

Design a Community-Academic Partnered MOU Form

UCLA CTSI Community Engagement & Research Program
Partnered Research "How To" Series

What is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

- A written agreement (not a contract) between two or more parties meant to support the collaborative.
- Offers a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the collaborative partners' roles and expectations to assure fairness and mutually satisfactory outcomes.
- Not legally binding unless **explicitly stated** in the MOU
- If not stated as contractually binding, carries a degree of seriousness and signals mutual respect that is tantamount to a gentlemen's agreement.
- When compensation is involved, a MOU usually leads to a subcontract (a legally binding document).

Why is it important to have an MOU?

- To ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities as a foundation toward building capacity, often as a first step in the development of more formal agreements that outline equal representation and mutual benefit for community-academic partnerships.
- Each partner needs to take time to know what their needs and mission-driven goals are to assure the contents of the MOU will honor fidelity to such mission and goals. This is particularly important for service focused community agencies.
- The MOU outlines specific roles and responsibilities between two or more parties so that all parties have a clear understanding of their purpose in the partnership. It helps to fill in the gaps between a verbal agreement or a handshake and the formal contract.

What are elements of an MOU Document?

- Identification of Partners
- Each Partner's Responsibilities
- Purpose of Work
- Start and End Date
- Decision-Making Process
- Compensation/Terms
- Provisions for Conflict Resolution (see below)
- Authorized Signatures for All Partners
- Date Signed by Each Partner Representative

Include options below, as may apply to your collaborative:

- History of Relationships between partners
- Service area/populations to be served
- Identify representatives for the planning and development teams
- Describe how teams will work together
- How will partners work to achieve project goals and to sustain the project once grant funds are no longer available
- Amend MOU when new partners are added and when partners discontinue their affiliation

Conflict Resolution

- How will disputes be handled?
- What happens to the continuity of work during resolution process?
- Is there a 3rd party mediation entity in place? Can one be established?
- Are there Guiding Principles of Engagement for this partnership?



UCLA CTSI Community Engagement and Research Program (CERP)

Develops, implements, and refines models of community engagement and community capacity building, and facilitates research collaborations between academics and community partners.

Services:

Dissemination of research results ▪ Advice on study design and implementation

Additional Resources on community engaged research:
<http://ctsi.ucla.edu/patients-community>

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