LIBRO PROFESSOR OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2024-2025 Annual Report

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

The Libro Professor of Regional Economic Development was established in 2016 through the generous donations from Libro Credit Union, the Klosler family, and the Roberts family. Together, a $1 million gift was created to serve as a catalyst for enhancing regional economic development in Southwestern Ontario.

I am pleased to present the 2024-2025 Annual Report of the Libro Professorship in Regional Economic Development at the University of Guelph. Over the past year, the Professorship has continued to advance its mission of strengthening regional economies through research, teaching, and community engagement. Our work remains grounded in collaboration—bringing together students, community partners, policymakers, and industry leaders to address the opportunities and challenges facing rural and regional communities.

This year has been marked by meaningful progress across several key areas. In teaching and mentorship, we have supported and inspired students pursuing careers in planning, economic development, and rural studies. Through research, we have contributed new insights into critical issues such as workforce development, housing, immigration, and the resilience of local economies. Our partnerships with communities and organizations have further deepened, ensuring that our work remains relevant, applied, and impactful.

At the same time, we continue to navigate a rapidly changing economic and social landscape. Communities are adapting to shifting labour markets, evolving demographic trends, and ongoing global uncertainties. These dynamics underscore the importance of place-based approaches to economic development—approaches that recognize the unique assets, needs, and aspirations of each region. The Libro Professorship is committed to supporting this work by generating knowledge, fostering dialogue, and building capacity at the local level.

This report offers a snapshot of the activities and accomplishments of the past year. It highlights not only what has been achieved, but also the relationships and collaborations that make this work possible. We are grateful for the continued support of our partners, colleagues, and the broader community, whose engagement is central to our success.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on expanding our impact through innovative research, experiential learning opportunities for students, and strengthened community partnerships. We are excited to build on this year's momentum and to continue contributing to vibrant, inclusive, and resilient regional economies.

Sincerely,

Ryan Gibson, PhD
Libro Professor of Regional Economic Development

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The School of Environmental Design and Rural Development brings together major academic fields concerned with creating strong communities in Canada and around the world. The four highly respected units that have come together to form the School share many common goals but approach them in different and complementary ways. This model reflects the imperatives in building authentic communities where planners, leaders, communicators, landscape architects, the citizens, and politicians all play important interdependent roles in strengthening communities. For more information, visit www.sedrd.uoguelph.ca.

2024-2025 Highlights

From Learning to Impact

Research

Knowledge Mobilization

Illustrative Student Engagement

Six graduate students shared their research with economic development practitioners, health practitioners, and researchers at the Rural Talks to Rural Conference in Blyth, Ontario. The interactive session allowed conference participants to learn more about current best practices, learn about existing programming, and to hear about current research.

Seven graduate students showcased new and emerging rural development knowledge related to agri-food systems, housing, work force development, economic development, and rural transit at the North Atlantic Forum conference in Letterfrack, Ireland.

Five graduate students collected information from businesses owners in Seaforth, Ontario to better understand the realities of attracting and retaining employees. Information on the challenges business owners experience in finding new staff, supports that would be useful to assist in finding new staff, and success stories of approaches in finding new staff.

Highly Qualified Personnel

The Libro Professor provides supervision for graduate students in three graduate programs at the University of Guelph: the Master of Science in Rural Planning and Development, Master of Planning, and PhD in Rural Studies. A total of 37 graduate students were supervised during 2024–2025.

Ajibola Michael Agbejobi
Ilogbo-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria
Master of Science (Planning)

Jayden Cote
Penetanguishene, Ontario
Master of Science (Planning)

Jennifer Aikman

Master of Planning

John Dale
Wellington, Nova Scotia
PhD in Rural Studies

Joshua Barrett
Conception Bay South, Newfoundland and Labrador
PhD in Rural Studies

Connor Dorey
Belleville, Ontario
Master of Planning

Lucas Berek
Alliston, Ontario
Master of Science (Planning)

Natasha D'Souza
Brampton, Ontario
PhD in Rural Studies

Heather Douglas
Guelph, Ontario
Master of Science (Planning)

Melanie McCann Lang
Pontiac, Quebec
PhD in Rural Studies

Heather Graham
Bowmanville, Ontario
Master of Science (Planning)

Amy Lickers
Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, Ontario
Master of Science (Planning)

Ferdous Farhana Huq
Bangladesh
Master of Planning

Madeline Kowalchuk

Master of Planning

Mohammed Jalabi

Master of Planning

Greg McLeod
Kitchener, Ontario
Master of Planning

Calum Jacques

Master of Science (Planning)

Niju Mathew

Master of Science (Planning)

Briana Miller
Kitchener, Ontario
Master of Science (Planning)

Arshjit Singh

Master of Planning

Damilola Oyewale
Nigeria
Master of Science (Planning)

Paul Sitsofe
Ghana
Master of Science (Planning)

Kalind Patel
Kitchener, Ontario
Master of Planning

Andrea Torok

Master of Science (Planning)

Jeremy Parsons
Colchester, Ontario
Master of Planning

Chris Van Dyke
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Master of Planning

Geetanjali Rana
British Columbia
Master of Planning

Shanley Weston
Oshawa, Ontario
Master of Science (Planning)

Research Engagement

The Libro Professor is actively engaged in research initiatives focused on critical topics in regional and rural development. The following projects are currently underway

- Addressing Labour Shortages through Newcomer Attraction
- Blueprint for Prosperity: Preparing for Mega-Investments in Manufacturing
- Bridging International Research to Rural Ontario
- Connecting Research to Rural Ontario
- Connecting the Dots: Mobilizing Rural Knowledge to Knowledge Users
- Emerging Voices – Rural Knowledge Transfer
- International Agricultural Workers and Housing in Rural Ontario
- Pathways to Practice: Bridging Knowledge, Practitioners, and Students
- Philanthropy in Atlantic Canada: Connecting Research, Policy and Practice to Build Resilient Rural Communities
- Rural Economic Development Knowledge Translation and Transfer
- The Urban Exodus: Understanding The Impacts of Migration to Rural Ontario as a Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Connecting Local Practice, Public Policy, and Research

Each of these research initiatives engages a series partners, including communities, organizations, nonprofits, local governments, Indigenous communities, provincial government ministries, federal government ministries, and international partners. Graduate students are engaged in each of these research initiatives, providing them opportunities for gaining employable skills, building networks, and enhancing their knowledge.

Pathways to Practice: Bridging Knowledge, Practitioners, and Students

This is a knowledge-translation and mentoring initiative designed to link graduate students, rural economic development officers, and rural community leaders across Ontario. Its central aim is to build communication bridges—through an in-person forum, ongoing training and mentorship, and public knowledge-sharing outputs—that bring together academic insights with community practice. By creating spaces where students, local practitioners, and leaders can share ideas and form networks, the project supports the development of practical, locally relevant strategies for rural economic and agricultural development. Ultimately, the initiative seeks to generate new learning materials, cultivate skills and guidance for participants, and help build supportive networks to strengthen rural communities.

Sustainable Rural Livelihoods

This initiative translates international rural development insights into practical resources for Ontario communities. Graduate students produced seven plain-language, one-page research summaries highlighting topics such as housing, solar energy, heritage tourism, food security, and economic innovation. These summaries are crafted specifically for community organizations, local governments, rural businesses, and development professionals across Ontario. The initiative's aim is to ensure that cutting-edge research is accessible, relevant, and transferable—supporting sustainable livelihoods and evidence-informed decision-making in rural settings.

