URGE Session 4 Deliverable Questions
FOLFE Pod

If you are involved in research with communities of color, in the US or abroad, have you...

- Actively sought out local collaborators / liaisons / guides? Why or why not?

Some of the lab member’s projects have involved local collaborators but to varying extent. One example included local collaborator, but mostly for policy implications and with little involvement of data analyses and sample planning. Another example included involvement from a local collaborator, but this was largely after the project was moving forward and the person did not have a large amount of input on sampling design. One pod member recounted an experience where local community members served as guides, yet were not included in project development or teaching positions. Other examples have included native observer participation on cruises, but again, less input and inclusion on the proposal process. The lack of seeking local community members out may have been due to prioritization of scientific goals over understanding their broader context. Additionally, many projects performed by pod members lack clear relevance to local communities.

  ○ Were they included in the early development and/or proposal of the research or project itself, or added at a later stage?
  
  As mentioned above, generally no with one exception where a person(s) was involved throughout but mostly for policy implications.

  ○ Were any local collaborators included as authors on presentations and/or papers?
  
  In one of the above cases, yes the local collaborator was included in presentations and the manuscript resulting from the work. However, the person was not involved in the original proposal development.

- Actively sought to include local students in your research? Why or why not?

In one of the aforementioned projects, a local student assisted with field work for an extended period of time in the summer. However, there was little done to keep a strong relationship with this student. This was likely due to the lack of explicit inclusion of the local university during proposal formation and science planning.

In another one of the projects, there was money explicitly reserved for local students and a local student was able to participate in two field cruises throughout the project.

- Sought to build trust and form long-term connections and collaborations with local institutions if your project is multi-year / ongoing? Why or why not?

Much of the described work involved short term projects (1-3 yrs) so minimal long-term connections and collaborations were formed. One project does have ongoing collaboration and connection with the local community government. One pod member discussed their experience participating in a long-term survey that performed locally relevant research which (at least historically) may have had minimal input and involvement of the local community. These connections between scientists and local communities
may not have been established due to their lack of perceived value in past scientific communities and culture, though relationships and collaborations are being sought for new surveys.

○ Were previous negative interactions, whether from inside or outside of your organization, addressed in the plans for building these connections and trust?

This was generally not considered during collaboration and connection plans with local institutions during past projects.

● Shared data and findings with the local/regional community in a way that is more accessible? (i.e., translating into different languages). Why or why not?

In multiple cases, presentations were given to local community members during the process of the research. However, little was done to reach back out to connect with local members for presentations after project completion. In at least one case, the culminating manuscript was published as open-access, increasing its accessibility to local communities. Regarding why more was not done, we generally felt that there was previously minimal career-advancing motivation for doing so.

● Educated yourself and your group/team about local politics, culture, customs, and knowledge, including the history of colonialism / settler colonialism in the region? Why or why not?

In one of the described projects, much of the information about local politics and knowledge was learned along the way, though realistically only partially considered. This likely due to a focus explicitly on the science and minimally the larger context of performing research within and for the local community. Another project that pod members were involved in was part of a broader educational program in which students learned about the history and culture of the island nation and the development of the protected area where fieldwork occurred, and all cruise participants had an opportunity to do a cultural exchange with locals during one of the fieldwork port stops.

○ Was sufficient time allocated to the process of working within the community’s governance, customs, and priorities?

In one of the projects, this was done out of necessity for permitting but little beyond that. In another project, this was done more thoroughly including government representative participation and reporting results directly to government officials.

○ Is respecting culture and customs included as part of your code of conduct? This will be addressed in Session 6 as well.

This is considered a value within the lab/pod, though there is not an explicit, publicly available statement from the lab declaring so. One of our members has more general mention of respecting differences, various viewpoints, identities, etc. in their Code of Conduct, but nothing explicit about respecting culture and customs.

● Acknowledged local communities / Indigenous tribes in your research results?

Many of the pod members have started including land acknowledgements for presentations and acknowledgement of local importance of the lab’s research (when applicable). However, this can be expanded in the future.
• Included local communities in your broader impacts in a meaningful way that builds on the community’s identified needs and concerns?

In one project, a series of public talks were given to the local community regarding relevant results. This project focused on an ecologically important species that is relevant for local subsistence hunting. Observers also participated in each research cruise to serve as a conduit between the science conducted and local communities. Another project focused on understanding the importance of a protected area for the spawning of commercially valuable fishes. This project was highly economically relevant for the local community. Relationships with the local government during the latter project helped expand this impact.

○ Did these efforts leverage community members, and was that work compensated appropriately?

In the former project, observers participating on board the cruises were compensated. In the latter, local government members participated as observers during field work and were paid for that work.

• Considered and prioritized research questions and research locations based on needs of local communities, in addition to how impactful they are seen within academia?

This was done explicitly in one project regarding the spawning of commercially valuable fishes and a clear objective of this work. This cannot be said for other lab projects, including those described above.