Community Engagement Educational Modules
CSU TECH Hub Facilitator Guide

Purpose: The purpose of these educational modules are to prepare faculty and community members alike to interact in a positive, sustained and productive manner in true partnership to meet the community's needs. The content may be presented in-person, online, or for faculty may be recorded for online asynchronous viewing. Adaptations to the content may be necessary to accommodate large, small or online learning groups.

Module 1: Cultural Awareness and Responsivity for Faculty
Duration: 2 hours

Learning Objectives:
(Knowledge) By the end of this module, faculty participants will be able to:

1. Describe current demographic and socioeconomic data for Hough and Central neighborhoods, including:
  - Population demographics
  - Economic indicators
  - Educational attainment
  - Health disparities
  - Housing stability

2. Explain historical factors that have shaped community-university relationships in Cleveland, particularly regarding:
  - Urban development patterns
  - Educational access
  - Economic opportunities
  - Health outcomes
  - Technology adoption

3. Define key concepts in community-based research:
  - Cultural humility
  - Asset-based community development
  - Participatory research methods
  - Community knowledge systems
  - Equitable partnership models

(Skills) By the end of this module, faculty participants will be able to:

1. Consider research projects that incorporate:
  - Community expertise and leadership
  - Equitable resource allocation

- Accessible communication methods
- Fair compensation practices
- Sustainable partnership structures

2. Described effective strategies to effectives implement community engagement strategies:
   - How to facilitate inclusive meetings
   - How to navigate power dynamics
   - How to build trusting relationships
   - How to address conflicts constructively
   - Strategies to maintain long-term partnerships

3. Develop culturally responsive research protocols:
   - Create accessible consent processes
   - Design inclusive data collection methods
   - Establish equitable data sharing agreements
   - Plan appropriate dissemination strategies
   - Structure fair benefit-sharing mechanisms

(Attitudes) By the end of this module, faculty participants will be able to:

1. Recognize and value:
   - Community expertise and knowledge
   - Local leadership capacity
   - Cultural wisdom and practices
   - Neighborhood assets
   - Community resilience

2. Demonstrate commitment to:
   - Equitable partnerships
   - Power-sharing
   - Transparent communication
   - Resource sharing
   - Long-term engagement

Introduction (10 minutes)

Meaningful community engagement requires deep understanding, respect, and commitment to equitable partnerships. This module will help faculty develop the knowledge and skills needed to build authentic relationships with Cleveland's communities, particularly focusing on the Hough and Central neighborhoods where the Internet of Things Community Advisory Board (ICAB) has grown from.

Provide a brief history of ICAB to the group:

- Previously no mechanism for sustained, engagement between CSU faculty and residents and organizations in Hough and surrounding under-resourced neighborhoods
- Discuss original "Let's Talk Tech" project in Hough, disbanded efforts in 2020 and COVID-19
- PIT-UN funded the initial recruitment of ICAB
- Second round of funding supported expansion of ICAB to include additional neighborhoods and organizations

Grounding Exercise
Ask participants to reflect on their own experiences with community engagement, both positive and challenging. This sets the tone for honest dialogue and personal growth throughout the session.

Part 1: Understanding Community Context (30 minutes)

Neighborhood Deep Dive: Hough and Central Case Studies

Provide participants with neighborhood fact sheets for relevant neighborhoods, provided from:
https://www.communitysolutions.com/fact-sheet/cleveland-neighborhoods

Start with a comprehensive examination of current community data. In Hough, we see a population of 9,878 residents, with 88.9% identifying as Black/African American. The neighborhood faces significant economic challenges, with 70.1% of residents living in or near poverty. Similarly, Central's 12,887 residents experience even higher poverty rates, with 85% living in or near poverty. These statistics aren't just numbers – they represent real people and families whose daily experiences and decisions are shaped by these circumstances. Present the health disparities evident in both neighborhoods. Life expectancy in Hough (74.1 years) and Central (75.2 years) falls below the Ohio average (77.0 years).

Discussion (small or large group):
- What do these numbers mean for community engagement?
- How does economic insecurity impact residents' ability to participate in research projects?
- What considerations should be made regarding meeting times, locations, and compensation?
- How might these factors influence community priorities and concerns?
- How do health disparities might influence community trust in institutions and what that means for building research partnerships?

Historical Context and Current Reality

Examine the historical events that have shaped these communities' relationships with institutions. Discuss:
- Urban renewal projects
- Historical disinvestment
- Past research practices (CSU, CWRU)
  - Community feelings of exploitation
  - Federal grants and the inclusion of community input
- Reference the "Let's Talk Tech Hough" project from the CSU TECH Hub proposal as a positive example of community-centered engagement.

Part 2: Cultural Competency Framework (30 minutes)

Begin this section by introducing the concept of cultural humility as distinct from cultural competency. Cultural humility emphasizes lifelong learning and self-reflection, rather than achieving a state of "competence."

