The Centre for Public Involvement, through its partner organizations, provides leadership in understanding and applying innovative public involvement ideas, practices, and technologies for citizen participation and deliberation.

FOUNDING PARTNERS
City of Edmonton
University of Alberta

EXECUTIVE SPONSORS
Simon Farbrother, City of Edmonton
Dr. Katy Campbell, University of Alberta

MANAGEMENT BOARD
Dr. Marco Adria, University of Alberta
Dr. Al Cook, University of Alberta
Jason Darrah, City of Edmonton
Dr. Heather McRae, University of Alberta
Michael Phair, University of Alberta
Cathy Raftis, City of Edmonton

STAFF
Fiona Cavanagh -- Executive Director
Dr. Kalina Kamenova -- Interim Research Director and Postdoctoral Fellow
Adèle Wakaruk -- Program and Administrative Assistant
MESSAGE FROM CO-CHAIRS

It has been an exciting year for the Centre for Public Involvement (CPI), a partnership between the City of Edmonton and University of Alberta. In only its first year of operations, the advancement of practice and scholarship of public involvement is being realized. Through three significant deliberative citizen engagement projects, CPI provided new and innovative opportunities for citizens to be involved in policy decisions.

Over the past year, 133 randomly selected citizens collectively contributed approximately 4500 hours to political and civic engagement. They participated in learning and collective problem solving about complex issues, through an examination of values, trade-offs, and priorities. Their work produced well developed recommendations to support decisions and decision makers in their critical role.

The CPI also implemented new models of citizen recruitment; developed the capacities of citizens; initiated learning about research-practice partnerships; increased knowledge of citizen deliberation, and examined the relationship between citizens and experts in technical issues. Efforts have also been focused on critique and reflection of CPI work, and over the next year there will be further dissemination of lessons learned.

While cynicism and challenges to civic involvement still arise, CPI projects give testament to the fact that citizens are willing to be engaged in political issues. This engagement requires the creation of well designed, intentional opportunities, that are rigorously researched and evaluated. It also requires strong collaborations between scholars, practitioners, and policy makers. Finally it requires innovation, creativity, and commitment to involve citizens in decision making.

In all CPI projects, research is at the core, and scholars from across Canada and beyond contributed their expertise to push boundaries, and support the collection of evidence to better understand public involvement, including examining the impacts on policy, and the relationships between citizens and policy makers. Graduate and undergraduate students from the University of Alberta had hands-on opportunities, to learn from City administrators, increase their abilities as scholars, and to contribute to the field of public involvement.

We would like to acknowledge the work of CPI staff and members of the Management Board who have brought to fruition the exciting work of this past year. We would also like to thank all of the CPI collaborators who have provided skills, knowledge, time, and expertise.

Finally, the work of this past year would not have been possible without the contribution and partnership of the founding partners whose vision has made the CPI a reality. We look forward to an official CPI launch in the near future, and continued advancement of learning and practice.

SINCERELY
Cathy Raftis and Marco Adria (Co-Chairs, CPI Management Board)

1Food Panel - 60 citizens at 30 hrs each; Energy Panel - 56 citizens at 42 hours each; Citizen Jury - 17 citizens at 22 hrs each
IMPACTS

• The affiliation proposal was developed and approved by founding partners.

• **133** randomly selected Edmonton citizens participated in three CPI projects and contributed over **4,500** hours to support municipal policy making.

• **17** graduate and **8** undergraduate students had hands-on learning and research opportunities through participation in CPI projects.

• **11** researchers from the University of Alberta and beyond and **8** senior administrators from the City of Edmonton contributed time and expertise to advance public involvement.

• Two innovative models of public involvement were advanced for further use, including an evolved model of the **Citizens Panel**, and a **Citizens Jury**.

• A new CPI website was launched and three short videos were made about CPI citizen involvement models, in partnership with Avatar Media.

• Two comprehensive topic guides were created: **Issue Guide on Internet Voting in Canada**, and a **Citizen Handbook on Energy and Climate Challenges** (in partnership with Alberta Climate Dialogue).

• CPI presented at two International Conferences in the UK and Italy and co-chaired the first North American Conference on Public Participation.

