WCMER
DEEP DIVES
INNOVATING URBAN EXTENSION
WCMER DEEP DIVES
INNOVATING URBAN EXTENSION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEEP DIVE OVERVIEW
CURRENT AND PAST FELLOWSHIPS
CURRENT DEEP DIVE PLANS OF WORK:
  Urban Professional Development
  Urban Green Infrastructure
  Urban Extension and Academia
WCMER Applied Research Fellows undertake Deep Dives to address complex issues facing metropolitan areas, while providing opportunities for faculty at WCMER platinum member institutions to lead multi-state or national projects. Each WCMER Deep Dive is led by a funded WCMER Fellow, a subject matter expert from a platinum member institution who provides leadership to:

- assess the current state of the issue including the current knowledge base, and the need and opportunities within metropolitan communities;
- build a collaborative network of other professionals working in the area;
- identify and pursue funding opportunities; and
- help advance the knowledge base of other Extension professionals.

WCMER offers several Deep Dives per year. Each Deep Dive is implemented over a period of approximately two years, with annual funding based on the Center’s approved budget. The goal of each Deep Dive is to build a sustainable network which continues to secure funded projects, produce scholarship and expand Extension’s capacity in metropolitan areas after the fellowship concludes.

**How we support Deep Dive Applied Research**

To support these Deep Dives, WCMER provides:

- funding to the Fellow to support their deep dive;
- grant support for multi-university projects, including established master agreements with WCMER member institutions;
- staffing support for workshops, webinars, summits, or other activities associated with the deep dive; and
- access to metropolitan communities across the nation through connections to WCMER member institutions and the National Urban Extension Leaders (NUEL) network to help expand the reach and impact of the Deep Dive.

**How to become a WCMER Deep Dive Fellow**

An application to propose a Deep Dive Fellowship is on the WCMER website. Additionally, the WCMER Advisory Board may establish a fellowship based on opportunities to address emerging or timely issues, and invite faculty, with expertise in that issue, to undertake that fellowship.

---

It starts with an issue facing our cities

Progresses with an exploration of the knowledge base and community needs

Expands into a powerful collaborative network of content experts across the region

Culminates in applied research projects and strengthened connections between land-grant universities and metro areas
The WCMER established Applied Research Fellowships to increase our capacity to conduct applied research while also trying to leverage synergistic activity amongst faculty from multiple member institutions. Referred to as Deep Dives, these fellowships address complex issues with the intention of creating a collaborative network that culminates in funded applied research projects, scholarship and professional development activities.

- **Nigel Pickering (WSU, 2020)** Nigel will reach out to potential urban green infrastructure national partners to develop a research network, seek funds to promote green infrastructure partnerships, and create durable products from the 2018 Urban Green Infrastructure Summit.

- **Ramona Madhosingh-Hector (UF, 2020)** Ramona will address urban Extension professional development by exploring organizational competencies and related professional development for administrative leadership. She will also focus additional effort on individual competencies and needs with an emphasis on coordination with other Extension organizations supporting urban Extension professional development.

- **Patricia Townsend (WSU, 2018-19).** Patricia expanded upon the collaborative network created at the Urban Green Infrastructure Summit in 2018, disseminate results of the summit through an award winning poster at the National Sustainability Summit + National Extension Energy Summit, procured NSF funding to plan and host The Next Urban Giants summit in 2019 which produced three scholarly products, and began development of a National Science Foundation Research Coordination Network proposal.

Resulting products:
• **Julie Fox (tOSU, 2017 and 2019).** Julie used the WCMER Promising Practices data base to catalog existing, and find new opportunities for, professional development targeting the necessary competencies for urban extension professionals. She developed a training program and three scholarly publications related to this work. In 2019 she led an Urban Extension Professional Development Summit – which brought together a diverse group of Extension leaders representing different subject areas, ECOP regions and JCEP organizations to collectively address core competencies, and identify a series of next steps that provide a realistic pathway toward achieving a collective urban Extension professional development system. Julie also hosted a Leading Edge Dialog at the 2019 National Urban Extension Conference titled Staffing: Preparing the urban Extension workforce, and authored a subsequent white paper (in progress) documenting outcomes of that discussion.

Resulting products include:


• **Jody Norman (CSU, 2017).** Jody conducted a review and meta-analysis of the WCMER Promising Practices Data Base created by the first WCMER Applied Research Fellow in 2016, for best or promising practices of how Extension professionals are engaged in policy work. An article for the Journal of Extension about this effort is in process.

• **Dayna Emmons (WSU, 2017).** Working under the direction of Dr. Rebecca Sero (WSU), Dayna helped establish and conduct elements of the WCMER’s three-pronged evaluation system.

