

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Operation Black Vote Canada and university partners announce first comprehensive study of Black Canadians’ participation and inclusion in elected office**

(Toronto, ON- October 3, 2022) More than 1.2 million Black Canadians call Canada home. Many have achieved great success in business, law, education, and other fields. Even so, just 19 Black Canadians have ever been elected to Parliament. There have been no Black provincial premiers, and only a handful of mayors.

Why aren’t there more Black Canadians in elected office? A new partnership will find out through the first comprehensive study of Black Canadians’ participation and inclusion in elected office.

Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council’s Partnership Engage Program and led by co-directors Velma Morgan and Erin Tolley, the project brings together Operation Black Vote Canada with researchers from Carleton University, McGill University, and the University of Toronto.

Working collaboratively, the team will identify Black Canadians who have run for and served in elected office at the school board, municipal, provincial, and federal levels over the past 20 years and then talk to them about running for and serving in elected office in Canada. The project will provide a necessary examination of the Black Canadian experience in politics, pinpointing barriers and making recommendations about how to increase representation in elected office. A key outcome will be the development of resources and training tools aimed at Black Canadian candidates and office-holders.

“It is imperative that we have data on Black civic engagement and the barriers faced by Black Canadians at all levels of our government. This will allow us to provide better supports for Black Canadians in their pursuit of elected office.” –Velma Morgan, chair of Operation Black Vote Canada

“To date, researchers have devoted too little attention to the experiences of Black Canadians in electoral politics. Our collaborative partnership will provide new insights into Black Canadians’ electoral under-representation and help us figure out how to fix it.” – Erin Tolley, Canada Research Chair in Gender, Race, and Inclusive Politics and associate professor of political science at Carleton University

The project will launch with a survey in Fall 2022. Are you a Black Canadian who has run for elected office at any level of government? If yes, we’d like to hear from you. Send us an email at [blackcanadianpolitics@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:blackcanadianpolitics@cunet.carleton.ca) or fill out the form at [www.blackcanadianpolitics.ca](http://www.blackcanadianpolitics.ca). We’ll send you a link to the survey and keep you updated on our work.

Operation Black Vote Canada (OBVC) was established in 2004 as a non-profit and multi-partisan organization that supports the election of Black people to public office.

The organization educates, motivates and advocates for Black Canadians to participate in Canada's government, agencies, boards, commissions, civil service and in Canada's political process at all levels. OBVC's mission is to simplify and demystify the path to public office and civic engagement. For more information about OBVC visit [www.obvc.ca](http://www.obvc.ca)

For interviews opportunities, please contact:

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