

LOI For Phase 2 Projects / Subprojects template

Completed Letters of Intent (LOIs) should be sent as email attachments to applications@grand-nce.ca with "GRAND Phase 2 LOI" as the subject line.

A successful proposal will address problems of significant relevance to the GRAND research program and must meet all of the guidelines for projects within GRAND, including the following mandatory requirements:

- The project must address significant research issues relevant to one or more of the GRAND Challenges identified for Phase 2 of the GRAND NCE
- The Project Leader and Co-leader must work at different universities; often they will represent multiple disciplinary approaches, appropriate to the project.
- There must be at least three researchers (including the Project Leader and Co-leader) who are or are eligible to be Principal Network Investigators within the GRAND NCE.
- There must be at least one Project Champion personally involved in planning and carrying out the project who is affiliated with a current or potential GRAND Partner drawn from the receptor community.
- One or more Partners from the receptor community must commit to making significant cash or in-kind contributions to the project.
- A current NSERC Form 100, SSHRC CV, or CIHR Common CV for <u>both</u> the Project Leader and Co-leader <u>must</u> be submitted as attachments to the LOI. Failure to include these attachments will be cause for immediate rejection.

Detailed instructions for completing this LOI template are on Page 2. More information on Phase 2 of the GRAND NCE is available on the GRAND website at the following URL, which will be updated with links to additional information as it becomes available: http://grand-nce.ca/renewal

Please note: If you complete this form using Preview, do not enter more text than is visible within the dimensions of the provided text box. Text that exceeds the visible limits will not be reviewed.

Project Title and Description □ Full project LOI □ Subproject only LOI Title of proposed project NEWS

Brief description for public use

The NEWS project examines the production and consumption of news in the online environment, exploring issues such as the intersection of news and 'big data', new methods of organizing and accessing news, the intersection of news and social media, 'new' journalism in the online environment, and news consumption online. Our goal is twofold: to understand news production and consumption online, and to develop tools, policies, and strategies that optimize online news.

Proposed Project Leader	Form 100, SSHRC CV, or CIHR CCV has been attached		
Name Jacquelyn Burkell	Email jburkell@uwo.ca		
University The University of Western Ontario	Title/Position Associate Professor and Assistant Dean, Research		
Proposed Project Co-leader	Form 100, SSHRC CV, or CIHR CCV has been attached		
Name Charles Clarke	Email claclark@gmail.com		
University (must be different from Project Leader) Waterloo University	Title/Position Professor		
Proposed Project Champion	Confirmed Contacted Not Yet Contacted		
Name Valentine Matula	Email		
Organization Avaya Canada	Title/Position Director, Multimedia Technologies Research		

Instructions for Letter of Intents for Phase 2 of the GRAND NCE

Front Page: All fields are mandatory. (a) Provide a project title and indicate whether the LOI is for a full project with subprojects or is only for a single subproject. LOIs that only propose a subproject will be matched with related LOIs to form full projects. (b) Provide a brief description of the proposed research suitable for posting on a public website that explains the project in terms accessible to the digital media community. (c) Provide the name, email address, university, and title for both the proposed project leader and the proposed project co-leader. (d) Provide the name, email address, organization name, and title for the proposed project champion (a person affiliated with a project partner who will be engaged in planning the project) and indicate whether the project champion has been confirmed, has only been contacted, or has yet to be contacted.

This Page: Read all of the instructions for completing the LOI template before filling out any of the information on later pages.

In **Part A**, provide the names of up to six partner organizations, indicate whether each has been confirmed, has only been contacted, or has yet to be contacted, and provide a brief explanation for how each organization will be involved in the project either as an active participant or as a potential receptor that will benefit from the research.

In **Part B**, list all GRAND projects that are related to the new LOI and also any other LOIs you are aware of that may be relevant to the new LOI.

In **Part C**, list up to nine additional co-applicants (not including the individuals listed on Page 1) who are expected to be involved as active participants in the research project. Indicate for each whether the individual is a project champion from the receptor community or an academic researcher.

In Part D, succinctly summarize (up to one half page) the problem being solved by the research.

