

CUP Collaborators: Terms of Reference

1. Purpose and Philosophy

CUP Collaborators are a formalized network of community and academic experts dedicated to community-university engaged research and evaluation. The Collaborator model operates with a “two-way street” philosophy, meaning that Collaborators provide different forms of support towards CUP’s mission and, in turn, benefit from aspects of CUP’s infrastructure, networks, and knowledge mobilization.

2. Core Values

All CUP Collaborators agree to uphold the following values in their work:

- **Reciprocity:** We commit to mutually beneficial relationships between the communities and researchers.
- **Diversity of knowledge:** We prioritize lived experience and actively welcome perspectives from groups who are traditionally underrepresented in research.
- **Collaboration:** We actively build and sustain relationships throughout the research or evaluation process.
- **Continuous learning:** We share our insights, remain critical of “conventional” ways of thinking, and seek to continuously improve our approaches to community engagement.

3. Membership Categories

- **Academic Collaborators:** Includes faculty (Assistant, Associate, Full, Clinical, and Adjunct Professors), Emeritus Professors, Postdoctoral Scholars, and Research Associates from any post-secondary institution in the Edmonton region.
- **Community Collaborators:** Includes individuals from non-profits, industry, government, citizen groups, consultants, and community organizations. This category also includes community-engaged leaders, researchers, and evaluators working outside a university environment.

4. Expectations and Contributions

Collaborators are expected to contribute to the following types of activities (as appropriate):

- **Project leadership:** Act as lead or co-lead in research and/or evaluation projects in collaboration with CUP.
- **CUP Connect:** Help CUP respond to community requests for support that align with your experience and availability. Requests for support are received through the [CUP Connect](#) portal.
- **Funding development:** Contribute to funding proposals (e.g., grants) in partnership with CUP.
- **Supervision:** Supervise or co-supervise practicum or research students who are involved in CUP projects.
- **Capacity building:** Help build capacity for community-engaged research on and off campus (via students, curriculum, workshops, facilitation, etc.)

- **Knowledge mobilization:** Contribute to mobilizing and sharing research and evaluation knowledge.

NOTE: Collaborators will share annual contributions and engagement with CUP through their annual feedback (see Section 7: Feedback to CUP).

5. Benefits and Reciprocity

CUP provides the following types of support for Collaborators to achieve their professional and community-engaged goals:

- **Collaboration:** Opportunities to work with CUP directly on research and/or evaluation projects.
- **Network:** Access to CUP's network of community-engaged experts and partners, which includes opportunities for interdisciplinary gatherings, communities of practice, mentoring relationships, and webinars.
- **Institutional support:** Letters of support from CUP to secure external funding.
- **Funding partnerships:** Opportunities to partner with CUP on funding applications.
- **Impact support:** Support from CUP to mobilize your research for practice, programs, and policy impact.
- **Community of practice:** Opportunity to participate in bi-monthly community of practice sessions for CUP Collaborators.
- **Student engagement:** Opportunities to engage students in research projects.

6. Term Limits and Review Process

- **Application review:** Applications to become a CUP Collaborator are submitted via an online form. They are reviewed to ensure alignment with CUP's values and model.
- **Timeline:** CUP will follow up on applications via email within 10 working days of their receipt.
- **Term length:** CUP Collaborators are appointed to a two (2) year term (with the possibility of renewal).
- **Annual profile update:** To ensure the network remains active and up to date, Collaborators will be asked to update their profile details annually.
- **Termination:** CUP Collaborators who must end their affiliation with CUP for any reason (e.g., life circumstances, changing jobs) are asked to notify CUP. In extreme circumstances, CUP reserves the ability to end a Collaborator's term.

7. Feedback to CUP

CUP Collaborators are required to provide a short report and feedback on the community-engaged work they have undertaken with CUP in the past year. CUP will send templates for your reporting in May, and submissions will be due in June. Your feedback and input help CUP understand the impact of its network and showcase its impact to funders and the university. You will receive a copy of your feedback, which may be useful in your own reporting within your organization.

8. Governance and Conduct

- **Conflict of interest:** If a Collaborator believes they have a conflict of interest related to their work with CUP (financial, professional, or personal), they are asked to disclose this to CUP.
- **Safe spaces:** Members commit to maintaining a collaborative, collegial environment and fostering psychologically safe and equitable spaces for diverse participation.
- **Ethics:** If a Collaborator is co-leading a research and/or evaluation project, the co-investigators will be required to adhere to the University of Alberta's standards of ethical conduct or that of their own post-secondary institution. REB (Research Ethics Board) approval is required for all research projects in a post-secondary institution.

9. Representing CUP

- **Organizational liaison (community):** Community Collaborators who serve as the primary connection point between CUP and their respective organizations are encouraged to promote CUP resources and opportunities within their organizations.
- **External representation:** When appropriate, Collaborators may represent CUP at external events or conferences to highlight CUP's model and the impact of community-university partnerships.
- **Acknowledgement:** When appropriate, Collaborators should acknowledge their formal affiliation with CUP in professional biographies, presentations, websites, email signatures, etc.

10. Community of Practice

CUP will organize community of practice (CoP) sessions for CUP Collaborators. A CoP is a group of people who meet regularly to learn from one another, share experiences, and provide mutual assistance for addressing real-world problems. Attendance is encouraged but not mandatory.

- **Purpose:** The CoP will be a dedicated space for interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral knowledge sharing, professional development, and networking.
- **Frequency:** The CoP will be organized once every two months.

Documentation: High-level summaries of CoP sessions will be documented and shared with participants. The information may also be used in CUP reporting.