



Allyship in Research Toolkit

A resource for those conducting
research with participants of
lived experience



Kelowna Homelessness
Research Collaborative

<https://khrc.ok.ubc.ca>

AUTHORS

Kyleen Myrah, EdD, MPA, BA (Hons), CPA, CMA
Co-Investigator - KHRC
Professor, Okanagan School of Business - Okanagan College

Kerry Rempel, MBA, CPHR
Co-Investigator - KHRC
Professor, Okanagan School of Business - Okanagan College

Stephanie Laing, MSW, RSW
Director of Operations - KHRC
Field Education Coordinator, School of Social Work - UBC Okanagan

AUTHORS GRATITUDE

The authors would like to thank all those who participated in this study, and contributed to the development of this toolkit.

We would like to sincerely thank our Co-Researchers, Sherry W. Landry and Dorothy Goodeye, from the Lived Experience Circle on Homelessness (LECoH).

The illustrations utilized through the toolkit are the work of Bob Mack, a graphic designer who created the illustrations during the Journey Home task force process to record the input from those with lived and living experience of homelessness. Thank you to Bob for the use of these images.

The accompanying video "Creating Allyship in Research", could not have been produced without the work of Paul Cotton Films. Thank you to Paul for a visual representation of this toolkit.

FUNDERS

This project was funded by Enactus Canada in partnership with the John Dobson Foundation Faculty Advisor Research Grant.

<https://enactus.ca/>



PURPOSE OF TOOLKIT

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide researchers and practitioners with a framework to embed lived and living experience, and allyship, into their work. The toolkit describes ways to incorporate authentic participation into the entire research or program development process, identifies strategies for engaging in a co-research/co-construction process, and outlines the benefits of practicing in this way.

"CREATING ALLYSHIP IN RESEARCH" VIDEOS

To accompany this resource, a video was created that provides insight from those with experience in the area of homelessness - from service providers to those with lived experience of homelessness - highlighting why allyship in research is needed.

A long and short version of the video is available on the Resources tab of the Kelowna Homelessness Research Collaborative website : <https://khrc.ok.ubc.ca>

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

The toolkit and accompanying videos share the story of lived experience allyship in research and how groups moving forward can position their own work, using each piece as a starting point for consideration and a reference throughout.



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION..... 2

- Context of Homelessness Research Initiatives in Kelowna, BC 2
- Background to the Study..... 2

PART I: HOW DO WE DEFINE ALLYSHIP IN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE..... 3

- What is Allyship? 3
- Situating Allyship in Research..... 4
- Outlining the Process 5

PART II: PRACTICAL TOOLS 7

- Guiding Philosophy 7
- How to “do” Allyship in Research: A Guiding Framework..... 9
- “Creating Allyship in Research” Video 14

PART III: WHY YOU SHOULD CARE 14

- Benefits of Allyship in Conducting Research..... 14
- Key Considerations for Implementation..... 15

CONCLUSION..... 16

- Call to Action..... 17
- Additional Resources..... 18

References 19

INTRODUCTION

Context of Homelessness Research Initiatives in Kelowna, BC

The Journey Home Task Force (JHTF) was appointed in the fall of 2017 by Kelowna City Council to lead the development of the Journey Home Strategy, a five-year plan to address homelessness (Turner Strategies, 2018). The Lived Experience Circle on Homelessness (LECoH) was formed alongside the creation of the JHTF, to inform the development of the strategy in a manner that recognized and heard the invaluable perspectives and insights of those who had previous or current experiences of homelessness (Turner Strategies, 2018). The Central Okanagan Journey Home Society (COJHS) was established to implement the Journey Home Strategy. The Kelowna Homelessness Research Collaborative (KHRC) was developed as a result of the recommendations of community consultations held by the JHTF to embed research in the Journey Home Strategy implementation. The mission of the KHRC is to “explore intersecting facets of homelessness and offer evidence-based approaches to mitigate and eradicate it” (Kelowna Homelessness Research Collaborative, 2020, About Us section, para. 1).

Background to the Study



Mack, B. (2018).

In the spring of 2019, a team of researchers in Kelowna, British Columbia with varied backgrounds, including lived and living experience, set out to gather baseline information on vulnerabilities to homelessness and mitigation strategies to prevent homelessness. Through this work, the team learned that the focus of research, program development, and professional practice could be changed and strengthened by ensuring that individuals with living and lived experience were included as active members and their voices brought forward through the process. While much research and literature explained the benefits of doing community engaged work, there was little concrete material to draw from.

This toolkit aims to address that gap and describe, through a lived and living experience lens, strategies, to genuinely integrate their ideas, perspectives, and voices into the research process.

“The integration of allyship in research is absolutely critical to the work that we do. Research is undertaken in partnership and completely co-created from the ground up with people with lived experience voices. It provides an opportunity for us to understand complex issues from the voices and experiences of people that have journeyed through homelessness and other aspects of poverty in our community.”

- Stephanie Ball, Executive Director, Central Okanagan Journey Home Society

While homelessness is the context of lived and living experience in this study, its learnings, and the framework presented, can be applied to other lived and living experience scenarios. Further, it is not only a tool designed for researchers, research assistants, and research participants, but for a variety of other groups, including practitioners, educators, and students. It is important for all groups to think about the process - not as an afterthought - but from the start to inform research, programming, evaluation, and professional practice.

Incorporating allyship throughout a project requires a recognition that this will take more time and you need to build this into the timeline from its inception.

“If you think creating allyship in research is a short process, it’s not; it requires a length of time to build those relationships”.

- Kerry Rempel, Co-Investigator, KHRC & Professor, Okanagan College

PART I: HOW DO WE DEFINE ALLYSHIP IN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

What is Allyship?

Being an ally is about disrupting oppressive spaces by educating others on the realities and histories of marginalized people (Swiftwolfe, 2016). It is a way of being and doing, through self-reflection, checking in with one’s motivations and debriefing with community members in a continual process (Swiftwolfe, 2016). Creating allyship is an important component of ensuring that participants ultimately benefit from the research (Lambley, 2020).

The definition of allyship used in this toolkit is aligned with previous work (Swiftwolfe, 2016), and was created with our co-researchers and community partners:

Allyship is deep, intentional, and active engagement with Lived and Living Experience. The purpose is to co-create knowledge and solutions with the goal to develop, implement, analyze, and disseminate findings together.

In order to gather knowledge and co-develop solutions, the design, development, and implementation of your project must utilize the knowledge and expertise of every team member. Including all voices in the analysis of the work results in authentic, shared meaning that more accurately conveys lived and living experience. Additionally, sharing and disseminating the findings or results through meaningful and appropriate methods targeted to the audience you are trying to reach will have greater long-term impact. This may mean that your final work is communicated in various forms, each tailored specifically to a purpose.

Allyship can be viewed in many ways. Gerard “G” Joyal highlights the powerful role that lived and living experience team members can play in research or project design

“People with lived experience are the allies to the people who are doing the work, not the other way around. They’re the ones who are seeking consultation, seeking support to do their work, it’s not the other way around.”

- Gerard “G” Joyal, Convenor, LECoh

Sherry Landry stresses how the recognition that lived and living experience team members are equal and valued contributors can build allyship. She describes what this looked like during the Vulnerabilities to Homelessness research project.

“We come in, even the set up of the room, the circle, where we can sit there, face to face and talk, and we opened it with the sacred circle which is very different from other research that I have been in, and this, I believe, had given everybody the comfort, and the feeling of safety and speaking out. In order to have this allyship going on, we have to have the trust, and the respect for the people; it’s all about relationship building.”

- Sherry Landry, Co-Reseacher & LECoh member

Situating Allyship in Research

Allyship in research as a framework is built on the fundamental concepts of community engaged research (CEnR) and community-based participatory research (CBPR), as outlined below:

CEnR has sought to integrate community partners throughout research processes, aiming to prevent stereotyping, stigmatizing, or other research practices that have historically harmed communities (Tuck & Yang, 2012). CBPR is committed to principles of co-learning and health equity actions (Israel et al., 2013; Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998), with goals to equalize power between researchers and researched (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Gaventa & Cornwall, 2015). (Wallerstein, et al., 2020, p. 380-381).

However, as Kent et al. (2019) indicates, community involvement can be described along a continuum from very little (consultation with the community, for example) to fully involved (community driven, wherein the community identifies needs and approaches researchers). Our working definition fits in the continuum presented by Kent et al. (2019) and adds to it by emphasizing the inclusion of individuals with lived and living experience as co-researchers/members of the team.

In allyship, the focus shifts to significant and intentional inclusion and validation of lived and living experience voices and ideas throughout the process, particularly in the process of design and creation. While this can take place in community-engaged research, it does not necessarily, and this is the critical difference. CEnR and CBPR may not have a lens of lived and living experience as they may not be the “community” driving the research.

