

About the Energy Equity Working Group

The Guelph Energy Equity project wants to make sure everyone can adequately heat and cool their homes, no matter who they are or where they live in Guelph. We want to learn from residents of Guelph who know what it's like to face tough choices about energy – like whether to keep the heat on or put food on the table. By taking part in this working group, you can help the City develop an action plan that reflects what life is really like for people and families across Guelph.

This document provides more information about the working group.

Summary

What will the Working Group do?

You'll have a chance to share your experiences, thoughts and ideas at 3 group meetings run by researchers from the University of Toronto and the University of Guelph. What you share during these meetings will help shape programs, policies and funding that make energy more affordable and fairer in Guelph.

The Working Group will meet 3 times:

- Saturday, October 18, 2025, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Saturday, November 29, 2025, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Saturday, February 28, 2026, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Who will be part of the Working Group?

If energy costs have been a challenge in your life, or if heating and cooling your home has been challenging, you have something important to share.

No prior experience is needed. There will be lots of time and opportunities to learn from each other throughout the meetings, and we are ready to provide additional support for anyone who needs it.

We know life is busy – and sometimes hard. We're offering support like childcare, transportation vouchers, lunch and other refreshments to make it easier to participate.

We also want to recognize the time and energy you're giving. As a thank you, we'll be offering an honorarium – such as gift cards or cash to honour your experience and knowledge.



How can I join the Working Group?

If you are interested in joining the Energy Equity Working Group, please fill out this [online form](#), or contact Derya Tarhan (University of Guelph) at guelphenergy@uoguelph.ca or 519-824-4120, Ext. 52138 to fill out the form verbally.

The working group will be between 8 and 12 people. If we receive more applications than we have space for, we will ensure a wide range of experiences are reflected in the group.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is energy inequity?

Energy inequity occurs when households struggle to afford the energy needed to heat and cool their homes, or power their lights and appliances. In Guelph, an estimated 20 per cent of households experience this challenge. It disproportionately affects newcomers to Canada, seniors, renters, single-parent households, and other traditionally marginalized groups.

2. What is the Energy Equity Working Group?

The Energy Equity Working Group is a group of people who live in Guelph with lived experience of energy inequity. They will help shape an Energy Equity Action Plan for the City of Guelph. Members will share ideas, review existing programs, and provide advice to a coalition of municipal and community organizations working on energy affordability and accessibility.

3. Who is organizing this initiative?

This initiative is a partnership between the University of Guelph, University of Toronto, the Guelph Lab, and the City of Guelph's Climate Change Office.

The research team includes: Dr. Derya Tarhan, Assistant Professor, UofG (Co-Principal Investigator); Dr. Laura Tozer, Assistant Professor, UofT (Co-Principal Investigator); Dr. Craig Johnson, Professor, UofG (Advisor); Adam Bonnycastle, GIS Specialist, UofG; Sam Laban, Facilitator, the Guelph Lab.

4. What will members of the working group do?

Members will:

- Share their experiences and ideas for improving energy affordability and access
- Learn about current programs and policies in Guelph
- Help review and prioritize proposed actions for the Energy Equity Action Plan
- Provide feedback on the final action plan

5. How many meetings will there be and when?

There will be **three in-person meetings**, each lasting five hours:

- October 18, 2025 (Saturday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.)
- November 29, 2025 (Saturday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.)
- February 28, 2026 (Saturday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.)

6. Do I have to attend all three meetings?

It is encouraged but not mandatory to attend all three meetings.



7. Where will the meetings take place?

10C Downtown Guelph - 42 Carden St, Guelph, ON N1H 3A2

Transportation vouchers will be provided. The building is accessible.

8. How will members be compensated?

Members will receive:

- A \$125 honorarium per meeting
- The honorarium will be paid immediately after each session (options: cash, e-transfer, gift card for Dollarama or a grocery store, or prepaid Mastercard)

9. Will there be food provided?

Yes! Lunch, snacks and refreshments will be provided.

10. What about other supports, such as transportation vouchers and childcare?

Both transportation vouchers and on-site childcare will be provided.

11. Is translation available?

Discussions will take place in English. Unfortunately, we do not have the resources to support translation.

12. Who can apply to join?

We are looking for Guelph residents who have **lived experience of energy inequity**. If you have ever had difficulty paying your utility bills or had to choose between keeping the heat on or putting food on the table, we want to talk to you.

13. What groups are especially encouraged to apply?

We aim to have representation from:

- Low-income households
 - Young adults (25 and under) and seniors (65+)
 - Renters, owners, co-op members, and social/community housing residents
 - Racialized individuals (e.g., Black, Indigenous, South Asian, East Asian)
 - Individuals with chronic illness or disabilities
 - Lone parents
 - Newcomers to Canada, immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers
 - Residents from different neighborhoods across Guelph
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14. How do I apply to become part of the Energy Equity Working Group?

To apply for the working group, you can do any of the following:

- Fill out the [online application form](#)
- Contact us by email or phone
 - Email guelphenergy@uoguelph.ca
 - Call 519-824-4120, Ext. 52138 (Derya Tarhan, University of Guelph)

15. Who will select the working group members?

If we receive more applications than we have space for, we will ensure a wide range of experiences are reflected in the group.

Three members of the project team will select working group members:

- Dr. Derya Tarhan (University of Guelph)
- Dr. Laura Tozer (University of Toronto)
- Sam Laban (The Guelph Lab)

16. What if I'm not selected?

Applicants who are not selected will be invited to community events where they can still share their input and stay involved.

17. What happens with the group's input?

Your ideas and priorities will:

- Be shared with the coalition of organizations developing the Energy Equity Action Plan
- Be incorporated into the draft Action Plan
- Be shared directly with City Council.

At the last Working Group meeting, the group will review the final version of the Action Plan before it is presented to City Council. At this meeting, the Working Group will have the option to formally support the Action Plan, or to express any concerns. This feedback will be shared with City Council when the Action Plan is presented to Council in Spring 2026.

18. Will I receive updates after the meetings?

Yes. All working group members will be invited to a community event in spring 2026 and will receive updates on the progress of the Energy Equity Act