



Community Environmental Sustainability (Ottawa) Hub Evaluation Synthesis Report

YEARS 1-4, 2012-2016

Prepared by Patricia Ballamingie [CES (Ottawa) Hub Academic Lead]
Magda Goemans [Research Assistant for both the CES (Ottawa) Hub and SLOE] |
August 29, 2016



Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE), a major SSHRC-funded project, aims to strengthen Canadian communities through action research on best practices of community-campus engagement. We ask how community-campus partnerships can be done to maximize the value created for non-profit, community based organizations in four key areas: poverty, community food security, community environmental sustainability, and reducing violence against women.

This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada through the Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement Project.





Table of Contents

Introduction	1
1. Methodology.....	1
1.1 Methodology of data collection:.....	1
1.2 Methodology of data analysis for report:.....	3
1.3 Audit trails for accessing raw data:.....	4
Data citation/reference list:.....	4
2 Evaluation Data	6
2.1 Why have you been involved in this community-campus partnership?	6
2.2 How do you define the partnership/project’s value for you/your organization (whether faculty member, student, CBO, etc.)?	7
2.3 What aspects of the partnership directly contributed to the value that you experienced?	8
2.4 What do you think have been the main impacts of your partnership and how would you measure them?	10
2.5 What did you hope to achieve through this specific community-campus partnership project?	11
2.6 Drawing on your experience in this project, what have been the major enablers for achieving these goals?	12
2.7 Drawing on your experience in this project, what have been the most significant barriers to achieving these goals?	13
2.8 What other issues had an impact on whether or not your goals were achieved?	16
2.9 How were responsibilities and resources shared among the various partners in your project?	17
2.10 If there were any challenges, how were they addressed?	18
2.11 To what extent were members of communities who may not typically participate in community-campus partnerships (i.e. ‘marginalized communities’) involved in determining the direction of your project?	19
2.12 What challenges arose in the context of this participation, and how were they addressed?	20
2.13 As your project progressed, did you make any changes to the way your partnership was organized? If not, what would you change if you could start again?	21
2.14 Did any specific ethical issues arise in the context of your community-campus partnership (e.g. around how information would be gathered and shared), and how were these issues addressed?	22
2.15 Do you expect the work of this partnership to continue into the future? Why or why not?	22
References	24



Introduction

This evaluation report synthesizes and summarizes comments from participants involved in community-campus engagement (CCE) initiatives with the Community Environmental Sustainability (CES) Ottawa Hub, lead by Patricia Ballamingie, Carleton University. From 2012-2016, the CES Ottawa Hub conducted applied action research with four community partners. First, we worked in concert with Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE) – a neighbourhood organization of volunteer residents seeking to influence the adoption of environmental and socially sustainability measures across a large redevelopment project within an inner-urban green space in Old Ottawa East. A sub-group of SLOE known as Innovative Housing for Older Adults in Old Ottawa East (IHOA) aimed more explicitly to establish a seniors cohousing community within the new development – an initiative for which we provided targeted support and research capacity. Second, we supported the Ottawa Eco-Talent Network (OETN) – a group that aims to link environmental initiatives with pro-bono advisors and expertise. Third, we supported seed funding to the GottaGo! Campaign – an advocacy group campaigning for a larger network of (and better access to) public toilets in Ottawa. Finally, building on a previous history of engagement with the Batawa Development Corporation, we conducted numerous interviews with key stakeholders to identify successes and obstacles to working with a private sector partner. In spite of a signed Memorandum of Understanding, we were unable to proceed with demonstration projects, due to partner constraints beyond the scope of the CFICE project.

This report is organized into two sections. Section 1 delineates the qualitative methodological approach used to gather primary data, detailing evaluation activities conducted over Years 1-4 of the CFICE SSHRC Partnership Grant for the CES Ottawa Hub. It further details the categories used to code the data, identifies key themes, and lists audit trails for data access. Section 2 synthesises participant data across a set of 15 evaluation questions.

NB The authors would like to express sincere gratitude for the time and insights provided by our core community partners (this would include broader teams from all three partnerships, but notably, Rebecca Aird and Chris Osler from SLOE, John Karau and Jason Garlough from OETN, and Joan Kuyek and Bessa Whitmore from the GottaGo! Campaign.)

1. Methodology

1.1 Methodology of data collection:

(CFICE instruction: Describe how the evaluation data was collected – what tools were used to collect data? – why certain data collection methods were used – who collected and compiled the data – when the data was collected – if challenges or problems were encountered, what were they and how were they addressed?)

Relying exclusively on qualitative research methods, we conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews and focus groups with representatives from each of our key community partners, along with the relevant faculty involved. Where possible, student research assistants also conducted self-assessments to critically and self-reflexively evaluate their outputs, accomplishments and constraints over the past year of engagement. Section 1.3 details the data collected for this evaluation process of demonstration projects from Years 1-4. Our qualitative approach to data collection allowed participants to consider focus group/interview questions at length, and to bring forth other insights that may not have been addressed in the original evaluation questions. As such, it proved an appropriate way to glean thoughtful insights through a process valued by both researchers and participants. Academic Lead, Patricia Ballamingie, along with CES Hub Research Assistants, Stephanie Kittmer, Magda Goemans and Katalin Koller, collected and compiled the data over a period spanning Years 1-4 of the CFICE project.



The following table summarizes more specific evaluation activities that took place each year.

Timeframe	Evaluation Activities	Outputs
Year 1 (2012-2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation interviews with General Manager of the Batawa Development Corporation, Heather Candler, along with five Carleton faculty/staff involved in previous collaboration (Brian Burns, Beth Gorham, Mark Forbes, Sheryl Boyle, and Stephen Fai). • Evaluation interview with SLOE Chair, Rebecca Aird plus focus group with broader SLOE team. • Self-assessment by SLOE RA, Gary Martin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation summary prepared by SLOE RA, Blair Cullen, in conjunction with Community Co-Lead, Todd Barr (Trent Community Research Centre), submitted December 18, 2013.
Year 2 (2013-2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation interviews with faculty involved with SLOE (Ben Gianni, Lisa Meyers) • Evaluation focus group with OETN team • Self-assessment by SLOE RA, Magda Goemans and OETN RA, Michael Lait 	
Year 3 (2014-2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation interview with SLOE Chair, Rebecca Aird 	
Year 4 (2015-2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assessment by SLOE RA, Magda Goemans and OETN RA, Michael Lait on Years 3-4 • Evaluation focus groups with key proponents from each demo project: SLOE, OETN, and GottaGo! Campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CES Ottawa Hub Evaluation Synthesis Report, Years 1-4 (2012-2016)

One obvious constraint has been for the Academic Co-lead to find the time to formally conduct the annual self-assessment. However, in addition to contributions throughout this report, ongoing self-reflection and analysis has resulted in the following eight contributions to scholarly dialogue around CCE by Patricia Ballamingie:

- Presented as a part of a panel: ***From Research to Action: Mobilizing Community-Campus Engagement to Transform Institutional and Public Policy*** (organized by Charles Levkoe, with Diana Majury, Todd Barr, Kim Pate, Geri Briggs, Nastasha Pei, Bessa Whitmore, Gen Harrison, and Peter Andr e) at C2U-Expo, May 27, 2015, Carleton University [Co-facilitated a breakout session on: *Aligning institutions for greater community impact*]
- Organized and chaired 1-hour workshop: ***Facilitating Campus-Community Engagement: Models and Best Practices*** (with Karen Schwartz, Todd Barr, Lisa Meyer, Liz Lefrancois, Natasha Pei and Magda Goemans) at C2U-Expo, May 29, 2015, Carleton University
- Presented ***Tangling oneself in action research and voluntary commitments in grassroots organizations*** at the 8th Annual Food Secure Canada Assembly, in a session titled: *Researching for/with the Canadian Food Movement to Build Food Sovereignty*, November 14, 2014, Halifax, NS
- Presented ***Motivating Faculty to Become Engaged Scholars*** at the Healthy, Resilient Communities Conference, May 28, 2014, Ottawa, ON
- Participated in a CFICE team project presentation: Campus-Community Partnership for Health (CCPH) Conference, May 1, 2014: ***Learning to share power and resources in order to build more effective campus-community relationships in large research, multi-issue, university-based projects***, Chicago, IL



- Presented with Stephanie Kittmer, **The Community Environmental Sustainability Hub** in a roundtable organized by Edward Jackson, *Putting Community First: Practices and Policies for Maximizing the Benefits to Non-Profits of Community-Campus Engagement* at the ANSER 2013 Annual Meeting, Victoria, B.C. (June 5, 2013)
- **Researching for/with the Canadian Food Movement: The Power of Community-Campus Connections:** Presented on a panel moderated by Charles Levkoe at the Food Secure Canada's 8th Annual Assembly, *Waves of Change: Sustainable Food for All*, Halifax, NS (November 14, 2014)
- **Sustaining Our Environments Through Campus Community Engagement:** (a) Invited by Alan Steele to introduce keynote speaker, Dr. David Schindler; (b) Presented a *pecha kucha* on the Community Environmental Sustainability Hub with Stephanie Kittmer (April 12, 2013)

1.2 Methodology of data analysis for report:

(CFICE instruction: Describe how themes or codes were developed/why themes and codes were chosen – were tools used to help analyze data?)

