

Community-Engaged Research Working Group – Summary of Priorities

These priorities were proposed during roundtable discussions on the CE Research Working Group and are sorted by timeframe.

Immediate Priorities (by September 2016)

- **Collect exemplars and share best practices** of community-engaged research by gathering case studies and developing a repository of methodologies that are available in multiple formats. Through these exemplars and stories of success, establish a framework for research that involves both campus and community partners in a principled manner. Consider specific research topics such as democratic participation, responses to the Truth and Reconciliation Report, and police carding practices.
- **Facilitate opportunities for partnership-building** by raising awareness of opportunities in the community, obtaining funding, promoting the resources that McMaster has to offer, and identifying gaps in information gathered to date, particularly information missing from community partners.
- **Encourage and facilitate student involvement** with community-engaged research projects. This could be done through altering the application and selection process for potential graduate students and providing information and support resources for students to design community-engaged theses and dissertations. Designing a graduate-level course on community engagement program evaluation would also be helpful.
- **Improve clarity on the foundations of the group**, such as the goals, the definitions of community engagement, themes, budget, and responsibilities of Working Group members. Another important aspect of this priority action is identifying barriers.
- **Establish accountability structures**, creating structures of co-leadership after determining who should be accountable.
- **Communicate and coordinate partnerships and projects**, by first identifying research and opportunities that already exist and then developing a comprehensive communication strategy for both campus and community partners.
- **Discuss with community partners** on their specific interests, their ideas for research topics and individuals who should be involved, and the physical spaces where community research takes place.

Short-term Priorities (by June 2017)

- **Build capacity** for community-engaged research by creating resources and pursuing funding to support individuals, from both campus and community, who are interested in community engaged research. Resources could include training courses, toolkit of best practices, workshops for grant writing, and a list of funding opportunities.

- **Establish a clear communication strategy** to increase awareness about community research, report back to community partners on the success of partnerships, showcase research stories, and catalogue and report on ongoing research. Other communications goals should include opening access to McMaster library resources for community partners and creating an asset map of stakeholders and services.
- **Establish projects** after a landscape analysis has been completed, identifying research opportunities and partnerships and experimenting with examples that integrate but community-driven and researcher-generated ideas.
- **Facilitate partnership building** through identifying community groups and their ideas for potential research, then communicating this list to faculty researchers and brokering linkages to community requests. Events and meetings that bring community groups and campus researchers together, in addition to a calendar of community events that brings the Network into the community, will also facilitate partnership building. It is also important to bring communities who do not have a lot of researchers into the conversation and to pursue funding for new research partnerships.
- **Assess impacts and outcomes** with a structure of evaluation that looks at effectiveness and reports through an accountability mechanism and communicates through a narrative of what worked and what did not work.

Long-term Priorities (over next 5 years)

- **Continue building support** for community-engaged research by recruiting and training new researchers from campus and community and achieving official recognition for those involved in this work, while avoiding bureaucratization. Obtaining funding, establishing mechanisms for allocation that cover the specific costs of community-engaged research, and pursuing Tri-Council funding for projects will also be essential.
- **Evaluate and track** community-engaged research by creating an archive of projects, reporting on their progress, evaluating initiatives, and annually reviewing the suitability of project plans and Working Group mandates.
- **Communicate outcomes** of community-engaged research through conferences, annual showcases, and annual reports. A communications strategy that translates and makes research accessible going forward will also be important, as is an active and engaged network of community research organizations and partnerships who share information.
- **Facilitate partnership development** that bridges the research and service components of community engagement, and perhaps the education aspect as well. The Working Group should be the public face of connecting and engaging partners. Specific initiatives such as the Learning Annex and the Mohawk City School are examples to which the Group should look for this work.
- **Maintain support for existing initiatives and develop new projects** that are driven by community questions, consider community definitions, and support priorities unique to different communities.