Community-university research partnerships

Hall, Peter V., MacPherson, Ian

Published by University of Victoria Libraries

Hall, Peter V. and Ian MacPherson.
Community-university research partnerships: Reflections on the Canadian social economy experience.

University of Victoria Libraries, 2012.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/65888

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=2380238
Partners in Research: Reflections on Creating and Sustaining a Collaborative Research Network

Leslie Brown, Mount Saint Vincent University
Social Economy and Sustainability Research Network

In this chapter I reflect on the experiences of the Social Economy and Sustainability Research Network (SESRN) as a community-university research partnership, developed within the framework offered by SSHRC’s CURA programme. Reviewing this experience allows me to draw out some of the implications for knowledge about, and capacity for, successful partnered research. SESRN was thus an intentional creation, a community of practice (Wenger, 2006) created by people and organizations entering into new relationships. Highly diverse though the members were (e.g., in institutional affiliation; culture/subculture; nation; degree of inclusion and marginalization in the wider society; language; experience with, and expectations of, research and of activism), they were drawn together by a desire to be part of a research network focusing on the social economy.

A major priority of the first year in particular was to lay the foundations for the kind of community we wanted to build, foundations that would allow us to work effectively as a team, to strengthen our knowledge and capacities, and to meet the research and dissemination goals we honed together. After that, the challenge was to continue as we had begun, to be flexible and open to new opportunities while juggling the myriad expectations we held for our work together, and to meet commitments we made to external parties. This chapter describes our efforts to achieve such an accommodation, offering commentary on the successes and challenges along the way.

As Director of the network my reflections are necessarily grounded in my own experiences and particular locations within the network: based in a university, located in Halifax, player of multiple roles (as network director, as participant in several projects and in a number of governance bodies). I draw, as well, on reports from the many evaluations that were conducted during the course of the CURA. I rely heavily on two reports of team-wide evaluations – one prepared by an academic (Kienapple, 2008) and the other by a community partner (Daughton, 2011). While our experiences are certainly relevant to other CURAs, the qualities of the SESRN were shaped by our particularities - the research focus on the social economy of Atlantic Canada,
the characteristics of SESRN’s people and organizations (social economy organizations and activists, community-oriented academics), and the ways the partnership adapted to (and shaped) the SSHRC CURA programme guidelines and expectations. Many of the academic researchers had experience in social economy organizations (often as volunteers), and many of the community partners had experience with research (some in CURAs), so these people brought invaluable experience to the network.

Below I consider partnered research from the perspectives of university researchers, community partners/activists, and SSHRC. Recognizing, respecting and addressing these sometimes divergent views is central to building a successful partnership. I then describe SESRN’s approach to: (1) prioritizing shared foundational principles, (2) developing structures and processes to effect participatory methods of governance, (3) prioritizing Participatory Action Research (PAR) approaches to developing and carrying out partnered research projects, and (4) framing and ensuring accountability (which requires the assessment of successes and challenges). The third section of the chapter reviews the results of SESRN’s various self-evaluation reports, summarizing experiences and outcomes. The final section offers some concluding observations.

Three Perspectives on Partnered Research: Intersections and Divergences

Table 3.1 poses five questions that every partnership addresses, whether deliberately and as part of planning for engagement, or without explicit dialogue and on an ad hoc basis. Examples of potential answers to these questions are presented in the three right hand columns of the table; answers from the perspectives of: partners based in SE organizations rooted in communities, partners based in the academy, and from SSHRC’s perspective. At first glance, Table 3.1 shows considerable agreement: on definitions of partnered research, on who should be included in the partnership, and on the way the partnership should work. However, many complexities and nuances are not immediately apparent, even when starting from the premise that all partners commit to collaborative, respectful and egalitarian partnerships. For SESRN, the differences in meaning, expectations, and approaches to the work had to be addressed and, to the degree possible, reconciled, oft-revisited and again reconciled – an iterative process. Network members needed time to know and build trust with one another, bridging the “categories” of university and community, while meeting obligations to one another, to our home institutions and communities, and to SSHRC. Since they had to do this quickly, it was necessary to bring explicit “negotiated” aspects to bear.
We knew from the literature, and our own experiences, that it is not easy to establish partnerships; nor is it easy to reach a satisfactory conclusion. Indeed, SESRN encountered most of the challenges discussed in the literature (Rosenow-Redhead, n.d.), and a few others besides. For example:

- high probability for misunderstandings, e.g., people will use different terminology, and may misconstrue one another’s terms;
- process is slow; e.g., building consensus takes time and everyone involved is likely to be juggling other commitments;
- managing different agendas, and agreeing on main points, e.g., what are our key measures of success?;
- difficulties in achieving a “real sharing of power and resources between academics and practitioners;”
- overcoming constraints from home institutions - many institutions are inherently hierarchical;
- the culture of academia has not typically been conducive to these sorts of partnerships.

Despite these potential pitfalls, participants in SESRN believed that partnering could be personally and professionally satisfying and enriching. We were convinced that partnered research is not only perfectly compatible with high quality research standards, but that in many instances the quality surpasses that of conventional research. From the perspective of dissemination and knowledge mobilization, partnered research can be highly productive, reaching a wider audience, and resulting in valuable and often innovative contributions to knowledge, policy, practice and social change (Gauvin, 2007; Lomas, 1997; Cuthill, 2010). SESRN was able to learn from the literature, from one another, from colleagues in the other SE networks, and from reflection on our own practices. Reviewing the questions posed in Table 3.1, and the likely variations in the perspectives of community, academia, and SSHRC gives us a framework for discussing the various elements of the SESRN story.
Table 3.1: Partnered Research – A Taste of the Complexities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. What is partnered research?</th>
<th>Community-Based Research (University Researcher Perspective)</th>
<th>Community Engagement and Research (Community Perspective)</th>
<th>Community-University Research Alliance (SSHRC Perspective)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“A partnership of students, faculty, and community members who collaboratively engage in research projects for the purpose of solving a problem or creating social change.” (Stoecker, 2005)</td>
<td>“Research that strives to be community situated … with a research topic of practical relevance to the community (as opposed to individual scholars) …; collaborative … share control of the research agenda [and] action oriented – the process and results are useful to community members …” (Ochoka et al., 2010).</td>
<td>“… partnerships between community organizations and postsecondary institutions which, through a process of ongoing collaboration and mutual learning, will foster innovative research, training and the creation of new knowledge …” (SSHRC, 2005)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2. Who is included in the partnership? | - Universities (researchers and students); - Community organizations and their members / leaders who bring legitimacy, grounded expertise, and an interest in using research to address problems / enable positive change | - Community organizations and their members / leaders; - Researchers from outside these organizations who bring legitimacy, skills, and perspectives, that the community can tap to address matters of concern / enable positive change | - Universities (researchers and students); - Organizations from the community - Partners who can bring or leverage additional resources (financial and other) |

