

## **DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR RESEARCH IN PRACTICE IN ADULT LITERACY IN CANADA**

A project directed by a national steering committee (see Appendix A), administered by Literacy BC, and funded by the National Literacy Secretariat.

**TIMELINE:** April 2005 to September 2006

### **SUMMARY**

Research in practice enriches the research culture of the adult literacy field. It encourages practitioners—instructors, administrators, those working in advocacy—to create and share knowledge in systematic ways. It also opens up opportunities for them to critically reflect on existing knowledge and to apply findings to their practice. Through all these activities, research in practice promotes improvements in practice, informs policy, and contributes to learner success.

Research in practice in adult literacy has been gaining strength and visibility in Canada since 1996. However, there is an unevenness of support and capacity across the country and many practitioners do not have access to opportunities to engage in research in practice. Consequently, there is a need for a strategic framework that will address this disparity and guide future practice and policy. This project will address that need by: (1) conducting an inventory of research in practice in adult literacy in English speaking Canada; (2) making comprehensive recommendations for the further growth and development of research in practice based on the results of the inventory; (3) creating opportunities for practitioners across the country to be part of the development of the framework.

The inventory will collect data at four levels: national, provincial/territorial, community, and individual. The data will identify and describe research in practice events, networks, projects, learning circles, resource people, university connections, type and level of government support, among others. In addition, up to 16 individuals in different parts of the country will reflect on their unique experiences of the supports and barriers that influence their participation or non-participation in research in practice.

The inventory process will contribute to the development of research in practice by taking a participatory approach to the collection and production of data. This approach will: ensure inclusiveness by systematically reaching out to a wide range of people; strengthen and enrich the research results by bringing practitioner knowledge to the fore; facilitate community ownership of the project process and findings; and increase capacity for research in practice by building interest, skills, and hands-on experience.

### **Process**

The project will be directed by a Steering Committee, drawn from a variety of settings and locations. Two coordinating researchers will be hired to collect data at the national level, and provide support and mentoring to the groups and individuals collecting data at the provincial/territorial and individual levels. The individual and provincial/territorial researchers will be selected based on calls for proposals.

### **Results**

The project will result in a final report that includes: (1) an inventory that identifies and describes current research in practice activities at four different levels, and that analyses the conditions necessary to support research in practice; (2) comprehensive

recommendations based on the inventory data that provide a strategic framework for future practice and policy.

The final report will be distributed in hard copy to: national literacy organizations; provincial/territorial literacy coalitions; university-based adult education and research organizations; provincial/territorial government representatives; federal policy makers. In order to ensure the report is also available to practitioners and community-based organizations, the report will be posted in full-text on the National Adult Literacy Database and on the web sites of interested and relevant organizations in the United States and the United Kingdom.

Other project outcomes will include: increased skills and interest in research in practice among practitioners; and increased knowledge by a variety of stakeholders about the breadth and depth of research in practice activities. Anticipated long-term outcomes include: further development and visibility of a research culture within the Canadian adult literacy field; greater connectivity and linkages among people and groups involved in research in practice.

### **NEED FOR THE PROJECT**

Research in practice in adult literacy has been gaining strength and visibility in Canada since the National Literacy Secretariat held a policy conversation on literacy research in 1996. In fact, a second consultation sponsored by the NLS in March 2004 identified as a priority a continued focus on and support for research in practice. The momentum for research in practice in Canada, and internationally, clearly demonstrates its importance and value to the field of adult literacy. Practitioner-based research is a rich source of knowledge, a dynamic professional development tool, and a powerful catalyst for practice-based change.

Doing research is an activity generally associated with the academy, and, indeed, much research on adult literacy comes from academic sources. Encouraging practitioners to conduct research is a means for also articulating, developing, and circulating knowledge from other "places" in the field. In this way, research in practice enriches our collective understanding about how to promote people's abilities to read and write and to enhance their opportunities and resources for reading and writing.

Research in practice, however, is about more than *doing* research. Research in practice gives practitioners other ways to engage with research: learning about and from research by reading and responding to it; reflecting on research and its implications for practice; and applying research findings to practice (Horsman and Norton, 1999). It opens up opportunities for practitioners to critically reflect on existing knowledge and to apply findings to their practice. The literacy field is also strengthened when practitioners have access to documented research, occasions to think about and to discuss its connections to practice, and opportunities to make changes and improve their practice as a consequence (Horsman and Norton, 1999).

