

Request for Proposals
2021 Toulan School of Urban Studies & Planning
MURP Graduate Planning Workshop: Focus on Justice-Oriented Recovery

Summary

In January-June 2021, graduate students in the Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) program at Portland State University work in teams of 4 or 5 members to complete applied planning projects, as part of a required course known as "the MURP workshop." This course is intended to give our students hands-on experience in conceiving, planning, and implementing a community-based planning project in close consultation with a committed client/partner. We are seeking proposals from community "clients." For examples of past projects, please visit our website at: <https://www.pdx.edu/urban-studies-planning/master-urban-and-regional-planning-workshop-projects>

Key dates

- Q&A Session For Potential Clients: Wednesday November 11th, 12pm-1pm via zoom (the session will be recorded and can be shared with folks who cannot attend). Register here: https://pdx.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwtfumtpz4sHNMUMe_E_Z-j5uY4mr6mkbkZ
- Proposals due: Friday, December 11, 2020 to mhorst@pdx.edu with subject line MURP Workshop Proposal.

Questions and proposal submission

- Questions: Please email mhorst@pdx.edu with subject line: MURP Workshop question.
- Please email proposals to Dr. Megan Horst at mhorst@pdx.edu with subject line MURP Workshop Proposal by December 11, 2020.

Overview

In the winter and spring quarters of 2021 graduate students in the Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) program at Portland State University will be completing applied planning projects in a required course known as "the MURP workshop." This course is intended to give our students hands-on experience in conceiving, planning, and implementing a community-based planning project in close consultation with a committed client/partner.

In past years, workshop groups have completed projects for a wide range of public agencies and community groups. The resulting plans have, in many cases, been implemented, and many of them have been recognized with awards from state and national planning organizations.

What makes a good project? Projects that involve Problems, Places and People. We want planning projects that are problem-centered, have a specific geographic area of concern, have a strong equity focus or lens, require the development and evaluation of alternatives, results in a product that includes a recommended course of action, and utilizes community consultation and participation. It also has a committed and involved client (a good client is key to a good product) and a place for the work to go/be used once it's completed. Note that limited research projects, projects that don't involve contact with and involvement of the public, or projects that don't create choices for clients are generally not acceptable. Also note that site specific projects must engage the broader context in which they are located, and projects may not focus on site analysis.

Focus for 2021 Projects

We are focusing the 2021 Workshop to be responsive to the times. We are seeking planning projects that:

- Contribute to response and recovery of communities impacted by COVID-19, especially

in light of constrained public and non-profit budgets. We seek projects with a specific focus on frontline communities that are underserved and experience disparities which can be worsened by the ongoing health and economic crises, e.g. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; immigrant and refugee of all status; low-wage “essential workers”; individuals facing layoff or challenges making payments or rent. We also are interested in projects that address other salient issues related to racial and other social injustices, e.g. about police reform, planning with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated communities, and police brutality and violence. Applicants will be asked to include a statement explaining how projects will advance equitable outcomes for one or more of these groups, and/or that is responsive to the themes of “just recovery.”

- Have some ideas for flexible community engagement. Typically, community engagement is an important component of these MURP Workshop projects. Past project teams have engaged in a lot of strategies, including surveys, face to face interviews, community events, etc. to engage the affected public, with a particular focus on engaging community members who are often underrepresented in decision-making. In 2021, it is likely that much of our community engagement will need to use virtual techniques, with only limited face to face engagement (and that pending public health guidelines and prioritizing safety of students and community members). We especially are looking for projects where students can prioritize equitable engagement of priority communities, though we recognize that may be extra challenging in these times.

Seeking Clients/How to Apply

To identify Workshop possibilities, we are sending out this request for projects to our alumni, neighborhood and community groups, community planning organizations, nonprofit organizations, local governments, and the community at large. We especially are interested in seeing project proposals from community partners engaged as hosts for Community Recovery Fellow, from PSU Institute for Metropolitan Studies. For the most part, the geography that we've focused on has been the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area, but from time to time a group has engaged in a project well outside those boundaries.

