



Research 102 builds off [Research 101: A Manifesto for Ethical Research in the Downtown Eastside](#). We thank everyone involved in Research 101 for their work and support in creating these guidelines for ethical research in so-called Edmonton.

Treaty Acknowledgement:

City Centre Edmonton is in Treaty 6 Territory, the traditional meeting land and home of many Indigenous Peoples. The original spirit and intent of the treaties has not been upheld in the face of ongoing settler-colonialism, which continues to do harm to Indigenous Peoples today. Research has been part of this continued harm. We are all treaty people, and should always be mindful that instead of giving reconciliation superficial platitudes, we need to work together towards meaningful reconciliation. Research must play a role in disrupting settler-colonialism and other harmful practices.

Research 102 was created in late 2019 and early 2020 during a series of workshops with city-centre residents, activists, and workers from harm-reduction centres, social organizations, and academic institutions.

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Photo credits:

Yeseul Cho (page 10), Les Danyluk (page 2 and 7), Rylan Kafara (page 8), Vicki-Lynn Moses (page 5 and 6), and Bill Neis (page 1 and 9).

City Centre Edmonton* continues to be structured by ongoing settler-colonialism, [gentrification](#), and [carceral redlining](#). It is heavily researched by academics, social organizations, and consulting companies. These researchers should already follow internal ethics reviews and policies that include plans for consent, study procedures, and avoiding possible harm. While these plans are based on a researcher's perception of what the study will entail, the plans do not necessarily require ongoing approval from the community, or accountability to the community. Research processes can then lead to researchers parachuting into the community, extracting data, and leaving no benefits for participants in the study. Currently, there are no shared community guidelines that researchers must also follow. The purpose of these guidelines is to help ensure a collaborative and mutually beneficial research process for everyone involved. Not only should research not do harm, but it should be rooted in care.

HOPES FOR THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Trust is a two-way street. We hope that researchers come into the community with a generosity of spirit grounded in:

1. Care: readiness to support the community in meaningful ways
2. Passion: excitement to be a participant in the community
3. Sincerity: always being genuine and honest with the community
4. Dignity: being considerate of everyone's boundaries, values, and worth
5. Respect: putting the community first

We also hope that researchers maintain an awareness of these important factors:

1. Community values
2. The diversity of the community
3. Changes happening in the community
4. The existence of power imbalances between researchers and partners
5. Research must have fluidity and reflexivity
6. There are many forms of representation
7. Jargon is a barrier. Use appropriate language
8. Research should always challenge stigma

* We use "city centre" to represent the physical and spatial parameters of central Edmonton. [Owen Toews uses the term](#) "city centre" instead of "inner city" in Winnipeg. Similarly, "city centre" is used here to show that city-centre residents belong in central Edmonton.

FIVE SPOKES OF THE RESEARCH WHEEL

Mutual benefit is a key part of every spoke on the research wheel. Consider how everyone could benefit from each part of this ongoing process:





SPOKE 1: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Researchers need to intentionally form partnerships, even before designing a research project. Reflect honestly on your motivation for doing the research. Recognize the role your position (class, politics, identity) will play in building relationships. Healthy communication is important. Get to know the people and organizations face to face. Share your study's approved ethics application or your organization's ethical policies. Do not just state how your study is funded, but explain how this could shape the outcomes of your research. Ensure that everyone knows they can choose to stop or change their involvement at any time. Be prepared to sensitively engage with both past and ongoing trauma experienced by project participants. Just as research is an ongoing process, so are relationships. The following questions should be answered through ongoing collaboration with the community.

Ask yourself:

- A) Who do I need to get to know? What would they like to know about me?
- B) What research has already been done? How can I build upon it?
- C) How am I benefitting from these relationships? Am I sharing these benefits with the community?
- D) Although this research could be done, should it

Ask the community:

