

## **Call for applications - Research Assistant position**

### ***Research Project:***

### ***The Economic Beneath the Economy: Rethinking Value Through Invisible Labours***

Economics has traditionally analyzed how a society's resources, understood as scarce goods, are transformed, distributed, and consumed through transactions among individuals, businesses, and the state. This analysis has been grounded in the following premises:

- a) individuals are rational and competitive, seeking to maximize their own economic interest;
- b) private property serves as the organizing institution of production and labour; and
- c) the free market is the primary regulatory mechanism for determining prices and allocating resources globally.

In this conception, "the economy"—as the outcome of these interactions—appears decoupled from the socio-affective networks that shape people's daily lives.

Furthermore, the growing autonomization of the economic world from the political one—legitimized by mainstream academic knowledge—has led to the naturalization of a mode of thinking that excludes economies of giving and generosity. This has undermined democracy's ability to confront the most critical challenges that humanity is currently facing, such as the exponential growth of inequality and climate change.

The purpose of this project is to study and promote alternative conceptions of the economy. The team will produce a comprehensive review paper that explains and organizes bodies of literature—such as feminist economics, ecological economics, and scholarship on "the commons"—that challenge dominant views of the economy and politics, while centring care, livability, cooperation, and the democratic self-management of common goods.

**Deadline: August 25, 2025**

**Start date: September 10, 2025**

This part-time position (20 hours per week) offered by Saint Mary's is for one year, with the potential for extension.

### **Responsibilities:**

The RA will work closely with lead investigators Dr. Anabel Rieiro (Universidad de la República) and Dr. Paulo Ravecca (Saint Mary's University). Their main task will be to read numerous texts (articles and full books), take systematic notes about their main

arguments, concepts, evidence offered, and other key aspects, and contribute to a laborious and detailed literature review.

### Qualifications:

- Bachelor's or Master's degree in Political Science, Anthropology, Sociology, or related field. Advanced undergraduate students might be considered.
- Familiarity with one or more strands of critical theory (Marxism, feminism, queer theory, postcolonial studies, critical disability studies, decolonial thought, etc.).
- Strong writing skills and ability to understand complex, lengthy and theoretically dense scholarly texts. Note that this project will require extensive and sustained reading.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively in a team environment.
- Ability to organize, synthesize and process information and prepare comprehensive reports.
- Knowledge of Excel, PowerPoint, Word, and other office software.

### Application Process:

Please submit the following documents by the deadline:

- Cover Letter outlining relevant experience and alignment with the project's mission (4 pages max). The letter should address the following:
  - **Thematic Alignment**  
Reflect on the key themes of the project — such as alternative conceptions of the economy, invisible and affective labour, the commons, and critical perspectives on value. Briefly discuss how your academic background or intellectual interests engage with these themes. You may refer to specific theoretical traditions (e.g., feminist economics, decolonial thought, critical political economy).
  - **Relevant Experience**  
Describe any academic, professional, or activist experience that has prepared you to engage with this research. This may include coursework, community work, or previous research assistantships that involved literature reviews, theoretical analysis, or engagement with critical theory.
  - **Motivation and Trajectory**  
Share why this project matters to you personally. How does it relate to your own intellectual or political trajectory? What excites you about contributing to a research project that centers life-economies and challenges dominant economic paradigms? Feel free to reflect on how this opportunity might support your own intellectual development.



- Contact information for two academic references.
- Curriculum Vitae

Applications should be sent to [poli-gds@smu.ca](mailto:poli-gds@smu.ca). Saint Mary's University is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion. We encourage applications from individuals of all backgrounds, especially those from marginalized communities.