
Model Partnership Agreement

Preamble: Community-engaged research necessitates early and sustained engagement with community partners, including community-based organizations and individuals, and may also involve government agencies. Partnership agreements among researchers and community and government partners can promote research reciprocity, improve transparency, level real or perceived power differentials, and build trust. This model partnership agreement was developed by the University of Washington's (UW) Interdisciplinary Center for Exposures, Diseases, Genomics, and the Environment (EDGE) Community Engagement Core (CEC) for use by UW School of Public Health investigators working with community and government partners.

Community and government partners develop and value relationships with individual researchers, versus organizations. As such, the scope and suggested language in this model partnership agreement intentionally commit individual investigator signatories to basic and well-accepted principles of community-engaged research partnerships. The agreement intentionally does not commit university resources or engagement beyond that of the individual investigators that sign the agreement.

Approvals: This document has been reviewed by Uli Haller from the UW School of Public Health's Dean's Office in January 2022. As such, partnership agreements that adhere to the general scope and language of this model agreement may be signed by individual investigators within the UW School of Public Health without additional approval from the Department Chair, Dean's Office, or other University offices. However, non-independent investigators (e.g., staff, students) should receive approval from their supervisor or mentor prior to signature. If faculty or staff are signing with a center, lab, or grant affiliation, the Director and/or PI should first review and approve the use of the affiliation on the partnership agreement. Investigators affiliated with other schools and colleges should check with their unit's leadership about processes and permissions for partnership agreement development.

The partnership agreement also contains an optional Scope of Work attachment for specific community-engaged research projects. Notably, this Scope of Work should be reviewed and approved by the Office of Sponsored Projects according to and aligned with departmental or University policies and procedures *for any project where contracts or subcontracts are used to manage resources flowing to or from UW.*

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How to use this template: The template below contains a combination of suggested language, guidance/instructions, and project-specific example language.

[Bolded information in brackets] indicates text that should be replaced with information specific to your partnership or project.

Dark grey italicized text indicates that an example is being provided for your reference. Examples are drawn from a community partnership agreement developed by EDGE Investigators Dr. Esther Min and Dr. Jeremy Hess between Front and Centered (community partner) and the UW Center for Health and the Global Environment. This text should be replaced by language specific to your project.

Underlined text is there to provide you with guidance/instructions. This should be deleted prior to finalization.

All other text is suggested language that you are welcome to adapt or use verbatim in the context of your partnership agreement. Adaptations to text that alter the scope or intention may require additional review or approval at the Department Chair or Dean's Office level.

Feedback and questions on this template: The UW EDGE CEC is interested in learning how this partnership agreement has been used and welcomes feedback. Please contact the EDGE Community Engagement Manager, BJ Cummings (bjcumngs@uw.edu), to share your experience and provide feedback.

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Title: Community-Engaged Research Partnership Agreement between [**Community Partner(s)**] and the University of Washington (UW) [**Department/Program/Center/Lab**]

Overview: This community-engaged research partnership agreement is between [**Community Partner(s)**] and UW [**Department/Program/Center/Lab**] for [**program or project**]. This partnership agreement is entered into in good faith and is not intended to be exclusive.

Definitions

“Project” in this agreement refers to [**name of project and/or grant source**]. The project begins [**date**] and ends [**date**].

“Community Partner” in this agreement refers to incorporated (501(c)3) non-profit and/or unincorporated community-based organization(s) that is collaborating with a UW Department, Program, Center or Lab to develop, implement, and/or disseminate community-engaged research. Other “Partners” who may also enter into this agreement with Community Partners for the purpose of co-producing community-engaged research may represent other academic, governmental, or private sector collaborators.

“Data” in this agreement refers to [**describe data, e.g., spreadsheets and databases associated with data, maps, graphs, and charts representing the data, survey response forms or other evaluative materials, transcripts or recordings of conversations such as focus groups or interviews, photos, images, or other visual references, and/or community stories/narratives**].

“Products” created by this project refer to, but are not limited to, [**describe outputs, e.g., data summaries, technical reports, presentations, publications**].

Purpose

The **purpose** of this partnership agreement is to establish principles of partnership between individual investigators from the University of Washington [**Department/Program/Center/Lab**] and [**Community Partner**] as it relates to community-engaged research on [**briefly describe the purpose of the specific research program or project**]. Our overall goal is to collaborate on research that will [**describe larger picture goal of the community partnership and community needs**]. This partnership agreement commits only the individual signatories to adhering to the below principles of partnership as it relates to this research goal. It does not create any obligations to their broader organizations, including its subunits or representatives, or extend to other activities that they are engaged in as individual investigators unrelated to this research goal.

Guidance: Specify bulleted purpose(s) of project elements if appropriate, e.g., data collection, shared interpretation, translation to policy or action, public education, etc.. See example below:

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1. **Community engagement** to solicit community priorities for climate action including efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emission and climate change adaptation.
2. **Policy analysis** to translate community inputs into policy scenarios to use in health impact assessments (HIAs).
3. **Visualizations** to convey baseline information on demographics, social determinants of health, environmental hazards, climate, and estimates of future health impacts along different action pathways.

Detailed description(s) of specific research projects and plans, including anticipated data, products, outcomes; timeline/schedule; partner responsibilities and expectations; decision-making process; ownership of work; communications plans; and community engagement plans may be provided in attached Scope(s) of Work.

Partnership Team

The partnership involves individuals **employed by UW**, a public Washington State educational and research institution: **[names of individual leads and Department/Program/Center/Lab description if applicable]**. **[Community Partner]** is **[describe structure and purpose/mission of community partner; names of individual leads]**.

Principles of Partnership

Guidance: Review/revise per applicable best practices, ensuring equitable academic-community relationship

1. All commit to investing in a community leadership approach to decision-making by supporting **[Community Partner]**.
2. The ongoing relationship is characterized by shared respect, trust, and co-decision-making. Expectations of conduct include acknowledging unequal power relationships and that everyone is capable of harm or being harmed, as well as treating each other with respect and dignity.
3. Partners recognize the investment that **[Community Partner]** and its affiliated organizations and community participants and UW are making in the partnership in terms of time, money and other resources.
4. All partners should be involved in all major phases including: project planning, development of timeline, progress report of project, data analysis, authorship of reports and/or academic papers (per [International Committee on Medical Journal Editors \(ICMJE\) Authorship guidelines](#)), and communications.
5. All partners acknowledge an intent to publish or otherwise distribute research results on a nondiscriminatory basis within a reasonable amount of time agreed on by all parties. All partners acknowledge that research findings may have positive or negative implications for the wellbeing or reputation of the community. All partners commit to shared decision-making and good faith efforts to safeguard the

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wellbeing and reputation of the community in any publication or distribution of research findings (e.g., through anonymization, concurrent science communications efforts, shared decision making about outlets for publication, delaying publication by a reasonable amount of time, etc.).

Guidance: UW, as a research institution, is committed to the distribution of research results with a “reasonable amount of time.” However, it is possible that researchers and community partners disagree about if, how, when, or where to communicate these results, particularly if they are perceived to lead to negative consequences to the community’s social or economic wellbeing or reputation. The community may have to live with the impacts of communicating research results for years to come, while the researcher will be able to simply move on to a new project. As such, respecting community concerns and potential impacts of publication must be forefront in discussions about how, when, and where to publish community-engaged research. Prior to embarking on community-engaged research, it is recommended that all partners discuss the possible outcomes of the research, the potential for positive/negative impacts for the community if each of the identified possible outcomes are communicated, and available and mutually acceptable strategies to mitigate negative impacts (e.g., anonymization, etc.). If there are no mutually acceptable strategies to mitigate negative impacts, the partners should reconsider whether or not a community-engaged research project is the best way to meet their goals.

6. Partners will share **[at least 30 days]** in advance the opportunities and venues where the partnership activities and outputs may be or are being shared, such as conferences, workshops, and presentations.
7. Partners will consult each other when citing this partnership during fundraising activities (donor asks, grants, and other fundraising opportunities). Elements discussed may include appropriate roles/responsibilities, budget, and organizations affiliated with the funding opportunity.
8. Partners commit to communicating openly about potential harms of this or follow-on projects to allow for proactive and preemptive action. Potential harms could include sharing of protected information, erosion of existing organizational or individual trusts, or damage to professional reputation. Partners will work together to mitigate these risks to the best of their abilities.
9. All terms of this agreement apply to both intended and unintended uses.
10. The partnership agreement will be reviewed annually and/or at the conclusion of affiliated projects. It can be discontinued at any time with written notification from Project Lead(s) at either/any participating organization(s). Individual team members may withdraw from the partnership by submitting written notification to both/all Project Lead(s) at any time.

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11. If any party declares that some of the information shared is proprietary, then the parties shall separately negotiate an agreement for use of proprietary information in accordance with UW policies.

Signatories:

Guidance: Partnership agreements that adhere to the general scope and language of this model agreement may be signed by individual investigators and do not require additional approval by the Department Chair, Dean's Office, or other University offices. However, non-independent investigators (e.g., staff, students) should receive approval from their supervisor or mentor prior to signature. If faculty or staff are signing with a center, lab, or grant affiliation, the Director and/or PI should first review and approve the use of the affiliation on the partnership agreement.

[UW faculty lead name(s), Title,
Affiliation (UW Department/Program/
Center/Lab)]

[Community Partner lead name(s), Title,
Affiliation]

[Other UW participant(s) name, Title,
Affiliation (UW Department/Program/
Center/Lab)]

[Other Community Partner participant
name(s), Title, Affiliation]

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ATTACHMENT 1: [PROJECT TITLE] SCOPE OF WORK

Project period: [Start date] to [End date]

Project Team: The Project Leads are [names/titles/affiliations (Guidance: note PI/co-PI roles if funded grant)]. UW Project Team Members include [names/titles/affiliations (Guidance: note roles if funded grant)]. [Community Partner] Team Members (if applicable) are [names/titles/affiliations (Guidance: note roles if funded grant)]]. (Optional: Project Leads may delegate aspects of project management as necessary).

Project Overview: [Provide detailed research project abstract; anticipated data, products/outputs, outcomes; timeline; etc.] Guidance: For funded projects, ensure Statement of Work (SOW) is consistent with sponsor and Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) requirements.

Partnership Responsibilities and Expectations

[Community Partner] Responsibilities

Guidance: Define roles and responsibilities, see example below:

1. Lead **community engagement** activities: gather input from community organizations and members, transcribe, and analyze findings;
2. Lead the development of policy scenarios;
3. Co-lead **policy analysis** activities, particularly creating policy scenarios for UW to use in HIAs;
4. Assist **visualization** activities: particularly refine/define/provide feedback/shaping outcome.

UW [Department/Program/Center/Lab] Responsibilities

Guidance: Define roles and responsibilities, see example below:

1. Assist [Community Partner] in **community engagement** activities;
2. Co-lead **policy analysis** activities, particularly conducting HIAs using policy scenarios generated based on community inputs;
3. Lead **visualization** activities: particularly platform to show source-receptor matrix, demographic projections, climate hazards, HIA outputs...;
4. Obtain necessary approval(s) from UW Human Subjects Division Institutional Review Board, as appropriate.

To achieve the goals of this Project, the partners will jointly:

Guidance: Define shared responsibilities, see example below:

1. Develop meeting agendas, facilitate, and attend team meetings;
2. Coordinate project activities;

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3. *Share information and data related to the project;*
4. *Keep each other informed of actions, initiatives, activities that may contribute to the project goals;*
5. *Identify and discuss activities that have the potential to complement or conflict with the project goals;*
6. *Identify existing resources and additional resources that could be applied to the project goals;*
7. *Respect each organization's roles and contributions and any limitations regarding resources;*
8. *Respond to emails and other communications from project partners in a timely manner;*
9. *Attempt to resolve conflicts in a positive, swift, and constructive manner (Optional: describe agreed upon conflict resolution policy and procedures).*

Optional: Guidance for Project Meetings:

1. Regular meetings with Project Leads and Team Members will occur [define frequency] throughout the Project period to ensure everyone is informed of the Project activities and decisions; discuss next steps; and evaluate the Project needs.
 - a. Meeting minutes shall, at a minimum, include a record of: attendees, decisions, and actions needed. Meeting agendas and minutes shall be kept by [responsible Team Member(s)] and posted to a secure location and made available to all Project Leads and team members.

Guidance: The following sections are recommended:

Decision Making

Guidance: Review/revise per project needs

1. Decision-making includes decisions affecting the Project, use of data, data analysis/interpretation, communication strategies, and/or stakeholder engagement.
2. UW and community partner signatories will review and approve the addition of Project collaborators and team members.
3. The partners will strive for consensus decision-making. In Project meetings, decisions and recommendations will be discussed. In instances where consensus is not possible, the UW and community partner Project Leads will consult with their teams. The Project leads will strive to reach agreement based on recommendations from their respective teams.
4. There may be a potential for conflicts of interest in the Project activities. Project leads and team members commit to proactively identifying potential issues of conflict and developing management plans for conflicts that potentially arise.

