



CLEO

Community Legal Education Ontario
Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario

REQUEST FOR SERVICES: RESEARCHER

CLEO (Community Legal Education Ontario/ Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario) is seeking the services of an experienced community-based researcher to help us identify the legal help learning needs of community workers who serve racialized communities, as well as current gaps in training and support. This will involve helping establish and working collaboratively with an advisory group, leading the development and implementation of a needs assessment survey, conducting focused interviews, and preparing a final report of key findings and recommendations. The researcher would be responsible for contributing their expertise in research design, quantitative and qualitative data collection, data analysis and report writing to this project.

CLEO is an independent, community-based, public legal education and information (PLEI) organization dedicated to serving communities and people in Ontario, particularly those who face barriers to participating in the justice system. For 45 years, CLEO has built a strong reputation for producing and disseminating high quality, effective public legal education and information in digital, print, and other formats. As a community legal clinic and part of Ontario's legal aid system, CLEO works in partnership with other legal clinics and community organizations across the province.

CLEO Connect (www.cleoconnect.ca) is the branch of CLEO that focuses on providing training, information and resources for community workers who assist people facing legal issues. We recognize that a “one size fits all” approach to training may not be sufficient to address the unique needs of diverse communities facing barriers to access to justice. Given the impacts of systemic racism on access to justice, one of our future goals is to develop and implement a training program for community workers serving racialized communities, in order to build their capacity to support clients with their law related problems. To do this, we are seeking a researcher who can help us identify the legal help learning needs of community workers, including existing gaps in training and support, as well as possible ways to address these needs in order to help inform our future training program.

Services would be provided on a fee-for-service, freelance basis.

Services would include:

- **Supporting with the establishment and consultation of advisory group (approximately 20-30 hours):** The researcher will support CLEO Connect staff to establish and consult with an advisory group of six to ten community leaders/workers. The researcher will: provide input to CLEO Connect Staff on potential advisory group members and recruitment materials; prepare relevant documents for advisory group review; work with CLEO to identify questions/tasks for the group; and attend advisory group meetings. The advisory group will meet up to four times throughout the project and provide feedback on relevant project documents as well as provide input on research approach, participant recruitment, and report recommendations.

- **Needs assessment survey (approximately 25-30 hours):** The needs assessment survey will allow us to determine legal help learning needs of community workers who assist people with law-related issues, and existing gaps in training and support. The researcher will use their experience in survey design to create a set of survey questions for dissemination to community workers serving racialized communities, seeking and incorporating input from the advisory group and CLEO staff. The researcher will also establish and implement an outreach strategy and contact list to recruit participants, including existing CLEO contacts as well as new potential partners.
- **Conducting focused key interviews (approximately 30-35 hours):** Focused interviews conducted by phone or virtual meeting software will explore the survey research questions in greater depth and provide community workers with an opportunity to comment on any important areas not addressed by the survey. Based on survey results, the researcher will use their experience in research design to create a set of questions for a series of focused interviews, inviting input from the advisory group and CLEO staff. The researcher will then recruit 10-15 interview participants and conduct interviews.
- **Report of key findings and recommendations (approximately 40-50 hours):** Following data collection through the survey and interviews, the researcher will use their data analysis expertise to prepare a draft report of the findings and present this to the advisory group for discussion on key salient points to highlight in the final report. The researcher will then prepare a 10-15 page final report providing a summary of the findings and recommendations to address legal help learning needs and existing gaps in training and support for community workers who serve racialized communities.

We are seeking the following qualifications and experience:

- Excellent research, writing, and communication skills
- Experience with community-based quantitative and qualitative research, including research design, participant recruitment and data collection, data analysis, and reporting
- Experience working with racialized communities and applying an anti-racist, anti-oppression and intersectional framework to research
- Experience with remote data collection
- Advanced knowledge of statistics and research study design
- Experience writing research summary reports and recommendations
- Proficiency using Microsoft Office and data collection software such as survey software
- Familiarity with the non-profit sector would be considered an asset
- Familiarity with the justice sector or legal education would be considered an asset
- A background in education, law, or social services would be an asset

Interested researchers are requested to forward their proposals to **helen.anderson@cleo.on.ca** by **Monday June 5, 2023**. Please include QUOTE FOR RESEARCH SERVICES in the subject line. The proposal should comprise a résumé and covering letter setting out qualifications, experience, proposed budget and timeline, along with a description of how their experience meets the above requirements. For more information about CLEO, please visit our websites at www.cleo.on.ca and www.cleoconnect.ca.



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TERMS OF REFERENCE

Research on the Legal Help Learning Needs of Community Workers Supporting Racialized Communities

Preamble/context

The experience of racialized communities in the Canadian justice system is one that is complex and affected by a multitude of factors. Systemic racism and intersecting forms of oppression are significant factors which have shaped and continue to shape people's experiences accessing justice. Racialized communities are overrepresented and underserved within the justice system and disproportionately experience barriers when attempting to access justice, including discrimination as well as a lack of access to culturally safe and affordable legal help. Given these barriers, many may turn to a trusted community worker or community service for help with legal issues before seeking paid professional legal services.

