

# Canadian Science Policy Fellowship

## 2019-20 Provincial Government Fellow Biographies

### **Sarah Drohan, Princeton University** **Hosted by the BC Ministry of Health**

Sarah Drohan has a PhD in Applied and Computational Mathematics from Princeton University where she specialized in mathematical ecology, epidemiology, and economics. She has been interested in interdisciplinary work since her honours Bachelor of Science in Integrated Science with Mathematics from McMaster University.

Her research has focused on developing novel mathematics to solve problems in optimal decision-making and resource allocation for public goods. She has developed mathematical models to manage and predict antibiotic resistance in hospitals, the impact of fisher and hunter behaviour on ecosystems, and the drivers of wealth inequality. As evidenced by the wide variety of fields to which she contributes, she seeks to use her quantitative skills to take on challenges in new policy areas that promote social and economic wellbeing.

She is also passionate about enhancing diversity in science and society. As a woman in mathematics and a competitive powerlifter, she is committed to encouraging young women to thrive in areas where they are underrepresented.



### **Joana Katter, York University** **Hosted by the BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions**

Joana Katter is a behavioural scientist with a PhD in Social Psychology from York University, specializing in health psychology and economic psychology. Her research uses psychological models of stress and coping to understand the impact of economic conditions on both psychological functioning and subsequent financial behaviours. Her dissertation explored how economic stressors can impact financial risk-taking by first influencing an individual's perceptions of control.

Prior to starting the Canadian Science Policy Fellowship, Joana completed a Mitacs Accelerate postdoctoral research project in collaboration with TD Bank. In this position, she applied behavioural economics to understand the impact of financial literacy and related psychological constructs on financial decision-making. Joana is also an active member of the International Association for Applied Psychology, where she is currently a member of the Special Project on Gender Equality and has previously served as a member-at-large on the board of directors.



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### **Christine Kormos, University of Victoria** **Hosted by the BC Ministry of Agriculture**

Christine Kormos is a behavioural scientist with a master's and PhD in Applied Social and Environmental Psychology from the University of Victoria, and a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Psychology from Queen's University. She has a passion for conducting projects that apply behavioural insights and for bridging research with application to create behaviour change interventions. For her dissertation, she studied British Columbians' preferences for plug-in electric vehicles to help inform the design of provincial policy measures through the BC Ministry of Energy and Mines. Recently, as a postdoctoral fellow at Simon Fraser University, Christine conducted interdisciplinary and policy-relevant research, incorporating theories and methods from psychology and economics to inform efforts to increase adoption of zero-emissions vehicles in Canada. In addition to authoring academic papers and book chapters, she has also worked as a sessional instructor at the University of Victoria, as well as a behavioural science and behavioural economics consultant on sustainability-related research projects.

Christine will be working with the Ministry of Agriculture over the coming year to develop, implement, and evaluate behavioural interventions to target improved access to land among new entrants to agriculture in BC.



### **Natalya Melnychuk, University of Waterloo** **Hosted by the BC Ministry of Agriculture**

Natalya Melnychuk has a PhD in Social and Ecological Sustainability from the University of Waterloo, where she examined collaborative water governance bodies across British Columbia. More recently, Natalya has been finalizing her postdoctoral research on environmental flow needs policy across Canada.

As a consultant and academic, Natalya has worked with the British Columbia provincial government, local governments, non-governmental groups, First Nations and research organizations across the country. Her work has included: assessing Okanagan-integrated water resource management practices for the Okanagan Basin Water Board; reviewing and providing public comment on the modernization of BC's Agricultural Waste Control Regulation for the Shuswap Water Action Team; leading a jurisdictional review on water quantity management for the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks; facilitating the Indigenous re-naming of a BC Provincial Park by building relationships between BC Parks and the Little Shuswap Indian Band; managing a rural sustainability project on business succession planning for the municipality of Chase; and teaching a master's-level course on water management sustainability at the University of Saskatchewan.

In the Shuswap, Natalya serves on her area's Advisory Planning Commission and is a community representative for the Shuswap Watershed Council. Natalya is joining the BC Ministry of Agriculture's climate action team for 12 months as a Mitacs Canadian Science Policy Fellow. Natalya will work with the climate action team on its key priorities and will also undertake a major research project on climate change adaptation.



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### **Ashley Pullman, University of British Columbia** **Hosted by the BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions**

Ashley Pullman is a postdoctoral fellow at The Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa. As a Vanier Canada Graduate Scholar, she completed her PhD in Educational Studies with a sub-specialization in measurement, evaluation, and research methodology from the University of British Columbia. Her research focuses broadly on education, skill, and work, and uses a sociodemographic lens to understand how and why outcomes vary among individuals. She specializes in scholarship on inequality in educational outcomes and school-work transitions and, more recently, evaluating social services and programs.



### **Luisa Ramirez, Wilfrid Laurier University** **Hosted by the BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development**

Luisa Ramirez is an environmental social scientist with expertise in environmental governance, social-ecological systems, biodiversity conservation, research evaluation, and policy-science interactions. She completed her PhD in Geography at Wilfrid Laurier University in 2017. Luisa's doctoral research examined opportunities and constraints for integrating key aspects of governance and for shifting traditional top-down schemes towards more collaborative and integrative resource management strategies that enhance conservation and social outcomes.

As a postdoctoral researcher in the Sustainability Research Effectiveness (SRE) Program at Royal Roads University, Luisa focused on analyzing aspects of scientific research design and implementation that are key for influencing policy and understanding how those aspects may shape stakeholders' perceptions on different kinds of knowledge and influence knowledge uptake in decision making. The outcomes of her postdoctoral work support research design that facilitates opportunities for learning and for improving the implementation of research that aims to inform policy making. Luisa's postdoctoral experience will be instrumental in her work with the government as a Mitacs Canadian Science Policy Fellow, where she will pursue improving the integration of science policy making.





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### **Anna Slavina, University of Toronto**

**Hosted by the Department of Central Services, Government of Manitoba**

Anna Slavina's research expertise lies at the intersection of quantitative data analysis strategies and the study of cross-national trends in political activism. She has over seven years of experience working with complex cross-national social surveys and advanced quantitative modeling techniques. She also has experience in developing qualitative surveys to address questions related to migrant acculturation and best practices for graduate and undergraduate student learning.

Anna's research on political participation and immigration has been presented at major national and international conferences, and published in peer-reviewed scholarly journals and edited volumes. Her research has also been presented to community organizations and used to inform policy and programming to target university students and better engage them in university-level community activities.

She looks forward to having the opportunity to apply her research skills to inform policy that best serves Canadians.

