

Inclusion & Diversity

Panel

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Mon, 11/06/2017 - 10:30 am

This panel will expand the focus of Sunday's pre-conference workshop by discussing best practices and lessons learned from EOD leads from four different EPSCoR jurisdictions that are working with individuals, institutions, or organizations from Indigenous populations. Content will investigate (1) programs and best practices from four different jurisdictions (2) how approaches vary geographically, and (3) how programs that are effective in Native communities might be similar to or different than effective programming for other minority groups.

Summary of Panel:

The panel discussed challenges and strategies for ethically conducting research with and amongst native peoples. Several key practices for conducting successful research emerged:

- **Build Relationships:** Researchers need to begin by building relationships with the community. Researchers should not show up for the first time when they are ready to begin collecting data. Get to know the people. Listen. Eat meals. Work to connect on a human-to-human level. Show that you care about them as people, not just as research subjects. There is a deep, widespread mistrust of researchers due to past experiences that mistreated Native peoples. Get to know a respected person within the community who can introduce you to the government and to other people. Once trust and relationships are established, then research can begin.
- **Be Patient:** Research in and with Native communities takes time because it takes time to build a relationship. Begin way before any deadlines and do not be constrained by deadlines.
- **Learn about the community:** Prior to showing up, learn what you can about the community. Read what the community has produced and published about themselves and what others have produced about the community.
- **Listen to the needs of the community:** Researchers should ask themselves how their research may benefit the community, not just the literature or their career. The answer to this question lies with the community itself, not in the researchers "great idea."
- **Recognize the community's context:** Yes, research is important. But researchers need to recognize all the other problems that Native communities are dealing with on a daily basis, such as poverty, addiction, suicide, or broken social structures, that take precedence or limit their willingness to prioritize the research project.
- **Provide a benefit to the community:** Researchers should determine and demonstrate how their research will bring a benefit to the community (something tangible that addresses their needs, concerns, or desires, not merely an academic publication or report of findings). Too often research extracts from the community (e.g. the communities knowledge) but provides nothing in return. In this way, research too often remains a colonial practice. Compensate the people for what they provide. This may be gifts, money, or simple acts of

reciprocity like chopping wood for elders. It may be helping the tribes build their own research capacity.

- **Follow the community's protocols for research:** Many Native Nations have developed their own protocols, including their own IRB. These protocols may require meeting with tribal governments or committees. Researchers need to learn what these are and follow them in addition to the requirements of their home institution.