



Call for Papers
COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP
RESEARCH FINDINGS WORKSHOP

Montreal, May 1-3, 2018

Desautels Faculty of Management, McGill University

A significant body of theory in collective leadership has been developed over the past decade, challenging both the accuracy and efficacy of traditional models of individualized leadership. While debate and development of theories of collective leadership are ongoing – touching on relational, distributed, shared and practice-oriented frameworks for understanding this phenomenon – it is timely and important to now bring the focus **to empirical findings about collective leadership**. *What do we know about collective leadership, from empirical work that has been done or is now underway in this field?*

The emphasis on ‘what we know’ builds upon previous Co-LEAD Net international workshops, which bring together 30-40 researchers at a time to share work in progress, to debate across disciplines and perspectives, and to increase knowledge and identify emerging questions about the theory, practice and impact of collective leadership. Workshops to date have focused on 1) **Conceptual** questions (April 2014, NYU): How do we recognize and name forms of plural, relational and collective leadership? 2) **Pedagogical** questions (April 2015, NYU): How can we shift our teaching to build students’ knowledge of and capacity for the new paradigm of collective leadership? and 3) **Methodological** questions (September 2016): How do we design research agendas to see and analyze collective forms of leadership in the field? The third workshop led to a call for papers for a special issue of *Human Relations*, currently underway, on "Collective dimensions of leadership: The challenges of connecting theory and method." We expect that this fourth workshop will also result in a journal special issue on findings from empirical research on collective leadership.

This call invites papers that address the following questions and issues: Empirical findings on collective leadership. What do we know about how collective leadership works? The purpose of the workshop is to share new results about when, where and how collective leadership emerges, the forms that it takes, and the impacts that it produces in a variety of contexts. What conditions facilitate or hinder the emergence and impact of collective leadership? How does collective leadership develop and unfold? How do specific factors— roles, the framing of problems or opportunities, the multiplicity of identities, power dynamics, information, or other features – come into play in collective leadership? What are the costs and benefits of collective leadership, for example in terms of resources, impacts, or timeframes? (How) does collective leadership coexist with plural or individual leadership?

Diverse contexts. We are specifically interested in bringing together researchers whose work represents empirical settings in and across different sectors (e.g., corporations, government, NGOs),

focal areas (e.g. health care, entrepreneurial ventures, art, public services, professional services, social issues), and cultural settings and regions. We are interested in diverse forms of initiatives, including, for example, hybrid or so-called “fourth sector” organizations of funding mechanisms, community task forces, or public-private partnerships. The workshop will create opportunities for cross-sectional learning by digging deeper into common and contrasting themes and patterns among these intentionally diverse contexts.

Definitions of collective leadership. The definition and operationalization of “collective leadership” remains productively unsettled. Using terms like distributed (Gronn, 2002), collaborative (Vangen and Huxham 2003), relational (Uhl-Bien 2006), interdependent (Drath et al. 2008), and integrative (Crosby & Bryson, 2010) leadership, these streams of scholarship have in common an orientation to “leadership in the plural” as an alternative to individualistic or “heroic” leader models (Denis et al., 2012). Some use collective leadership to reference a plurality of individual leaders who are collaborating (Ospina & Foldy, 2010), while others use it as a lens to study emergent, decentered practices in or qualities of networks (Carter & DeChurch, 2012; Dinh et al., 2014; Raelin, 2016; Quick, 2017). Some critical leadership scholars question whether there is anything distinctively new in some of these approaches (e.g., Collinson, 2017), and whether fascination with shared leadership may overwrite still salient features of individuals and organizations (Tourish, 2014). Asymmetrical power relations within leadership processes are a further area for investigation in this context (Gagnon & Collinson, 2014). In this workshop, we seek to advance scholarship on collective leadership through a robust exchange among these perspectives, the success of which requires that each contributor be explicit about their respective definition of collective leadership and how they are operationalizing it in their empirical study.

Methodological alignment. Heterogeneity in the study of collective leadership also manifests in methodological choices (Yammarino et al., 2012). Diversity in units of analysis is appropriate, given its presence in spaces between personal, cultural, organizational, or sectoral differences. More fundamental, there is a range of relatively more relational and entitative perspectives on what collective leadership is (Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2012), with some attending more to practice (e.g., Fairhurst, 2007; Raelin, 2011; Gagnon et al., 2012), and others more to the constellation of actors involved and their interactions (e.g., Friedrich et al., 2009; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2016). Building on previous Co-LEAD Net workshops regarding methodological issues in the study of collective leadership, authors contributing to the 2018 workshop are asked to narrate carefully the alignment between their conceptualization of collective leadership, research questions, and data collection and analysis methods (Cunliffe, 2016; Mele & Cappellaro, 2016). That said, we particularly encourage longitudinal analysis, identified as one of the major gaps in research on collective leadership (Carroll & Simpson, 2012; Cullen & Yammarino, 2014).

Timeline

30 October Authors email workshop co-host Suzanne Gagnon suzanne.gagnon@mcgill.ca to express interest in submitting a paper for the workshop. Please make sure your subject line reads: ‘Co-LEAD Montreal expression of interest’

15 December Submit one page paper proposal identifying the empirical questions and institutional context of the study, setting forth your provisional definition of “collective

leadership,” and providing a short explanation of how your methods align with the definition. *Submission e-mail address to follow.*

15 January	Decisions about proposal acceptance announced
1 February	Submit requests for financial assistance if it is otherwise a barrier to participate
1 March	Decisions about financial assistance announced
15 March	Deadline to register for conference
April 15	Deadline to provide paper to be circulated and posted for workshop participants. Papers should be 3,000 words minimum.
May 1-3	Workshop

Organizers and Hosting

The workshop will be hosted by the Desautels Faculty of Management of McGill University, Montreal, with co-sponsorship from the Wagner School of Public Service at New York University, the Center for Integrative Leadership of the University of Minnesota, HEC Montréal, ESG UQAM (Université du Québec à Montréal), and the School of Public and Environmental Affairs of Indiana University. To encourage workshop contributions and diverse participation, funding will be provided for travel costs for a limited number of paper authors and discussants. We plan to also provide funds to assist a limited number of attendees for whom costs would otherwise be a barrier to participation. The organizing committee for the workshop is comprised of:

Suzanne Gagnon, Desautels Faculty of Management, McGill University

Ann Langley, HEC Montréal

Sonia Ospina, Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, New York University

Kathy Quick, Center for Integrative Leadership, University of Minnesota

Viviane Sergi, ESG UQAM

Siv Vangen, Director of Center for Voluntary Sector Leadership, Open University

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