



NED 2025

Networking to Enhance Development

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STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGED RESEARCH

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Session Overview and Goals

- What is Community Engaged Research (CEnR)?
- Benefits and Potential Challenges
- Actionable Strategies to Apply to Your Own Work

Definition of CEnR

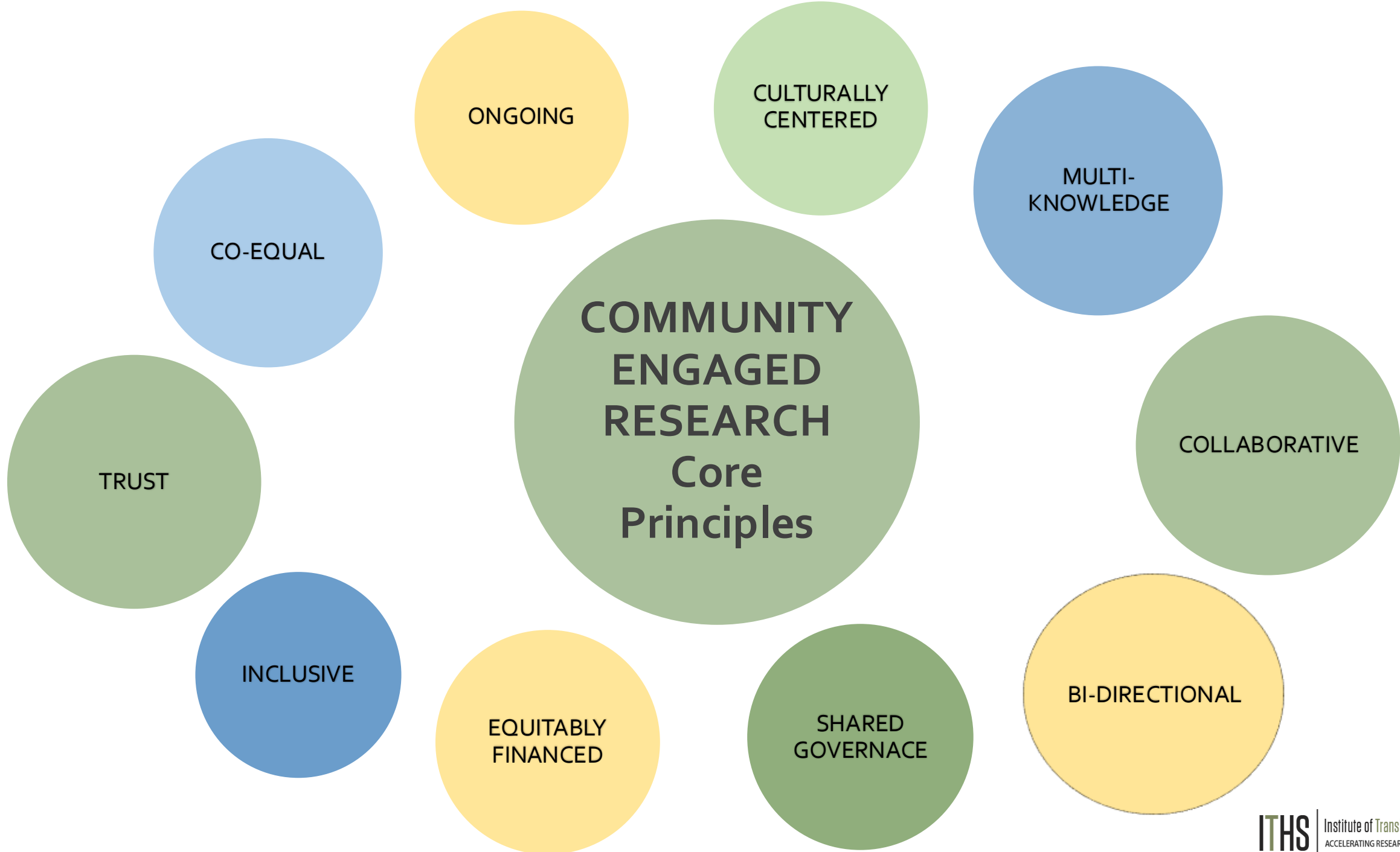
“A **Collaborative approach** that **equitably** involves all partners in the process and recognizes the strength each person brings. Begins with a **topic of importance to the community** with the aim of combining knowledge and action for social change to improve community health and eliminate health disparities”



