

# CFICE Community Impact Symposium

January 18 & 19, 2017  
Carleton University



# Celebrating CFICE Achievements

*Communities and campuses working effectively together for  
a healthier, more sustainable and just society.*

*Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement* (CFICE) is a two-phase action-research project that seeks to improve partnerships between communities and campuses. Our core research question examines **how value is maximized for communities** that engage in community-campus partnerships across a range of partnership approaches and policy areas. Our overarching goal is to improve the partnership policies and practices of community-based organizations (CBOs), post-secondary institutions (PSIs) and funders to create more effective and valuable community-campus engagement (CCE). We define CCE to include Community-Based Research (CBR), Community Service-Learning (CSL), and other ways that PSIs can have an impact in their communities.

In **Phase I of CFICE (2012-2015)**, the project focused on **supporting CCE that advanced sectoral policy priorities as determined by our community partners**. Through our partnership work in five sectors, we also studied what made our partnerships work, and what posed obstacles to partnership development. The structure of the project team during this phase consisted of **five ‘hubs’**, each of which was lead by a community and an academic co-lead:

- **Community Food Security** (CFS), co-led by Food Secure Canada/Réseau pour une alimentation durable (FSC/RAD) in cooperation with the Canadian Association of Food Studies/l’Association canadienne des études sur l’alimentation (CAFS/ACÉA);
- **Poverty Reduction** (PR), co-led by the Vibrant Communities network (coordinated by Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement);
- **Community Environmental Sustainability** (CES), co-led by the Trent Community Research Centre;
- **Violence Against Women** (VAW), co-lead by the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies;
- **Knowledge Mobilization** (KMb), co-lead by the Canadian Alliance for Community-Service Learning (CACSL).

Each hub developed its own governance structure – more information about individual hubs can be found in the ‘CFICE Phase I Hubs’ section starting on page 4. The majority of hub work involved developing, implementing, evaluating and sharing the results of community-driven demonstration projects. The KMb hub played a unique role; it managed its own demonstration projects while at the same time provided key knowledge mobilization services to CFICE as a whole.

While Phase I was heavily focused on completing projects and collecting data, **Phase II (start: April 1, 2016)** focuses on mobilizing the findings gained from Phase I (including refining and testing our interpretations of those findings). The goal in Phase II is to **influence the CCE policies, practices, and systems of PSIs, governments, funders and CBOs to achieve more effective, value-generating CCE**.

Phase II work is being undertaken through **five working groups**:

- **Aligning Institutions for Community Impacts**, co-led by Maeve Lydon and Patricia Ballamingie
- **Community First CCE Tools**, co-led by Natasha Pei, Mike Bulthuis and Adje van de Sande
- **Community-Campus Brokering**, co-led by Jason Garlough, Amanda Wilson, Charles Levkoe, Eileen O'Connor and Elizabeth Whitmore
- **Student Pathways**, co-led by John Marris and Stephen Hill
- **CFICE Evaluation and Analysis**, led by Peter Andrée

