

CALL FOR RESEARCH COLLABORATORS



- Please fill in the [ONLINE APPLICATION](#) form
- Deadline: Noon, February 14, 2018
- Successful applicants will be notified by email on or before February 21, 2018
- Training dates: March 7-8, 2018 in Calgary; June 12-13, 2018 in Edmonton
- Participation is open to any Alberta resident able to fulfil the overall project requirements. Collaborators will be selected based on best fit with the project objectives.
- There are no fees related to trainings, participants must cover their transportation and accommodation costs
- Questions? Please contact Amber Bennett, regional project lead, at amber@upayaconsulting.com or 587.435.2152.

Project summary

The Alberta Narratives Project (ANP) is a new approach to public engagement research that will build research skills and better energy-climate communications in Alberta. Our goal is to create a set of energy-climate narratives based on the unique culture, values and identities of Albertans, and to uncover language and messages that can effectively engage a wider spectrum of audiences.

Unlike other methods, the ANP is a collaborative social research model that will train individuals to conduct professional qualitative research and support them to incorporate the findings into their communications' programs.

A key focus of this community-based initiative is openness and the inclusion of a diversity of Albertans. We are seeking the involvement of a spectrum of organizations and individuals from business, energy, civil society, Indigenous communities, education, faith, youth, government, agriculture and people whose lives are invested in fossil fuels.

Climate communications specialist George Marshall and the organization he co-founded, Climate Outreach, will lead this work. George's work spans the political spectrum and seeks to break down boundaries of culture, class and politics to find values and language we all share.

This is a community-based initiative made possible through a growing list of supporters including: Alberta Ecotrust, Canada West Foundation, P&C Carlson, City of Calgary, Pembina Institute, Telus Spark, University of Calgary and University of Alberta.

Project objectives

1. Explore language around climate change, energy transition, and building a sustainable future for the province.
2. Work across Alberta and initiate structured discussions with a wide range of audiences.
3. Test and evaluate our current communications.
4. Find the best language for speaking with specific audiences and the language that does not work well or actively alienates people.
5. Seek a distinctly Albertan meta-narrative that can speak across all audiences based around shared values and identity.
6. Compile these learning in an Albertan Communications Guide, supported by presentations and webinars.

What you will gain

- ✓ Those attending the training will gain a strong grounding in professional methods of qualitative research. They will be enabled to present these methods and train others in your organisation. These skills will support all your current and future communications work.
- ✓ The project will stress openness and political neutrality, providing a unique opportunity for you to meet and listen to new and neglected audiences, including opponents and critics. Previous participants rated the experience of active listening to be the single most valuable personal learning.
- ✓ You will have an opportunity to test your own messaging and trial new concepts.
- ✓ You will obtain professional support and research that would normally be very expensive and beyond the budget of most organisations. This advice will continue throughout 2018 with Climate Outreach on hand to provide input as you develop your plans.

What you will provide

- ✓ You, or someone within your organization, will need to contribute to the programme from beginning to end, including attending two, two-day trainings (a total of four days, March 7-8 and June 12-13) and lead at least two discussion groups. All told, this should take no more than 1.5 -2 staff weeks work over a 3-month period.
- ✓ That person will present the training (and maybe run a trial discussion group) within your own organization. S/he will also present the findings within your organisation and distribute the final Guide within your organisation and networks.
- ✓ Training and lunch costs are provided but you will need to pay for transport and accommodation.
- ✓ You will need to organize at least two discussion groups of two hours and recruit 10-12 participants from a defined target audience. The groups will be run by two people of whom at least one must attend both trainings. You will need to pay any costs of the discussion groups including venue hire and refreshments.
- ✓ You will record and transcribe the conversation or submit detailed notes in a standardised format.

What we will do

Stage one: Training Workshop | March 7+8 | Calgary

Climate Outreach (see below) will provide an intensive two-day training March 7 & 8 in Calgary, supported by materials and a training manual. At the workshop, you will design trial narratives and select priority audiences for message testing. You will then be provided with training on a range of simple and practical research tools including interviews, discussion groups and surveys. You will also be trained in recording and interpreting the results.

Stage two: Research | March – May

Then it is over to you. You will go back to your organisation and share this training. You may also wish to run an internal discussion group to practice and share the approach.

You will organise a discussion group and invite 10-12 people to participate. You will lead the discussion following a standard script. This will initiate a conversation around shared identity, values, concerns for the future, then discuss the core issues of climate change

and energy, followed by testing different narratives. You will record conversations or take very detailed notes that you will be able to enter online.

Stage three: Evaluation Workshop | June 12 + 13 | Edmonton

At the two-day evaluation workshop we will share our findings. We will help you to interpret the findings, refine the language for your audiences and then apply it to your own work.

Stage four: The Alberta Climate Narratives Guide | September

Your findings will be compiled into a guide by Climate Outreach. This will be completed and launched in September.

Lead researchers

George Marshall has spent his career working with diverse audiences and pioneering conversations across the political spectrum. His work seeks to break down boundaries of culture, class and politics to find values and language we all share. He is a lead advisor to European governments and counts the World Bank, United Nations, World Wildlife Fund and all major British political parties among his clients. He is the co-founder of Climate Outreach.

Climate Outreach is a 'think-and-do' tank and Europe's leading specialist in climate change communication. Our charity is focused on building cross-societal acceptance of the need to tackle climate change. We work with a wide-range of partners at the interface of research and practice. For more on [Climate Outreach](#)