

## Canadian Whistleblowing Research Network

May 27-28, 2026

### CALL FOR PAPERS

#### A Research Conference on Whistleblowing in Canada

**Hosted By:** ESG, Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), Montréal, Québec

**Organized by:** Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), University of Ottawa, and Whistleblowing Canada Research Society

**Date:** May 27-28, 2026

**Location:** ESG, University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM), Montreal, Quebec

**Keynote speaker:** Wim Vandekerckhove

Wim Vandekerckhove is (full) Professor of Business Ethics at EDHEC Business School in France. Wim has provided expertise on whistleblowing to various organizations, including Council of Europe, UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Olympic Committee, Transparency International, the UK Department of Health, and the British Standards Institute (BSI). He was the working group convenor for ISO37002:2021, the international standard for whistleblowing management systems. He published numerous studies on whistleblowing in Journal of Business Ethics, Organization Studies, Administrative Sciences, Philosophy of Management. He is the author of *Whistleblowing and Organizational Social Responsibility* (Ashgate / Routledge) and co-authored *The Whistleblowing Guide: Speak-Up Arrangements, Challenges and Best Practices* (Wiley). He is involved in coordinating the International Whistleblowing Research Network and is a section editor of the Journal of Business Ethics.

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### Objective

We aim to foster a dialogue on whistleblowing and develop a network of researchers while capturing the diversity and complexity of the challenges and opportunities associated with whistleblowing in the Canadian context. Researchers are invited to submit their work on whistleblowing and to present it at the conference.

### Submission Guidelines:

- Article proposals or abstracts of 150 to 200 words must be submitted by October 10, 2025. Please submit to Nadia Smaili at [smaili.nadia@uqam.ca](mailto:smaili.nadia@uqam.ca).
- All proposals must include names and contact information.
- Deadline for submission of first drafts: February 2026.

## Theme

### **“Collaborating to Explore the Evolving Landscape of Whistleblowing in Canada”**

Whistleblowing is generally defined as the disclosure by a member of an organization (former or current) of an illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practice to individuals or other organizations that have the power to take corrective action (Near and Miceli, 1985). Whistleblowing is the most effective means for fighting corruption, sexual harassment, fraud, and environmental wrongdoings (ACFE, 2024; Dyck et al., 2010; Culiberg and Mihelic, 2017; Vandekerckhove et al., 2012).

Several Canadian whistleblowers have brought to light serious wrongdoings, such as Louis Robert, Richard Leblanc, Luc Sabourin, and Garry Clement. However, legal and institutional frameworks often fail to protect whistleblowers effectively and/or act appropriately on their disclosures. While several studies have been conducted on the topic, research on whistleblowing in Canada remains limited.

The ambition of this conference is to enrich our understanding of whistleblowing in Canada. In particular, we wish to better understand the whistleblowing ecosystem and its network; the factors that facilitate or silence the whistleblowing process once it has been initiated; the mechanisms that influence how whistleblowing is received by the organization; and the positive or negative consequences of whistleblowing for whistleblowing stakeholders.

We invite researchers from various backgrounds i.e. accounting, business, health, science, law, sociology, psychology, ethics, political science, public administration, and nursing to submit a proposal for research and to present a paper at the conference in Montréal.

The ultimate objective of the conference is to build a solid network of Canadian researchers who focus on the whistleblowing phenomenon. This conference aims to offer a space for discussion between researchers, compliance officers, and whistleblowers.

### **Proposed Topics**

The aim of the conference is to build a network of Canadian researchers working on topics related to whistleblowing. We invite researchers to advance our knowledge on whistleblowing protection mechanisms and to deepen our understanding of what drives whistleblowers to make their disclosures and organizations to appropriately handle whistleblowing reports.

Here are some ideas for research topics/themes that could inspire your contributions:

- *Organizational handling and support in managing the whistleblowing process:* What are the determining organizational factors (e.g., perceived organizational justice, trust in superiors, organizational culture, etc.) in the success or failure of using an ethics whistleblowing line within an organization?
- *Governance and whistleblowing:* What is the role of the board of directors? How should corporate governance empower the whistleblower?

- *Mental health consequences of whistleblowing*: What are the consequences for the whistleblower when the organization fails to appropriately handle reports? What are the consequences for the whistleblower's network, such as family members, friends, colleagues, etc.? Why do reprisals occur and how can we prevent them, or are reprisals inevitable? How can we support whistleblowers in the post-disclosure phase of whistleblowing?
- *Whistleblowing process*: When do whistleblowers decide to make their disclosure? How and why do they decide to come forward?
- *Public whistleblowing*: Who are the public whistleblowers? Why do they decide to go public? What are the consequences of public whistleblowing?
- *Whistleblower protection*: What laws and regulations govern whistleblowing and provide protection to those who engage in such a process in Canada? What innovative protection models could be considered, in addition to or as a replacement for what currently exists?
- Other interesting topics are welcome such as *whistleblowing and the environment*; *whistleblowing and democracy*; *whistleblowing and political culture* in Canada – an enabling or disabling force? *Whistleblowing and decisions of Courts and Tribunals* – what do they tell us about existing attitudes towards whistleblowing and whistleblowers? *Whistleblowing and AI*: How IA shapes the whistleblowing process? How AI protect whistleblowers? What are the challenges of whistleblowers in the AI sector?

We strongly encourage submissions that explore innovative perspectives, contexts, issues and challenges related to whistleblowing in Canada. Any work that enriches the understanding of whistleblowing such as theoretical analyses, empirical studies, case studies, normative analysis, or expert testimony is welcome.

### Outcomes

We expect to publish a book in November 2027. Presenters can submit their papers for publication in the book: *Whistleblowing in Canada*. The book will be based on certain selected papers from the Conference.

We plan to organize the conference annually at different Canadian universities. The host university for 2027 will be announced at the 28 May 2026 Conference.

### References

- ACFE (2024). Occupational fraud 2022: A report to the nations. Available at: <https://legacy.acfe.com/report-to-the-nations/2022/>
- Culiberg, B., & Mihelič, K.K. (2017). The evolution of whistleblowing studies: A critical review and research agenda. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 146 (4), 787-803.
- Dyck, A., Morse, A., & Zingales, L. (2010). Who blows the whistle on corporate fraud? *The Journal of Finance*, 65(6), 2213-2253.
- Vandekerckhove, Wim, Kenny, K., & Fotaki, M. (2012). Whistleblower subjectivities: Organization and passionate attachment. *Organization Studies*, 41 (3), 323-343.