

Partner Stage Reflection Questions

By grounding the **partner** stage in the 5Rs—Representation, Relationships, Reflexivity, Responsibility, and Resources—community and research partners can address potential challenges proactively, create balanced decision-making, and set the tone for a collaborative research journey that is responsive and truly community-engaged. Use the following reflection questions to guide your thinking through this stage.

Representation

- Who has a vested interest in the focus of your research, and how might they contribute to its success?
- How can you honor and incorporate the community's unique context, values, and lived experiences into the project?
- Which perspectives are currently missing, and how can you ensure they are included?
- What steps will you take to identify and eliminate barriers so all partners can fully participate and contribute?

Relationships

- How are roles, group norms, and relationship-building activities being established and sustained over time?
- What strategies foster a group culture of open dialogue and collaboration?
- How are trust and mutual respect actively nurtured throughout the project?

Reflexivity

- How well does the project align with and address the needs of the community it serves?
- In what ways are research and community partners reflecting on their own biases, assumptions, and cultural perspectives?
- What systems or practices are in place to identify and address biases throughout the project?
- How do we assess and adapt our partnerships to ensure alignment with project goals and team dynamics?

Responsibility

- Does our team have the necessary expertise to carry out this work effectively and ethically?
- How am I actively addressing power dynamics between researchers and community partners?
- What steps will we take to keep community input central and adaptable to changing needs?

Resources

- What are the time and cost implications for all partners involved in the project?
- How might organizational processes (e.g., accounting, human resources, Institutional Review Board) need to adjust to support this work?
- Are all contributors fairly compensated for their time, expertise, and contributions?