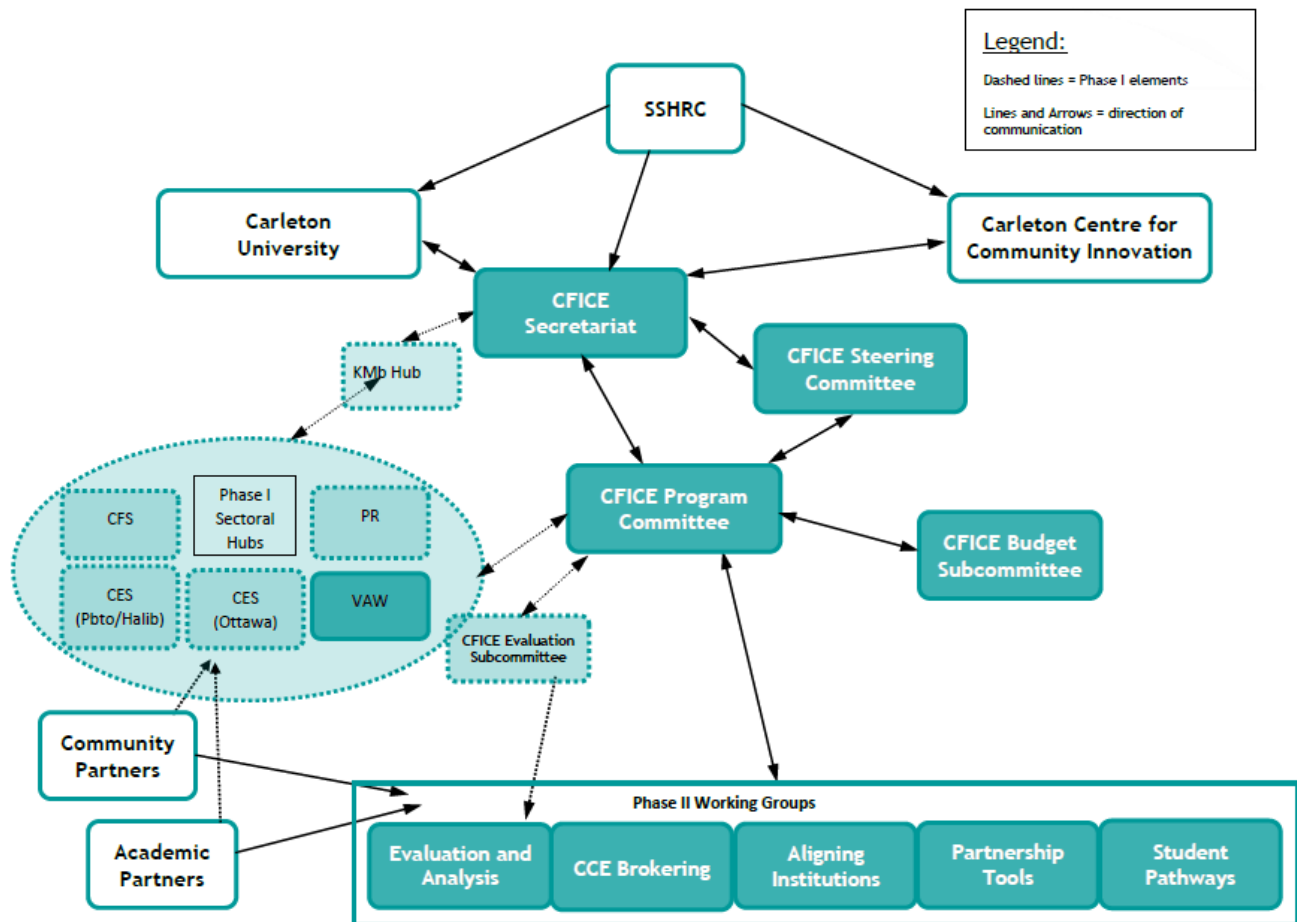
More information about each working group can be found in the 'CFICE Phase II Working Groups' section starting on page 11.

CFICE operates under the guidance of a Steering Committee, while a Program Committee sets the operational direction. The Steering Committee is comprised of representatives from community-based organizations and foundations from across Canada, as well as representatives from Carleton University. CFICE is supported by a Secretariat that is housed at the [Carleton Centre for Community Innovation](#) (3ci).

Over the course of the project, **CFICE has greatly benefitted from the contributions of its many participants**:

- **60+ community-based organizations** across Canada
- **40+ faculty** from **23 post-secondary institutions** across Canada and internationally
- **278 volunteer and paid students** (including 196 undergraduate students, 62 Masters' students, 16 PhD students, and 4 post-docs)

## CFICE Phase II Organizational Structure:



## CFICE Phase I Hubs

# Community Food Security (CFS)

**Community Co-Lead** Cathleen Kneen, Ram's Horn  
**Academic Co-Lead** Charles Levkoe, Lakehead University

## Hub Structure and Governance:

- The main objective of the CFS hub was to **build on an emergent CCE 'community of practice'** linked to Canada's growing food movements. The CFS Hub was governed by a team of community and academic partners, including representation from our core partner, Food Secure Canada.
- The CFS hub **provided seed money to various food-related CCE projects**, and then **studied those partnership approaches** to channel lessons learned into existing/future CCE projects and food-related policy.

## Community Food Security Hub Phase I Activity:

- Worked to **build stronger links between research, program and policy advocacy** and to see the research capacity of CBOs better recognized and supported through links to academic scholarship.
- **Supported twelve demonstration projects**, each of which had specific impacts on their local communities, regions, or sectors. For example, the 'Creating a Food Hub Through University-Community Partnership' project in the Guelph-Wellington area contributed to the region's shift away from a charity-based approach to hunger to a more holistic model by providing the **evidence needed to secure funding** to develop The Seed Community Food Hub in Guelph, Ontario.

