**Community-Engaged Research**

As an urban-engaged campus, SUNY Buffalo State values our relationship with the community. This engagement is one of the pillars of the institution. Goal 3 of this pillar is to expand support for community-based research and scholarship.

The SUNY Buffalo State Institutional Review Board supports community-engaged research. Community-engaged research is research in which a campus researcher and community partner collaborate on a systematic investigation to broadly disseminate the results and strengthen the community (See DOPS VI:04:05 for further discussion). Community-engaged research does not include program evaluation (for example, when a researcher works with the community partner to develop a tool to determine whether a particular program is effective).

**I’m working with a community partner. Is my research project considered to be community-engaged?**

Community-engaged research requires that the community partner be actively involved in the project. If the campus researcher is conducting a study at a community location at the request or permission of a partner, but the partner is not involved in the consent process, data collection, or data storage, this is not considered community-engaged research. For example, suppose the community partner is merely passing along invitations to participate or is allowing the Buffalo State researcher to be present in the location to collect data. In that case, the community partner is not considered to be engaged.

**What are my next steps?**

* If a study is considered to be community-engaged, the community partner must complete training in research ethics, as required by federal regulations. Only the community partners actively involved in the consent process, data collection, or data storage must complete this training. For example, if the CEO approves the study to take place, but all responsibility for the study rests with a program director, only the program director is required to complete the training.
* If a study takes place in a community setting, but is not considered to be community-engaged, the community partner is not required to complete training in research ethics.

**For Buffalo State researchers**: CITI has a brief, optional course in Community-Engaged Research. This course, which takes about 30 minutes, provides researchers with important considerations and useful tips for conducting this type of research. Although this is not required, campus members are strongly encouraged to complete this training prior to conducting research in the community.

**For our community partners in community-engaged research**: Community partners who are required to complete this training have two options. They may complete the same CITI training that campus researchers are required to complete. For them to complete this training under Buffalo State’s site license, please contact Gina Game. Because this training is for all social and behavioral research, not every module or concept will apply to our community partners. As an alternative for our community partners, CIRTification Online is a human research training program designed for community research that is available in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. The following description is from their website:

The online version of CIRTification introduces learners to the basics of the research – the terminology, people, and methods. It also reviews the history of research abuses that have informed current ethical principles, rules, and regulations.

The training program also:

* Covers standards and best practices for
  + Recruitment and informed consent
  + Collecting and protecting data
  + Handling challenges that may arise during participant interactions
* Reviews the role of the institutional review board in protecting the rights and safety of research participants
* Includes a dictionary of research terms and a toolbox with resources related to human research protections

CIRTification is free for use. Community partners must simply sign up for the free course (<https://ccts.uic.edu/resources/cirtification/online/> ). Upon completion, the community partner should send a PDF of their certificate to the Buffalo State researcher, who will submit it with the IRB protocol for review.

If you aren’t sure if your research is considered community-engaged or if you have any questions about this policy, please reach out to Gina Game, IRB Administrator, gameg@buffalostate.edu.