Addressing Labour Shortages through Newcomer Attraction

Addressing Labour Shortages through Newcomer Attraction is a research initiative led by the University of Guelph, aiming to identify effective strategies for attracting and retaining newcomers to rural Ontario to address ongoing labour shortages. The project employs a mixed-methods approach, including content analysis of rural workforce strategies, case studies of innovative practices, and interviews with rural business owners, newcomers, and economic development agencies. The research focuses on three primary sources of human capital: urban newcomers, immigrant newcomers, and temporary migrants. By examining successful models and gathering diverse perspectives, the project seeks to develop actionable recommendations for rural communities to enhance their workforce and economic resilience through inclusive and sustainable newcomer integration strategies. The findings aim to inform policy and practice to support rural economic development and address labour market challenges.

A Catalyst for Change: Knowledge Mobilization

Over the past year, the Libro Professor of Regional Economic Development has strived to serve as a catalyst of change through sharing new research, new approaches, to advocate for different policies, and to influence local practice. These activities have taken place in-person and online across Ontario, Canada, and internationally. Illustrations are noted below.

The Libro Professor facilitated a discussion with federal, provincial, and territorial ministers responsible for rural economic development in Niagara-on-the-Lake. It was an opportunity to explore innovation approaches to regional economic development.

A series of online workshops were held with community leaders, local governments, nonprofit organizations and policy staff to explore how to translate research into action in a more meaningful and effective manner. A series of guides, videos, and research summaries are now being used to advance regional economic development.

The Libro Professor and team actively use social media to advocate for and influence policy and practice by sharing research-informed insights and engaging professionals in discussions. By curating relevant content and fostering interaction, the Libro Professor helps translate research into practice and shapes professional thinking, demonstrating how social media can serve as a tool for informal policy advocacy and knowledge exchange.

Outputs

Articles and Book Chapters

*Barrett, J. (2024), Breaking path dependency? Factors to enhance capacity for rural local governments in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. Community Development.

*Maloney, J., Markey, S., Gibson, R., & *Weeden, A. (2024). Advancing green infrastructure solutions for rural infrastructure and economic development: A case study from Southwest Ontario. Rural and Regional Development, 2(2), 10010.

Breen, S., Gibson, R., & *Main, H. (2025). Beyond the City Limits: Analysis of federal funding of public transit in rural Canada. Canadian Public Policy/Analyse de politiques, 51(2),

Chowdhury, A., Kabir, K., Khan, N., Gibson, R., & McMorris, M. (2024). Embracing Pluralism: Assessing the Perceptions of Different Stakeholders on the Effectiveness of Advisory Methods in Ontario. The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension.

Gibson, R., *Graham, H., *Sitsofe, P., *Mathew, N., & Breen, S. (2024). Help Wanted: Innovative Approaches for Workforce Development in Rural and Northern Ontario. Y Magazine: Ontario Professional Planners Institute, 15, 41-43.

Gibson, R., *Oyewale, D., *Berek, L., *Miller, C., *Velez, A., *MacLauchlan, & *Pennel, N. (2025). Mobilizing Economic Planning Knowledge for Rural Ontario. Ontario Professional Planners Institute Y Magazine, 17, 46-47.

Markey, S., *Weeden, A., Gibson, R., Halseth, G., & Ryser, L. (2025). Community-Engaged Research and the Right to be Rural. In S. Poyntz, A. Johal, & K. Grain (Eds), Critical Futures: Community Engaged Research in a Time of Crisis and Social Transformation. University of Toronto Press.

Markey, S., Ryser, L., Halseth, G., *Mateus, M., *Barrett, J., Halstrom, L., Vodden, K., & Gibson, R. (2025). Reluctant entrepreneurs or embracing marketization: The governance of municipal entrepreneurialism for community development in rural Canada. Community Development.

*Petric, A., & Gibson, R. (2025). Hidden Treasures? Estimating intergenerational wealth transfers in rural Canada. Regional Science, Regional Studies, 12(1), 270-286.

** denotes a student/emerging scholar author*

Reports and Online Resources

*Berek, L, & Gibson, R. (2024, July). 2024 North Atlantic Forum Explores Sustainable Rural Livelihoods. Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation.

*Berek, L, & Gibson, R. (2024, July). Bringing National and International Rural Research to Ontario. Rural Ontario Institute.

