

## **CALL FOR PARTNERS**

### **Why Do Migrants Stay in Small and Mid-sized Cities?**

#### **Seeking to partner with organizations to understand migrant retention in small and mid-sized cities in Ontario and British Columbia**

The Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration (CERC Migration) at Ryerson University aims to produce innovative and usable knowledge by exploring the challenges and opportunities involved in the **integration processes of migrants and refugees in regional Canada.**

#### **Context**

Many small and mid-sized cities in Canada view international migration as a way to address labour shortages and to counter the effects of population decline. Smaller urban centres often face significant challenges to attracting and retaining migrants, as migrants often prefer to live in larger cities. Stable and meaningful employment is a primary factor for immigrant attraction and retention in regional centres. A number of research studies have also found that educational opportunities, the creation of a welcoming environment, and the presence of amenities and services contribute to the successful attraction and retention of migrants. However, smaller centres often struggle to meet all of these criteria simultaneously. Moreover, even when these requirements appear to be met, migrant retention rates may fall short of expectations.

This project seeks to delve deep into the contextual factors contributing to newcomer retention in small and mid-sized cities. **We want to turn the usual policy and research question (why do people leave?) on its head and ask those who stay in smaller centres:**

- **Why do they choose to live in small or mid-sized cities?**
- What is attractive or important for them?
- How do their motivations evolve in the different life stages of a family/household? and,
- **What then is the role of community organizations and cultural associations** in building connections and creating a welcoming environment in small and mid-sized cities?

We are looking for **community organizations and cultural associations of all types in Ontario or British Columbia** (with a preference for organizations in Owen Sound, Peterborough, Belleville, Thunder Bay, Sault-Ste-Marie, Timmins, Chilliwack, Courtenay, and Nanaimo) that are interested in partnering with us to explore the above questions. Partners would help facilitate connections to the local community and recruit focus group participants. We will entertain proposals from organizations covering a range of possible degrees of involvement--from recruitment and co-hosting only, to working with CERC Migration to co-develop the focus group research plan.

## CONDITIONS

### Eligibility

Proposals from non-profit and non-governmental organizations in Canada are eligible for consideration in this call for proposals. We invite cultural, religious or other types of community organizations that work with individuals of first-generation immigrant or refugee origin from diverse backgrounds as well as with the wider local community to apply. Settlement service provider organizations are encouraged to apply albeit our focus in this study is not on recent newcomers but rather on migrants to Canada who have been living for three or more years in a given small or mid-sized city.

### Criteria

Relevance of the work of the organization in relation to the research focus – 5 points

The objectives and activities of the applicant organization focus on making their town/city a welcoming community for all.

Capacity – 5 points

The applicant organization has a significant membership or client-base (as applicable) and has a track record of engaging in activities in the field of migrant/refugee integration and/or activities to make their community more welcoming. Activities related to promoting diversity and inclusion and fighting racism fall within the broader scope of welcoming community initiatives, and will be considered.

### Timeline

Launch of Call	30 April 2021
Online information sessions	17 May 2021 (4 to 5 pm)
We shall offer an online information session where interested organizations can pose questions to clarify the scope of the proposal and what is expected from them	

### Deadline for Submission of proposals

**31 May 2021**

Announcement of Results	15 June 2021
Research starts	July 2021
Expected Completion	April 2022
Concluding Workshop	May 2022

## EVALUATION PROCESS

A Panel of four experts will evaluate the proposals remotely:

- Three members of the CERC Migration Research Team
- One Ryerson Faculty member

**Conflict of Interest:** We will ensure that none of the Committee members has a direct or indirect connection with any of the applicant organizations. The evaluation will take place remotely. Evaluators will review the applications individually and then meet as a panel chaired by Professor Anna Triandafyllidou to make the final selection.

**Research Costs:** The research projects will utilize the data resources, staff and researchers available to the CERC Migration program. Organizations are expected to contribute a limited amount of working time and/or if relevant make their premises available for meetings related to the conduction of the research. There is no expectation for in cash or other financial contributions.

## **APPLICATION**

Applications must be submitted by email by **31 May 2021, 4 PM EDT**, to [cerc.migration@ryerson.ca](mailto:cerc.migration@ryerson.ca)

## **APPLICATION FORM**

### **Applicant Details:**

Organization name:

Principal name:

Address:

Contact phone:

Contact email:

### **Organization Details:**

Organization profile: What is the main profile and members/clients of your organization? (Less than 500 words)

Recent projects and activities: Please state what are the main activities that your organization has been involved in in the last five years. (Less than 500 words)

Motivation: Why are you interested in taking part in this project? (300-400 words)