## Phase I Evaluation – Key Highlights:

- Hub members valued opportunities for **relationship-building**, particularly through **in-person communication**. Participants benefitted from support for discussion to **clarify roles, expectations and needs** of all parties involved. A major barrier to effective communication involved **multiple changes in personnel**, which had impacts on continuity and trust-building.
- Primary impacts of hub work included the **reflection and evaluation of partnerships**, the support and the greater **legitimacy** that partners brought to each other's efforts. Participants also valued having the CFS hub act as a **broker** to foster varied (i.e. not just academic) forms of knowledge mobilization within projects.
- **Power imbalances** manifested in **control over projects, and in flows of resources** (e.g., delays in receiving funds for community partners). The model of providing small grants to community partners had a mixed impact, being of use to some and a burden to others.
- **CCE is not the solution but an important tool** that can contribute to fostering food sovereignty. It is important to figure out how CCE can contribute, and not pretend it can do everything for everyone.

# Poverty Reduction

**Community Co-Leads**

Natasha Pei, Vibrant Communities

**Academic Co-Lead**

Karen Schwartz, Carleton University

## Hub Structure and Governance:

- The hub formed a **partnership between Carleton University and Vibrant Communities Canada (VCC)**. VCC works to reduce poverty through collective impact (i.e. bringing together relevant community stakeholders around a specific issue to work together).
- The PR hub consciously equalized power by **making all decisions together**, including the co-creation of measurement instruments.

## Poverty Reduction Hub Phase I Activity:

- Successfully applied principles of power equalization towards **several demonstration projects that sought to move the needle on poverty**. For example, the 'Best Practices in Implementing a Living Wage Policy' project led to more than 100 employers committing to becoming Living Wage employers as of December 2014.
- **Studied the co-created CCE models** that resulted by funding poverty reduction-focused CCE demonstration projects (see Schwartz et al. 2006).

## Phase I Evaluation – Key Highlights:

- The PR hub was valued as a hub for **centralized processes and organization**, as a **partnership network** (particularly in regard to face-to-face meetings), and as offering opportunities for **critical reflection and research**.
- Enablers for effective CCE included **pre-existing relationships**, ongoing **collaboration and connection-building** among participants, having a **backbone organization** (VCC) leading the project, as well as **access to funding and other resources** (particularly in the form of RA support).
- The student RA held a role of **'connector'** between hub participants, and helped to keep hub goals on track.
- Noted barriers to effective CCE included a **lack of interaction between CFICE hubs**, **difficulty navigating CFICE bureaucracy** and gaining access to CFICE funds, **limited access to campus** for some community partners (e.g. parking), as well as a **challenging ethics approval process**.
- There was a **lack of participants with lived experience** in PR hub project management.
- Respecting and including community members in CCE efforts includes **respecting the time available** for members to participate.

# Community Environmental Sustainability (CES) - Ottawa

**Academic Lead:** Patricia Ballamingie, Carleton University

## Hub Structure and Governance:

- In its first two years, the CES Hub worked to facilitate comparative case studies and connect actors from its two regional nodes, Ottawa and Peterborough/Haliburton. Over time, the **two nodes began to function as independent hubs**, each working with half of the CES hub's allocated budget.
- The Ottawa node supported three **modestly-sized, locally-focused CBOs**.
- Central to the organization of the CES Ottawa hub was the practice of **'embedding' graduate-level RAs in specific community-based projects** to provide applied research support and develop meaningful relationships with community partners over time.

## CES Ottawa Hub Phase I Activity:

- **Provided research and administrative support** to Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE), and its sub-group Innovative Housing for Older Adults in Old Ottawa East (IHOA), both of which aim to influence sustainability measures within a large local redevelopment project.
- Assisted the Ottawa Eco-Talent Network (OETN), which aims to link environmental initiatives with pro-bono advisors and expertise, in **securing Trillium Grant funding** for the organization to hire a new Executive Director for three years.
- **Provided seed funding** to GottaGo!, an advocacy group campaigning for a larger network of public toilets in Ottawa. The funding supported the development of a report that contributed to the city's approval to include public toilets in its new Light Rail Transit plan.

