1. Summary

One significant segment of Canada’s unhoused population is families with children. Within this group are many immigrant and refugee families. Homelessness and shelter life impose great stress on mothers and their children. The children may experience difficulties in school, and express problems in their behaviour and social skills.

There have been numerous studies of homelessness in Canada, but relatively little research has been done on homeless immigrants and refugees. As a nation that welcomes so many immigrants, most of whom settle in large cities, we need to understand the problems that produce family homelessness in general, and homelessness among immigrant and refugee families in particular. A better understanding of the way in which discrimination contributes to homelessness among immigrant and refugee families with children can improve public policy and programs for immigrant families, thereby reducing family homelessness.

The proposed study will focus on Toronto, where almost half of all immigrants settle after their arrival in Canada. Toronto is also one of the highest-cost housing markets in Canada and the city where newcomers face the greatest affordability problems, and
therefore the greatest risk of homelessness. Our approach will look at the housing careers of immigrant families over time, since changes in residence are often linked to important events such as changes in household composition or employment status. Major life events often lead to a change in residence, or in more dramatic cases, entry to or exit from homelessness. Barriers in the employment and housing markets, especially discriminatory practices, may accelerate this process.

In particular, we will try to answer four sets of questions:

1. How and why do some immigrant and refugee families become homeless in Toronto and what role, if any, does discrimination and racism play in the process?
2. How long do immigrant families remain homeless, how many spells of homelessness do they experience, and how they cope when they are homeless?
3. How do immigrant families exit homelessness, what kind of housing do they find, and what factors or services are most helpful in ending the homelessness of immigrant families?
4. What policies and programs most effectively and efficiently (a) prevent families from becoming homeless, (b) help homeless families out of their homeless status more quickly, (c) address issues relating to discrimination and racism to the extent these pay a role in producing, maintaining, and ending family homelessness?

Our approach involves interviewing 100 families four times during the course of a year. The sample will include two groups of 50 homeless families: (1) racialized homeless immigrant and refugee families, and (2) white, non-aboriginal, native-born homeless families. The first interview with each family will be retrospective and will focus on their housing pathways and life experiences up to that time. The other three interviews will be shorter and will investigate changes in their circumstances since the previous interview. We will use a semi-structured questionnaire to obtain information about housing careers and other life experiences, including changes in household structure and employment status. We will also ask about attitudes towards, and experiences with, discrimination, and support services used. In each of the two groups of 50, we will select 10 to 20 people for an additional, in-depth, qualitative long interview.

2. Detailed Description

One significant segment of Canada’s unhoused population is families with children. It is also one of the least visible aspects of the homelessness crisis, because families “double up with friends and family, or take refuge in a hostel, and are therefore out of sight” (City of Toronto, Mayor’s Homelessness Action Task Force, 1999, p.49). Within this group are many immigrant families.

Many different problems and population groups are lumped together in the word “homelessness.” While homelessness is not just a housing problem, it is always a housing problem (Hulchanski, 2002; Wright et al. 1998). In our conceptual framing of
the issue, we argue that people are at risk of homelessness if they have a serious problem in any one or more of three areas of their “household economy”: housing stability, income adequacy, and social supports. As Springer (2000) and Hulchanski (2000) note, homelessness is a term with many possible meanings. The United Nations, in its data collection and research efforts, now uses the term “houselessness.” Houselessness – a much clearer, more straightforward term than homelessness – refers to the one crucial factor all homeless people have in common. There are three identifiable states of houselessness: absolute (people sleeping outdoors or in shelters); concealed (people temporarily housed with friends); at risk (people at grave risk of losing their housing).

As a nation that welcomes so many immigrants and refugees, most of whom settle in higher-cost big-city environments, and nearly half of whom move into the Greater Toronto Area, there is a need to understand the problems that produce family homelessness in general and homelessness among immigrant and refugee families in particular. Skin colour and ethnicity do matter in access to employment and housing markets in Canada. A better understanding of the role played by discrimination in homelessness among immigrant and refugee families with children can improve public policy and programs for immigrant families, thereby reducing family homelessness.

Why Immigrants and Refugees?

There have been numerous studies of homelessness in Canada, but relatively little research on homeless immigrants and refugees. However, the City of Toronto Housing Department’s 1992 Refugee Housing Study and the 1999 Report of the Mayor’s Homelessness Action Task Force, Taking Responsibility for Homelessness: An Action Plan for Toronto noted that immigrants and refugees face particular challenges and require special strategies in homelessness prevention.

Since the late 1990s a few research studies, primarily in Toronto, have highlighted the housing situation of immigrants and refugees who live on the margins of society (e.g., Access Alliance Community Health Centre, 2003; Donahue, Este and Miller, 2003; Zine, 2002). Other studies have identified the difficulties that immigrants and refugees face in acquiring good-quality, affordable housing, both in Toronto (e.g., Murdie and Teixeira, 2003; Murdie, 2003a; Owusu, 1999; Novac, 1999) and elsewhere in Canada (e.g., Danso and Grant, 2000; Miraftab, 2000). The precarious housing situation of many immigrants and refugees was the focus of a special forum, “Living on the Ragged Edges: Immigrants, Refugees and Homelessness in Toronto,” held in March 2003 (Murdie, 2003b).

These studies indicate that many immigrants and refugees face serious barriers in securing and maintaining permanent housing. The major problems include their marginalized economic status, a limited supply of good-quality low-cost rental housing, and discrimination in housing opportunities, especially for racialized minorities.
Why Toronto?

Toronto is Canada’s major gateway city for immigrants and refugees. In 2002, Canada received about 230,000 immigrants (including sponsored refugees). Almost half were destined for Toronto (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2003a, p. 7). Toronto is also Canada’s major reception centre for refugee claimants. In 2002, about 30% or 35,500 of Canada’s refugee claimants (those awaiting a decision on their claim) lived in Toronto (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2003b).

Toronto is also one of the highest-cost housing markets in Canada and the city where newcomers face the greatest affordability problems. The situation is particularly difficult for those who rent. According to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), 82% of immigrant tenants who arrived in Toronto between 1991 and 1996 were in core housing need, compared to 18% of immigrant homeowners who arrived during the same period. Immigrants also tend to have higher shelter-to-income ratios than non-immigrants (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2003). These findings have been confirmed by interviews with immigrants and refugees (e.g., Access Alliance Community Health Centre, 2003; Murdie, 2003; Zine, 2003).

Why Families?

Springer et al. (1998) analysed the City of Toronto database on shelter users and determined that from 1988 to 1996 there were increases in average family size, the proportion of families to other sub-groups, and the total number of shelter beds occupied by families. Families tended to be transitional users of shelters, usually staying for uninterrupted periods of two weeks to six months. About 10% of families were chronically homeless (i.e., had shelter stays of one year or more), partly because of the difficulty of obtaining subsidized housing. Most of the families were one-parent families, usually headed by women. The number of families using shelters has declined recently. However, families as a percentage of all shelter users were still considerably higher in 2002 (14.9%) than in 1990 (9.1%). Also, the number of two-parent families with children using the shelter system nearly tripled between 1990 and 2002, and the number of one-parent families with children increased by 50% (City of Toronto, 2003, p. 40).

There have been no rigorous studies on homeless families or children in Canada, but several U.S. studies have found that children in homeless families experience greater behavioural problems and interruptions in schooling, with decreased attendance and lower performance levels. A small-scale qualitative study with 20 homeless mothers in Toronto found that homelessness and shelter life imposed great stress on mothers and their children and that children commonly faced difficulties adjusting to shelter life (Anstett, 1997). A survey of staff at 112 shelters serving homeless families suggests that difficulties in school achievement, behaviour, and social skills were common (CMHC, 2000).
**Why Discrimination?**

Canada prides itself, quite rightly, on being a tolerant society in which people from many different racial, ethnic, religious, linguistic, and national backgrounds can live together amicably in a “mosaic.” Nevertheless, members of some groups often feel discriminated against in personal, economic, political, and social spheres (for a literature review see Novac et al., 2002).

A national Gallup poll in the early 1990s showed one in four Canadians believed they had been discriminated against on some basis. The same question posed a decade earlier found one in five Canadians felt discriminated against. Thus the perception of discrimination in the general Canadian population is increasing, and probably will continue to do so as individuals’ willingness to tolerate inequity declines or disappears.

The perception of discrimination is also more evident in some ethnic and racial groups than others. Dion and Kawakami (1996) analyzed survey data from telephone interviews conducted in the early 1990s with more than 900 respondents in Toronto, male and female, representing six ethnic groups, including visible minorities such as Blacks, South Asians, and Chinese, as well as white ethnic minorities, including Italians, Jews, and Portuguese. “Visible” or racialized minorities perceived considerably more discrimination directed towards them than did white minorities. Black respondents reported the highest levels of discrimination in finding employment. A decade earlier, however, South Asians in Toronto were most prone to see their group as being discriminated against, showing that perceptions of discrimination are dynamic and reflect changing patterns of immigration and racial bias in Canada.

**Perceived discrimination in housing.** The Housing New Canadians project, conducted by the present applicants from the mid-1990s to the present, investigated and documented perceptions of discrimination among recent immigrants in finding rental housing after arriving in Toronto (Dion, 2001). Respondents from four immigrant communities – Jamaicans, Poles, Salvadorans, and Somalis – indicated how much housing discrimination they had personally experienced and how much discrimination they perceived to have been directed against their group. For both personal and group discrimination, Somalis perceived the most discrimination in housing and Poles the least, with Salvadorans and Jamaicans between these two groups. Gender was also an important dimension: women in all four groups perceived more personal discrimination in housing than men, with Somali women perceiving especially high levels of personal housing discrimination.

**Perceived discrimination as a social stressor.** Considerable evidence from Canada, the United States, and European countries suggests that perceived discrimination is a social stressor associated with psychological symptoms such as depression and anxiety, adverse health conditions such as hypertension, and behavioural health risks such as smoking. Thus, surveying and documenting the extent of perceived discrimination in vulnerable groups is important from the perspectives of public health as well as social justice.
Pathways of Homelessness

Many studies of the general homeless population have found that the typical pattern of homelessness is *residential instability* – that is, the majority of the homeless population experience temporary but recurrent spells of homelessness (see literature reviews by Hulchanski *et al.*, 2001). Consequently, this study will focus on pathways to, within, and out of homelessness. The conceptual framework uses what many researchers refer to as the *housing career* (e.g., Murdie, 2002; Özuekren and van Kempen, 2002). This approach attempts to link changes in residence with life course events such as changes in household composition and employment status. Such events often lead to a change in residence, or in more dramatic cases, entry to or exit from homelessness. Barriers in the employment and housing markets, especially discriminatory practices, may accelerate this process.

3. Research Questions

This project seeks to answer four sets of questions.

1. **Pathways to Homelessness**: How and why do some immigrant and refugee families become homeless in Toronto? What were their housing and employment experiences before becoming homeless? Did they have stable housing and/or employment arrangements or not? What factors contributed to them becoming and remaining homeless? What role, if any, does discrimination and racism play? Have family members experienced instances of prejudice, discrimination, or racism?

2. **Pathways within Homelessness**: How long do families remain homeless? How many spells of homelessness do they experience? How do families cope when they are homeless? What services and supports do families find most helpful while they are homeless? What services should be provided? How can existing services be improved? What barriers keep families from ending their homeless status?

3. **Pathways out of Homelessness**: How do families exit homelessness? What kind of housing do they find? How and why do some families stop being homeless sooner than others? What factors or services are most helpful in ending the homelessness of the families studied (e.g., support services, social networks, obtaining employment, etc.)? What role, if any, has discrimination and racism played in delaying families’ return to housing stability and adequate employment (or other income support)?

4. **Policy and program implications**: What policies and programs most effectively and efficiently (a) prevent families from becoming homeless, (b) help homeless families out of their homeless status more quickly, (c) address issues relating to discrimination and racism to the extent these pay a role in producing, maintaining, and ending family homelessness?
4. **Research Design**

**Steering Committee.** A steering committee will oversee all aspects of the research, consisting of the research team, the community partners, and 3 or 4 others who are familiar with the subject. The aim is to have a committee that goes beyond the usual research expertise, and includes practitioners and policy analysts who can help ensure the relevance of the research design and dissemination strategy.

**Interviews.** At the start of the project, we will conduct structured interviews with service providers, policy and program staff, and others with first-hand knowledge and experience with homeless families, in order to refine the research design and questionnaire.

**Focus Group.** We will hold a focus group with staff who work with homeless families to discuss the revised research design and the draft interview instruments.

**Sample Selection and Number of Participants.** We will sample two groups of immigrants and refugees: (1) racialized homeless immigrant and refugee families (50 interviews), and (2) white, non-aboriginal, native-born homeless families (50 interviews). The first sample group is of primary interest for this study. The second sample will act as a comparison (control) group. These groups were selected to achieve maximum contrast in immigrant and racial status. We will also attempt to obtain a diversity of respondents according to (1) immigrant and refugee status, including landed immigrants, sponsored (government or private) refugees, and refugee claimants, and (2) family status, including two-parent families with children and one-parent female-headed families with children. A sample of 100 families has been selected to ensure a sufficient number of respondents for a reliable analysis, keeping in mind the time required to recruit willing respondents and undertake the research.

We will recruit willing respondents through referrals from a variety of organizations, including homeless shelters, drop-in centres (day shelters), and housing help centres. The main contact will be the Shelter, Housing and Support Division of the City of Toronto. We will also contact non-government organizations that assist homeless immigrants and refugees and seek the advice of members of the Refugee Housing Task Group. The Task Group consists of representatives from community groups who work with immigrants and refugees and City of Toronto staff.

5. **Data Collection Process**

There are two major ways of obtaining information about the housing careers of homeless people.

1. **Retrospective:** the most common method is a retrospective approach, whereby individuals or families are interviewed once and asked about their past housing history and associated life events, including the incidence and nature of
homelessness (e.g., Järvinen, 2003; Kissoon, 2000; May, 2000; Weitzman, Knickman, and Shinn, 1990).

2. **Panel:** the ideal, but less common approach is a panel study whereby a sample of homeless people is tracked for a period of time (e.g., Sosin, Piliavin, and Westerfelt, 1990).

Retrospective studies are easier to undertake and do not suffer from the problem of sample attrition typical of panel studies. The latter problem is particularly likely with highly mobile populations such as the homeless. With retrospective studies, however, there is a problem of accurate recall. This problem is generally avoided in panel studies. On the other hand, because of limited time to undertake the research, it is not possible to capture the entirety of a family’s housing career in a panel study.

We believe that the retrospective and panel approaches are complementary methods and therefore we will use both in this study. In addition to acquiring specific information on the causes and scope of immigrant and refugee homelessness in Toronto, this strategy will enable us to compare the advantages and limitations of using two complementary methodologies when studying the dynamics of homelessness.

**Longitudinal Design.** Participants will be interviewed four times over the course of a year. The first interview will be retrospective and will focus on their housing pathways and life experiences up to that time. The other three interviews will be shorter and will investigate changes in their circumstances since the previous interview. Undoubtedly, there will be some attrition of participants through the year, but we feel that we can minimize this problem by adopting a short time period (two months) between the first two interviews and by using suggestions from the literature for locating participants for subsequent interviews (e.g., Sosin, Piliavin, and Westerfelt, 1990). The interviews will be undertaken according to the following schedule.

