

# THE GREEN GAP: TOWARD INCLUSIVITY IN TORONTO'S GREEN EMPLOYMENT

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*This research examines Toronto's transition to **green jobs** and the **green economy**, with a focus on the **energy-related sector***

## CONTEXT

In light of climate change and scarcity of non-renewable resources, Toronto is facing a contradiction in energy. High levels of energy use and urban development characterize the city alongside growing concerns of environmental pollution and energy security. With a need to conserve and consider alternative sources of energy, there is momentum toward creating a green economy that can stimulate economic activity, reduce environmental risks, and improve social equity. Key policy initiatives, such as Ontario's **Green Energy and Green Economy Act** and **The Power to Live Green: Toronto's Sustainable Energy Strategy**, signal the growth of green economy.

The **energy-related sector** is a significant part of Toronto's growing green economy. Potential jobs can include **consumer conservation**, **alternative energy production**, and **retrofitting** of power plants and buildings with energy efficient equipment. New green **job training initiatives** are providing some of the skills re-training for this emerging labour market. The prospective job market in green energy is also associated with better paying opportunities.

Many racialized workers are re-training in order to seek better employment opportunities in the green economy. However, one study from Eco-Canada reveal **women, new immigrants, and Aboriginal people** are under-represented in green jobs across Canada, in comparison to the rest of the Canadian workforce. There is a need to frame green economy toward better social inclusion.

## OBJECTIVES

- ✓ to **foster a better understanding** of the green energy job sector and the green economy based on a **dialogue with key stakeholders** in Toronto
- ✓ to investigate pathways for community and stakeholders to **build capacity** to frame the transition to a green economy in more **socially inclusive terms**

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the multiple social constructions of green jobs by various stakeholders?
- 2) What do green jobs mean for racialized communities?
- 3) What do various stakeholders see as solutions to moving the green agenda forward?

## RESEARCH PLAN and TIMELINE

In line with the objectives to foster community dialogue and building a more inclusive green economy, this study uses a **collaborative community-based research approach**.

**An advisory group** to this project will consist of leaders and individuals in green energy sector and representatives from key organizations. The community advisory group will ensure community involvement and collaboration. The group will informally guide interaction with stakeholders, help with interview recruitment, and contribute to research dissemination.

**In-depth interviews** and **focus groups** are to be conducted to gain perspective on the green economy and green energy job sector in Toronto. This **qualitative research strategy** can enable an understanding of how different groups of people perceive and define the emerging green economy. Through this discussion, the study strives to open up opportunities for a more inclusive green economy.

	Method	Set-up	Stakeholders
Year I + Year II	<b>In-depth Interviews</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 45 interviews</li> <li>➤ 90 minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ green energy business leaders</li> <li>❖ green energy and green jobs policy key informants</li> <li>❖ labour organizations and trade union key informants</li> <li>❖ green jobs training program organizers</li> <li>❖ green job seekers from diverse racialized communities</li> </ul>
Year III	<b>Focus Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 5 focus groups</li> <li>➤ 90 minutes</li> <li>➤ 6-9 mixed participants per group</li> </ul>	

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