PETER WALL INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES
University of British Columbia

Catalyst Collaboration Fund
Climate and Nature Emergency
2022-2023

Catalyst Collaboration Fund Application Guide:
Engagement with the Four Guiding Principles

The Catalyst Collaboration Fund seeks to support collaborative research about the climate and nature emergency that is relevant, rigorous, and responsible. To be eligible for funding, applicants must demonstrate how they will engage with at least 3 of the 4 guiding principles of the Wall Catalyst Program, which are outlined below. The guiding principles were selected based on literature related to ethical collaborations and harm reduction in research. This literature raises reflexive and sometimes difficult questions that researchers from all disciplines are increasingly expected to consider in their research collaborations.

There is no "one size fits all approach" to these principles, and how you engage them should be specific and suited to the context of your project and discipline. We also understand that not all projects may directly address all of these principles, all of the time, in their work. However, applicants should demonstrate thoughtful consideration of the principles, how these issues might manifest in their discipline, area or field of study, and how these principles will inform the design, implementation, and knowledge mobilization aspects of their project.

For instance, if one of the principles is not commonly engaged in your field, you might reflect on why that is, what is the impact of that lack of engagement, and how your project might implement initial steps toward engagement. A possible response may be: "Discussions about (principle X) are not substantially or substantively happening in my discipline (because …), but in my project we are starting to address (issue X) in the following way..."

Four Guiding Principles of the Wall Catalyst Program

Ethical Collaborations: *Transdisciplinary, intergenerational, and community relationship building grounded on trust, respect, reciprocity, consent, and accountability.*

While these terms are contested, multidisciplinary research can be understood as research centered around a shared issue of concern that brings together the contributions of multiple academic disciplines through an additive approach. Interdisciplinary research is a more integrative approach that might entail, for instance,

developing new methodologies or frameworks that synthesize the contributions of multiple disciplines. Finally, transdisciplinary research, which is what we seek to fund with this program, can be understood as research that brings together collaborators from within but also beyond the academic context to ensure the expertise of community knowledge keepers and various sectors of society are central to any research that seeks to respond to a shared problem.

Community relationships require considerable time, patience, and commitment to build. Researchers in the western academy are not necessarily trained to engage in this work in accountable ways. Historically and still today, research relations with marginalized communities, particularly Indigenous communities, have tended to be extractive and exploitative, with non-Indigenous researchers treating Indigenous knowledge as "raw data" to be mined, and treating Indigenous peoples as "informants" rather than knowledge producers and holders. Non-Indigenous researchers have also tended to unilaterally decide what is to be researched, how it is to be researched, the audience for dissemination, and ownership of data. It is difficult for research collaborations to be ethical if those with more systemic power set the terms of the collaboration and claim ownership of the project and its outcomes. Building relationships that are instead grounded in trust, respect, reciprocity, accountability, and consent can take years, which often conflicts with mainstream academic research deadlines and output expectations. It is also important to keep in mind that these terms might mean different things in academic contexts than in community contexts.

Intergenerational relationship building may not directly impact your project, but you might consider how the proposed research will affect, and is accountable to, current and future generations (of both human and other-than-human-beings).

Questions you might consider as you answer this question:
- What collaborations does my research project require? Are these collaborators participating in all or just some phases of the research process (research design, data collection, data analysis, knowledge mobilization)?
- How did I determine the appropriate collaborators? Do I already have the necessary relationships for these collaborations, or do I need to build them?
- How am I addressing uneven power relations in my project, particularly in relation to systemically marginalized collaborators?
- Who decides (where "forward" is, what the project should focus on, how it will be conducted, to what end)? In whose name? For whose benefit? At whose expense?
- How does my project try to interrupt common patterns of extractivist research and try to enact reciprocity amongst all collaborators?
- How does my project benefit or serve systemically marginalized communities? Is there any risk the project will further marginalize them? What do community partners want from the project?

- How does my project try to interrupt common patterns through which academic researchers are considered the only (or primary) experts and knowledge producers?
- How am I seeking to ensure collaborators with less systemic power are not only able to voice their perspectives (including critical concerns they might have about the project), but also have those perspectives heard by those on the project with more power?
- How will data from the project be managed and owned, especially data produced by/with/about Indigenous and other marginalized communities?
- How will my project impact future generations (of humans and other-than-humans)?
- How might future generations, especially of marginalized/Indigenous researchers, assess the ethical implications of my project?

Intellectual Depth: *(self)Critical and relational rigour in moving beyond common patterns of simplistic solutions, paternalistic forms of engagements and ethnocentric ideals of sustainability, justice, and change.*

Intellectual depth requires more than one form of rigour. In business as usual, intellectual depth usually refers to meeting the established standards of a particular discipline and its norms. For this program, we invite people to deepen their engagement with critical perspectives and their commitment to relational rigour. Critical and relational rigour require attending to politics of knowledge that shape any research project, the complexity of wicked challenges like the climate and nature emergency, and researchers' accountabilities to multiple human and other-than-human communities - including how our research affects those different communities and which communities will benefit the most.

