

How to partner with young people

Partnerships should be based on mutual respect, acknowledging the unique contribution that each person makes



- **have clear expectations**

about what can and can't happen from the outset, and acknowledge when processes and outcomes may change

- **be flexible**

about when and how young people can engage... offer a range of ways young people can participate (e.g. varying commitment levels) to maximise youth participation

- **value experience**

including qualifications, lived experience and unique perspectives... recognise individual skills and interests and try to draw on and build on them

- **involve more than one young person**

where possible and appropriate also aim for diverse representation so that partnerships can reach their full potential

- **mutual benefit**

make sure the young person is benefiting too (e.g. learning new skill)

- **reimburse appropriately**

depending on the nature and duration of the commitment

- **support involvement**

different young people will require different support – involve young people because they are the right people, not because of convenience

- **avoid tokenism**

don't develop something and then get young people to provide input when it is too late to make meaningful changes

- **provide resources**

plan for youth involvement and make sure both you and the young people have what you need to enjoy a successful partnership

- **provide feedback**

let the young people know what changed as a result of their involvement and what you were able to achieve together

When to partner with young people

Involving young people improves the quality, relevance and success of research

Using these four broad methods, young people can be involved in any number of ways to improve the quality and meaning of research.

Participatory research

Co-design and youth-led research

Major contributions to research

Advice on research



Community

Reviewing manuscripts, conference abstracts and grant applications

Engaging other young people in research

Keeping the broader community up-to-date with research findings

Suggesting and determining community research agendas

Helping to organise and run conferences and other events



Organisation

Suggesting and determining organisational research agendas

Interview panel members for new positions and promotions

Advisory group members

Ethics committee members

Promoting culture change



Specific study

Study advisory groups

Analysis and interpreting study results

Translating and communicating study findings (improving the accessibility and reach of research)

Designing, revising or testing interventions

Setting and revising research topics and questions

Training data collection staff or acting in roles

Contributing to study design

Designing, revising or testing measures



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Talking points for youth partnerships in research

-  I will have the opportunity to learn and develop new skills
-  I know what I am going to be doing
-  I will be using my experiences or skills
-  I know how often and for long I will be involved
-  I know the limits of my contributions (if any)
-  I understand there is flexibility to help me be involved
-  I will get feedback on the outcomes of the project/activity
-  I know what resources I will have access to or can ask for
-  I know how I will be reimbursed
-  I know what support I will receive or can ask for
-  I know who else is involved (including other young people)
-  I know how my privacy will be respected and how to maintain personal boundaries

Considerations when partnering with young people

