

RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS TO REVITALIZE RURAL COMMUNITIES PROJECT

Research Project Summaries

Rural Community Small Business Centres: Public-Private Partnerships

Lead researcher: John Andrew, Queen's School of Business

One of the obstacles to launching and growing an entrepreneurial small business in a small rural community is the lack of sufficiently equipped and staffed office space. This project will explore the feasibility of and obstacles to providing Community Small Business Centres, and the impact that providing these centres would have on entrepreneurial small businesses in rural communities. The project would have a public-private partnership real estate development component.

Start date: January 2013

End date: November 2013

Opportunities for collaboration: Interviews will be conducted to collect data on the financial and political feasibility of entrepreneurial incubators; sources of funding; and potential partners (both private and public sector). If you or a contact would like to participate, please contact John Andrew at john.andrew@queensu.ca.

Building Community Capacity through Green Economic Development in Southwestern Ontario

Lead researcher: Alison Blay-Palmer, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University

This project will extend the work on green economic development that was conducted during the summer of 2011 in Eastern Ontario into Southwestern Ontario. Given the increased profile and importance of the environment and the concurrent more general concern for overall sustainability, it is timely and relevant to explore the extent of environmental considerations for large, medium and small size firms in the region. The project will identify and then help to grow both existing and emerging initiatives.

Alison Blay-Palmer on sabbatical until Spring 2013.

Start date: April 2012

End date: August 2013

Opportunities for collaboration: Interviews focusing on green economic development will be conducted with key informants from research organizations, SMEs and multinational corporations, local economic

development offices and consultants. If you or a contact would like to participate, please contact Alison Blay Palmer at ablaypalmer@wlu.ca.

Rural Transportation Planning and Management

Lead researcher: Chialin Chen, Queen's School of Business

The overall goal of the research project is to create templates for rural transportation planning and management. The secondary goal is to train highly qualified students who are interested in pursuing a career in supply-chain and transportation management. To accomplish these objectives, this project will develop scientific methods for rural transportation planning and management which are suitable for different rural communities, conduct case studies to understand the challenges and opportunities in rural transportation planning and management, and integrate the research findings to develop templates for rural transportation planning and management.

Start date: September 2012

End date: March 2014

Opportunities for collaboration: Interviews will be conducted to understand the challenges and opportunities in rural transportation planning and management. If you or a contact would like to participate, please contact Chialin Chen at cchen@business.queensu.ca.

Routes to Roots: The Role of Tradition in the Production of Sustainable Practices

Lead researcher: M. Tina Dacin, Queen's School of Business

This project examines the role of traditions in communities and how entrepreneurs embed and invoke ideological principles of the past to build strategies for sustainability. Using Prince Edward County as an example, the project examines the evolution of the region and how its social structure encourages ecological and other forms of sustainability and how it has enabled the development of numerous formal and informal network ties amongst its producers, contributing to the preservation of its identity and culture.

Start date: September 2011

End date: Spring 2013

Opportunities for collaboration: Interviews will be conducted with wine producers and others involved in culture, tradition and sustainable practices. If you or a contact would like to participate, please contact Tina Dacin at tdacin@business.queensu.ca.

The Sources and Process of Rural Development

Lead researcher: Jean-Etienne de Bettignies, Queen's School of Business

Human capital is a key driver of rural growth, just as it is a driver of urban growth. The project examines factors that can help rural communities seeking economic growth attract human capital to their geographic areas. These factors can include cost of living, population densities, and quality of living.

Start date: April 2013
End date: March 2014

Opportunities for collaboration: If you have data that you feel may assist in this project, please contact Jean-Etienne de Bettignies at jdebettignies@business.queensu.ca.

Economic Development for Sustainable Living in the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve

Lead researcher: Betsy Donald, Department of Geography, Queen's University

This project will include a comprehensive regional economic analysis of the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve. It will pay particular attention to the sustainable economy elements in the region, such as the local food, creative arts and culture, nature, scientific and green energy communities. The approach to understanding the current sustainable economy will be holistic and integrative. Not only will the project assess the current economy, but it will also assess future opportunities for sustainable living in the region.

Betsy Donald on sabbatical until Spring 2013.

Start date: April 2011
End date: Spring 2013

Opportunities for collaboration: If you or a contact live and/or work within the boundaries of the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve and would like to participate, please contact Betsy Donald at betsy.donald@queensu.ca.

Communication for Rural and Agri-Food Innovation

Lead researchers: Helen Hambly Odame and Laxmi Prasad Pant, University of Guelph

Investing in rural telecommunication infrastructure has dominated federal, provincial and municipal policy. New public/private partnerships for improved rural connectivity have been proposed. While improved infrastructure is an important effort, this project will examine how new information technologies build better communication among agricultural knowledge workers and entrepreneurs, and subsequently, how enabling technical and institutional innovations can overcome existing bottlenecks to socio-economic and environmental change in rural areas.

Start date: April 2011
End date: March 2012

Opportunities for collaboration: If you and/or a contact live in Southwestern Ontario, are involved in the agri-food industry, and would like to participate, please contact Helen Hambly Odame at hhambly@uoguelph.ca, or Laxmi Pant at lpant@uoguelph.ca.

Multi-Generation Small Business in Rural Communities

Lead researcher: M. Gordon Hunter, The University of Lethbridge

This project will investigate the histories and issues of multi-generation small business in rural communities, and represents the continuation and extension of a project conducted in southern Alberta. The goal of this project is to identify those characteristics which not only contribute to the current success of the small business, but also those that have contributed to the survival of the small business beyond the tenure of the founding entrepreneur. The result of this investigation will be a more thorough understanding of the important aspects of intergenerational small business.