## Phase I Evaluation – Key Highlights:

- Community partners credited CCE with strengthening the **capacity, research base and visibility/prestige** of their organizations.
- Community partners valued the **continuity of relationships with CES-Ottawa hub RAs** within a multi-year research project. The quality of student engagement, including the student's ability to grasp the complex context in which community groups struggle, as well as to serve as **'boundary spanners'** between community and academic worlds, was critical to the success of their CCE projects. Community partners would like **more control over the selection of student RAs**.
- All CES-Ottawa hub participants acknowledged the need for more **equitable decision-making around resource allocation**, and ease of access to funds for community partners.
- Community-engaged **faculty work under significant strain, and lack adequate support** from the academic institution for CCE work.



# Community Environmental Sustainability (CES) - Peterborough-Haliburton

## Community Co-Leads

John Marris & Todd Barr,  
Trent Community Research Centre

## Academic Co-Lead

Nadine Changfoot, Trent University

## Hub Structure and Governance:

- In its first two years, the CES Hub worked from its two regional nodes, Ottawa and Peterborough/Haliburton. Over time, the **two nodes began to function as independent hubs**.
- The CES Ptbo/Halib hub established and evaluated **four local demonstration projects** in its first year. In subsequent years, a more **long-term view** was taken, resulting in continuity for all participants. The immersion of RAs provided the **relationship building required when working with a vulnerable population** marginalized by traditional planning processes and academic engagement.

## CES Peterborough-Haliburton Hub Phase I Activity:

- Supported the Active Neighbourhoods Canada (ANC) project, which developed with residents a Portrait and Vision for the Peterborough Stewart Street Neighbourhood to **collaboratively reimagine the space to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles**.
- Helped Abbey Gardens (Haliburton) to create **improvements for its market table at Farmers' Markets**.
- Supported the creation of four public event kits for Abbey Gardens and Haliburton Highlands to raise awareness and knowledge of local ecologies and sustainable ethics and practices.

## Phase I Evaluation – Key Highlights:

- Community partners acknowledged **CFICE funding as important** -- yet it was also a **relatively small contribution** in the overall context of CBO operating budgets and project development, on the one hand, and the **multi-year funding facilitated a longer term vision for CCE**, on the other. The university held the power balance as it controlled the funds.
- **Existing long-term relationships**, CCE and social change commitment between CBOs and RAs increased the depth of community research, accommodated complex projects, and facilitated trust-building critical to project success. RAs were viewed as **'integrators' and 'boundary-spanners'** between university and community cultures, and built connections beyond project parameters.
- Building community-campus relationships requires a **conflict resolution protocol and opportunities to discuss power dynamics front-end**. Language was sometimes a contributor to power imbalances in these relationships.
- In regard to **knowledge-creation and mobilization**: who owns the body of knowledge and outcomes from the research, how could/should the community voice be incorporated, and how can existing resources and outputs meet the different needs of both PSI researchers and community?

# Violence Against Women

**Community Co-Lead**

Kim Pate, Canadian Association of  
Elizabeth Fry Societies

**Academic Co-Lead**

Diana Majury, Carleton University

## Hub Structure and Governance:

- The VAW hub -- a **pan-Canadian community/academic partnership** -- is overseen by a **fifteen-member steering committee** made up of community and academic partners. This committee approves projects proposed by community partners. The VAW hub will continue to operate as a hub throughout Phase II (with budget allocated in Phase I).
- The **academic co-lead takes on all CFICE-related management and administrative duties** to minimize demands on the hub's community co-lead and the other community partners. This approach to CCE is unique to the VAW hub.

## Violence Against Women Hub Phase I Activity:

- **Produced two databases** that provide access to valuable information from which researchers and anti-VAW advocates can develop VAW policy recommendations:
  - the expansion of the preliminary database of missing and murdered Indigenous women undertaken by the Native Women's Association of Canada; and
  - a database of Canadian anti-VAW movement documents of the 1980s and 1990s.
- **Produced video interviews** with five long-time Ontario VAW activists.
- **Released a report** on the implementation of the Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee's recommendations (2007-2011).