Interactive Exercise: Power and Privilege Mapping

Guide participants through a reflective exercise mapping their own positions of power and privilege in relation to the communities they seek to serve. This isn't about shame or guilt, but about understanding one's own perspective and potential blind spots.

Select a Group Activity from one of the following based on session format and attendees:
https://community.astc.org/ccli/resources-for-action/group-activities
https://ywcaspokane.org/get-involved/learn-with-us/cultural-competency-exercises/

Questions for reflection:
- What assumptions might you bring to community partnerships?
- How might your institutional role influence community perceptions?
- What aspects of community life might be outside your direct experience?

Communication and Trust Building

Drawing from the CSU TECH Hub's successful community engagement strategies, discuss effective approaches to communication:

- Use of accessible language and avoidance of academic jargon
- Recognition of community expertise and knowledge
- Active listening and responsive dialogue
- Appropriate meeting facilitation techniques

Part 3: Community-Based Participatory Research (30 minutes)

This section builds on the CSU TECH Hub's demonstrated success with community-led research, using the Hough neighborhood project and the TechBox Program as case studies.

Case Study Analysis: "Let's Talk Tech Hough"

Examine how this project exemplified best practices in community engagement:
- Community members as research leaders
- Kitchen table talks methodology
- Incorporation of resident perspectives
- Translation of findings into action

Present the six opportunity areas identified through this project and discuss how they emerged from community voices rather than predetermined research agendas.

Case Study Analysis: The TechBox Program
Examine how this project exemplified best practices in community engagement:
-Community members recruiting other community members to ICAB
-Hosting meetings in community spaces
-Soliciting community feedback on TechBox sessions from previous year for future planning
-ICAB members invited to be part of and lead the TechBox sessions
-Additional training for select ICAB members (drones in schools, computer coding) provided and utilized to lead TechBox sessions

Practical Application Exercise

Have participants work in small groups to:
1. Design a community engagement strategy for a hypothetical research project
2. Identify potential challenges and solutions
3. Create a timeline that respects both academic and community needs
4. Develop a resource allocation plan that ensures equitable participation

Part 4: Implementation Strategies (20 minutes)

The facilitator will focus on practical tools and approaches for implementing culturally responsive research partnerships.

Partnership Development Guide

Overview
Drawing from both neighborhood data and CSU TECH Hub experience, outline key steps:
1. Initial community outreach and relationship building
2. Collaborative project planning
3. Resource sharing and capacity building
4. Ongoing communication and feedback loops

5. Impact evaluation and sustainability planning

Comprehensive Guide

1. Initial Community Outreach and Relationship Building
Key Principles to consider:
- Begin with existing community connections
- Respect established community leadership
- Take time to understand neighborhood context
- Focus on relationship before research
-Show up and be recognized as part of the neighborhood community

Example from Hough
The "Let's Talk Tech Hough" project exemplifies effective initial outreach:
- Recruited 10 community ambassadors
- Organized kitchen table talks with 5-15 residents
- Reached over 300 residents in 6 months
- Built trust through consistent engagement

Practical Steps
1. Map community assets and leaders
2. Attend community events and meetings
   - Examples: Midtown, Vital Neighborhoods, Arts and Cultural Events, League Park
3. Listen to neighborhood priorities
   - Find themes – what are the recurring things that you hear across different groups and organizations?
4. Share university resources and capabilities
5. Document community insights and feedback

2. Collaborative Project Planning
Key Elements to consider:
- Joint priority setting
- Shared decision-making processes
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Realistic timelines
- Fair resource allocation

Example from Central Neighborhood
Reference Central neighborhood statistics:
- 85% of residents in/near poverty
- 50.4% employment rate
- Limited digital access

These factors inform meeting scheduling, resource needs, and participation barriers.

Planning Considerations
- Meeting times and locations
- Childcare needs
- Transportation access
- Digital accessibility
- Language requirements
- Meals and gift cards *Paying for their time*

3. Resource Sharing and Capacity Building
Resource Categories
- Financial compensation
- Technical training
- Meeting spaces
- Equipment access
- Educational opportunities

Capacity Building Focus Areas
- Research skills
- Technical literacy
- Project management
- Leadership development
- Network building

4. Communication and Feedback
Communication Channels
- Regular in-person meetings
- Digital platforms
- Print materials
- Community presentations
- Progress reports

Feedback Mechanisms
- Anonymous suggestion boxes
- Regular check-ins
- Community forums
- Written evaluations
- Informal conversations

5. Impact Evaluation and Sustainability
Evaluation Methods
- Quantitative metrics
- Qualitative feedback

- Community assessments
- Partner reflections
- Outcome tracking

Sustainability Elements
- Long-term funding plans
- Leadership succession
- Knowledge transfer
- Resource maintenance
- Partnership evolution

Action Planning

Guide participants in developing individual action plans for their research projects that incorporate module learnings.