

SSHRC CRSH

Committee: 5B - Education and social work 1
Applicant Name: Ingrid Johnston
Application Number: 435-2014-1225
Assessor Number: 1

Insight Grants

External Assessment Form

Assessment

Instructions: Evaluations by external assessors are intended to assist the committee in its deliberations. SSHRC is extremely grateful for your expertise as well as your time and effort.

Given the competitive nature of the adjudication process, constructive criticism and/or suggestions for improvement, if appropriate, may be helpful to the applicant.

As your assessment will be made available to the applicant, please do not include any personal identifying information. If such information appears in your document, the Council reserves the right to remove it.

Declarations on confidentiality and conflict of interest

- a) The information provided in the applications is protected by Canada's *Privacy Act* and is made available to external assessors for reviewing purposes only. I therefore agree to treat as strictly confidential all the material from the above-mentioned file which has been submitted to me by the Council. After responding, be it positively or negatively, I will ensure the destruction of the said material.

Agree ☒ X

- b) I attest that I am not in a conflict of interest with the applicant(s).

Agree ☒ X

Using the guidelines in the attached document, evaluate each sub-criteria below and check the appropriate box. Briefly explain your response.



Committee: 5B - Education and social work 1
 Applicant Name: Ingrid Johnston
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Part 1: Challenge – The aim and importance of the endeavour

Sub-criteria (No specific weighting assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	Modest	Good	Very Good	Excellent
a) Originality, significance and expected contribution to knowledge					X
b) Appropriateness of the literature review				X	
c) Appropriateness of the theoretical approach or framework					X
d) Appropriateness of the methods/approach					X
e) Quality of training and mentoring to be provided to students, emerging scholars and other highly qualified personnel, and opportunities for them to contribute					X
f) Potential influence and impact within and/or beyond the social sciences and humanities research community				X	

g) Briefly describe the proposal's strengths and weaknesses in relation to the above criteria:

These researchers are experienced and knowledgeable in the area of literature (new Canadian and international) focussed on social justice. Their theoretical frames of "postcolonial theories of reading practices", "pedagogies of discomfort" and "inquiry as stance" are timely, and apt for their purposes. This new endeavor will build on previous successful SSHRC research and will influence educational curriculum and policy for at least six provinces over the next decade. They are meeting challenges from changes demographics in school populations, students, teachers, and administrators and the communities in which they/we all live. I believe this research will also attract attention and use in many other countries struggling with similar issues of social justice. This is a thoughtful, strategic, and important project that has potential to contribute to the well being of so many citizens, locally, nationally, internationally. This work addresses both new Canadians, as well as existing and indigenous Canadians developing and educating interculturally together. The benefit can be enormous if supported. The range and expertise and experience of these senior researchers, working with new ones and building research capacity with doctoral students is well conceived, clearly articulated, and will have a positive effect across Canada. They have delivered quality outcomes and research in the past, their wisdom and education will be shared in a legacy of crucial knowing at a critical time in Canada's history. Their methods of collaboration, training, data collecting, and thematic case work across multiple sites will contribute and construct knowledge. I have been looking at and for this kind of research for many years: it is very exciting!

The significance to educators and policy makers and curriculum developers is very positive. This work benefits real people in many contexts. I see no weakness.

Part 2: Feasibility – The plan to achieve excellence

Sub-criteria (No specific weighting assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	Modest	Good	Very Good	Excellent
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Sub-criteria (No specific weighting assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	Modest	Good	Very Good	Excellent
a) Probability of effective and timely attainment of the research objectives					X
b) Appropriateness of the requested budget, and justification of proposed costs					X
c) Indications of financial and in-kind contributions from other sources, where appropriate				X	
d) Quality of knowledge mobilization plans, including for effective knowledge dissemination, knowledge exchange and engagement within and/or beyond the research community					X
e) Strategies and timelines for the design and conduct of the activity/activities proposed					X

f) Briefly describe the proposal's strengths and weaknesses in relation to the above criteria:

Because the researchers are so experienced and have mobilized their results widely in the past, they have an appropriate sense of the full reach and responsibility of what they have done before and what they propose here. This is very do-able as they describe it and they are reliable and will deliver. Their budget requests are reasonable, often mostly for training and cost of actual research with both experienced and new researchers, and a bit for dissemination of the findings. It is a long term plan, across many contexts, so in that sense, they ask for a very modest amount and are responsible stewards about how that money is invested in key findings that can inform large populations. In a way, part of the excitement for me as an assessor for SSHRC is that what they propose are preventative strategies -- to include literature (post -colonial) in the service of social justice. That builds on other research that assists literacy rates (a goal of the Canadian Ministers of Education -2009), builds social and community citizenship, and contributes to the well being of Canadians. The hidden benefit may be seen in healthier and contributing people (students for sure), raising the quality of life and easing suffering, helping all belong to a more positive educational experience in this country. Teaching strategies can be improved, and understanding the historical and colonial effects on so many can do restorative education that is so urgently needed now for peaceful, meaningful, and participatory living well together.

Part 3: Capability – The expertise to succeed

Please note that in the case of a research team, you will need to evaluate the strength and suitability of the team members' research achievements (do not include collaborators).

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In your evaluation of this scholar's or team's capability to succeed, address the following criteria while considering his/her career stage:

Sub-criteria (No specific weight assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	Modest	Good	Very Good	Excellent
a) Quality, quantity and significance of past experience and published outputs of the applicant and any team members relative to their roles in the project and their respective stages of career					X
b) Evidence of contributions such as commissioned reports, professional practice, public discourse, public policies, products and services, development of talent, experience in collaboration, etc.					X
c) Potential to make future contributions					X

d) Briefly describe the proposal's strengths and weaknesses in relation to the above criteria:

I made related comments in the previous section, but this large group of researchers have experience, positive reputation, a proven positive track record, and rigorous/robust careers of high quality research. They are the writers, keynotes, and leading speakers at high level conferences across the country and balance each other in theoretical and practical strengths for this research endeavor. Please support them for this next key exciting step. For each of the main researchers, there is competence, passion, and long term track level that will make this endeavor a good investment by SSHRC, as we increase the quality of research and excellent communities of practice.