## Phase I Evaluation – Key Highlights:

- VAW hub members valued the **collaborative process**, opportunities for **capacity-building and knowledge-sharing**, contributions to personal growth and **rejuvenation to the VAW sector**, as well as opportunities to **train young student researchers** that came out of CCE projects.
- Barriers to effective CCE within VAW projects included **overcoming distrust of academics** based on past experiences, as well as **pre-determined parameters** (i.e. SSHRC guidelines) on the structure/process, which limited the organic nature of the work. Getting **access to funds was sometimes burdensome** for already overextended community partners.
- CCE relationships require **significant investments of time**. It is important to make space for **'hard conversations'** to discuss expectations and potential challenges at the outset of a project, and to recognize the value of participation from **different places and perspectives**.
- A CCE research project is more meaningful if the **community brings the project forth**. There is a **risk of misrepresentation** if community partners do not actively participate in CCE research.

# Knowledge Mobilization

**Community Co-Lead**

Geri Briggs, Canadian Alliance for  
Community-Service Learning

**Academic Co-Lead**

Elizabeth Whitmore, Carleton University

## Hub Structure and Governance:

- The KMb hub **began as a collaborative team** with representatives from universities, CBOs and (only in its early stages) the private sector. The intention was to manage projects collaboratively, however, partners had limited time to engage – as a result, the hub co-leads and RAs **shifted to promoting effective communication among the other CFICE hubs and developing KM ideas and tools, supporting three demonstration projects**, and undertaking the activities noted below.
- These shifts in direction reflected a changing understanding of the ‘fit’ of a KMb hub within the larger action research project.

## Knowledge Mobilization Hub Phase I Activity:

- **Supported a major conference** on CCE (C2UExpo 2015).
- **Designed the CFICE website** and facilitated the dissemination of a **weekly e-mail newsletter** (CFICE Connections).
- Expanded CFICE’s external audience by **sharing interesting research through external publications** – for example, the KMb’s hub’s piece “What the heck is knowledge mobilization and why should I care?” was the most viewed article on ResearchImpact.ca for 2014.

## Phase I Evaluation – Key Highlights:

- Hub participants valued **collaboration and network-building** that occurred among multiple post-secondary institutions, and the access to new perspectives and strategies this provided. Some participants didn’t derive a great deal of tangible value for their organizations.
- **Student researchers gained new skills** in evaluation and planning, and broadened understandings of community advocacy. There was a **lack of community voice in selecting student researchers**.
- Hub challenges included **inadequate planning and definition** around how the KMb hub would operate. The mandate did not ‘fit’ well with the focus on community based projects, and attempts to do this around KMb were not particularly successful. It took quite a while to figure out our role within the larger CFICE project. **Community involvement was difficult to solicit**, and those groups that did participate did not have their contributions properly attributed.
- Barriers also included **insufficient funding** and inefficient dispersal of funds.
- Without the **means to properly evaluate** the success of knowledge mobilization strategies, there was no way to really evaluate what had gone wrong and how things could be improved.

## **CFICE Phase II Working Groups**

# Aligning Institutions for Community Impact

Community Co-Lead

Maeve Lydon, Community-Based Research Canada

Academic Co-Lead

Patricia Ballamingie, Carleton University

## What we learned in Phase I:

- Community partners wish to **broaden understanding among PSIs of the value of ‘non-traditional’ research**, including research that may not produce typical academic-centred outcomes.
- Faculty perceive that **PSIs do not generally value their work in CCE**. Faculty face significant pressure to prioritize research activities that will generate funding and academic publications, at the expense of other efforts that may more adequately address community partner needs.
- Community partners had **difficulty navigating administrative hurdles** within CFICE projects, which involved complex reporting and evaluation requirements, as well as slow bureaucratic timelines.
- Community partners appreciated the substantial, multi-year funding they received through the CFICE project. However, **gaining access to funding was often an administrative burden** for community partners.
- The **SSHRC grant funding structure did not treat community partners equitably**. Decisions about allocation of funds were primarily made by academics, who recognized community concerns about potential power imbalances, but also grappled with considerations of responsibility, risk management and accountability related to managing grants from a public funding source.

## Key themes informing our work:

Shifting institutional culture to embed and strengthen ‘Community First’ CCE

Supporting partners in negotiating administrative challenges in CCE

Augmenting and fostering equitable distribution of CCE grant funding and supports

## Opportunities to apply Phase I lessons within Phase II work:

- Develop and pilot, in coordination with community partners and PSI demonstration sites, a **Community-First self-assessment/classification system for the Canadian context**, informed by existing tools, best practices, and other recommendations.
- **Establish a Canadian CCE network** to connect practitioners and campus engagement initiatives and entities across Canada, to enable sharing and development of CCE best practices, research and resources.
- Convene high-level discussions among funders and university research offices to **advocate for changes to funding policies and practices** to better reflect and reward Community-First CCE.

