PROPOSAL to the Princeton Global Collaborative Network Fund
of the Council on International Teaching and Research

COOPERATIVE RESEARCH NETWORK IN ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY (CRNAP)
An International Scholarly Network linking the Princeton Department of Philosophy, the Australian National University School of Philosophy, University of Oxford Faculty of Philosophy, and the Institut Jean-Nicod (Paris)

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The Department of Philosophy would like to apply for support from the Global Collaborative Research Fund of the Council for International Teaching and Research for the Cooperative Research Network in Analytic Philosophy (CRNAP). CRNAP is conceived as a joint project of the Department of Philosophy at Princeton, together with the Research School of Social Sciences (RSSS) at the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra, Australia, the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Oxford, and the Institut Jean-Nicod in Paris. RNAP is conceived of as a joint research institute in analytic philosophy, taken in the broadest sense to include a number of different research strands, including epistemology, metaphysics, and value theory. We are modeling ourselves roughly on the Training, Research, and Motion network (TRAM) instituted by the Department of Mathematics last year through the Princeton Global Collaborative Research Fund. As with the mathematicians, we would envision a variety of activities, including exchanges of faculty and students, joint research seminars and projects, conferences and lectures. Because of the complexity of making arrangements, both here and at our partner institutions, we would expect that we would begin in September 2012. We are requesting funds for a period of three academic years.

1. OVERVIEW OF FIELD OF STUDY

It is difficult to define Analytic Philosophy. As a specific program for Philosophy, it can be traced back to the formal work in logic and the philosophy of language at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, inspired particularly by the work of Gottlob Frege and Bertrand Russell. In its strictest sense, it was conceived of as a program for the solution of philosophical problems through the logical analysis of language. But by the second half of the twentieth century it became something much broader, a tradition shaped by its almost century and a half long heritage and an approach to Philosophy that emphasizes rigorous argument and careful thinking, often using the formal tools of such disciplines as mathematical logic, linguistics, decision and game theory and the like. In practice it distinguishes itself from more historical approaches to Philosophy and from other programs such as Phenomenology, and Literary Theory. Analytic
Philosophy is not limited to one subject-matter in Philosophy; in principle, the analytic approach can be applied in any area of philosophy, including the history of philosophy. (As the supporting letter from Oxford indicates, we expect to include interested faculty in the history of philosophy from partner institutions in our activities.) It is most closely associated with such areas as metaphysics, philosophy of language, epistemology (the theory of knowledge), philosophy of science and the like, but many who work on ethics, political philosophy, aesthetics, the philosophy of religion and many other sub-disciplines in Philosophy.

The Analytic approach to philosophy is what is dominant in the English-speaking world, and is fast becoming the popular in countries like Germany, Italy, and even France, where other traditions have been more dominant. Princeton has been a dominant player in this approach to Philosophy, and its faculty, such as Carl Hempel, Paul Benacerraf, Bas van Fraassen, David Lewis, and Saul Kripke have shaped the field as it is now practiced.

It is important to add here that we do not want to specify the specific research projects on which faculty and students could be expected to collaborate in any more detail than we have. Philosophers in general, but particularly Analytic Philosophers do research through conversation and argument. By making it possible for faculty from Princeton and the other institutions in the CRNAP network to get together on a regular basis we are thereby fostering genuine philosophical collaboration. For this reason, the emphasis in this proposal is on the network, on providing the conditions for collaboration, and not on the specific topics within Analytic Philosophy taken broadly on which we would collaborate.

2. OUR GLOBAL PARTNERS

Our plan is to establish an international research network that would link Princeton to two of the strongest Departments in the Analytic Philosophy world, as well as a research institute that is emerging as the center of activity in Analytic Philosophy in Continental Europe.

For many years, ANU has been a major center for analytic philosophy of all kinds, and is generally ranked as the top Department of Philosophy in Australia. For the last twenty or twenty-five years, faculty and students from all the major North American departments of philosophy have congregated in Canberra because of the intense philosophical atmosphere. (It also doesn’t hurt that because of the fact that the ANU is in the Southern Hemisphere, our summer falls in the middle of their academic year.) Princeton students and faculty regularly appear on their lists of visiting scholars. Furthermore, for many years Princeton has had a very special relation with Australian philosophy in general, and with the ANU in particular. A number of Princeton faculty and students in the Department of Philosophy have passed through the ANU either as students or as
teachers. Most recently, Frank Jackson, Michael Smith, and Philip Pettit have come to Princeton directly from the ANU. Even so, the Department at ANU remains one of the strongest and most interesting in the Anglo-American world, and we would be delighted to have a formal relation with them.

The Faculty of Philosophy at Oxford is one of the largest and strongest groups of analytic philosophers anywhere in the world. Historically, it has been at the center of the movement since the early twentieth century, and it continues to be one of the most creative centers. John Hawthorne, the Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy at Oxford is already a regular visitor to Princeton, and would serve as an anchor for the network. Other faculty include recent visitors to Princeton (Timothy Williamson, here as a Hempel Lecturer, and Ralph Wedgewood), as well as former students (Cian Dorr, Anthony Eagle, and Terrence Irwin). Establishing even closer relations between Princeton and Oxford would be of great benefit to both institutions.