The growth and development of research in practice in English-speaking Canada has been particularly evident in recent years. At the national level, for example, an inter-provincial web site ([www.nald.ca/ripal/](http://www.nald.ca/ripal/)) is centralizing information about research in practice in Canada; research in practice events for three consecutive years in Edmonton (2001), Vancouver (2002), and St. John's (2003) have given practitioners the opportunity to present their work and connect with colleagues; and,

since 2003, a new Canadian journal, *Literacies: Researching practice, practising research*, has offered an accessible forum for the publication of practitioner writing.

These national activities, in concert with important initiatives at the provincial/territorial and community levels, have created a great deal of momentum for research in practice. But there is an unevenness of activity, support and capacity across the country. The infrastructure to support research in practice is inconsistent. Infrastructure includes a variety of factors such as leadership in promoting and supporting research in practice, provision of funds, availability of mentors or research friends, and employment stability for literacy practitioners, among many others. Consequently, in some provinces research in practice is flourishing and in others it is non-existent. In addition, there are limited spaces for discussion of issues that concern all those involved in research in practice. Since 2003, for example, no organization has stepped forward to sponsor another research in practice institute. Indeed, practitioners are often reluctant to take on projects that are national in scope without an explicit mandate from the field.

It is important to ensure that practitioners in every part of the country have access to opportunities to engage in research in practice and that spaces are opened up for the exchange and transfer of knowledge, experience, and best practices. In order to identify and address the disparities that exist, and create new opportunities, a strategic framework is required to guide practice and policy. This project will address that need by: (1) conducting an inventory of research in practice in adult literacy in English speaking Canada; (2) making comprehensive recommendations for the future growth and development of research in practice based on the results of the inventory; and (3) creating opportunities for practitioners across the country to be part of the development of the framework.

The inventory and recommendations will build on and enhance the information and knowledge documented since 1996. In that year, Norton and Laberge surveyed six consultants about practitioner research in Canada. The consultation identified both an interest in research in practice and a number of potential challenges to practitioners engaged in research, including practitioners' need for support and resources to do research. The survey led to an October 1997 research in practice seminar in Edmonton. Eighteen literacy researchers, practitioners and consultants met to discuss the potential and possible future applications of literacy research in practice in Canada. Literacy practitioner research networks and projects that had been discussed or attempted in parts of Canada were reviewed, as were some of the established networks in Australia, the UK and the USA. The seminar heightened interest in developing organized approaches to supporting or sustaining research in practice initiatives.

In 1998 the NLS published *Enhancing literacy research in Canada* (NLS,1998), which highlighted the need for research capacity building in Canada. This report outlined a framework for supporting literacy research and included practitioner research as one important direction for literacy research in Canada. In 1999 Horsman and Norton wrote a *Framework to encourage and support adult literacy practitioner involvement in literacy research in Canada*. This framework offers a broad definition of research in practice, one that has gained prevalence within the adult literacy field and is used in the current proposal. In 2002, Quigley and Norton published "*It simply makes us better:*" *Learning from Literacy Research in Practice Networks, A Resource for Literacy Research in Practice in Canada*. Based on a study of eleven research in practice networks or projects in the UK, Australia and the USA, the resource offered

ideas for planning and supporting research in practice based on information from the eleven networks. The appendix included a brief description of research in practice initiatives in Canada to that time.

These documents provide an emergent body of knowledge and information about the history of research in practice, its benefits and challenges, and some of the ways in which it can be supported and sustained. There is a need to build on the existing documentation to produce a comprehensive, systematic, and in-depth overview of current research in practice activities and issues. Comprehensiveness will require data collection at four levels: national, provincial/territorial, community, and individual. Systematic data collection at the first three levels will identify and describe research in practice events, networks, projects, learning circles, resource people, university connections, government support, among others. At the individual level the focus will be to collect in-depth data about the conditions which support or hinder practitioner participation in research in practice.

The breadth and depth of the inventory data will provide the information needed to make specific recommendations that form a strategic framework to guide practice and policy. Equally importantly, the inventory process *itself* will contribute to the growth and development of research in practice by taking a participatory approach to data collection. Conducting part of the inventory as a research in practice activity answers several needs. Inclusiveness is ensured by systematically reaching out to a wide range of people. The research results are strengthened and enriched by bringing practitioner knowledge to the fore. Community ownership of the project process and findings is facilitated. And finally, capacity for research in practice is increased by building interest, skills, and hands-on experience among practitioners. Many practitioners view research as a world apart from their daily work in a literacy program. Only when they begin to read research, do research themselves, and talk with others about research, do they start seeing the possibilities for their participation in research in practice (Horsman and Norton 1999).