*Berek, L, & Gibson, R. (2024, July). Transferring Knowledge from North Atlantic Forum to Rural Ontario.

*Berek, L, & Gibson, R. (2024, October). From Letterfrack to Rural Ontario: Sharing Ideas from the 2024 North Atlantic Forum. Rural Ontario Institute Newsletter.

*Berek, L. (2024). Searching for Entrepreneurialism in Rural Newfoundland. North Atlantic Forum.

*Berek, L. (2024). The Reality of Unaffordable Housing in Rural Ireland. North Atlantic Forum.

*Berek, L., & Gibson, R. (2024, July). Bringing National and International Rural Research to Ontario. Rural Ontario Institute Newsletter.

*Berek, L., & Gibson, R. (2024, July). Plain Language Summary Workshop Evaluation Report.

*Berek, L., & Gibson, R. (2024, June). Plain Language Summaries: An Overview.

*Berek, L., & Gibson, R. (2024, November). Facilitating Knowledge Exchange - Research Summaries from the 2024 North Atlantic Forum. Published by the Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island.

*Berek, L., & Gibson, R. (2024, September). Facilitating Knowledge Exchange - Research Summaries from the 2024 North Atlantic Forum. Published by the Rural Ontario Institute.

*Berek, L., & Gibson, R. (2024, September). Lessons from Letterfrack: Evaluation of the 2024 North Atlantic Forum.

*Berek, L., & Gibson, R. (2024, September). Mobilizing Knowledge from the 2024 North Atlantic Forum. Published by the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation.

*Berek, L., & Gibson, R. (2024, September). Research Summaries Emerging from the North Atlantic Forum. Published by the Economic Development Council of Ontario.

*Berek, L., & Gibson, R. (2024, September). Rural Research Summaries from the North Atlantic Forum. Published by the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development.

*Berek, L., & Gibson, R. (2024, September). Transferring Rural Research: From Letterfrack to Rural Ontario.

Breen, S., Gibson, R., & Main, H. (2024). Federal Transit Funding: Rural Review & Analysis. 14 Selkirk College.

Reports and Online Resources

Gibson, R. (2024, August). Josh Barrett Successfully Defends PhD. School of Environmental Design and Rural Development. School of Environmental Design and Rural Development.

Gibson, R. (2024, August). Knowledge Mobilization at National Geography Conference. School of Environmental Design and Rural Development.

Gibson, R. (2024, August). SEDRD Scholars Share Rural Research at Canadian Association of Geography Conference. School of Environmental Design and Rural Development.

Gibson, R. (2024, December). Ageism, the Baby Boomers, and Elderhood.

Gibson, R. (2024, July). New Project – Pathways to Practice.

Gibson, R. (2024, July). Pathways to Practice: Bridging Knowledge, Practitioners, and Students. School of Environmental Design and Rural Development.

Gibson, R. (2024, July). Rural Ontario Research Shared at North Atlantic Forum.

Gibson, R. (2024, March). 2024 Rural Symposium.

Gibson, R. (2024, March). New Project: Emerging Voices – Rural Knowledge Transfer.

Gibson, R. (2024, March). Research Sharing at Two Days of Rural Canada.

Gibson, R. (2024, March). SEDRD Research Shared at the Two Days of Rural Canada Conference. School of Environmental Design and Rural Development.

Gibson, R. (2024, May). Josh Barrett (PhD Candidate) Awarded Best Student Paper Award at American Association of Geographers Conference.

Gibson, R. (2024, May). Northern Dialogues Conference Explores Remoteness and Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural and Northern Canada.

Gibson, R. (2024, May). SEDRD Research on Display at Conference Exploring Remoteness and Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural and Northern Canada.

Gibson, R. (2024, November). RPD Celebrates World Town Planning Day.

Gibson, R. (2024, October). Food Security, Workforce Development, and Recognizing International Trained Planners - SEDRD Represented in the Latest Issue of Y Magazine. School of Environmental Design and Rural Development.