• CPI Expert Advisory Committee was established with **10** scholars and practitioners from Alberta and across Canada.
After spending over 25 hours talking about food, Jasmin Tremblay wasn’t ready to give into fatigue. She was as ready to share her views - and to hear those of others- as she was when she began. Jasmin, a participant in the Citizens Panel on Food and Agriculture, held in the spring of 2012, said: “Sometimes you’re voting for something that everyone else isn’t. But it’s important to remember that this isn’t just about you. This is about Edmonton and everyone’s views.”

The Citizens’ Panel is the second of its kind undertaken in Alberta, implemented collaboratively by municipal administrators, researchers, and public involvement practitioners. Sixty citizens met for six half day sessions over two months, and built relationships with one another and with the City. Small group discussions were combined with plenary work and voting technology to establish a set of detailed, comprehensive recommendations. Participants were recruited through the use of random telephone calling and targeted outreach. A range of demographic criteria and the City wards were used as recruitment targets.

The purpose of the Panel was to identify, affirm, and recommend strategies for food and agriculture planning in Edmonton. It provides an example of the value of well-designed citizen deliberation and the benefits of this for municipal decision making.

Research for this project, led by Dr. Marco Adria, compares changes in opinion before and after the panel process. The second dimension of comparison involves examining changes in opinion between members of the Citizens Panel considered as a group, when compared with changes in opinion of larger population of citizens in Edmonton. Research also explores impact on policy outcomes.

Project Partner: City of Edmonton, Sustainable Development

2 The Citizens Panel on the Budget was the first of its kind undertaken in Alberta by a municipal government. The panel was a pilot project jointly implemented by the City of Edmonton and University of Alberta. The establishment of the Centre was one of the outcomes of the project.
In late November, seventeen Edmonton citizens met for the first time, at City Hall, to take part in the Citizens Jury on Internet Voting. The question charged to jurors was: “should the City of Edmonton adopt internet voting as an alternative method of voting for use in future municipal elections?” Scholars, industry professionals, and municipal administrators from across Canada convened to provide expert evidence to the jurors so they could grapple with this important and controversial issue. Jurors critically evaluated information from expert witnesses and spent many hours discussing and deliberating before reaching their verdict and final recommendations. The participants were randomly recruited to establish a demographically and attitudinally diverse group with a range of views on the topic. The Citizens Jury is an example of direct involvement of citizens in policy making. In the Edmonton Citizens Jury, City administrators committed to bringing the jury’s verdict and recommendations directly to decision makers. This unique public engagement process, modeled by CPI, is the first of its kind, connected to a policy outcome, in Canada. In addition to the jury, the public was invited to provide their views and opinions about internet voting through an online survey and citizen roundtables.

The research associated with this project, led by Dr. Kalina Kamenova and Dr. Marco Adria, University of Alberta, is the assessment of the implications for potential use of the Citizens Jury method for other municipal government policy questions.

**Project Partners:** City of Edmonton, Office of the City Clerk

---

3 In Canada, Citizens Juries have previously been deployed but process outcomes were not directly linked to decision-making as in the Citizen Jury on Internet Voting. See two examples of previous use of Citizens Juries.


Citizens Grapple with Complex Energy and Climate Challenges

Members of the Citizens’ Panel on Edmonton’s Energy and Climate Challenges demonstrated remarkable effort and ambition as they worked intensely over two months and gave forty-two hours each to explore, through experiential learning methods and expert presentations, the topic of energy and climate in Edmonton. This multi-faceted project, was undertaken in partnership with Alberta Climate Dialogue (ABCD) and the City of Edmonton, Office of Environment.

The fifty-six Edmontonians who participated, were very diverse and were recruited through a rigorous selection process to ensure that “Edmonton was in the room”, both demographically and attitudinally. Some participants were skeptical about whether their input would make a difference while others questioned climate science. Scott Hannah, one of the panelists comments: “I came in, and there were a few others who were like-minded, in that we didn’t believe in the science of climate change. But in the process, we found that one of the few things we did agree on is that, this doesn’t mean the city shouldn’t move forward with being smart about energy.”

The panel final report, written by participants, demonstrates the ability of a diverse group of citizens to reach agreement after learning, small group deliberation, and anonymous voting.

The Citizens’ Panel is an innovative and effective model for citizens to examine complex policy issues, particularly where there are broad and polarized public views.

Research for this project led by Dr. David Kahane and collaborators from ABCD, involves the examination of all aspects of the process. This includes, assessing change in participant opinions through the panel, impact on policy, larger political and social context, and the impact on engagement of participants over time and other key topics.

Project Partners: Alberta Climate Dialogue and City of Edmonton, Office of Environment

I personally believe that the participation of citizens in Citizens Panels is crucial to really coming to grips with the broader issues (spanning many departments), that the City must address over the coming years. The Centre for Public Involvement provides a crucial opportunity for citizen engagement. Its research component supports whatever topic that is being explored. ...And, most exciting is the support given to dedicated panelists to undertake actions to ensure that they remain involved with the issue going forward.

Anita Moore, Citizen Panelist and Facilitator

"
Examining the Civic and Political Involvement of Youth

The disengagement of young people from civic and political arenas has the attention of many academics and policy makers in Canada and around the world. This topic is being explored by Edmonton’s NextGen who are leading the development of a strategy to increase engagement of 18-40 year old Edmontonians.

CPI partnered with Edmonton’s NextGen to complete an extensive literature review and report on youth civic and political engagement. The literature review examined key scholarly sources on the topic and also included interviews with other municipalities and civil society groups about youth engagement. CPI created two reports for this project including a full research report and a shortened report for non-academic audiences that offers eight ideas about youth involvement and potential strategies and opportunities for further research, including case studies of best practices from across Canada.

CPI would like to undertake a symposium on youth and democracy to develop further ideas between scholars, administrators, policy makers, and youth.

*Project Partners:* Edmonton’s NextGen

“The Centre for Public Involvement makes an exciting and novel contribution to the well-being of public engagement in civic and political life in Edmonton. CPI provides an important space for dialogue and exchange of ideas around core concerns in any community. Through my research at CPI, I began to discover how unique the Centre is in the context of Canadian municipalities.

*Melody Viczko, Ph. D candidate, University of Alberta and CPI Graduate researcher*
The Centre for Public Involvement is continuing and improving upon Faculty of Extension leadership in public policy education and scholarship. Particularly commendable are the Centre’s rigorous collaborative research efforts that focus on democratic deliberation of policy questions; these efforts are delightfully elegant in light of the Faculty’s core commitment to university-community engagement.

E.C LeSage - Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Extension and CPI Collaborator
Graduate Students

Eric Abrahams  M. Arts Student, University of Alberta
Daria Soltysiak  M. Arts Student, University of Alberta
Ping Zou  M. Business Administration Student, University of Alberta
Julianna Sookraaj  M. Public Health Student, University of Alberta
Jennifer Braun  M. Science Student, University of Alberta
Lyndsay Hobbs  M. Science Student, University of Alberta
Robyn Paddison  M. Science Student, University of Alberta
Nermin Allam  Ph. D Candidate Political Science, University of Alberta
Deborah Schrader  Ph.D Candidate Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta
Melody Viczko  Ph.D Candidate Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta
Mohsen Hajiloo  Ph.D Candidate Philosophy, University of Alberta
Shadi Mehrabi  Ph.D Candidate Philosophy, University of Alberta
Miriam Sekandi  Ph.D Candidate Philosophy, University of Alberta
Kristjana Loptson  Ph.D Candidate Political Science, University of Alberta
Geoff Salomons  Ph.D Candidate Political Science, University of Alberta
Andres Torres  Ph.D Candidate Political Science, University of Alberta
Tolga Karabulut  Visiting Graduate Student, University of Alberta

Undergraduate Students

Gaganpreet Gill  University of Alberta
Alexandra Joseph  University of Alberta
Isabelle Lam  University of Alberta
Denis Laplante  University of Alberta
David Manunthg  University of Alberta
Sarim Mirza  University of Alberta
Meng Yang Bai  University of Alberta
Helaina Zyp  University of Alberta

For detailed reports, research publications, media coverage and other resources please explore [www.centreforpublicinvolvement.com](http://www.centreforpublicinvolvement.com)

Follow us on Twitter: Centre4Involve
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

For the period April 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013

Total Revenues $471,083

- Partner Funds $300,000 (64%)
- Research Projects $165,083 (35%)
- Project Management $6,000 (1%)

Total Expenditures $453,686

- Research Projects $354,197 (78%)
- Facility Rental $15,780 (4%)
- Administration $38,152 (8%)
- Knowledge Dissemination & Learning $29,101 (6%)
- Marketing & Communications $16,455 (4%)

Partner Funds $300,000

Project Management $6,000