In **Part E**, provide an overview (up to one and one half pages) of the proposed solution and the approach that will be taken in the research. Include relevant details about the theoretical framework, significant previous work, methodological approaches, and how the research will be managed and structured to achieve the desired goals. If you checked the box on the **Front Page** indicating you are submitting an LOI for only a subproject, just use the first box for **Part E**, don't use the second box on the continuation page.

In **Part F**, describe up to six subprojects (up to one half page for each subproject) that will be pursued during the first two years of the project. Indicate for each subproject the research question(s) that will be addressed, the relationship of the subproject to the rest of the project, the deliverables and assessment criteria appropriate for evaluating the success of the subproject, and the time frame (start and finish dates) estimated for the subproject. If you checked the box on the **Front Page** indicating you are submitting an LOI for only a subproject, enter "**N/A**" in all of the fields in **Part F** and continue to **Part G**.

In **Part G**, explain the likely technology transfer, knowledge mobilization, knowledge translation, or other activities that are planned for the project and how they may provide benefits to the receptor community.

In **Part H**, explain how the project will interact with other projects and the ways in which it may support or otherwise enhance the overall impact of the network.

In **Part I**, explain specific ways in which current or future partners will participate in the project and the mechanisms that will be used to ensure that this takes place.

In **Part J**, for each of the seven GRAND Challenges check whether the project will make its primary research contribution (check exactly one box) or a secondary research contribution (as many additional boxes as apply) to the challenge. Check "**N/A**" for any challenge that is not significantly impacted by the proposed research. For each challenge where a contribution is expected, provide a brief description of the likely contribution and its importance to the receptor community. The "Other" category may be used to describe anticipated contributions to the research infrastructure and enabling technologies and methodologies used in the GRAND NCE, or to other areas relevant to digital media that may be impacted, if the proposed research is expected to make a significant contribution in these areas.

Part A: Receptors and Partners list up to six organizations	5		
Organization Avaya Canada	Confirmed	Contacted	Not yet contacted
Brief description of involvement Avaya Canada is a receptor agency for Gerald Penn's work	on the CBC digit	al archive.	
Organization Google	Confirmed	Contacted	Not yet contacted
Brief description of involvement Google will be a receptor for the news classification and da	ta mining work.		
Organization Samara	Confirmed	Contacted	Not yet contacted
Brief description of involvement Receptor organization that works to improve political partici	ipation in Canada.	Thev will be rec	eptors for the work on
audience interpretation of online news, as well as research	on news in social	media.	•
Organization	Confirmed	Contacted	Not yet contacted
The Canadian Association of Journalists (CAJ) Rrief description of involvement			
Brief description of involvement The CAJ represents media professionals across Canada. T of journalism in the new media environment.	hey will be a rece	ptor for research	and policy on the profession
Organization	Confirmed	☐ Contacted	Not yet contacted
IBM	Commined	Contacted	Not yet contacted
Brief description of involvement IBM is a receptor agency for news and data mining tools.			
Organization Maluuba	Confirmed	Contacted	Not yet contacted
Brief description of involvement			
Maluuba is a 'personal assistant app' that connects users to the come of the tools we develop for news organization and delivery		en they want it. Th	ey will be a receptor agency for
Part B: Relations to existing and proposed projects in the	GRAND NCE		
Related Current Projects	GRAND NCL		
NGAIA, AESTHVIS, MOTIV, PRIVNM			
Related LOIs Big Data, Privlit			
John Satta, Frivit			

Part C: Additional Co-Applicants List up to nine additional co-applicants				
Name Luanne Freund	Email luanne.freund@ubc.ca	Project Champion		
Organization UBC, Archival and Information Studies	Title/Position Assistant Professor	Researcher		
Name Alfred Hermida	Email alfred.hermida@ubc.ca	Project Champion		
Organization UBC, Graduate School of Journalism	Title/Position Associate Professor	Researcher		
Name Gerald Penn	Email gpenn@cs.utoronto.ca	☐ Project Champion		
Organization University of Toronto, computer science	Title/Position Associate Professor	Researcher		
Name Anatoliy Gruzd	Email gruzd@dal.ca	Project Champion		
Organization Dalhousie University, School of Information Management	Title/Position Associate Professor	Researcher		
Name Brian Greenspan	Email brian_greenspan@carleton.ca	Project Champion		
Organization Carleton University, English	Title/Position Associate Professor	Researcher		
Name Victoria Rubin	Email vrubin@uwo.ca	Project Champion		
Organization UWO, Faculty of Information and Media Studies	Title/Position Associate Professor	Researcher		
Name Mary Cavanagh	Email mcavanaugh@uottawa.ca	Project Champion		
Organization University of Ottawa, School of Information Studies	Title/Position Assistant Professor	Researcher		
Name Lisa Lynch	Email liesell@mac.com	☐ Project Champion		
Organization Concordia University, Journalism	Title/Position Assistant Professor	☑ Researcher		
Name Mary-Lynn Young	Email MaryLynn.Young@ubc.ca	Project Champion		
Organization UBC, Graduate School of Journalism	Title/Position Associate Professor	Researcher		

