

UW QRC Experiences Working with Communities of Color
Deliverable from session #4 of Unlearning Racism in Geoscience (URGE)
University of Washington Quaternary Research Center pods 1 and 2

QRC Pods 1 and 2 include Quaternary Research Center members who saw this deliverable as an opportunity to survey the Center's members about their research experiences around and with Indigenous communities and other communities of color. The QRC includes faculty, students and research scientists from disciplines and departments across the UW campuses and beyond. The survey was offered to all 70+ QRC members for anonymous response. The survey coincided with the last week of classes and the first part of exam week in the university's winter quarter.

The summary below is based on responses from the 11 QRC members who completed the survey. Eight of these respondents indicated that they are UW faculty and the other three identified as students. Two self-identified as members of underrepresented groups in the geosciences or other Quaternary related fields. The responses may be biased toward respondents who had collaborative experiences to report. The results should not be taken as representative of the experiences of the QRC or the larger UW Geoscience community.

The survey results add incentives and insights for the QRC to build on existing collaborative work and to develop opportunities for sharing experiences as models for others. The compilers of this summary know of many QRC members who are engaged, or who wish to participate, in community collaborations—a direction for the Center to hold workshops in coming months.

The survey, carried out online, centered on questions paraphrased in Table 1 (next page). Questions 1–8 were answered by all eleven respondents, question 9 was answered mainly in comments, questions 10–14 were answered by ten respondents.

The set of questions was followed by a request for explanatory comments and suggestions for future QRC supporting activities (training, funding and others support were suggested.)

Themes that appeared in explanatory comments included:

- QRC projects including community engagement span a range of scales (e.g., from interacting with local Indigenous tribes to scientists and communities internationally), that may warrant a variety of approaches.
- Past efforts to collaborate with communities in mutually beneficial ways required time and consistency that were sometimes at odds with funding timelines.
- Multiple members noted that a relationship had been started with a community but never brought to fruition in a substantive way (e.g., there was an initial effort to reach out, or a community was made aware of the work, but that the relationship did not move on to the point of understanding community needs or bringing community members to the table).
- Multiple members expressed that their interactions with communities proceeded differently than they originally expected or planned.
- Members expressed a desire to engage more collaboratively with communities and felt that it would be helpful to have more educational resources about researcher responsibilities and ethics, plus more institutional support and funding.

Table 1. Questionnaire, edited for tabular summary, and simple responses

Question	Yes	No	n/a
1 Have you worked with Indigenous or other minoritized communities?	9	2	
2 If you have done this kind of work, in the US or abroad, did you actively seek collaborators, liaisons, or guides?	9	1	1
3a Were these community members included in early development and/or proposal of the research	2	8	
3b Were community members brought in at a later stage?	8		
3c Were there collaborators at any stage?	9		1
4 Were any local collaborators included as authors on presentations and/or papers?	6	4	1
5 Have you actively sought to include local students in your research?	9	2	
6 Have you sought to build trust and form long-term connections and collaborations with local organizations in multi-year/ongoing projects?	8	2	1
7 Were previous negative interactions, whether from inside or outside of your organization, addressed in the plans for building these connections and trust?	4	4	3
8 Have you shared data and findings with the local/regional community in a way that is more accessible? (i.e., translating into different languages)	5	3	3
9 Have you educated yourself about local politics, culture, customs, and knowledge, including the history of colonialism/settler colonialism in the region? (<i>Elicited grist for workshops. Yes/No responses not listed here.</i>)	—	—	—
10 For projects involving local communities, was sufficient time allocated to the process of working within the community's governance, customs, and priorities?	4	5	1
11 Have you acknowledged local communities/Indigenous tribes in your research results?	10		
12 Have you included local communities in your broader impacts in a meaningful way that builds on the community's identified needs and concerns?	5	5	
13 Did these efforts leverage community members, and was that work compensated appropriately?	4	2	4
14 Have you considered and prioritized research questions and research locations based on needs of local communities, in addition to how impactful they are seen within academia?		8	2