

Postdoctoral Fellowship in Human-Polar Bear Coexistence in Southern Hudson Bay and James Bay

The Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change (EUC) at York University is seeking a full-time Postdoctoral Fellow to lead a collaborative project on human-polar bear coexistence in Hudson Bay and James Bay.

Background: The coexistence of people and polar bears is an emerging conservation concern throughout the circumpolar Arctic, with serious implications for both human safety and polar bear conservation. A better understanding of the ecological factors contributing to polar bear presence around communities could help predict and mitigate conflict, improve conservation outcomes, and enhance public safety. Understanding the proximate and ultimate drivers of human-polar bear interaction is essential to developing appropriate management responses. Polar bears in Ontario inhabit the traditional territories of the Cree people of the Hudson Bay lowlands, who have coexisted with polar bears for millennia. Members of the Weenusk (Peawanuck), Washaho (Fort Severn), Attawapiskat, Kashechewan, Fort Albany, and Moose Cree First Nations may encounter polar bears while travelling on the land or in their communities. With polar bears spending more time on land as sea ice habitat declines, the risk of human-polar bear conflict may be rising.

Purpose and Responsibilities: The appointee will work under the supervision of Dr. Gregory Thiemann and Dr. Joseph Northrup to lead a collaborative project on human-polar bear coexistence. With funding provided by Mushkegowuk Council and Polar Bears International, in partnership with the Weston Foundation, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, and San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, the appointee will work to identify drivers of, and effective mitigation strategies for, human-polar bear interactions. Specific responsibilities include: collecting and analyzing interview data from knowledge holders, coordinating with research partners, participating in fieldwork, applying for grants, writing manuscripts.

Skills and Qualifications: Applicants must have completed all requirements for a PhD. Previous research experience in understanding the human dimensions of conflict with wildlife is essential. Prior experience collaborating with Indigenous partners is highly-valued. Expertise on polar bear and/or sea ice ecology is an asset. The position will require travel to First Nations communities in the Hudson Bay region.

We welcome applications from all qualified individuals, including individuals within the University's employment equity categories of women, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities and aboriginal persons, individuals of diverse gender and sexual orientation and all groups protected by the Human Rights Code. York University is committed to employment equity and diversity, and a positive and supportive environment.

This is a 2-year position starting as soon as possible, and ideally by May 1, 2025. The salary for the position is \$70,000 per year, plus benefits.

The position is open to both Canadian and non-Canadian applicants, but the appointment will depend upon an applicant securing the right to work in Canada. The position is based at York University's Keele Campus, with some options for remote work. We invite qualified candidates to submit the following to Gregory Thiemann (thiemann@yorku.ca) by **March 31, 2025**: 1) a full CV; 2) statement of interest, describing relevant experience and accomplishments; and 3) the names and contact details of three referees.

Only those applicants selected for consideration will be contacted.

For more information: Contact Dr. Gregory Thiemann (thiemann@yorku.ca) or Dr. Joseph Northrup (Joseph.Northrup@ontario.ca)

About EUC

The Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change at York University explicitly addresses the distinct, yet interconnected, challenges of environmental change and urbanization, with a focus on innovating diverse transitions to a sustainable and just future. EUC champions interdisciplinarity through curricular programs and scholarship; emphasizes field-based and experiential learning to enhance understanding of biophysical processes and social potentials; embraces global perspectives so that this understanding is derived from a broad range of places; and pursues community-engaged endeavours to generate meaningful scholarship and to train active citizens, innovators and leaders. As a community, we believe that making positive change requires bold and diverse thinking, ambitious action, and community engagement. We are inclusive and devoted to making the world a better place for all. EUC is currently home to five undergraduate programs leading to BES, BA, and BSc degrees, Master's programs in Environmental Studies (MES and MES/JD), Geography (MA and MSc) and Planning (MES); and PhD programs in Environmental Studies and Geography; as well as a number of programs with certificates and diplomas. See <https://euc.yorku.ca/>

About York

York is a leading international teaching and research university, and a driving force for positive change. Empowered by a welcoming and diverse community with a uniquely global perspective, we are preparing our students for their long-term careers and personal success. Together, we can make things right for our communities, our planet and our future.