| 3. How should the partnership work? | - Collaborative - Mutual learning - Attention to relations of power; respectful relations | - Attention to relations of power; respectful relations - Collaborative - Mutual learning | - Ongoing collaboration and mutual learning - Working together as equal partners in the research |
### 4. What is the purpose of partnering in research - anticipated outcomes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of Partnering in Research</th>
<th>Meant to Meet Needs</th>
<th>Increase Research Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obtain reliable valid data that contributes to knowledge, and (for many) can inform policy analysis and decisions as well as social change</td>
<td>Meet the needs of the community organizations for reliable valid data that can be used in many ways including advocacy work</td>
<td>Meet the needs of the community organizations for reliable valid data that can be used in many ways including advocacy work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leverage additional resources (financial, in-kind, grounded expertise)</td>
<td>Leverage additional resources (financial, in-kind, expertise)</td>
<td>Leverage additional resources (financial, in-kind, expertise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building (skills, knowledge)</td>
<td>Capacity building (skills, knowledge, mobilizing)</td>
<td>Capacity building (skills, knowledge, mobilizing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building networks of people with similar commitments and concerns (friendships / colleagues)</td>
<td>Building networks of people with similar commitments and concerns (friendships / colleagues)</td>
<td>Building networks of people with similar commitments and concerns (friendships / colleagues)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career and personal motivations at play to varying degrees for individuals (tenure, promotion, etc)</td>
<td>Career and personal motivations at play to varying degrees for individuals (tenure, promotion, etc)</td>
<td>Career and personal motivations at play to varying degrees for individuals (tenure, promotion, etc)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5. To whom is the Alliance accountable? (note implications for measures of “success”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>To academic standards of the discipline(s) and academic peers / departments</th>
<th>To the organization and its members / clients</th>
<th>To SSHRC, government, and citizens of Canada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To the partners and participants in the research</td>
<td>To standards of own fields</td>
<td>To the partners and participants in the research</td>
<td>To academic standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To ethics review boards</td>
<td>To ethics review boards</td>
<td>To the funder</td>
<td>To the partners and participants in the research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To the funder</td>
<td>To the funder</td>
<td>To the funder</td>
<td>To Tri-Council ethics standards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First, a word about context is in order. As Bowen et al. (2008, p.26) remind us, best practice techniques in engaged partnerships are contextually dependent. As a research network funded by SSHRC, SESRN was subject to SSHRC rules. This meant that there were certain “non-negotiable” elements of our work together. Beyond moral and legal accountability for the use of funds, the criteria against which we would be evaluated (e.g., at the mid-term review) were those of the CURA programme. A valuable but challenging feature of this programme
Community-University Research Partnerships

was that partnerships took place on so many levels – within SESRN, with others on the Board of the Hub, and with the wider Canadian Social Economy Research Partnership.

A second contextual factor, related to both Tri-Council requirements and to academic standards, was the requirement for ethics reviews by university-based ethics committees. The universities resisted collaboration on this, and most projects had to gain approval from (and report to) two or more university review committees – a time consuming and frustrating process.

Thirdly, our research, and achievement of successful dissemination and knowledge mobilization, would be judged according to multiple criteria. Academics needed to consider disciplinary peer review standards, while community-partners needed to meet standards of relevancy to their home organization and to action objectives. All wanted reliable and valid data, but did not always agree on how to achieve that. Related to this was the fact that SSHRC, and our own commitments, required that we address multiple audiences.

This was even more complex than it seems since SSHRC expectations, as well as our own, required our network to encompass a significant diversity of social economy organizations and actors, of disciplines and home institutions, of urban, rural and remote locations. Given our regional focus, network members necessarily came from every province. We also included organizations and activists embedded in Francophone, Anglophone, Mi’kmaq, and immigrant communities. This, then, was a fourth contextual factor. We built a network with people and organizations from many differing communities ranging over considerable geographic distances.

Lastly, we knew that SESRN would not live on beyond the term of the grant (at least in this form). We had to get to know one another and learn to work together very quickly in circumstances that required novel relationships. Participation in the network was demanding of time and, for many, was emotionally demanding as well. Putting into practice the principles we developed together and focusing on the objectives we shared, we sought a “negotiated equality” (Cuthill, 2010, p. 31).

Reflection on the answers to the questions in Table 3.1 can help unravel the complexities of the network’s efforts. One general comment is that the differences in perspectives are not to be interpreted merely as “problems.” These differences sparked considerable discussion and mutual learning, enriching relationships - even where tensions continued to exist. In what follows, I will place the greatest emphasis on questions 2 and 3.
Question 1: What is a Community-University Research Alliance?

Table 3.1 presents three descriptions of partnerships between communities and universities. The perspective of a university-based researcher is represented by Stoecker (2005), a respected and experienced advocate and practitioner of engaged research. The view from the community perspective is represented by the influential non-profit Centre for Community Based Research. The third column presents SSHRC’s perspective on CURAs. From this comparison we see that university-based researchers, community partners, and SSHRC describe research alliances in similar ways, while differing in emphasis.

As an example of an area where SSHRC’s priorities do not fully square with those of the community partners in the SESRN, consider the focus on training students. Though generous of their time and experience, and while they value mentoring and training, community partners find it strange that students who are mentored within a research project have to leave the team once they graduate. The project loses someone who is contributing a great deal. As well, a great deal of time goes into mentoring students, only to repeat that mentoring again and again over the course of the project. University-based team members see this as part of their job as educators. Not so for community-based partners who often do this mentoring and training, and indeed take part in the research itself, “on the side” rather than as a part of their job.4

As a second example, consider the creation and dissemination of “new knowledge.” For community partners, the emphasis is often on serving the needs of the partner organizations and their communities, on prioritizing immediacy of knowledge transfer out to communities. For university-based team members and for SSHRC “new knowledge” also means contributing to the development of theory and to empirical knowledge, through academic publication/dissemination. Frequent (civil) communication was needed to build mutual understanding and to ensure that this difference did not jeopardize relations.

Question 2: Who was included in the SESRN Partnership?

This is where it all starts – the composition of the partnership. SESRN recruited and attracted academics (mostly from the region) with histories of partnering with community groups (or who wanted to learn to do so) and individuals from (mainly) grass-roots organizations rooted in local communities who valued the opportunity to partner in research about the SE.5 While grass-roots organizations tend to be small and often over-stretched, we also knew that such organizations are “typical” of the social economy in the region (Rowe, 2006) and as such needed to be central members of the network. Further, we wanted to reach into local communities as deeply as possible, and to attract activists committed to mobilizing through the SE. Decisions about recruitment
Community-University Research Partnerships

and acceptance of requests to join the network were guided by the goals, general research themes, broad research questions and methodological approaches committed to in our SSHRC proposal. Federations, people from various government departments, people from outside the region and other bodies were included, if not always as partners, then certainly as “Interested Parties” who received team communications and participated in dissemination events.6

Question 3: How Should the Partnership Work?