Part D: Summarize the problem being solved (1/2 page)

News entertains us, educates us, frightens us, and comforts us: above all, news informs us. While news is valued for all these purposes (and indeed many more), it is critical for the last, since an informed public is the foundation of democracy. The NEWS project, therefore, examines the production, dissemination, sharing, interpretation, and archiving of news in the new media environment, concentrating on changes to the news brought about by new media. Our goal is to understand the 'new' news, and to identify ways to leverage the advantages wrought by technological mediation of the news while minimizing the costs: in other words, to help ensure that 'new' news works to support an informed citizenry.

News both reflects and constructs the public perspective; news changes our understanding of world events; news tells us about our own past, present, and anticipated future. News has long been produced by professional journalists and distributed through broadcast media including newspaper, television, and radio. With the advent of new media, however, the news is profoundly changed. The line between news producer and news consumer has blurred: consumers are creating content that is used by traditional news organizations, and they are producing their own content, distributed online alongside news and opinion produced by professional journalists. News is increasingly atomized: 'Narrowcasting' has replaced the traditional broadcast model, and users can automatically select and format their own news through the use of tools such as RSS feeds, and people are turning to social networks for news, accessing selectively items that are shared with them, and sharing those news stories with others in turn. At the same time, news is increasingly aggregated: news consumers are demanding their news from a multiplicity of sources, and in a multiplicity of formats, delivered through aggregators such as Google. We want our news 'real-time', hyperlinked, and commented; we want tools that support seamless search of current and archived news -- but we are less and less willing to pay for news, and the advertising models that have supported traditional journalism are no longer applicable. Newsmakers, including politicians, no longer require journalists as a conduit to the public press: they now have the choice of going directly to outlets such as Youtube with their messages, bypassing the interpretive lens (sometimes critical) of the journalist. If news is to continue to contribute to an informed citizenry, we need to understand how to produce and provide the news in new media. We need to leverage the possibilities that are created by technology, and mitigate the challenges. The NEWS project addresses these issues, with the goal of identifying best practices and developing effective tools for news in the new media environment.

Part E: Summarize the proposed solution and approach (1 ½ pages)

The NEWS project examines online news from a variety of perspectives, focusing on production, consumption, and tools. Our goals are to understand online news production and consumption in order to create tools, policies, and practices that optimize both. Thus, we propose to study what is 'new' about news in the online context, and we cluster our sub-projects into several thematic groups. One theme is the relationship between news and 'big data': news as big data, and big data as news. PNIs PENN and LADLY and CNIs PEI and ZELLER are digitizing CBC audio and video footage, creating a 'big data' resource valuable to journalists, students, and scholars. They are developing unique user interfaces (e.g., the "On This Day" experience presented at the 2013 GRAND AGM) to provide access to this archive, and they are exploring information retrieval and signal processing techniques to segment and structure this repository. CNI LYNCH is taking a different perspective on the relationship between news and big data: she is examining the contribution of large datasets to journalistic production in the Canadian media. Her goals are to identify how Canadian media use large data resources, and to provide tools and training to Canadian media practitioners and students to support their use of such large datasets. The projects in this theme link closely to the new 'Big Data' project, and will result in tools and policies that improve access to news (especially archived news) and the leveraging of 'big data' in news production.