CES Ottawa Hub RA, Magda Goemans, and Academic Lead, Patricia Ballamingie, conducted the analysis of evaluation data in July 2016. As indicated in the CFICE document titled *Research Data Management Plan – Year 4 Evaluation*, the evaluation focused on drawing out potential enabling and hindering practices for community partners within campus-community engagement initiatives. We applied a “general inductive approach”, as described by Thomas (2006), when coding raw data. This process involved repeated, careful and in-depth readings of the data to iteratively draw out primary evaluation themes, noting potential linkages between categories, as well as changing perspectives, methods and outcomes for community partners, faculty and students that may have developed over Years 1-4 of the CFICE project. We also identified “contradictory points of view and new insights” that emerged within each theme. We undertook this work aware that the design and application of coding frameworks will inevitably be influenced by our own respective subjectivities and positionalities.

In coding the raw data from participants, several key evaluation themes emerged:

- **Capacity building for the community partner:** Participants commented on impacts of CCE on capacity building for the community organization, including CES Hub faculty and student research and administrative support, and identified other activities that strengthened the focus of the organization and assisted community groups in articulating their goals and strategies.
- **Strengthening community partner visibility/expertise/prestige:** Participants commented on impacts of CCE on strengthening community partner visibility, expertise, and prestige, vis-à-vis activities related to communications and community outreach, extension of community partner networks, and improvements to perceived legitimacy and credibility of community organizations.
- **Scholarly contributions:** Participants commented on the positive influence of academic involvement on CCE projects, noting in particular that scholarly input may expose community partners to fresh (and critical) perspectives and encourage them to test new ideas.
- **Student development:** Participants commented on the beneficial opportunities for student development in CCE projects – activities that enhance the student experience, expand their social capital, and ultimately make them more marketable following their degrees.



- **Relationship building:** Participants commented on the influence of CCE on fostering strong, positive, respectful, effective, and meaningful relationships between CES Ottawa Hub community partners, faculty and students.
- **Relations of power:** Participants commented on ways in which CCE may influence relations of power between CES Ottawa Hub community partners, faculty and students, including how power imbalances may manifest from differing academic and community partner perspectives and relative standing.
- **Logistical and administrative supports/obstacles:** Participants commented on issues, activities and institutional structures within CCE that help or hinder community partner planning, organization and management, including, for example, factors such as third-party brokerage and community partner access to funding.

1.3 Audit trails for accessing raw data:

(CFICE instruction: Describe how to access the raw data/where it is stored – protocols and permissions for accessing the raw data)

Raw data files are currently being stored on the (locked and password-protected) hard drives of Academic Lead, Patricia Ballamingie, and CES Hub RA, Magda Goemans. Data will be indefinitely stored in a safe and secure manner, and will only be used in the context of the CFICE project, or a project directly related to this project. Permission to access the raw data is limited to the Academic Lead and CES Ottawa Hub RAs, as per our original ethics application. See Appendix 1 for the Letter of Introduction and Informed Consent — Years 1-3, and Appendix 2 for the Letter of Introduction and Informed Consent — Year 4.

Data citation/reference list:

*(CFICE instruction: Naming convention for raw data: [HUB]_[Data Descriptor]-RAW_[MonthYYYY]_V#
e.g. CESOttawa_Yr3InterviewTrans-RAW_Dec2015_V01)*

CESOttawa_Yr1FocusGroupTrans-SLOE-RAW_July2013_V01:
Year 1 evaluation focus group with Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE)

CESOttawa_Yr1InterviewTrans-SLOE-RAW_date?_V01:
Year 1 evaluation interview with Rebecca Aird, Chair of Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE)

CESOttawa_Yr1RAReflectionTrans-Martin-RAW_June2013_V01:
Year 1 evaluation RA reflection from Gary Martin, SLOE RA (Year 1)

CESOttawa_Yr2FocusGroupTrans-OETN-RAW_Sept2014_V01:
Year 2 evaluation focus group with Ottawa Eco-Talent Network (OETN)

CESOttawa_Yr2InterviewTrans-Meyer-RAW_Sept2014_V01:
Year 2 evaluation interview with Lisa Meyer, Carleton University faculty

CESOttawa_Yr2InterviewTrans-Gianni-RAW_Sept2014_V01:
Year 2 evaluation interview with Ben Gianni, Carleton University faculty



Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE)

CESOttawa_Yr2RAReflectionTrans-Goemans-RAW_July2014_V01:
Year 2 evaluation RA reflection from Magda Goemans, SLOE RA (Years 2-4)

CESOttawa_Yr2RAReflectionTrans-Lait-RAW_July2014_V01:
Year 2 evaluation RA reflection from Michael Lait, OETN RA (Years 2-4)

CESOttawa_Yr4FocusGroupTrans-OETN-RAW_Apr2016_V01:
Year 4 evaluation focus group with Ottawa Eco-Talent Network (OETN)

CESOttawa_Yr4FocusGroupTrans-SLOE-RAW_May2016_V01:
Year 4 evaluation focus group with Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE)

CESOttawa_Yr4FocusGroupTrans-GottaGo!-RAW_May2016_V01:
Year 4 evaluation focus group with GottaGo!

CESOttawa_Yr4RAReflectionTrans-Lait-RAW_June2016_V01:
Year 4 evaluation RA reflection from Michael Lait, OETN RA

CESOttawa_Yr4RAReflectionTrans-Goemans-RAW_July2016_V01:
Year 4 evaluation RA reflection from Magda Goemans, SLOE RA (Years 2-4)

CESOttawa_Yr4Eval-REPORT_July2016_V01:
CES Ottawa Hub Year 4 Evaluation Report

CESOttawa_Yr4Analysis_July2016_V01:
CES Ottawa Hub Year 4 Analysis



2 Evaluation Data

2.1 Why have you been involved in this community-campus partnership?

Community partners, faculty and students all highlighted myriad opportunities offered within community-campus engagement, noting in particular the possibility for academic partners to **strengthen the capacity of community-based organizations**. CES Ottawa Hub faculty and students provided applied research and administrative support otherwise unavailable to community partners within civil society (who regularly experience time, financial, and human resource constraints). To this end, community partners and faculty described how both individual student researchers and classes engaged in community service learning projects helped to strengthen the research base of community-based organizations, by **filling modest research gaps** as well as undertaking more long-term and in-depth research projects. GottaGo! Campaign members noted that student researchers helped to **'ground-truth' claims** made by government – for example, assembling a database of existing public toilets in Ottawa to test assertions by municipal government about the distribution and availability of washrooms across the city. Moreover, students in the Industrial Design program assembled innovative washroom designs to support the GottaGo! Campaign's **community outreach efforts**. As one community partner expressed: "We needed to extend our reach beyond what was possible with our small community" (GottaGo!, year 4 evaluation).

Community partners also noted that engagement with academic partners contributed to **greater visibility and prestige** for their organizations. CES Hub faculty, and in some cases students, pursued new connections within Carleton and beyond that helped to **extend community partner networks** across varied academic departments and other allied professional fields. Community partners also suggested that academic engagement, with its links to **specialized research expertise**, strengthened the **perceived standing of the organization** in its engagement with other stakeholder groups. They further suggested that this connection helped to **legitimize their grant applications**. An OETN representative explained: "This campus-community partnership allowed us to return to [the funding agency] with **demonstrated value**" (OETN, year 4 evaluation). They further asserted: "To do the kind of sustainable city work we are involved in, it was key to ensure we had a working relationship with universities: both the institution at large, and also the campus and students as RAs" (OETN, year 4).

