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Manitoba Research Alliance to Explore Community Economic Development in the New Economy

Million-dollar, CCPA -led project involves university, government, and community researchers

Winnipeg – A major new project, funded primarily by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), will research the effects of the New Economy on disadvantaged communities in Manitoba, and investigate how community economic development (CED) strategies might be used to allow these communities to share in the benefits of the New Economy. The public announcement was made today in Winnipeg by the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development), Dr. Rey Pagtakhan, on behalf of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

The Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy's Principal Investigator is John Loxley, Professor of Economics at the University of Manitoba. Participating researchers represent Manitoba's three universities, as well as federal and provincial government departments and a number of community economic development organizations. The Research Alliance's lead organization is the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Manitoba. A number of participating researchers are also CCPA-MB Research Associates.

The three-year Research Alliance project's total budget is approximately \$1,000,000, of which \$900,000 will be provided by SSHRC—the federal government agency that funds university-based research—under its Initiative on the New Economy (INE). The purpose of the INE Research Alliances program is to encourage partnerships between academic institutions and organizations involved in Canadian communities. The funding will allow for the hiring of up to 45 Manitoba students, as well as travel to rural and northern communities. The project also includes a strong knowledge mobilization component.

"This is a very exciting opportunity to research the effects of new economy developments on Manitoba communities, and identify opportunities for sustainable community economic development," said Todd Scarth, Director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Manitoba. Scarth added that the project's findings will also be of interest to CED practitioners outside of Manitoba.

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For more information, contact:

Todd Scarth, Director, CCPA-MB
ph: (204) 927-3202 email: todd@policyalternatives.ca



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Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy

Project Team

Lead Organization

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Manitoba

Principal Investigator

John Loxley (Economics, University of Manitoba)

Co-Investigators

Robert Annis (Rural Development Institute, University of Brandon)

Jim Silver (Politics, University of Winnipeg)

Collaborators

Sheri Blake (City Planning, University of Manitoba)

Lawrence Deane (Winnipeg Education Centre, University of Manitoba)

Parvin Ghorayshi (Sociology, University of Winnipeg)

Heather Hunter (Manitoba Department of Education Training and Youth)

Peter Hudson (Social Work, University of Manitoba)

Christopher Leo (Politics, University of Winnipeg)

Michael Lewis (Canadian Community Economic Development Network)

Thibault Martin (Sociology, University of Winnipeg)

Byron Sheldrick (Politics, University of Winnipeg)

University Partners

University of Brandon (Rural Development Institute)

University of Manitoba (Economics, Native Studies, City Planning, Social Work)

University of Winnipeg (Politics, Sociology)

Community Partner Organizations

Bayline Regional Roundtable

Canadian Community Economic Development Network

Community and Economic Development Committee of Cabinet Secretariat, Manitoba

Community Futures Partnership of Manitoba

Health Promotion and Programs Branch, Health Canada

North End Community Renewal Corporation

Prairie and Northern Regional Office, Environment Canada

Rural Secretariat, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada

SEED Winnipeg

West Broadway Development Corporation



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Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy

Project Summary

In recent years, the emergence of a new knowledge-based economy has been credited with generating robust economic growth, new and challenging employment opportunities, new wealth creation possibilities, and the promise of greatly enhancing productivity in the rest of the economy. Current evidence, however, suggests that the rewards and opportunities presented by this New Economy have not been shared equally. Moreover, the New Economy might impose additional obstacles to communities that already faced sizeable barriers to economic development under previous economic conditions. The **Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy** will investigate how disadvantaged communities might share in the benefits of the New Economy, and where the transition to a New Economy has erected new barriers, how these might be overcome. The Research Alliance has identified Community Economic Development (CED), a development strategy that emphasizes local self-sufficiency, local decision-making and local ownership, as a strategic response that might assist communities in taking up the opportunities and meeting the challenges created by the transition to a New Economy.

The Research Alliance brings together academic researchers from the Universities of Manitoba, Winnipeg and Brandon, senior government policy makers and practitioners active in Manitoba's dynamic CED community and elsewhere, under the leadership of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Manitoba, a community-based research institute uniquely positioned to make such community-university connections. The diversity of the research group will create a context for innovative, inter-disciplinary assessments of the impacts of the New Economy on disadvantaged communities that are attentive to both theory and practice, and give voice to the personal experiences of people who live in those communities. It will evaluate the potential for CED approaches to capitalize on the opportunities and minimize the dislocations of the New Economy as experienced in urban, rural and northern Manitoba.

While focussing primarily on Manitoba, the composition of the Alliance will enable it to draw on experiences from across Canada and beyond. The Alliance will explore how and where New Economy developments might facilitate effective CED, and conversely, the ways in which CED approaches might assist communities in satisfying New Economy requirements that might otherwise impede economic development. The Research Alliance will formalize the economic and political theory of the New Economy to assess its compatibility with democratic and participatory economic development. It will identify opportunities where the pursuit of New Economy activities might be integrated with current CED activities to produce greater development returns, and will determine what capital, infrastructure and policy supports are required for such activities. And the Alliance will consider how CED might be transformed to be more effective in today's environment.

The unique character of the Alliance, combined with its participatory methodology, will produce a transfer of knowledge generating tangible policy and community outcomes.