

**Advancing Canadian Entrepreneurship (ACE) - Providing practical entrepreneurial  
experience for students.**

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Connecting... Policy, Practice & Research  
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## **Purpose**

ACE (Advancing Canadian Entrepreneurship) has identified CCSBE as group with similar interests in developing the entrepreneurial landscape in Canada. As ACE works directly with post-secondary education to deliver its programming, the CCSBE event is an excellent opportunity to help raise the awareness of the program among people in the field of small business and entrepreneurship. For some, the session will act as an introduction to ACE and for others; the session will be a refresher and an update on the activities of the quickly growing organization. The goal for the presentation is to increase the awareness of ACE and our activities and to further the network of ACE supporters across Canada. ACE defines supporters as those who see the organization as a viable way to improve the skills and entrepreneurial interest of Canada's post-secondary students.

## **Session Outline**

The proposed session will be 1 hour and will include a presentation on ACE's two on-campus programs - The Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) program and the Student Entrepreneur program.

The session will be delivered by the SIFE Program Manager for Western Canada. The session will be broken in two parts, a presentation and a panel discussion. Due to the high number of faculty members that are involved with both ACE and CCSBE, two CCSBE members will join the presentation for the final 20 minutes to help answer questions. If the conference schedule is not based on one hour time blocks this portion of the session can be lengthened or shortened to accommodate. The past participants in this portion of the session were:

- Vance Gough – Mount Royal College
- Steve Farlow – Wilfrid Laurier University
- Lisa Lowthers – Acadia University
- Ron Robichaud – Acadia University/ Université Sainte-Anne
- David Rittenhouse – Bishop's University

The participants for this year's panel will be identified at a future date. While there are many faculty members who are very knowledgeable of ACE, it is unclear which one will be available for the session. There are also a number of ACE faculty advisors that have not yet confirmed their attendance at the event. The names of the participants will be confirmed by the beginning of October. Depending on the schedule, this session could incorporate students involved with the ACE program, allowing them to provide insight on their experience with ACE.

The remainder of this proposal is an outline of the main topics that will be covered in the presentation proceeding the question and answer period. These sections include:

- What is ACE?
- Student Entrepreneur Program
- Students in Free Enterprise Program
- The ACE model

## **WHAT IS ACE?**

ACE is a national charitable organization that is teaching and igniting young Canadians to create brighter futures for themselves and their communities. ACE actively creates partnerships between business and higher education that prepare university and college students to make a meaningful contribution towards a better country, as entrepreneurs and business leaders. ACE operates two programs; Students In Free Enterprise and the Student Entrepreneur program.

One of the major purposes of this session will be to communicate the similar goals but different natures of ACE's two programs.

### **Program #1 – Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE)**

Our “team” based program empowers students to create economic opportunity in their communities by teaching others about market economics, entrepreneurship, success skills, financial literacy and business ethics. Teams do this by implementing community focused and entrepreneurial based projects that have a notable impact on the target audience involved. The teams build projects around the topics in the SIFE criteria which are:

- Market Economics
- Success Skills
- Entrepreneurship
- Financial Literacy
- Ethics

ACE is the official operator of the SIFE program in Canada. Canada is one of over 40 Countries that hosts the SIFE program. For SIFE to be successful in a community it must have many individuals providing varying levels of support. This session will explain how SIFE works and the opportunities for involvement.

### **Program #2 – Student Entrepreneur**

Our “individual” program provides a vital service to full-time university and college students, who also operate a business. Through programming and competition, ACE creates a platform for these young entrepreneurs to network with like-minded students, showcase their business on a regional and national stage to top executives and leading entrepreneurs, receive relevant training and leverage valuable mentorship opportunities to accelerate the growth of their business. The success of this program depends heavily on its awareness level. This session will let participants know how to recognize student entrepreneurs in their community and how to get them involved in the program.

### **The ACE Model**

The most important thing to be covered in this proposed session is the difference between ACE and other student entrepreneurship programs. Both the SIFE and Student Entrepreneur program focus heavily on taking action and practicing entrepreneurship in a variety of ways. This model allows students to be introduced to practical entrepreneurship and to further their entrepreneurial endeavors through a national network.

Part of the success of this model is due to the benefits provided to varied stakeholders. In addition to student involvement, ACE is a partnership between leading Canadian and international corporations, entrepreneurship support agencies and post-secondary institutions. The individuals who get involved with ACE do so because they see the personal and professional benefits for themselves.