Community partners also described a genuine interest in contributing to **student experience** and development. They proved cognizant of the practicalities and limitations involved: "Students need a project with a beginning, middle and end, something they can achieve in the given timeframe. If it is not very good, we don't have to use it" (GottaGo!, year 4 evaluation). Conversely, students sought to meaningfully **contribute to community partner advocacy efforts**, as well as to take advantage of opportunities to **draw on expertise** within community-based organizations. As one student expressed: "This was an extremely rich experience for me. I worked with a dedicated, determined and highly skilled group of professionals and activists" (RA, year 1 evaluation). Another explained: "My academic and practical knowledge and thesis research fed directly into my interactions with [the community partner] in numerous ways" (SLOE RA, year 1 evaluation).

Finally, faculty members supporting the SLOE group described how **previous experience in leading community service learning projects fuelled their own interest** in contributing to CFICE-led community-campus engagement work. One faculty member expressed an aim to transfer her enthusiasm for working with and in community to her students: "The goal is to create a memorable, practical, hands-on experience" (faculty member, year 2 evaluation). Another faculty member cited **multiple motivations for engaging in CCE**: "to write/right the world" – invoking perceived academic authority to effect pro-social and pro-environmental change; "to do justice to the privilege of my situation within the academy"; "to support groups within civil society working with constrained resources to



fight the good fight”; “to imbue research and teaching with greater meaning”; “to provide rewarding opportunities for graduate students”; and “to connect with colleagues with whom I share core values.” (faculty member, year 4 self-assessment) This last point was echoed by another faculty member, who value the “exposure to amazing people” afforded by CCE (faculty member, year 2 evaluation). All faculty interviewed had a history of collaborating with community partners, and could be described as “engaged scholars”.

In sum, community partners, faculty and students all described in **positive terms** the experiences of participating in CES Ottawa Hub projects. Over time, they developed both meaningful and reciprocal relationships. As one faculty member concluded: “[The community partner] needed us as much as we needed them” (faculty member, year 2 evaluation).

2.2 How do you define the partnership/project’s value for you/your organization (whether faculty member, student, CBO, etc.)?

Capacity building

Community partners and faculty highlighted the value of CCE projects in building capacity for CES Hub community organizations. OETN and SLOE members described ways in which academic engagement helped to strengthen organizational focus. For example, through such activities as assisting with the development of a business plan and facilitating group discussions, CES Hub RAs assisted community partners in articulating and prioritizing the needs, goals and strategies of each organization. Community partners also emphasized how student outputs augmented organizational research capacity (though one community partner noted that some outputs were more useful than others). Following the first year of engagement with the CES Ottawa Hub, one SLOE member reflected: “Just having the partnership has given more impetus to the whole initiative. People feel like there is a core of potential to make a difference that might have been harder to convince people of in the absence of that engagement. It is a validation about the importance of the work” (SLOE, year 1 evaluation). After four years of collaboration had passed, SLOE members further offered: “[the CCE] provided an opportunity to get our thinking together so that we could communicate that to students”, and characterized the CES Ottawa Hub RA as “the administrative and organizational glue that is holding things together” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation).

CBO visibility and standing

Community groups and faculty also noted how academic engagement had positive impacts on the visibility and prestige of organizations working with members of the CES Ottawa Hub. One SLOE member suggested that academic involvement gave her greater confidence in engaging with stakeholders involved in the substantial redevelopment project taking place in her neighbourhood. She acknowledged the credibility gained through assistance with in-depth research and public outreach that came out of the community-campus engagement, and appreciated that she could introduce suggestions to the developer that were supported by academic expertise. SLOE members also described how promotional videos created by Carleton communications students became valuable tools in disseminating information to other stakeholders in the redevelopment project, and in stimulating interest and excitement about the organization’s efforts among neighbourhood residents. SLOE members also recalled how academic engagement expanded networking opportunities for their organization, for example by linking community partners to expert mentors that guided Carleton CSL classes supporting SLOE’s work. In reflecting on the organization’s engagement with the developer, one SLOE member summarized: “Partnership gave us the impetus and confidence (resources) to step into that space in a more significant way. It gave us some gravitas. It lent weight to what we are doing” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation). In addition, one SLOE member commented that scholarly input by CFICE faculty and students furthered their efforts, by adding useful critique and providing opportunities for greater inclusion in the community advocacy process.



Expanded network of respectful relations

Community partners, faculty and students noted that CCE offers opportunities to establish and strengthen relationships among project participants. Community partners valued the continuity of relationships (and in particular, long-term contributions from CES Hub RAs) made possible through a multi-year research project. OETN members appreciated opportunities to engage with the broader CFICE program committee and other CFICE hubs. OETN also described how CCE spurred a context that allowed participants from diverse academic departments (including Music, Political Science, Environmental Science, Engineering Communications and Industrial Design) to contribute to its sustainability advisory efforts. SLOE offered similar reflections: “It [CCE] excited members to leverage assets and bring students along in the learning and exploration process. That kind of partnership stimulated people” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation).

Development of skilled personnel

Students participating in CES Hub work commented on the value of generating applied research within a ‘real-world’ context, which increased their motivation to see the project through to fruition. CCE work expanded other students’ exposure to fields of study outside their areas of expertise, thus challenging them to consider other perspectives and broaden their formation. The CCE context also offered opportunities for students to hone their skills in less theoretical and abstract activities than traditionally available in the critical social sciences. For example, the OETN RA developed a business plan – a pragmatic and practical output for the community partner. Students also generated academic and lay publications, and networked broadly with sustainability advocates and established professionals. One SLOE member noted that group members appreciated opportunities to mentor students, as working with students brought new life into the group’s efforts. One faculty member described opportunities to stimulate students’ excitement about CCE work as “a basic pedagogical drive”. She further reflected: “Without CFICE, it might be easier for the project to fizzle out. In other cases, fulfilling course requirements becomes a priority for students. When creating a useful deliverable, there is less of a chance through this process of wasting community partner time” (faculty member, year 2 evaluation).

Critical insights and scholarly perspectives

Finally, one community partner (SLOE) commented on the value of scholarly contribution for challenging CBO ideas and methods, and for introducing new perspectives into the engagement. A member explained: “[the RA] had the capacity to keep her ear open and determine what is needed; she didn’t impose her agenda, but she did ask: What about this? What about affordability? Things that can get lost in the complexity of everything” (SLOE member, year 4 evaluation).

2.3 What aspects of the partnership directly contributed to the value that you experienced?

Capacity building

Community partners emphasized that capacity building activities contributed by CES Hub faculty and students freed up time and resources for community partners to strengthen organizational foundations, and consider opportunities to expand their work. As one SLOE member noted, these types of activities helped the group to “revisit milestones”; she explained: “[The RA] served as a touchstone, in a respectful and generous way, to keep us [the organization] on track” (SLOE member, year 4 evaluation). The support also provided a direct stimulus for two of the community partners to apply for additional funding. In the case of OETN, the RA proved instrumental in securing a Trillium Foundation grant – ensuring funding for a 3-year period while the organization tests and establishes its longer-term economic viability. In addition, the OETN RA reflected: “Following the brainstorming session ... steering committee members have a much stronger sense of organizational direction and purpose”



(OETN RA, year 4 evaluation). He went on to describe the partnership as “an accelerator to organizational transition.” Thus, CCE efforts contributed directly to both financial opportunity and renewed organizational mandate for OETN.

Administrative support

Both community partners and research assistants recognized the substantial value of long-term, skilled and consistent administrative support that CES Hub RAs brought to CCE under the multi-year CFICE project, especially for modestly-sized community organizations which may not always be able to rely on this kind of support from a volunteer member base. As one example, an OETN member cited the skilled support of the CES Hub RA as substantially contributing to the development of a business plan for the organization. SLOE and OETN members also noted that having research assistants take on these ongoing day-to-day tasks (e.g. taking minutes at meetings, facilitating e-mail communication between members, organizing computer files, and establishing online repositories for sharing files) allowed group members more time to focus on their core objectives. However, the advantages this type of student engagement brings may also present challenges at the end of the CFICE project, as community partners have come to rely on that dedicated help from research assistants. Clearly, these tasks must be transferred back to willing (and trained) volunteers for smooth succession to occur – a challenge if/when community partner capacity wanes.

CBO visibility and standing

Overall, academic engagement brought greater visibility and standing to the CBOs involved. Community partners noted that the expanded research base growing out of the work of CFICE students (both individual RAs and larger CSL classes) provided more established and credible positions from which to engage the stakeholders they sought to influence (for example, SLOE’s interactions with the developer) as well as the community at large. Community partners and RAs identified significant contributions made by CES Hub students to communications outputs such as summary reports, briefing notes, and promotional videos in relaying community organization objectives in ways that made them “palatable to a wider audience”. The SLOE RA (Years 2-4) also described how her experience of assisting in the planning of a Deep Green Experts Forum -- that brought together representatives from professional and municipal agencies involved in sustainable development – helped the community partner to present a breadth of knowledge and experience related to sustainable development to the developer. As SLOE confirmed: “We knew we needed a project with legs before we could even have a conversation with [the developer].” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation)

Critical insights and scholarly perspectives

Community partners and faculty highlighted value for the community partner within the scholarly contributions offered by academic partners to each group’s efforts. In fact, community partners welcomed opportunities for critical student feedback and opportunities for proactive and assertive approaches taken by CES Ottawa Hub RAs. One faculty member leading an urbanism class in a CSL project for the SLOE group saw opportunities to challenge the community partner’s “terms of reference”. To this end, students championing innovative approaches proved a potentially a more neutral way to expand discussion and present more radical ideas to the wider community. As the faculty member working with SLOE explained: “We could do things that the community organization couldn’t... The students’ work was not threatening, and could depart from the community social contract. The school was a neutral third place, a safe space for dialogue” (faculty member, year 2 evaluation). These types of interactions took place within a context where young people could be expected to bring new and idealistic perspectives to help to effect positive change – especially among community proponents who were receptive to these critical perspectives.



Development of highly-skilled personnel

The benefits for students involved in CCE – in terms of their personal growth and professional development – proved significant. GottaGo! Campaign members emphasized the benefits that CCE offers to students, including exposure for students to new fields of study. This advantage was echoed by the SLOE RA (Years 2-4), who described how her initial work with SLOE members related to environmental sustainability advocacy efforts for the Old Ottawa East redevelopment project evolved into her assisting in the establishment of a SLOE sub-group (Innovative Housing for Older Adults in Old Ottawa East) more focused on addressing social sustainability issues in the neighbourhood (i.e. seniors and affordable housing). While this shift represented a departure from the more ecological aspects of sustainability, the focus on social justice issues proved equally interesting, rounding out employment experience and augmenting social capital. Faculty members and CES Hub RAs commented that other valuable aspects of CCE for students include increased knowledge of the issues that community-based organizations address, a better understanding of how to engage with community partners, and exposure to valuable networking opportunities.

Expanded network of respectful relations

Community group members mentioned links to the academic institution as offering opportunities to expand their networks. To this end, the CFICE context allowed a varied group of participants to come together to share ideas and perspectives, and to collaborate towards shared goals. As an example, one OETN member referenced the value of interactions (including heightened “organizational profile” and “exposure to other ways of thinking”) achieved during CFICE program committee meetings and in contributions to CFICE webinars. But perhaps the most critical aspect of expanded networks lay in the respect established in new relations. Community partners, faculty and students all underscored the value of understanding each other’s needs and goals, as part of fostering positive, respectful and productive working relationships between participants. A GottaGo! Campaign member also noted appreciation for the “energy and enthusiasm” that students brought to the CCE environment.

Boundary spanners – knowledge translators

On a practical level, the SLOE RA (years 2-4) helped to make the documents accessible – translating and filtering the consultant reports to make them palatable to a wider audience (SLOE, year 4).

2.4 What do you think have been the main impacts of your partnership and how would you measure them?

In all cases, our community partners have benefited from **improved capacity** to execute their broader missions and mandates. Strengthened capacity has taken various forms, including a clearer articulation of fundamental goals of the respective organizations. In the case of SLOE, the broader goal of ‘deep green’ re-development became refined into various sub-projects, with the CFICE RA assisting in the formation of a seniors’ cohousing sub-group. Community partners also noted they had benefitted from the ‘strategic direction’ offered and networks created through their engagement with CFICE administration (for example, through OETN’s engagement with the CFICE Brokering and Tools Working Group). Community partners further acknowledged contributions made by students to strengthen the research base of their organizations, for instance, through literature reviews and on-the-ground data gathering. As a lead from the GottaGo! Campaign credited: “Almost all of our achievements have been due to the students, and we are on the hunt for the fall!” (GottaGo!, year 4 evaluation). OETN and SLOE also attributed the CES Hub support they received to their receipt of additional external grants. This funding enabled the OETN to hire an executive director for a three-year term, and SLOE to support the development of the IHOA seniors’ cohousing initiative.



Closely related to capacity building, community partners and CES Hub students emphasized another positive impact of CCE: **greater visibility, standing and influence for the community partner**. To this end, a SLOE member described many of the impacts of CCE as ‘intangible’, as the partnership itself lent weight to the profile and efforts of the community-based organization. More specifically, the SLOE RA (Years 2-4) noted how the planning and organizational skills she brought to the group contributed to well-attended and well-received community outreach events by the group, including their Experts Forum, and the IHOA design and financing workshops for seniors’ cohousing. Evidence of impact included the high degree of participation at these events and the positive feedback received from community members as well as the developer (who then further investigated some of the sustainable development strategies proposed by SLOE, and referred to SLOE’s work within the development company’s own communications materials). In the case of the GottaGo! Campaign, members highlighted the impact of contributions made by CES Hub students to a press release on their advocacy efforts that attracted increased attention from municipal government.

The **main impacts of CCE for faculty** are indirect, but tangible and measurable. CCE affords various benefits, including: legitimacy for community-based participatory action researchers; privileged access to key stakeholders (overcoming the usual gatekeepers); demonstrated relevance of their research agenda; valuable and established partnerships that make subsequent funding applications more competitive; opportunities for applied research assistantships, which enable faculty to attract top quality graduate students; and, access to primary data and insights gleaned through participant observation that enable the development of peer-reviewed journal articles – the primary metric of evaluation for career advancement (e.g., promotion from assistant to associate to full professor).

The overall impacts on students involved proved similarly positive. **Students acknowledged several beneficial opportunities** stemming from CCE: to develop professionally; to acquire new skills (e.g. negotiating lay and scholarly communications, navigating the not-for-profit sector); and to expand potential employment opportunities.

2.5 What did you hope to achieve through this specific community-campus partnership project?

Each CES Hub demonstration project entailed different project goals. In the case of SLOE, the group aimed to strengthen their voice and augment their presence in relation to sustainability efforts in the community, which would, in turn, allow them to engage the developer from a stronger position. As a secondary, longer-term goal, SLOE sought to build capacity for advocacy among members of the wider community. In the case of the OETN, members hoped, rather pragmatically, to build organizational capacity – an outcome they achieved. By employing a student researcher to investigate other successful advisory models and potential funders, and to assist with the development of a business plan, OETN was able to secure significant external funding. The longer-term vision of the group involves replicating OETN’s Ottawa-based model across other sectors (e.g. an Ottawa Homelessness Talent Network or Ottawa Mental Health Talent Network) and regional scales (e.g. a National Capital Eco-Talent Network).

CES Hub research assistants and faculty described numerous objectives. Students hoped to: enhance and acquire additional skills (including skills related to meaningfully engaging with a community partner within a ‘real-world’ context); expand social and professional network contacts; and access opportunities to generate publications related to their CCE experience. Faculty members sought to: embed themselves within local networks; contribute meaningfully to the pro-social and pro-environmental struggles of civil society actors; generate both lay and



scholarly outputs; and, provide rich and rewarding opportunities for the students involved. In sum, although motivated by various factors, both students and faculty sought to further the efforts of the community-based organizations, and chose partners with whom their core values aligned. In all cases, we encouraged the community partners to identify their discrete objectives, and supported them to fulfil those ends.

2.6 Drawing on your experience in this project, what have been the major enablers for achieving these goals?

Both community partners and faculty linked long-term engagement with an academic partner to progress on community partner goals. This perceived positive connection lent weight to the message community partners sent, raising the profile of their respective causes. As a SLOE representative stressed: “‘Objective’ academic research input gives the community an ability to invoke academic discourse to reinforce their messages” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation). SLOE members also stated that they appreciated how substantial and sustained CFICE-funded assistance from students contributed to the more practical, day-to-day elements of their organizing. OETN appreciated in particular “project management support” – another form of sustained support – received from CFICE administration in facilitating communication between CFICE participants, and in offering links to an expanded advisor network in the Ottawa area. Thus, the ongoing, committed nature of the CCE proved critical, as summarized here: “The length of the partnership is very important, as it reiterates in community development and funding circles” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation).