A second theme is the reconfiguring of news: new methods of organization and delivery. PNIs FREUND and CLARKE are focusing on the classification of news content for retrieval. Recognizing that the online news environment is highly complex, presenting challenges for readers who want to find content that suits their interests, tastes, and needs, Freund and Clarke will use text retrieval, genre classification, and sentiment analysis, as well as user studies, to classify and mine online news stories. They plan to test their mining and classification in a prototype online news reading system that they will develop. PNI GREENSPAN is investigating the use of locative media to deliver real-time, site-specific content. This project leverages Greenspan's Storytek authorware to tell extensive and continuous spatial stories based on the arc of a user's movement through real space. Sub-projects clustered in this theme examine the ways in which new media tools and techniques can be used to provide innovative, timely, and effective interfaces to news content. A third theme is the intersection of news and social media. PNI FREUND and CNI CAVANAUGH examine organizational and governmental uses of social media as a means of building communities of followers and keeping their constituents informed. Their particular focus is on the nature of online news sharing and community-building as practiced by local governmental agencies,

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Part E: Summarize the proposed solution and approach (continued, but only for full project LOIs)

with a specific focus on trust and credibility. PNI GRUZD is interested in the potentially polarizing effects of partisan news and political participation in online social media. He plans to use the Social Network Analysis approach to explore the spread of news across social media platforms, with a particular focus on the practices of sharing partisan news and the impact on political polarization. PNI BURKELL will explore news sharing in social media from an individual perspective, examining when, why, and how people choose to share news within their online social networks. This sub-project will contribute to our understanding of how and why content goes 'viral' in social networks. Increasingly, social media networks are becoming preferred news sources, and it is therefore critical that we understand how news moves through these communities, and how the intertwining of social and informational contexts influences the impact of news. This theme explores these issues.

A fourth theme is the 'new' journalism: the impact of digital media on the profession of journalism and the production of news. CNIs HERMIDA and YOUNG explores the coverage of social media movements in mainstream media and social media, contrasting coverage by professional journalists with culturally produced journalism with citizens involved in the flow, framing, and interpretation of news. CNI LYNCH also contributes to this theme, insofar as her project examines alternative sources of information for news. This theme will also explore the impact and place of citizen participation in news production, the changing nature of professional journalism, and the role of professionals within the online news environment.

Finally, we include a focus on the news audience: how people received, process, and evaluate online news content. This aspect of the NEWS project recognizes that news is consumed differently in the online environment. PNI BURKELL heads up a project exploring the credibility of online news. In an environment where source and authorship are often unclear, and much news content is produced outside of mainstream news organizations, it becomes more difficult to ascertain what is 'trustworthy'. This project explores the strategies that consumers use to determine whether to believe news content. A second aspect of the project examines the impact of context, specifically commentary, on news interpretation. In a related project, CNI RUBIN is developing verification tools for news content. Using natural language processing techniques and focusing on linguistic choices and persuasive rhetoric, she will develop deception detection techniques that can be applied to online news content to flag potentially deceptive news stories. The subprojects clustered under this theme examine online news from the audience perspective, and are designed to provide an understanding of online news audiences and support their effective consumption of news content.

This project takes a comprehensive approach to the study of online news. We will be working with commercial receptors including Google, IBM, Avaya and Maluuba, mainstream and alternative news organizations including CBC, Sky News, Demotix, and the Guardian, and professional organizations such as the Canadian Association of Journalists. Our work will inform product development, news production, and journalistic policy; in addition, we will be producing tools and research that will be of value to other GRAND projects interested in information production and dissemination.

Part F: Subprojects list up to six subprojects that will be undertaken in the first two years (only for full project LOIs).

Subproject Name (1)

CBC NewsWorld

Summary

PNIs: Penn (Toronto), Ladly (OCAD); CNIs: Pei (SFU), Zeller (Ryerson)

For the past 73 years, the CBC has given voice to our unique Canadian perspective on the world, producing a rich multimedia record of our social, political and cultural heritage. This sub-project has already digitized over 1,600 hours of audio and video footage from Newsworld's CRTC air-check tapes, dating back to 1991, which have already served as the basis for the "On This Day" experience that was presented at the 2013 GRAND AGM. We are using information retrieval and signal processing techniques to segment and structure this audio-visual repository, and thus to enable us to tap into not only the explicit spoken content of the broadcasts, but the correlations latent in the patterns of advertising and content distribution. This is a truly unique "big data" resource of value to journalists, students, scholars, and researchers of Canadian history, political science and cultural studies. This project is made possible through the partnership of the CBC and Carleton University Libraries who have jointly donated the CBC NewsWorld data corpus for our research.

