The Power of Community Based Research
Community Based Research (CBR)

“A research approach that involves active participation of …those whose lives are affected by the issue being studied, in all phases of research for the purpose of producing useful results to make positive changes.”

Current Reality

• “Community engagement buzz” in higher ed/funding circles

• Most research done at the university is initiated by academics and driven by their ideas about what the issues and needs in the community are.

• THAT needs to change!
Three Hallmarks of Community-Based Research

<table>
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<th>Community Driven</th>
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<td>Research is relevant to those most affected by the issue.</td>
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<th>Participatory</th>
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<td>Community partners and university researchers are equitably share control of the research agenda.</td>
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<th>Action-Oriented</th>
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<td>The process and results are useful to community members and help lead to positive change.</td>
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Source: Adapted from Secretariat of CBR Canada, the Centre for Community Based Research
There is no substitute for first-hand experience.
## Functions of Community-Based Research

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<th>Knowledge Production</th>
<th>Knowledge Mobilization</th>
<th>Community Mobilization</th>
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<td>Gain new insight through rigorous research</td>
<td>Communicate results to the right people in the right format and manner</td>
<td>Bring community together to create positive change.</td>
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Source: Adapted from Secretariat of CBR Canada, the Centre for Community Based Research
PRE-PROJECT

- How well do you know and trust your potential partner?
- Are time commitments/expectations clear?
- Is there a budget to compensate staff and potential participants?
- If you reached out to them – have you asked if the university has an administrative fee?
- What outcomes do you need from the research?
Connecting with Researcher Partners

- University engagement centers
- Institutional research offices
- Relevant departments
- Individual researchers

- Join Community Campus Engage Canada.
Watch out if...

- You are asked to write a letter of support at the last minute
- The potential “partner” is not taking the time to get to know what **YOU** need from the project
- The potential “partner” is unwilling to share details of the whole grant with you
Building Effective, Equitable Partnerships
Building Effective, Equitable Partnerships

Building Effective, Equitable Partnerships

- Openly communicate expectation, roles, and goals
- Respect time and workload of partners
- Respect and acknowledge the knowledge each partner brings to the table

- Before committing to a partnership:
  - Ask yourself what you are looking for in a partner
  - Get to know the potential partners
  - Decide whether you click with the researcher

Source: Tilakaratna, 1990
• Collaboration and communication at every step
• The more shared involvement the better the project will be
• It is vital researchers and community partners engage on equal footing:
  • Researchers are experts on research
  • Community partners are experts on their communities
Knowledge Mobilization

- Plan how the research knowledge will be communicated between partners and to the community.
- Knowledge outputs should inform public debate, policy, and practice and improve services.
- Knowledge outputs inform decision making and procedures of people in business, government, the media, practitioner community, and civil society.

Source: SSHRC, 2020
• Social Media
• Op-eds
• Public Service Announcements
• Workshops
• Media Coverage
• Pamphlets
• Policy Papers
• Reports
• Websites

• Films
• Plays
• Dance
• Performances
• Oral Histories
• Videos
• Exhibits
• Festivals
• Funding Mechanisms

• Knowledge Syntheses and Workshops
• Conferences and other events
• Books
• Refereed Journal Articles
• Data Sharing through Online Repositories
Evaluating Success

- **Implementation**: Was your research done as originally intended? If not, what changed?
- **Effectiveness**: Did your research meet the goals and objectives it was intended to accomplish? Are there unexpected achievements?
- **Outputs**: Did your research result in the planned knowledge outputs? Were the outputs useful to your community?
- **Efficiency**: Was your research produced with appropriate use of resources such as budget and staff time?

Source: Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit, 2009
Helpful Resources

• Community-Based Research Canada
  A national non-profit organization contributing to equitable, just, and sustainable communities within and beyond Canada.
  https://www.communityresearchcanada.ca/

• Community Campus Engage Canada
  (CCEC) connects people, ideas and resources to build reciprocal partnerships. We are a national network and learning community for organizations and individuals that address pressing social and environmental challenges through community-campus engagement (CCE). We offer comprehensive access to CCE expertise and advice, and we create spaces for a wider range of voices to enhance partnership practices.
  https://ccecanada.ca/
Helpful Resources

• Campus Community Engagement Primer for Community Organizations with Research Questions
  Clear easy steps for community partners wanting to engage in CBR from selecting a partner, to communicating expectations, to how to be involved in each stage of research.

• 7 Steps to Engagement for Community-Based Organizations
  Clear steps to CBR with helpful links to topic tailored detailed toolkits for success.
Helpful Resources

• Community Toolkit: A Guide for Working with Universities on Research Projects

• Plain Language & How to Use it
References


Our Panelists

- Candace Giblett, Public Education Officer, Regina Fire & Protective Services
- Lynne Fernandez, Researcher, Manitoba Research Alliance
- Jody Linklater, CEO, Clean Community Corporation and Founder, Indigenous YouthBuild Canada
Thank you for your interest!

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