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Laurier receives nearly \$2.3 million in research funding from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council

WATERLOO – Researchers at Wilfrid Laurier University have received **\$2.28 million** in funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for projects under the SSHRC Partnership Development Grant, Insight Grant and Partnership Engage Grant programs.

The funded research projects will address important societal issues such as best practices around the regulation of Canada's sex workers, the impact of human behaviours within high-performance green office buildings and the experiences of LGBTQ immigrants and refugees in the Waterloo Region.

"Laurier researchers, through unique partnerships with communities, businesses and academic institutions, are contributing to Canada's knowledge economy to solve pressing issues facing society and business," said **Robert Gordon**, vice-president: research. "This investment by SSHRC continues to demonstrate Laurier's growing and innovative research strengths."

Laurier researcher **Yujie (Jessie) Zhan**, associate professor at the Lazaridis School of Business and Economics, received a SSHRC Insight Grant to fill a gap in research about the psychological aspects of the transition to retirement, specifically retiree identity development and activity adaptation.

Between 2011 and 2031, a large number of baby boomers are or will be transitioning into retirement. Retirement represents a major life transition for older workers, but many retirees also suffer from poor retirement adjustment.

"It is crucial to study how people prepare for and transition into retirement today," said Zhan. "Both scholarly research and organizational practices have largely focused on the financial aspect of retirement transition, but once the finances have been taken care of, many retirees face the difficulty of establishing their identity in their new role as retirees and adjusting to their new life routines in retirement."

Using interviews and surveys of workers who are close to retirement age, Zhan will study how their personality and attitudes toward work and retirement, their organizations' policies and practices related to ageing and retirement, and their social network impact their ability to transition into retirement.

Other funded Laurier research projects include:

- **Jeffrey Aguinaldo**, associate professor in the Department of Sociology, will examine how HIV and its disclosure are made relevant in everyday interactions of people with HIV-positive status.

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- **Simon Coulombe**, assistant professor in the Department of Psychology, will partner with the Rainbow Community Council to strengthen the understanding of the experiences of LGBTQ immigrants and refugees in the Waterloo Region.
- **Scott Ensign**, associate professor at the Lazaridis School of Business and Economics, will bring together academic institutions with existing rurally based social enterprises and economic and community development organizations to fill a void in research and knowledge about non-profit social enterprises located in rural and northern regions.
- **Stacey Hannem**, associate professor in the Department of Criminology, will conduct a comparative analysis of the legalization, decriminalization and targeted criminalization of sex workers and will collect data on the experiences of sex workers under each model to identify best practices for sex-industry regulation.
- **Michael Haughton**, professor at the Lazaridis School of Business and Economics, will examine the "spot market" in the buying and selling of transport services in the trucking sector to fill a knowledge gap in how it affects transportation efficiency, business success and environmental sustainability.
- **Mark Humphries**, associate professor in the Department of History and director of the [Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies](#) (LCMSDS), will work to systematically organize and analyze pension files from the Department of Veterans Affairs, in which [Humphries initially received funding to digitize](#).
- **Simon Kiss**, assistant professor in the Digital Media and Journalism program, will explore the New Democratic Party's transformation into a more "electoral professional" party and how well the party is now positioned to influence policies that can contribute to Canadians' overall well-being and quality of life.
- **Tobias Krettenauer**, professor in the Department of Psychology, will examine sustainable behavior and moral development from early to late adolescence.
- **Nancy Kocovski**, associate professor in the Department of Psychology, will evaluate the impact of self-compassion on social stress that arises before, during, and following, different types of stressful social situations such as during presentations or social interactions in the short- and longer-term.
- **Lindie Liang**, assistant professor at the Lazaridis School of Business and Economics, will provide insight on why abusive supervision occurs and the effects of abusive leadership on the leaders themselves.
- **Audra Mitchell**, associate professor in the Department of Political Science and at the Balsillie School of International Affairs, will partner with Six Nations Polytechnic and two Australian universities to conduct community-based research on global patterns of plant and animal extinction and how Indigenous-led recovery activities can restore relationships between Indigenous communities and the nature on which they rely.
- **Manuel Riemer**, associate professor in the Department of Psychology, will collaborate with three universities, Sustainable Waterloo Region and contributing industry and government partners to investigate the human factors in high-performance green office buildings. [Read more about Riemer's research](#).

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- **Bradley Ruffle**, professor at the Lazaridis School of Business and Economics, will study the “rank-match algorithm” that currently matches students with co-op work placements; the algorithm has not been previously studied.
- **Michelle Skop**, assistant professor in the Faculty of Social Work, will partner with Branford based non-profit organization Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services to examine the use of art therapy in counselling survivors of intimate partner violence.
- **David Smith**, associate professor in the Department of History, will contribute a historical perspective to the debate around corporate social responsibility by reconstructing debates over the legitimacy of the business corporation and its social responsibilities in England from 1625-1784.
- **Justin Smith**, associate professor at the Lazaridis School of Business and Economics, will produce new insights into the determinants of private donation using the now accessible Longitudinal Administrative Databank (LAD), a database of detailed tax filing information.
- **Yujie (Jessie) Zhan**, associate professor at the Lazaridis School of Business and Economics, will fill a gap in research around the psychological aspects of retirement transition, specifically retiree identity development and activity adaptation.

This research is supported through the [Tri-Council Research Support Fund](#).