Research Assistant for ‘Voices from the periphery’ study

We are seeking to hire an experienced researcher, currently enrolled in a PhD program at the University of Toronto, for the study “Voices from the Periphery: Understanding perspectives on policies that promote health equity within marginalized neighborhoods.” This is a proposed collaborative project being planned between the University of Toronto School of Cities and the Wellesley Institute. Professor Dan Silver from the Department of Sociology will lead the University of Toronto team, and the RA will work closely with him.

The study seeks to increase our understanding of how residents of marginalized neighbourhoods within Toronto’s inner-suburbs define a healthy neighbourhood, what their local priorities are for achieving neighbourhood health, and how they view policies that according to current research findings would improve health equity.

This research will be conducted using a mixed methods approach. Surveys will examine opinions of residents in different neighbourhoods concerning what makes a healthy community, the public policies they prioritize, and their perceptions and experience with political representation and power in the city. Following this a detailed qualitative analysis of the views of the residents from communities that face large degrees of social marginalization will dive deeper into the perspectives and priorities of residents around one specific area of public policy that can improve community health. As part of this we will map out how the values of residents and their experiences with public services shape their views on public policy. In the short term, this research will help institutions committed to health equity to ensure the policies they chose to support and the framing they use to communicate these policies is more in-line with the priorities and perspectives of marginalized communities. Over the long term, the aspiration is that this research can set the basis for deeper analysis of neighbourhood views on public policy and for the creation of more effective tools to increase public engagement in policy development.

Data collected through this project, as well as analyses conducted as part of it, will lead to peer-reviewed publications. The Research Assistant would be welcome to make this a part of their own program of research.

Duties:

The Research Assistant will work especially on the survey component of the project. They will contribute to devising the survey’s methodology and recruitment design, as well as to coordinating and assisting with fielding it and analyzing the results. Depending upon the sampling method adopted, there may be a supervisory component to this role, as the researcher would be responsible for overseeing a team of undergraduate students as they implement the survey in the field.

Qualifications:

The successful applicant must be currently enrolled in a PhD program at the University of Toronto. It would be valuable for the researcher to have a substantive research interest and background in social determinants of health, sociology of health, urban studies, community health, health equity, and/or the public and political uptake of evidence.

The ideal candidate will have experience or training in survey design, sampling methodology, and analysis.
**Duration:**

May 2019 to December 2019, though time commitments during this period will vary. The most intensive phase will be primary data collection, which will occur in Summer 2019.

**Salary:**

$28/hr + 4% vacation + 10% benefits to a maximum of 250 hrs or $7980 over the study period.

**Other:**

If you are interested in the position or would like to learn more about it, please email Dan Silver (Dept. of Sociology, University of Toronto) at dan.silver@utoronto.ca

Applications to be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled.