



Pollution Prevention Project Fellowship

Plastic pollution is a threat to biodiversity and human health. Diverse and effective solutions to this issue are needed, and should include source-reduction, improved and more sustainable waste management, and cleanup. The U of T Trash Team's [Pollution Prevention Projects](#) are solutions-based research projects to inform the prevention of plastic pollution, one source at a time. We combine innovative prevention strategies and case studies with empirical research and knowledge transfer/mobilization to policy makers and managers.

Our initial Pollution Prevention Project ([Divert and Capture](#)) was aimed at reducing microfiber pollution from textiles. We first tested filters on washing machines to collect data on their effectiveness and then scaled up, by putting filters in the homes of 100 residences in Parry Sound with support from Georgian Bay Forever. This pilot study showed a significant decrease in microfiber pollution in treated effluent. The findings are currently informing legislation introduced to require filters on washing machines in Ontario, California, Oregon and France.

For the fellowship, we are looking for candidates with passion to reduce plastic pollution and a creative idea to propose their own Pollution Prevention Project on any source of plastic pollution (e.g., construction foam, cigarette butts, textile waste, leakage from garbage bins).

Fellowship Description:

We are looking for a fellow who is a student or recent graduate (within the last 2 years) to lead a Pollution Prevention Project aimed at reducing a specific source of plastic pollution locally (with applicability to scale up provincially, federally, or globally). We are looking for proposals for any valid source of plastic pollution, which can include a continuation of our previous projects, or a source we have not worked on yet. The fellowship will be a 4-month full-time (or 8-month part-time) position, mentored by leadership of the U of T Trash Team, with seed funding to jump-start a data-informed solution. The position is competitive, with only one available per year.

Position Details:

- This position can be full-time for 4 months or part-time for 8 at \$20/hour; up to \$12,000 in total stipend.
- The fellow will have access to up to \$4,000 for supplies, travel, communications.
- The fellow will meet at least once bi-weekly with a mentor from the U of T Trash Team – with more frequent meetings during the initial stage.
- Mentorship will be provided, and the fellow will have access to resources and the network within the U of T Trash Team and/or Rochman Lab.

The fellow is expected to:

- Show strong leadership skills.
- Design a solution for one source of plastic pollution.
- Collect data to test the efficacy of the solution and/or better understand the problem.



- Trial the solution.
- Transfer the knowledge to decision-makers in policy, industry, community or environmental management.

Application Process: Please send 1) a short cover letter describing why you would like this position and why you are qualified for it, 2) a two-page proposal that includes background on the problem (i.e., source), proposed solution, action plan, any preliminary data if relevant, and a budget, and 3) your CV or resume which should include the contact information of two references. Send to Dr. Chelsea Rochman at chelsea.rochman@utoronto.ca by Friday April 3, 2023.

Support for fellowship:

This fellowship is supported by Community Matters Toronto and JUANNE CLARKE. [Community Matters Toronto](#) is a registered charity supporting local initiatives in St. James Town and the surrounding neighbourhoods. Focused originally on grassroots community development they have gradually pivoted to direct resources and efforts using a similar approach in meeting the climate emergency confronting us today. JUANNE CLARKE is a friend of Community Matters Toronto.

This is the second year of this fellowship, with the first supported project focused on [plastic pre-production pellets](#).