

Best Practices for DEMOCRATIZING RESEARCH

The Drug Policy Alliance in partnership with New York University Silver School of Social work hosted a convening entitled *Ethics, Expertise, and Experience: Democratizing the Role of the Expert*. The convening gathered over thirty academics, community based organizations and people directly impacted by the war on drugs to begin dismantling the oppressive structure of current research and research methodology; we are doing this in an effort to pay homage and give credit to those who provided the information.

We have set out to document best practices from the conversation **for communities when working with researchers and academics below:**

Engagement

1. When partnering with researchers communities should:
 - Gauge the purpose of researcher's study
 - Create an informal review committee of community members who would be impacted
 - Create outcomes with the researcher



Collaboration

2. Once permission is granted to the researcher, communities should:
 - Create a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure:
 - Opportunities are created for participants to:
 - ◆ Assist in the creation of the study
 - ◆ Conduct interviews and/or other methodological practices
 - ◆ Draft, review, and/or edit the outcome product

Resource Allocation and Impact

3. Use research opportunities to strengthen your communities by demanding:

- Compensation for participants in cash or check
- Services for people impacted by the research
 - Example--outlets to mental health; need based
- Services return back to the community post research
 - Researchers should direct their grants back into the community where they have worked where a need has been identified
- Skills training for participants and staff
- Policy relevant changes for communities directly impacted by research being conducted



4. Know the rights for you and your community:

- You have the right to compensation for your knowledge
- You have the right to respect
- You have the right to confidentiality



5. Credit

- Demand inclusion in academic opportunities such as:
 - Funding for you and/or your community members to present findings at conferences
 - Acknowledging you and your communities in articles while protecting confidentiality
 - Including communities in drafting of peer review journal articles

The Drug Policy Alliance and the Office of Academic Engagement wants to extend its humble appreciation to the colleagues whose discussion helped inform and guide this document.

For more information please feel free to reach out to the Office of Academic Engagement.

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the Drug
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