### **PROJECT PERSONNEL**

The project will be directed by a **Steering Committee**. The 5-8 member Steering Committee will be comprised of individuals from different sectors and regions in the country. The Steering Committee members will be recommended by an ad hoc group that has participated, since June 2004, in developing the current proposal (See **Appendix A**). Attention will be given to ensuring that there is diversity on the Committee, for example, that committee members bring experience in research in practice, academic research, and national projects. Steering Committee members will also be drawn from different parts of the country and different types of settings and backgrounds.

The Steering Committee will communicate via a private electronic conference on The Hub (the literacy electronic network delivered by Literacy BC and Capilano College) and via teleconference. The Steering Committee will meet face-to-face once during the project, during the gathering scheduled for November 2005. See **Appendix B** for the **Steering Committee Terms of Reference**.

The project will be administered by Literacy BC, an organization with experience in successfully administering national projects. **Literacy BC** will receive and disburse the project funds, hire project personnel, prepare financial reports, and provide administrative assistance to the project. A Literacy BC staff member will sit on the

project Steering Committee in order to provide a liaison between the two entities. See **Appendix C** for the **Roles and Responsibilities of Literacy BC**.

A team of two **coordinating researchers** will be hired to manage the project. In collaboration with Literacy BC, the Steering Committee will distribute a call for applications, review the applications, conduct interviews by telephone, and recommend the hiring to Literacy BC. The coordinating researchers will be selected from different regions of the country. The work will be divided between the two coordinating researchers so that each is working with different provinces/territories.

The coordinating researchers will report to the Steering Committee and be responsible for: developing initial processes for data collection; collecting data at the national level; consulting with and supporting groups/individuals in the provinces/territories as they undertake their data collection; facilitating an online conference for the groups and individuals engaged in data collection; analyzing the collective data and writing and circulating a draft report; planning and facilitating the Steering Committee conference calls and the project gathering; writing the final report. See **Appendix D** for the **Coordinating Researchers' Job Description**.

Other project personnel include the **groups and individuals** who will collect data. See **Appendix E** for a **Description of the Roles and Responsibilities of Groups and Individuals Collecting Data**.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The primary project goal is to create a strategic framework to guide practice and policy in the future development of research in practice in adult literacy in English speaking Canada. Specifically, there are three objectives:

1. To conduct an inventory of research in practice by collecting data at four levels: national, provincial/territorial, community and individual.
2. To produce comprehensive recommendations, based on the data.
3. To create opportunities for practitioners across the country to participate in the development of the framework.

### **OBJECTIVE 1: To conduct an inventory of research in practice by collecting data at four levels: national, provincial/territorial, community and individual.**

The inventory will collect data at four different levels in order to provide a comprehensive, in-depth picture of research in practice. Each of the four overlapping levels of data will contribute a layer of richness and detail to the overall picture.

The coordinating researchers will collect data about research in practice activities, events and opportunities at the **national level**. Underlying the collection of these data are key questions: Why is there a need for national or interprovincial research in practice activities and collaborations? Who has jurisdiction or a mandate to conduct national activities? How can provincial/ territorial and national activities be

coordinated and made complementary? What connections exist between research in practice and university and research-based organizations?

The data collection at the national level will answer these and other questions that emerge through the research process. Among the initiatives to be investigated are:

- **The role of research in practice events or institutes:** What are the outcomes of these events? How inclusive are they? How often should they take place and should they be regional or national in composition? If national, how can non-national organizations be encouraged to come forward to sponsor a national event?
- **The role of *Literacies: Researching practice, practising research*** in encouraging and fostering research in practice, and the journal's collaborations and partnerships.
- **The role of electronic initiatives** in disseminating information about research in practice, providing opportunities for practitioners to engage in reflection about research, and offering training and professional development in research in practice.
- **The relationship of research in practice with university-based organizations** such as the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

The methods to collect these data will include:

- **In-depth interviews** with a maximum of 15 individuals who have been actively involved in national research in practice activities and events.
- **A survey** distributed to participants in national events and meetings, for example, the research in practice conferences/institutes in Edmonton, Vancouver and St. John's.
- **A review of the literature** on research in practice and of the various initiatives different regions and countries have undertaken in this area.
- **Policy and document analysis** of current policies and opportunities that frame research in practice.