Following a review of publications on community engaged research and robust discussions between the authors and co-researchers, it became clear that a toolkit that provided an applied and step-by-step guide to achieving allyship in research would be useful. This includes:

- How to find people with lived and living experience to participate, and authentic approaches to relationships to ensure trust and integrity;
- How to construct environments to collect data together and what strategies will identify ways to analyse and evaluate these findings in a co-created manner that considers barriers and challenges working with marginalized populations;
- How to factor in creativity and flexibility through the research process for unintended or unanticipated modifications or changes, particularly with respect to working with diverse research teams and communities;
- How to build trust and genuine relationships while working to reduce power imbalances between team members with and without lived and living experience;
- What potential risks could this research entail, and how to develop strategies to mitigate or minimize possible risk for co-researchers with living and lived experience.

Outlining the Process

The need for this toolkit arose from the research team identifying the value and necessity of authentically incorporating the voices and perspectives of those with lived and living experience in research.

As mentioned earlier, in 2019 a research team set out to understand the factors (from the lens of those with lived and living experience) that made individuals vulnerable to homelessness. While other research of this nature exists in the sector, this study looked to determine if there were nuances or factors unique to the local community. The study also sought to understand (again from the lens of those with lived and living experience) what participants felt could have mitigated, reduced, or prevented the risk of homelessness in the first place. The research was conducted in two phases: the first to look at vulnerabilities, and the second, preventions.

Initially, the research process followed a fairly standard flow where the academic or “expert” team planned for the research protocols and envisioned how analysis and reporting would roll out.

Early in the process, individuals with lived and living experience were not directly included on the research team. It was during the planning process to gather stakeholder feedback that the initial research team engaged with LECoH. This outreach introduced Sherry Landry and Dorothy Goodeye to the project. Members of the initial research team had worked with both women previously in the community, but had never collaborated directly in research.

Initially, Sherry and Dorothy were seen as advisors to the team; however, their role quickly grew to full research partners. While the initial team had previous and successful facilitation and research experience, the insights provided by the new co-researchers influenced almost all aspects of what had been planned and they initiated key changes to the proposed work. Examples of their valuable input included how to structure the opening moments of focus groups, the kind of food provided to participants, and how honorariums should be delivered. Their in-depth

The difference for this process was the embedded inclusion of the voices of co-researchers from LECoH.

knowledge and insight initiated significant evolutions to the data gathering process and analysis design. While the examples above might be seen as potentially small changes, they resulted in unexpected levels and depth of participation from those involved in the focus groups. What began as simply including the voice of living/lived experience, quickly evolved into something far more significant – *allyship*.

“Nothing about us, without us”. This sentiment expresses what many people with lived and living experience want others to know. When doing research, creating programming, and designing policies, the voices of people with lived and living experience should be present and persistent throughout the whole process.

Co-researchers Sherry and Dorothy were instrumental in many different components of the research process such as conducting the focus groups, encouraging participants to attend (recruitment), creating a safe space for participants to contribute, and reducing conflicts. Their insights changed the collective approach to delivering focus groups and they identified key changes that created a better outcome for the research. Further, their insights during analysis were invaluable in grounding the work. Kerry Rempel concurs, and highlights that a key component of the practice of creating allyship is the relationship among team members.

“... ensuring that there is an equality between voices. Are you treating your co-researcher like a co-researcher and not a participant in the process? I think that’s really critical”.

- Kerry Rempel, Co-Investigator, KHRC & Professor, Okanagan College

Dorothy and Sherry were not “participants” in the research process, they were co-creators, teachers, analysts, and equals. Consciously making that shift changed the very nature of the research process, and ultimately what could be achieved by the team.

The work itself was important, but just as important was the reflection of the co-researchers during and after the work was completed. The participation from people with lived and living experience throughout the project identified that the process used to achieve these results was an important research finding itself; as a result, the research team saw the value of this approach and wanted to document and share the process.



Figure 1 - Dorothy Goodeye, Sherry Landry, middle, seated, and Gerard “G” Joyal, standing.

The summary above reflects the intentional practice of the research team shifting from community engaged research to the identification and documentation of allyship in research. The following guiding philosophy and the accompanying framework are intended to act as a resource for practitioners, researchers, students, and participants in the consideration of exploring and creating allyship in research projects, designing programming, policy creation, and more.