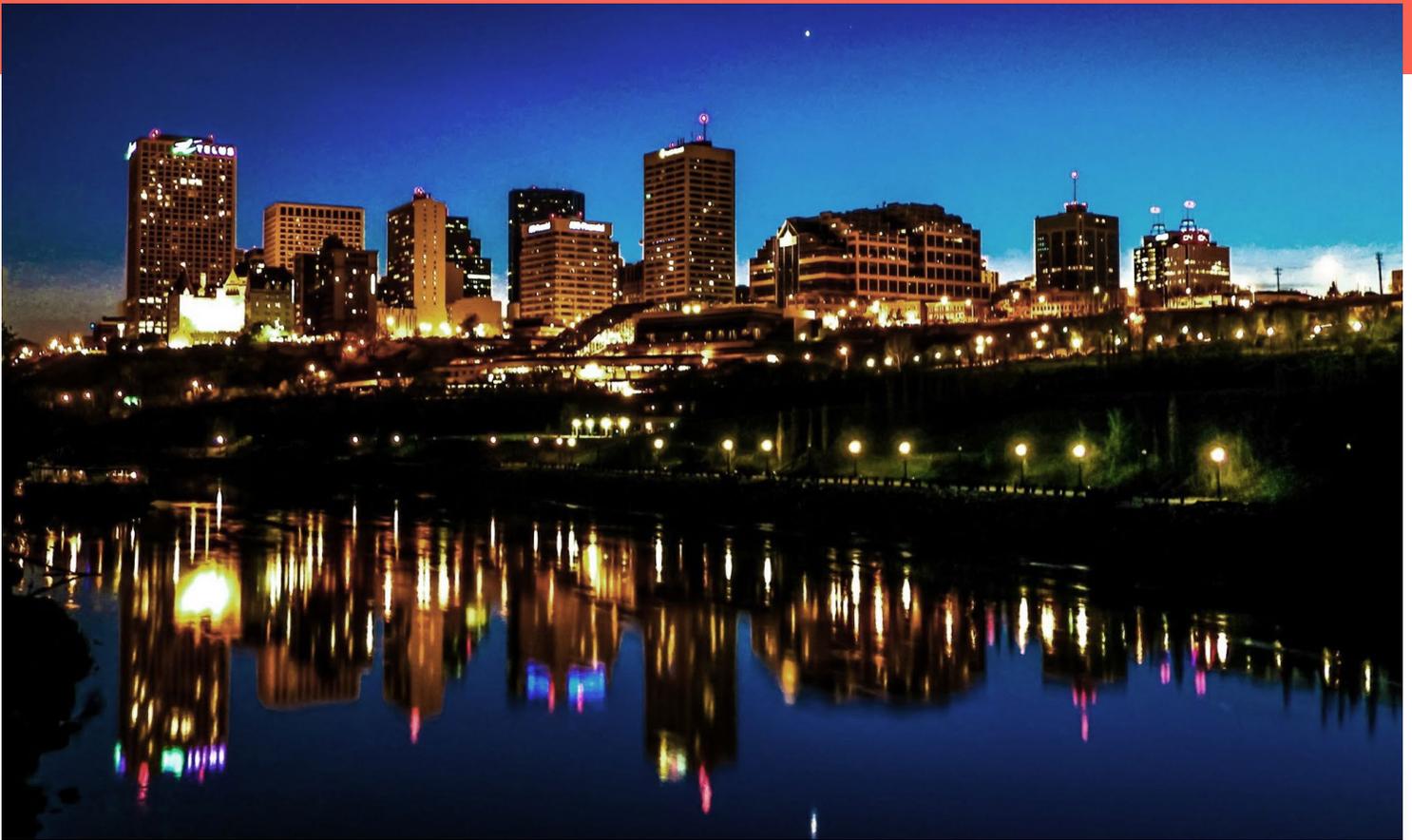
- E) What can research do for the community? What kind of research can I do with the community? What is the most important priority?
- F) Once these relationships are starting, how can they continue to grow?
- G) Is the trust there before the research begins? Researchers should have a community partner on your research team.
- H) How are my partners benefiting from these relationships?



SPOKE 2: PLANNING RESEARCH

Research is not a race. It is important to have a clear plan ahead of conducting research, and continually checking in on the plan during the process. Your methods must be clear and easy to understand. In particular, consider these factors:

