The following information is an excerpt from the Letter of Intent submitted to the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation in response to the RECODE Request for Proposals of Spring 2014.

Queen's University

1. What are your initial aspirations and vision for how social innovation and social entrepreneurship can take root and grow at your institution and contribute to broader change?
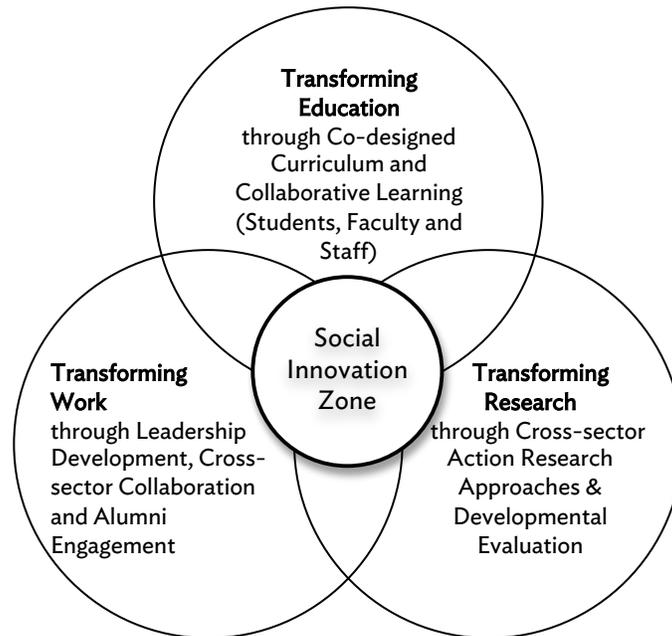
As illustrated with *Figure 1*, Queen's vision is to consolidate, mainstream and leverage faculty-based activities, programs and initiatives in social innovation and social entrepreneurship to create an interdisciplinary, campus-wide Social Innovation Zone that will:

> **Transform Education** by redesigning how students are taught. We will co-create an interdisciplinary and inter-faculty "Social Impact Academy" (SIA) featuring a number of learning modules about various pathways for social change for students, staff and faculty across our campus from Business, Engineering, Geography, Policy and Environmental Studies, Biology, Arts and beyond. SIA will focus on students as well as staff and faculty because we believe in order to change the system of thinking about social innovation on campus we must shift the insight for all three sets of university stakeholders. The SIA will incorporate sessions on systems thinking, innovation, social enterprise, social financing, cross-sector partnering, and lab approaches. We will co-design these sessions with the input and involvement of our community partners and student groups. We will seek to complement the SIA with a series on ongoing workshops and intensive activities such as student challenges and in-depth learning approaches on a given topic such as development approaches to poverty alleviation. We will work towards the launch of a campus-wide Cross-Sector Lab and Social Venture Fund to support the learning objectives of the SIA and the evolution of the campus-wide ecosystem.

> **Transform Research** by inverting the traditional approach to research and knowledge mobilization. Instead of research informing practice, action research co-created by students and faculty will inform scholarly work through networks like the Community of Social Innovation (COSI), an academic think-tank co-founded in 2012 by Queen's School of Business to foster and advance the sharing of insights around teaching, data, theory and methods in the social innovation space. We will work to identify and execute research of interest to our community and community partners.

> **Transform Work and Workplaces** by training a cadre of students in all disciplines who will be the next generation of leaders deeply engaged in social change. By leveraging our community partners and worldwide network of 140,000 Queen's alumni, we will mentor students from across campus in key skills and insights, and provide them with the seed funding to turn winning innovations into new social ventures. The creation of a cross-sector alumni mentor network will be critical to the success of our efforts.

Figure 1: Queen's Social Innovation Zone

Transforming Education through Co-designed Curriculum and Collaborative Learning (Students, Faculty and Staff)

Transforming Work through Leadership Development, Cross-sector Collaboration and Alumni Engagement

Social Innovation Zone

Transforming Research through Cross-sector Action Research Approaches & Developmental Evaluation

While our initial aspiration is to grow Queen's campus ecosystem, discussions are already underway around scaling up our education model to include regional institutions like Royal Military College and St. Lawrence College. Through case studies, joint research projects and application-based learning that includes social venture design and prototyping, we also plan to share our unique cross-sector approach and proven research skills as a member of the RECODE National Network.