However, community partners offered differing perspectives regarding the degree to which scholarly contributions from students enabled advancement of community projects. To begin, community partners valued the new insights generated from a different perspective: “It’s important to have different lenses on a problem” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation). SLOE members (as well as one faculty member supporting a CSL class for SLOE) described how scholarly contributions by engaged and capable students may move research in new directions and foster a more inclusive research environment. The quality of the student, including their ability to readily grasp the complex and nuanced context in which community groups struggle, remains critical. To this end, OETN members cautioned that academic participants must be able to “translate great ideas into actual deliverables” (OETN, year 4 evaluation). Similarly, in the early years of the CFICE partnership, SLOE members suggested that insights generated may be less relevant if they appeared too “academic”, or removed from the day-to-day contexts of others with whom they engaged (i.e. the developer). This ambivalence points to the need for skilled knowledge translation, and careful selection of students who can truly serve as “boundary spanners.”

Students cited various other major enablers for achieving CCE goals, including opportunities to learn, advance skills, and participate in friendly and respectful relationships with community partners. In turn, community partners suggested students would benefit from ongoing support and guidance – from expert mentors, faculty and/or senior graduate students – within a context that strengthens outcomes (while allowing room for failure) and remains sympathetic to the experiences of young adults. One faculty member reflected on such mentorship: “For students, it’s about accountability. The more interaction, the better the project will be... Otherwise, it’s still a make-believe project for the student” (faculty member, year 2 evaluation). A SLOE representative furthered: “I see engagement of faculty and/or senior grad students as fundamental... Without that control system on the framework, there can be a lot of frustration. Working with university students can be a drain on resources, rather than advancing an agenda” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation). However, even though community members appear to understand some of the challenges associated with mentoring students, they also posited: “People want to feel they are contributing to the experience of young folks” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation).



Community partners and faculty highlighted other enablers, including: solid brokerage structures to link community and academic participants, access to financial and other resources from government, as well as opportunities to adjust academic and community partner timelines to suit the needs of each project.

2.7 Drawing on your experience in this project, what have been the most significant barriers to achieving these goals?

Scholarly ≠ pragmatic

As mentioned above (2.6), with regards to scholarly contributions from the CES Hub, community partners identified a need for students and faculty to give more consideration, at times, to the pragmatic elements of the project. For example, a SLOE member described one case in which urbanism students developed site designs for redevelopment without adequately considering the potential costs of each option. While SLOE members valued the innovative thinking and creativity, they questioned their pragmatic contributions: “There were so many wonderful, blue sky dreaming elements that are catalysts for conversations, but not necessarily useful in moving the project forward” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation). An OETN member (year 4 evaluation) noted that some participants in the organization had expressed “suspicion of the value of student work” – as sometimes it could be generally perceived as too ‘academic’, or framed more for potential publication value than for practical application.

Need for high quality students

Faculty acknowledged the related challenge of ensuring “consistent quality in students’ research findings”, often within the context of student research at the undergrad level. They noted that the quality of outputs produced by students varied substantially according to how CSL classes were structured or the degree of professional experience held by students. One particular challenge may develop towards the end of term, in cases where outputs may still need revision but students (who lack adequate understanding of the potential long-term benefits of seeing the project through) have moved on to other classes and projects. This type of concern may place pressure, and ultimately have negative impacts, on faculty leading CSL projects. Less-than-optimal student outputs can compromise the integrity of a community-campus relationship. With this in mind, one faculty member stressed the imperative to: “Give them [community partners] our best and brightest [students]!” (faculty member, year 4 evaluation).

Several respondents noted ways to mitigate risks associated with student work of variable or indeterminate quality. One CES Hub RA suggested that issues related to student research relevance and quality control might be addressed by: (1) ensuring that community partners clearly articulate their research requirements, preferred methods and goals at the outset of the engagement – so that students know exactly what is expected/required of them; and, (2) placing the primary community group RA in the position of liaison between the community partner and CSL students. A GottaGo! member also suggested that more of a collaborative, team environment be encouraged among students working on a project, noting: “The students really need a space where they can get collective energy and support.” In regard to logistical and administrative barriers, OETN cited a lack of control over the selection of the student RA for their project; while OETN expressed appreciation for the contributions made by the RA, they also noted they would have preferred the opportunity to select an RA from students with skills more directly relating to the organization’s strategic plan. (With regards to the latter, significant attempts were made to engage business students, but came up short due to the key business professor feeling stretched beyond capacity to facilitate yet another CCE.) Students also face time pressures to balance CCE work with other academic and



familial commitments, so those realities need to be brought transparently to the fore, so that faculty and community partners make reasonable (and informed) requests that respect work-life balance.

Academic culture

One community partner noted another barrier – the ‘insularity’ of academic institutions, adding: “[Academic institutions] largely consider ‘what’s in it for me’, versus ‘what’s in it for the community’? We bring that community relevance into the conversation” (OETN, year 4 evaluation). A SLOE participant remarked that they would benefit from a primer (or video tutorial) on how to engage with a university – as a distinctly different realm than they were previously familiar with. Such differences are apparent in the perceived disconnect between sometimes inaccessible academic language (from critical but unfamiliar formulations to disciplinary jargon) and more accessible (and perhaps non-technical) lay terms. Another SLOE respondent explained: “I had envisioned more structured access to really practical research support. I was envisioning good access points and control systems for engaging the academy to guide research” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation). SLOE members expressed a desire for more opportunities to educate community partners about how they can approach and engage with universities. While as faculty and students we are immersed within the academy, it is worth contemplating self-reflexively how others might perceive us in particular, and our institutional culture in general.

Failure to consider timelines (and time constraints)

Community partners and faculty also identified mismatched academic and community partner timelines as a significant barrier to more effective engagement. Issues related to conflicting schedules arose at several critical junctures: when community partners initially tried to connect with faculty (such relationship building takes time and energy, and ideally, a broker); when faculty members designed CSL classes or applied research projects, and then sought out and selected individual student researchers; and, when faculty attempted to design community research projects to suit class schedules (for example, ensuring projects fit within a 12-week class – offered usually in fall or winter terms). Final grade submission typically represents a hard deadline, and students must have submitted major projects well enough in advance for assessment (much less follow-up and revision with a community partner). A faculty member leading two CSL classes for the SLOE project noted that what is produced within this context more often than not ultimately addresses the needs of the student more than those of the community partner. This necessary privileging of student needs remains an ongoing concern about CSL in particular. As a SLOE member cautioned: “...if we’re just tacking in at the end of the year on a final paper, the student is going to drive that process, adapting to what we identify as a need, without actually doing what we’ve asked.” The SLOE member further emphasized: “Group progress isn’t organized around university timelines. Ideas emerge organically” (SLOE, year 1 evaluation).

How might the timelines (and time constraints) of various participants be considered when designing CCE? Students typically work within the constraints of an academic term. Community partners typically work with other, external stakeholders (e.g. municipalities, developers), and must adhere to exogenous deadlines and pressures. One SLOE member noted that uncertainties associated with participating in a long-running project (i.e. SLOE’s advocacy efforts for sustainable approaches within a major redevelopment site in their neighbourhood), in which “information is partial, sporadic, and coming out over many years”, may influence outcomes for the community partner. Community partners also lack adequate time and resources to engage with CFICE committees, inform CCE policy, or contribute to communications outputs (e.g., as co-authors, though most did offer a critical and constructive review of outputs). All of these timing-related issues impact the effectiveness of CCE.

Need for CCE broker

Community partners identified the lack of a solid brokerage structure within Carleton as a major barrier to effective community-campus engagement, as compared to the “one-stop shopping” available to community-based organizations at other academic institutions, such as Algonquin College. As a result, the process of gaining access to faculty and students with the requisite expertise and availability proved challenging. As OETN expressed: “Personal contacts and good working relationships make it doable, but that brokerage is not there, and it poses a serious limitation” (OETN, year 4). Moreover, one faculty member noted: “Each time I receive a call from a prospective community partner, it can take hours to days to actually find them a match on campus. While I believe strongly in this type of collaboration, facilitating it is not part of my job description (or core responsibilities)! I tend to do this sort of ‘brokering’ off the side of my desk, and usually at my own expense” (faculty member, year 4 evaluation).

Community-engaged faculty under significant strain

Further to this last quote, both community partners and faculty highlighted several factors limiting effective involvement by faculty supervisors in CCE projects. Faculty identified a lack of support from the academic institution for CCE engagement. The support desired would take two key forms: first, community-engaged faculty have argued for reduced workloads in recognition of the significant time it takes to negotiate CCE projects; and second, they have also sought meaningful recognition from the university for their CCE work (in terms of advancement – through appropriate assessment metrics for tenure and promotion; annual performance review; awards and public recognition).