Answers to this question are very similar across the three columns of Table 3.1. Discussing what these qualities meant to the various members of the team helped inform decisions about governance and the research process. Reporting empirical research on the factors that contribute to effective community-university engagement McNall et al. (2008, p. 327) identify effective partnership management and opportunities for the co-creation of knowledge as features that offer the best potential for achieving successful community–university engagement. Kienapple (2010) offers a complementary version of this emphasis on governance and research design, one rooted in the particular nature of social economy organizations in general, and the members of SESRN in particular:

Social economy organizations are characterized by participation, community responsibility and increased community capacity. Community-University partnerships that have emerged to examine the impact of the social economy organizations have to accommodate to the dual challenge of adapting methodologies to observe the functioning of these participatory organizations and adopting governance policies and practices that mirror the participatory characteristics found within social economy organizations.

In SESRN we found that success in “getting the research and dissemination done” was integrally linked with “following the appropriate processes,” “maintaining respectful relationships,” and “mutual learning.” One community partner told Daughton (2011) “My experience with this work is that it is quite inclusive and respectful. Not only does this approach work, it is a necessary approach when dealing with community groups” (emphasis added).

Underpinning both of these is effective communication. Emke (2011) explains that “… a community is a social product, and effective communication is one of its constituent elements.” Drawing upon interviews with community partners from various projects, Golden et al. (2011, p. 1) report that communication is “directly or indirectly described as vitally important to successful community and university partnerships.” Complementing that is flexibility and openness to changing “in course,” as appropriate based on input from the team. Figure 3.1 presents the process of building and sustaining a
collaborative research network as an iterative process, incorporating periods of reflection (within projects and within the team as a whole) and adaptation along the way.

Figure 3.1: Iterative Processes for a Collaborative and Sustainable Research Partnership

The characteristics of community-university partnerships as presented in Table 3.1 align with those of transformational engagement, the most difficult form of partnership to develop and sustain (Bowen, et al., 2008, p. iii). This approach requires ongoing authentic dialogue, shared sense-making and critical reflexivity (Bowen et al., 2008, p. 14). Table 3.2 elaborates on the qualities of transformational engagement. Much more common, and less likely to achieve the full range of outcomes intended by a CURA, are partnerships characterized by transactional engagement based on limited relationships with one another (e.g., philanthropy, sending employees to volunteer in the community). Transitional forms of engagement are characterized by genuine attempts to move beyond transactional towards transformational engagement, while falling short in one or more key dimension. For example, in striving for effective multi-lateral communication, they may not achieve fully shared understandings or framing of problems. It is likely that partnered research networks are characterized by a range of degrees and forms of engagement.

a) Participatory governance framework for the SESRN partnership

The Steering Committee (SC) and full team re-affirmed and elaborated upon the schematic of the network’s decentralized governance structure as laid out in the original SSHRC proposal, at the first two SC meetings in the fall of 2005, in the sub-node (SN) meetings that fall, and at the team meeting in February of 2006. At the team meeting we explored community partner expectations and
hopes for the network and heard presentations from community-based SESRN partners. Team members participated in workshops, shared their experiences with others, lead discussions about involvement in the social economy, identified qualities of effective research partnerships, clarified expectations for communication, and so on. Among the many helpful comments, consistent themes were: genuine collaboration, strong emphasis on communication, and face-to-face meetings in which formal activities (e.g., presentations, discussions, feedback sessions) were balanced with informal networking, bridging and bonding time. Time for fun (usually involving music) was valued too and contributed to our sense of community.

**Figure 3.2: Governance Diagram**

![Governance Diagram](http://www.msvu.ca/socialeconomyatlantic/pdfs/Governance/Governance%20diagram%20E.pdf)

The basic units of the team were the individual research projects, each of which was a partnership between a community-based partner and a university-based team member (see project list at the end of this chapter). Some projects were ready to go from the start, others were added later. The projects were grouped
into six sub-nodes (SN) according to themes. Each project sent representatives (typically both a university-based researcher and a community partner) to the SN Steering Committee led by a coordinator (two SNs had co-coordinators) responsible for facilitating the work of the SN, performing necessary administrative functions and liaising with the Node as a whole. In all but one case SNs tasked an academic with the role of coordinator. SN coordinators also represented the SN on the Node SC. Community based partners were very active at the SN level and assumed roles as chairs / facilitators of meetings, organizers of events, alternates to Node SC meetings and so on). Individual SNs often met as a “committee of the whole,” with active participation from all SN members.

At the SN level, responsiveness to members’ needs, and transparent decision-making were priorities. SN partners came to know one another quite well through frequent, and often face-to-face communication. The SN steering committee solicited and approved projects, supported those conducting the research, managed the SN budget and protocols, received progress reports and bridged to the node (especially regarding administration, bridging matters, and node governance). SNs often organized their own mutual learning gatherings, knowledge dissemination events and community workshops. Each SN developed its own way of operationalizing participatory governance and indeed each developed a distinctive culture. Those involved in more than one SN helped bridge these subcultures. A password protected “team site” set up by the Community Sector Council was used as a repository for SN and node agendas, minutes, project reports, budgets and other documents which all team members could access.

Overall direction, integration and management of the SESRN (the node) were provided by the node SC, composed of representatives from the 6 SNs plus the network director. In addition to their coordinator, SNs often sent a community partner to the node SC meetings, so more than one SN member would have a view of the network from the perspective of the entire Node. Up to three students would typically attend each Node SC meeting, and would present on their work. From time to time government partners and other guests would attend SC meetings, and SESRN usually held some form of dissemination event when face-to-face governance meetings took place. The SC met at least three times a year, in Halifax or (usually at least once a year) at a SN location. While node SC meetings were in English, we tried, within the limitations of our funding, to be as inclusive as possible in both official languages (e.g., a website with both French and English platforms, translations of selected documents and simultaneous or whisper translations for team events). Individual team members and one of the organizational partners also helped in translating outputs from the network.
A management committee composed of the director and three co-directors (two academics and two community partners, all of whom were SC members) facilitated the work of the SC. This committee met on average 4 times per year, usually remotely. Over time, and at the request of the SC, more of the administrative and pre-planning was assigned to the management committee to free up time at steering committee meetings. This change only occurred after levels of trust had deepened and could not have been implemented early on.

The SC sought “wise counsel” from a range of different people over the years (e.g., for evaluations, for facilitating, for suggests about relations with government), and SNs did so as well. The commitment to meet face-to-face where possible increased the opportunities to build trust and to reach decisions all could support. Investing in face-to-face meetings also made it possible for personal relationships to be forged, and for information about the research projects to be shared across the full team.

Early on, with input from the SNs, the node SC identified seven foundational principles against which to assess both the processes and products of our network: inclusivity, transparency, accountability, relationship building, mutual respect, consultative process, participatory and collaborative project governance, and research processes. The SC operationalized these principles by drafting, re-working and signing a memorandum of understanding for the SC which included commitments, roles and responsibilities, procedures for dealing with conflict, and information on conflict of interest. These documents were circulated to the SNs which reviewed them and, in turn, developed and signed their own MOUs. In collaboration with the SNs, the node SC developed an internal communications plan as well as an external communication / dissemination plan. We recognized that there would be ebbs and flows in the levels of participation in governance - engagement is a continuum of processes.

