

Re-Designing the City of Guelph's Advisory Committees of Council (ACOCs)

Call for Applications: Graduate Research Assistant (Full Time, Summer 2023)

The Community Engaged Scholarship Institute (CESI) is hiring a graduate student to join our team as Research Assistant. CESI is a research and teaching support unit in the College of Social and Applied Human Sciences working in collaboration with community organizations to address community research needs. Our work enables university-community collaborations that positively impact our partners and the wider community.


About the Project

In Ontario, Advisory Committees of Council (ACOCs) are a well-established component of municipal policy administration. These committees can provide a venue for ongoing interaction between constituents, Council members, and municipal staff. They address a wide range of topics, including accessibility, transit, heritage, the arts, and more. They might also offer significant policy advice in crucial areas of municipal responsibility.

Despite their widespread use, little research has explored how ACOCs function. Existing ACOCs differ significantly in terms of their structure, scope, and representativeness, and there are few resources available to assist Ontario's 444 municipalities in developing and operationalizing new and existing ACOCs.

Based on input from city staff, Council members, and the ACOC committee members themselves, the City of Guelph's Clerk's Office has expressed interest in better understanding the form and function of the city's ACOCs and having a tool to guide the development of future ACOCs. The goal of this community-based research is therefore to develop a framework that Guelph, and potentially other municipalities, can use to guide their creation and use of ACOCs.

To undertake this work, the research team will combine data gathering approaches (surveys, interviews, and participatory research) and undertake a collaborative analysis process to create a framework for directing the future design, function, resource needs, etc. of ACOCs. The



research is guided by community engaged scholarship principles such as addressing the needs of the community, promoting reciprocity, and advancing justice.



About the Role


We are seeking a highly motivated and detail-oriented Graduate Research Assistant to join our team. The successful candidate will work closely with our interdisciplinary team to support this ongoing research project focused on creating a framework to guide the City of Guelph and other municipalities in the design of ACOCs.

General Outline of Duties

- Conduct literature reviews on various topics related to public policy, municipal policy and governance, diversity and inclusion, civic/public engagement, deliberative democracy etc.
- Conduct interviews with project stakeholders
- Conduct both qualitative and quantitative data analysis, including coding, content analysis, thematic analysis, data cleaning, descriptive statistics, regression analysis etc.
- Manage and maintain project databases, ensuring accuracy, organization and completeness of data.
- Support the preparation of project reports, presentations, and publications.
- Complete other tasks associated with the project as requested by the supervisor.

Details About the Role

This position reports to Dr. Winnie Chan, the postdoctoral scholar on the project team. The role will also involve regular meetings and communications with project team members, City of Guelph staff and other involved stakeholders and parties.

- Applicants must currently be enrolled as a graduate student at the University of Guelph
 - This position will require some in-person work in Guelph, and some work can be completed remotely
 - Time commitment: 35 hrs per week
 - Contract date: June to September, 2023
 - Rate: \$28.00/hour
 - We invite and encourage applications from all qualified individuals, including from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in employment, and/or those with lived experience relevant to the project.
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Required Qualifications

- MA or PhD student in a relevant field, such as political science, public policy, or sociology; experience with local governance / community engaged research an asset
- Experience with gathering, compiling, and annotating literature and synthesizing complex information
- Experience with conducting interviews
- Experience with qualitative and quantitative data analysis
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail
- Outstanding written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office (e.g., Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, and Outlook) and other virtual communication platforms
- Experience with qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods and software such as NVivo, SPSS etc.
- Knowledge of research methodology and data analysis techniques

Application Instructions

Please submit the following as a single document to Dr. Winnie Chan at waiyinc@uoguelph.ca
The file name should be "FIRST NAME _ SURNAME _ ACOC Application".

1. A cover letter (max 1 page)
2. Your resume

Please include at least the following information:

- Summary of research experience

Deadline for submission: Monday 10th April 2023, at 9am.

Interviews of shortlisted applicants will be held remotely.