COMMUNITY ENGAGED RESEARCH WITH PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS

CONNECTION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND DISSEMINATION

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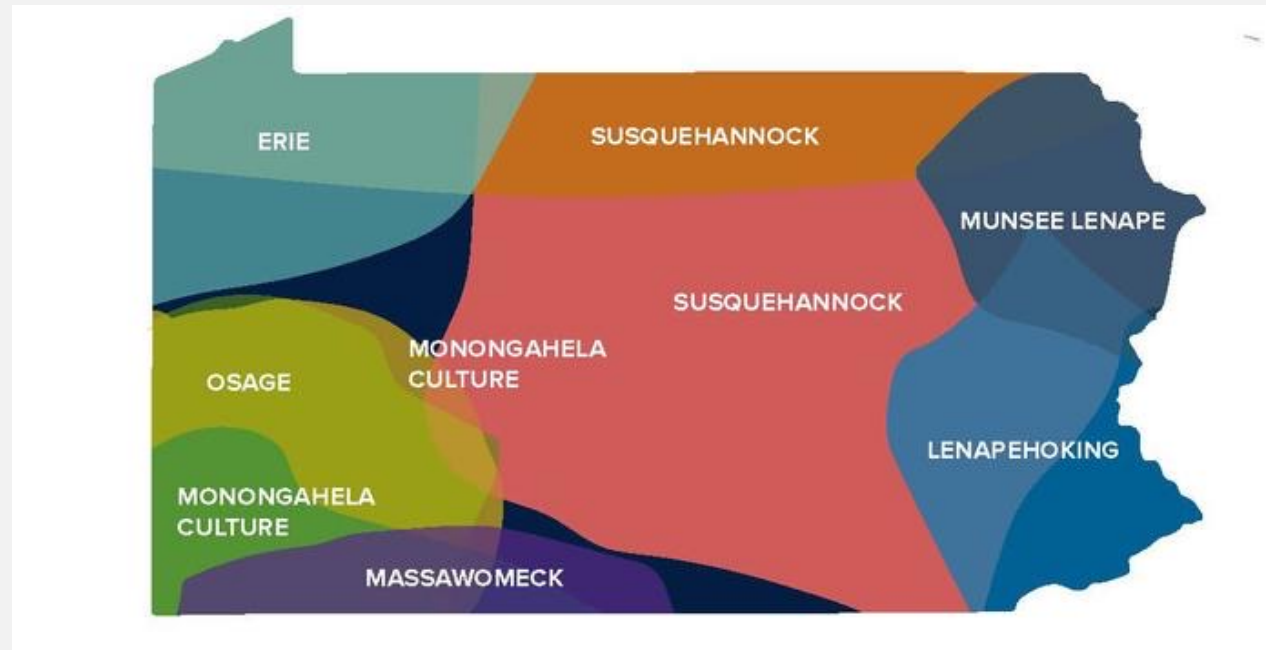
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND

The Pennsylvania State University campuses are located on the original homelands of the Erie, Haudenosaunee (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk, and Tuscarora), Lenape (Delaware Nation, Delaware Tribe, Stockbridge-Munsee), Shawnee (Absentee, Eastern, Oklahoma), Susquehannock, and Wahzhazhe (Osage) Nations. As a land grant institution, Penn State acknowledges and honors the traditional caretakers of these lands and strives to understand and model their responsible stewardship. We also acknowledge the longer history of these lands and our place in that history.

OUTLINE

1. The Case for Community Engaged Research

2. Community Driven Research (CDR)

3. Suggestions for Engagement:

   - Connection

   - Implementation

   - Dissemination

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1. THE CASE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGED RESEARCH (CER)

Community Engaged Research (CER):

Involves directly impacted people in the research process

Advances knowledge and is ethically appropriate

Vulnerable groups: significant distrust of researchers

Christopher et al. 2008 Israel, et al. 2012; Wallerstein et al. 2020; Carrera et al. 2019; Jones 2018; Mikesell, et al. 2013; Montoya and Kent 2011

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1. THE CASE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGED RESEARCH (CER)

Community Engaged Research (CER):

Important for addressing rising fatal overdose risk and emerging drug-related harms

Longstanding CER tradition in drug use research

Brown et al. 2019; Chang et al. 2021; Figgatt et al. 2021; Elkhalifa et al. 2020; Hayashi et al. 2012; Jozaghi et al. 2018; Meyerson et al. 2019, Nieweglowski et al. 2018

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2. COMMUNITY DRIVEN RESEARCH (CDR)

Community-initiated research questions

Capacity development

Full engagement throughout the research process

Transparency

Foregrounds community perspectives

Low-threshold methods

"Methods that promote skill building and are inclusive of people with disabilities, varying substance use, and limited financial and technological resources"

Brothers et al. 2023; Simon et al. 2022; Simon et al. 2021; Brothers, Simon, Vincent *under review*

Draws on: Fullwood et al. 2009; Coombes et al. 2022; McTighe and Haywood 2018; Simonds and Christopher 2013 Albert 2021; Downey and Zuiderent-Jerak 2017; Fricker 2007

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2. COMMUNITY DRIVEN RESEARCH (CDR)

Moves away from

- Directly impacted people as passive

Carrera and Key 2021

- "Damage Centered Research"

Tuck 2009

Our approach

- Situated, embodied, partial, emotional

Haraway 1988; Benjamin 2016

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3. ENGAGEMENT SUGGESTIONS:

CONNECTION STRATEGIES

- **Contribution**
  - Collaborate on projects outside the research focus
  - Contribute skills to people's needs outside research focus
  - Provide advice and support for other projects
- **Transparency**
  - Clear objectives
  - Accessible language
  - Grant timelines
- **Positionality**
  - Flexibility in meeting times and structure
- **Compensation**
  - All meetings
  - In money or in trade
  - Avoid gift cards (Festinger et al. 2005, Ritter et al. 2003)

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3. ENGAGEMENT SUGGESTIONS:

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Community centered research questions

- Work from people's needs and concerns
- Develop questions collaboratively
- Develop questions from collaborators' current advocacy projects

Promote full transparency

- Share documents whenever possible
- Share information on funding, timeline
- Explain terminology

Collaborations with organizations

- Built on collaborator's existing practices
- Focus on group work
- Skill sharing

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**3.
ENGAGEMENT
SUGGESTIONS:**

**IMPLEMENTATION
STRATEGIES**

Low threshold inclusive methods

- Employ co-working practices

- Read data and drafts out loud

- Inclusion in:

  - Survey and interview guide design

  - Pilot interviews and surveys (ask for criticism!)

  - Data analysis

  - Manuscript review, writing, and editing

- Care centered work

  - Allow space for emotional discussions

- Ethics training: CIRTIfication programs (Anderson 2015)

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3. ENGAGEMENT SUGGESTIONS:

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Skill-building

- Training in basic research practices and methods

- Data analysis training and one-on-one support

- Trainings on assessing peer-reviewed publications

- Synchronous co-writing as teaching opportunity

- Help write and rehearse talks

- Emphasize transferrable skills

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3.
ENGAGEMENT SUGGESTIONS:

DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES

Dissemination

- Prioritize rapid open access dissemination
- Accessible language and in community's familiar venues
- Dissemination in multiple mediums:
    - White papers, webinars, press, plain language summaries, story sharing, and documentary shorts
- Support project ties to advocacy work

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CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Can be time intensive for academic researchers and community researchers

- Involves skill building, low threshold work, and collaborations on outside projects

- Facilitates flow of information from subject to researcher and researcher to directly impacted community members

- Funding for exploratory projects, deeper engagement, collaborator training, community organization infrastructure

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