Program in York University's Schulich School of Business with a cross appointment to York's Department of Philosophy. He is on the editorial boards of the two leading North American business ethics journals, served as the Corporate Governance Editor of the Journal of Business Ethics, published widely, lectured and given workshops in more than 40 countries worldwide, and served as the President of the Canadian Philosophical Association and as a member of the Social Advisory Council of Export Development Canada, the Audit and Ethics Committee of Public Works Canada and the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's Ethics Roundtable to name just a few.

Project co-investigators have all participated in the development of CBERN in a concrete way over one or more of the phases of its development. They have been chosen with a view to ensuring that CBERN is able to respond to regional as well as national aspirations in French and English Canada, and is well connected to ethics research centres in every region of the country. Some co-investigators are relatively early in their academic careers, some mid career and some senior scholars. All have established distinguished records of research and publication. All have active international profiles and are connected to local, regional, national and international networks. Alex Michalos and Deborah Poff are the founding editors of the Journal of Business Ethics, the only business ethics journal in the world used to rank management schools. All four academics who participated as co-investigators in the previous two cluster grant applications continue on as co-investigators.

Collectively the fourteen co-investigators represent a broad cross section of humanities, social science, management and professional school disciplines. All either head or are actively involved in university ethics research centres across the country. Several are the founders of research centres: Len Brooks, Clarkson Centre of Business Ethics, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto; Michael McDonald, Maurice Young Centre of Applied Ethics, UBC; and Arthur Schafer, Centre for Practical and Professional Ethics, University of Manitoba.

Project collaborators are an equally distinguished group, each with an impressive record of leadership in his or her own area of activity. Ten have teaching appointments at Canadian universities. Four are relatively early in their academic careers, each with a distinguished record of business ethics related research or engagement. One, Mary Runte, University of Lethbridge, last year organized the first Ethics/CSR stream at the annual conference of the Administrative Studies Association of Canada.

Eight are international scholars who have been chosen for their distinguished research records but also with a view to establishing and enhancing CBERN's international connections and international profile. This group includes: Malcolm McIntosh, the editor of the Journal of Corporate Citizenship, recently appointed Professor of Human Security at the University of Coventry in England; George Brenkert, recently retired editor of Business Ethics Quarterly; Charles Sampford, Foundation Professor of Law and Research Professor in Ethics, Griffith University, Convenor of the Australian Research Council Governance Research Network, and President of the International Institute for Public Ethics, together with five distinguished international scholars who will connect the network to scholars, networks, and research centres in England, the United States, Norway, Spain,

Hong Kong, Mexico, and Australia.

Seven of our collaborators have extensive private sector leadership experience as illustrated by two examples. Jim Cooney is recently retired as Vice President of International and Government Affairs for Placer Dome. He has played a leadership role at each phase of the development of CBERN. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, now Special Advisor to the Nuclear Waste Management Organization, chaired the recently released, highly regarded study commissioned by the Council of Canadian Academies entitled *The State of Science & Technology in Canada*. She brings a wealth of leadership experience in the United Nations, government and the private sector.

Our five NGO collaborators are equally distinguished. They include: Joy Kennedy, who has played a leadership role in all stages of the development of CBERN, and is currently Eco Justice Program Director for KAIROS; Roy Culpeper, President of the North-South Institute, a leading Canadian economic think tank, and a CBERN partner, who will bring the intellectual resources of his Institute and its networks and projects into our Network; David Simpson who is on the Board of EPAC (Ethical Practitioners Association) and AccountAbility; and Eugene Ellmen, Executive Director of the Social Investment Organization.

Project Partners include an elite group of companies each of whom has put ethics at the centre of their strategic planning and business management. Two are private sector corporations. Talisman is an oil company headquartered in Calgary. The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) is headquartered in Toronto. The third, Export Development Canada (EDC) is a crown corporation with head offices in Ottawa. Each has faced significant public controversy and criticism out of which has evolved a strong strategic focus on ethics. Each has committed to providing financial support, including an initial \$25,000 contribution by the Nuclear Waste Management Organization.

Three partners are consulting firms with ethics at the centre of their consulting activities. Two have strong international experience, Integrity Bridges and EthicScan. One, Paul Wilkinson Associates, has a long and distinguished record of work with First Nations. Each describes the value added dimension of CBERN in their Partnership letters.

We have ten university Research Centers as Partners, several of whom were regional partners in our initial national consultation. Two of these Research Centres are francophone.

The Institute for Ethics, Governance and Law, an Australian Research Centre, is a joint initiative of the United Nations University, Griffith University and the Australian National University. It will link CBERN to the United Nation University's Institute for Ethics, Governance and Law, the UN Global Compact and the ARC (Australian Research Council) Governance Network.

The Sheldon Chumir Foundation, whose focus is ethical leadership, hosted a regional workshop as part of our national consultation and joins us again as a Partner.

We have six voluntary sector Partners including AccountAbility, a leading UK NGO with a very high international profile for its work on ethics reports and ethics audits.

Students and New Researchers: The SSHRC focus in this category is typically graduate students who will be supported in their university work as paid research assistants and associates. As our budget indicates, we expect to engage a large number of students as research assistants over the seven year funding period for this project.

Capacity building designed to have a very positive impact on the quality of graduate education available to students with an interest in business ethics is a thematic focus of CBERN. If, however, CBERN is to "integrate students and new researchers in innovative ways" and facilitate "the mobility and networking of students and new researchers in Canada and abroad", as called for by SSHRC's evaluation criteria for the Strategic Knowledge Cluster Grant program, then a student perspective must be an integral part of network development and planning. Hence, we have made a special effort to include six collaborators, each with independent, non student status, who are either about to enter a PhD program, have recently graduated with an MBA, LL.M or PhD degree, or are currently enrolled in a PhD program. Including "students" as collaborators, is an innovation that stretches SSHRC's definitional boundaries. We point out in defence, however, that SSHRC is calling for innovation and creativity. We also point out that each of the collaborators in this cohort is qualified as a participant by virtue of employment history and professional and academic qualifications, quite independently of student status.

E) Governance:

CBERN will be governed for the first fifteen months by an Advisory Board of twelve project participants to include the project director as chair, seven co-investigators, and four collaborators and Partners. Our proposal is that the Project Director chair the Advisory Board for the first year and a half (June 2008) while CBERN is taking shape. This initial Board will be composed of Fredrick Bird, Len Brooks, Alex Michalos, Noel Simard, and Kernaghan Webb, who is in transition from government (Industry Canada) to an academic appointment (Ryerson), and two additional co-investigators, Loren Falkenberg (Haskayne School of Business/Calgary) and Cathy Driscoll (Sobey School of Business/St. Mary's/Halifax). The non academic cohort is to include two people who have served as advisors over the first two phases of the project, James Cooney (VP Placer Dome/retired) and Joy Kennedy (KAIROS) together with Al Pedden (CELF), who has been an active participant in the network for two years, and Yolanda Banks (EDC), who participated in our national consultation and has maintained contact with CBERN over the intervening period.

The Advisory Board will meet twice a year, once in conjunction with the annual conference, and once by telephone conference or a suitable alternative. The advisory committee will receive semi annual financial and activity reports. An annual report including financial statements and an overview of network activity along with a budget will be presented to the Advisory Board and the network participants at the annual meeting.

At the second and fourth annual meetings the governance structure will be reviewed by project participants and changes implemented within the framework of SSHRC regulations.

F) Leverage and Long-term Viability:

CBERN has already demonstrated its ability to lever financial and in-kind support from partners and other sources. In the initial

building phase of CBERN, we have received a private sector grant of \$25,000, \$20,000 of financial and in-kind support from York University, as well as financial support from Placer Dome (purchased in 2006 by Barrick Gold) on a number of occasions including our first “Advisory Council” meeting in Calgary in January, 2006. One of our corporate partners has committed \$25,000 as an initial contribution. The two additional corporate partners have indicated a commitment in principle to funding CBERN activities. All of this points to a capacity to secure financial and in-kind self sustaining support in the long term.

G) Budget:

We are requesting \$300,000 a year for seven years. We have in addition a first year initial \$25,000 cash contribution from NWMO and a commitment in principle to contribute financial support to the project from Talisman and Export Development Canada. York University and the Schulich School of Business have agreed to provide offices for the Project Director, Network Coordinator, Communications and Website Manager and the Secretary. In addition, Schulich will provide two research assistants annually for a total in-kind contribution valued at \$256,244 over seven years. Both the in-kind and the financial support that CBERN has received to date, together with the in principle commitment of our corporate Partners indicates that SSHRC’s portion of our budget will decline as the network develops. They also evidence the long term viability of the network.

Personnel Costs – Students: Our plan calls for 15 students research assistants in each budget year over the life of the grant. Three student research assistants will work directly with the network’s hub at York University. Twelve regionally located student research assistantships will support regional activities.

Personnel Costs – Non student salaries: We are proposing to hire a network coordinator, a communications and website manager and a secretary. Each of these positions will be a half time position. The Grant Program calls for the engagement of a professional staff to support the work of the network. We agree. We have already found an extremely well qualified Network Coordinator. We will partner with another academic unit for half time secretarial support. Initial queries indicate that there will be considerable interest in the half time communications and website manager’s position when it is advertised. These three positions when filled will ensure that we will be able to take full advantage of the communication technology to which we will have access through our partnership with York University’s ABEL Research Centre.

Travel and subsistence costs: Our plans call for six regional meetings and one national conference annually. We anticipate that corporate participants will cover their costs of participation in Network events. Funding support will be provided for network team members. Costs will be reduced and value for travel dollars enhanced by holding our annual meeting in conjunction with the Humanities and Social Science Congress or ASAC. We anticipate that this arrangement will open the door to a much wider participation in our annual conference than would otherwise be the case. Our foreign collaborators and Partners will be encouraged to participate in our annual conference and their participation costs covered. They will be encouraged to participate in other network events and activities where appropriate and funding for that purpose will be provided if available. However, we have made no provision for participation of our foreign team members except for the annual conference.

Other expenses: We are budgeting \$22,400 for **Professional/Technical** support. Included is website development and website management. Our plan is to provide the technical support required to make our website is user friendly and will meet the needs of the anticipated range of users. Our goal is to build a website that facilitates knowledge mobilization and knowledge transfer and support innovative and creative approaches to business ethics research. We are budgeting \$8450 annually for **supplies**.

Non disposable equipment: Our budget calls for the purchase of two computers in the first and fourth years of the project through York’s procurement contracts and \$1,000 annually for software.

Other: Conference room rental and AV rental. Our budget of approximately \$8,000 is based on best estimates of our annual conference and regional meetings costs together with related expenses and the rental of AV equipment.

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