Often, trusted helpers or leaders in racialized communities are called on to provide information, guidance, and supports that can be different in kind and in depth from other communities. Community workers are not only vital in navigating various legal issues, but they are well placed and have the necessary knowledge and skills to respond to inquiries within their discipline on a regular basis. Research confirms that community workers and other trusted community helpers often "go above and beyond," however, they are also aware of the limits of their expertise and know when to recommend others who can help their clients. The nature of the law-related services provided by community workers spans a spectrum, which in turn affects the nature of the knowledge and skills, and related training they need.

Our future goal is to develop and implement a training program for community workers serving racialized communities, in order to build their capacity to support people to address law-related problems. To do this, we are seeking a community-based researcher who can help us conduct a needs assessment to identify legal help learning needs as well as existing gaps in training and support for community workers who assist racialized clients with legal problems.

This will involve helping establish and working collaboratively with an advisory group, leading the development and implementation of a needs assessment survey, conducting focused interviews, and preparing a final report of key findings and recommendations. The researcher would be responsible for contributing their expertise in research design, quantitative and qualitative data collection, data analysis and report writing to this project. The findings and recommendations from the needs assessment will be used to inform the planning and implementation of our future training program.

This project will apply a framework that recognizes the experience of intersecting systems of racism and other forms of oppression. We will seek the advice and support of organizations with whom CLEO has partnered in the past, as well as expand our outreach efforts to include other organizations serving racialized communities, particularly those who work with communities that experience high levels of low income.

Research Questions, Methodology and Products

This project will involve four main components:

1. Supporting the establishment and consultation of an advisory group
2. Conducting a needs assessment survey
3. Conducting needs assessment interviews
4. Preparing a report of key findings and recommendations

1.Supporting with the establishment and consultation of advisory group (approximately 20-30 hours): The researcher will support CLEO Connect staff to establish and consult with an advisory group of six to ten community leaders/workers. The researcher will: provide input to CLEO Connect Staff on potential advisory group members and recruitment materials; prepare relevant documents for advisory group review; work with CLEO to identify questions/tasks for the group; and attend advisory group meetings. The advisory group will meet up to four times throughout the project and provide feedback on relevant project documents as well as provide input on research approach, participant recruitment, and report recommendations.

Some questions for the advisory group might include:

- What important factors should we consider as we begin this project?
- Which organizations should we engage in the research?
- How should we approach outreach?
- What survey and interview questions should we include?
- What are the key lessons learned from the data?
- What recommendations can we draw from the data?

2. Needs assessment survey: (approximately 25-30 hours):

The needs assessment survey will allow us to determine legal help learning needs of community workers who assist people with law-related issues, as well as identify existing gaps in training and support. The researcher will use their experience in survey design to create a set of survey questions for dissemination to community workers serving racialized communities, seeking and incorporating input from the advisory group and CLEO staff. The researcher will also establish and implement an outreach strategy and contact list to recruit participants, including existing CLEO contacts as well as new potential partners.

Research may explore the following questions, or other questions as identified by the researcher and advisory committee:

- What are the main areas in which community workers struggle when trying to assist community members with law-related problems?
- Do they have any difficulty navigating existing information and supports?
- What knowledge/info/skills would be helpful to make their roles easier?
- What legal topics would they like to learn more about?
- Are there any gaps in the training or support they receive?

- Would additional training be helpful? If so, what would an effective training program look like?
- Have they attended CLEO events (webinars, workshops) or accessed CLEO resources (Steps, Guided Pathways, YLR) before? If so, how useful were these? Were there any limitations on their applicability to their clients? What might make them more useful?
- What other supports from CLEO would be helpful?
- Are there considerations unique to their community that a training program would need to take into account? For example, are there particular barriers that their clients face in accessing justice?

3. Conducting needs assessment interviews: (approximately 30-35 hours)

Focused interviews conducted by phone or virtual meeting software will explore the survey research questions in greater depth and provide community workers with an opportunity to comment on any important areas not addressed by the survey. Based on survey results, the researcher will use their experience in research design to create a set of questions for a series of focused interviews, inviting input from the advisory group and CLEO staff. The researcher will then recruit 10-15 interview participants and conduct interviews.

4. Report of key findings and recommendations: (approximately 40-50 hours)

Following data collection through the survey and interviews, the researcher will use their data analysis expertise to prepare a draft report of the findings and present this to the advisory group for discussion on key salient points to highlight in the final report. The researcher will then prepare a 10-15 page report providing a summary of the findings and recommendations to address legal help learning needs and existing gaps in training and support for community workers who serve racialized communities.

Key dates and milestones:

1. Advisory group formed: (July-August)
 - A panel of 6-10 community workers is formed and the first meeting is scheduled
2. Survey launched: (September-November)
 - Questions and outreach strategy are finalized, survey is sent to relevant community workers/organizations
3. Interviews conducted: (September-November)
 - Questions and outreach strategy are finalized, 10-15 interviews are completed
4. Report submitted: (December 2023)
 - A 10-15 page report presenting and analyzing findings as well as providing recommendations is completed