# Community First CCE Tools

## Community Co-Leads

Natasha Pei, Tamarack Institute  
Mike Bulthuis, Alliance to End Homelessness

## Academic Co-Lead

Adje van de Sande, Carleton University

## What we learned in Phase I:

- CCE is valued by community and academic partners for its contributions to:
  - **building capacity** by enhancing the research base, organizational focus and administrative efficiency of community-based organizations (CBOs);
  - enhancing the **visibility, standing, and influence** of CBOs;
  - fostering a context for **evaluation, critical reflection and scholarly input** by academic partners;
  - **strengthening relationships** and expanding networking opportunities for CCE participants; and
  - providing **strategic access to valued partners** and opportunities for **additional grant funding**.
- A **collaborative governance process**, in which community and academic partners establish **clear project goals, expectations and roles**, is key to the success of CCE projects.
- **Substantial investments of time** by community and academic partners may be required to establish and maintain relationships in CCE projects. **In-person communication** plays an important role.
- Creating a context for ‘messy conversations’ -- which **recognize a diversity of perspectives** and provide **space to openly voice concerns** -- helps to build understanding and a common language among community and academic partners.

## Key themes informing our work:

Understanding the value of CCE for community and academic partners

Developing an accessible and common language among CCE partners

Fostering equitable and effective governance and relationship-building in CCE

## Opportunities to apply Phase I lessons within Phase II work:

- Support community and academic partners in **framing collaborative, equitable and feasible CCE projects** that build on diverse understandings of community and academic needs, and that facilitate strategic goal-setting and continued communication among partners.
- Establish a **Community-First multi-step CCE process** that incorporates a needs assessment and self-assessment checklist for CBOs, as well as assistance in identifying CCE-ready academic partners.
- Develop **Community-First CCE tools** including a website, partner directory and instructional videos.

# Community-Campus Brokering

## Community Co-Leads

Amanda Wilson, Food Secure Canada  
Jason Garlough, Ottawa Eco-Talent Network

## Academic Co-Leads

Charles Levkoe, Lakehead University  
Eileen O'Connor, University of Ottawa  
Elizabeth Whitmore, Carleton University

## What we learned in Phase I:

- **Community and academic partner timelines, objectives, goals and strategies were often misaligned**, affecting communication between partners and constraining CCE projects.
- CFICE faculty, community co-leads and students often **informally took on a substantial responsibility of brokering CCE relationships**.
- Community partners would like **greater control over student placement**. It is critical that **students are sensitive to the complex contexts** within which community partners work.
- Community and academic partners would like more structured access to CCE support **that links community-based organizations with researchers and funders**. Brokerage mechanisms can assist in establishing valuable roles for post-secondary institutions, faculty and students that match particular skills, projects and learning objectives and help to build long term relationships.
- While a lot of good CCE work is being done, there is often a **lack of knowledge mobilization to share and use research** and **limited infrastructure to support ongoing and new partnerships**.

## Key themes informing our work:

Understanding the challenges, benefits and opportunities of CCE brokerage models

Centering community in the brokerage process

Strengthening community and campus capacity by fostering links to timely and sustained research support, funding and other resources

Fostering equitable and effective governance and relationship-building in CCE

## Opportunities to apply Phase I lessons within Phase II work:

- Establish and pilot **two sector-specific CCE brokerage initiatives to develop capacity for communities**, which support varied community contexts and scales. Each model will assist partners in navigating community and academic knowledge and practice, and **facilitate strengthened, sustained and mutually beneficial relationships** among participants in CCE projects.
- Ensure that processes of brokerage development **build on key principles from Community-First perspectives**, draw on a wide range of partners' expertise and local points of access, and are fluid, responsive and adaptable.
- **Document the challenges and successes of the pilots** to understand how to do better CCE.

