

CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS
Leadership Succession in Business Schools
Business Schools Association of Canada
May 2023

The Business Schools Association of Canada (BSAC) invites proposals for research, which examine the future of business education leadership and inform leaders responsible for the strategic direction of business schools in Canada. The research must be conducted within the context of a changing business and educational landscape, which includes new expectations from varying stakeholders in relation to diversity, equity, inclusion, social justice, and social impact.

Approximately 40 percent of deans in higher education in Canada are reappointed for a second term, and this percentage reduces substantially when we consider race and gender (Lavigne, 2020). We do not know, however, how many deans seek reappointment, choose to pursue other leadership roles or resume their former academic roles. We also know very little about the specific career path of deans of business schools, but we do know that the average tenure is low, with some estimates at five to six years only (Bradshaw, 2015).

Deans of business schools typically operate as both the CEO of their respective Schools and as middle managers who report to senior administration of the larger institution. These are complex roles which involve managing the often-conflicting cultures and expectations of internal and external stakeholders, whereby effective collegial governance determines successful leadership with academic colleagues, and corporate sensitivities and responsiveness determine effective leadership with the business community and donors. The pool of qualified candidates for decanal roles in business schools is small and since the pandemic seems to be shrinking further. Moreover, in times where stakeholders are demanding more attention be devoted to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and Truth and Reconciliation, little has been documented about gender, race, disability, and sexual and gender diversity in business school leadership teams.

This call for research aims to provide insights for business schools as they navigate the post-pandemic society and economy and to seek to establish leadership in a critical agenda for Canada. The objective is to investigate leadership of business schools, the career advancement of deans, associate deans, department chairs, - etc. -, and how to effectively engage in succession planning to build a robust pool of business dean candidates across Canada. More research is needed to understand this unique context.

Specifically, the call is for research to address questions, such as:

- Given the critical role of leaders in academic contexts, how can we ensure a sustainable pipeline for Canadian business schools?
- What is the state of knowledge of succession planning and strategic human resources management? How might this knowledge transfer to a business school context, recognizing the particularities of Canadian academic institutions?
- What are ways to attract faculty members to positions of leadership in business schools?
- How might faculty members be better prepared and equipped to assume leadership roles in academia?
- How can business schools ensure that their leadership pipeline and access to leadership positions is equitable and inclusive?

- What may be ways to support retention of faculty members in academic leadership positions? How might such measures support health and resilience of administrators over time?
- How may faculty members be more oriented when they choose a career path that includes administration?
- When is the right time to take on a leadership role for a faculty member and how best to balance those trade-offs?
- What motivates business schools deans to take on such roles and stay in such roles?
- Where do business school deans go after their tenure as a dean? How can they prepare for what comes next?

References:

Bradshaw, D. (2015). Short tenure of deans signals a leadership void. Financial Times April, <https://www.ft.com/content/8af77ab4-e442-11e4-9039-00144feab7de>.

Lavigne, E. (2020). The demographics and career paths of Canadian university deans: gender, race, experience, and provenance. *Studies in Higher Education* 45(9), 1949–1960.

Researchers and faculty from BSAC member schools are invited to submit a research proposal including any of the above or related topics. The proposal should clearly indicate the topic of interest. We welcome any and all disciplines, methodologies and frameworks.

Important Deadlines:

Research Study proposal due: June 15, 2023
Award of grant: July 2023
Report submission deadline: October 31, 2024

Grant value:

BSAC will provide a financial award of \$15,000 to the successful proposal – \$10,000 upon award and \$5,000 following receipt of the full report – subject to terms and conditions as outlined in agreement with the successful candidate.

Award recipients may be invited to present their report at the annual BSAC Annual Conference in fall 2024 and / or present a webinar of their research findings.

Grant value:

For any queries, or more information, please contact:

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GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Proposals should be 3 to 5 pages maximum, exclusive of appendices, and should be organized in the order described below.

Proposal Abstract

Resume (approximately 50-80 words) of research focus, objectives, methodology, and primary deliverables.

Proposal Summary

Primary researcher's name, contact information, and credentials.

Explain how, in your view, this research will support the BSAC overall mission to expand the organization's knowledge and understanding of the issue.

How could the report be used to further our knowledge and understanding of the problem in a way that can be of value to BSAC, its members and important stakeholders in the Canadian management education sector?

Research Description

There are a number of issues addressed in the call for proposals document. Please describe the particular approach you would choose for this research. What would be the focus of the research? What is your understanding of the key issues? Why is this topic important?

Methodology

Describe your proposed methodology and explain how it will answer or lead to a better understanding of the research problem.

Expected Results / Deliverable Description

What do you see in terms of length of final document?

What information would be included and how does this coincide with the proposed methodology?

Timeline for completion

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee in June 2023, with an intended award decision to be made by July 2023.

Deadline for final report is October 31, 2024. Information on expected progress reports and other details are to be negotiated with the selected candidate before final award is granted.

Appendices

Curriculum vitae of researcher.

Submit proposals

No later than June 15, 2023, to daus@bsac-aegc.ca.