PART II: PRACTICAL TOOLS

Guiding Philosophy

It is crucial for those engaging in the process of creating allyship in research to consider the values, ethics, and best practice recommendations driving the process. The tenets below have been identified as a starting point; however, it is encouraged that those beginning a new project co-create additional tenets with all team members to form a guiding philosophy.

- **Intentionality and Commitment**
 - Consider as a team the intent behind the research or project to be undertaken, and what relationship building with people with lived and living experience has occurred to date. Determine how you plan to embed co-researchers with lived and living experience throughout the process and what specific skills and knowledge each team member will contribute to the work. Further, consider how the team is being intentional with allyship at each stage of the process.
 - Be sure that there is genuine commitment to the process from all parties. It will not be easy to balance the expertise of all individuals involved in the research. The path for all participating is generally uncharted. Each individual will likely need to consciously consider their use of language, jargon, and may need to confront unconscious bias during the process.
- **Authenticity**
 - Focus on the authentic inclusion of allyship in research – avoid tokenism or the perception that co-researchers with lived and living experience are included “because they are supposed to be”. Identify as a team what genuine inclusion of co-researchers with lived and living experience looks like throughout each stage.
- **Respect and inclusivity**
 - Recognize that all team members have insights and knowledge to share, and make an effort to leverage each person’s area of expertise so their contributions are valued. No one team member is elevated in their expertise.
 - Respect for each team member’s knowledge, skills, and expertise is important and genuine acts of inclusivity are required.
 - Relationship building between team members and participants with lived and living experience will take time and a commitment to inclusivity throughout the process. It is important to revisit how the relationship is proceeding periodically through the process.

“My experience that I brought to the table in our project was having had the rapport with the street people I’ve been working with for years; they trust me. They will sit and talk to me”.

– Dorothy Goodeye, Co-Researcher & LECOH member

- Sharing space and power
 - Value the contributions of each team member and direct attention to how the team will actively share space and power. Recognize that the perspectives and voices of co-researchers with and without lived and living experience are equal.
 - Not every team member will participate in the same way throughout the research process. Because each researcher comes with different knowledge and skills, they may take or share the lead at different points of the process. Take a moment at each phase to reflect on the power dynamics.
 - Do not presume to know the skill sets of any member of the team. Ensure that team members are given the support and tools to be active participants. Consider if some practice, coaching, or training would allow for members of the team to participate more fully.
- Transparency
 - At all stages be clear with co-researchers, participants, and other key stakeholders as to how the team is engaging in allyship, what work is being undertaken, and how it will be communicated.

Dr. Kyleen Myrah highlights this well:

“It takes more time, it takes a commitment, it takes a funding model to do that, but it is integral to any research you do on any needs of the population and without it, are you truly capturing what your research intends to do”?

- Dr. Kyleen Myrah, Co-Investigator, KHRC & Professor, Okanagan College



Mack, B. (2018)

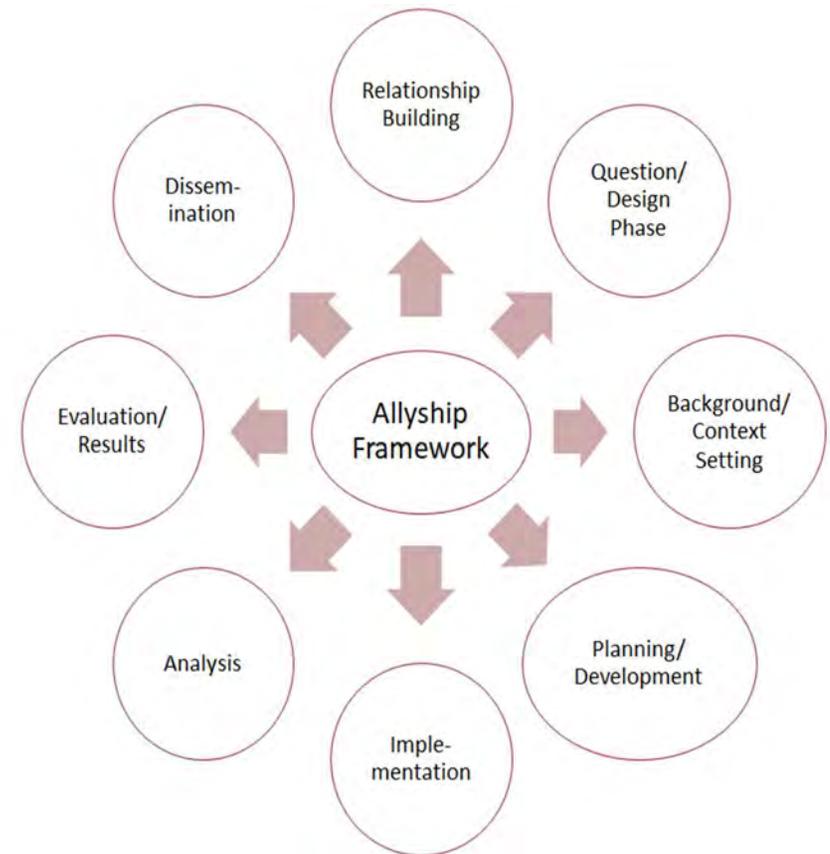
How to “do” Allyship in Research: A Guiding Framework

