



Municipal Internship Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the *Municipal Internship Program: Youth Engagement Strategies*?

The Municipal Internship Program is designed to support and encourage youth engagement activities across rural Ontario. Through this program, 10 rural communities will receive financial assistance (\$8,000) in the summer of 2019 for the purposes of:

- financing the employment of a municipal intern by the municipality;
- developing and implementing youth engagement strategies; and/or
- offsetting staff time dedicated to supervising the intern and reporting on the project.

Through this Municipal Internship Program, the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is working to foster long-term outcomes that extend to municipalities across rural Ontario. These include:

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

What is “Youth”?

ROI will be following the provincial definition of “youth.” Youth is comprised of all people 15-29 years of age. The focus of all “youth engagement” activities must be directed at youth according to this definition. Municipal interns must also fall within the age limits for “youth.”

Does our community count as “rural”?

ROI is looking to work with municipalities outside of Census Metropolitan Areas. We also recognize that there can often be communities bordering metropolitan areas that are, in many ways, functionally rural. The most important consideration is that all youth engagement activities are focussed exclusively on rural youth.

My organization works with youth in our community and we would like to apply. Are we able to submit an EOI?

Youth-serving organizations may certainly apply. We recognize there are many different stakeholders crucial to fostering widespread youth engagement in rural Ontario. One important outcome of this project is exposing interns to municipal governance processes and the multi-stakeholder landscape where community development happens. As such, we ask that all youth-serving organizations seeking consideration for partnership have the support of the local municipality. Transfer of funds will 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.).



How detailed should our workplan be?

Having some pre-defined activities in a workplan is important to ensuring a positive experience for the intern, positive outcomes in your community and some informative lessons learned for the broader project. With that said, ROI will be working with partner communities prior to the internship to identify new ideas and further develop youth engagement activities.

For the workplan that is submitted with the Expression of Interest, **preference will be given** to communities where the scope of proposed activities are demonstrably over and above local programming that the municipality would ordinarily undertake.

What do you mean when you say “Youth Engagement”?

There are a wide variety of “youth engagement” activities a community or organization might decide to take on as part of this project. ROI is not prescriptive in what we define as “youth engagement” and welcome creativity. Some youth engagement activities may include:

- Strategic Planning: supporting the development of a local strategic plan for youth engagement.
- Community Research: listening to what youth have to say on community issues (surveys, focus groups, workshops).
- Political engagement: i.e., youth advisory committees/ action councils.
- Story-telling: sharing stories, and/or helping youth to tell their stories.
- Youth-serving functions: networking events, volunteer opportunities, etc.
- Youth engagement education: workshops, communications materials, etc.

What would our commitments be as partners on this project?

All partner communities are required to:

- develop a locally-focussed workplan for youth engagement activities;
- prepare for activities in advance of youth internship;
- contribute to on-line engagement resources to be shared through the project;
- co-design a kick-off orientation session for the interns;
- recruit and hire an intern;
- oversee the intern’s activities; and
- share intern experiences through a post-internship summary.

Why is ROI doing this project?

Rural communities have long experienced the out-migration of youth for post-secondary education but only some regions show return rates high enough to replace those who left. This produces a local demographic with fewer young people in the labour force and fewer people in child-rearing age groups. Meanwhile, research has shown that youth who are engaged in community life before they leave are more likely to return. In this context, many rural municipalities are undertaking activities to engage their youth. This project aims to further catalyse those efforts and foster knowledge exchange of effective, practical ideas for engagement