

HSTA Community Research Project

As a HSTA student you are required to conduct a community research project that sets out to improve the wellbeing of your community. You will complete four projects over the course of your HSTA career. You may work in a group of three or less HSTA students (check with your Field Site to see if this is different for your region but your group can be no bigger than three HSTA students). Your HSTA teacher, HSTA peers and Community Research Associate (CRA) will help guide your projects.

Summary of Project Logistics:

1. Once you have selected your community research topic you will work with the HSTA Research Document (Doc 1) to start laying out your ideas in a research manner.
2. There are specific deadlines that you will need to follow. You will submit project information to your HSTA teacher for comments and CRA for comments/score.
3. Once you have an approved project you may start to collect data.
4. During data collection make sure to communicate with HSTA teacher, Field Site and CRA with updates and any problems.
5. As you work on data analysis again make sure to communicate with updates and issues.
6. Your final presentation has to be submitted to CRA on Friday before the first symposium and then you will present at a symposia.

Below is additional information about community research projects. Make sure to read over the all materials in the online notebook.

Community Engagement Principles

"Community engagement is about relationships between and among communities, researchers, and research institutions."

Nine Principles of Community Engagement

Before Starting....

1. Be clear about the population/communities to be engaged and the goals of effort.
2. Know the community, including its norms, history, and experience with engagement efforts.

For Engagement to Occur...

3. Build trust and relationships and get commitments from formal and informal leadership.
4. Collective self-determination is the responsibility and right of all community members.

For Engagement to Succeed...

5. Partnering with the community is necessary to create change and improve health.
6. Recognize and respect community cultures and other factors affecting diversity in designing and implementing approaches.
7. Sustainability results from mobilizing community assets and developing capacities and resources.

8. Be prepared to release control to the community and be flexible enough to meet its changing needs.
9. Community collaboration requires long-term commitment.

Community Research Partnerships

Research with community involvement benefits both communities and researchers. It is important to remember the goals and roles of each party when working within such a partnership. By combining the unique resources of both the Community and the University, the goals of each group may be better accomplished. The community brings knowledge and understanding of community norms as well as the concerns related to research participation held within their community. The University researcher brings resources and experimental expertise to the partnerships.

There are many terms that are specific to University-Community Research partnerships that may be used within the course of the project. These terms have been defined below for clarification.

Community – a group of people who have something in common. Communities may be defined as a geographic or political area like a neighborhood or town. Other ways to define a community include groupings of people with similar characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, or gender. Additionally, a community may result from a shared interest or practice.

Community Based Research – research that draws on the community's resources in terms of subjects, data, personnel, material or other support

Community Based Participatory Research – A specific model of community-based research in which the researcher and individuals in the Community create a partnership that identifies questions of mutual interest, conducts studies that reflect mutual input and derive outcomes that provide mutual benefit (Israel, Schulz, Parker, Becker 1998)

Community Partner – individuals within the community who may fairly represent their interests, needs, and/or concerns because they are both knowledgeable about and empowered to represent that community.

Collaboration – researchers usually collaborate with others. A true collaboration involves planning together, sharing resources, and managing resources together. Collaboration is best when all groups understand each other's point of view, communicate openly and trust each other

Data Collection Plan – a written plan describing exactly how the researchers will collect information. This plan usually describes who collects the information, when, where and how.

Dissemination – spreading the news about how a research project was done and what was discovered. **The purpose of dissemination is to make sure the research is useful to many people, not just the ones who did the project.** When a research project is planned, it is important to think about how the results will be disseminated to the people who are most likely to benefit from it.

Human Subjects – a living individual about whom an investigator obtains either data through interaction or intervention with the individual, or identifiable private information.

Human Subjects Protection Certification – All investigators conducting research with humans are required to complete an education program and become “Certified” in human subjects protection.

Informed consent – researchers need informed consent from people before they can include them in their research. After the researcher has explained the purpose, type of information being collected, and the way the information will be used, the person can then freely choose to be in the research study. If, after the explanation, the person freely chooses to be in the research study, they have given informed consent.

Instrument (Data Collection Instrument) – Researchers often call the ways they collect data “instruments.” What they mean is anything they use to collect and organize information such as surveys, intake forms, attendance records, or tests.

Intervention – A word for any program that tries to make a change, such as improving heart health, decreasing hospitalizations from falls or increasing the skills of hospital interpreters.

IRB (Institutional Review Board) – Most research projects need to be reviewed by an IRB. An IRB is a committee made up of researchers and community representatives who make sure the research projects will not hurt anyone and adhere to ethical guidelines.

Protocol - A protocol is an action plan for a research project. A protocol should tell what the project will do, how many people will be in it, who is eligible to participate, what interventions they will be given, what tests or surveys they will be asked to do and how often, and what information will be gathered.

Research - To understand researchers, it is important to think about what research really is. At the most basic level, research is the search for knowledge. The knowledge gained from research can help us to understand and solve problems. There are many ways to do research. You can do research in a library or on the Internet to learn specific information about the world. But research is not limited to looking up information that is already available. Research can help discovery new information and create new knowledge.

Who’s Who in HSTA Research Projects?

If the research project is a partnership with a scientist from a University →

HSTA Students’ Roles

- Acts as community partner and community investigator.
- Make sure they know about the study’s development, implementation, analysis and dissemination of findings as well as the time lines for each of these steps.
- Adhere to the requirements of the IRB protocol for the collection, use, and security of data.
- Take steps to maximize the benefit of the research to the larger Community.

University Partners' Roles

- Be familiar with the important issues facing the Community that would be appropriate for a research study.
- Educate/train community partners/community investigators about the process of research development, approval, implementation, analysis, and dissemination as well as the time lines for these steps.
- Ensure that community partners fully understand the purpose and the implications of the proposed research.
- Involve community partners in the planning of studies.
- Involve community partners in discussions about uses of data to be collected, including a dissemination plan for the sharing of the research findings with the community.
- Be willing to address research questions important to the community group

If the research is a HSTA student created project →

HSTA Students' Roles

- Act as the primary investigator/researcher
- Be familiar with the important issues facing the Community that would be appropriate for a research study.
- Educate/train community partners/community investigators about the process of research development, approval, implementation, analysis, and dissemination as well as the time lines for these steps.
- Ensure that community partners fully understand the purpose and the implications of the proposed research.
- Involve community partners in the planning of studies.
- Involve community partners in discussions about uses of data to be collected, including a dissemination plan for the sharing of the research findings with the community.
- Be willing to address research questions important to the community group

Community Members' Roles

- Make sure they know about the study's development, implementation, analysis and dissemination of findings as well as the time lines for each of these steps.
- Adhere to the requirements of the IRB protocol for the collection, use, and security of data.
- Take steps to maximize the benefit of the research to the larger Community.