- Interview #1: detailed investigation of the housing pathway
- Interview #2: 2 months after the initial interview
- Interview #3: 6 months after the initial interview
- Interview #4: 12 months after the initial interview

**Questionnaire Design.** We will use a semi-structured questionnaire to obtain information about housing pathways and other life experiences, including changes in household structure and employment status. We will also ask about attitudes towards, and experiences with, discrimination, and support services used. In each of the two groups of 50, we will select 10 to 20 people for an additional in-depth, qualitative long interview.

In the first interview, information on housing pathways and other life course experiences will be captured in grid form using a “life events timeline” (Donahue, Este and Miller, 2003) or “housing resume” (Kissoon, 2000). Using this template,
participants will be asked to summarize their housing and life experiences since arriving in Canada.

Concerning housing, participants will be asked to recall the time period, location, characteristics, level of satisfaction, and reasons for staying in or leaving a residence. We will focus particularly on the reasons for falling into homelessness and exiting from homelessness.

At the second, third, and fourth interviews, participants will be asked about their housing and related life experiences since the previous interview.

Through this multi-method approach we intend to address the scope and causes of immigrant and refugee homelessness in Toronto.

**Measuring Perceived Discrimination and Stress.** Families’ experiences of discrimination will be measured using the Unfairness Scale developed by U.S. sociologist David Williams and his colleagues (Williams et al., 1997) for everyday events and lifetime events, assessed in separate subscales. These subscales can be used to predict mental health and show improved predictive value when combined. The Every-Day Discrimination (EDD) subscale measures chronic, routine, and relatively minor experiences of unfair treatment. Respondents rate how frequently each of nine events occur in their daily life (e.g., being treated with less courtesy, being called names or insulted, being threatened or harassed) using a six–point scale (1= almost every day; 6= never). The Major Life Events (MLE) subscale includes six items (e.g., fired or denied promotion, not hired for a job, stopped by police); respondents indicate occurrences for the past year. For each item of both subscales, the respondent is asked to indicate the main reason for the experience: ethnicity, gender, race, age, religion, immigrant or refugee status, sexual orientation, income level/social class.

The Somatic Complaints Scale (SCS), adapted from David Crystal and his colleagues (1994), will be used to assess general stress level. The SCS is a nine-item self-report scale that assesses physical symptoms (e.g., lost appetite, trouble sleeping, headache) often associated with emotional or psychological distress. Respondents rate the frequency of symptoms over the past month (1=never to 5=almost every day).

**Conclusion**

This study will provide a better understanding of the pathways to, within and out of homelessness and the role played by discrimination in homelessness among immigrant and refugee families with children in Canada’s major immigrant reception centre. It differs from other studies by the emphasis placed on the dynamic nature of homelessness and the role of discrimination in families becoming and remaining homeless. The ultimate objective is to improve public policy and programs for immigrant families, thereby reducing family homelessness.
6. List of References Cited in Proposal


Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (2000). *Children and youth in homeless families: Shelter spaces and services.* Ottawa: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.


7. Description of Team

The multidisciplinary research team making this proposal has been working together for about 10 years. Professors Dion, Hulchanski, and Murdie, together with Sylvia Novac (Ph.D., Research Associate at the Centre for Urban and Community Studies) make up the Housing New Canadians in Toronto Research Working Group, established in the mid-1990s (see: www.hnc.utoronto.ca). This project is focused on the rental housing experience of low-income immigrants and refugees, paying particular attention to the role of housing-related discrimination. Professor Hulchanski and Dr. Novac also carried out an extensive review of the literature on housing discrimination for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. A research bulletin summarizing this research is available at: http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/pdfs/researchbulletins/11.pdf

Professors McDonald and Hulchanski, together with Dr. Novac, have worked on several research projects on homelessness since the mid-1990s. In 1995 they co-authored the report Estimating Homelessness: Towards a Methodology for Counting the Homeless in Canada for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (133 pages). Lynn McDonald and David Hulchanski are currently co-investigators for two (each is the P.I. of one) City of Toronto–sponsored research projects (using HRDC/SCPI funds): (a) Aging and Homelessness, and (b) the Multidimensional Impacts of Adequate Housing (the impact of obtaining good-quality housing on previously homeless people). Sylvia Novac is coordinator for the latter project.