Inadequate funding and other resources for all involved (students, community partners, faculty members, mentors)

Faculty and students also noted several factors limiting opportunities for sustained and meaningful involvement in CCE projects by students, including inadequate funding to support in-depth engagement by some students (outside of longer-term CFICE funding that was made available to primary RAs for each community partner). As one example, GottaGo! members referred to an industrial design class requiring greater financial assistance to build models that would support the group’s advocacy work for more public toilets in Ottawa. However, while the need to resource students remains, an OETN member challenged: “I know it is Community First, but it seems to be: Students paid first ” (OETN, year 4 evaluation). Of course, SSHRC grants are intended primarily to benefit students, but this critical but candid perspective points to necessarily unequal power relations.

In addition, community partners attributed challenges associated with adequately overseeing student research in part to insufficient capacity (related to unpaid time to do this supervisory work). Community oversight and participation in applied research represents a hidden pedagogical value that is generally not compensated (beyond the value of the outputs generated – which, as discussed earlier, are of variable quality). Community organizations sometimes also lack formal office space (as one GottaGo! member noted: “we meet in coffee shops”) and volunteers predominantly support the efforts of citizen-based groups. SLOE also alluded to such limitation in capacity: “Within a completely volunteer organization, do people have the capacity to provide guidance, engagement, and quality control?” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation). Moreover, as the OETN representative pointed out: “Capacity-building and partnership formation are important, but we won’t be rewarded for these sufficiently to survive. We need projects to be implemented” (OETN, year 4 evaluation). One faculty member also described logistical challenges experienced by expert mentors assisting CSL projects, including matching mentor schedules to those of CSL classes, as well as other more mundane concerns such as the lack of compensation for travel (e.g. public transportation/taxi) and parking costs. All of these examples speak to the financial constraints/realities faced by all involved in CCE, and the imperative to better fund these activities.



Ethics review delays project implementation

GottaGo! members also noted limitations associated with the length of time required for the ethics review process at Carleton, though they did acknowledge recent improvements had increased the efficiency of the process. Such delays are perhaps inevitable – research (including applied, community-based research) ought necessarily and rightfully be subject to scrutiny, and must adhere to the Tri-Council Agreement to ensure compliance with stringent ethical standards. Faculty might work with community partners to develop ethics submissions earlier, and might also request expedited review, especially when risk is limited. The ethics review process marks a teachable moment – for students, to understand the implications of the research they engage in, and for communities, to understand how review ensures they are ultimately protected.

Suggestions moving forward

The faculty member suggested that these and other general concerns might be addressed by establishing a more formal orientation program for students, mentors and community partners at the start of a CCE project (perhaps administered through the co-op office at Carleton) that could, for example, advise students on such issues as communicating professionally with the community partner, and assist the community partner in setting out “formal project guidelines” at the outset of a project.

2.8 What other issues had an impact on whether or not your goals were achieved?

There are myriad other issues that impact CCE, and thus must be taken into account (almost as preconditions for success) for the desired goals to be met. Drawing on various sources (RA, year 1 evaluation; CES Hub Academic Co-Lead, year 4 evaluation; faculty, year 2 evaluation), the following bulleted list offers a preliminary attempt to organize relevant questions that must be answered:

- ***Recruitment and selection of students:*** Who will choose and train the student researchers? Given the proposed research, would an undergraduate or graduate student be more suitable? Faculty members will presumably want to privilege students from within their disciplines, or even more likely, students they are personally supervising. Community partners have expressed the desire to help select the prospective researchers. One way to assuage this tension might be to bypass faculty altogether at the initial stages (although, then having them sign on as supervisors – a discretionary addition to their workload, could prove challenging). CCE must remain transparent about the benefits generated to each party involved.
- ***Risk mitigation:*** What liabilities and risks must be mitigated? For the researcher(s), department, community organization, and university?
- ***Rigorous and thoughtful research design:*** How will research be designed? Community partners (in concert with faculty and/or mentors) must establish clear research objectives (including discrete parameters, desired outputs, on a feasible timeline).
- ***CSL course design:*** How does the proposed applied research activity fit into broader course requirements? Do the grades allocated reflect the work involved? Is the workload manageable for students? How will student researchers be evaluated? Has an assessment rubric been developed, with clear expectations delineated? Will community partners share in the responsibility for grading students? Will they be compensated for their time and energy in doing so?

- *Student engagement, commitment and follow-through:* Community partners and faculty noted that the degree to which students were emotionally engaged in the CCE process proved proportionate to the skills they developed. In other words, their level of personal investment in the research directly impacts the achievement of community partner goals. One faculty member noted a particular challenge of maintaining students' interest and enthusiasm over long projects. She reflected: "Overall, it is crucial for students to perceive a continued momentum during the project, for students to think 'wow, this is real'." (faculty member, year 2 evaluation)
- *Decision-making around resource allocation:* To whom will the funding or stipends go? How will resource allocation be determined? The following advice from the Year 1 RA might apply here, though not without its challenges: "Establish a democratic process from the start and strive to ensure inputs from various participants are included."
- *Faculty involvement not a given:* Why might faculty voluntarily choose to supervise CCE? To foster a culture of CCE within their department? To enrich the pedagogical environment in classes they are teaching? To offer real-world applied research opportunities to students they personally supervise? To develop relationships with community partners that might bolster chances of securing grant funding in the future? To gain access to primary data from which to publish in scholarly journals? (Scholarly publishing and grant funding are the metrics privileged above all else in evaluating career advancement.)
- *Benefits to students:* How will students benefit from CCE? As fulfilment of a CSL component within an existing course? As a Directed Studies, Thesis, Co-op or Practicum credit?
- *Need to generate scholarly publications:* How might students and faculty generate scholarly publications, and how (and when) does this fit in with the needs of the community organization? How will publishing on the CCE impact relations? One RA commented on lost opportunities for integrating community-campus engagement work into academic outputs (i.e. publication in academic journals). Another RA who had published on her experience in CCE noted that this process had required her to reflect on how she had engaged with the community partner, and how, in future work, she might provide more meaningful input to the group.
- *Promotion of CCE across campuses and within communities:* SLOE members and the Year 1 SLOE research assistant asserted that education about and promotion of the value of community-campus partnerships within universities and across wider communities helps to sustain and disseminate CCE impacts and build strong relationships between participants.

2.9 How were responsibilities and resources shared among the various partners in your project?

All of the community partners stated that they had directed the process of community-campus engagement, maintaining control over research and overall project design within a context of shared responsibilities and respectful dialogue between community and academic partners. CFICE Hub RAs also confirmed this sharing of power within a largely community-driven process. As a SLOE member reflected: "I never saw this as much of an issue... a community with aims in mind put us in the driver's seat" (SLOE member, year 4 evaluation).

However, both faculty and community partners recognized opportunities for students to take on greater responsibilities (and initiative) within the CES Ottawa Hub projects. One faculty member leading a CSL urbanism class for SLOE suggested that academic partners did not work *for* the community partner, but that "[academic and



community partners] were working together” (faculty member, year 2 evaluation). In his view, course requirements and opportunities for student development warranted equal consideration as the requirements of the community project; he also asserted that this approach to engagement had the potential to generate innovative approaches that further the community partner’s efforts.

In fact, community partners envisioned even more active roles for the RAs. One SLOE member suggested a more substantial role for CFICE RAs as a “backbone between the organization and university”, and welcomed opportunities for research assistants to foster an environment for scholarly debate – to challenge community partner objectives and methods. The community partner also suggested that RAs might potentially serve as brokers: “translating the needs of the organization into specific projects and finding matches with capacity at the university ” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation). In another case of fostering RA empowerment, a member of GottaGo! recounted with pleasure how one student “took charge” of a meeting with an Ottawa councillor. The member also acknowledged that student input in defining research parameters could help to advance their cause.