This step by step framework was designed to provide context and practical considerations to guide researchers, groups, or individuals in exploring and creating allyship in their work. It can support research, program development, evaluation, or other interventions.

Consider the framework as a central focus on allyship that touches on each aspect of the research process. Not all steps are linear and may require the research team to move back and forth between steps as new knowledge or understanding is gained.

Key components of the guiding framework are outlined below:

1. The specific process steps
2. Identification of how the allyship lens is applied, emphasizing the unique skills and knowledge of individuals with lived and living experience
3. Practical examples of how allyship can be applied at each step



Stage or Process	Allyship Lens	Example of Actions
<p>Relationship Building</p>	<p>Create connections between those with lived and living experience and those wanting to create change. Determine how to find members of lived and living experience communities and who to reach out to. Building these relationships will take time.</p> <p>Recognize that these actions may be uncomfortable to do, but have courage to try to authentically build relationships. Your research or project will benefit and members of the lived and living experience community will appreciate the effort.</p>	<p>Prior to asking for participation, actually form a relationship with members of the lived and living experience community or work with those who have existing relationships</p> <p>Collaborate with grassroots organizations, go to local agencies in the sector, or reach out to frontline staff to ask who to talk to. Do not assume you can find members of the lived or living experience community “on the street” as it may NOT be clear who has lived or living experience.</p> <p><i>NOTE: your first contact with the community should not be to ask for their help.</i></p>
<p>Question or Design Phase (when you are beginning to conceive or develop an idea for a project/program/research)</p>	<p>Co-author or co-create in the design phase. Consciously reflect to ensure no one voice is privileged over others in the development of the research questions or program design.</p> <p>Have all individuals involved identify key informants, stakeholders and knowledge keepers.</p> <p>Monitor language and jargon to ensure language itself is not a barrier to participation.</p> <p>Determine where you will hold planning meetings and research/project meetings to ensure a neutral, safe, and accessible space for all individuals. Recognize that academic or research institutions/space or religious spaces may not be welcoming or safe. Community centres and libraries may be appropriate options for meeting locations.</p>	<p>Involve individuals with lived and living experience to jointly determine the key question to be addressed.</p> <p>Ask lived and living experience members what the key issues or concerns are that they feel should be addressed to ensure all perspectives are valued.</p> <p>Find meeting spaces in the community that are centrally located for members and accessible. Consider providing bus tickets or other transportation methods to ensure all individuals have access to the meeting location. Additionally, supporting childcare (on-site or via vouchers) can also be key to reducing barriers to participation. To increase comfort for participants, team members with living/lived experience may plan to bring participants or meet at the location and enter together.</p>
<p>Background/context development</p>	<p>Involve multiple stakeholders in providing context to the issue being addressed. Look to traditional (reports, research) and non-traditional sources of information, including stories, writing, poems and blogs written by community and lived and living experience to form a complete picture of the issue/problem you are looking to address.</p>	<p>Have individuals provide their most trusted sources of information. Individuals with lived and living experience can be key conduits to access hidden or difficult to find insights about the issue/problem.</p> <p>Individuals with lived and living experience may also remind us of people/populations that may be missing, hard to reach, or not considered for participation.</p>

Stage or Process	Allyship Lens	Example of Actions
Planning/Development	<p>Actively involve all members of the team in the design and planning of the project or research. Utilize all skill sets and voices.</p> <p>Be sure to ask detailed or specific questions and avoid making assumptions about what should be done.</p> <p>It is important to be genuine in listening and using the information provided.</p>	<p>Map the expertise of the group. Recognize that all participants in this phase will have unique knowledge to bring to the tasks at hand.</p> <p>Be intentional in using each individual's knowledge, skills and abilities.</p> <p><i>NOTE: when in doubt, look to lived and living experience members for guidance in planning.</i></p>
Implementation	<p>All members need an active role and responsibilities within the process/project/research.</p> <p>Guard against tokenism when involving all participants in the work. Do not just give the appearance of incorporating a small number of individuals with lived and living experience but genuinely engage in them in the research work.</p> <p>Ask if, how, and when people wish to be recognized during implementation. This includes identifying individuals as having lived and living experience. Do not assume that participation on the research team is permission to connect an individual to lived and living experience.</p>	<p>Assign roles according to interests and abilities. Don't assume what their role will be.</p> <p>Sometimes people will lead, sometimes they take a less visible role; knowing how to leverage the strengths of the core research team is central to how effective the implementation will be.</p> <p>Make it a practice to clarify with the entire research team how they wish to be identified during the research project. This can include pronouns, institutional affiliation, credentials and connection to lived and living experience.</p> <p>If there is an ethical reason to disclose an affiliation or there could be perceived conflict of interest, the best practice is to disclose affiliations in consultation with the research team.</p>
Analysis	<p>Plan the analysis process in advance. Ask participants how they would like to see information/data/results presented or available for analysis.</p> <p>Consider different ways to look at the data collected as suggested by the members of the team. Diverse teams will often review or categorize the information in unique ways.</p> <p>Ensure the tools being used are accessible to all members of the team (i.e. if held electronically, all members must have ability and technology to view).</p>	<p>Consider a two-step process for analysis.</p> <p>First, have all members identify what they have learned from the information/data presented. Second, as a group share and compare analyses.</p> <p>Trial models or approaches that are different from your "normal" discipline; make space for culturally relevant analysis.</p> <p>Never leave the analysis solely to one individual or an isolated part of the group. In particular, ensure that there are lived and living experience voices presented and involved in the analysis.</p>

Stage or Process	Allyship Lens	Example of Actions
<p>Evaluation of the process and results (evaluation of the process is often viewed as ongoing and not necessarily as one of the last steps of the research process)</p>	<p>Evaluation of the process should be ongoing to allow for adaption and modification throughout.</p> <p>Consider how the project/process/research was experienced by the team. Identify aspects of the process where individual voices or contributions may have been missed.</p> <p>When evaluating the results, be sure to include multiple perspectives (e.g. research team members, key stakeholders in the community, participants with lived and living experience) of the “success” or “failure” or “other” of the initiative. Consider if there were achievements from some perspectives, but issues in others. Identify which voices or perspectives are driving the determination of success or failure and work to ensure all participant voices are included.</p>	<p>As much as possible use a 360-degree approach to evaluation. This does not need to be expensive or overly time consuming. Simple approaches like having a tea/coffee session to gather feedback, use of suggestion boxes or online input forms, can provide different ways to engage multiple voices in the evaluation.</p> <p>Try to ask “whose perspective haven’t we considered?” during the evaluation process.</p>
<p>Dissemination</p>	<p>Determine the most appropriate and impactful ways to disseminate. Consider the traditional (journal articles, community reports) and the non-traditional (stories, podcasts, community meetings, emailed information or printed leaflets).</p> <p>Encourage all members to contribute to the creation and dissemination by determining interest and abilities (writing stories and narratives, speaking with stakeholders, attending conferences/presentations/community meetings).</p> <p>Determine with lived and living experience members ways of disseminating information through different forms of expression that feel safer and less academic or technical.</p>	<p>Ensure plain language is utilized throughout all materials.</p> <p>Take care to ensure the outcomes/results are available and accessible to all interested parties (timely, accessible, and appropriate to the audience).</p> <p>Lived and living experience members may have critical connections that would lead to more effective distribution in the community. Use these networks to share the information.</p>

Stage or Process	Allyship Lens	Example of Actions
<p>Reflection (this is an ongoing and periodic requirement of research with an allyship lens)</p>	<p>Reflection should be present at every stage of the research process. It can, however, play a special role at the end of a project/research/program as an overall debrief.</p> <p>Encouraging all members to consider times in the process where they felt most heard, most engaged or most valued can highlight where allyship has been integrated more fully. Conversely, having all participants identify when they felt least engaged, valued or heard can identify instances where allyship could have been better employed.</p> <p>Reflection is not solely about critique. Critique implies that there is a single best or better way to “do something”. Instead, reflection asks members to consider their own actions, their experiences and the experiences of others during the process to identify what worked well, and how things could be done differently next time.</p>	<p>Find ways to bring the team together to create the space for individual and group reflection multiple times throughout.</p> <p>Reflection may or may not lead to immediate (or any) action, but it is important that the group honour the experience.</p> <p>Key components to reflection include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust; • Time and Patience; • Authentic engagement; • Commitment to listen; • Genuine intention; and • Consideration of action.

“Creating Allyship in Research” Video

As an accompaniment to this toolkit, the *Creating Allyship in Research* videos (short and long version) can be utilized as a practical tool. The videos provide an interactive and engaging method to bring the voices of those with lived and living experience, and others involved in the research process, to life. This medium uses creative techniques to encourage a more nuanced understanding of the need for, and outcomes of, genuine and authentic allyship in research. Further, it helps to emphasize the language and intention of the individuals involved in allyship, from their own voices.



Mack, B. (2018).

The prominent call to action of the video is the intention to be a catalyst, to think carefully when designing research and programs with those from marginalized populations, and why the inclusion of their perspectives and involvement throughout project phases is so important.

The short version of the video is intended to introduce the topic of allyship, for example in brief presentations and classrooms. The long version can be used to gain a more in-depth understanding and to begin conversations around research/project/process planning and analysis. It is encouraged that all members of a team review the long version of the video and reflect together on what they will take away, what stood out, and how to tangibly incorporate the call to action in their work. The videos

can be found on the Resources tab of the Kelowna Homelessness Research Collaborative website: <https://khrc.ok.ubc.ca/resources/>

PART III: WHY YOU SHOULD CARE

Benefits of Allyship in Conducting Research

The benefits of allyship in research, program development, evaluation, policy creation, and other interventions are numerous and vital.

- Impacts and outcomes are richer
 - Research has been grounded in and strengthened by the inclusion of lived and living experience
- Increases validity and reliability
 - Increases the likelihood of reaching hard to access voices and ensures the research measures what was intended

- Individuals are more readily accepting of results when they trust the process
 - Individuals who are involved and invested in the process are more likely to support and help disseminate the findings
- Authentically includes seats at the table for experts with living and lived experience
 - Individuals are more likely to collaborate with you in the future

“I now have the hope and belief that it’s [research outcomes] actually going to go somewhere and make a difference.”
 - Dorothy Goodeye, Co-Researcher & LECoH Member



Mack, B. (2018).

Key Considerations for Implementation

Relationship Building: As highlighted throughout this toolkit and the accompanying *Creating Allyship in Research* videos, relationship building is a key component of implementing allyship in research. If respect and attention are not paid to the time and authenticity required to build rapport and strong relationships with co-researchers and participants with lived and living experience, allyship in research will not be achieved.

Authenticity: Tokenism or simply the “appearance” of genuine engagement with co-researchers and participants with lived and living experience has no place in implementing allyship in research. Relationships and inclusion must be genuine and take place at each step of the process.

Valuing Contributions: The skills, experiences, and knowledge of all co-researchers and participants with lived and living experience must be valued. Valuing contributions should emphasize respecting and including perspectives and ideas throughout the process, as well as the inclusion of recognition of work throughout. Further, monetary compensation for expertise and work completed for both co-researchers and participants with lived and living experience should be provided through honorariums or payment for services rendered.

Sherry Landry reflects on the importance of monetary compensation.

“That’s a great feeling, to know I helped provide someone with two hours of work, to get paid for their knowledge. This payment recognizes their intellectual property rights. I believe this research has respected their contributions, especially a population that is so vulnerable. I hope this will teach other people respect comes at all levels, coming from the root”.

- Sherry Landry, Co-Research & LECoH Member

Trauma and Trauma Informed Work: Marginalized populations have consistently expressed being queried or “researched on” with no concrete outcomes being shared or implemented post-completion. As a result, engaging in research as a co-researcher or participant with lived and living experience can be a difficult and traumatic experience. It is a key consideration for all team members to understand the impacts of trauma and to ensure that there is a detailed plan to mitigate risk of re-traumatization. Team members are encouraged to complete training in trauma informed practice and to include a consultant or team member with experience in trauma informed practice.

