



Core Lab Team Application

About the Edmonton Shift Lab

A partnership between Edmonton Community Foundation and Skills Society Action Lab, the Edmonton Shift Lab is an action-oriented exploration of the intersection of racism and poverty in our city.

Addressing racism and discrimination continues to be identified as a critical piece of the puzzle in how we reach the big goal of ending poverty in a generation in Edmonton. Building on the work of many local initiatives, the diverse collective making up the Shift Lab is stewarding an exploration to develop potential service, policy, system, and community action prototypes that will reduce racism as it contributes to poverty.

What is a lab?

A social innovation lab draws on the strengths, empathy, creativity, and wisdom of a collective to explore new ways of making progress on a complex challenge. The Shift Lab will have several stages: it begins by making sense of the problem at hand by learning and listening to stories and reflections from the community. These insights help the core lab team narrow the focus of the lab to a specific problem area. Once they have a narrower focus, the team begins to come up with prototypes that might help address the problem area. These prototypes are tested and vetted by the community multiple times: even if an idea doesn't work, they will incorporate the learning into a new prototype. When they find ideas that work, the Shift Lab will help them grow.

Why get involved?

The core lab team is the heart of the Shift Lab and is the driving force behind developing the prototypes that will emerge. You will learn from others, engage in a process that will support a city wide strategy, and promote engagement within a complex issue. Whether this is an area you've been working in professionally for years or an issue you've always wanted to explore, this is an opportunity to dig deep into an urgent issue in our community.

Who are we looking for? We're looking to build a team of stellar leaders and doers. A team with diverse perspectives and who can easily collaborate across disciplines. We need people who are thoughtful and help bring out the best ideas from the team they are working with. We're looking for critical and empathic thinkers, those that strive to understand racism and poverty, those passionate about social change, those with an ability to work in complexity and ambiguity, people willing to take risks and learn from others, and creative thinkers who will make ideas happen. In particular we're looking for human rights activists, service designers, design thinkers, anthropologists, policy designers, story-tellers, writers, action researchers, and community builders.

What is the time commitment? The first phase of the lab will commence at the end of October 2016 and run until February 2017. The core team will meet approximately 2 -3 times per month. We will be flexible for meeting times depending on the composition of the group but might require daytime, evening, or weekend work. Between in-person sessions, the core team will design and engage in community research explorations, ethnographic research, and personal reflections to support the learning journey of the lab. We anticipate an average time commitment of approximately 30 hours per month, with some months being lighter or heavier.

Core Lab Team Honorarium: Each core lab team member will receive financial compensation. This can be used as direct compensation to an individual (for those who are self-employed or underemployed/not working); organizational support to offset work hours (for those coming from an agency/organization); or a donation to a local charity of your choice (for those who do not need compensation). Details will be discussed with successful applicants.

Application Process

Each applicant is required to submit the following by **September 15th 2016:**

1. Resume (or portfolio of projects if the applicant prefers);
2. Letter of intent (see below for more information) 2 pages max;
3. 2 letters of reference. These can be from anyone who you think can speak to your ability to participate in the lab.

Letter of Intent details

Please answer the following questions in your letter, keeping to a maximum of 2 pages:

1. Why are you interested in being a part of the Edmonton Shift Lab?
2. What is your current understanding of racism and poverty and how they intersect, particularly in Edmonton?
3. The Shift Lab is going to be working with complex issues and ambiguity. How do you navigate through complexity and work within uncertainty? Please also give us an example of how you manage difficult questions and conversations.

Please submit questions or completed applications to info@edmontonshiftlab.ca.

Short-listed candidates will be invited to an interview process at the end of September. Successful participants will be announced in early October.