



GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION – UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESEARCH & ACTION GROUP (Two positions, \$500/each)

The Graduate Student Association (GSA-UW) is committed to fostering a supportive, healthy and safe, reliable environment for all graduate students during their time at UWaterloo, inclusive of affordable housing (see [GSA Political Position](#)). To that end, we are interested in forming a research and action group on affordable housing that can support our advocacy strategies for proper housing in Waterloo Region. It will also support the GSA-UW's advocacy efforts to improve municipal resources and support for students and the UWaterloo's initiatives for housing in the region.

CONTEXT: Currently, there is a great deal of focus on the issue of housing affordability in Canada and, in particular, the rapid increase of living costs related to housing in the Region of Waterloo. To that end, we propose pursuing action (or change) and research (or understanding) at the same time on the issue of housing within the Region of Waterloo and community. We wish to build mitigation strategies and resources to support graduate students, and that will help guide the GSA-UW's advocacy efforts towards improving local community resources. This research should include information regarding the rapid increase in housing costs and shortage in Waterloo Region, overall affordability of current housing for graduate students in Waterloo Region, and an overview of affordable housing initiatives in Waterloo Region. We wish to collect municipal and graduate student community data to support our continuous advocacy initiatives. This research and action group will work within an emergent process that takes shape as the understanding of the problem increases. Drawing on data and recommendations from previous [GSA research reports](#) (municipal housing issues, graduate students on-campus residence experience) and our joint [GSA-WUSA Housing Experience Survey](#), we aim to create the first phase of a multi-pronged advocacy and service initiative to support graduate students.

APPROACH: A GSA-UW research and action group is a collective made up of graduate students and community members rooted in grassroots organizing and initiatives (see [examples of other research and action groups](#)). A primary purpose of this research and action group is to ensure our advocacy efforts are in partnership with already existing grassroots affordable housing initiatives in the Region of Waterloo while in alignment with the GSA-UW mandate. We aim to utilize a [community-based research approach](#) focused on the lived experiences of graduate students at UWaterloo. Taking this approach, we hope to reject the student/non-student binary prevalent in our community, acknowledging that our advocacy efforts must recognize the diverse housing needs of graduate students, many of which overlap with the requirements of non-students. The goals of this research and action group include but are not limited to participation in committees, organizing events, hosting and presenting workshops, outreach to community stakeholders, data collection and presentation, and creation of toolkits, with results geared towards change.

REQUIREMENTS: The following deliverables **must** be completed to the satisfaction of the GSA-UW President and/or Vice President of Administration before issuing compensation:

- Coordination meetings with GSA-UW VP Administration and action group
- Written action report by group (10-15 pages not including bibliography/appendices, single-spaced, 10 Arial)
- PowerPoint presentation to GSA-UW Council (10 – 15 minutes)
- Creation of a mechanism to gather everyday data on graduate student living experiences

- Research and recommendations are required on this topic to assist the GSA-UW with understanding, communicating and advocating on behalf of the current housing situation within the Region of Waterloo.

REPORT FORMAT: The contracted research and action group (2 researchers) is required to produce a report with, but not limited to, the following headings:

1. Purpose
2. Background
3. Key Considerations
4. Conclusions and Recommendations to GSA Council
5. Bibliography
6. Appendices (if necessary)

COMPENSATION: Each incumbent is expected to work around 10 hours and receive \$500 (CAD), paid on its completion, after the report presentation. A new contract can be issued once this current contract is complete to keep the continuous effort of the research and action group.

TIMELINE: The research and action group contract will be issued in January 2022 and completed by April 2022. **PUBLISHING NOTE:** The report and presentation produced as part of this community-based research contract will be the property of the GSA-UW and will be posted on the GSA-UW website. The author(s) will be identified in the final document.

APPLICATIONS: Resumes/CVs, along with a brief statement of interest (2-3 paragraphs), should be sent to gsa-admin@uwaterloo.ca by January 31, 2022, using the subject line "GSA Housing Research and Action Group Application". A team of 2 graduate students will be chosen, and this team will work together.