Though considered onerous by some at the time, this process proved helpful in getting to know one another and in coming to agreements about the elements of our governance and research. A community partner told Daughton (2011) “Personally, I think that the main partnership-building success was that there was attention paid to the meaningful participation of all partners from the very beginning … engagement wasn’t just lip service.” An academic offered a similar comment:

… we made a conscious decision right off the top not to rush things, and we took the better part of a year to do just that [build the partnership]. The other thing that contributed to our success was that we decided to trust one another and to just share the money up front and put it in the hands of local committees [sub-nodes] who then did what they needed to do with it… I think these two decisions made this project a success.
Our first year of work resulted in a governance framework that fit the participatory research practices to which we committed. It allowed us to be flexible and innovative and to respond to concerns that were articulated along the way.

The Node Coordinator played a central role in supporting the governance processes. As the only person who was full time with the network, her role proved vital to the effective working, the participative qualities and the morale of the network. The position required diverse and high level skills in networking and facilitating, as well as strong administrative capabilities. The coordinator was “communications central,” supporting positive relationships within the network as well as keeping track of products and activities, and alerting the Director to potential problems. Later in the course of the project we added an assistant position (a student) to support the node office’s communication function.

Commenting on the work of the node office, one academic told Daughton (2011) “there was tremendous effort … to have these regular meetings and structure of the larger meeting and the smaller management committee. I raise my hat to them for how democratically they tried to engage and maintain this. I can tell you that in other projects things are not done like that.”

b) Participatory action research (PAR) approach to developing and carrying out partnered research projects.

The second component of making partnerships work is developing methodologies that enable the co-creation of knowledge. SESRN committed to participatory action research (PAR) methodologies, which both produces strong research outcomes (Reason, 2000) and aligned with our seven guiding principles. McAulay (1999, p. 76) defines PAR as “a process of producing new knowledge by systematic inquiry with the collaboration of those affected by the issue being studied, for the purposes of education and taking action or effecting social change.” It eschews “… the ‘expert’ delivery of knowledge from academics to the people” (Cuthill, 2010, p.22) and increases the likelihood that research findings will be used, since the knowledge and expertise of community groups is incorporated (Lomas, 1997) and because they have played a role in choosing and defining the research questions. Typically, research results are validated by presenting them to the groups from which the original data was obtained.13 PAR aims: 1) to produce knowledge and action directly useful to the community being studied, and 2) to empower people through the process of constructing and using their own knowledge (Barnsley & Ellis, 1992).

As with participatory governance, operationalizing PAR in particular projects and at the node level had its challenges. Further, although using the same words, the various partners did not necessarily attribute the same meaning
to those words. One example was the strong objection community partners raised to the term “non-academic” used by SSHRC to categorize community-based participants in research projects. Our team substituted the term “community-based.” A challenge requiring more ongoing effort was around “respect” - a term with many strands that took time to unravel. One aspect of respect related to the fact that community-based participants wanted recognition of the advanced educational credentials and research experience that many of them brought to the team, as well as of their grounded experience in organizations within the social economy.14 The academics wanted their community activism valued as experience that they contributed to the research. In addition to using language differently, actors in the partnership differed in their emphasis, their expectations of one another, their sensitivities, and their views of what outputs and outcomes were the most important. PAR was interpreted differently within different projects as well.

Our decentralized structure allowed for such issues to be addressed within project teams and at the SN level where the link to SN themes was important. All research projects undertaken with the Network were approved by a SN and/or the node SC. Each had to identify both a university and a community based partner5 who jointly developed and approved the project proposal, ethics applications, and dissemination commitments. Each proposal also had to demonstrate a contribution to the research themes of the network.16 Variations in applying PAR approaches were accepted as long as the community and university partners could articulate and agree upon the key components. Workload was an issue for almost everyone, but especially for community-based partners.

Generally the individual projects succeeded in implementing their partnerships. A community partner told Daughton (2011) “It took a couple of years to really see that there are lots of academics who learned just as much working with community, and really honoured our practices, as much as I learned to really value what academics could offer to round out the work that we do.” An academic remarked on “… the friendships that we established … the trust we built between us and how we felt that there was always opportunity to … be creative and come up with things that would really help people.” Some stereotypes were challenged too – one government partner, frustrated with government colleagues who did not see the value of attending as guests at the various SESRN learning and dissemination events spoke up at a meeting to say “Don’t tell me that university researchers don’t care about community!”

Bridging across SNs proved challenging, even though SN membership overlapped to some degree. It helped that the node director and/or node coordinator visited every SN at least once each year, sometimes in person and sometimes via conference call, and were often present at key SN dissemination events. Still, it was difficult for team members to be fully informed about what
Partners in Research

was happening in each SN – the secure team site was not as useful as we had anticipated for this purpose. Team meetings, always face-to-face, were absolutely fundamental in helping to address these concerns. Besides being valuable for bringing the team together in different SN locations, they functioned as networking, bridging and research reporting/dissemination venues, with at least part of the programme open to the public, local SE groups and targeted interested parties.17 During these meetings the SN members also learned about the broad sweep of SESRN research. Regardless of the many channels put in place for internal communication, we heard repeatedly that nothing could replace face-to-face interactions.

**Question 4: What is the Purpose of Partnering in Research - What are the Anticipated Outcomes?**

This question arose in many guises over the life of the network – at the level of individual projects, SNs and full node. This network gobbled up energy and time. Why were we doing it? Table 3.1 gives indication of the sorts of anticipated outcomes that could draw participants to partner in research. Ultimately what provided staying power was the belief in common that the research was worthwhile, that the knowledge being generated was valuable, and that our work would lead to lasting benefits (individual, organizational and for the SE of the region). Many on the team valued the personal relationships and, especially, the networks they gained access to. Still, we were all aware that motives were mixed. For example, the community partners knew that universities needed to partner with community groups so as to attract SSHRC funding. Understandably wary of being used by academics, community partners looked for demonstrations of genuine commitments to partnership. The governance and PAR engagement processes and structures enabled the realization of these multiple reasons for partnering, with opportunities to reflect, dialogue and adapt. During the process of developing measures of success, individual projects, the SNs and node had to decide which priorities to emphasize and at what phases of the work. They also addressed issues of accountability. In all this, of course, SESRN was also guided by the criteria developed by SSHRC.

**Question 5: To Whom is the Partnership Accountable for its Work?**

The reality was that individuals within SESRN were accountable to a variety of different bodies and organizations. Early discussion of the implications of that reality helped reduce conflict within the partnership. For example, historic relationships and requirements of home institutions (and their criteria for assessing “success”) can work against community-university research partnerships. Academics and community partners are held to account (by peers, by their home institutions and by funders) in different ways, and to different criteria. For example, SESRN community partners found that projects often
Community-University Research Partnerships

proceeded more slowly than they or their home organizations expected, with the consequence that results were not forthcoming as quickly as desired. SESRN academics sometimes felt that their engaged scholarship was not being valued by peers in the academy.

