



## Community-Based Research (CBR) Project Proposal Form

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### U-Links Administration Only

**Project Number** (automatically generated by CBR database):

**Recommended Courses and/or Disciplines** (i.e. GEOG4030Y, FRSC4890Y, IDST3700Y/3710H/3720H, ERSC3160H, PSYCH or Alternatives):

**Recommended Faculty Advisors:**

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### PROJECT TITLE: It's All About the Lakes - Benchmarking Haliburton Lake Associations

#### A – CONTACT INFORMATION

**Date:** June 2024

**Contact person:** Frank Figuli (U-Links Program Coordinator) /Jim Prince (KLCOA VP)

**Phone:** 519-216-4498/416-528-1739

**Email:** [coordinator@ulinks.ca](mailto:coordinator@ulinks.ca) / [jimprince@sympatico.ca](mailto:jimprince@sympatico.ca)

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#### B – COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

**a) Organization's name and address:** Woodlands and Waterways EcoWatch (in partnership with several Lake Associations within Haliburton County and FOCA (Federation of Ontario Cottage Owners' Associations as an observer)

**b) Briefly state the organization's purpose and the products or services offered:**

The project partners are Lake Associations and generally have the following purpose and services:

- Promoting strong, sustainable community of property owners through leadership, education and communication for the benefit of members and the community and to protect the natural environment for future generations by:
  - Promoting, educating and communicating the general interests of our members both internally and externally
  - Encouraging the social engagement of our members by organizing lake-community focused events
  - Fostering, promoting and teaching environmental stewardship among all property owners
  - Promoting physical and recreational activities for the community
  - Advancing programs, policies and plans that benefit our members and community
  - Monitoring development activities in the area to ensure consistency with the purposes of the Association

- o Engaging with government and others on issues impacting the community.

**Has an immediate supervisor or board approved this application? Yes**

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**C - PROJECT SCOPE**

- a) **Full year undergraduate CBR projects are allotted 220 hours total, per 1-2 students on a single project. The condensed hours are similar to six weeks of full-time work. Full term students would be working on this project from September to April as part of a course, while balancing work from other courses as well. Half term students will be working on this project from September - December or January to April. Does the scope of your project fit within this timeframe?**

Yes  No  Comments:

- b) **Select the theme(s) for your project:**

Cultural  Economic  Environmental  Social  • Other:

- c) **Based on the timeframe and complexity of your project, please indicate the potential project scale:**

- Single year project
- Multi-year project (requiring follow up or several parts)
- Ideal for undergraduate students
- Ideal for graduate students (requires specialized knowledge/in-depth consideration of theory)

- d) **Is your project appropriate for a single student or a group?** Group, 3-4 students recommended, however scope can be refined for individual students.

- e) **Describe the purpose of the project:**

Haliburton County is fortunate to have over 600 lakes, connected by many rivers and surrounded by natural forests. These natural attributes continue to draw permanent and seasonal residents and visitors to the County. Haliburton County is also home to over 50 Lake and Cottage Associations that contribute significantly to the economic, cultural, environmental, and social fabric of the region. These Lake Associations have an outreach to over 15,000 waterfront property owners in Haliburton County. The Lake Associations rely on membership dues and fundraising to deliver programming and services to their membership and community. These Lake Associations are exclusively operated by volunteers, and do not always have the resources to evaluate how well their organizations are doing and to compare their programs with best practices of other Lake Associations.

The one area that we often have questions about (as a Lake Association BoD member) is benchmarking other Lake Associations – Fees, organization, roads etc. This project was pitched last week at a preliminary meeting with the professor and students and generated significant interest.

The project would consist of collecting data about the Haliburton Lake Associations to provide benchmarks for supporting planning, programming, service delivery and engagement. The survey

results could also help to illustrate the difficulties that smaller lake associations have in funding and delivering services to their members.