Gibson, R. (2024, October). New Publication – Help Wanted.

Gibson, R. (2024, October). SEDRD and Gateway Centre of Excellence in Rural Health Sign New Memorandum of Understanding.

Gibson, R. (2024, September). Gathering Insights on Attracting and Retaining Workers in Rural Ontario.

Gibson, R. (2024, September). Research Chair in Rural Economic Development Updates. Gateway Centre of Excellence in Rural Health.

Gibson, R. (2024, September). Rural Realities of Attracting and Retaining Workers: Perspectives from Seaforth, Ontario. School of Environmental Design and Rural Development.

Gibson, R. (2024, September). Understanding Challenges in Finding Workers.

*Douglas, H., Gibson, R., & Epp, S. (2025). Bridging Rural Insights: Evaluation of the 2025 Rural Research Symposium. Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance.

*Graham, H., & Gibson, R. (2024, July). Addressing Labour Force Shortages in Rural Ontario: Perspective of Business Supporting Organizations. Community Futures Ontario Newsletter.

*Graham, H., & Gibson, R. (2024, July). Finding Workers: Online Survey of Labour Force Shortages in Rural Ontario. Rural Ontario Institute Newsletter.

*Graham, H., & Gibson, R. (2024, July). Finding Workers: Online Survey of Labour Force Shortages in Rural Ontario. Rural Ontario Institute.

*Graham, H., & Gibson, R. (2024, July). Rural Labour Shortages: Findings from Ontario Survey.

*Graham, H., & Gibson, R. (2024, March). Graham and Gibson Share Research at National Immigration Conference.

*Graham, H., & Gibson, R. (2024, March). Innovative Workforce Strategies in Rural Ontario.

*Graham, H., & Gibson, R. (2024). Labour Force Dynamics in Rural Ontario: Perspectives of Community Futures Development Corporations in Ontario.

*Graham, H., & Gibson, R. (2024). Labour Force Dynamics in Rural Ontario: Perspectives of Ontario's Workforce Planning Boards.

MacLauchlan, E. (2024). Heritage Tourism and Local Livelihoods in Inishbofin, Ireland. North Atlantic Forum.

*Madni, S., & Gibson, R. (2024). Scan of Economic Development Job Advertisements in Rural Ontario.

*Mathew, N., & Gibson, R. (2025). A Business Response to Labour Shortages and Refugee Crisis: A Case Study of the Titan Trailers' Response to the Ukrainian Refugee Crisis in Ontario.

*Mathew, N., & Gibson, R. (2025). Case Study of Economic Development and Immigration - The Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot Program in Sudbury, Ontario.

*Mathew, N., & Gibson, R. (2025). Empowering the Workforce: First Work's Pioneering Approach to Addressing Labour Shortages in Ontario's Rural Communities.

*Mathew, N., & Gibson, R. (2025). Enhancing Early Childhood Education in Dufferin County: A Case Study on Collaborative Workforce Development and Diversity Initiatives.

*Miller, C. (2024). A Case Study of Community-Led versus State- Led Solar Projects in NunatuKavut. North Atlantic Forum.

*Oweyale, D., & Gibson, R. (2024, October). University of Guelph Rural Research Summary - Farmland at Risk. Rural Ontario Institute Newsletter.

*Oyewale, D. (2024, May). Summary: Evaluation of the Impact of the Provincial Policy Statement on International Agricultural Workers' Housing in Ontario.

*Oyewale, D., & Gibson, R. (2024, May). Rural Health through the Lenses of Housing for International Agricultural Workers. Gateway Centre of Excellence in Rural Health Newsletter Article.

*Oyewale, D., & Gibson, R. (2024, September). Preserving Ontario's Agricultural Land: Strategies for Sustainable Growth. School of Environmental Design and Rural Development.

*Oyewale, D., & Gibson, R. (2024, September). Rural Research Summary – Farmland Preservation and Urban Expansion in Ontario.