Part 4: Additional Comments

a) If you have comments regarding the budget or other aspects of the proposal, please include them here:

The whole application for this endeavor "Developing A Pedagogy of Social Justice in the Classroom Through Postcolonial Literature" is done thoughtfully, strategically, inclusively, collaboratively, right at the edge of our knowing, discomfort, concern, and most needed educational work. I positively endorse this application and look forward to reading and integrating their findings with colleagues, students, and other professionals and educators.

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Agree X

- b) I attest that I am not in a conflict of interest with the applicant(s).

Agree X

Using the guidelines in the attached document, evaluate each sub-criteria below and check the appropriate box. Briefly explain your response.



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Part 1: Challenge — The aim and importance of the endeavour

Sub-criteria (No specific weighting assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	Modest	Good	Very Good	Excellent
a) Originality, significance and expected contribution to knowledge					X
b) Appropriateness of the literature review					X
c) Appropriateness of the theoretical approach or framework					X
d) Appropriateness of the methods/approach				X	
e) Quality of training and mentoring to be provided to students, emerging scholars and other highly qualified personnel, and opportunities for them to contribute					X
f) Potential influence and impact within and/or beyond the social sciences and humanities research community					X

g) Briefly describe the proposal's strengths and weaknesses in relation to the above criteria:

This proposed research project addresses the significant issue of pedagogies of social justice in classrooms and proposes the introduction of international postcolonial literature in order to achieve these important aims. It builds upon the substantial research already conducted by the Principal Investigator, Ingrid Johnston, and her team of co-applicants. It is likely to make a highly significant contribution to knowledge about how teachers can examine their emotional investments in enacting dominant values and assumptions and move beyond multicultural discourses of containment of difference to more radical and far-reaching pedagogies that are transformed by difference. The literature review provided is appropriate and comprehensive. The postcolonial theoretical framework chosen for this study is highly relevant, innovative and intriguing. It brings together postcolonial theories of reading practice, pedagogies of discomfort, theories of social justice education for teachers and theories of communities of practice in a coherent and thoughtful way. The fact that students' voices are particularly emphasised in this application ensures that the project is likely to fill a significant gap in current knowledge. The proposed methods appear to be appropriate and well-designed to elicit the perspectives the project focuses on.

The project application clearly and convincingly outlines the high quality mentoring and guidance the doctoral students and less experienced researchers in the project are likely to receive from the senior researchers. The findings of this project are likely to have great significance beyond the Social Sciences and Humanities research community because they have direct relevance to fundamental social issues such as the ongoing effects of colonisation and historical marginalisation of Canada's Aboriginal peoples and immigrant groups in Canada. As a result this project will have significant ramifications for broader national social policy and practice. There are, however, a number of issues that require further clarification and explanation in the application. While the inclusion of student voices about the experience of reading and engaging with postcolonial texts is a major gap in current understanding that the project aims to fill, the project application does not indicate in enough detail how the collection of student-generated materials and focus group discussions will be prioritised in the study.

So too, the description of the approach to data analysis is a little thin and more

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detail is required.

Part 2: Feasibility – The plan to achieve excellence

Sub-criteria (No specific weighting assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	Modest	Good	Very Good	Excellent
a) Probability of effective and timely attainment of the research objectives					X
b) Appropriateness of the requested budget, and justification of proposed costs					X
c) Indications of financial and in-kind contributions from other sources, where appropriate					X
d) Quality of knowledge mobilization plans, including for effective knowledge dissemination, knowledge exchange and engagement within and/or beyond the research community					X
e) Strategies and timelines for the design and conduct of the activity/activities proposed					X

f) Briefly describe the proposal's strengths and weaknesses in relation to the above criteria:

The project application presents a very strong case that the study is highly feasible and likely to deliver the achievement of its objectives in an effective and timely manner. The budget appears to be very appropriate and well-justified and clearly lists all of the financial and in-kind contributions being made to the project. The timelines seem very feasible and the project outcomes appear likely to be effectively disseminated to both academic, professional and government audiences.

Part 3: Capability – The expertise to succeed

Please note that in the case of a research team, you will need to evaluate the strength and suitability of the team members' research achievements (do not include collaborators).

In your evaluation of this scholar's or team's capability to succeed, address the following criteria while considering his/her career stage:

Sub-criteria (No specific weight assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	Modest	Good	Very Good	Excellent
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Sub-criteria (No specific weight assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	Modest	Good	Very Good	Excellent
a) Quality, quantity and significance of past experience and published outputs of the applicant and any team members relative to their roles in the project and their respective stages of career					X
b) Evidence of contributions such as commissioned reports, professional practice, public discourse, public policies, products and services, development of talent, experience in collaboration, etc.					X
c) Potential to make future contributions					X

d) Briefly describe the proposal's strengths and weaknesses in relation to the above criteria:

This team has a convincing record of prior collaboration and appears well-placed to conduct this research project. All of the project team have a highly impressive, outstanding record of grant success. Each of the researchers also has an excellent track record of publication, with the exception of Co-Applicants Balzer and Wiltse. It is not clear from their CVs if they experienced periods of career interruption or other challenges that may have impacted upon their publication record. Each of the researchers has also made significant professional and public contributions. They appear extremely likely to make highly significant future contributions to knowledge.

Part 4: Additional Comments

a) If you have comments regarding the budget or other aspects of the proposal, please include them here: