

RPLC Network Workplan 2019- 2020

1.RPLC Research Network Title:

Rural Governance Network

2.Network Lead

	Lead
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3. Network Members

Full name and title	Institution /Organisation	Current Member in RPLC? Y/N	Post Grad/Early Career Researcher ¹ Y/N	Email
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¹ Post Grad/Early Career Researchers are defined as individuals who have completed their PhD in the last five years

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4. Network Summary

The Rural Governance Network (RGN) aims to facilitate, promote and enable connections for actors engaged in rural governance. This Network supports activities that further understanding and improvement in the formal and informal mechanisms and tools by which rural communities and regions organize themselves for economic, environmental, political and social-cultural objectives. The RGN helps to examine the implications of governance structures, processes, and policies that impact rural communities.

Table 1 indicates the directions and research themes that have been selected to guide the work of this network (see below). Multiple topics are likely to be encompassed within these themes, but not all are listed.

Table 1 –Rural Governance Network Research Themes

Governance and Policy Development Policy development processes and social, political, and psychological components of community engagement and mobilization. This theme also includes community engagement as it relates to governance practice as well as governance structures and collaborations.
Environmental Issues This includes governance components of environmental issues such as rural water and watersheds and climate change adaptation.
Food, Health, and Prosperity Focusing on governance considerations within agro-food systems management, food losses and waste, food security and safety, food policy.

Proposed RGN outputs for 2019-2020 include: webinars, newsletter articles/social media posts, funding for further networking opportunities; and funding for knowledge mobilization (policy briefs, conference presentations).

5. Description of the Network

Topics the proposal seeks to address

Rural Governance with the focus on the research themes described above in Section 4.

Rationale for a network, aims, and objectives

This networks aim is to bring together people interested in rural governance issues, to build on and find synergies with current research and practice.

Process of engagement

The RGN already has a well-established network meeting schedule to ensure network members are getting the full benefit of the network. The RGN also sends out monthly update emails, that includes sections on upcoming conferences and workshops other members will be at. This ensures network members do not miss any opportunity to meet.

An important part of the RGN is the ability to be either a passive or active member. This allows us to know what members we can target for increased networking and knowledge mobilization activities. We would like to continue to develop this network. Proposed methods of engagement include:

- Webinars
- Social Media (RPLC Twitter/Facebook/Instagram)
- Traditional media stories, like OpEds and other routes for increasing public awareness of rural issues
- RPLC Newsletter articles from network members
- Conference presentations
- Meetings with policy officials and networking with those engaged in rural governance (both internal and external to the RGN)

Relevance for the RPLC

We are currently an active team passionate about rural issues. We directly link and contribute to RPLC's mandate to build on the good things that people are already doing through collaboration and network. The RGN aims to add to the research and action regarding rural policy as it applies to governance issues.

6. Strategic fit of the Network with RPLC

RPLC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	PROPOSED NETWORK'S CONTRIBUTIONS
Build a cohort of highly qualified researchers, policy analysts, and community leaders	The RGN would like to continue funding students/early researchers with conference presentations, policy briefs, and literature reviews. Furthermore, we will continue to engage/mentor students on various tasks within the RGN such as webinars, policy briefs, and other knowledge mobilization activities. We will continue as a network to provide such opportunities and other venues for collaboration and learning for high qualified personnel.
Increase opportunities to exchange insights	The RGN will continue to provide opportunities for the exchange of insights through the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinars • RPLC newsletter articles • Funding for members to attend conferences/networking events • Policy briefs through the new RPLC policy brief process • Recruitment of new members • Team meetings • Monthly team e-mails
Add to existing research knowledge	As a network the RGN would like to continue to add to existing knowledge by funding policy briefs and focusing on other innovative methods to reach policy makers and practitioners and make positive policy impacts. Furthermore, it is a strategic aim of the network to mobilize our outputs into further outputs (journal articles, edited volumes, etc.) and outcomes (greater collaborations, expanding of professional networks, etc). These efforts will both add to existing research knowledge and help mobilize knowledge created.
Increase the mobilization of this knowledge	As mentioned, the RGN will be facilitating knowledge mobilization and avenues for influence on policy through: policy briefs, future meetings with senior government, webinars, monthly e-mails, RPLC newsletter articles, RPLC social media, and network meetings. Furthermore, the Policy Fellow position is critical in connecting the network with the policy world. More on this position is described in Section 7 below.
Strengthen networks, relationships, and institutional/community capacities	The RGN has had great success with mobilizing research and knowledge through webinars, conference presentations, policy briefs and literature reviews. We have requested more collaborative methods of dissemination and engagement in every output we have delivered. For example, with all our webinars we encourage diverse panels in terms of both positions (e.g., academics, various levels of government, and non-governmental organizations) and geographical locations. For more information on the ways we have been active we suggest you visit our webpage on the RPLC website: http://rplc-capr.ca/rural-governance-network/

<p>Ensure the integration of Canadians into international research and policy networks</p>	<p>Our previous funding opportunities for literature reviews and policy brief funding gave preference for comparative studies. As a network, we encourage comparative studies from various jurisdictions about rural policy-making. An agenda item we will be including in each meeting of our network meetings is inviting a new network member to speak on a topic of interest. This will open up discussions among the network from different jurisdictional, political, and geographical perspectives.</p>
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7. Outcomes and Outputs

RPLC NETWORK OUTCOMES/OUTPUTS	Description, Audience & Details (150 words max)
<p>Webinar (required)</p>	<p>The RGN will continue to support network members to lead webinars in 2019-2020. Some webinar topics we currently have planned include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian Regional Development profiling the upcoming volume: <i>The Theory, Practice and Potential of Regional Development: The Case of Canada</i> • Handbook of comparative rural policy: Author presentations
<p>Policy Brief (required)</p>	<p>The RGN would like to support network members in the completion of 3 targeted policy briefs per year (@ \$1,000 each) related to at least one of the networks core areas of focus. These policy briefs are intended to identify and capitalize on policy windows using current research from team members. For the remaining two years of the network we will be asking that students submit their already completed policy briefs related to either their thesis research or another rural governance topic. Three policy briefs will be chosen a year and student authors will be given the opportunity to work with experts in the Rural Policy Learning Commons to finalize their policy brief and disseminate the brief widely. The new RPLC policy brief process/template will be used for the winners of the competition.</p>
<p>Annual Report (required)</p>	<p>It will be a strategic aim of the network to mobilize our outputs into further outputs (journal articles, edited volumes, etc.) and outcomes (greater collaborations, expanding of professional networks, etc). The following deliverables, impact and evaluations will be used to assess these outputs and outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections made to rural governance topics and agents in the network and outside of the network • Attendance at relevant meetings and conferences • Asset mapping and cataloguing of connections and deliverables • Story telling by members of the differences made in their work by connecting with the RPLC and Governance Network • Quantitative measures of attendees to webinars, meetings, member list, etc.(captured in the RPLC Network spreadsheet) <p>We will also continue to regularly update the RPLC reporting spreadsheet.</p>
<p>Policy Fellow</p>	<p>The Policy Fellow initiative is designed to recognize policy actors that are making substantial contributions to rural policy, in whatever jurisdiction they may be working. This initiative facilitates the engagement of public policy actors within the RPLC network and among RPLC activities. The typical length of appointment would be 6-12 months and it is anticipated the time commitment of a RPLC Policy</p>

	<p>Fellow would include service to the network 3-4 hours per month. The policy fellow will be allocated \$3,000/year to support efforts made in this role (e.g., travel costs). This is not intended as pay; it is offered to offset costs.</p> <p><i>Expectations</i></p> <p>It is expected the Policy Fellow would work towards advancing the mandate and vision of RPLC. Within the RGN, RPLC Policy Fellows would be appointed to contribute within their expertise and within a theme area listed above. While policy engagement may vary by specialty, potential activities of a Policy Fellow could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connecting with and/or mentoring graduate students interested in governance related topics • justifying new governance research topics • assisting in advancing governance policy • advising on policy briefs • helping to ground policy discussions in the perspectives of rural practitioners • attending and presenting at select conferences • contributing to articles, blog posts, and knowledge mobilization events <p><i>Selection Criteria and Process</i></p> <p>Network members are encouraged to circulate this call for applicants among their networks, as well as identifying and reaching out to potential applicants. The Governance Public Policy Fellow must meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a practitioner or researcher working within one of the RGN research themes: policy development; environmental issues; and food, health, and prosperity. • Have an interest in advancing the discourse on governance with a focus on at least one of the themes. • Candidates must have a strong understanding of the rural context. <p>The RGN can appoint one fellow per fiscal year. Applicants who wish to be considered must provide a two-page description of themselves and their ideas around potential activities they would like to engage with and how they feel they can contribute to the RPLC mandate and vision. The selection committee will be made up of the Network Lead, Network Support and one other RGN.</p>
<p>Increased conference/networking opportunities</p>	<p>The RGN would like to allocate \$3,000 toward funding to attend conferences or other networking events (e.g., workshops, community discussion, etc) as well as in some cases funding for student research travel (e.g., when they will be meeting up with other RPLC members).</p> <p>In the case of a competition, funding requests will be given preference that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align with the RGN mission statement

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes a presentation or poster being presented relevant to rural governance research • Is for an event or conference that provides an opportunity to meet with the RPLC network <p>In particular each year the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation hosts an annual conference. Funding for this conference will be a priority for our network.</p>
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8. Project Timetable and Activities

Date Period	Description of Network Activity		
2019-2020 Fiscal Year			
May 2019	Conference/networking funding deadline		
May 2019	Webinar: Canadian Regional Development		
June 2019	Policy Brief Competition		
Summer 2019	Webinar: ICRPS book		
August 2019	2019-2020 RGN Policy Fellow deadline		
September 2019	Network meeting		
October 2019	Webinar: CRRF 2019 session		
January 2020	Webinar: Topic TBA		
February 2020	Network meeting		
March 2020	Conference/networking funding deadline		
Start date	April 1, 2019	Anticipated end date	March 31, 2020

9. Finance

SSHRC Categories for Budgets	2019-2020
Personnel Expenses <i>(Total A)</i>	
Student salaries and benefits/Stipends	\$3,000
Undergraduate	
Masters (2 policy briefs)	\$2000
Doctorate (1 policy briefs)	\$1,000
Non-student salaries and benefits/Stipends	\$4,000
Postdoctoral (network support)	\$4,000
Other	
Travel and subsistence costs <i>(Total B)</i>	\$6,000
Applicant/Team member(s)	
Canadian travel (conference network funding/policy fellow)	\$4,000
Foreign travel	\$2,000
Students	
Canadian travel	
Foreign travel	
Other expenses <i>(Total C)</i>	

Professional/Technical services (team lead support)	
Supplies	
Non-disposable equipment	
Computer hardware	
Other	
Other expenses (specify)	
Total - All expenses <i>(Totals A+B+C)</i>	\$13,000

Annex A Biography of Lead

Matteo Vittuari is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Food Sciences with the Academic discipline: AGR/01 Agricultural Economics and Rural Appraisal. His work has been involved in evaluating food systems and undertaking economics as well as social and political studies of ways to increase viability and sustainability for rural communities and food entrepreneurs.



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