Data collection will also take place at the **provincial/territorial and community levels**. In each province/territory the inventory process will investigate questions such as: what is happening in research in practice, where is it happening, who is doing it, and what supports and conditions allow it to happen? The intention is to collect information about the broad range of research in practice activities, including related activities that may be offered under the umbrella of professional development and training. In those provinces/territories where research in practice is *not* happening, the inventory will describe the barriers perceived by practitioners, advocates, government employees and researchers.

The data will be collected by groups in each province/territory who successfully apply to a call for proposals. A budget of \$130,000 is allocated for research at the provincial/territorial and community levels. A maximum amount will be allocated to

each province/territory by the Steering Committee, in accordance with the size of the population and other considerations such as need for travel, and travel distances.

The budget allocated to each group that successfully applies will be expected to cover staff time, anticipated to be the largest expense, and all other expenses required to do the research such as office materials and supplies, long-distance, and travel.

A group in each province/territory will be selected based on these criteria: a well developed plan for the collection of data; experience in doing research; evidence of collaboration among different groups and individuals in collecting the data; basic knowledge of research in practice activity within the province/territory; the provision of a budget and timeline within the given framework; willingness to participate in an electronic conference about the project; a plan for disseminating results of the data collection to provincial/territorial constituents; willingness to participate in a project evaluation.

Some data collection will be specific to a particular province/territory because of its unique conditions. At the same time, it is essential that the inventory produce comparable data across the country. To that end, attention will be paid to ensure that consistent data are systematically collected. Successful applicants to the call for proposals will be required to identify and describe the following activities taking place in their province/territory:

- **Research in practice networks:** The history, goals, activities, projects, and personnel attached to existing networks.
- **Research in practice learning circles:** Formal and informal learning circles in which participants read, discuss, and reflect on research.
- **Research in practice projects.** A brief description of past and current research in practice projects.
- **Resource people:** Key resource people who are instrumental in stimulating and supporting research in practice and/or mentoring and training practitioner researchers. This will include research “friends” and other field-based people involved in research in practice training, as well as key government and university-based contacts.
- **University/college involvement and support:** The type and level of involvement in and support for research in practice in universities and colleges and the key factors influencing and sustaining that involvement and support.
- **Status of literacy studies within universities.** The location of literacy studies in Canadian universities and characteristics of those programs, including their approach to research in practice, funding sources, key personnel, longevity, stability, etc.
- **Type and level of provincial-territorial government support.**
- **Type and level of provincial-territorial literacy coalition support.**
- **Technology initiatives:** The opportunities technology is providing for communication within research in practice projects, dissemination of research results, and discussion and reflection about research in practice.
- **Other initiatives** and activities that emerge.

Research at the individual level will also take place. The intent is to complement the other layers of data by providing a unique and in-depth look at how the potential for research in practice actually plays out in different parts of the country. Data at the

individual level will provide information on the barriers and supports that make a difference in opening up or closing opportunities for individual practitioners to engage in research in practice. These data will add depth and richness to the other layers, and allow for a description of unique experiences not easily captured through more traditional research methods.

One or more individuals in each province/territory, to a maximum of 16 in total, will keep a journal of their experiences, thoughts and motivations to participate in research in practice activities offered in their region for two to three months (April to June 2005). Each individual will receive a stipend for this work. The selection of the individuals collecting data in a particular province or territory may be done by provincial/territorial groups as part of their data collection plan. If that is not feasible, individuals will be selected by the Steering Committee based on a call for proposals.

**Objective 2: To produce comprehensive recommendations based on the data.**

The data produced by coordinating researchers, provincial groups and individuals will present a clear picture of current research in practice activities and organizations. The analysis of the data will point at strengths and weaknesses in the delivery of research in practice; gaps where more support is needed; and the best ways of providing support. The coordinating researchers will organize this information and present it at the gathering in November 2005. Based on responses to the presentations and through small group discussions, participants at the gathering will build a Framework for Research in Practice in Adult Literacy in English-speaking Canada. The framework will identify the kinds of support that are needed to continue the development of research in practice and identify the basic direction and organization such work should follow. The framework will offer recommendations regarding:

- Effective mechanisms to encourage and support research in practice.
- Structures to support decision-making about national directions, events, and activities.
- The allocation of resources to address disparities and gaps in resources.
- Coordination between provincial/territorial and national events and activities.
- Ways to facilitate the exchange and transfer of knowledge, experience and best practices, including: training and professional development such as national and regional events or institutes, and electronic communication; the role of *Literacies: Researching Practice, Practising Research*; the role of electronic communication and web site development.
- Other areas that emerge from the data.

The coordinating researchers will organize the discussions and conclusions that emerge from the gathering to create the framework.

**Objective 3: To create opportunities for practitioners across the country to be part of the development of the framework.**

Practitioner participation in the research process and the development of the framework will be facilitated in two principal ways: (1) an electronic conference; (2) a project gathering.

**1. Electronic conference:** To assist and support the groups and individuals who collect the data, an online conference will be moderated by the coordinating researchers. The conference will be hosted by The Hub (the literacy electronic network delivered by Literacy BC and Capilano College) and will be open from April 2005 to March 2006 (with a two month expected hiatus during July/August 2005). The electronic conference will provide an interactive forum for everyone involved in data collection and production to share information, ideas, and research results. The conference will also provide the coordinating researchers with a means to offer ongoing mentorship to the groups and individuals collecting data. As well, the coordinating researchers will be able to use the electronic forum to ensure that the data groups and individuals are collecting are comparable. For example, the coordinating researchers will use the electronic conference to discuss obstacles that groups face when contacting people in their province/territory. These conversations can point at aspects of the data collection that had not been anticipated and the conversation among the different groups may provide creative solutions. These discussions can also contain data that the coordinating researchers will collect in respect to the differences among provinces/territories.

**2. Project gathering:** The gathering in November 2005 will bring together the Steering Committee, the coordinating researchers, and one delegate from each of the groups collecting data at the provincial/territorial levels. The gathering will provide a direct opportunity for community input into the development of the framework through presentations, discussions, and consensus building.

**WHO WILL BENEFIT?**

Achievement of **Objectives 1 and 2** will result in the following benefits:

- **Practitioners** will gain insights into the possibilities for their participation in research in practice, names of key resource people, and information about professional development and training opportunities.
- **Literacy organizations** will gain information about the range of research in practice activities taking place in their communities and regions. Alternatively, they will gain information about the reasons why research in practice activities are *not* taking place.
- **Provincial/territorial government representatives** will gain an understanding of the benefits and challenges of research in practice, the conditions required to support and sustain it, and information about the breadth and depth of research in practice activities in their jurisdiction in comparison to other provinces/territories.
- **Federal policy makers** will be provided with a strategic framework to guide future decisions about the allocation of resources to support research in practice.
- **Non-governmental organizations in other sectors** will gain information and knowledge about research in practice models for possible use in their own sectors.

- **University-based researchers and organizations** will gain information about existing connections between universities and the literacy field in relation to research in practice.

Achievement of **Objective 3** will result in the following benefits:

- **Practitioners and organizations** will gain community ownership of the research process and findings.
- **Practitioners** will gain interest, skills and hands-on experience in research in practice.
- **Policy-makers** will gain an important policy tool in the form of strong and enriched research results and recommendations.

## **PLAN OF ACTION**

SC = Steering Committee

CR = Coordinating Researcher

Time frame: April 2005 – September 2006

### **April 2005**

- Steering Committee (SC) formed by consensus among ad hoc national planning group.
- Literacy BC sets up electronic conference on The Hub/eLit for Steering Committee communication.

### **May – June 2005**

- Literacy BC and the Steering Committee develop and distribute a call for applications for the positions of Coordinating Researchers (CRs).
- Literacy BC distributes information about the project on the RiPAL, *Literacies*, and NALD web sites and sends to literacy organizations across the country.
- SC reviews applications and conducts interviews by teleconference.

### **June – July 2005**

- CRs selected by Steering Committee.
- Literacy BC develops and signs contracts with CRs.
- CRs begin work – June 13, 2005.
- CRs begin to develop framework for data collection.
- CRs begin to prepare a call for proposals for provincial/territorial and individual data collection.
- CRs begin collecting data at the national level.

### **August – September 2005**

- CRs distribute a call for proposals for provincial/territorial and individual data collection (mid-August).
- CRs consult with groups and individuals across the country re the data collection – discussing and shaping ideas re how the data collection could be done. CRs document conversations as part of the data.
- Deadline for receipt of proposals – September 30, 2005.

### **October 2005**

- CRs review applications and recommend groups and individuals to the SC. SC makes final decisions.