Resulting product:


• **Marie Ruemenapp (MSU, 2016).** As the first WCMER Applied Research Fellow, Marie created the WCMER Promising Practices Data Base through an extensive search of existing published literature relevant to metropolitan extension. The WCMER Promising Practices Data Base is available to faculty from member institutions at all membership levels. This work was presented in several venues and supported Marie’s dissertation work.

Resulting product:

- Literature Database for Metropolitan Extension; https://metroextension.wsu.edu/2016/03/01/literature-database/
WCMER Deep Dive – Urban Professional Development

The Landscape
Working in urban, suburban and peri-urban areas requires that all Extension professionals – both field staff and administrators – possess skills beyond disciplinary expertise for their work to have the desired impact. The WCMER, through its Urban Professional Development Deep Dive is working to identify and implement a series of next steps that provides a realistic pathway toward achieving a collective urban Extension professional development system. This system would be designed to help both individual Extension professionals and Extension organizations function more effectively, while recognizing the need to provide tangible benefits to its member institutions.

Key Roles and Accomplishments
Working in various partnership combinations National Urban Extension Leaders (NUEL), eXtension, Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) and WCMER, are all working to address professional development for urban Extension personnel.

- **NUEL** – guided by their National Urban Extension framework and opportunities for the Cooperative Extension System, NUEL’s efforts have been focused on understanding the needs of urban Extension personnel through the Professional Development Action Team led by Brenda Rogers from the University of Florida.

- **eXtension** – has provided a platform for framing and disseminating information by supporting NUEL fellows working on the eFieldbook, a compilation of stories of successful urban Extension programs, and a Competency Framework Development. Working collaboratively with NUEL, they funded a fellow to focus on the Extension program delivery professional with hopes of getting to a fellow to focus on the project-based extension professional.

- **JCEP** is exploring certificate programs for Extension competencies and a complimentary urban competency “badge”. Professional development efforts are also ongoing in each of the JCEP organizations.

- **WCMER** has focused on viewing the organizations and actions through more of a collective impact lens, including focusing 2019’s Urban Professional Development Deep Dive and conversations with the Western Extension Directors Association (WEDA) on this approach and the roles WCMER can play. Accomplishments from the first Deep Dive fellow, Julie Fox from The Ohio State University, included:
  - A February, 2019 Urban Extension Professional Development Summit – in conjunction with the JCEP annual conference – which brought together a diverse group of Extension leaders representing different subject areas, ECOP regions and JCEP organizations to collectively address core competencies, and identify a series of next steps that provide a realistic pathway toward achieving a collective urban Extension professional development system.
  - A Leading Edge Dialog at the 2019 National Urban Extension Conference (NUEC) titled Staffing: Preparing the urban Extension workforce, and a subsequent white paper (in progress) documenting outcomes of that discussion.
  - Direction of a Competency Framework Development (CFD) process and additional research to study which competencies are unique for Extension professionals working in urban areas.

Resulting from these previous activities, WCMER sees its primary focus for professional development to be more at the organizational level (e.g. staffing approaches, project management, working with cities and non-traditional stakeholders) and NUEL will continue to focus primarily at the individual-level competencies.
Next Steps for the Deep Dive
To further advance WCMER's leadership and dialogue with WEDA, and continue follow-up from the NUEC Leading Edge Dialogue, the Urban Extension Professional Development Summit, and the NUEL Professional Development Action Team, the WCMER fellow will focus on the following next steps:

**Organizational Competencies and Administrator Professional Development**

1. Review WEDA notes and visit with WCMER members who participated in the event for further context as needed.
2. Explore organizational competencies and related professional development for administrative leadership.
3. Work with WCMER and ECOP on potential topic-based webinars and/or whitepaper contributions aligned with identified competencies.

**Individual Competencies and Professional Development**

- Follow-up with JCEP on the eXtension competency framework to gain an understanding of how this is progressing and explore ways to integrate an urban digital badge or other micro-credential.
- Work with the NUEL PD Action Team and eXtension to complete a CFD process for Urban Extension Program Professionals and Project Representative (i.e. Hot Shots).
- Work with WCMER and eXtension on potential webinar and eBook contributions aligned with identified competencies.
- As appropriate, coordinate and work with other WCMER projects (e.g. NUEL Western Network summit, Urban Green Infrastructure Deep Dive, and ROI to Cities Deep Dive) related to the primary focus of this deep dive.
  o Communication structure will need to be established for this.