# Student Pathways

Community Co-Lead

John Marris,

Trent Community Research Centre

Academic Co-Lead

Stephen Hill, Trent University

## What we learned in Phase I:

- Students bring **enthusiasm, advocacy interests, and scholarly perspectives** to CCE projects. Students have contributed directly to the success of CFICE projects in many ways, most notably by **strengthening the organizational capacity and research base** of community partner organizations.
- The embedded research assistant is positioned as **integrator and advocate of both academic and community concerns**, helping to foster relationship-building, trust-building and knowledge translation among partners. This may sometimes be a challenging space to occupy.
- **Disproportionate attention may sometimes be paid to student needs** over that of community partners. CCE projects may favour faculty research needs, as well as student timelines and grading requirements.
- Students **require sustained support from community and academic supervisors** over the course of CCE projects. Substantial community partner resources are often required to supervise students.
- Student participation in CCE projects may be **transactional rather than transformative**, with opportunities missed to connect students to place and foster a deeper interest in community.

## Key themes informing our work:

Defining student pathways for CCE: From good experiences to institutionalization

Making a meaningful impact as an embedded research assistant in CCE projects

Enhancing the student experience: Improving access to research opportunities and project guidance in CCE

## Opportunities to apply Phase I lessons within Phase II work:

- Complete a **curriculum mapping process** to support graduated post-secondary learning in Community-First CCE practices, from extended undergraduate involvement in CCE projects to embedded Master's RAs. Pilot this integrated curriculum with students at Trent University.
- Design a **senior high school module** that prepares students for post-secondary CCE work.
- Develop **CCE tools, courses and modules that build student skills in community advocacy and relationship-building**, and that foster deeper sensitivity to community needs and perspectives.



# CFICE Evaluation and Analysis

Academic Lead: Peter Andrée, Carleton University

## What we learned in Phase I:

- There is a **need for ongoing evaluation processes** in CCE projects, including **developmental evaluation** processes.
- The CFICE **Secretariat provides necessary continued support** for hub and working group evaluation.
- CFICE participants **require ongoing resources** to support the **dissemination of evaluation findings** over the course of the CFICE project. RA support is a valuable contributor to this effort.
- Academics not fully grounded in local contexts risk misrepresenting community perspectives in CCE projects. Effective community-first CCE projects **foster and incorporate first-voice perspectives from community participants**, and provide adequate resources to support these voices.

## Key themes informing our work:

Evaluation as an ongoing process of reflection

Resources to best support knowledge mobilization of evaluation results

Supporting diverse levels/forms of engagement among CCE participants:

Balancing inclusion with what is achievable for community and academic partners

## Opportunities to apply Phase I lessons within Phase II work:

- Provide **ongoing evaluation assistance, oversight, and guidance**. This includes assisting working group members with implementing evaluation tools, **tracking the process of evaluation** (i.e. how it is being done), gathering and analyzing Phase I findings, and ensuring the project is accountable to its partners and supporters by **ensuring evaluation work is shared with the appropriate audiences**.
- **Synthesize and mobilize CFICE's research knowledge**. Work with the project Secretariat, as well as working group members to actively **support cross-project communications** related to evaluation, including ensuring project **findings are shared with all project members**; connecting working group members with other project participants for **research/conference/mobilization activities**; and **telling the CFICE research story** by composing and targeting project findings based on the three purposes of research: planning and program development, sharing, and accountability.

# **A Summary of High-Level Findings from Phase I Hub Evaluations**

Prepared by Peter Andrée, drawing on the hub evaluation synthesis created by Magda Goemans

## High-level Findings from Phase I

### What is most valued about ‘community-first’ CCE partnerships by community-based organization (CBO) representatives?

- When post-secondary institutions, faculty and students really listen to and **value community expertise**
- Increased alignment of research with policy advocacy and/or program delivery
- Development of **shared analysis of issues** (community/academic)
- Increased **confidence and credibility** when community work is backed by academic credentials/expertise
- **Capacity building** for CBOs provided through partnerships:
  - **Labour:** dedicated student research assistants and/or faculty frees up time for CBOs to work on other priorities
  - **Research support:** Research results, methodological rigour, evaluation support
    - Generates outputs, including academic dissemination
    - Introduces new/critical perspectives
    - Helps meet growing demand by funders for outcomes-based assessments
    - Provides opportunities for critical reflection
  - **Access to funding:** travel and research support, honoraria
    - Support for face-to-face/in-person meetings, meeting spaces, meals for focus group participants
    - Allows CBOs to leverage funds
  - Expansion of **networks, visibility, reach and influence**
  - Increased understanding of how to approach and engage academics
- Working together within a **shared perspective** (e.g. feminist analysis or a social movement commitment)
- Learning to work together collaboratively, including **working through the ‘messiness’** and challenges of partnership (“Sometimes in CCE the process is the outcome”)
- The **institutional support** that faculty involvement represents
- The opportunity to **mentor students** and enhance their exposure to community issues