Community partners and students also discussed potential challenges for students in fulfilling responsibilities to community projects while maintaining other academic commitments. However, as discussed in Q10, several potential strategies emerged to address this issue, including: better initial and ongoing communication with students about scheduling community work to accommodate other obligations; better access to resources from academic institutions to allow for more students to support a given a project with additional student hours. Related to this issue, community partners also re-iterated the significant time and financial resource demands of participating in a CCE project, and the need for greater support and ease of access to funds (whether from the academic institution, governmental or philanthropic sources). A GottaGo! member provided a concrete example: the organization won a “Raven’s Den” prize through the annual Community Engaged Pedagogy event, but the funds could only be accessed through the CES Ottawa Hub Academic Co-Lead, rather than being paid out directly to the community partner. Thus, rather than providing a group with unallocated core funding, to be used at their discretion, funds became the responsibility and logistical burden for a faculty member to administer (and oversee). These funds were ultimately used to benefit the organization (through applied student research), but the constraint (imposed institutionally) is far from ideal, and does not treat the community partner as an equal.

2.10 If there were any challenges, how were they addressed?

All community partners acknowledged a lack of adequate guidance about community partner expectations regarding student roles in CCE projects. For example, as part of the Year 1 evaluation, SLOE members recounted how they were “unsure how to direct” the SLOE RA (Year 1) when he had asserted a strong position about accommodating affordability in the redevelopment project. The SLOE RA similarly acknowledged this concern. Both SLOE members and the RA explained that while this specific issue was never directly addressed, they were able to better understand each other’s perspectives over time. This does speak to the difficulty individuals have in general in directly and explicitly confronting each other around perceived tensions, and the need for training in this regard (e.g., training in how to have “fierce conversations” – difficult, confrontational, but often transformational conversations) (see Scott, 2004). It also signals, perhaps, the need to consciously consider the degree of assertiveness of the RA, and for the RA to touch base on a regular basis with the community partner, to ensure both the RA and community partner are getting what they need from the relationship.

Another SLOE RA (Years 2-4) relayed her initial experience as being overwhelmed by challenges associated with learning how to effectively engage with the community organization and fulfill CCE project requirements while balancing academic and other personal commitments. She described how she addressed this issue – by communicating her concerns directly to her academic supervisor, by creating a more flexible schedule that

allowed her to set aside periods of time where she focused almost exclusively on CCE efforts, and by keeping the community partner informed ahead of time about upcoming academic deadlines and other periods requiring intense academic work. These responses reflect a high degree of professionalism and maturity, and could be considered best practices in handling multiple, competing demands, and the rigours of achieving a sometime elusive work-life balance.

Community partners suggested a number of ways to address student concerns, including: (1) ensuring that adequate guidance for students (including those within CSL classes), either from expert mentors or graduate-level research assistants, is put in place for students; (2) building contingencies into community project timelines to accommodate late submissions from students; and, (3) adopting a general attitude of experimentation within CCE projects that invites new perspectives and allows for adjustments to required tasks and timelines. One GottaGo! Campaign member explained her group's approach: "When students didn't deliver what they said they would, we simply backed off. It doesn't matter. Sometimes they give up, and the final product arrives four to five months later" (GottaGo!, year 4 evaluation). While this is undoubtedly the outcome from students in certain cases, two practices developed within the CES Ottawa Hub seemed to mitigate this risk. First, we employed an MA RA for a small stipend to provide ongoing support and mentorship to an undergraduate student who completed her thesis research on a SLOE project related to Community Connectivity. This alleviated some of the ongoing supervisory burden for the faculty member, and also provided both undergraduate and graduate RAs the experience of mentoring and being mentored. Second, in the case of video products generated by undergraduate communications students for the SLOE group, we hired a graduate student to polish a more professional end product that the community partner was ultimately pleased with.

Faculty assisting the SLOE group also suggested several strategies to maintain students' motivation and foster deeper engagement between students and community partners, including: formalizing community-campus engagement on student transcripts – perhaps something akin to Carleton's co-curricular record; and, emphasizing to students the value of broadening their network to expand future employment opportunities and to add relevant professional research experience to their resumes – opportunities uniquely available within CCE projects.

2.11 To what extent were members of communities who may not typically participate in community-campus partnerships (i.e. 'marginalized communities') involved in determining the direction of your project?

All community partners acknowledged that marginalized individuals were not significantly involved in determining the direction of their projects; though many group members hoped to foster greater inclusion in future work. In the case of the GottaGo! Campaign, members commented that they are "technically" partners with Crohn's and Colitis Canada, but due to the group's limited capacity there had been no significant interaction with them to date. GottaGo! also cited that older individuals and individuals with disabilities, as well as members of the City for All Women initiative, have supported their efforts and attended their events. In the case of the OETN, members suggested that they have assisted in furthering efforts of those who are "challenged" rather than "marginalized" per say. By considering opportunities to work with church groups and grassroots associations, OETN aims for a more inclusive model that will influence "research to support more progressive policies". The OETN definition of "marginalized" also adopted an ecological lens: "Our marginalized communities may not be as vocal! Pollinators, flora and fauna... They are not re-tweeting my tweets, sharing my posts, visiting my website, or protesting at City Hall" (OETN, year 4 evaluation).

In the case of SLOE, members acknowledged lost opportunities to broaden the range of voices heard in regard to affordable housing opportunities for residents (i.e. voices from those who will potentially occupy future affordable housing units) – both within the specific work of the IHOA seniors’ cohousing group, as well as within broader affordability advocacy efforts for the wider redevelopment. One member suggested that a significant challenge exists to meaningfully engage members of marginalized communities in what to date has been a hypothetical and conceptual project (with an uncertain location). She also suggested that potential affordable housing residents might not be capable of contributing the time and energy required to contribute substantively to the planning process. The member admitted that SLOE is still struggling to figure out where, at a practical level, the most effective points of engagements with marginalized communities might be. With regards to the seniors’ cohousing initiative, she also suggested that participation within an intimate cohousing setting “requires a certain kind of personality” – with similar interests and methods of engagement to other cohousing members. An individual chosen first on the waiting list of Ottawa’s affordable housing registry may or may not prove compatible. But SLOE reflected on possible openings for broader engagement: “Are there windows of opportunity to ensure they can engage? Perhaps at a point closer to where there is some actual tangible benefit to them without expecting them to waver through meeting after meeting for months on end” (SLOE, year 4 evaluation).

Ultimately, in the absence of significant involvement by members of marginalized communities in CCE projects, community partners and students acknowledged the potential for scholarly contributions from academic partners to bring in and reinforce marginalized perspectives – to foster greater inclusion and diversity in these projects.

2.12 What challenges arose in the context of this participation, and how were they addressed?

Interestingly, community participants offered no answers in this regard (though, in fairness, by this point in the interview process, fatigue had set in). Upon reflection, we can confirm that while members of marginalized communities had limited involvement in the governance of CES Hub demonstration projects, community partners did make discrete strides to involve marginalized peoples. In the case of the GottaGo! Campaign, we know (through participant observation) that they successfully recruited many marginalized community members to participate in protests and events to raise awareness about the need for better access to public toilets. In the case of SLOE, as mentioned previously, most group members proved economically secure and highly professional, though they did make consistent attempts to advertise community outreach events to others in the community. In reflecting on our own role as engaged scholars over the past three years, we could have taken a more assertive and proactive role to more consciously work to facilitate a stronger voice for marginalized groups. Perhaps this should be conceived of as the responsibility that emerges from the privilege of being the day-to-day, up-close academic representative, immersed in the inner workings of CBOs? We believe we achieved modest (if indirect) progress in this regard – raising the issue of “affordability” and encouraging the group to refine their understanding of who should be included in the redevelopment, and how they might be given a voice.

To further elaborate on the case of SLOE, particularly in regard to meanings of ‘affordability’, the SLOE RAs certainly attempted to broaden the discussion of affordability to take into account more marginalized members of the community (for a self-reflexive account of this process, see Ballamingie, Goemans and Martin 2016). In his year 1 self-reflection, the SLOE RA (year 1) recounted repeatedly bringing forth the need to include low-income folks in the neighbourhood redevelopment discussion. While the SLOE RA (years 2-4) further confirmed that members of low-income communities did not contribute significantly to the community partner’s advocacy efforts for affordable housing (either general advocacy for affordable housing within the redevelopment site, or more



targeted planning for affordable units within IHOA's senior cohousing initiative), she also noted that SLOE had advertised the group's community outreach events on this topic within lower-income areas of the neighbourhood.

Over the course of this CCE, we (CES Ottawa faculty and RAs) observed that SLOE members did not significantly explore affordability concepts (beyond the general City of Ottawa definition that purports housing should cost no more than 30% of income). For example, in the case of the seniors' cohousing community, group members did not discuss whether residents would welcome those first on the Social Housing Registry waiting list, or if other parameters regarding who would be occupying affordable housing units would be established. Recounting the favourable response she received from SLOE members following her modest efforts to call attention to this knowledge gap, the RA expressed some regret over opportunities lost to contribute to a stronger voice for inclusion of marginalized communities in this process. This regret speaks to an ongoing tension in CCE – when to facilitate a grassroots, community-driven process, and when to insert critical perspectives (whether ecological or social justice considerations) into the process.

