RURAL ONTARIO INSTITUTE

MEASURING RURAL COMMUNITY VITALITY: COMMUNITY DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is ROI doing the *Measuring Rural Community Vitality: Community Demonstration Projects* initiative?

An important outcome of most community Well-Being or Vital Signs reports is strengthening local multi-stakeholder dialogue on community priorities. The dialogue and engagement **process** surrounding the publication of community data is often as important as the numbers themselves.

This initiative will look to capture and share instances where communities have moved from data generation and/or analysis to community engagement and the uptake and implementation of new ideas.

What is being delivered through the *Measuring Rural Community Vitality: Community Demonstration Projects* initiative?

Through this initiative, ROI will work alongside three (3) community partners to highlight effective approaches for, and challenges with, stimulating community action flowing from the reporting and discussion of well-being measures and indicators.

Community partners will be documenting their activities to produce three (3) case studies and to share their experiences through an interactive webinar(s) to a broader audience of fellow rural communities across Ontario. These webinars will serve to transfer knowledge and ideas of what works well and what doesn't work to other practitioners.

Through this knowledge transfer, ROI looks to foster community adoption of successful engagement approaches for future rural well-being projects.

What would our commitments be as partners on this project?

All partner communities are required to complete their community demonstration project and support the development of a "case study" describing the story of community engagement and uptake of the community report. Communities must also participate in the webinar, sharing their experiences first-hand with communities across the province.

Community partners will be expected to share all aspects of their approach (including what worked well and what didn't work) in bringing data analysis a step further towards community engagement and collaborative community action.

Each partner's local initiative should be substantially completed by fall of 2019 to facilitate case study development and knowledge exchange.

At what stage should our community be in the development/implementation of a community report?

Your community may be in the planning stages, you may have only completed the report or you may have completed the report and implemented some suggested actions. All communities are eligible to partner with ROI on this initiative, given it is feasible for their local initiative to be substantially completed by fall of 2019 to facilitate case study development and knowledge exchange.

What is the story ROI would like to see?

ROI would like to hear stories of how communities are engaging stakeholders in community reports. How have community reports inspired and facilitated community action on community betterment projects? We would like to understand the strategies that worked effectively to leverage data towards community engagement and community action. We would also like to understand which strategies were not very effective. Some of the more compelling questions include:

- Were community members and organizations involved before or after the reporting?
- Was there demonstrable social capital built, i.e., new networks, new connections?
- Were there spinoff initiatives following from these community activities?
- Were there diverse sectors or organizations involved, and how was this managed?
- What engagement strategies failed?
- Did your community lose interest in the project? If so, why?

Who is ROI looking to as partners?

ROI is looking to work with municipalities, community groups and engaged citizens, particularly those collaborating on a community demonstration project. We would like to emphasize that projects where the local municipality is a partner are considered stronger for the purpose of selecting partners for this initiative.

Note: Transfer of funds must be through a designated, authorized individual at a municipality. If applying as a community organization, please attach a letter of support from your partner municipality, signed by an appropriate municipal contact (CAO, Department Head, etc.).

What is a "community report"?

For the purpose of this project, community reports should include the collection of data on community vitality and wellbeing. These reports should be looking at community vitality/wellbeing as integrative concepts, tying in a review of multiple indicators (i.e., social, environmental, economic) into the assessment of your community. Examples of some specific frameworks used in preparing community reports include the Canadian Index of Wellbeing and Community Vital Signs.

If our community has done other data gathering, community reporting or strategic planning outside the Canadian Index of Well-being and/or Vital Signs methodologies, are we eligible to partner with ROI on this initiative?

Yes, though we are looking for community reports to be assessing community wellbeing from a number of indicators, not solely economic or not solely social, for example.

We haven't yet completed a "community report". Can we still submit an EOI?

We would like to hear from you! Whether you're just beginning, right in the middle or you've completed a report and are well into implementation, there are lessons to be learned and shared at each step of the process.

My organization has developed the community report but is not a municipality. Are we able to submit an EOI?

All community organizations may certainly apply. We recognize there are many different stakeholders involved in community development across Ontario. We ask that all organizations seeking consideration for partnership have the support of the local municipality. Transfer of funds must also be through a designated, authorized individual at the municipality. Please **attach a letter of support** from your partner municipality, signed by an appropriate municipal contact (CAO, Department Head, etc.).

What is the deadline for applications?

All EOI submissions are due by November 30, 2018.