Minkler, M. and Wallerstein, N., (2003). Kellogg Foundation

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ONGOING

CULTURALLY
CENTERED

MULTI-
KNOWLEDGE

COLLABORATIVE

BI-DIRECTIONAL

SHARED
GOVERNANCE

EQUITABLY
FINANCED

INCLUSIVE

TRUST

CO-EQUAL

COMMUNITY
ENGAGED
RESEARCH
Core
Principles

Community Engaged Research (CEnR)

"The process of working collaboratively with groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interests, or similar situations with respect to issues affecting their well-being"

-CDC

"Shifts power through bidirectional learning, shared resources, collective decision making and outcomes beneficial to the community"

-Wallerstein and Duran (2010)

What Does Community Mean?

- ✚ Populations defined by geography, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or health conditions
- ✚ Groups with a common interest or cause
 - Healthcare or service agencies/organizations
 - Healthcare or public health providers
 - Community-based groups with public health concerns
- ✚ State, local, tribal leaders and policy-makers

What is Engagement?

The collaborative involvement of community stakeholders as equal partners throughout the research process—including identifying priorities, designing and conducting the study, interpreting results, and disseminating findings.



Why Community Engagement Matters

Some Benefits:

- Empowers Voices Often Excluded from Research
- Enhances Relevance and Uptake of Findings
- Increases Feasibility and Acceptability
- Promotes Shared Ownership and Power
- Supports Ethical Practice
- Improves Recruitment and Retention
- Facilitates Translation to Practice and Policy
- Builds Capacity and Sustainability



Why Community Engagement Matters

Potential Challenges:

- Time and Resource Intensive
- Power Dynamics and Shared Decision-Making
- Aligning Goals and Expectations
- Funding and/or Institutional Requirements
- Maintaining Engagement Over Time
- Ethical Considerations



Discussion

In your own work, can you think of ways that using a Community-Engaged Research (CEnR) approach—such as incorporating an Engagement Advisory Board or partnering with individuals who have lived or professional experience—could have strengthened the research process?

Benefits and Challenges

Benefits
Empowers voices that may be excluded
Promotes shared ownership and power
Supports ethical practice
Enhances relevance and rigor
Improves recruitment and retention
Increases feasibility and acceptability
Builds capacity and sustainability
Facilitates translation to practice and policy
Others?

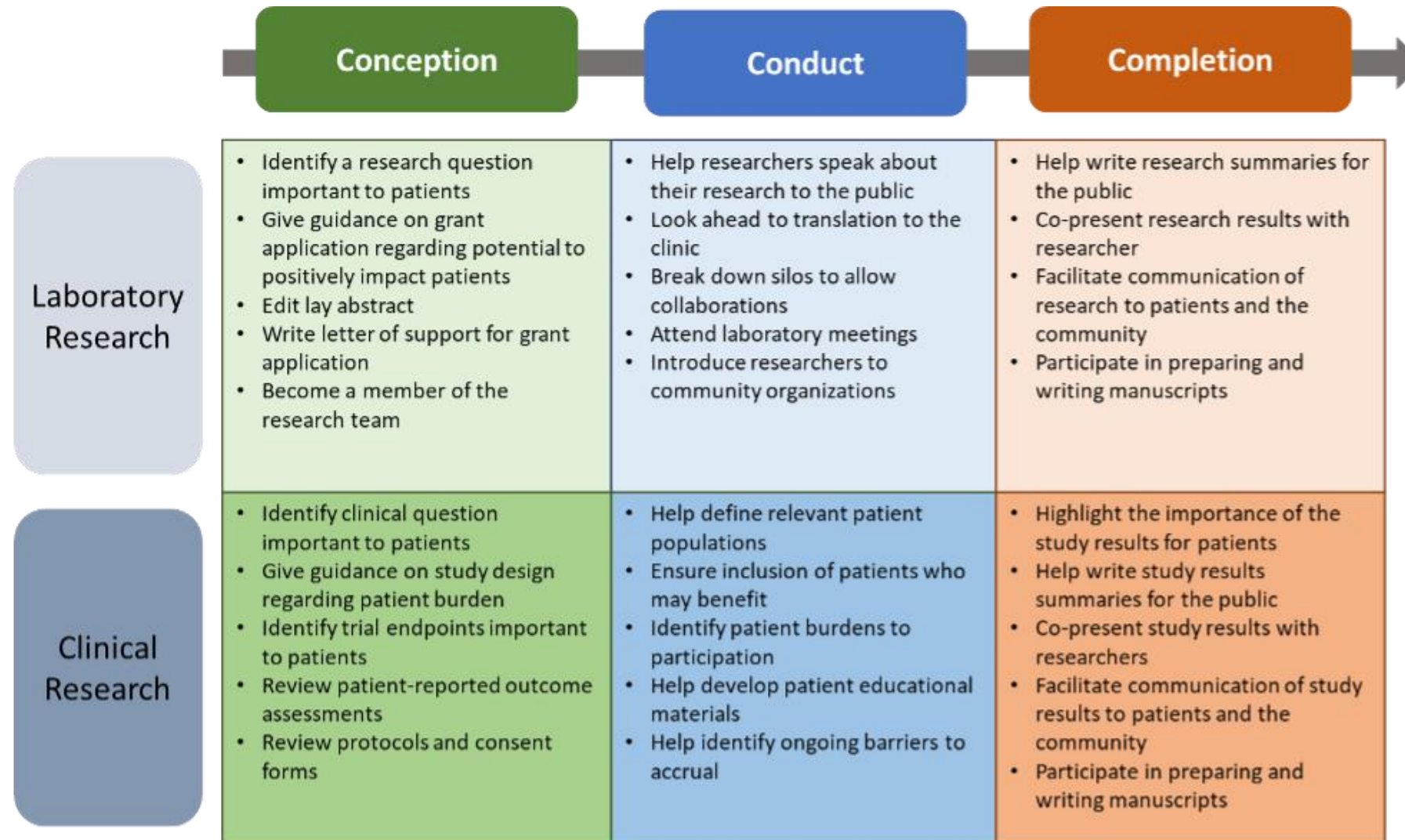
Challenges
Time and resource intensive
Power dynamics and shared decision-making
Aligning goals and expectations
Funding limitations
Maintaining engagement over time
Others?

Continuum of Community-Engaged Research

<i>Community Perspective/Experience</i>						
We do not know about this project	We may or may not be aware of this project but our information informed it	Researchers met with us to present the project and asked for our input	Researchers provided opportunities for us to participate (e.g., recruitment, community advisory board)	We told researchers what questions we need answers for	We participated in all aspects, equitably	We fully own the research
No Community Involvement	Community Informed	Community Consultation	Community Participation	Community Initiated	Community Based Participatory Research	Community Driven/Lead
We had no contact with the community	We sat in on a meeting and learned a great deal	We met with several community organizations, they shared their concerns and gave us suggestions	We have a defined role(s) for community to participate in the research	We created the research in response to community identified issue(s)/question(s)	We developed the project together with community partners	The community is in charge and we support their efforts when asked
<i>Researcher Perspective/Experience</i>						

Figure 3. The Continuum of Community Engagement in Research: Perspective and Experience

How can engagement partner voices be incorporated throughout the duration of a project?



**CDMRP website
Original Source:**

Spears, 2021.
Future Oncol.
PMID: 3421335

Trust Building Strategies

- Build Relationships Early
- Create an Inclusive and Safe Space
- [Clarify Roles and Expectations](#)
- Support Diverse Communication Styles
- Respect Time and Capacity
- Address Conflict Through Shared Values
- Prioritize Diversity and Representation
- Balance Task Focus with Team Building
- Reinforce the Value of Lived Experience

Trust Building Strategies

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BRITE EEF Videos and Tip Sheets



BRITE Engagement Videos

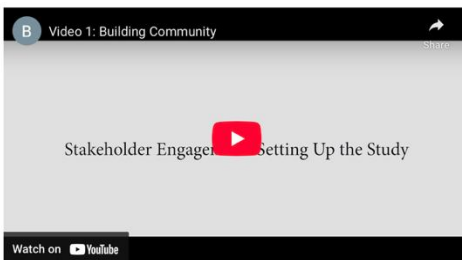
Investigator, staff, and community stakeholder perspectives: Meaningfully engaging community partners in research

The BRITE study was a 5-year project that focused on the process of transitioning for people who had a traumatic brain injury (TBI) from inpatient rehabilitation care to discharge to the community. The study had stakeholder or research partner groups who acted as investigators throughout the duration of the project and through their engagement contributed to the planning, design and dissemination of BRITE. These groups of individuals share a connection to traumatic brain injury – people who have had a TBI, people who cared for someone who had a TBI, and professionals who have a connection to TBI. Here, we dive into the perspectives of the BRITE investigators, study staff, and stakeholders to understand what kept them engaged throughout the study.