Subproject Name (2)

Theme 2: Tools for news organization and delivery 2) News Discovery and Distribution mining and classification of online news in supp

Summary

PNIs: Freund (UBC) and Clarke (Waterloo):Traditional means of classifying news content are limited and focus primarily on subject matter, but motivations for news reading are varied, and readers seek stories that meet their particular needs. This project seeks to develop online news retrieval systems that better respond to this range of motivations, employing classification and text mining techniques to offer the reader a much wider range of features for discovery and content selection. Building on ongoing work on text retrieval, genre classification and sentiment analysis and a series of user studies of news readers, this subproject will develop and test tools to mine and classify online news stories, to exposing their latent characteristics and make appealing and useful stories more discoverable by readers.

PNI Greenspan (Carleton) is using locative media and location-based services to deliver news stories that are relevant to a users' specific location in the world, addressing new audiences and communicies with fine-grained geopolitical precision. The goal of the sub-project is to deliver real-time, site-specific news content that responds fluidly to user movement. Greenspan's StoryTrek authorware will be integrated with RSS feeds of major news sources to creaste a system for the rapid assembly and delivery of live, richly contextual journalistic content matched to the user's route and location. The project will examine the delivery and impact of site-specific news content.

Subproject Name (3)

Counter narratives and the news: Social media, activism and the reconfiguration of journalism

Summary

CNIs: Alfred Hermida (UBC), Mary Lynn Young (UBC)

Journalists within mainstream media organisations wield considerable influence in the construction of social reality through the power of framing, ordering, naming, and allocating. Yet digital technologies provide alternative platforms for public communication that facilitate the visibility of a marginalized social reality. A growing body of research points to how social media are emerging as a hybrid space for the cultural production of journalism, with citizens are involved in the flow, framing and interpretation of news. Studies of recent social movements demonstrate how committed individuals are appropriating social media to articulate a counter narrative, contesting dismissive framing by mainstream media, presenting an open-ended, unspecified meta-narrative where participants create their own meaning. This research examines how the conditions of discourse in an age of social media are influencing news and information flows and impacting journalistic practices. We will examine the coverage of social movements on mainstream media and social media to provide insight into how engagement with networked technologies by people outside news organisations neutralises, challenges or reinforces the power of media institutions to construct social reality, and how it reconfigures journalism's role to foster a broadly informed and engaged public.

Part F: Subprojects (continued, only for full project LOIs)

Subproject Name (4)

The social side of news

Summary

PNIs: Freund (UBC), CNI Cavanagh (Ottawa): This project will investigate the nature of news sharing and community building through social media use in the context of local government agencies. Through longitudinal examination of large data sets of social media interactions (e.g., Twitter, Facebook) using text analysis and by triangulating this method with social network analysis and personal interviews on both sides of the institution-community boundaries, we aim to identify patterns in interaction modes and to distinguish between more and less effective approaches to building community engagement through social media. A specific focus of the research will be to understand how trust and credibility are influenced through social media interactions with government.

PNI: Gruzd (Dalhousie): In just a short period of time, social media have altered many aspects of our daily lives, including how we conduct our politics. Politicians, party organizers, the media and the general public have taken notice and are moving in droves to social media as a locus for promotion, debate, support solicitaion, and organization. While this new reliance on social media has many obvious benefits, there is a growing concern that people are becoming more politically polarized on social media, especially among supporters of different parties. Using the Social Network Analysis approach, this research will investigate practices of sharing partisan news and their impact on political polarization in social media.

Subproject Name (5)

Theme 5: Trusting and Authenticating Online News

Summary

PNI: Burkell (UWO)

In an environment where source and authorship are often unclear, and much news content is produced outside of mainstream news organizations, it becomes more difficult to ascertain what is 'trustworthy'. This project uses interview/focus group, survey, and experimental techniques to explore the strategies that consumers use to determine whether to believe news content. We will examine the impact of context (e.g., comments), extra-informational cues (e.g., identified authorship), and consumer strategies (e.g., triangulation) on trustworthiness determination.

