

## MEDIA RELEASE

CUFA BC Collaborates with SFU Labour Studies and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives BC in funded project *Understanding Precarity in BC*

(x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əjəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) & səlilwətəʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Territories – Vancouver, BC, June 24, 2021) – The Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC) is pleased to be a collaborating partner in a major partnership project exploring precarious work in BC.

*Understanding Precarity in BC (UP-BC)* is a joint project led by Dr. Kendra Strauss, Director of [SFU's Labour Studies Program](#) and the Morgan Centre for Labour Research, and Iglíka Ivanova, Senior Economist and Public Interest Researcher with the [Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' BC \(CCPA-BC\)](#). The project was recently awarded [\\$2.5 million from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada \(SSHRC\) Partnership Grant](#) and will involve a team of 39 academic researchers, four BC universities, and 26 community partners working over six years. As a collaborator organization in this project, CUFA BC's involvement in this project will focus on understanding the prevalence of precarious work in the province's post-secondary sector.

"The pandemic has shed light on the rise of unstable, short-term jobs without benefits in Canada, and the overall shift toward precarious work," says Strauss. "We know that racialized communities, Indigenous people, women, low-income groups and younger workers are most likely to experience precarity. The diverse range of partners centrally involved in this project means their experiences and voices will be at the heart of our work."

"There is a lot we don't know about precarious work in BC, but it likely contributes to inequality and polarization," says Ivanova. "This project will look at how precarious work impacts people's lives — not just at work, but in the related insecurity and hardship they experience. We want to better understand the consequences of widespread precarity for the wellbeing of our province so we can develop effective, evidence-based solutions to tackle it."

"Research on academic labour precarity is challenging," says Dr. Daniel Laitsch, CUFA BC President and project collaborator. "Data are inconsistent to date and often focus on the personal experiences of precarious faculty and while that is important, this project emphasizes the need for a bigger picture understanding of the various ways precarity affects academics, post-secondary institutions, and communities."

"Successfully tackling a major societal challenge like precarity can only be done through community-university collaboration with organizations like CCPA-BC and SFU Labour Studies, and with experts like Dr. Kendra Strauss and Iglíka Ivanova," says Annabree Fairweather, CUFA BC Executive Director and project collaborator. "The role of universities within this project is critical to understanding their own participation in the gig economy."

CUFA BC looks forward to being an active partner in this project, and in supporting the important work of Dr. Kendra Strauss at SFU and Iglíka Ivanova at CCPA-BC, as well as the many other individuals and organizations involved in this project.

To arrange interviews on this project, please contact CCPA-BC Jean Kavanagh at 604-802-5729, [jean@policyalternatives.ca](mailto:jean@policyalternatives.ca).

*CUFA BC represents over 5,500 faculty members, professional librarians, lecturers, instructors, and other academics at the five research-intensive universities in British Columbia, which include University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, Royal Roads University and University of Northern British Columbia.*

*CUFA BC [celebrates fifty years](#) of working closely with the member Faculty Associations at each institution. Our purposes are to support high-quality post-secondary education and research in British Columbia and to advocate for the interests of our members.*

