

Community Ready Researchers

Terms of engagement for researchers working with the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire diverse Research Engagement Network

These terms of engagement aim to help develop equitable, respectful and mutually beneficial collaborations between researchers and community partners, recognising the important role of community organisations in research and ensuring their fair treatment, compensation and involvement.

They have been co-developed with the Research Engagement Network community partners to help the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire research community to progress and produce more diverse and inclusive research and knowledge exchange.

Recognition and compensation:

Researchers must acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of community partners by recognising their expertise, time and effort.

All activities involving community partners will be compensated as per the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) [INVOLVE](#) guidance, and [rates set](#). £25 per hour is recommended locally.

However, recognition extends beyond financial compensation. It includes acknowledgment in publications and reports, expressing gratitude and treating community partners as all other valued collaborators and co-applicants. Community investments/payback events are encouraged – if you would like to discuss ideas, please do so with your Research Engagement Network contact.

Reporting and findings:

Researchers commit to sharing research findings with all community partners who have contributed to the project.

Regular updates and progress reports will be provided to keep community partners informed about the research process.

Findings will be shared in a manner that is accessible and understandable to the community, ensuring the information reaches and benefits all stakeholders involved.

Avoiding “bid candy” mentality:

Researchers understand and respect that community organisations are not to be used as names to be included in grant applications to help secure funding for the project and research team.

Grant proposals will accurately reflect the nature and extent of collaboration with community partners, avoiding tokenistic or exploitative practices.

Community partners will not be expected to work for free or at significantly reduced rates. The importance of their contributions will be acknowledged and fairly compensated. Universities are set up to develop research, with the understanding and expectation that staff will work on the application for funding and the set-up of a project prior to funding being provided. Most community organisations do not have this capacity. They have very different financial positions, with different needs and expectations. By agreeing to these terms, you agree to acknowledge this situation and to openly explore what expectations the community organisation has, and to work within their capacity and/or seek further resources to enable them to work with you.

Including costs for public involvement and engagement:

Grants and funding applications will include explicit budget allocations for Public and Patient Involvement activities and engagement efforts.

Costs related to supporting community organisations' involvement and engagement in the research project will be appropriately considered and funded. Researchers are asked to consider training, conference attendance and professional development activities, as well as the time needed to input into your project. Your project is contributing to a wider endeavour of research and should be viewed as an opportunity to invest in the communities the research is aiming to work with.

Collaboration and co-creation of research grant applications:

Researchers and community partners will engage in a collaborative and inclusive process, where decisions are made collectively, taking into account the perspectives and needs of all stakeholders.

Community partners will be involved in shaping research questions, methodologies, and the interpretation of findings.

The project will be co-created, ensuring that the research aligns with the values, priorities and aspirations of the community partners. There will be clear statements

about the format of the involvement and what activities or decisions community members will be involved in. If there are any decisions that community members will not be involved in there will be a rationale as to why (it may be that decisions have been made already).

Capacity building and skill sharing:

Researchers will actively support capacity building and skill sharing initiatives within community organisations, empowering people with diverse experiences to participate meaningfully in the research process.

Our Research Engagement Network community provides training, workshops and/or resources to enhance the knowledge and skills of community partners, enabling them to contribute effectively. We ask that researchers who work with the Research Engagement Network offer a reasonable amount of their time to contribute their knowledge and skills to these training opportunities.

Ethical considerations:

Research will be conducted in an ethically responsible manner, ensuring the well-being, confidentiality and privacy of community partners. Further, identification of potential ethical problems should be done collaboratively with community partners, not by researchers alone.

Clear communication about the research process will be maintained throughout the collaboration.

Any potential risks or adverse effects on community partners will be proactively identified and mitigated. The research project team agrees to keep this under review, e.g. by way of a standing item on project management meetings.

Questions and feedback:

Please contact hello@bristolhealthpartners.org.uk

I have read the above and agree to the terms of engagement

Signed:

Date: