

URGE Week 4 Deliverables- Monterey Bay POD

During the POD meeting, we decided members would add their thoughts to the prompts below. If they were not actively conducting research, they were encouraged to reflect on how they would address these questions in the future. Responses were compiled for each question. Individual's responses are followed by their initials.

Week 4 Prompt:

General responses:

"I am not actively doing research with communities of color right now however I am the curator for a collection of archaeological artifacts from the excavation of the lab building site. At the time of the excavation the lab leadership did work with the Native American tribes from the beginning of the excavation through to the reburial of any Native American remains. Since then, however, I do not think there has been much communication. There are no policies (I could find) about use of the artifacts that remain in the collection.

I've answered the questions below in regards to my role in curating this collection." -KAL

"I am not involved in research right now, but some of my thesis research involved collecting algae on Indigenous land. Someone else in my lab applied for the collection permit and did all of the communication. It happened very quickly because she was pressed for time.

We met in person with one of the community members on our collection trip. We were transparent about what we were doing. They were more interested in my work than her work. Even though the chapter in my thesis that involved most of the collections from that land was cut from my thesis, I did get results that I could pass on to the community, and I plan to inform and acknowledge them if/when I publish bits and pieces in the future.

They had expressed interest in knowing which species were growing on the land and it was important to me not to let them down after I had collected on their land. We shared the same research questions - We all wanted to know what was growing there. So, I prepared a 2-page summary report for them of what I found. I had wanted to present the results to the community in person, but the pandemic hit. So, I also prepared a very long self-guided slide show presentation explaining who I was, why I was doing science, and the research questions I was asking. I included pictures and descriptions of what I did to extract and amplify the DNA from the specimens, and then I had pictures of the collections, so they could see which sample corresponded with which names we've been applying to the species (I also offered to talk with anyone who wished via zoom, but I haven't heard back.) I wanted to make sure that the science from the summary was accessible.

With what I have learned now, the next time I have a project like this, I would like to start sooner, rush less, and be the person that is directly involved with speaking with the community so I could ask the questions. I would want to see if members of the community were interested or wanted to be involved in a collaborative project, as opposed to us simply begging for a collection permit in a race against time. I'd want to ask them if there was something that they specifically wanted sequenced and identified. Or perhaps there would be something else that I could do for them while I'm out in the field. I would also

prefer to design a longer-term project and involve the community and figure out if they had any other questions that I could help answer.” -SH

“I am not actively involved in research at this moment. It would have been interesting to include any local tribal knowledge into my thesis work, since it was on a species that was probably actively fished. Including tribal knowledge about species distributions would contribute an additional aspect to the type of research that I conducted.” -MB

“Daniel Fernandez, CSU Monterey Bay regarding a 5-year National Institute of Health/NIGMS/Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) on which I am a PI. It is an educational grant aiming to bring environmental science health awareness and education through the arts to, often, disadvantaged communities in the agricultural Salinas Valley area. Specifically, we are addressing the issues of plastics pollution, climate change, and agricultural practices and how they can affect the health of regional communities.” -DF

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?**
 - **Were they included in the early development and/or proposal of the research or project itself, or added at a later stage?**
 - **Were any local collaborators included as authors on presentations and/or papers?**

“Yes, they were included in the beginning. However, I see this as a new stage of the project and will need to include them right away.

Since I am not the one doing research on the collection, I will not be publishing about it. However, this might be something I could talk to the community to ask about requiring in the usage policy we create.” -KAL

“I have been involved in a few projects that used local collaborators and guides. In the Arctic they were principally involved with the sea ice studies and mammal observations. My group was working with deep-sea plankton and so we have much less communication and contact with the locals on the project, but did all share social times and meals while on the icebreakers. I don’t know if they were invited to be PIs on the project or were involved in the publications after the fact.

Almost 30 years ago I spent close to 3 months in Palau working with local guides to navigate and transport researchers to distant locations among the rock islands. In all honesty, it never even occurred to me to involve them in the actual science itself, or even to really ask their opinions on the projects we had designed and were caring out. They were hired for transport and not brought into the research team in any real way.” -KR

“This is definitely something to consider when thinking about whose voices and stories are centered in stories about communities of color/indigenous communities/international communities. I could seek out local writers, filmmakers, or oral storytellers who could act as active collaborators on the project.” -MP

"I have not worked in this space, but when peripherally involved, I have usually seen engagement happen at a workshop after the proposal is funded. I have been part of projects where local collaborators were included as key co-authors on papers." -ELH

"Yes, local schools in the Salinas Valley. Monterey County Office of Education, Baktun 12, and Artists Ink. They were included early in the project development. Yes, and this is still in the works as it is a new project." -DF

"Yes and no. We have some local collaborators, but unfortunately most of our local collaborators are American expatriates. There are some politics involved that are ingrained in our project and unfortunately tied to our project funder. I have at times been discouraged from reaching out to local native researchers, due to political disagreements in the past. The collaborators I have were included in the project development stage, including the local governmental officials, however local commercial and recreational fishermen were not included in project development." -DEH

"Yes. Lots of reasons: I've worked extensively in one country where most citizens are Black or Brown, and it's ingrained in the work culture (there and among my mentors/collaborators here in the US) to prioritize local collaboration. This was required in order to be granted research permits, my grad school mentor encouraged it, many other "outside" researchers working there also collaborated with host-country researchers/students/citizens. It was also my personal motivation to collaborate to help mentor students at local institutions (like I do here in the US). It also benefited the work tremendously to collaborate locally (many reasons, e.g. unique insights/skills/perspectives/connections of collaborators, improved project longevity/stability). My international works successively included more and more host-country collaborators/co-workers, and the work was better for it.

I also have some experience working in another country where this was not the culture and expectation of the people around me, and I did not have such a strong opportunity to connect with local communities. Reasons for this (I think) are: the research station made it too easy to become insular, I didn't know the language (it was harder for me to learn than the other country's language, and I didn't invest in learning it because I didn't expect to work there often), and (a big one for me) the local research community was also a colonial presence.

In my early experiences they were involved in the early and late stages, but in my later experiences local collaborators have been involved at all stages.

Yes. Many papers, many co-authors." -Anonymous

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

"Not at this stage." -KAL

"We did include several students in some projects in the Arctic, but I am unsure if any were from BIPOC groups. When in the south Pacific I was a graduate student myself and didn't think about the options of enlisting the help of local students. Today this would be a big focus; at the time we brought everyone with us from the U.S. to do all the work."-KR

“One way to engage local students would be to have them participate in essential science communication activities like keeping cruise logs, interviewing researchers, and writing articles and short explainers.”-MP

“No.” -ELH

“Yes, that is the focus of the grant. We are also engaging on-campus students as well as grades 6-12 in the community.” -DF

“No, our field work is limited to short trips and it would be difficult to maintain connection with a local student and to make sure that the other PhD student in my lab has enough work for her PhD, however as our project develops and data is collected, I would like it if we could include a local student. I would need to make more local connections though.” -DEH

“Yes. It just seemed like the right thing to do to share the skills and opportunity, to expand my research community and help fill geographic gaps in who was active in the field. And- I love mentoring research, so it’s just a part of who I am.” -Anonymous

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

“There were connections established at the beginning of the project (1999?) but they have lapsed and I will reach out to re-establish trust and collaborations.

I don’t know much about the beginning of the project but I do know there were some previous negative interactions that I believe were addressed at the time and repaired. I do not know the specifics of the interactions but I plan to address this by starting to build the collaboration and trust from the beginning and addressing things as they arise.” -KAL

“The results of early projects were solely focused on scientific publications. There was some conversation with the local community about the research and preliminary results, but it was not organized or officially built into the projects.” -KR

“Often in the case of filmmaking or other multimedia SciComm, so many editorial choices happen between the filming/reporting and the final stages that the final product doesn’t reflect the overarching values and perspective of the community it’s about. Building relationships with collaborators so that they can advise at multiple points on the project would help to center and amplify the perspective of the community.” -MP

“In the only example I have where I worked with a different group / culture, I worked hard to build local heroes that could run the work while providing advice rather than running the work myself. I think this is critical both in engagement but also in creating a successful project.” - ELH

“Yes, that is the focus of the grant. No, previous negative interactions” -DF

“Yes and no. We are trying to build and maintain local connections with local government officials, and fisherman cooperative groups, however we have not maintained a strong communication line with the native commercial fisherman, which is something I need to work on, but is difficult to do remotely and with the language barrier. Local native fishermen have had negative interactions with previous researchers in the region, and do have a strong distrust of us. We have worked to address those issues and build trust; however, the pandemic severely impacted our abilities to maintain communication with these groups and this is something I should work harder at addressing.” -DEH

“Yes. Even though many individual projects have ended, I want to keep connections going with the hope of future collaborations that benefit all of us. Plus, as with any work, you get to know and like colleagues and peers, and want to stay connected in some way.

Even very early on I was made very aware (from talking with people in the host country and in the US) that other western researchers had given empty promises in the past and eroded trust. I knew this was an issue and that it was up to me to make sure I followed through on promises. I haven't always been able to follow through, but I've tried really hard, and explained/apologized where I haven't.” -Anonymous

- **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?**

“Yes, data sharing will be part of the use agreement.”- KAL

“The most unusual version of “translating” our findings was to use many dozen of our images of deep-sea creatures as a printed and framed art show that was hosted by a local art gallery for a period of time. The public was invited, but I don't know how widely the invitations were sent and to whom.” -KR

“Articles, videos, and any other multimedia content could be translated into different languages with captions and subtitles. I could also work with the local/regional community to identify key audiences in the general public and the best genres/platforms/channels to share SciComm materials.” -MP

“Regular discussions and presentations to the local community is a MUST. I feel this should be a minimal requirement in working with a different group or culture.” -ELH

“To occur later – certainly translations into Spanish could occur. Ensuring information is accessible and available to those most adversely affected by the situations being addressed is an important part of the work.” -DF

“Not yet, but this is important for me to keep in mind as our project progresses and we begin publishing results.” -DEH

“Yes. It was the culture among my peers/coworkers/collaborators to do so via presentations, fact-sheets, trainings.” -Anonymous

- **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?**
 - **Was sufficient time allocated to the process of working within the community's "governance, customs, and priorities?**

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

"I plan to continue learning through the URGE resources."- KAL

"In Palau I spent some time trying to understand the history of the area, which most significantly for our interactions, was rooted in World War II and post-WWII dynamics of U.S. occupation. There was significantly more negative reaction to our long-term presence on the islands than I had predicted. Being from the U.S. and not just being on a holiday, but living and shopping in the local areas of the towns was an eye-opening experience. Feelings of occupation, and sometimes outright hostility, were more prevalent than what I was prepared for.