*Oyewale, D., & Gibson, R. (2024, September). Safeguarding Ontario's Farmland: Solutions for Balancing Growth and Agriculture. Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation.

*Oyewale, D., & Gibson, R. (2024). Impact of Social Media Promotion for Rural Researchers: Evaluation of Rural Futures Online Portal and Profiles.

*Oyewale, D., & Gibson, R. (2024). Seeking Sustainability: Enhancing the Rural Futures Initiative at the University of Guelph.

*Oyewale, D., Gibson, R., Caldwell, W., Clow, K., Leach, B., & Mann, S. (2024). Rural Futures Annual Report: 2024.

*Patel, K., & Gibson, R. (2024, August). An Overview of Work Force and Labour Force Development: A Review of Concepts and Models.

*Pennell, N. (2024). SABRI: Reinvesting in the Region to Expand the Economic Base. North Atlantic Forum.

*Sitsofe, P., & Gibson, R. (2024, April). Empowering Rural Well-Being: Insights from the Rural Symposium on Health and Quality of Life. Gateway Centre of Excellence in Rural Health.

*Sitsofe, P., & Gibson, R. (2024, April). Innovative Rural Approaches to Labour Force Development.

*Sitsofe, P., & Gibson, R. (2024, April). Linking Research and Policy: Reflections on the 2024 Rural Symposium.

*Sitsofe, P., & Gibson, R. (2024, April). Research, Policy, and Practice: Reflections on the 2024 Rural Symposium.

*Sitsofe, P., & Gibson, R. (2024, May). Empowering Rural Well-Being: Insights from the Rural Symposium on Health and Quality of Life. Gateway Centre of Excellence in Rural Health Newsletter Article.

*Sitsofe, P., & Gibson, R. (2024, September). Attracting and Retaining Workers can be Difficult – Share Your Insights. Huron East Chamber of Commerce Newsletter.

*Sitsofe, P., & Gibson, R. (2025). Building Economic Strength through Workforce Development: A Case Study of the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus Workforce Development Strategy.

*Sitsofe, P., & Gibson, R. (2025). Innovative Rural Labor Force Planning: A Case Study of Thunder Bay's Northern Immigration Pilot Program.

*Sitsofe, P., & Gibson, R. (2025). Opportunities for Enhancing Workforce Development in Seaforth, Ontario: Findings from Business Walk Discussions.

*Sitsofe, P., Gibson, R., & *Mathew, N. (2024, April). Addressing Rural Labour Shortages: Innovative Ontario Case Studies.

*Sitsofe, P., Gibson, R., & *Mathew, N. (2024, May). Addressing Rural Labour Shortages: Innovative Ontario Case Studies. Rural Ontario Institute Newsletter.

*Sitsofe, P., Gibson, R., & Epp. S. (2024). Emerging Rural Voices – Evaluation of the 2024 Rural Symposium.

*Velez, A. (2024). From Colonial Challenges to Community Solutions: Transforming Food Insecurity in Ktaqmkuk. North Atlantic Forum.

Presentations

*Berek, L., Gibson, R., Brinklow, L, & Downer, S. (2025, March). Translating Research to Practice: Research Summaries from the North Atlantic Forum. 2025 Rural Research Symposium. Guelph, Ontario.

*Dale, J., & Gibson, R. (2024, March). Optimizing local governance: How municipalities navigate the impacts of austerity in rural Ontario. Liminal Spaces: Two Days of Rural Canada, St Catharines, Ontario.

*Dale, J., Gibson, R., & Breen, S. (2024, May). Addressing Labour Shortages Through Newcomer Attraction in Rural Ontario and British Columbia. Northern Dialogues Conference, Whitehorse, Yukon.

Epp, S., Gibson, R., Fullerton, C., & Gaudio Harrison, N. (2025, February). The Urban Exodus: Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Rural Ontario. Gateway Centre for Rural Health Excellence.

Gibson, R. (2024, December). Translating Place to Wealth: Experiences in Place-Based Endowments in Rural Canada. Folk, Knowledge, and Culture Conference, Singapore.