As with so much else about partnerships it is important to engage in dialogue about criteria and about accountability, taking advantage of natural opportunities to do so. For SESRN, these natural opportunities included: during project proposal development; while preparing research ethics applications; designing the node’s project reporting forms; developing the node’s internal and external communication plans; designing self-evaluation tools; preparing reports to SSHRC. One academic spoke to Daughton (2011) about accountability:

But being rooted in the community organization and having to do research that is sensible to them, that makes a difference to them, is key to how you then conduct the whole thing, and in the pressures you then have, because there is responsibility and accountability to them, to deliver something that they can show they spent their time wisely … [and] because it is asking a lot of them in voluntary time.

A community partner commented:

I’ve really been interested in the different priorities between community and academic research and how there isn’t an easy balance in meeting everyone’s needs. I found it enlightening in that I learned a lot from that. I wasn’t really happy about that at times, but it was a really good opportunity to understand why it is the way it is and to think about how you take these two different needs (the need to publish and the need to do) and blend them into something that achieves the best we can, and reflect the different focuses.

Keeping records to demonstrate accountability was an ongoing challenge for many members of the team and complaints were frequently voiced to the node office - so much reporting, so many details, about so many different things. To illustrate, consider this comment from a community partner:

If I’m at a meeting in Vancouver and talking to someone about what I learned from the SE project, I don’t cite it, I don’t put it on my CV. I’m using the information constantly … I’m constantly using the knowledge that I’ve learned from this process … but it’s never getting recorded.

The areas of tension did not disappear, but dialogue helped build mutual understanding and led to strategies that helped sustain the partnership.
Outcomes – Evaluations of the SESRN Partnership

In this section I present a summary of the team’s self-evaluations of the governance process and of the research process. While occasionally incorporating material from other sources, I draw primarily on the findings reported by Kienapple (2008) and by Daughton (2011).18

Using responses to 2 web-based surveys of the full team, Kienapple looked at governance within SESRN and at the research process.19 Reporting on his evaluation of the governance process, Kienapple pointed to some very positive results with at least half of community and academic partners answering positively (strongly agree and agree) to all the survey questions. For example: the “mission, goals” and “structure and operations of the node/subnode” were valued by a strong majority of both community and academic partners, and they indicated growth in a “sense of community” (86% and 96% respectively). The one exception related to “opportunities for personal responsibility and growth,” where among community-based respondents only 44% agreed or strongly agreed, while 38% were neutral – in part this was because of the different starting points for the organizations. In the words of one community-based respondent, “I and my organization were quite far along the social economy research continuum when we became engaged so there has been less growth opportunity to this point.”20 Among university-based team members this item had the lowest levels of agreement of all the items (58% agreed with 30% being neutral). Again some academics came to the team with significant experience already.

While positively evaluated by the majority of community respondents, “effectiveness of communication,” and “needs being met in the governance process” were 2 additional areas where improvements would be desirable. A higher proportion of academic than of community-based partners were strongly positive about the governance processes, perhaps because they had less experience with participatory governance.

Reporting on his evaluation of research partnership (personal and organizational development) noted that a minimum of 74% of community partners and 84% of academic partners reported development in three of the thematic areas investigated. For example, significant “partnered research skill development” (74% of community members and 87% of academic members), increased “community and organizational development” (96% of community members and 84% of academic members), and “effective resource use enabling valuable projects” (70% and 80%). In relation to “organizational/group access to and use of information” 67% of community-based partners and 58% of university-based partners reported positively. This somewhat lower percentage was, in Kienapple’s (2008, p. 4) opinion, in part a reflection of the fact that most research projects were in the early phases.21 Both community and academic
members of the network reported significant increase in “knowledge and understanding of research topic” and “current information in the topic area” (88% of community members and 97% of academic members).

Kienapple concluded that both community and university participants valued the participatory organizational structure found in the Atlantic Node, and that the PAR approach offers a useful foundation for community-university partnerships. We were encouraged by the results of this evaluation and took away some ideas for strengthening the partnership. In particular at the Node level, we concluded that the partnership needed improvement in terms of internal communication within the network, gaining clarity regarding the benefits partners wished to gain, and the development of shared meanings. As one community partner indicated, “Nous utilisons les mêmes mots mais nous n’avons pas les mêmes interprétations et définitions de ces ‘mêmes’ mots.” (We use the same words but we do not have the same interpretations and definitions for these ‘same’ words.)

When these results were reported at the 2008 team meeting in St. John’s, they generated significant discussion. While the team members were generally satisfied that these finding reflected their experience, they strongly requested that Kienapple supplement the survey with interview and/or focus group data which would help deepen the understanding of people’s responses.

Responding to the team’s request for qualitative data, Daughton conducted a group self-evaluation after the final Steering Committee meeting and in 2010-11 he interviewed 22 team members (8 academics, 6 students and 8 community partners). He explored partnership building successes and hindrances (including efficacy of governance processes), lessons learned, the team’s evaluation of knowledge mobilization, capacity-building, participant engagement and other project outcomes. Generally speaking, his findings supported Kienapple’s, with indications of some improvement in communication and knowledge transfer. In a report that also provided information about the differences across SNs and across individual research projects, Daughton noted that “The successes and hindrances identified in this evaluation are consistent with the literature on successful collaborations.” He found the results to be generally very positive though of course not without ideas for improvement.

More specifically, Daughton (2011) reported that partnership successes included the formation of good and productive working relationships, which resulted in increased credibility for both the community and the university-based partners. Team members felt that there was more awareness of the social economy than there had been. They valued the highly participatory approach to project development and governance while noting that some SNs were
closer to that model than others. Interestingly, tensions between academic and community needs were seen as both a help and a hindrance in partnership building – addressing the tensions led to fruitful discussion, but not always to complete resolution.

Participants liked the way the money was allocated, the autonomy given to SNs regarding decisions about projects, and the commitment to engagement demonstrated not only in governance processes but also by granting salary release for community-based partners (though more would have been better). By way of hindrances they noted time pressures, record keeping, and challenges of communicating across so many people and such substantial distances. Several commented that their personal knowledge and professional lives had been enhanced. Even those who came to the team knowing a lot about research and about the SE reported that they had gained a lot during the CURA – comments about enhanced networks figured prominently. For both academic and community partners, involvement in SESRN led to further funding opportunities as well as to “spin-off” projects (notably opportunities for future partnered research including involvement in new CURAs, and advantages of the linkages they had forged) and all spoke about the growth in their networks and in their perspective on the SE.

Community organizations were seen to be beneficiaries, not just individuals. “A couple of good pieces of work got done for us that we had no way of doing … it helped us to disseminate our work on an international level … the benefits have been many, to us.” As for individual benefits consistent themes were the increased access to information and knowledge, funding for travel, and insight into the nature of the social economy. Academics benefitted as individuals and one academic remarked that “[through the network] we were able to create a critical mass [of social economy researchers] in Atlantic Canada.” However, some felt that their universities did not benefit as much as they could have as they still do not recognize the imperative of changing the relationship between universities and communities. However, the increased stock of knowledge about the SE that team members and government partners commented upon favourably will affect teaching in the universities. Several academic partners noted that they can now modify existing courses and develop new ones. One commented that in retrospect it would have been good to develop a draft course outline and readings list that all professors could draw upon.

