

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rural Ontario Institute selects community partners for two new projects

Guelph, Ontario, January 23, 2019 – The Rural Ontario Institute is partnering with 13 different communities and community organizations from across Ontario, with two of its latest projects: *Municipal Internship: Youth Engagement Strategies* and the *Community Demonstration Projects*. These communities were selected following a rigorous evaluation process from staff and selection committees. Submissions from both projects were reviewed by their own respective committee using the criteria outlined for the Expression of Interest.

Municipal Internship: Youth Engagement Strategies

Ten community partners have been selected for the *Municipal Internship: Youth Engagement Strategies* project. These ten partners are: Timmins Youth Wellness Hub, Perth County, Northern Wellington (collaborative), Town of Hanover, South Huron, Wellington Big Brothers Big Sisters, Brock Youth Centre, The Municipality of South Dundas, Recreation Outreach Centre – Picton, Ontario, and the City of Brockville.

Each partner has developed their own unique approach to youth engagement, tailored to address needs in the local community. The interns will be tasked with implementing local work plans. ROI will be working alongside the partner communities to provide a collaborative environment for the interns, including an in-person orientation session and an online platform for knowledge sharing.

“The work plans we reviewed from all 35 communities who submitted Expressions of Interest have been quite impressive,” says Project Lead, Ryan Deska. “Communities are looking at youth engagement from a number of different angles, from workforce development, to inclusivity, to health and well-being. It’s encouraging to see this kind of energy focused on better engaging youth in the future of their rural communities.”

Final reports from this project will be shared publicly following its completion, outlining promising practices and lessons learned.

Community Demonstrations Project

Three community partners have been selected for ROI's *Community Demonstrations Project*. These partners are Chigamik Community Health Centre, Middlesex County and the County Foundation in Prince Edward County.

These community partners include organizations and municipal governments working to better understand and improve local community vitality and well-being. Partners were selected who demonstrated a promising work plan for moving beyond data collection and reporting, towards the implementation of strategies and actions to improve community well-being.

ROI will be working with these communities as their projects unfold to gather information and help share their experiences. The intent is to share these stories in a way that other communities might find helpful ideas and inspiration for their own well-being projects. Final reports and a final webinar will be shared publicly following the completion of this project.

The Rural Ontario Institute gratefully recognizes the support of the Ontario government which has enabled us to undertake this initiative for the benefit of rural municipal stakeholders. The Rural Ontario Institute acknowledges that the Province bears no responsibility for any errors and omissions in our work nor does it imply any

endorsement of the information, findings or conclusions of any related reports which are solely the responsibility of the Rural Ontario Institute.

The Rural Ontario Institute is a non-profit organization committed to developing leaders, initiating dialogue, supporting collaboration and promoting action on issues and opportunities facing rural and northern Ontario.

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