- CRs communicate results of the call for proposals to the applicants.
- Literacy BC develops contracts with groups and individuals collecting data.
- Literacy BC sets up web-based electronic conference for groups and individuals involved in data collection.
- CRs begin to facilitate electronic conference.
- Local groups begin collecting data at the provincial/territorial and community levels.
- Individuals begin collecting data.

**October 2005 – March 2006**

- CRs facilitate electronic conference on The Hub.
- Provincial/territorial groups disseminate information about their data collection and emergent findings through a variety of methods, including newsletters, web sites, and presentations at local and regional gatherings.

**April 2006**

- CRs finalize collection of data at the national level.
- Local groups finalize collection of data at the provincial/territorial and community levels.
- Individuals finalize collection of data.
- CRs organize and analyze the collective data and begin a draft of final report.

**May 2006**

- CRs moderate discussion on electronic conference about the research results and the final report.
- CRs continue to work on data analysis and final report.
- CRs organize and facilitate two day gathering to develop the framework.

**June – July 2006**

- CRs work on final report.

**August 2006**

- SC reviews and approves final report.
- Contractor designs and formats final report.
- CRs write articles based on the report for *Literacies* and other relevant journals.

**September 2006**

- Literacy BC prints and distributes final report.

**OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS**

The immediate project outcomes will be:

1. An inventory of research in practice in adult literacy in English-speaking Canada that includes detailed data collected at four levels of enquiry: national, provincial/territorial, community, and individual.
2. Comprehensive recommendations that present a strategic framework to guide practice and policy in the future development of research in practice.
3. Increased interest, skills and hands-on experience in research in practice among practitioners.

4. Increased knowledge by a variety of stakeholders about the breadth and depth of research in practice activities and issues in their jurisdictions, and nationally.

Anticipated long-term outcomes of the project include:

1. The further development and visibility of a research culture within the Canadian adult literacy field.
2. Greater connectivity and linkages among people involved in research in practice in adult literacy in Canada.

The dissemination plan includes:

**1. The distribution of the final report:** The final report will be distributed broadly in hard copy to:

- Participants in the project.
- National literacy organizations.
- Provincial/territorial literacy coalitions..
- Adult education and research organizations.
- Provincial/territorial government representatives.
- Policy makers at the federal level.
- Research in practice contacts and organizations in the United States and the United Kingdom.

In addition, and in order to make the final report accessible to practitioners in the field, it will be posted in full text on the National Adult Literacy Database with a notation that hard copies may be requested.

Information and articles about the final report and how to obtain it will take place through the use of electronic and print communication methods including:

- The RiPAL inter-provincial web site.
- The National Adult Literacy Database.
- *Literacy.ca*, the newsletter of the Movement for Canadian Literacy and the newsletters of other national literacy organizations.
- The newsletters of the provincial/territorial literacy coalitions.
- *Literacies: Researching practice, practising research*.
- Literacy electronic networks: *AlphaCom, The Hub, eLit.ca, North of 60*.

An executive summary of the final report will be translated into French for information and distribution among the French-speaking adult literacy community. The Executive Summary in French will be sent directly to La Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français and other French language organizations in the provinces/territories identified as having an interest in research in practice in adult literacy.

**2. Dissemination by groups and individuals.** The provincial/territorial groups will disseminate information about their findings as part of their research plan.

## **EVALUATION**

Ongoing evaluation is central to the project. The Steering Committee will communicate regularly to evaluate the project by comparing activities and accomplishments to plans and objectives and, on that basis, will make decisions to institute changes to procedures where necessary. The coordinating researchers will

regularly document, analyze and share with the Steering Committee the successes and challenges they experience in their work. Evaluation will also be participatory and include feedback from the groups and individuals involved in data collection about the process as well as the findings of the project. The feedback will be gathered through: documentation of reflection and discussion on the electronic conference; interviews with selected participants (up to 5); an evaluation survey distributed to all groups and individuals who take part in the collection of data.

Using information from all these sources, the final report of the project will identify the project objectives, describe activities related to those objectives, and indicate the progress made in the achievement of those objectives.

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**APPENDIX A: STEERING COMMITTEE**

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**APPENDIX B: STEERING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The central role of the Steering Committee is to direct the project and ensure the project goals are achieved. The Steering Committee will be comprised of 5-8 individuals in different sectors and regions of the country.

