



How much is enough?
Impact of Low Incomes on Households and Communities in Huron and Perth Counties

Request for Proposals

Who we are & what we do:

The Social Research and Planning Council (SRPC), operated by the United Way Perth-Huron, identifies local issues and trends, prioritizes local research directions and collects, collates and disseminates relevant community reports. The SRPC relies on social research to initiate, participate or facilitate social planning initiatives.

Examples of SRPC reports can be found at:

<http://perthhuron.unitedway.ca/social-research-planning-council>

Project Description:

In 2015, the SRPC calculated a “living wage” for Huron and Perth Counties. This is the hourly wage a worker needs to earn to cover his/her family’s basic everyday expenses, such as food, housing, utilities, transportation and childcare. The 2015 living wage calculation was \$16.47/hour for Huron and Perth County.

The 2015 Living Wage study reported that about half of the households in Perth and Huron Counties are earning less than a living wage. The complete report is available on the SRPC website: <http://perthhuron.unitedway.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/SRPC-LivingWageReport-WEB.pdf>

The 2015 Living Wage report also noted that in general, individuals working in Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Assistance earn more than annualized living wage rates, while individuals working in Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fishery, Retail Trade, and Accommodation and Food Services earn less than living wages.

To continue the discussion initiated by the 2015 Living Wage report, the SRPC is now requesting proposals for a participatory research project, which could include creative research methodologies to understand the impact on households and communities of not having a living income. The following questions are to be addressed:

- How do families living on less than a living wage/income make household spending decisions?
- Approximately fifty percent of the households in Perth and Huron earn less than a living wage/income. How does this impact communities across Perth and Huron?
- How do we know that precarious employment is a factor in Perth and Huron?
- What factors are influencing the employment sectors where the median annual earnings of the persons employed is less than a living wage?
- What is the experience and role of employers with living wage initiatives?

Budget and timeline:

Funding for the project is provided by the Social Research and Planning Council. The budget for this project will include all expenses (excluding printing costs) and HST. This proposed budget

must include research, writing, travel costs and basic report layout costs and should not exceed \$23,000.

Project goals and objectives:

The goals of this project are:

- To understand the impact of inadequate household incomes and precarious employment in Perth and Huron Counties on families
- To understand the impact of inadequate household incomes and precarious employment in Perth and Huron Counties on communities
- To understand how economic trends are influencing employment sectors paying less than a living wage
- To understand how provincial policy (for example: Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act; Income Security: A Roadmap for Change) and local policy (for example: economic development, housing programs) is influencing low-income households in Huron and Perth Counties
- To promote critical dialogue about the impact of not having a living wage or income amongst communities in Huron and Perth Counties

Target audience:

The primary audience for this research includes: employers, and people with lived experience of not having a living wage/income.

The secondary audience includes: agencies (including economic development departments, health care, schools, social service agencies), municipal decision makers and the general public.

Objectives:

1. Conduct background research regarding:
 - a) economic trends in Huron and Perth Counties, especially focusing on sectors which traditionally do not pay a living wage (Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fishery, Retail Trade, and Accommodation and Food Services)
 - b) government policy relevant to a living wage/income
 - c) the number of households by household type and income quintile in Perth and Huron Counties
2. Design and undertake participatory research in order to:
 - a) Learn the perspective of people with lived experience of having less than a living wage/income
 - b) Provide opportunities for people with lived experience of having their voices shared
3. Design and undertake participatory research in order to:
 - a) Research the perspective of employers in a minimum of three sectors which traditionally pay less than a living wage
 - b) Provide opportunities for employers' experiences to be shared
4. Develop recommendations for local government, provincial government, employer and community-wide responses to the impact of not having a living wage/income

Research format:

The SRPC requests that responses describe the proposed format for the research product. The SRPC will consider written reports and/or creative formats (video, theatre, story-telling, audio recordings, social media).

Evaluation criteria:

During the evaluation process any or all of the consultants may be invited for an interview at their own expense. Consultants will be evaluated specifically on:

- The quality of the proposal;
- Responsiveness to the requirements of the RFP;
- Qualifications and relevant experience;
- Understanding of poverty, precarious employment, government policy, employment trends and rural issues;
- Demonstrated knowledge of Huron and Perth Counties;
- Familiarity with participatory research methods;
- Approach to the project;
- Quality of work experience and similar development;
- Demonstrated knowledge of local and national statistical survey sources;
- Experience of proposed personnel; and
- Proposed budget and ability to complete work within stated timelines.

Pricing information shall contain the total price and a detailed cost breakdown showing task, person assigned, estimated hours, rate/hour, subtotal; and disbursement expenses.

Deliverables:

- 1) A report summarizing the research completed to address the objectives listed in this RFP
- 2) Presentation of the voice of people with experience living on less than a living wage/income
- 3) Presentation of the voice of employers who are paying less than a living wage/income
- 4) Community consultations or events to engage the community in critical dialogue about the impact of not having a living wage/income for households and communities in Huron and Perth Counties

Time Line:

Date	Task
Friday February 9 2018	RFP Released
Friday March 2 2018	Deadline for submissions
March/April 2018	Research Consultant Selected
May 2018	Workplan approved and project start
June to November 2018	Data collection and analysis Photovoice workshops
January 2019	Draft report provided to SRPC
February 2019	Final report due

Statement of Ethics:

The Social Research and Planning Council (SRPC) expect those who do research for the SRPC to act in an ethical manner. The principles of justice, concern for welfare, respect for persons, privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, and equity in research participation will be respected (as defined in the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans) (www.pre.ethics.gc.ca).

Application Procedure:

Please submit your CV, a preliminary work plan, two samples of similar work and the names of three references who can speak to your ability to complete this project to:

Social Research & Planning Council
The United Centre
32 Erie Street, Stratford Ontario
N5A 2M4
or email to: srpc@perthhuron.unitedway.ca
by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 2nd, 2018

Direct inquiries to:

Susanna Reid
Director, Social Research and Planning Council
sreid@perthhuron.unitedway.ca
519-271-7730

Thank you for your interest. Only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.