



SEEKING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST: ARTICULATING VALUE IN HOUSING COOPERATIVES

We are seeking Expressions of Interest for two Housing Cooperative Management Committee Members (one CERC and one CMC) to assist in the development of a research project on housing cooperatives. This project seeks to identify the benefits generated by housing cooperatives and how those benefits are created. This includes the work of cooperative members in creating those benefits.

The project is being developed in collaboration with the Australian Cooperative Housing Alliance (ACHA). ACHA comprises housing cooperative organisations Common Equity NSW, Common Equity Housing Ltd, United Housing Cooperative Victoria, Common Equity Housing SA, and Co-operation Housing.

Addressing ACHA's objectives, the proposed research develops a methodology to test the assertion that housing cooperatives generate social value. Testing this assertion can provide an evidence base for policies to expand the supply of affordable, socially beneficial housing in Australia. This is a timely response as governments seek new, innovative, and effective responses to Australia's housing affordability crisis.

You will receive a \$50 per month stipend as a 'thank you' for participating in this research project.

PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS

- Associate Professor Louise Crabtree-Hayes – Western Sydney University
- Ms Bronwyn Bate – Western Sydney University
- Dr Sidsel Grimstad – University of Newcastle
- Dr Neil Perry – Western Sydney University
- Dr Emma Power – Western Sydney University
- Dr Piret Veeroja - Swinburne University of Technology
- Professor Wendy Stone – Swinburne University of Technology

RESEARCH TOOLS AND PARTICIPATION

The project will involve a worksheet to determine the amount of time spent on cooperative tasks, a survey to ask members about their experiences living in a coop, and interviews to discuss the survey issues in more depth. The worksheet and survey will be developed, tested, and reviewed through a pilot of each, in participation with six cooperatives across the states.

- Pilot worksheet: 6 housing cooperative members will be able to fill out a worksheet that details the amount of time they spend on particular tasks performed within their cooperatives' committee/s. These six people will be invited to a workshop with the academic and ACHA staff,



to review the draft worksheet, then a second workshop after completing the worksheet to discuss and, if necessary, revise it.

- Pilot survey: 20 cooperative members will be asked to fill out a pilot of a survey about living and participating in a housing cooperative.
- Worksheet: after the worksheet is tested in the pilot, we will need 45 cooperatives to fill it out.
- Cooperative member survey: after the survey is tested in the pilot, we will need close to 400 housing cooperative members to fill it out - this represents 10% of the entire sector.
- Interviews: Members who complete a survey will be asked at the end of the survey to leave their contact details if they are interested in participating in an interview. Interviews will further explore members' responses to survey questions.

TASKS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN PILOT RESEARCH

We are seeking six experts among the five housing cooperative organisations (Common Equity NSW, Common Equity Housing Ltd, United Housing Cooperative Victoria, Common Equity Housing SA, and Co-operation Housing) to provide advice on the development of the research project.

If you choose to participate in the research project in this way, you will be asked to:

- Participate in three half day workshops (approximately 4 hours in total). The workshops will be:
 1. A half-day workshop (held in June 2021) to provide input into the draft surveys; (1) a costing worksheet survey and (2) a coop member survey.
 2. A half-day workshop (held in July-Aug 2021) to review the anonymised results of the piloted surveys, assess the research tools and make changes as needed.
 3. A half-day workshop (held in April 2022) to review the overall anonymised research findings prior to the publication of the final project report.
- Attend the 2-hourly monthly advisory meetings between June 2021 and September 2022. These meetings are attended by the project team members and the ACHA housing cooperative organisations Common Equity NSW, Common Equity Housing Ltd, United Housing Cooperative Victoria, Common Equity Housing SA, and Co-operation Housing.
- You and your housing cooperative will be asked to undertake the pilot worksheet and recommend potential cooperative housing members to undertake the pilot survey (see Research Tools and Participation above).

Data collected for this research will remain anonymous and personal information (including participants' names and the housing cooperative they belong to) will not be used in any publication outputs including reports, articles, presentations etc. Further, any data passed on to ACHA organisations will be anonymised.

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Selection criteria	How to demonstrate
Considerable experience in housing co-op/program membership.	Length of membership, number of co-ops lived in, number of co-op director/office bearer roles held, number of program roles held (i.e., board, committee, advisory group, etc.)
Endorsement from current co-op to undertake this role, including co-op agreement to provide input into pilot the process.	Letter from member's co-op board.
Ability to allocate adequate time and be flexible with meeting/task times.	A summary of your other commitments and constraints which could impact your availability to participate in this project.
Ability to take a broad view and understand a variety of perspectives (broader than representing your own co-op or only your own experience).	Examples of participation in discussion and consensus in decision making in co-op or committee.
Ability to work well with a diverse group of people.	Examples of working effectively with groups with different personalities and styles.
Ability to be a 'project champion' within your program – encourage and assist co-ops to complete survey without influencing their views.	Examples of encouraging and assisting co-op members (or members of another group) to participate, provide feedback, etc.
Ability to use relevant technology and attend meetings remotely.	Examples of using Zoom, MS Teams, email, etc.

CONTACT

For more information about this project please email:

Bronwyn Bate: b.bate@westernsydney.edu.au

Louise Crabtree-Hayes: l.crabtree-hayes@westernsydney.edu.au

If you are Interested in participating in the project, please submit a CV and a written response demonstrating how you meet the above Selection Criteria by COB Friday, **31 May 2021** to Laura Freeman: laura@cehl.com.au