CNI: Rubin (UWO)

Non-institutional news media, including citizen journalism, allow unverified posts to pass for bona-fide reporting. The speed and ease with which misinformation can be created and disseminated, coupled with new mechanisms for news production and consumption, leads to the requirement fo new verification tools. One avenue for deception detection is the development of natural language tools to distinguish truthful from deceptive communication. This project will implement and test natural language deception detection methods for online news-reading and corporate intelligence.

Subproject Name (6)

Big Data/Data Visualization in Canadian Journalism

Summary

CNI: Lynch (Concordia)

Data journalism (the practice of writing stories drawn from large data sets) and data visualization (the practice of visualizing said data with software tools) has made some inroads in Canadian journalism, but compared to US and European newsrooms, Canada lags behind. In part, this is due to institutional culture in Canadian newsrooms, and in part, to the lack of availability of corporate and government data, a problem currently being addressed by new federal and provincial Open Data portals (e.g.http://www.data.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En and http://data.alberta.ca). This project will attempt an overview of the state of data journalism and datavisualization in Canadian newsrooms, tracking current practices, best practitioners, and current resources and training possibilities for aspiring data journalists. The project has three goals; to provide a whitepaper on the how Canadian media use data resources; to create an informational resource that will help network practitioners inside and outside of journalism; and to provide students training in journalism with information on how telling stories with data is a growth career field both in journalism and in other sectors of Canadian industry.

Part G: Summarize how the proposed project will pursue knowledge and technology exchange and exploitation activities within the context of GRAND.
Knowledge and technology exchange will take place in academic outlets and venues, including publications and conference presentations. We will make our publications available to the GRAND network on the website, and through other venues as appropriate. We will meet regularly with receptor agencies, and present at professional venues (e.g., conferences) as appropriate to disseminate research results.
Part H: Summarize how the project will network with other projects within GRAND.
The PNIs and CNIs who are involved in this project have connections to a wide variety of other existing initiatives within GRAND. Among these, the connection to NGAIA (in a new configuration) will be ongoing, since there is significant overlap with respect to the analysis and implications of 'big data'. Other project relationships will depend entirely on the new suite of projects that are identified, but we anticipate relationships with projects that address social policy/implications, digital labour issues, and aesthetics and visualization. Our links will take the form of sub-projects situated jointly in two or more projects; in addition, some of the tools developed in the NEWS project (e.g., tools for news classification, mining, and display) will prove valuable for other initiatives.
Part I: Summarize how one or more current or potential GRAND partners will be engaged in and benefit from the
proposed research.

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Part J: GRAND Challenges	Check all that apply and briefly describe anticipated impact
Entertainment Primary impact Secondary impact N/A	Increasingly, news and entertainment are blending together: news is entertainment, and entertainment is news. Research in the NEWS project will contribute to an understanding of entertainment content creation, production practices, and distribution paradigms. Analysis and discovery tools developed in NEWS will also apply to analysis and discovery of entertainment content.
Learning Primary impact Secondary impact N/A	The NEWS project includes the development of tools for news archiving, mining, and discovery. These tools will be of significant value in the education sector, supporting effective access to news content for pedagogical purposes.
Healthcare Primary impact Secondary impact N/A	Consumer health information is an important aspect of news, and an important aspect of patient-centred healthcare and wellness. The NEWS project will contribute to this challenge through an understanding of how people seek and understand online news, and through the development of tools that will assist consumers in identifying health news that meets their information needs.
Sustainability Primary impact Secondary impact N/A	Online news is an important avenue for dissemination of information regarding sustainability initiatives. The NEWS project will contribute to this challenge by an improved understanding of how to promote sustainability initiatives in online media so that they reach their intended audience.
Big Data Primary impact Secondary impact N/A	The NEWS data includes sub-projects that examine the archiving and mining of large news datasets; we have an additional interest in the ways in which large datasets contribute to news production. Thus, NEWS will examine how to communicate big data as well as how to access it.
Work □ Primary impact □ Secondary impact □ N/A	The NEWS project includes an examination of the changing work of journalism given the movement of news to online venues and the increase in non-professional contributions to online journalism.
Citizenship Primary impact Secondary impact N/A	An informed citizenry is fundamental to a democratic society and news is a critical source of information. Our project examines the production, dissemination, consumption, and archiving of online news, promoting an understanding of how the digital media environment and the new forms of social interaction it promotes changes the nature of news.
Other Primary impact Secondary impact N/A	