The data would be collected through surveys and interviews with Lake Associations and could include, but not limited to the following:

- Association Fees
- Other revenues (advertising, sponsorship)
- Governance models
- Road Maintenance & Road Association Fees (\$/km maintained)
- Services and Programs Provided to members
- Fees paid to other umbrella organizations (FOCA, CHA, CEWF etc...)
- Support Organizations
- Interfaces with local governments
- Local Lake Association data:
  - % of property owners as members
  - # of volunteers
  - # of Board of Director (BoD) members
  - % of budget that is Admin vs. Programming

The data would be compiled into a report with data insights and analysis that would be driven by Lake Association needs.

**f) How will the project benefit your organization and/or clients?**

This project will help provide Lake Associations with collective and comparative data from other Associations in Haliburton County and provide benchmarks for planning and programming.

**g) How will the results of this project benefit Haliburton County?**

This research will provide a broad view of how Lake Associations operate in Haliburton County. The project will contribute to understanding the important contribution of Lake Associations in the Haliburton region.

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**D – RESEARCH DESIGN**

**a) What are the proposed research questions to be answered?**

***IF GROUP***

- What are the common governance models among Haliburton County Lake Associations
- How do association fees and other revenue sources (advertising, sponsors, etc.) compare across different Lake Associations?
- What are the umbrella organization fees (FOCA, CHA, CEWF, Etc.) and how do they impact Lake Association budgets?
- What types of services and programs are provided by Lake Associations and their members?
- How do Lake Associations manage road maintenance, and what are the associated fees in maintenance (e.g. \$/km)
- What percentage of the Lake Association budget is allocated to admin vs programming fees, how does this differ across Lake Associations?
- What percentage of property owners on a lake are members of the respective Lake Association?

- How many volunteers and BoD members do each Lake Association have on average?
- How do Lake Associations interface with local government and support organizations?

**IF SINGLE STUDENT**

- What are the governance models and financial structures (fees, other revenues) among the Lake Associations in Haliburton County?
- How do Lake Associations manage road maintenance, and what are the associated costs (\$/km)?
- What types of services and programs are provided by Lake Associations, how do they compare in terms of budget allocation (admin vs. programming)?
- What types of services and programs are provided by Lake Associations, and how do they compare in terms of budget allocation?
- What are the membership and engagement levels of Lake Associations, including the percentage of property owners as members, number of volunteers and BoD members?
- How do Lake Associations interact with umbrella organizations, local governments and other support organizations?

**b) What are your ideas on how these questions might be answered (i.e., survey, literature review, field work etc.)?**

Initial work will include a literature review on how surveys and benchmarking are performed effectively with local community groups including analysis of data and reporting. Planning meetings with lead Lake Associations would be conducted to design the surveys and interview questions. The data would be collected through online surveys and interviews with selected Lake Association board members.

**c) Do you have knowledge of or expertise with these types of research methods? Yes**

**E - SCREENING AND/OR TRAINING**

**a) Do the students require any specific screening or training? (e.g., police checks, confidentiality agreements, CPR, WHMIS):**

Yes  No  Comments: Confidentiality agreement.

*EXAMPLES: Projects involving vulnerable populations may require police checks. Some types of field work may involve WHMIS or other safety related training. Students and hosts working on boats need to understand and follow the U-Links Boat Safety Guidelines.*

**F – RESEARCH ETHICS**

**a) Does the research involve human subjects? (i.e. surveys, interviews)**

Yes  No

*NOTE: If yes, the students may be required to submit an application for ethical review of the research. This process may take several weeks and will need to be taken into consideration when creating project timelines.*

**b) If your project involves collecting human subject data (i.e. interview transcripts), would you like access to that “raw” data at the end of the project, in addition to receiving the “summary” of data in the final report?**

Yes  No

c) Does the organization/employer have policies about research ethics approval?

Yes  No

If yes, please explain:

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**G – PROJECT TASKS AND TIMELINE** *(This section should be completed by the final draft)*

a) **Please outline the major tasks and timelines involved in completing the project.**

*These tasks include important information to be gathered, key stakeholders who should be involved, relevant dates for your organization, and critical meetings for the student to attend. Your Coordinator can help you complete this section.*

**Task:** Set an initial meeting with host organization and students

**Objective:** Familiarize students with project

**Date:** Early September

**Task:** Complete Project Agreement

**Objective:** Finalize responsibilities, logistics, etc. for each party

**Date:** Early September in conjunction with initial meeting and prior to research

**Task:** Survey and Interview Planning – Best Practices

**Objective:** Familiarize Student team with scope and exemplars. Design survey questions and expected responses. Plan for report data visualization.