Start date: April 2013
End date: August 2013

Opportunities for collaboration: If you are involved with a multi-generational business in Eastern Ontario and like to participate, please contact Gordon Hunter at ghunter@uleth.ca.

Skill-Intensive Entrepreneurship in Urban and Rural Regions

Lead researcher: Olena Ivus, Queen's School of Business

This project investigates the impact of broadband on labour from 2005-2012, with comparisons of rural and urban contexts. It draws on data provided by Industry Canada and other project partners. The research focus dovetails with an OMAFRA-funded Monieson Centre project on broadband impact in Eastern Ontario.

Start date: April 2012
End date: March 2014

Opportunities for collaboration: If you have data that you feel may assist in this project, please contact Olena Ivus at oivus@business.queensu.ca.

Advisory Relationships in Government-Funded Programs

Lead researcher: Kelley Packalen, Queen's School of Business

Governments spend considerable money funding programs and centres that are designed to help entrepreneurs turn their opportunities into viable businesses. Yet there is mixed evidence regarding the

value of these programs. This project will examine what aspects of the business advisory process are seen as most important (and why) from the point of view of the program directors, the business advisors, and the clients. It will also identify the types of knowledge exchanged during the business advisory process and determine which ones address the entrepreneur and the firm's immediate needs versus the entrepreneur and the firm's longer term development.

Kelley Packalen on leave until Spring 2013.

Start date: September 2011

End date: August 2013

Opportunities for collaboration: If you are a business advisor, or are using advisors and would like to participate, please contact Kelley Packalen at kpackalen@business.queensu.ca

Continuous Improvement in the Face of Adversity: Investigating Rural Entrepreneurs and Organizations

Lead researcher: Jana Raver, Queen's School of Business with Ingrid Chadwick, Queen's School of Business

Adversity at work is inevitable in today's economic climate where employees are faced with harsh conditions such as resource constraints, downsizing, salary freezes, and associated interpersonal stressors such as conflict. In rural communities, these challenges are further compounded by unique concerns including the need for infrastructure developments (e.g., high-speed internet, transportation), the difficulty of attracting talent, and a narrow customer base. In line with this discussion, the purpose of this research is to investigate the ways that entrepreneurs and small organizations in rural communities develop and maintain motivation toward continuous improvement, despite the numerous challenges that they must overcome to be successful. Data is drawn from surveys and interviews with participants in the Self-Employment Benefit program both in Ottawa and through CFDCs in rural Eastern Ontario. It will highlight characteristics of successful entrepreneurship (e.g., psychological capital).

Start date: January 2012

End date: December 2013

Opportunities for collaboration: If you or a contact would like to participate in interviews regarding continuous improvement, please contact Jana Raver at jraver@business.queensu.ca or Ingrid Chadwick at ichadwick@business.queensu.ca.

The Creative Economy in Ontario Rural Communities

Lead researcher: Kevin Stolarick, Martin Prosperity Institute, University of Toronto

In the emerging economy of the 21st century, rural communities and peripheral regions across Ontario face significant challenges encouraging continued economic growth and regional prosperity. However, opportunities exist for rural communities to regain momentum and stimulate their regional economies by pursuing their own strategies in the emerging creative economy. The objective of the proposed research is to examine the creative economy in rural communities across Ontario and produce a document that can then be used by any community seeking to better understand how to execute creative economy research and begin to interpret results.

COMPLETED September 2012

Start date: November 2011

End date: September 2012

Opportunities for collaboration: If you have data that may assist in this project, please contact Kevin Stolarick at Kevin.Stolarick@Rotman.Utoronto.Ca.

Fostering Entrepreneurship: Public Entrepreneurship Programs and the Success of New Ventures

Lead researcher: Veikko Thiele, Queen's School of Business

Federal, provincial and municipal governments have established various public entrepreneurship programs (PEPs). A key objective of many of these PEPs is to provide financial support to entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs can receive subsidized start-up financing during the founding process (*input subsidy*), or subsidies after the successful founding process, typically in the form of tax incentives, which are aimed at fostering the growth of new ventures (*output subsidy*). This project will examine whether both types of subsidies can effectively support the formation of new ventures and improve their survival rates. It will also identify the optimal type of financial subsidy conditional on the type of entrepreneur (e.g., first-time vs. serial entrepreneurs), industry (e.g., high-growth vs. low-growth), degree of market competition, and availability of alternative resources for financing (e.g., venture capital, angel financing).

Start date: January 2012

End date: December 2012

Opportunities for collaboration: If you have data on public entrepreneurship programs and would like to participate, please contact Veikko Theile at vtheile@business.queensu.ca

A Toolkit for Immigrant Entrepreneurship in the Peterborough and Kawartha Lakes Region"

Lead researcher: Leela Viswanathan, School of Urban and Regional Planning, Queen's University

This project will outline the structural barriers and policy incentives for labour recruitment and retention of immigrant skilled workers (with a possible focus on entrepreneurs) in the Kingston, Peterborough and Kawartha Lakes Region of Ontario. It will also develop a toolkit for local economic development

professionals that will assist immigrant entrepreneurs in the region. It will also highlight key themes to guide potential future studies of interest to HR managers.

Start date: April 2012
End date: March 2014

Opportunities for collaboration: If you are located in Peterborough and Kawartha Lakes Region, are involved in the labour recruitment and retention of immigrant skilled workers, and would like to participate in this research, please contact Leela Viswanathan at leela.viswanathan@queensu.ca.