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5. Where differences arise, the Project Leads and team members agree to attempt to resolve the conflict and address their differences in a timely, open and honest manner. Team members should engage the Project Leads when appropriate.
 - a. If a conflict is not resolved, the UW and Community Partner Project leads will consult with their teams respectively to assess the situation. Decisions to resolve the conflict and/or continue the Project will ultimately be agreed upon between [**Community Partner**] and UW Project Leads, with support from a neutral facilitator or mediator, if deemed necessary by the partners.
 - b. Guidance: Describe any specific conflict resolution processes agreed to by the partners (examples of processes designed to address power inequities are available from the EDGE Center CEC)

Ownership of Work

Guidance: Review/revise per project needs

6. Use of novel concepts, ideas, and products produced through the Project should clearly acknowledge the partners involved.
7. Permission to use data or materials from this Project should be asked of the UW and [**Community Partner**] Project Leads.
8. For funded projects: [**Community Partner**] and UW agree to abide by the grant sponsor's requirements for data retention and publication.
9. [**Community partner and/or UW**] will maintain [**sole/joint**] ownership and control of all data or material collected through this Project. Such data and material should not be shared without the explicit written permission from [**Community Partner and/or UW**] Project Lead(s).
10. Confidentiality of individual or organizational participants as research subjects in this Project will be maintained unless these individuals or organizations provide explicit approval to use names.
11. A deidentified data summary can be made accessible to any Project Lead or Team Member, given they adhere to general use restrictions relevant to this Project and the overall Partnership Agreement.
12. UW retains the right to use any products created in the course of this Project for educational and research purposes.
13. [**Community Partner**] retains the right to use any products created in the course of this Project for education, outreach, advocacy and other purposes.
14. [**Community Partner**] and UW are co-creators and co-owners of products created within this Project. Any potential licensing/patent/branding will be discussed between and agreed mutually by UW and [**Community Partner**] Project Leads and may require additional institutional or organizational review or approvals.

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Communication

Guidance: Review/revise per project needs

15. Project Leads agree to develop a communication plan for all aspects of the Project. Communication plan will include key messages regarding the partnership and project, names of partner organizations and specific roles of each, and spokespeople. All partner organizations commit to using the communication plan for all related activities (such as news releases, media advisories and other media materials).
16. The communications liaisons for this Project are **[name/title]** from UW and **[name/title]** from **[Community Partner]**.
17. The date and timing of the release of announcements to the media shall be jointly agreed upon by the communications liaisons. News releases will be distributed to media, posted to websites and otherwise released externally on the same date.
18. All Project Team Members will consult with their respective organizational communication liaisons to decide on how to engage in the specific media activities. Project team members should not offer story advances or exclusives to reporters without prior approval from all communications liaisons.
19. All media materials will include contact information for the communication liaisons. The communications liaisons will be responsible for managing incoming media calls and, as they choose, directing reporters to their designated interviewee(s) as outlined in the communication plan.
20. In the event of unsolicited media inquiries regarding this joint project, each liaison must be notified in a timely manner. Responses to unsolicited media calls will follow procedures outlined in the communication plan, using agreed-upon messages.
21. When communicating about the project, UW and **[Community Partner]** must be mentioned as co-leads of the project. In the event that organizational logos are used on Project-related communications, and both the UW **[Department/Program/Center/Lab]** and **[Community Partner]** logos must be visible.
 - a. Logos should only be used with permission from the respective organizational communications liaison.
22. Project Leads and Team Members may share about the project, its process and findings in presentations, articles, and other forms of communication. For scholarly publications and formal presentations, **[Community Partner]** and UW Project Leads and Team Members who meet ICJME authorship requirements should be included as co-authors/ co-presenters/ co-contributors. All others should be acknowledged with their permission.

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- a. Contribution from community organizations and members should be acknowledged in all Project outputs, including those developed for academic audiences.
23. **[Community Partner]** leads will approve all draft or revised reports, manuscripts, or other written material that contain **[Community Partner]** generated or collected data as part of this Project prior to any submission, publication, or distribution, and retain the right to approve or disapprove use of **[Community Partner]** data.

Community Engagement

Guidance: Review/revise per project needs

1. The Project Leads and Team Members will strive to avoid duplication of efforts for community engagement. **[Community Partner]** should be consulted for all community engagement efforts related to this project.
2. UW Project Leads and Team Members shall not contact **[Community Partner]** [board members, organization staff , or community members related to the partner organizations] related to this project, including to publicly speak or be featured in any form of communication without receiving explicit approval from the **[Community Partner]** Project lead.
3. Photo/video releases should be used as needed.

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