The Institut Jean-Nicod is somewhat different, a research institute rather than a Department in a University. The Institut Jean-Nicod in Paris, a “research laboratory” funded by the French government Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), is the center of activity in Analytic Philosophy on the European continent, particularly for the cognitive sciences and the neurosciences. Virtually every French philosopher who works on analytic philosophy, both faculty and students, are members. They have a very lively series of activities, including regular lectures and seminars, and visitors at all levels from all over the world, which connect it to the larger intellectual community in Analytic Philosophy. The Institut Jean-Nicod is very interested in being connected with Princeton, Oxford, and the ANU, which would bring the top Analytic Philosophers to Paris. But the other institutions are very interested in being connected with the Institut Jean-Nicod as well. It gives us a presence in a growing community on Continental Europe with some very talented scholars who are very eager to enter into mainstream Analytic Philosophy.

We have been in contact with all of the other institutions in the proposed network, and all are enthusiastic about CRNAP. Like us, all are currently discussing what they would like such a network to include, and how they might be able to institute it within the context of their own institutions. Because of the complexity of the arrangements, and the different institutional structures with which our partners have to deal, we do not have definite plans from them yet, but there should be no problem working out the details before we are hoping to start the work of CRNAP in September 2012.
3. PLAN OF OPERATION

The CRNAP collaboration would take place through regular visits of Princeton faculty and students to the other member institutions, and of the faculty and students of the other member institutions to Princeton, where there would be regular research workshops and seminars that included members of the group from the institutions. We anticipate three kinds of exchanges: (1) “net-working groups”; (2) short term exchanges of faculty; and (3) “Networkshops.” We would expect to pay the travel expenses of Princeton faculty and students who participate in such programs, while lodging and food are provided by the host institution. Similarly, we would expect that our partners would pay the transportation for their students and faculty who come to Princeton, while we would pay for their lodging and upkeep here.

(1) The net-working groups would involve short visits of faculty and students to other members of the CRNAP network for intensive short-term seminars on focused topics in Analytic Philosophy. We envision that these seminars might be as short as a week or two, or as long as a month. These net-working groups would be organized at the initiative of faculty in the different partner institutions. We expect that each net-working group will be sponsored by faculty in different institutions, working together, and may be coordinated with seminars or working groups at the different institutions. The length of each joint seminar will depend on the subject-matter and the availability of the relevant participants. But it is worth pointing out that the fact that one of the institutions in the CRNAP network is in the Southern Hemisphere adds a certain flexibility to the arrangement, insofar as the regular term time in one of the hemispheres corresponds to the summer break in the other. We are expecting roughly three faculty and three students from our partner institutions to visit Princeton each year, and for roughly ten faculty and students from Princeton to visit our partner institutions each year of the arrangement.

(2) Faculty Exchange. What we have in mind here is brief exchanges of faculty for up to a week to deliver lectures or participate in seminars or working groups at partner institutions. We would assume that we would send five of our faculty to partner institutions in each year of the network, and welcome a similar number of partner faculty to Princeton each year.

(3) Networkshops. The Networkshops are intended to be focused mini-conferences. They may grow out of net-working groups, or they may be organized independently by members of the CRNAP who have common interests in a particular problem. We envision these would last from two to four days, with participants giving formal papers, and involve roughly fifteen to twenty people, including both speakers and audience, of which we would expect the majority would be faculty and students from the CRNAP institutions. We would expect to host one Networkshop per year at Princeton, but send roughly a dozen of our faculty and students to Networkshops at other partner institutions.
The main participants in the exchange would be Princeton faculty and advanced graduate students and those at our partner institutions. In addition, though, we are hoping to include a small number of advanced undergraduates, both from Princeton and from our partners. It will, of course, be easier to include Princeton undergraduates during the sessions at Princeton, and undergraduates from our partner institutions during the sessions abroad. But it may be possible to include some undergraduates as visitors both ways. This may not be possible with the level of funding that we receive from the Council, but we intend to seek supplementary funds to allow the program to include some undergraduates.

CRNAP will be directed by a four-person Steering Committee, one representative from each of the partner institutions. While it would be good to meet in person from time to time, it will be more practical to meet regularly by video conferencing through Skype or something similar.

4. HOW CRNAP SITUATES PRINCETON SCHOLARS

Princeton scholars at every level are at the very heart of CRNAP. It will, in essence, integrate them into a close research collaboration with three of the world’s most interesting groups of analytic philosophers.

5. HOW CRNAP PROMOTES GLOBAL NETWORKING

This collaboration creates something unique in the philosophical world: a genuine joint research seminar that unites four departments across the globe. As the exchanges develop, we expect that there will develop a genuinely international research group.

6. HOW CRNAP ENHANCES THE CAREERS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Regular interchange with other philosophers working in institutional and intellectual contexts can only enhance the careers of all involved. This is obviously true of the faculty and the advanced graduate students. For undergraduates, we can’t say that it would enhance their careers. However, for those going on to graduate school, it would certainly enhance their credentials and expose them and their work to other senior scholars who would be in a position to write letters of reference.

7. HOW CRNAP PROMOTES INTERNATIONALIZATION

It is obvious how the project proposed promotes the internationalization of the Department of Philosophy. It is more difficult to say how it might promote internationalization in
other units of the University. A successful program like the one proposed would provide a model for others to follow, just as the Mathematics Department TRAM program provided a model for us to follow. Furthermore, this particular relation with the ANU might also promote relations between other units at Princeton and their comparable units at the ANU.