Daughton reported that, with some exceptions, people were generally satisfied with the extent of knowledge mobilization both within the network and outside, but several noted that there was a trade-off between the time spent on process and the ability to produce and disseminate findings. Others noted the negative impact of the significant amounts of administrative work associated with the CURA of such size and complexity.22
Information on policy impacts was not yet available to the team at the time of Daughton’s interviews, but several commented that their organizations had acquired knowledge that would be useful in future policy discussions and advocacy work. Others mentioned policy work that would continue past the end of the CURA, for example “… I’m chairing this Advisory Committee [name] that continues that process of developing and engaging people around these concepts of social enterprise and social economy” (C2). Several commented on the long term potentials of the new Atlantic Council for Community and Social Enterprise, in which SESRN members played a significant role.

All respondents were positive about student involvement, and despite caveats about busy team members having limited time for consistent mentoring, students commented positively on the benefits they derived from the experience, especially from the respectful relationships, opportunities for genuine engagement and opportunities to present at conferences. Community partners were generally of the opinion that the knowledge generated through their projects would be used in their own organizations (e.g., for advancing policy proposals or for other work in their communities) and that they anticipated longer term implications for the region.

**Concluding Observations**

As we have seen, the deepest forms of partnership are characterized by transformative engagement. In a multi-layered, decentralized network such as SESRN, this is not easy to achieve. Among the inhibiting factors discussed above we noted the size and geographical reach of SESRN, historical relationships between the academy and the community, the learning curve for newly partnered community and academic partners, relationships with funders (SSHRC and any leveraged funding), and many other factors. Even at the project and SN levels it was a challenge. Further, the question of balance was important. As seen above, team members noted that it was often difficult to find the “right” balance between a focus on engagement processes and the actual “doing of the work.” A related balancing act was that of giving priority to an internal focus while also reaching beyond our team.

SESRN was characterized by a mix of transformative and transitional forms of engagement. A little digging reveals incidents of more purely “transactional” relationships too. That said, there is also evidence that the nature of engagement changed over the course of individual projects and over the course of SESRN as a whole – ebbs and flows, crises navigated, opportunities missed or seized. While this chapter notes the impact of contextual factors, the type of engagement achieved also depends on the outcomes prioritized by network members. The SESRN partnership was shaped by our early answers to the questions “Who is included in the partnership?” and “What is partnered research?”
The time spent preparing for partnership, and the pairing of PAR approaches with participatory governance, contributed to the successes SESRN enjoyed. SESRN contributed to the stock of (co-produced) knowledge on the social economy of the region and of the various partners and “interested parties,” including government. Team members have commented on how difficult (and exhausting) the work was at times, but also on how great the rewards have been. In many ways we found ourselves to be very much like the grass roots social economy itself. Decentralized and participatory structures and processes involving many different people and organizations can be challenging, but no more so than engaging in the social economy.

Team members expressed significant satisfaction about our productivity, the quality of our work, and the impact on us as individuals and (to a lesser degree, especially for academics) on our organizations. We never agreed on a single definition of the social economy, though within individual projects more precise definitions were developed, in keeping with the research foci and objectives of the particular project. While that bothered some, for most of the team there was satisfaction in finding agreement around the basic idea of a social economy and its worth, in Atlantic Canada in particular. With this came the confidence to use the term in our home organizations and networks, introducing students and the media to this way of framing and valuing the social economy, and providing government officials with reasons to pay attention. This was, in our region, a not inconsiderable achievement.

We created and nurtured professional, political, and social networks that offer promise of enduring into the future. Achieving this promise is, of course, conditional. To a considerable degree, the longer term impacts of SESRN are contingent on the fates of the individual and organizational members of the network, and on the ways the social economy is conceptualized by our provinces, regions, nation, the academy, the media, and among community activists. Will network members continue to work in and conduct research on the SE? Will the organizations survive these times of cutback and crisis? Will the term SE have currency, both as a framing concept and in more tangible ways (e.g., in policy, in university curricula)?

Partnerships between the academy and the SE community are vital to this momentum and to the generation of the knowledge base essential to its sustenance. Speaking about a community organization, one community partner reported:

It truly did give us a window into what goes on with the SE community … It allowed us access to, and to share information with, a whole breadth of people who were doing work in sectors that apply to us … It created a whole new network of people who can provide us with information and opportunities we didn’t have before.
Community-University Research Partnerships

An academic partner noted that:

It made me aware of [the] broader SE and community and aware on many levels. Not just in the research and listening to the stories from other SE organizations in all those meetings and places where we could cross information, but in the teaching.

There is clearly an appetite for learning about the social economy and for doing so in collaborative ways. While this appetite cannot be satiated by one research network over a six year period, it is an appetite we can stoke and encourage by demonstrating that collaborative research can generate solid research results and increased capacity for both research and action. Indeed, many SESRN members are now part of successful new SSHRC-funded community-university research partnerships (regional, national and international in focus). They are involved in policy development, and a number are active in a new association which they helped to create, the Atlantic Council for Community and Social Enterprise (ACCSE). Networks now extend well beyond Atlantic Canada. In the words of one community partner:

Throughout the Atlantic region, first of all, there are many more linkages. There is much more knowledge, much more information on who has what kinds of initiatives, [who is] doing what. That level of connectedness will continue long after the project is over.
Endnotes

1. I regret that it has proved impossible to do justice here to all the perspectives, the insightful positive and critical comments, and the reasoned reflections of the many members of the SESRN. I thank all who took part over the past 6 years of our work together.

2. Relations with the universities, and the structures mandated by these relationships (e.g., their financial offices and ethics boards) are not the focus here, though they clearly impacted the partnership. The universities both supported and created significant challenges for community-university relations within the network and for those administering the partnership.

3. Many useful descriptions of CURAs, and of community-based and engaged scholarship, are now available (e.g., http://www.msvu.ca/socialeconomyatlantic/English/CURAsE.asp; Cuthill, 2010; McNall et al., 2008; Vaillancourt, 2005; Jackson & Kassam, 2005; Bowen, Newenham-Kahindi, & Herremans, 2008) and helped in developing this table. So too, did comments made at the various planning meetings held early on in the SESRN’s partnership.

4. While a salary release is appreciated, it is of limited help here. For small organizations especially, new hires are more like stopgaps than staff who can completely replace a person on salary release.

5. We deliberately used a broad conception of the term social economy, intending to explore its many meanings over the course of the research.

6. Sometimes people or organizations approached us, asking to join the network. Over the years, the team grew to over 80 individuals, 46 community organizations, 20 colleges and universities, 5 First Nation communities, and 12 government bodies across 4 provinces and departments of the federal government. While not all were active throughout the full term of the grant, many were. The SESRN also developed criteria for adding new team members.