2. What types of activities, practices, programs and/or structures are you proposing to achieve this?

We are proposing a phased approach to the creation of a cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary Social Innovation Zone at Queen's University that meets each of the six stated objectives of the RECODE program. The following activities are proposed through each of four phases:

> **Phase 1:** We will conduct a deep scan of social innovation on campus in order to understand how social innovation (as opposed to innovation) is understood, what is already happening and what can and should take place as part of the Queen's Social Innovation Zone.

> **Phase 2:** We will leverage existing efforts campus-wide and forge new partnerships on campus and within the Kingston and area community (see Q4). Specifically, this phase will include:

- Identification of social innovation champions in departments, centres and faculties campus wide;
- Creation of a cross-sector, cross-campus Steering Committee to oversee Queen's social innovation transformation (see Q4);

- Scaling up of existing activities, such as boot camps, courses, workshops and case writing offered through Queen's Centre for Responsible Leadership and Queen's School of Business business plan and case competitions to all Queen's students; and
- Creation of new activities and partnerships.

Phase 3: We will create key social innovation vehicles as the building blocks of campus-wide transformation. This phase will include the launch of:

- **Queen's Social Impact Academy**, a co-created campus-wide learning platform for students and faculty from across campus and the source of existing and new traditional and online courses in the areas of social innovation and human-centred design; social enterprise design and evaluation tools; and social finance and impact investing. The Academy will connect students, staff and faculty from across campus with the Social Innovation Zone's campus and community partners, and with other people and institutions via the RECODE National Network.
- **Queen's Social Impact Lab**, a physical space for the development of social ventures via design, prototyping and innovation. The Lab will be complemented by a Social Venture Fund and a Queen's community partner and alumni mentorship program to support the launch of new social ventures.

Phase 4: Within the Social Impact Academy, we will leverage Queen's existing research networks to mobilize knowledge. We will share our research with other universities and involve our community partners at Ashoka Canada, a global association of the world's leading social entrepreneurs, and the MaRS Centre for Impact Investing. During this phase, we will also introduce formal impact measures — an active process of developmental evaluation involving student case study projects and storytelling training. Queen's stories of social innovation process, success and failure will serve as an integral part of our learning platform to be shared via the Academy, media partners and the RECODE National Network.

3. How do they align with existing initiatives on campus?

Social innovation at Queen's University has its home in the Centre for Responsible Leadership in Queen's School of Business. Founded in 2004, CRL is committed to inspiring practitioners, researchers, teachers and students of business to instill responsible leadership as an integral part of their thinking and practice. Among many social innovation activities, the Centre offers:

- An annual Social Innovation Boot camp, attended in 2014 by more than 80 undergraduate and graduate students from across campus;
- Discovery Learning Workshops on social innovation, social enterprise, design thinking, Aboriginal Business, and other relevant topics;
- Students in the Certificate Program for Responsible Leadership perform more than 6,000 hours of directed community outreach annually. These experience-based opportunities offer more in-depth knowledge about business ethics, social innovation/social entrepreneurship, sustainability and community engagement

- A Speakers' Forum, Social Entrepreneur-in-Residence and an annual Responsible Leadership Summit that brings leading social innovators to campus;
- Multiple courses in social innovation, social enterprise, sustainability and business ethics as well as Certificate programs in Responsible Leadership, along with development of a series of cases and teaching materials; and
- A Social Innovation Research Incubator.

CRL is also the co-founder of the Community of Social Innovation network (COSI), which seeks to build a global community of high quality research scholars to mentor and support the work of more junior scholars in the field. In addition to Queen's, COSI includes faculty from Boston College, Harvard, Insead, Michigan, Rotman, Stanford and others.

Other pockets of social innovation also exist at Queen's University. From joint programs between Business and Engineering such as the Queen's Summer Innovation Institute, the Third Sector Initiative at the School of Policy Studies, and community focused initiatives in Geography, Development and Environmental Studies and the School of Urban and Regional Planning, there is momentum and appetite for social innovation on our campus.

While Queen's is already engaged in successful learning, research and outreach related to social innovation, few, if any of the initiatives cross faculty lines and involve the kind of interdisciplinary approach that is key to problem-solving at a systems level.