



## Opportunity for students interested in Social Policy Development, Research, and Evaluation

An exciting research program called SPECTRUM offers unique opportunities for students

### **What is SPECTRUM?**

The acronym expands to: Social Policy Evaluation Collaborative Team Research at Universities in Manitoba. SPECTRUM is a partnership of community service providers, non-profit organizations, government staff, students, and researchers across Manitoba, Canada.

These groups are working together to seek ways to improve social services programs and policies in Manitoba and beyond.

### **Why is SPECTRUM needed?**

Users of social services are often the most systemically marginalized members of society. Often, the way programs are set up or delivered makes it difficult, if not impossible, for people to access services, despite being eligible, because of a lack of coordination between departments and agencies. With political and public pressure to spend taxpayer funds wisely, there is a need for rigorous research to make sure that the programs are accessible to all Manitobans.

### **Who is in this partnership?**

SPECTRUM partners include:

- leaders of community service organisations – Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg, Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre, Autism Alliance of Canada, Boys & Girls Clubs of Winnipeg, First Nations Family Advocate Office, First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba, Harvest Manitoba, Island Lake Anishinew Okimawin, Leading 4 Impact, Manitoba Métis Federation, Onashowewin Justice Circle, Peguis First Nation Child & Family Services, Public Interest Law Centre, United Way Winnipeg, Winnipeg Chambers of Commerce
- government staff from departments of Families, Education & Early Childhood Learning, Justice, Health, Housing, Addictions & Homelessness, Finance, Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation, Advanced Education & Training, and Municipal & Northern Relations
- students and researchers from the fields of education, social work, law, psychology, sociology, economics, social epidemiology, health sciences, and political studies at the University of Manitoba, the University of Winnipeg, Brandon University, and Red River College Polytechnic

### **How does the partnership work?**

A group of researchers, government staff and leaders of community organisations came together with an idea to work together and collaborated on the development of an application for a Partnership Development Grant to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). This application was funded for 3 years (to 2023). SPECTRUM has recently received funding for 7 years (to 2031) from

SSHRC under the Partnership Grant stream. In the next 7 years, SPECTRUM has committed to conducting research under four primary themes, decided upon by the partnership:

- Child and family services
- Mental health and addictions
- Basic income
- Housing and homelessness

Additional research themes may arise during this funding.

Student Fellows work on research projects that evaluate programs and policies delivered by government partners and community organizations, and the reasons why some programs and policies are not reaching all the people who need them.

Students and the partnership members work together through workshops, meetings, working groups, one-on-one discussions, e-mails etc., to develop the project ideas and to complete the projects.

### **Student Opportunities**

- Are you a Graduate student looking for a Thesis topic in areas that may connect with SPECTRUM topics?
- Are you a Graduate student or senior Undergraduate student looking to broaden your exposure to working in social policy development initiatives, including the use of data?
- Are you involved with a non-profit or community group, and potentially interested in furthering your formal education?

We have opportunities for students to:

- Develop and implement communication strategies to communicate SPECTRUM and its work to the public, including using social media and online newsletters
- Work with data on social service use: programming statistical analyses (in SAS, R, etc.) to inform research questions
- Analyze social policy options and work with partners to develop recommendations
- Evaluate the development of this SPECTRUM partnership
- Evaluate social policies or programs

For more information, please see our [SPECTRUM website](#) or contact Mikayla Hunter at [hunterm7@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:hunterm7@myumanitoba.ca).

If you are interested in applying to become a SPECTRUM Fellow, please send an email with your CV to [spectrum@umanitoba.ca](mailto:spectrum@umanitoba.ca) with the subject line “fellow application”

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