

Background Information

The NCE Program goal has the following objectives:

- Stimulate internationally competitive, leading-edge, multidisciplinary research in areas critical to Canadian economic and social development;
- Develop and retain world-class research and research mobilization capabilities in areas essential to Canada's productivity and economic growth;
- Create nation-wide and international partnerships that bring together the key individuals and organizations needed to generate and implement multifaceted solutions to complex Canadian challenges;
- Accelerate the exchange of research results within the Network and the use of this knowledge by organizations within Canada to produce economic and social benefits; and
- Increase Canada's international visibility and reputation as a leader by attracting world-class collaborations, and developing partnerships with international organization counterparts, when applicable.

Applications are evaluated against the following criteria:

1. Excellence of the research program
2. Development of highly qualified personnel
3. Networking and partnerships
4. Knowledge and technology exchange and exploitation
5. Management of the Network

Timeline

The NCE competition moves through two key stages. Applicants were first required to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) in August 2013. CBERN was one of ten successful applicants at this stage (from 83 applications selected). CBERN must now prepare a full application – the **deadline is June 11, 2014**. Winners will be announced in the fall of 2014 and funding will begin in March 2015.

CBERN NCE Application Overview



[Download "CBERN at a Glance" >>](#)



[Download "CBERN Activities Overview - The First Six Years" >>](#)

The Opportunity:

The Canadian Business Ethics Research Network ([CBERN](#)) has been invited to apply for a Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) five year grant to fund a research program designed to find values-driven solutions to key challenges standing in the way of economic and social development, particularly in the resource development sector. The Networks of Centres of Excellence is a national research program that funds internationally competitive, leading-edge, multidisciplinary research networks in areas critical to Canadian economic and social development. CBERN is an innovative, collaborative, cross sector and multi disciplinary business ethics research network focused on: finding and implementing creative, solutions to ethical challenges impeding Canadian economic development; fostering leadership development; and stimulating informed public dialogue.

The Research Challenge:

Economic development globally and in Canada is being impeded by unresolved questions of a profoundly ethical

nature: human rights, environmental protection, obligations to future generations, poverty reduction, corruption, and aboriginal rights, to name just a few. Further, although it is not always recognized, important keys to unlocking solutions to many of these problems rest with investors and particularly institutional investors. It is also clear that solutions will require rethinking the allocation of governance responsibilities, laws and public policy. These are all areas plagued by several problems: research gaps that need to be filled if these issues are to be addressed and properly resolved; the need for tools, models and programs designed to implement research findings aimed at resolving these challenges; capacity and leadership development; informed decision makers.

The Proposal:

The NCE grant application will be organized around three Topics/Clusters and five Cross-Cutting Ethical Themes:

Topics/Clusters:

- Resource Development (*initial focus on mining*)
- Responsible Investment
- Governance, Law and Public Policy

Cross-Cutting Ethical Themes:

- Aboriginal Perspectives
- Anti-Corruption
- Environment and Future Generations
- Human Rights
- Spirituality

After almost a decade of collaborative network building and capacity development, it is now clear that CBERN has the expertise required to create values driven practical solutions in each of these topic and thematic areas.

Our Goal:

Our goal is to find trust building solutions to fundamental values-based challenges and conflicts facing Canada and the Canadian economy. Mining is an area of international leadership for Canada and an area of fundamental Canadian economic importance. For this reason, research will focus initially on mining as a case study. We expect the scope of research to widen to other natural resource sectors as the research program develops. Research, however, will not be focused exclusively on resource development. Investors and investment institutions have significant impacts on economic decision making. The role of investment and large investment institutions in resolving values-based challenges facing the Canadian economy in general and mining in particular will be a second focus of research. Finally, it is also clear that solutions will require rethinking governance relationships and the allocation of governance responsibilities to the private, public and voluntary sectors as well as legal, regulatory and public policy frameworks.

The research agenda will be solution driven, defined and continuously evaluated collaboratively by cross sectoral and multidisciplinary steering committees. A key element will be the development and use of tools, education and communication models, and the expertise that will ensure that research findings are actually used to resolve the challenges they are designed to resolve. This will include: structured, trust building dialogue where knowledge can be shared in creative and non threatening ways; the use of advanced data visualization tools and techniques to communicate complex ideas to non expert audiences; the use of information communication technologies (websites, social media, blog posts, webinars) to reach the public and also those with the practical responsibility for solving social, economic and environmental challenges; and workshops, seminars, conferences, public presentations and academic, trade and professional publications.

In Summary:

The invitation to submit an NCE grant application is an exciting opportunity to bring world class Canadian research expertise to bear on fundamental ethical challenges currently facing business, government and Canadian society generally. The social, economic and environment benefits that will flow from concerted, coordinated, cross sector efforts to address these challenges will be substantial.