For this proposal, the four co-investigators bring specialized areas of expertise to the research design and implementation. Professor Hulchanski, an urban planner, is Director of the Centre for Urban and Community Studies at the University of Toronto and an expert in homelessness and human rights issues. Professor Murdie is a professor of geography at York University and Housing and Neighbourhood Domain Leader, Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS). He has undertaken numerous studies on the housing experiences of immigrants and refugees in Toronto. Professor Dion is professor of psychology at the University of Toronto and an expert in the measurement of perceived prejudice and discrimination. Professor McDonald is a professor of social work at the University of Toronto and has undertaken several studies on homelessness and poverty. Dr. Sylvia Novac will serve as project coordinator, responsible for maintaining contacts with community agencies, managing the series of longitudinal interviews, and providing day-to-day supervision of the graduate students who will carry out the interviews.

The community partners have either worked with the co-investigators in the recent past or serve on committees having to do with policy or research relating to immigrants or homelessness in Toronto. They will serve as members of the steering committee (and will help choose additional members of the Steering Committee should this project be funded). The Steering Committee will direct all aspects of the research process. While the research must be carried out at the highest possible scientific and ethical levels, it must, in addition, be designed and implemented to produce policy- and program-relevant results, and these results need to be disseminated. The experienced groups of community partners will help ensure this dissemination occurs.
Since the co-investigators (the four professors) cannot obtain release time and the project will be carried out over a two-year period, the four co-investigators will be fully involved in the intellectual management throughout the project. Each brings a particular expertise to the task and, as noted above, they have worked together in this fashion for many years.

8. Partnerships

Three community-based agencies with a great deal of direct experience with our target population group will act as the lead community partners to ensure the quality of the data collection process and the policy and program relevance of the research.

When this SSHRC grant was announced, the co-investigators consulted knowledgeable staff in community-based NGOs and in the division of the city government that manages shelter and services for Toronto’s homeless people to discuss population groups and research designs. That scan revealed that the situation of immigrant and refugee families with children was a major concern and that their problems were compounded by the lack of affordable housing (especially units appropriate for families) and the discrimination some have experienced in the rental housing market. Yet no systematic study of the problem has been done to guide policy makers.

There is one City of Toronto sponsored study of homeless families that is about to be completed but it is not longitudinal, does not deal directly with the potential role of discrimination, and is generally different – though, from what we have been able to learn about it, it will serve as a very helpful starting point for this proposed study.

The research team will work closely with the following three community-based groups that are directly involved in efforts to help house immigrant and refugee families. Other organizations / individuals will be recruited for the steering committee if we succeed in obtaining funding for the research. We will also seek to have a staff person from the City of Toronto’s Shelter, Housing and Support division serve on the steering committee.

1. Midaynta Association of Somali Service Agencies. Midaynta is a multi-service community agency serving Somali immigrants and refugees in Toronto. It provides direct support to Somalis who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and employs staff who work directly on housing issues, including eviction prevention and referral to shelters and permanent housing. The Somalis are one of the largest and most marginalized immigrant and refugee groups in Toronto. Midaynta’s assistance will be important in identifying and recruiting potential respondents. Somali refugees are one of the ethnic groups interviewed two years ago by the Housing New Canadians research team (David Hulchanski, Robert Murdie, and Sylvia Novac), and Robert Murdie has maintained a close working relationship with the staff at Midaynta. Midaynta has always been very open to cooperation with researchers. www.midaynta.com/
2. **Woodgreen Red Door Family Shelter.** The Red Door Family Shelter provides multiple language service to families, including immigrant families awaiting hearings and government-sponsored or refugee claimant families. Shelter workers have first-hand knowledge of the situations that immigrant and refugee families face. Through its wide range of programs and services for newcomers (ESL classes, employment programs, child care services, housing, and assistance with accreditation), Woodgreen Community Centre helped nearly 12,000 newcomers last year. The Centre also manages a Housing Help Centre and partners with many other local agencies, thereby providing multiple avenues for participant outreach. As a local and international leader in the development of community-based services (i.e., it is a directing member of the Canadian Association of Neighbourhood Services and of the International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres), Woodgreen is also well positioned to build community capacity and disseminate program-relevant research findings. [www.reddoorshelter.ca/](http://www.reddoorshelter.ca/) [www.woodgreen.org/]  