**Date:** September-December

**Task:** Initial Progress Report

**Objective:** Have students show their work plan and ensure that all parties are satisfied and that the planned research is meeting the needs of the host organizations. Allows for early comments by the host organizations.

**Date:** Late October

**Task:** Survey and Interview Execution – Data Collection

**Objective:** Collect survey and interview data

**Date:** January 2025

**Task:** Analyze Data and Generate Draft Report

**Objective:** Complete data analysis and prepare draft benchmarking report. Make use of Lake Association panel or working group.

**Date:** February 2025

**Task:** Monthly Progress Reports

**Objective:** Students to host monthly meetings to show progress on the project work plan and ensure that targets and milestones are achievable. Allows for dialogue between the host organizations and student team.

**Date:** Monthly

**Task:** Attend a Poster Workshop

**Objective:** Create a Research Poster for the Celebration of Research

**Date:** Several workshops in February

**Task:** Research Poster

**Objective:** Create a Research Poster for the Celebration of Research

**Date:** March 2025

**Task:** Final Draft

**Objective:** Have the final draft completed prior to Celebration of Research to give the host organization enough time to comment on results and make changes where necessary.

**Date:** End of March

**Task:** Host review and feedback on Final Draft

**Objective:** Provide feedback to students on the final draft of the report so that revisions can be made

**Date:** Comments due by Late March

**Task:** Participate in the Celebration of Research

**Objective:** Share research and knowledge with the public; make connections

**Date:** March XX, 2025

**Task:** Final Report

**Objective:** Publication of report and other documents on the U-Links website and Haliburton County Collection database. Hosts will receive final report and other deliverables for final approval prior to publishing.

**Date:** Late March to Early April

**b) Indicate important start and end dates for the project, if applicable:**

September - April

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## H – RESOURCES

*NOTE: All known and needed resources should be listed in this section (e.g. for project coordination, data collection and analysis, software, hardware, photocopying, office supplies, workspace, travel expenses, food and refreshments, training, etc.). Students' travel expenses are reimbursed by U-Links at the end of the term.*

**a) What resources are needed to support the research – financial or otherwise? Please indicate what, if any, resources your organization might be able to provide.**

- Lake Association Contacts
- Survey Tool Subscription

**b) Do you anticipate needing funding or other types of resources? If so, please explain (including any ideas on where resourcing may be obtained):** No

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## I – KNOWLEDGE SHARING

NOTE: Please note the researcher(s) will own the copyright for all work completed as part of his/her involvement, but the lead organization/group/employer may use all project outputs in whole or in part, as it sees fit as long as the researcher(s) is duly credited as the author. If work is completed collaboratively, copyright will be decided by all project participants.

a) How are the project results to be circulated and made useful to the broader community? Please indicate all that applies from the list below:

- Academic article
- Conference/forum
- Manual
- Marketing, promotional, newsletter, outreach materials
- Policy brief
- Report
- Roundtable
- Video
- Workshop/Webinar
- Presentation to the host organizations
- Not sure of the above, let's talk some more

b) If there are special circumstances where results might not be made public, please explain: None

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## J - ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

a) Are you able to credit U-Links when utilizing project results for the development of new programs, funding applications, policy, and other community endeavors? (Suggestions: cite U-Links and display our logo in your organization's printed matter and on your website, credit U-Links when speaking about your project in public and in the press, social media etc.)

- Yes    No    Possibly – N/A

b) Following successful completion of the research project, with results beneficial to the goals of your organization, would you consider a financial contribution to U-Links?

- Yes    No    Possibly – N/A

c) Can we highlight your project on our website and in social media?

- Yes    No

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## K – PROJECT PROMOTION

Please “insert” an image below to help promote your project proposal.