Gibson, R. (2024, May). Supporting rural youth in achieving sustainability. Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture-Embassy of Columbia, Ottawa, Ontario.

Gibson, R. (2025, June). Collaboration – Trends from Rural Ontario and Abroad. Ontario Ministry of Rural Affairs, Guelph, Ontario.

Gibson, R. (2025, March). Capacity, Leadership, and Development. Presented to the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program, Kitchener, Ontario.

Gibson, R. (2025, May). Exploring Inter-Generational Wealth Transfers in Rural Canada. Grey-Bruce Professional Development Network. Thornbury, Ontario.

Gibson, R. (2025, May). Rural Futures: Reflections on Knowledge Transfer and Translation. Knowledge Translation and Transfer Symposium, Guelph, Ontario.

Gibson, R. (2025, May). Weathering the Storm: Strategies for Rural Stability and Growth in Uncertain Times. Dufferin County Seminar Series, Orangeville, Ontario.

Gibson, R. (2024, August). Finding and Retaining Workers: Innovative Approaches to Addressing Labour Force Challenges in Rural Ontario. Canadian Association of Geographers, St John's, Newfoundland and Labrador.

Gibson, R. & *Oyewale, D. (2025, May). Navigating the Policy Quagmire: Housing Challenges for International Agricultural Workers in Rural Ontario. Canadian Association of Geographers Conference, Ottawa, Ontario.

Gibson, R., *Barrett, J., Vodden, K., & *Yirenkyi, E. (2025, May). Investing in Place: Themes and Treads from Atlantic Canada. Association of Non-profit and Social Economy Research Conference, Toronto, Ontario.

Gibson, R., *Graham, H., & *Sitsofe, P. (2024, June). Addressing Workforce Development through Innovative Approaches: Perspectives from Rural Canada. Sustainable Livelihoods: Regenerating Integrated Development through Innovative Communities, Letterfrack, Ireland.

*Graham, H., & Gibson, R. (2024, March). Engaging Newcomers in Rural Ontario to Address Workforce Challenges. Rural Symposium, Guelph, Ontario.

*Graham, H., & Gibson, R. (2024, March). Innovation Workforce Strategies for Engaging Newcomers in Rural Ontario. Our Immigration System: The Way Forward Conference, Montréal, Quebéc.

*Hammond, D. (2024, March). Defining rural: Advancing a place-based rural criteria matrix. Liminal Spaces: Two Days of Rural Canada, St Catharines, Ontario.

*Jacques, C., *Berek, L., *Oyewale, D., *Main, H., Breen, S., & Gibson, R. (2024, March). Rural Transit Funding - Ontario Analysis. Rural Symposium, Guelph, Ontario.

*Jacques, C., *Berek, L., *Oyewale, D., *Main, H., Breen, S., & Gibson, R. (2024, June). Analysis of Ontario Transit Projects Supported By Federal Funding. Sustainable Livelihoods: Regenerating Integrated Development through Innovative Communities, Letterfrack, Ireland.

Lasse, V., & Gibson, R. (2024, October). Farm Succession and Transfers of Wealth Planning. The Rural Assembly: Explore Our Differences Together, Blyth, Ontario.

*Moore, N., Epp, S. Gibson, R., & Fullerton, C. (2024, March). A Literature Review and Media Reporting on COVID-19 Related Mobility. Rural Symposium, Guelph, Ontario.

*Oweyale, D. (2024, June). Building Sustainable Communities through Immigration and Housing: A Review of Ontario International Agricultural Workers. Sustainable Livelihoods: Regenerating Integrated Development through Innovative Communities, Renvyle, Ireland.

*Oweyale, D. (2024, March). Assessing the Interplay of Immigration and Housing in Ontario's Agricultural Landscape for Economic Development. Liminal Spaces: Two Days of Rural Canada, St Catharines, Ontario.