**Timeline and Deliverables for Urban Professional Development Fellow 2020**

1. Based on the first two tasks for organizational competencies, provide a written report or white paper outlining findings and next steps – if appropriate, think about developing this into some form of durable product for professional advancement and system level documentation.
2. Keep members of the WCMER PD Action Team (whatever you guys are 😊) up-to-date so they can communicate to the WCMER Advisory Board on progress at bi-monthly meetings.
3. If appropriate, develop a SOW and budget to carry on this deep dive for CY2021.
WCMER Deep Dive – Urban Green Infrastructure and Sustainability

The Landscape
The WCMER launched the Urban Green Infrastructure Deep Dive with a summit in 2018 (http://metroextension.wsu.edu/gisummit). One goal from the summit was to develop a research network to enhance cooperation among researchers, state agencies, and stormwater practitioners. A regional network has the potential to:

- Increase knowledge and generate solutions
- Target research and avoid duplication
- Identify regional differences
- Provide certified training and continuing education
- Connect to Community Colleges / Tech Schools

Other potential partners for a regional network are:
- NUE - NE-C Hatch
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- State Environmental Protection Agencies
- NIWR Water Resources Institutes
- USDA-NRCS
- Water Environment Federation (WEF)
- Connect eXtension
- Sierra Club
- National Wildlife Federation
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- The Nature Conservancy
- Water Education Teacher (WET)
- Greening America’s Cities
- Watershed Associations

Task 1. Reach Out to Potential National Partners

- EPA Region 1. This region is the only one actively involved with NPDES stormwater permits. Others delegate NPDES responsibilities to the states. They have already expressed an interest to participate.
- WEF. This national organization has a Stormwater Institute with a National GSI Certification Program and a program for Stormwater Testing and Evaluation for Products and Practices.
- State and National Extension Programs. Connect to state Extension programs through professional societies like ANREP, the National Urban Extension Leaders (NUEL) network as they build out national and regional priorities, and other professional gatherings like the National Sustainability Summit + National Extension Energy Summit
- Other partners from the list above

Task 2. Seek Funding to Promote GI Partnership

- NSF Research Coordination Network. A draft proposal has been prepared and will need to be modified for new ideas and approaches. A number of NSF program directors should be consulted ahead of this effort. It is important to have champion at NSF.
- Seek funding from SESYNC (www.sesync.org/opportunities). Grants are available for collaboration on specific topics. The Center in Annapolis has well-equipped meeting rooms to host large groups for collaborative research.
• **Seek funding from regional and national foundations.** Examples are WRF, Barr, Bullitt, Mott, Mead, Johnson, Moore, Robert Wood.

**Task 3: Create durable products from the 2018 Summit**

• **Reach out to Summit presenters** on willingness to write blog style posts of their presentations and / or topics.

• **Working with the WCMER Director,** determine interest in MSRC in co-publishing or distributing the posts.

**Timeline: July through December 2020**
WCMER Deep Dive – Urban Extension and Academia: Subject Matter Expertise vs. Convener vs. Academic Systems

The Landscape
Extension faculty and staff working in urban areas need the same set of core competencies as Extension professionals in other geographic settings. However, because of the unique community conditions in urban areas, these individuals must also have additional skills and attributes to effectively address the needs of urban constituents. At the same time, Extension faculty and staff must navigate or manage their careers in sync with academic systems that are traditionally structured and lack the flexibility to incorporate new ways to accomplish the land grant mission. This creates a dilemma for Extension professionals who want to work in urban areas and advance in their careers as well.

The urban environment is competitive and complex. Extension competes with both government and non-governmental organizations that invest in specialized talent to develop social media programs, managing grants and contracts, and conducting other specialized activities. To be successful in achieving Extension impact and community change in this competitive environment, Extension professionals need flexibility from the academic system. Thus, new and innovative career tracks, balanced with academic rigor such as promotion and tenure requirements, will help propel urban Extension professionals to both greater academic advancement and overall impact.

Plan of Work
This deep dive will look at current system approaches for urban Extension professionals that are successful and replicable for urban counties. Research will include:

- Recruiting practices for urban Extension professionals beyond traditional academia’s methods.
- Comparing the role of subject matter expert versus convener in urban Extension and how that can translate to academic success in career tracks.
- Exploring how volunteer recruitment and management (convening) as a program/teaching strategy can be used for academic success for urban Extension professionals.
- Exploring partnership work (convening) as a program/teaching strategy to accomplish urban Extension and community impacts.
- Integrating cross-generational workplace methodologies/career tracks for urban Extension professionals.
- How academia and urban extension professionals can come together to develop and employ an appropriate career track/reward system that meets their mutual goals.

As Extension in the Urban West document states, “New urban extension educators will increasingly need to be multicultural, multilingual, suburban/urban-savvy and able to relate cross-generationally.” Their career tracks in extension and academia will have to match this charge.

Estimated Timeline:
July 2020 through February 2021