We will acknowledge receipt of project proposals. We anticipate that student teams will select their projects mid January. All applicants will be informed of team decisions immediately thereafter. Clients and student groups will be expected to enter into signed Memoranda of Understanding that spell out expected products, timelines, and mutual responsibilities for ensuring project success. All final project reports will be made available to the public on the Toulan School website. Project clients can use the products in whatever ways help to advance their aims. \

If you are interested in having a project considered for the upcoming workshop, please complete the attached application and email it to Dr. Megan Horst, mhorst@pdx.edu, by 5 pm on Friday, December 11th, 2020. *Please answer each question as completely as you can, relatively briefly. Please do not send additional materials or attachments at this time.*

Application for Planning Assistance from the Toulan School MURP Planning Workshop in 2021

1. What is the title for your project?
2. Who is the client for this project? Please tell us a little bit about the city/government agency/department, non-profit or advocacy organization, community group etc. and their mission/activities. Please also provide some information about the people within your agency or organization who may be involved in guiding or influencing the students' approach and/or desired product of this project; list them and describe their roles.
3. Tell us about the project in a few short sentences or other creative ways. It may be helpful to write this after you read the below.
4. Tell us about the project in more detail. In 2020/21, we are especially looking to support projects that contribute to response and recovery of communities impacted by COVID-19, especially in light of constrained public and non-profit budgets. We seek projects with a specific focus on frontline communities that are underserved and experience disparities which can be worsened by the ongoing health and economic crises, e.g. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; immigrant and refugee of all status; low-wage “essential workers”; individuals facing layoff or challenges making payments or rent. We also are interested in projects that address other salient issues related to ongoing racial and other social injustices, e.g. about police reform, planning with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated communities, and police brutality and violence. Please explain how the project will advance equitable outcomes for one or more of these groups and/or is responsive to the themes of “just recovery.”

Keep in mind that we usually look for “planning projects” (since our students are urban planners). A “planning project” addresses a specific problem or objective, has a specific geographic area of concern, requires the development and evaluation of alternatives, seeks a recommended course of action, and depends on direct community consultation and participation with the student project team. Workshop students often Students in these programs have a wide range of skills around participation and engagement strategies, spatial and data analysis, and policy and program assessment, as well as specialized knowledge regarding housing, economic development, transportation, land use, environment, real estate, food systems, and community development. Note that research projects, projects that don't involve public engagement of some kind, projects that don't analyze choices for clients, and purely site analysis/design projects are not usually acceptable for workshop purposes (though if there is a compelling reason to consider them, please talk to the Workshop Instructor).

5. What is the desired end product, and how will it address an identified community need? How will it be used? What organization and/or which communities might benefit from this project? Please note that all products, though developed for and delivered to clients, will be shared with the public on the Toulan School website.
6. Please describe how your organization addresses equity.
7. What are some ideas you have, as starting points, for flexible and equity-focused community/public engagement in these times?

8. What resources do you expect needing to complete the project? What resources, if any, can you provide to help support the completion of the project? Please note that it is NOT required that non-profit and advocacy organizations provide resources; if you are unable to, we will work collaboratively to address these needs. Please indicate the needs you anticipate, and your anticipated contributions, in the the following areas (note specific amounts including maximums, as relevant):
 - a. Travel expenses (transit, mileage reimbursement, etc.)
 - b. Meeting expenses (room rental, supplies, refreshments, etc.)
 - c. Incentives for community participation (e.g., gift cards)
 - d. Printing of draft and final documents (please indicate if you desire printed things such as versions of final documents.)
 - e. Overnight accommodations, if students must travel outside the metro area
 - f. In-kind assistance
 - g. Other?

9. Please provide the contact details (name, role in the client organization, telephone, number, e-mail address) for the person submitting the request on behalf of the client organization, what the time commitment the client can guarantee (approximate), and who will be regularly and consistently available during the winter and spring terms to interact directly with the student group.

10. Is there anything else you want to share?

Questions? Please email mhorst@pdx.edu with subject line: MURP Workshop question.

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