

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ROI Introduces Municipal Internship: Youth Engagement Strategies

Guelph, ON, Aug. 22, 2018 – The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is pleased to announce its latest project for 2018-19, Municipal Internship: Youth Engagement Strategies. This project will see 12 rural communities receive support and funding for a youth intern to work on dedicated youth engagement strategies in the summer of 2019. Community partners will be chosen by ROI and the project advisory committee following submissions of Expressions of Interest (EOI) from interested municipalities and youth-serving organizations. The Municipal Internship: Youth Engagement Strategies project will support rural municipalities across Ontario to:

- hire a municipal intern;
- develop and implement youth engagement strategies; and
- provide a voice for local youth in the ongoing development of their communities.

Through this initiative, ROI is working to foster long-term outcomes that extend to municipalities across rural Ontario. These include:

- building (young) civic leadership;
- increasing capacity for youth engagement;
- facilitating municipal sector workforce succession; and
- youth attraction and retention.

“The experience of youth is an important consideration for any municipality pursuing community development,” says Norm Ragetlie, CEO of the Rural Ontario Institute. “The strength and vitality of our rural communities is contingent on our young leaders: they are entrepreneurs, employees, neighbours, volunteers and patrons of our local businesses.”

Rural communities across Ontario continue to face significant challenges when it comes to youth attraction and retention. Many rural youth leave home for post-secondary education and job training and few return home with the skills and experiences they have learned while away. Research has shown that if meaningful community engagement is fostered from a young age, people are more likely to either stay or return home.

Jacinda Rudolph, who has spent a significant amount of time working with youth at the LaunchPad Youth Centre in Hanover, Ontario, says “people will only return if they feel like they’ve left something behind.”

Who Would We Like to Partner With?

All rural municipalities outside Census Metropolitan Areas will be considered for partnership in this initiative, given a demonstrated commitment to furthering local youth engagement. Youth serving organizations may also be considered, provided they receive support from their municipality agreeing to be the official recipient of project transfers.

Interested communities can find out more and submit an EOI at:

www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/programs/youthengagementstrategies