*Oweyale, D. (2024, March). From Policy to Practice: Housing for International Agricultural Workers in Ontario. Presented at the 2024 Rural Symposium, Guelph, Ontario.

*Oyewale, D., & Gibson, R. (2025, March). Addressing the Housing Policy Divide: A Study of International Agricultural Worker Accommodation Standards in Ontario. 2025 Rural Research Symposium. Guelph, Ontario.

*Oyewale, D., & Gibson, R. (2025, March). Visualizing Rural Research: Enhanced Knowledge Translation Pathways Between University of Guelph and Rural Ontario Communities. 2025 Rural Research Symposium. Guelph, Ontario.

*Oyewale, D., Gibson, R., Leach, B., Mann, S., Clow, K., & Caldwell, W. (2024, March). Rural Futures: Bridging Research and Community Solutions for a Resilient Ontario. Rural Symposium, Guelph, Ontario.

*Petric, A., Gibson, R., Markey, S., Vodden, K., & Fürst, B. (2024, May). Exploring the impact and potential of place-based philanthropy for community development in rural and northern Canada. Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation Conference, Whitehorse, Yukon.

Rich, K., Nelson, G., Ugwu, & *Dale, J. (2024, March). Social infrastructure in rural communities. Liminal Spaces: Two Days of Rural Canada, St Catharines, Ontario.

*Sitsofe, P. & Gibson, R. (2025, March). Workforce Challenges and Opportunities in Seaforth: Insight from Business Walk Discussions. 2025 Rural Research Symposium. Guelph, Ontario.

*Sitsofe, P., *Mathew, N., & Gibson, R. (2024, March). Addressing Rural Labour Shortages: Innovative Ontario Case Studies. Rural Symposium, Guelph, Ontario.

*Telfah, R. (2024, March). The early settlement experiences of Syrian families in Southwestern Ontario. Liminal Spaces: Two Days of Rural Canada, St Catharines, Ontario.

*Van Dyke, C. (2024, May). Home on Borrowed Land: Geographies of Land Leasing and the Impacts of Colonial Land Policy on Housing in the Northwest Territories. Northern Dialogues Conference, Whitehorse, Yukon.

*Wilson, T., *Cote, J., & Gibson, R. (2025, March). Knowledge Translation and Transfer to Advance Rural Economic Development in Ontario. 2025 Rural Research Symposium. Guelph, Ontario.

New Research Grants

Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Connecting Local Practice, Public Policy, and Research (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada - Connections Grant, 2024-2026, $37,500)

Connecting the Dots: Mobilizing Rural Knowledge to Knowledge Users (Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance Knowledge Translation and Transfer – Mobilization, 2024-2026, $47,000)

Bridging International Research to Rural Ontario (Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance Knowledge Translation and Transfer – Initiatives, 2024-2025, $5,000)

Emerging Voices – Rural Knowledge Transfer (Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance Knowledge Translation and Transfer – Initiatives, 2024-2025, $3,800)

Pathways to Practice: Bridging Knowledge, Practitioners, and Students (Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance Knowledge Translation and Transfer – Initiatives, 2024-2025, $5,000)

Blueprint for Prosperity: Preparing for Mega-Investments in Manufacturing (Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance Knowledge Translation and Transfer – Tier 1, 2025-2029, $201,000)

Philanthropy in Atlantic Canada: Connecting Research, Policy and Practice to Build Resilient Rural Communities (Primary Applicant is Joshua Barrett, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada - Connections Grant, 2024-2026, $49,861)

Graduate Student-Led Research

Barrett, J. (2024, August). A New Localism for Newfoundland and Labrador? An Exploratory Study of Rural Local Government Entrepreneurialism. PhD in Rural Studies.

Berek, L. (2025, April). The Living Room of a Rural Community: Economic Development in New Tecumseth, Ontario. Thesis, Master of Science (Planning).

Chew, K. (2024, August). Grace, Grit, and Intentions: Nurturing Communities on Common Groups. Major Research Paper, Master of Science (Planning).

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