The responsibility of the Steering Committee is to:

- Select the coordinating researchers through a call for applications and interview process.
- Direct, oversee, and evaluate the work of the coordinating researchers.
- Select the groups and individuals who will collect provincial/territorial and individual data, based on a call for proposals.
- Approve the final report.

Steering Committee members will be expected to:

- Participate in Committee teleconferences and communicate regularly via an electronic conference on The Hub.
- Participate in the gathering of inventory participants in September 2005.
- Elect a chairperson who will be the first point of contact with the coordinating researchers and Literacy BC.

Committee members will be drawn from different parts of the country and different types of settings and backgrounds. Attention will be paid to ensure that there are committee members who have experience in research in practice, academic research, and national projects.

**APPENDIX C: ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LITERACY BC**

Literacy BC is the administrative agency in the project. Literacy BC will receive an administration fee of 10% of the project funds, for a total of \$27,243, for the following services:

**Financial services**

- Monthly financial tracking.
- Preparation of monthly operating statements.
- Accounts receivable.
- Accounts payable.
- Preparation of cash flow projections.
- Preparation of interim and final financial reports.

**Administrative services**

- Liaison and consultation with the Steering Committee.
- Hiring of coordinating researchers.
- Liaison and consultation with the coordinating researchers.
- Preparation and administration of contracts with the provincial/territorial groups and individuals.
- Dissemination of information about the project and the findings.
- Supervision of the printing and distribution of the final report.
- Provision of office space, equipment, and resources.

#### **APPENDIX D: JOB DESCRIPTION: COORDINATING RESEARCHERS**

A team of two **coordinating researchers** will manage the project. The work will be divided between the two coordinating researchers so that each is working with different provinces/territories.

- Knowledge of and experience with literacy research in practice. Experience working with practitioners in research-related activities.
- Experience doing research. Good grasp and understanding of qualitative methods and some knowledge of quantitative design and analysis. Interest in including different perspectives in data design, collection analysis and reporting and the ability to do so.
- Experience in team research, preferably experience in coordinating a team of researchers. Ability to work as part of a team.
- Ability to manage large databases.
- Experience working in the Canadian adult literacy field and connections to people and organizations in the field.
- Knowledge of federal literacy policy and funding initiatives.
- Excellent facilitation, communication, organizational, and writing skills.

#### **Role and Responsibilities**

The coordinating researchers will manage the project under the direction of the Steering Committee and in consultation with Literacy BC. Working as a team, the coordinating researchers will coordinate the research and facilitate the research process. They will also collect data at the national level. Specifically, the coordinating researchers will:

- Develop the call for proposals for the collection of provincial/territorial and individual data.
- Consult with groups and individuals to assist in the application process.
- Support and mentor groups and individuals in undertaking data collection, including facilitation of an electronic conference.
- Facilitate sessions at the project gathering.
- Collect data at the national level.
- Analyze the collective project data.
- Prepare the final report.

## **APPENDIX D: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS**

### **Provincial/territorial and community levels**

Data collection will take place at the provincial/territorial and community levels. The data will be collected by groups in each province/territory who successfully apply to a call for proposals. A budget of \$130,000 is allocated for research at these levels. A maximum amount will be allocated to each province/territory by the Steering Committee, in accordance with the size of the population and other considerations such as need for travel, and travel distances.

The provincial/territorial groups will be required to collect data as described under Objective 1 above. Specifically, they will:

- Collect and organize the data, write up their data collection results and submit the results to the coordinating researchers.
- Develop and carry out a plan to communicate their results to groups/individuals in their province/territory, including presentations at local and regional gatherings in fall 2005.
- Participate in an electronic conference facilitated by the coordinating researchers.
- Send a delegate to participate in the project gathering in November 2005.
- Participate in a project evaluation.

### **Individual level**

One or more individuals in each province/territory, to a maximum of 16 in total, will keep a journal of their experiences, thoughts and motivations to participate in research in practice activities offered in their region for two to three months (April to June 2005). Each individual will receive a stipend of \$1000 for this work. The selection of the individuals collecting data in a particular province or territory may be done by provincial/territorial groups as part of their data collection plan. If that is not feasible, individuals will be selected by the Steering Committee based on a call for proposals.

The selected individuals will be required to:

- Keep a journal of their experiences, thoughts and motivations to participate in research in practice activities offered in their region for two to three months (April to June 2005).
- Participate in an electronic conference facilitated by the coordinating researchers.
- Participate in a project evaluation.