- A) Collaboration:** it is important that you collaborate with the community in your research planning, but what about how your institution or organization – which benefits from your work and the community’s participation – is supporting both you and the community? Will resources be available to your research partners, such as library access, using classrooms, and other supports that may be needed during and after the research? Will your institution or organization meaningfully acknowledge and protect the relationships you have built? How will the needs of project participants be met, not just in words, but actions?
- B) Time:** ensure you do proper planning before starting the research phase of your project. Meaningfully consider the relationships you have cultivated through the planning. Be mindful of your expectations for the research process, and the expectations of your partners. Are you making promises you might not deliver? Take the time to make sure everyone’s expectations align.
- C) Budget:** do you have the necessary financial resources to meaningfully conduct your research? In discussions with community partners, will your budget reflect what they have asked for, such as compensation in the form of cash payments for interviews? Food? If you do not have the financial resources, how will you make changes to you research project? Will it still be possible to move forward?
- D) Capacity:** what capacities and lived expertise will you bring to the community? What capacities do you hope to grow? What community capacities will you be building during the project? What will partners learn and experience by participating in the project? What positive effects will the research process have in the community?
- E) Sharing:** research should be done with the community, not for the community. Create research questions together. How will you recognize and acknowledge research partners in ways that are meaningful to them? Does any information need to be adapted or translated? What barriers to access exist?
- F) Review:** once you have a research plan, check-in with partners in the community for feedback, and to see what might be missing or needs to be changed. If partners do not approve of your plan, do not begin the research process.



SPOKE 3: CONDUCTING RESEARCH

The research process is never a straight line, but full of twists and turns and going to unexpected places. Are you prepared to ensure:

- A) Flexibility:** are you prepared to develop new relationships once research has already started? Will you adapt to feedback you receive from community partners during the research process? How will you change the way you do research, if, for example, partners tell you they are tired of telling the same stories to researchers over and over?
- B) Visibility:** do research participants feel you are part of the community, and not just dipping in when it suits you and the project? For example, after participating in an interview, does your partner know what the next step in the process will be, and what role they will play in positive outcomes?
- C) Understanding:** is the research process reinforcing predetermined or preconceived notions of the community, or breaking new ground? Is consent ongoing? Does the process use appropriate language, challenge stigma, and consider the nuances of the community? For example, is the process helping community partners heal from past trauma?
- D) Empowerment:** is the research process also an empowering process for partners? This can be done in many ways, but should be done with encouragement and support. Do participants feel like they are being heard? Are their voices being amplified by the process? For example, what if an interviewee wants to discuss an issue that is not directly related to your research project?



SPOKE 4: SHARING RESEARCH

Following data collection, it is important for researchers to take the time to analyze the information. It is also essential that community partners are contributing to this part of the project. In addition to analysis, how will your research lead to action? Ensure meaningful:

- A) Communication:** once the data collection process has concluded, it is important to continue to check-in with partners and discuss findings. What do your partners think of your conclusions? At this stage, how can partners contribute to your findings?
- B) Accessibility:** do not make partners wait for academic publications in order to access the data from the research process. What ways can partners access information, such as notes and interview transcriptions? Is it possible to publish your findings using an open license?
- C) Stewardship:** since the data you have collected is community-based material, you must take responsibility for it seriously. While it is important to make the data accessible, be mindful of not disclosing information partners do not want shared, or giving the data to individuals, groups, or organizations with predatory motives, or even to someone who is seemingly caring without permission. Do project participants know this is their data too? Mutually beneficial relationships are again key at this stage.
- D) Dissemination:** in addition to academic publications and presentations, how are you sharing the research information? Consider doing public talks, media interviews, and creating non-traditional ways of sharing, holding conferences, and publishing with community partners in mind. How can you connect with as many people as possible? Importantly, how are you using your position to ensure the research is leading to action?



SPOKE 5: ONGOING RELATIONSHIPS

These relationships are not simple transactions. How will you keep the wheel spinning? After the research process and sharing have concluded, what ways will you maintain the relationships you have built? How will you contribute to the continued well-being of the community? Are you prepared for a lifelong commitment to the people who have helped ensure the success of your research? In thinking about the future, consider these possibilities:

- A) **Future research:** what new mutually beneficial projects could be next?
- B) **Ethics board:** in addition to ethical guidelines, should a community ethics board be formed to help decide what research occurs in the community?
- C) **Changing Structures:** what changes could be made at your institution or organization to remove barriers to meaningful research going forward?
- D) **Community Development:** how can you participate in the community outside of your research? By organizing educational workshops that align with the interests of the community? Volunteering? Advocacy? Activism? How do your community partners think you could best contribute?



Research Archive: We have built an archive of research outputs done in and with the community. This is a starting point for any researchers coming into the community. The link to the archive is [here](#).

Find the list of supporters of this document [here](#).

This version was created on 31 March 2021. Future versions can be found [here](#).



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Event costs, city-centre resident honoraria, research assistant support, and workshop space.



Bissell Centre BOYLEstreet
COMMUNITY SERVICES

Workshop facilitation,
space, and transportation.



MacEwan
UNIVERSITY

Workshop space.

Creative services provided by: **Jeremy Seeman**

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