Potential Risks and Mitigation: When beginning to engage in allyship in research, it is important to identify what risks co-researchers and participants with lived and living experience may encounter and what mitigations will be in place. Experiences of trauma being felt and articulated is one example of a risk, described above; however, other risks should be considered, for example, with regards to the research process. Teams implementing allyship in research need to consider creativity and flexibility through the research process for potential modifications. For example, academic research ethics and protocols may be rigid at times. It is important for teams to help inform and work with institutional ethics and protocols to enable flexibility and accommodation in this process.

CONCLUSION

In recognition of the process and knowledge of creating allyship in research, the research team has committed to incorporating this approach in their future research. Creating allyship is not a static process, however, and will encourage continual reflection and growth to improve and share future research, planning, and processes.

Call to Action

It bears repeating that this toolkit and accompanying videos are intended to be a catalyst, to think carefully when designing programs with marginalized populations on why inclusion of their perspectives and genuine involvement in all project phases is so important. Consider the following reflections from Sherry Landry and Dorothy Goodeye:



“It has brought me up to a different level of understanding academia and how we can work as partners and making the voices heard. And I believe that’s the whole reason I’m here on earth. It’s connecting us all and everybody’s equal”. - Sherry Landry, Co-Researcher & LECoH Member

“It says nothing about us without us. That lived experience voice brings that to the table. You can’t make decisions and solutions that you don’t really understand the problem of”. - Dorothy Goodeye, Co-Researcher & LECoH Member

The authors invite you to utilize the framework presented and the accompanying videos in your exploration of allyship and to inform your research, programming, evaluation, intervention, and policy work. To encourage further growth and authentic incorporation of allyship, reflect on situations where this framework can enhance the work you are doing.

Using this toolkit to create allyship will not only benefit your work, but can personally benefit you as well. The content and framework will encourage you to step outside your comfort zone, to challenge your assumptions, and to consider new perspectives. Openness to new ideas, knowledge and ways of working is vital to creating relationships with individuals with lived and living experience. Be prepared to deviate from preconceived plans and you might just discover outcomes that you would not have been able to achieve without adding allyship to your work.

Additional Resources

Please review the following additional resources for:

- Previous research completed by the authors that incorporated allyship
- The context of homelessness research initiatives in Kelowna, BC and across Canada
- Allyship in practice

<p><u>Central Okanagan Journey Home Society</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Report ▪ Technical Report
<p><u>Kelowna Homelessness Research Collaborative</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Homelessness Vulnerabilities & Potential Mitigating Supports. Community Report A: Focus Group Findings ▪ Homelessness Vulnerabilities & Potential Mitigating Supports. Community Report B: Community Connection and Future Research Session ▪ Homelessness Vulnerabilities & Potential Mitigating Supports. Designing Online Focus Groups: Learnings from the Study
<p><u>Homeless Hub</u> (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Homelessness Learning Hub ▪ Community Profile: Kelowna
<p><u>Montreal Indigenous Community Network</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indigenous Ally Toolkit

References

- Kelowna Homelessness Research Collaborative. (2020). About us. <https://khrc.ok.ubc.ca/about-us/>
- Kent, K. D., Furr-Holden, D., Lewis, E. Y., Cunningham, R., Zimmerman, M. A., Johnson-Lawrence, V., & Selig, S. (2019). The continuum of community engagement in research: A roadmap for understanding and assessing progress. *Progress in Community Health Partnerships*, 13(4), 427-434. <https://doi.org/10.1353/cpr.2019.0064>
- Lambley, R. (2020). Small talk matters! Creating allyship in mental health research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1769239>
- Swiftwolfe, D. (2016). *Indigenous Ally Toolkit*. Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network.
https://segalcentre.org/common/sitemedia/201819_Shows/ENG_AllyToolkit.pdf
- Turner Strategies. (2018). *Journey home. Kelowna's journey home strategy technical report*. <https://www.journeyhome.ca/>
- Wallerstein, N., Oetzel, J. G., Sanchez-Youngman, S., Boursaw, B., Dickson, E., Kastelic, S., Koegel, P., Lucero, J. E., Magarati, M., Ortiz, K., Parker, M., Peña, J., Richmond, A., & Duran, B. (2020). Engage for equity: A long-term study of community-based participatory research and community-engaged research practices and outcomes. *Health Education & Behavior*, 47(3), 380-390. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198119897075>



To cite this toolkit:

Myrah, K., Rempel, K., & Laing, S. (2021). *Allyship in research toolkit: A resource for those conducting research with participants of lived experience*. Kelowna Homelessness Research Collaborative. <https://khrc.ok.ubc.ca/resources/>



<https://khrc.ok.ubc.ca>

Published July 2021