7. This term is used by Bowen, Newenham-Kahindi, & Herremans (2008, p. iii) as one end of an engagement continuum: “Recognizing that the definitions of ‘community’ and ‘engagement’ vary across this literature, we cluster the sources into three main approaches to engagement: transactional, transitional and transformational.” Though not focused on research partnerships per se, their study of over 200 partnerships between firms (including non-profits) and communities is germane.

8. Further, for various reasons engagement may not be genuine, despite the frameworks and agreements out in place. For example, transparency and openness may be promised but not delivered, or some of those making commitments to collaborate do not meet their commitments. The accumulation of too many discrepancies can destroy any partnership, whether transactional, transitional or transformative.
9. University-based coordinators were seen as best positioned to deal with university financial officers and ethics committees, to access to student assistants and other supports, and to have the time to devote to the work. We heard over and over again that the community partners found it difficult to take time off to travel and attend SC meetings of the Node. In one case, SN6, the community partner did take on the administration of the SN. That partner was also a member of the management committee of the Node.

10. Examples include contributions during team meetings such as Yves Vaillancourt’s presentation on community-university research alliances in Quebec and Yohanan Stryjan’s involvement in a team meeting where he shared his experience with social economy research in Europe.

11. The Network also developed Guidelines for the Node Steering Committee (which SNs further adapted to their own needs), addressing a variety of issues, including: allocation of funds for hiring graduate students; travel support and computer purchases; establishing quorum and regular agenda items for meetings; decision making in the absence of consensus; grievance procedures, project proposal and reporting templates; student feedback forms; criteria for Network membership; SSHRC reporting requirements; and so on.

12. At our first team meeting, Ivan Emke (co-coordinator of SN6) spoke about Tuckman’s (1965) model of group development which was characterized by the stages of forming, norming, storming and performing. We gave considerable attention to forming and norming, hoping that would allow us to weather any storming, and to excel at performing.

13. Things do not always go smoothly. For example, community partners may not like the findings of the research, or they may feel that making them public could hurt the organization. The academic researchers may find it challenging to be scrutinized by groups outside academia which apply different evaluation standards. In SESRN such potential problems were anticipated, at least to some degree, as partners co-produced individual project proposals and agreements.

14. Indeed, one of the characteristics of the social economy is that much of its workforce is highly educated (Gardner Pinfold, 2010, p. 9)

15. The very few exceptions had to be approved at the Node level and were generally in response to calls for proposals to undertake particular pieces of research (e.g., policy scans).

16. The original five network themes were addressed at the SN level. The precise content of these themes evolved over the course of the partnership and five additional themes were identified. We were not always able to find time and personnel to synthesize findings across projects within a theme to the degree that we had hoped. We drew on ad hoc committees (with membership drawn from interested SNs) to help with synthesis of findings.
17. The only province in which we did not hold a team meeting was PEI. However, the Steering Committee did meet there once. This provided an opportunity for SN members to meet the committee informally, and for the SC to hear formal presentations from members of the SN. Materials from team meetings were posted to the public website.

18. I single these out because they were the most comprehensive in scope. However, for us evaluations were ongoing. All node events were evaluated; SNs conducted their own evaluations of events and of SN governance; individual projects conducted evaluations.

19. Kienapple looked at governance in relation to 10 thematic areas. These were: Clarity of vision and goals; Structure and operation of the Node/Subnode; Methods used to involve participants/communications; Effectiveness of meetings; Opportunities for participant responsibility and growth; Planning, implementation and evaluation of projects from an operational point of view; Effectiveness of use of resources (governance and projects); Actions taken to create sense of community; Needs being met in the governance process; Relationships established with relevant individuals and organizations that interact with the Node/Subnode. (There was a 49% response rate.) In evaluating the research process, he explored 4 thematic areas: Personal knowledge development; Personal research skill development; Organizational access to and use of information; Community and organizational development (For this piece there was a 26% response rate; in part because it was difficult to answer the questions for projects still early in their progress.) The data was collected in 2007.

20. The survey offered room for additional comments and some took up this offer.

21. This explanation received some support in that in their evaluations of the 2008 team meeting and dissemination event, where every project had a poster, team members expressed delight at the range and quality of the research being conducted by the network and were pleased to have access to it. All the materials from that meeting were available to the full team on the public website soon after the meeting.

22. Note that during the extension period (2010-11) the team focused almost entirely, and successfully, on dissemination. Team members now have access to substantially more material on SE-Space and the public website.

23. The right hand column suggests some of the main qualities to seek and to monitor for each of the dimensions of transformational partnerships, informed by the research literature, personal experiences, conversations within the SESRN, and articles and presentations by SESRN members. An earlier version of this table was developed by Brown and Hicks (2010), and both versions have been heavily influenced by Bowen et al (2008: 14).
References


Brown, L., & Hicks, E. (2010). *An example of community-based research: The consumer co-operative sustainability and planning scorecard*. Presentation to the Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation, Montreal, QC.


Kienapple, K. (2010). Abstract for a paper “Research partnerships and the SESRN” proposed to the annual conference of the Association for Non-profit and Social Economy Research, Montreal.


Community-University Research Partnerships


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY DIMENSIONS</th>
<th>QUALITIES TO SEEK AND TO MONITOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Values and Principles in which the partnership is rooted (setting the stage)</td>
<td>▪ Consensus on these values and principles (including principles for decision making)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Consensus on overarching research themes and questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Respect diversity and divergent opinions (e.g., re. definition of the SE); developing some shared language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Control over processes (governance and research)</td>
<td>▪ Shared as widely as possible and as team decides is appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Representative, participatory, and decentralized governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Participatory Action Research Methodologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Clarity of roles and responsibilities achieved via MOUs, detailed project proposals, and ethics applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Number of partners</td>
<td>▪ Manageable number (smaller numbers work better)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Appropriate to the objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Adequately funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Interactions within the partnership</td>
<td>▪ Frequent, rooted in face-to-face as much as possible (especially in the early days) but also using available technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Appropriate to the needs of the network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Communications (internal and external)</td>
<td>▪ Guided by an agreed-upon communication plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Frequent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Bi-lateral and Multi-lateral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Respectful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Flexibility Adaptability</td>
<td>▪ Willingness to adapt and change as network develops and agrees on processes for doing this – iterative process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Trust</td>
<td>▪ Trust based on relational is likely to be the strongest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Fortified by clarity of roles and expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Learning</td>
<td>▪ Jointly generated collaborative learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Research results shared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Benefits and outcomes</td>
<td>▪ Mutual and/or compatible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Supporting one another in making space / time for particularized benefits to be realized too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Monitoring</td>
<td>▪ Self-evaluation of process and of deliverables / products / outcomes in relation to goals and commitments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Responding to the results of these self-evaluations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An earlier version of this table was developed by Brown and Hicks (2010), and both versions have been heavily influenced by Bowen et al. (2008: 14)
### Table 3.3: Atlantic Social Economy Research Node

