



Community-Based Research (CBR) Project Proposal Form

U-Links Administration Only

Project Number (automatically generated by CBR database): 6394

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

Recommended Faculty Advisors:

PROJECT TITLE: Identifying Septic-Safe Products: A Chemical and Market Scan in Cottage Country

A – CONTACT INFORMATION

Date: June 10 2025

Contact person: David Rea

Phone: 705 923 3683

Email: lakesteward@glca.ca

B – COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

- a) Organization's name and address:
Gull Lake Cottagers' Association
 - b) Briefly state the organization's purpose and the products or services offered:
Representing the interests of Gull Lake residents with a focus on being Lake Health and the protection and preservation of the lakes natural environment.
 - c) Has an immediate supervisor or board approved this application?
Yes
-

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?**

Appropriate for a single student or a small group.

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

This project aims to identify household and personal care products that are septic-safe and environmentally preferable, emphasizing commonly used products in cottage/residential settings in Haliburton County. The student(s) will analyze environmental and infrastructural impacts of harmful ingredients and offer safer alternatives by chemical profile and by commonly available brand names. A key part of the process will involve walking through typical household plumbing access points (kitchen sink, bath/shower, laundry, toilet, etc.) and assessing real world usage. Final outputs must prioritize clarity and public accessibility.

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

The project will directly inform county wide educational materials to be distributed by the CHA aimed at reducing septic system failures and protecting freshwater resources. It will also support more informed product choices at the household level and may influence what is stocked locally. Deliverables will be presented at the 2026 CHA (Coalition of Haliburton County Property Owners' Associations) Lake Health Meeting, with print ready info sheets to be shared with lake associations and their members.

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

The study contributes to environmental stewardship by reducing the nutrient and chemical loading associated with inappropriate septic system use. It supports long term lake health and drinking water protection in an area highly reliant on septic infrastructure.

h) **How did you hear about U-Links Centre for Community Based Research?**

Word of Mouth Social Media Newsletter News Article Other: _____

D – RESEARCH DESIGN

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

- What commonly used household, cleaning, and personal care products are harmful to septic systems and freshwater quality?
- What specific chemical ingredients (phosphates, microbeads, antibacterial agents) cause harm and what are their brand-name equivalents?
- What brands and product types are considered septic-safe and recommended by experts?
- What is the level of public awareness around septic-safe product use?
- Are safer alternatives readily available at Haliburton County retailers?

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

- Literature Review of academic and industry publications on septic-face and harmful ingredients
- Interviews with septic system professionals, environmental engineers, retailers, etc.
- Household use walkthroughs to define typical use at household access points (e.g. what gets poured down kitchen sinks, laundry tubs, etc.).

- Market Scan – Audit of available products at local stores to determine accessibility of recommended brands.
- Public Survey to assess awareness and product usage patterns among lakefront property owners.

NOTE: The final report must be written in a clear, layperson-friendly format that includes brand name recommendations alongside chemical explanations. A set of “cheat sheets” summarizing key findings will be created and prepared for distribution by CHA.

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

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:

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:

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: *Example – Meet with hosts*

Objective: *Familiarize students with projects*

Date:

Task: *Example – complete detailed project outline/project agreement*

Objective: *Finalize project details, responsibilities, logistics, etc.*

Date:

Task: *Example - receive ethics approval*

Objective: *Meet university ethics requirements for interviews*

Date:

Etc:

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

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.

b) Do you anticipate needing funding or other types of resources? If so, please explain (including any ideas on where resourcing may be obtained):

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
- Presentation to the host organization
- 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:

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

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

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

Yes No

K – PROJECT PROMOTION

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

