

Highlighting Rural Researchers

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Xinyue Zhu

Mitacs Globalink Research Intern | RDI

GETTING TO KNOW XINYUE ZHU

Xinyue is an undergraduate student from Northwest A&F University in China, majoring in Social Affairs Administration. Originally from the Shandong Province, she grew up in an urban environment and developed a strong interest in public systems and institutional design early in her academic journey. With outstanding academic performance and a growing portfolio of research experience, Xinyue has consistently demonstrated her commitment to scholarship and public service. In the summer of 2025, she joined the Rural Development Institute (RDI) at Brandon University as a Mitacs Globalink Research Intern, where she became a member of the Rural Capacity Building team.

RESEARCH AND EXPERIENCE

Before joining RDI, Xinyue actively engaged in two national-level undergraduate academic innovation research projects in China. Through these projects, she led a study on digital platform governance in rural areas, exploring how grassroots regulatory systems respond to algorithmic power and fragmented authority. She also participated in a study on innovation and entrepreneurship training, exploring its influence on student development in higher education. Xinyue has written one independent article that has been accepted by a Chinese general academic journal and her research primarily employs quantitative methods.

At RDI, Xinyue is responsible for evaluating selected undergraduate and graduate programs at universities in Manitoba. Her task focuses on assessing which core competencies and capitals are cultivated by these programs, and to what extent, based on course descriptions. Following these analyses, she conducted descriptive analysis to summarize the findings. Through this structured content analysis and data synthesis, Xinyue provided valuable insights into how curriculum structures align with the broader goals of rural capacity building. The part she was involved in was only a small part of the whole project, but it was still a great learning experience for her. Her work supports the team's larger effort to strengthen educational pathways that empower rural communities. In addition to her academics, Xinyue has received more than 40 honors at the university level and above, including the "Campus Star – Volunteer Star" award. She has served as a member of the student council committee and as the leader of the volunteer team.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Xinyue's time at RDI has provided important cross-cultural perspectives on rural development. Comparing Canadian and Chinese approaches has deepened her understanding of how community capacity can be built through local education, governance, and leadership. She considers this internship a milestone in her academic journey—an experience that will inform her bachelor's thesis and guide her future graduate studies. Her pending thesis will examine how local governments allocate attention in agricultural disaster reduction policies, linking this focus to broader questions of rural development and governance.



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