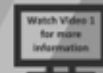
 Read all Tip Sheets in one PDF

Video and Tip Sheet 1: Building Community

Check out our tips and strategies for creating a study that prioritizes engagement from the beginning. Learn what tools resonated with community research partners and facilitated building a strong community!



PERSPECTIVES ON ENGAGEMENT: BUILDING COMMUNITY



Implement strategies at the beginning of a project that focus on building a strong community

1 BUILD INITIAL TEAM RELATIONSHIPS

Establish in-person meetings with the whole team when possible
Team members appreciate opportunities to meet in person at least annually.

Do personal check-ins at every meeting
When team members feel connected to the project leaders/staff, their engagement increases.

Try This

- > Sign onto video platform a few minutes before time to say hi to early participants.
- > Ask how everyone is doing towards the beginning of the meeting.

Unite the team on a common goal
Establish awareness of the specific objectives your team will be working on to increase passion for the project.

Create an environment where everyone has an equal voice
Make sure everyone feels heard and understood.

2 CULTIVATE COMMITMENT

Communicate clear responsibilities along with project expectations
Make sure all team members know what their role is on the team.

Set up a consistent structure for each meeting
Keep your meeting in a reliable format so it is easy to orient your team to new information.

Try This

- > Start each meeting with a quick check-in.
- > Recap the previous meeting, the actions taken between the meetings, and the purpose of the current meeting.
- > After finishing agenda, spend time catching up with each other's lives.

Simplify participation:

- Send 1-2 email reminders with video platform hyperlinked
- Include clear agenda and meeting documents
- Record all meetings
- Create a centralized website to house all materials and recordings



QUESTIONS?

What resonated with you?

Thank you for engaging!



References

Organizing Committee for Assessing Meaningful Community Engagement in Health & Health Care Programs & Policies. 2022. Assessing Meaningful Community Engagement: A Conceptual Model to Advance Health Equity through Transformed Systems for Health. *NAM Perspectives*. Commentary, National Academy of Medicine, Washington, DC. <https://doi.org/10.31478/202202c>.

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Engagement Resources | PCORI [Internet]. 2025 [cited 2025 March 11]. Engagement Resources.

Engagement Tip Sheets and Videos, Engagement Evaluation Funding, PCORI
<https://tbi.washington.edu/brite-engagement-videos/>

Strategies and Source Pages from the EEF Documents

Strategy	EEF Tips PDF Page(s)	Notes / Section Titles
Build Relationships Early	Pages 1, 5	"BUILD INITIAL TEAM RELATIONSHIPS", "MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION", "VIRTUAL PROJECTS"
Create an Inclusive and Safe Space	Pages 6–7	"MANAGING CONCERNS" – Create an Inclusive Environment, Show Respect & Understanding
Clarify Roles and Expectations	Page 2	"CULTIVATE COMMITMENT" – Communicate Clear Responsibilities
Structure Meetings for Accessibility	Pages 2, 5	"Simplify Participation", "Create Structure and Goals"
Use Technology Thoughtfully	Page 4	"PROVIDE TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT"
Support Diverse Communication Styles	Page 3	"SIMPLIFYING PARTICIPATION" – Encourage Participation, Contact Preferences
Encourage Active Participation	Pages 3, 4	"Breakout Rooms", "Focus on Engagement", "Virtual Participation Support"
Respect Time and Capacity	Page 7	"Respect Time & Presence", "End Meetings on Time"
Address Conflict Through Shared Values	Pages 8–9	"WORKING THROUGH DIFFERENCES", "Revisit the Project's Purpose", "Foster Community"
Prioritize Diversity and Representation	Pages 10–11	"DIVERSITY & INCLUSION", "Create a Wide Network", "Include Community Goals"
Balance Task Focus with Team Building	Pages 1, 3, 7	"BUILD INITIAL TEAM RELATIONSHIPS", "Team Check-ins", "Balance Agenda & Team Building"
Reinforce the Value of Lived Experience	Page 7, 11	"ACKNOWLEDGE EXPERTISE", "Reinforce Lived Experience", "Shared Decision-Making"