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Four research projects boosted by CREDO funding

The latest round of funding through the University of Lethbridge's Community of Research Excellence Development Opportunities (CREDO) program will provide \$25,000 to each of four diverse research projects.

They include a local oral history project, a study into green bonds and their effect on the stock market, research into how children's gender identity influences the way they produce sounds, and ways that countries with minority official languages can improve proficiency through education and training policies.

"The CREDO awards are the most generous and prestigious internal awards the University offers," says Dr. Claudia Malacrida, associate vice-president research. "Designed to support social science, humanities, arts, management and social health researchers, these funds provide seed money so our researchers in those disciplines can go on to seek more aggressive external funding. As a result, we can expect to hear much more about these exciting projects as they build momentum over the coming years."

Dr. Carly Adams (Kinesiology)

Dr. Carly Adams, a U of L kinesiology and physical education professor and member of the Centre for Oral History and Tradition (COHT), is collaborating with Dr. Darren Aoki of Plymouth University in the United Kingdom and U of L adjunct associate professor, on a community-based oral history project to rescue the stories of Nikkei, Canadians of Japanese descent, between the 1950s and the 1970s. The researchers want to record people's recollections of everyday life at a time when Nikkei communities, after suffering persecution during the Second World War, were being built again.

"I am delighted to be working with Dr. Aoki on this timely project. To carry out this historical study of this moment in southern Alberta's past, we are partnering with COHT, the Nikkei Cultural Society of Lethbridge and Area, the Nikka Yuko Japanese-Canadian Friendship Gardens, and the Galt Museum and Archives. We hope to learn more about work, school, leisure, home and Nikkei identity," says Adams.

Dr. Vishaal Baulkaran (Management)

A relatively new option for investing is green bonds, issued to finance capital projects that are environmentally sustainable. Dr. Vishaal Baulkaran, a management professor, will examine the need for and usefulness of this type of financing instrument in fighting climate change from a capital market point of view. As environmental and sustainable projects gain importance for both individual and institutional investors, Baulkaran wants to examine if issuing green bonds creates value for shareholders by measuring the reaction of the stock market.

“Capital markets and private financing will play an increasingly important role in fighting climate change,” says Baulkaran. “This project will examine one type of financial instrument available to market participants with the goal of alleviating the impact of climate change.”

Dr. Fangfang Li (Psychology)

Previous research has shown that a child’s gender identity can mediate a gender-specific way of producing the sound ‘s.’ Dr. Fangfang Li, a speech scientist and U of L professor, wants to know whether gender identity affects the development of other sounds to a similar degree, both in English and other languages. Working with Dr. Paul Vasey, a U of L sex researcher, their research will examine an established set of data on 160 children, including speech recordings in English and Mandarin Chinese.

“Boys and girls talk differently. The proposed research will allow us to understand how children learn to talk in a socially appropriate way,” says Li.

Dr. Alain Takam (Modern Languages)

Dr. Alain Takam, a professor in the Modern Languages department, wants to investigate ways of raising proficiency in minority official languages. Both Canada and Cameroon have French and English as official languages and Takam will examine how education and training policies can increase mastery in a minority official language. Takam intends to compare the policy and planning frameworks around minority official languages in both countries and stakeholders’ perceptions and attitudes about language courses in general and minority official languages in particular, especially in technical training programs.

“This research will benefit students, teachers, parents and language planners,” says Takam. “Our results will help inform policy about the special demands and challenges of language acquisition in the education system and in technical training. Further, our results will eventually help facilitate trades and technical workers to be more mobile in a bilingual economy.”

CREDO was established at the U of L in 2008 to provide funding to launch bold and exciting new projects that enhance research excellence at the University. The program helps support faculty as they build a research or artistic profile that helps them gain a competitive edge in national competitions or other external funding opportunities and provides skills and training opportunities for students. Since 2008, the U of L has bestowed more than \$1 million which has led CREDO researchers to awards of more than \$1.6 million in Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) funding.

The application deadline for the next round of CREDO funding is Nov. 28. Funding is valued at \$25,000 over two years. More information is available on the [Research & Innovation Services](#) website.

This news release can be found [online](#).

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Contact:

Caroline Zentner, public affairs advisor

403-394-3795 or 403-795-5403

caroline.zentner@uleth.ca