Language for Community Engagement Studios in Grant Applications

The UCI ICTS writes many letters of support for researchers writing grant applications. These letters of support assure granting agencies that the researchers have the ICTS' agreement and resources to support their project if funded.

We typically have an introductory paragraph explaining the ICTS in general, then a paragraph about specific programs and support we plan to provide to the research team, such as CE Studios, followed by a paragraph about the ICTS's reach into the community, including naming specific community organizations we can reach out to for populating CE Studios that allow us to have the human capital to support them with a CE studio specific for their project.

Examples of language we have used in letters of support for grant applications include:

EXAMPLE 1:
A program we host through our CEU for robust and meaningful community engagement in research includes our Community Engagement (CE) Studios Program. CE Studios use a one-time consultative model of engagement that uniquely addresses researcher needs based on the community of impact for any given researcher's investigative domain. For example, with your study, we can assemble a team of Latinx and/or Vietnamese, API, or other Asian community experts that have lived experience and can, therefore, advise about culturally-relevant recruitment methods and materials, language and study methods that may be more acceptable to this population, and ways to build trust to improve your success with this project. The ICTS also has a participant recruitment and retention core which provides consultations, as well as access to local and national research registries for your recruitment needs.

EXAMPLE 2:
A mechanism we host through our CEU for robust and meaningful community engagement in research includes our Community Engagement (CE) Studios Program. CE Studios uses a one-time consultative model of engagement that uniquely addresses researcher needs based on the community of impact for any given researcher's investigative domain. For example, with your study, we can assemble a team of community experts that have lived experience and service experience with diabetes, smoking, barriers and facilitators of smoking cessation, as well as cultural aspects that impact managing diabetes and tobacco use behaviors. One team of community experts might advise your research team on the most important topics related to diabetes and smoking for certain racial, social, economic, or gendered communities. Another might provide input on the best strategies for recruitment into intervention-based studies, while yet another team of community experts could provide guidance on the most effective

dissemination activities and accessing different communities for dissemination, such as clinicians, public health practitioners, advocates, and policy makers.

Community Engagement Studios (CES) are one-time consultative meetings for researchers interested in getting feedback and guidance about their research from patients, providers, policy makers, or other individuals that are part of a given community. Community stakeholders serve as experts on panels to provide reactions to various aspects of a proposed or ongoing research project, which may include the study design, intervention, communication materials, participant recruitment strategies, sharing research results with the community, and/or applying research findings to practice. CES help ensure that research meets the needs of people who live in a particular community or are impacted by a specific health issue.

Community Experts are one of the most important resources available to directly guide a research project that will impact communities. Through CES, Community Experts:
1. Provide research teams with a deeper understanding of patients' and communities' unique circumstances;
2. Increase researchers' understanding of, and sensitivity to, the environments, resources, and constraints of communities and their constituents;
3. Strengthen academic-community partnerships so that, over time, universities become more and more effective in working with patients, policy makers, and community residents;
4. Help assess the relevance, feasibility, and appropriateness of research activities;
5. Enhance the success of research projects by providing immediate feedback to researchers.

We will conduct at least two CES during the first year of the project: one with resident English speakers and one with resident Spanish speakers to address topics related to the Human Subjects aspects of the study: feasibility, acceptability, and recommendations for successful study implementation. The ICTS has experience in organizing and conducting CES and will plan these meetings in consultation with the research team. They will identify and recruit a cohort of community experts related to the details of Aim 1; employ an appropriate and neutral facilitator to run the meetings; handle all aspects of conducting the meetings (both in English and Spanish); organize the meeting space, food, and compensation; and attend to all follow up activities, including the provision of a comprehensive report provided to the researchers, as well as consulting and brokering subsequent activities.