



***Advancing Social Purpose in Advanced Education Administration and Finance Functions
to Strengthen Social Infrastructure in Canada***

Spring 2018 COWFLOP Conference

Council of Western Financial Logistical and Operational Personnel
Vancouver Island University, Nanaimo BC

Thursday April 26, 2018

Aide-Mémoire

On April 26, 2018, J.W. McConnell Family Foundation's RECODE initiative and CAUBO hosted a workshop with 22 senior leaders in administration and finance in Western universities. The purpose of the workshop was to present on the [Social Purpose Administration and Finance Framework](#), get feedback on the initiative, and identify collaboration opportunities to overcome barriers and scale social purpose administration within post-secondary institutions, if desired.

Introduction

The McConnell Foundation is a private Canadian foundation that develops and applies innovative approaches to social, cultural, economic and environmental challenges. They do this work through granting and investing, capacity building, convening, and co-creation with grantees, partners and the public. Active in a number of domain areas, including post-secondary, McConnell seeks to help create the conditions for the post-secondary sector to further leverage all its assets to better support community well-being. In current partnerships with national associations and regional networks McConnell funds convenings, non-academic research and project-based collaboratives. At this early stage, McConnell is consulting with key stakeholders within CAUBO and is looking to co-identify strategic collaborative / collective sector-wide priorities that will accelerate and scale progress. McConnell is interested in hearing what the sector sees as priorities for funding. [Feedback](#)

Participants provided the following feedback on the Social Purpose Administration and Finance Framework:

- Universities are already engaged in social purpose administration and finance, and have been for a long time, although it might look different at each institution
- For universities to become more visible in social impact work, it might just be a question of better communicating our contributions
- Many social impact projects might come at little to no cost to the institutions

- The social purpose administration and finance project should more explicitly address the role of students
- Depending on the initiative, there could be certain barriers to overcome, for example, in community-based procurement local food services suppliers lack capacity to supply large institutions
- Businesses have great potential to be partners in social impact administration

Opportunities for Collaboration

The following ideas were suggested as potential areas for collaboration:

1. **Social Infrastructure 'Helpdesk'**: for those interested in implementing new social infrastructure initiatives at their individual institutions or collectively - this helpdesk would give guidance regarding who's already working in a specific area, where to start, potential partners or funding opportunities, how to get to the execution stage, and more.
2. **Addressing Common Barriers**: despite the vastly different institutions that VPs in Finance and Administration work in, they still face common barriers. Is there a way to bring collegial advice or innovation to address these challenges?
3. **Strategic Structuring and Coordination**: institutions are doing this work already, but how do we structure and coordinate it to have the most impact? How do we communicate it?

Next Steps

McConnell will summarize and share the notes of the session and will incorporate the feedback into its planning. These ideas will be shared for further feedback at the upcoming social purpose and administration finance workshops at the CAUBO Conference.