Today things would be designed much differently with respect to local cultures and customs than some of my experiences from the past. Even in the last 10 years I have seen a great awakening from the predominantly white, male, "European" academic masses and their attempts to look outside themselves for true collaboration and not just tokenism, but how successful it is at large and how widespread?" -KR

"I could ensure that materials are read and seen by those familiar with local customs, culture etc. to catch both small things (spelling, titles of community members) and much larger things (sensitive histories, historical figures that might cause harm if referenced)." -MP

"Also was critical. There was a strong conflict between full time employees and soft money contractors which required both an understanding of past difficulties but also brainstorming on how to work with both groups if not unite the two." -ELH

"We are familiar with some of it. It is something we can and will address as the project commences. The community is the local school districts. We believe we have allocated ample time to both the grant writing and planning in the early stages of the grant (that is, now).

I am not aware of a code of conduct in this work, but will bring this point to my team" -DF

"No. I am not working with indigenous groups per se, but I could do a better job educating myself to the history of the fishery in the region. I have tried to hear from the local fisherman the history of conflict with "developed" nations extracting resources from the local region. I'm still unsure of how to address these types of concerns for my project, but I am actively thinking on it." -DEH

"Yes- again this was expected of me by everyone around me. Thinking back, I've definitely made mistakes (and probably still do) but I learn from them and try not to repeat them. Yes, sufficient time was allocated, but could always use more. Don't know of a code of conduct was the case for my affiliations at the time." -Anonymous

- **Acknowledged local communities / Indigenous tribes in your research results?**

"In my initial research I find we have a small collection donated by one of the tribal members. I do not believe this is acknowledged anywhere and I will do that. I also need to look into what information is available publicly about the archaeological collection, work with the Native Americans, and more. I do have a land acknowledgement for the library that I use, but I did not work with the local Native American

tribes to develop it. I, in concert with lab leadership, will do that and use it for the lab as a whole, not just the library.” -KAL

“I’ve never done it once. Although mostly working over international water or off the coast in oceanic areas, I think the concept of where indigenous “lands” begin and end is very interesting and was never talked about.” -KR

“I could make it a regular practice to include land acknowledgements as a standard addition to the end of written content and video credits and provide guidance to researchers on how to incorporate land acknowledgement in spoken communication.” -MP

“I worked with local researchers but not the local community more broadly. This would be a really valuable approach.” -ELH

“No research results yet – to occur.” -DF

“Again, not sure how this applies in my situation, but it is possible it does.” -DEH

“As appropriate given the subject matter of various projects.” -Anonymous

- **Included local communities in your broader impacts in a meaningful way that builds on the community’s identified needs and concerns?**
 - **Did these efforts leverage community members, and was that work compensated appropriately?**

“Not in any meaningful ways at my level of the projects. Some had others more focused on the local communities and we largely washed our hands of the issue and assumed that others were handling it all for the larger group.” -KR

“That is the intention of the proposal. We are compensating teachers and partner arts organizations for their efforts at an amount that feels appropriate based on the time expected.” -DF

“Not yet, but this is important to me as we begin synthesizing results. I hope to keep this in mind moving forward.” -DEH

“As appropriate given the subject matter of various projects. Not in grad school (I wasn’t funded myself, so didn’t have extra to give). In a later job, yes. I advocated for the hire of 20 local collaborators, many (most?) of whom are still in those jobs nearly ten years later.” -Anonymous

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

“The short answer? Not at all. The research was solely prioritized based on the traditional scientific need or the interest of the researchers. Local communities were not consulted or asked. I’d like to think that my experiences from 15-25 years ago would be done differently today, but I wonder, have things changed much or is it all still business as usual?” -KR

“This goes back to the importance of identifying the needs of the community and what kinds of stories would make an impact. Are there perspectives that have historically been silenced? Are there

issues/concerns that would be especially well-served by SciComm geared toward a more general audience? Did these stories center and amplify underrepresented folks? Were those folks compensated for the time that they spent being interviewed, consulting, reviewing, editing, etc.?" -MP

"We prioritized 100% local (regional government) needs to the academic impacts which I think offers up greater likelihood of future success."- ELH

"That is a part of the grants' educational mission."- DF

"We have met with local fisherman to hear their concerns and we are hoping to be able to address some of them as our research moves forward, however communication has been limited lately." -DEH

"Yes." -Anonymous