



Civil Society and Social Movement Engagement in Food Systems Governance (2019 – 2024)

- Charles Levkoe (Lakehead University)
- Peter Andrée (Carleton University)
- Trish Ballamingie (Carleton University)
- Amanda Wilson (Saint Paul University)
- Phil Mount (Sustain Ontario)
- Larry McDermott (Plenty Canada)
- Gisèle Yasmeeen (Food Secure Canada)
- Ana Moragues Faus (Cardiff)
- Nick Rose (William Angliss)

This research project aims to identify effective, innovative and collaborative approaches to food governance for building healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems. Moreover, it will develop a deeper understanding of the possible trade-offs, limitations and paradoxes associated with civil society organizations’ (CSO) active participation in multi-stakeholder and collaborative governance arrangements. We ask: *How do food movement actors and organizations engage in food systems governance, while also modeling alternative food futures?* With a focus at the national level in Canada, and in relation to similar efforts in Australia and the UK, the research team will critically analyze the social history, current context and future possibilities for building healthy, equitable and sustainable food systems.

Phase I (Years 1-2) of this research will explore the evolution of food movement engagement in governance over the past 40 years. **Phase II (Years 3-5)** will build on these findings to identify and evaluate key strategies for developing new co-governance opportunities that empower and enable food movements to engage productively with government and other food systems decision makers. We will support our community partners to develop innovative models of engagement and to evaluate and advance new strategies for co-governance to optimize impact.

Objectives

1. *To advance our understanding of how civil society organizations engagement in place-based initiatives has evolved to address food systems governance at the national scale (1977-2018)*
2. *To contribute to the development of innovative strategies led by food movements that facilitate more democratic and integrated food systems governance*
3. *To work alongside efforts in Australia and the UK to develop a comparative analysis of food movements’ engagement in national level food systems governance*
4. *To advance academic-community engagement in food systems work through community-based, participatory research*

Activity	Phase	#1	#2	#3	#4
Social network mapping	I				
Historical analysis of documents and media	I				
Interviews with food movement actors and decision-makers	I & II				
Research planning and coordination meeting	II				
Videos/digital storytelling	I & II				
Governance model case studies	II				



Project Outcomes

Deliverable	Year	Description
Website as KM Platform	1-5	Publicize research, share outputs, host a blog and Twitter feed (to update progress and lessons learned), and link to community partners
Historic Case Study Profiles	1-2	Highlight successes and challenges of CSOs engaging in food systems governance through food movements
Videos	1-4	Audio record in-depth interviews, and capture provocative ideas on video for digital stories (with support from a videographer)
Conference Presentations	1-5	Present at Canadian and international academic and community-based conferences.
Research Meeting	3	Bring together our full research team and case study partners to share learnings and contribute to the directions of the research project
Governance Summit	5	Food Systems Governance Summit will bring together collaborators and policy makers (Requires external funding)
Academic Publications	2-5	Articles will be made open access and translated into plain language executive summaries and reports for further dissemination
Book	5	Co-authored manuscript chronicling the history and future directions of Canada's food movements engagement in food systems governance

Student Support

Student	Year	Research Focus
PhD	1-4	project design; document/analyze food movements; case study research
PhD	2-5	document/analyze Canada's food movements; case studies; international comparisons
Masters	3-4	case study focus
Masters	3-4	audio-visual outputs
Masters	4-5	case study focus
Masters	4-5	case study focus
Other	1-5	literature reviews; transcriptions; audio/video interviews; project support

This research is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The total amount awarded was \$244,910 over five years.



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

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