

CSR NETWORK FOR CO-OPERATIVES

TERMS OF REFERENCE

DRAFT

BACKGROUND

Canadian co-operatives recognize that corporate social responsibility (CSR) is emerging as a strategic business trend and that they have a unique but diminishing competitive advantage given their historic concern for members, communities, employees and other stakeholders. Given the growing public and commercial interest in CSR, Canadian co-operatives seek to improve their CSR practices and programs, both to maintain their marketshare and to contribute positively to the larger community, consistent with co-operative values. To that end the CSR Network for Co-operatives was formed to be a forum for co-operatives and credit unions to learn from one another, collaborate on joint CSR projects and promote CSR to the broader co-operative system.

PURPOSE

The Purpose of the CSR Network for Co-operatives is to provide support and co-operative opportunities for the progress of CSR within participating organizations and the broader co-operative system.

DEFINITION

Corporate Social Responsibility is the integration of social and environmental values into business decision-making and operations; and the engagement of stakeholders in that effort.

MANDATE

The Mandate of the CSR Network for Co-operatives is:

- To function as a forum for mutual support and sharing in the development and implementation of CSR strategies and programs.
- To identify and pursue collaborative opportunities within the network and with others in the co-operative system towards furthering CSR goals and achieving co-operative and credit union differentiation.
- To propose and implement initiatives to advance system take-up of strategic corporate social responsibility.
- To foster innovation at the organizational and system level.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the CSR Network is open to employee representatives from Canadian co-operatives.

NETWORK OPPORTUNITIES

The following network opportunities are proposed:

- One or more annual gatherings
- E-dialogue network