### Some common challenges to strong partnerships (for individuals and organizations):

Lack of long-term relationships, **poor communication**, personnel turnover, **insufficient time** to commit fully, suspicions of value of student (and other) contributions, **lack of understanding** of pressures on each partner, **lack of clarity** on when academics should simply support community-driven directions vs. offering critical interventions, overcoming **experiences of ‘tokenism’** in the past. **Inclusion is important** (e.g. of people with lived experience with poverty and Indigenous voices), but **often difficult to achieve in practice**.

## Some common systemic/institutional challenges to strong partnerships:

Community partners **feeling taken for granted** if their expertise not valued and compensated; a **lack of faculty incentives**; mismatched timelines; ethics review timelines; lack of faculty involvement in student projects; when a research project (e.g. CFICE) is **seen only as a ‘funder’ rather than a collaborative effort** to generate new understanding; when accountability to the research funder creates tensions; **administrative hurdles** (e.g. long time-lines for paying community representatives); community partners not having full access to library and other university resources.

## Some CFICE-specific challenges:

The central contradiction at heart of CFICE - “to maximize value for community partners within a structure that made that very difficult and **very time and energy consuming**”; **lack of connections between hubs** in Phase I; **lack of clarity on role of Knowledge Mobilization Hub**; channelling funds through one partner over another could lead to differences in expectations/responsibilities; **confusion and tensions related to transition** from Phase I to Phase II; lack of CCE brokering structures at specific institutions (e.g. Carleton).

**Drawing on the hub evaluation reports (and recognizing that some hubs were more successful at achieving their goals than others), strong community-campus partnerships depend on:**

## Deep, communicative, and respectful relationships.

These involve **honesty, investment of time, building trust**, continuity. In practical terms, they require: working together **in-person** and virtually (e.g. conference calls); having **safe spaces for dialogue** (including for push-back by CBOs); building on **pre-existing relationships** (when possible); and the establishment of **common communication** norms, conventions, and shared terms.

## Explicit attention to power differences.

‘**Power**’ is a **complex issue**. Academics usually hold more power to define directions within research projects (e.g. deciding on how to spend research funds), but community partners are also powerful in own right (e.g. as gate-keepers in certain networks). Power differentials can be addressed through concerted efforts to **build trust, share resources and practice reciprocity**, but **differentials will remain** and can be expected to resurface from time to time.

## Collaboratively setting the rules of engagement.

This may include: achieving **clarity about expectations, limitations, potential problems**, etc. early on, then **regular check-ins**; being on same page with a **community-based participatory research model**; the importance of **understanding and delineating respective roles** (though likely also challenging the ‘traditional’ roles of researcher vs. community); alerting community partners to the potential for frontline experience to be overshadowed by academic expertise/language; developing **protocols for community ownership and control of data**, etc.

## Clarity around personal/institutional constraints.

**Demands of academia** (tenure and promotion, schedules, etc.) need to be understood by community partners. The **institutional and funding context and pressures of community-based work** needs to be understood by academics.

## Setting in place appropriate and accountable administrative policies and procedures.

This means: **collaborative funding allocation**; allocation of funds/resources to help CBOs and community reps participate fully; **minimizing administrative hurdles** (e.g. travel reimbursement).

## Flexibility.

CCP projects can be complex. A **flexible, ‘experimental’ approach** is often required to navigate hurdles while staying attuned to the shared purpose.

## Engaging when you can.

Partnership takes effort and resources. **Engage wisely/strategically.**

## Well-trained and committed RAs.

**Student RAs play a role between faculty and community partners**, but they often lack guidance in this role. The value for them is to ‘break out of theory and into practice’ and work with (rather than ‘on’) research subjects. It is especially valuable when the RA is an ‘insider’ to the community.

## Thoughtful ‘connectors’ (aka “boundary-spanners”).

Connectors are those individuals (including RAs in many cases, but also faculty members, community representatives and ‘brokers’), who **work across community/academic lines**: Managing the expectations of both community and academic partners is a delicate balancing act.

## A backbone organization.

Within the CFICE hubs, much of the above work was led by individuals or organizations supported by CFICE funds. The role of this **organizational ‘backbone’ was often critical** to sustaining the partnership effort.