3. **COSTI.** COSTI is a large and multi-faceted immigrant service organization, providing educational, social, and employment services to immigrants in the greater Toronto area. Two of COSTI's activities are particularly important for the success of this project:  

**COSTI North York Housing Help Centre.** The North York Housing Help Centre is one of seven housing help centres in Toronto. It provides assistance in multiple languages to clients in northwest Toronto, including housing counselling, information, eviction prevention, and referrals to and assistance with applications for emergency shelters and subsidized housing. The North York Housing Help Centre (and other housing help centres) will be important in recruiting potential respondents. Robert Murdie has a long-standing relationship with the North York Housing Help Centre.  

**COSTI Reception Centre.** This is Toronto's only reception centre for government sponsored refugees. [www.costi.org/](http://www.costi.org/)  

9. **Training (Role of Students)**  

About sixty percent of the SSHRC funds are allocated to graduate students who will assist in the data collection and the initial data analysis.  

Master's and doctoral students will be selected on the basis of their focus on the issue and the methods used in this project so that their work on the project complements their academic training. They will be involved as full members of the research team – attending and participating in steering committee meetings and helping in the more analytic tasks – in addition to the more routine tasks.  

Under the supervision and guidance of the co-investigators, students will carry out the interviews, keep track of the interviewees for the follow-up interviews, and help record, organize, and analyze the data. They will participate in discussions of the findings and of their significance for policy and programs related to immigrant families.
10. Communication of Results

Within the academic community. In addition to the final report, which will be made available in hard copy to researchers and policy analysts working on related topics, the findings will be divided into sub-topics for submission to academic journals. The full report will also be available on the website of the Centre for Urban and Community Studies (CUCS) for free downloading as a PDF file. (www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca) Members of the research team will also make the most of any opportunities to present papers at research and policy conferences (such as at a meeting of CMHC’s National Housing Research Committee). A small portion of the budget has been allocated for this purpose.

Outside the academic community. The findings will be divided into several themes/categories and produced as short, professionally edited research bulletin summaries (4 to 6 pages), in the CUCS research bulletin series (www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/researchbulletin.html). These bulletins are available on the CUCS website free of charge, downloadable as PDFs, and formatted so as to be easy to e-mail and fax. The CUCS research bulletin series is now widely known and website usage statistics indicate their popularity (500 downloads for one of the research bulletins in a recent four-month period; the average is about 150 downloads for each bulletin). CUCS puts special effort in advertising the availability of the research bulletins.

One-day workshop and live webcast. Together with our community partners, we will organize a one-day workshop on the research, presenting our findings and inviting researchers, policy analysts, and community agency staff to participate in discussion of their implications and the next steps (both further research and action on the findings). CUCS has experience and a track record for jointly hosting such workshops with community partners, particularly through its Community/University Research Partnerships unit. Recent activities of this unit are described at: www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/curp.html CUCS has partnered with the University of Toronto’s Knowledge, Media and Design Institute to use their live webcasting system. This allows anyone with an Internet connection to view the workshop live and e-mail in questions and comments. The event is then archived for future viewing. For an example of a recent CUCS webcast of a forum on rent regulation, go to www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/curp/rent.html.