There are **8 projects under Sub-node 1:**

1. **1.1 Survey of Co-ops and Credit Unions in Atlantic Canada**
2. **1.2 Atlantic Node Community Partners’ Profiles**
3. **1.3 Fishing for the Future II: Tracking the Coastal Communities Network from First Beginnings to Economic Sustainability**
5. **1.5 Profile of the Old and the New Social Economy to the Development of the Community of Acadian Islands (Lamèque and Miscou).**
6. **1.6 Policies that Support Bridging, Bonding and Building between Government and the Social Economy in Atlantic Canada**
7. **1.7 SES Research Network Policy: Threads Inventory and Analysis**
8. **1.8 Cultural Co-operatives in Atlantic Canada: Progress and Governance**

There are **15 projects under Sub-node 2:**

1. **2.1 Launching Rural Women’s Entrepreneurship**
2. **2.2 Community Accounts – PEI**
3. **2.3 Youth Engagement in Hillsborough Park (Global Culture, Local Meanings and Contested Community): Redefining Youth Apathy**
4. **2.4 Advocating Changes to Maternity & Parental Benefits Legislation**
5. **2.5 The Role of Women in the Fishery and Fisheries Management**
6. **2.6 Mapping Supports for the Social Economy**
7. **2.7(A) Indigenous Community Development: Phase I – Ethnobotany**
8. **2.7(B) Indigenous Community Development: Phase II – Microenterprise**
9. **2.7(C) Indigenous Community Development: Phase III – Youth Engagement with Community and Natural Resources**
10. **2.8 PEI Organic Farmer-Citizen Co-operative**
11. **2.10 Access of Adults with Learning Disabilities to Post-Secondary Education**
12. **2.11 Internationally Educated Health Professionals in PEI: Why They Come, Why They Stay and the Challenges They Face.**
13. **2.14 Beyond Silence**
14. **2.17 Community Engagement in Developing Domestic Fair Trade for Food Products**
15. **2.18 Quality of Life and Environmental Awareness Survey**
Partners in Research

### There are 6 projects under Sub-node 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Food Box Program: Current and Potential Contributions to the Social Economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Community Forum on Food Security and the Social Economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Mobilization around Food Security within the Canadian Social Economy Research Partnerships: A National Scan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Identification of Barriers and Tools to Support Community Mobilization and Action on Sustainable Food Purchasing Decisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Making Healthy, Local Food Possible: Rural Community Solutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Forum on Community Food Security and the Social Economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### There are 9 projects under Sub-node 4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Social Economy and Watershed Groups on the Acadian Coast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Économie Sociale et groupes de bassin-versant sur le littoral acadien</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Public Participation in Forestry Management: Experiences, Perceptions and Expectations of the Social Economy in New Brunswick.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Participation publique en gestion forestière : Expériences, perceptions et attentes des organismes de l’économie sociale du Nouveau-Brunswick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Alternative Farming Practices and Food Security at the Really Local Cooperative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 L’utilisation de compost comme pratique visant une plus grande viabilité des sols chez les fermiers du Sud-Est du Nouveau-Brunswick</td>
<td>(La Coopérative de la Récolte de Chez-Nous (RCN))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Acceptabilité sociale des pratiques aquacoles dans le sud du Golfe du St-Laurent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 New Social Economy, Reinforcing the Capacities of Coastal Communities in Delivering Services to Citizens in Relation to Rising Sea Levels on the Acadian Littoral of New Brunswick.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Nouvelle économie sociale, renforcement des capacités des collectivités côtières dans la livraison de services aux citoyens face à la hausse du niveau marin sur le littoral acadien du Nouveau-Brunswick.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Climate Change and Medicinal Plants in the Mi’kmaq Communities of Eel River Bar and d’Elsipogtog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Changements climatiques et plantes médicinales dans les communautés Mi’kmaq d’Eel River Bar et d’Elsipogtog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Contribution des coopératives d’artisanat autochtone à l’économie des Premières Nations aux provinces maritimes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Contribution of Aboriginal Craft Cooperatives to the Economy of First Nations in the Maritime Provinces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8 Impacts of the NB Regulatory Process on the Small Scale Cranberry Farmer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9 Quelles mesures permettraient d’inciter le transport non motorisé dans la région du Grand Moncton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are 8 projects under SN5:

5.1 Financing the Social Economy  
5.2 Fogo Island Cooperative  
5.3 Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Cooperative Accounting  
5.4 Halifax Independent School-Performance Measures  
5.5 Diagnostic Tool for Co-operative Firms  
5.7 Measuring the Co-op Difference  
5.8 Guide to Choosing an Enterprise Form  
5.10 Employment Law for Canadian Worker Co-operatives

There are 8 projects under SN6:

6.1 Bridges and Pathways, or Detours and Dead Ends: Evaluating a Collaborative Web Community  
6.2 Introducing a Web Community Software to a Complex Social Economy Organization  
6.3 The Development of Open-Source Web Community Software  
6.4 The Uses and Gratifications of Communication Technologies for Social Economy Actors: A Survey of Atlantic SE Organizations’ Use of Communications Tools  
6.5 Community Sector Forum: Testing an Inclusive Approach to Engaging Community Sector Leaders in a Discussion about Key Issues and Challenges Facing the Sector  
6.6 But I Sent You the E-mail: Exploring E-mail’s Effectiveness as a Promotional Medium within the Community Sector  
6.7 Evaluating the Utility of Webinars as an Information and Communications Technology  
6.8 Analysis of Community-Based Radio as a Communication Tool for Groups in the Social Economy

There are 3 projects under the Node office:

N.1 Mount St. Vincent University Library Project I: Social Economy Subject Guide  
N.3 Mapping the Social Economy with Mi’kmaq communities
### There are 8 projects under Student projects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Code</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S.2</td>
<td>Let Them In, But Keep Them Out: Liminality of the First-born Chinese Prince Edward Islanders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.3</td>
<td>Domestic Violence Research Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.4</td>
<td>The Policy Context for Co-operatives in New Brunswick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.5</td>
<td>Cultivating Food Security in NS Public Schools: A Case Study of the Gaspereau Valley Elementary School Garden Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.10</td>
<td>Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland: A Comparative Assessment of Two Islands As Viable Destinations for Immigrant Entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.11</td>
<td>Contribution d’une entreprise d’économie sociale à l’alimentation de proximité et à la sécurité alimentaire: le cas de la RCN dans le sud-est du NB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.12</td>
<td>At the Intersection of a Crisis? Examining the Ability of New Brunswick’s Non-Profit Organizations to Meet the Need for Home Care in the Twenty-First Century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.13</td>
<td>Examining the Risk of Lost Knowledge with Personnel Changes in Small Non-profit Organizations on PEI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For further information on each of these projects, visit:  
[http://msvu.ca/socialeconomyatlantic/English/projectsE.asp](http://msvu.ca/socialeconomyatlantic/English/projectsE.asp)