2.13 As your project progressed, did you make any changes to the way your partnership was organized? If not, what would you change if you could start again?

First, the GottaGo! Campaign described an unstructured and fluid process of CCE, acknowledging: “We are making it up as we go along!” (GottaGo!, year 4 evaluation). In general, GottaGo! members recalled a very positive experience of working with what they considered to be highly qualified and engaged students and faculty. (In fact, the two undergrad students selected were both hand-picked as top students from their respective programs – environmental studies and geomatics.) However, members also spoke of a need to “get the word out” about project requirements earlier in the process, in order to secure qualified student assistance to produce and disseminate outputs to match with “the rhythm of municipal elections and the budget process”. Early notification of research needs, and early identification of students (and supervising faculty) would better facilitate effective CCE, though these require: (a) community partners to think ahead about discrete research projects students might realistically take on, and (b) students and faculty to have the interest, capacity and resources to respond.

Second, OETN suggested that community and CFICE academic partners “establish some ground rules to ensure a manageable level of input” at the outset of their broader engagement. One OETN member also noted: “This may not be unique to us either; you may find it with others who are not as vocal about it.” He added: “We realized that if things stayed with the way it was evolving, [OETN Executive Director] Jason [Garlough] would be working for CFICE full-time” (OETN, year 4 evaluation). This reflection emerged not in the context of Phase 1 demonstration projects, which had been completed prior to Jason's tenure as ED, but rather as part of his involvement with the CFICE Program Committee and Phase 2 transition and working groups. It speaks to the need to remunerate community participants directly – to acknowledge the value they bring to partnership grant governance.

Third, in evaluation interviews reflecting on the first year of CFICE engagement, SLOE members spoke of the need for more explicit discussion at the outset of the engagement to determine exactly what form the engagement would take. As one example – SLOE members expressed concern during Year 1 over the disproportionate amount of time and resources devoted to certain activities (e.g. an assets inventory assembled by the primary RA) – that might not significantly advance the group's efforts. In his reflection the research assistant noted: “especially at the start of the engagement, both sides need to be flexible and aware that it takes time to get focused, and there might be some duplication of effort, and not every product of a community campus engagement will be useful or used.” In hindsight, SLOE also felt that RAs could have focused more on seeking out and applying for additional grant funding – because the grants they did secure proved valuable.

Each of the cases above highlights a reality: relationships between community and academic partners necessarily take time to develop, for a nuanced understanding of one another's needs and perspectives to be gained. We are bound, inevitably, to bumble around, to step on toes, and to work ineffectually until we have achieved a relationship of trust and open communication. A SLOE member echoed this sentiment in her suggestion that somewhat of a context of experimentation be fostered within CCE in general: "I think it would be prudent to work towards an environment where collisions are encouraged and deliberate and set up structures where they're more likely to happen. So instead of trying to force-fit and one-off, we're in an environment where it's encouraged and happens naturally" (SLOE, year 4 evaluation).

2.14 Did any specific ethical issues arise in the context of your community-campus partnership (e.g. around how information would be gathered and shared), and how were these issues addressed?

Community partners stated that, for the most part, no ethical issues arose when engaging with the academic institution in general, or with individual faculty and students within the CES Hub in particular. This may be due, in part, to Carleton's rigorous review of its ethics applications, to ensure proper and accountable conduct, and to the careful selection of mature and professional student RAs. However, we note below several specific items raised by CES hub community and academic partners:

- SLOE members noted that they strove to maintain respectful interactions with the developer, and have been careful to respect this engagement within the communication outputs they generated and shared with the wider community. CES Hub faculty and graduate RAs were also cautious in their communication related to CCE and the redevelopment project (e.g. scholarly publications) to address the developer's interactions with SLOE in a nuanced, thoughtful and fair way – in particular, to not compromise ongoing relations with the community partner (or between the developer and the community partner), and to not preclude positive outcomes that are yet to be finalized (that might not emerge if relations get tense and adversarial). We worked with an assumption that all parties, including the developer, were operating in good faith.
- As elaborated in Question 7, GottaGo! members noted a desire for a faster and more efficient ethics approval process to allow for the initial time required by community-based organizations to meaningfully engage wider community members in the development of data-gathering products (e.g. questionnaires).
- The Year 2-4 SLOE RA raised a serious ethical issue: her concern about how much to reveal about the inner workings of (and day-to-day interactions with) the community group in publications generated from this engagement. We employed three methods to address this issue: first, the RA discussed these concerns with the CES Ottawa Hub Academic Co-Lead; second, we explored the topic self-reflexively at length in a book chapter (see Ballamingie, Goemans and Martin, 2016, in press); and third, we vetted the reflection by the SLOE chair, who kindly contributed responses that got formally incorporated (as text boxes containing her statements) into the chapter.

2.15 Do you expect the work of this partnership to continue into the future? Why or why not?

All community partners responded favourably to this question, expressing hope that the community-campus engagement would continue in some form. More specifically, they indicated that they wished: to foster continued contributions by academic partners to such items as CBO capacity building; to benefit from needs-based, applied



Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE)

research to support policy advocacy; to further broaden their networking opportunities [as an OETN representative explained: “Networking remains extremely important; it gives us an opportunity to become part of the right kind of conversation.” (OETN, year 4 evaluation)]; and to receive support for communications products that augment community outreach (for example, assisting GottaGo! with the development of a blog/website).

With regards to future efforts, the OETN group stated that they would consider how the group might replicate its model at different (e.g. regional, provincial and national) scales and within new subject areas. OETN members also expressed a desire to continue interacting with new working groups in Phase 2 of CFICE (Years 5-7), for example by participating in webinars. However, the board expressed some concern that the ED might become over-extended with this involvement – distracting him from OETN’s core organizational mandate of facilitating and implementing projects (to justify collective impact to funders).

Community partners noted several potential challenges to continued engagement with academic partners, including: (1) a lack of consistent and sustained access to financial resources now that the CFICE funding period for demonstration projects has ended; (2) a requirement in general for more efficient (and more generous and equitable) transfer of any additional funds received by non-profit groups through the CFICE project; and (3) changes in community partner dynamics (for example, as the chair of the SLOE group has stepped down, the group is currently in a self-described “state of flux”).

In regard to academic involvement in CES Hub projects, the SLOE RA (Years 2-4) described how she has continued to work with the community partner beyond the CFICE contract (through an additional contract directly with the community partner), by coordinating communication between group members and assembling a report for the Supportive Services Committee of the IHOA group. In addition, over the next year, she plans to provide volunteer support to the next phase of the seniors’ cohousing initiative. Faculty and graduate RAs are also involved now in generating several scholarly publications (typically a 1-2 year process, from start to finish), so there will be ongoing contact to vet findings iteratively with community partners – pending available time and interest.

Faculty expressed mixed emotions over their continued involvement in CCE projects. Those that adopt the approach for pedagogical purposes – such as incorporating CSL as a course component – will likely continue with business-as-usual. However, those that participated based on CFICE project funding expressed reticence: without resourcing and brokering, pressure falls all the more heavily onto faculty engaged in such efforts. While they might entertain supervising 1-2 students each year for thesis or Directed Studies credit (as part of their normal load), they would otherwise significantly scale back involvement. They did see a glimmer of hope, however, should they be successful in introducing a community-based research undergrad capstone project (or graduate credit) that would allow them to dovetail teaching and community-based research. The latter represents a creative way the university can liberate existing resources, while offering strong students (there would have to be a minimum CGPA of 9.0) meaningful experiences to partner with community.



References

Ballamingie, Patricia, Goemans, Magda, and Martin, Gary (2016, in press) 'Supporting Local Civic Engagement through a "Community First" Approach to Foster Broader Social Inclusion in Development' in Fran Klodawsky, Caroline Andrews, and Janet Siltanen (Eds.) *Seeking Equity and Inclusion: Canadian Urban Encounters*. McGill-Queen's University Press: Montreal, Quebec.

Scott, Susan (2004) *Fierce Conversations: Achieving Success At Work and In Life, One Conversation At a Time*. New York: Berkeley Publishing Group.

Thomas, D.R. (2006). 'A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data' in *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2): 237-246.