

BC-Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance (BALTA)

Policy on Addition and Removal of SERC Members

NB: SERC = Social Enterprise Research Cluster

Policy Synopsis

The rationale and constraints/priorities for adding additional SERC members are explained. The process for nominating and appointing SERC members is explained, as well as the criteria for considering appointments. The policy also includes the grounds and process for removal of a SERC member.

Preamble – The Context for Adding SERC Members

The funding which the BALTA Research Alliance currently has for support of SERCs and their research activities is provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). SSHRC has policies that limit who can receive SSHRC funding, even for reimbursement of expenses. These policies limit such financial support to approved project co-investigators, approved project collaborators and project-affiliated students. While it is possible to add SERC members without BALTA covering their travel and other participation-related expenses, it is anticipated that in most cases BALTA will cover such expenses. Given the limited financial resources available to BALTA for the work of the SERCs, it is thus important to prioritize for acceptance of additional SERC members those people who can make a critical contribution to the strategic research priorities approved by each SERC.

To add a collaborator or co-investigator, SSHRC requires that the person being added must be approved by the Steering Committee and by the Lead Investigator personally (Mike Lewis). Mike Lewis must then submit the person's name to SSHRC, along with a completed SSHRC CV for the person. Thus, new SERC members must go through a process to be approved. They do not simply become a SERC member because they want to or because someone on a SERC invites them to.

Approval of New SERC Members

The initial decision point for approval of a new SERC member is at the level of the specific SERC. The SERC should review any options for additional SERC members in light of the criteria for approving new members. Once a SERC decides to propose a new member, that proposal is submitted by the SERC co-chairs to the Steering Committee for approval. Once the Steering Committee has approved the new SERC member, generally as a collaborator at least initially, then BALTA staff will approach the person in question to establish whether they are willing to join the SERC. If the answer is affirmative, then the person will be invited to complete the SSHRC CV and submit that to BALTA. A letter from Mike Lewis informing SSHRC of the new SERC member, along with that person's SSHRC CV, will then be sent to SSHRC.

Criteria for assessing potential new SERC members include:

1. Does this person bring a relevant background vis a vis the social economy and/or social economy related research to the SERC?
2. Can this person make a critical contribution to the strategic research priorities and framework of the SERC?
3. Can this person play a significant role in advancing specific research priorities and projects/activities of the SERC (eg. through advising on research, leading a specific research area, leading a specific research project, supervising students, etc.)?
4. Can this person commit the time to be an active SERC member?

Resignation and Removal of SERC Members

SERC members can resign at any time through submitting a letter of resignation to the SERC co-chairs, the Steering Committee and/or the Lead Investigator. The Lead Investigator will write a letter to SSHRC informing them of the resignation.

A SERC member can be removed upon recommendation of the two SERC co-chairs and a subsequent decision of the Steering Committee. The usual reason for removal of a SERC member will relate to non-participation or inadequate participation in the meetings and work of the SERC. In such cases, the co-chairs will first inform the person of their concerns and provide an opportunity for the person to address those concerns. If there is no response or the response is unsatisfactory, the co-chairs will then propose the removal to the Steering Committee, explaining the reasons for their decision.

In rare cases, a SERC member could be removed if their actions are undermining or damaging the work of the SERC or if their actions present a risk of damage to BALTA and its work. In such case, the co-chairs will normally attempt first to resolve the problem with the person concerned, though the Steering Committee reserves the right to act immediately if circumstances warrant.

Upon removal of a SERC member, the Lead Investigator will write letters to SSHRC and the person concerned informing them of the decision.

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