



## Student Pitch Competition – Design a Community Cooling Space



**When:** Final designs will be presented on November 20<sup>th</sup> in a virtual pitch competition

**Prize:** \$1,000 to winning team + opportunity to support the design and implementation phase of the community cooling space.

**What:** UWaterloo students are invited to design a modular outdoor community cooling space with a sustainable cooling system that will provide relief from extreme heat. This project is in collaboration with Southwestern Public Health (SWPH) which serves the regions of Oxford County, Elgin County, and the City of St. Thomas. Teams will be required to use the design criteria provided below. The winning design will have the opportunity to be part of the ongoing partnership between SWPH and Climate Institute in increasing climate and health resilience.

**Definitions:** *Cooling space:* A portable/moveable outdoor space that has seating and capacity for 15+ people. *Cooling system:* The unit that cools the space, this can be electronic or mechanical or use nature, shade, and/or water elements to cool.

**Who:** Individual students and teams of up to 4 students maximum may enter the competition.

### How:

- **Step 1:** Register for the competition. **Register [HERE](#) to participate.** Attend the information session on Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 12:00pm
- **Step 2:** Create an initial design idea using the information provided
- **Step 3:** Participate in a 15 minute “Question and Answer” with SWPH staff to ask any questions about your design. Week of October 28-Nov 1
- **Step 4:** Present ideas in a virtual presentation of maximum 5 minutes to SWPH on November 20<sup>th</sup>

## Project Description & Background

In 2023, the Waterloo Climate Institute and Southwestern Public Health (SWPH) launched a project partnership to assess climate and health risks and vulnerabilities in the region. This assessment provided recommendations to enhance climate and health resilience for the region and its community partners. [Read the full report [here.](#)]

The student competition phase of this project partnership will focus on designing and supporting a pilot project (experiment) to address extreme heat. Southwestern Public Health will assess the designs and use the winning idea as a basis for the pilot project (with funding and time constraints in mind).

## Design Components

To be eligible for the competition, designs must include:

- **Cooling system:** Incorporate a sustainable energy-efficient cooling system that is easy to install
- **Space:** A space that can hold 15+ people comfortably for multiple hours
- **Wellbeing:** Consider people’s well-being by incorporating nature and/or site atmosphere into design elements
- **Easy to install:** Use existing municipal outdoor structures (such as gazebos or band shells) to create a cooling space OR design a modular space that can be easily set up in municipal spaces (i.e., parks, courtyards) and take down for the winter.

## Criteria for the Design of the Community Cooling Space

pts	Title	Description
5	<b>Safety and security</b>	Does the cooling system meet safety standards? Can the structure withstand extreme weather events such as storms and/or flooding? Are the occupants safe inside the cooling space? Is there enough ventilation within the cooling space?
5	<b>Easy to install and store</b>	Can the space and cooling system be set up in a day by municipal operations staff? Is the cooling system easy to understand and set up? Can the cooling space’s components be stored in a warehouse over winter to increase the longevity of the unit?
5	<b>Nature component</b>	Does the community cooling space incorporate nature, either existing nature in a park setting or indoor nature elements such as a bio-wall, edible garden, or potted plants? Does the cooling space allow occupants to access the mental health benefits from nature, by being able to see nature, be close to nature, or incorporate nature into the space? Does the design emphasize use of native species and plants where applicable?

5	<b>Wellbeing component</b>	Does the cooling system incorporate creativity, beauty, and art to increase the wellbeing of occupants? Is the space designed to inspire occupants with colour, aesthetic, creating an inviting environment? Does the design increase a sense of community for the occupants?
5	<b>Cooling system</b>	Is the cooling system sustainable? Does the cooling system use innovative technology? Is the cooling system net-zero or energy efficient? Is the cooling system made of sustainable materials?
<b>25</b>	<b>Total</b>	

## Timeline

- **Mid-September - Registration opens. Register [HERE](#) to participate.**
- **October 2nd - Information Session** - We will be hosting a Zoom call for all interested participants to discuss objectives and answer any questions you may have.
- **Week of October 28-November 1st** – Book a 15 minute session with Southwestern Public Health staff to answer your questions.
- **November 18<sup>th</sup>** – Submit your 10-slide presentation to [t29huynh@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:t29huynh@uwaterloo.ca)
- **November 20<sup>th</sup>** – Present design idea to Southwestern Public Health team in a pitch format using 10-slide presentation.
- **November 29<sup>th</sup>** - Winners will be announced!

## Who We Are

The [Waterloo Climate Institute](#) is the hub for climate change research, training, and knowledge mobilization at the University of Waterloo, involving over 140 researchers from all faculties, as well as partners from institutions like Wilfrid Laurier University and government agencies such as Environment and Climate Change Canada. Our mission is to enhance interdisciplinary research and education to empower society to respond to the climate crisis, advancing solutions at all levels.

[Southwestern Public Health](#) works with its partners to ensure the health of the whole community. Our programs respond to public health emergencies; promote healthy lifestyles; help prevent injuries, illness, and disease in the community; and promote positive change and social conditions that improve health. Southwestern Public Health delivers mandated programs under the [Ontario Public Health Standards](#) and is regulated by the [Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act](#). The health unit maintains primary locations in Woodstock and St. Thomas. For more information, visit [www.swpublichealth.ca](http://www.swpublichealth.ca).