In relation to one's discipline, this entails naming and seeking to challenge implicit hierarchies of knowledges both within and outside of academia. For instance, the assumption that certain knowledges are universally relevant, and that experts in those knowledges should determine and impose solutions for others. This also means stepping back from your discipline enough to denaturalize its assumptions and recognize that different disciplines and knowledge systems will have different ideas of what is rigorous, relevant, and responsible. This entails a level of humility about what we know, what we don't know, and what is unknowable, recognizing that all disciplines and knowledge systems have gifts and limitations, and might include asking how your discipline is contributing to the problems you seek to address. Critical and relational rigour also requires self-reflexivity, that is, stepping back from your own social-cultural-economic position to examine how we as individual researchers are also embedded within and tend to reproduce ethnocentrism and unequal epistemic and material power in our work.

Going beyond simplistic solutions is not just about interrupting uneven power relations but also recognizing the complex and multi-layered nature of problems associated with the climate and nature emergency. These are often "wicked problems", meaning they are hyper-complex; can only be addressed through imperfect solutions that may create new problems; and affect multiple communities in different ways. Identifying the multiple layers of any problem (which are constantly moving, rather than static), as well as the socio-historical systems that have led to these problems, makes evident the need for multiple communities and multiple knowledge systems to be involved in any effort to address these problems in critically and relationally rigorous ways.

Questions you might consider as you answer this question:
- How am I taking into account the multiple moving layers and complexities that go into creating the problem that the project seeks to address? How am I discerning which of these layers to focus on (since it is impossible to focus on all of them at once)?
- Is my project presuming there is a simple solution to the problem we seek to address?
- How might my project contribute to an 'ecology of knowledges' about the issue we seek to address, rather than assuming we will come up with a definitive 'answer'?
- Does my project focus more on addressing the root causes of the CNE, or more on mitigating the impacts caused by those root causes? Both are important, but how can I tell the difference, and how can I ensure that it is also clear for others?
- Why is this project important and for whom is it important?
- What potential impacts do I foresee resulting from this project? Am I only considering the positive impacts, and ignoring the potential negative ones?
- What is my theory of change? How do I believe that my research project will bring about change? Which (human and other-than-human) communities will benefit most from this change? Which communities might be negatively impacted or bear the costs of my research?
- Why me (i.e., why am I the right person to undertake this research)? How am I benefitting from this research, and what responsibilities do I have as a result?
- How has my discipline contributed to the problem we seek to address? How have I as an individual contributed to the problem we seek to address?
- How might other disciplines and knowledge systems view the research problem very differently, and how is my project taking these differences into account (or not)?

Reparative Redistribution: *Allocation of resources prioritising populations most affected by the Climate and Nature Emergency and precarity, and research areas of greatest urgency and impact guided by principles of reparation.*

The principle of reparative redistribution is premised on recognition that existing social and institutional structures are not "naturally occurring" but rather are a product of centuries of extraction, exploitation, expropriation, and dispossession, which have resulted in unequal relationships and the unequal distribution of resources and power across different communities. In the context of the climate and nature emergency

specifically, this is a recognition that this emergency is not new, but rather has disproportionately affected Indigenous, Black and other marginalized communities since the onset of European colonization and the transatlantic slave trade. Research oriented by reparative redistribution seeks to contribute to redress of the social and ecological impacts of colonization and slavery, including specific reparations related to unequal levels of carbon consumption and uneven impacts of environmental degradation. These communities contributed the least to the climate and nature emergency (e.g. in terms of their levels of greenhouse gas emissions), and are the most negatively affected by it, for instance by being more severely impacted by: extreme weather events (e.g. heatwaves, floods, hurricanes; droughts); land, air, and water pollution; biodiversity loss; climate-related displacement; etc. Calls to prioritize funding for research that benefits and is conducted by and/or alongside these communities are also informed by the fact that these communities tend to have the fewest economic resources to fund climate mitigation, adaptation, and emergency responses, and the least institutional and systemic power to shape responses to these emergencies.

Even if your research is not conducted with or directly benefiting historically and systemically marginalized communities, this principle asks you to consider how your research can be more accountable to these communities. For instance, this might look like asking how your research about/with dominant communities invites those communities to consider their relational responsibilities to marginalized communities. Or, it might mean conducting research that seeks to interrupt and support restitution and repair for some of the harms historically enacted by your discipline or institution (e.g. the university).

Questions you might consider as you answer this question:
- In what ways does my project take into account the disproportionate impact of the CNE on historically and systemically marginalized communities?
- Are there opportunities within the research design, implementation and/or knowledge mobilization to direct project resources to marginalized communities?
- If research is conducted with marginalized communities, how is the funding distributed across different collaborators? Does this distribution take into account uneven access to resources? Who has decision-making power over the project finances?
- How can my project be more accountable to marginalized communities, even if it is not conducted in direct collaboration with these communities?
- How might these communities make use of my research findings to make a case for restitution and reparation for past harms?
- How can my project challenge the ways my discipline and/or institution has historically contributed to the climate and nature emergency?

Engagement with the Indigenous Strategic Plan: *Deepening understanding of settler responsibilities and supporting the aspirations of Indigenous scholars and communities.*

While this principle is specific to the UBC context, it reflects a wider social shift in which non-Indigenous people are increasingly expected to confront their individual and systemic complicity in colonialism, and to uphold their responsibilities to Indigenous Peoples, knowledges, and lands where our research takes place and where it has significant impacts, both locally and globally. In the context of research, this shift seeks to ensure that research practices, policies, and governance redress, reduce, or interrupt further harm to Indigenous communities. Doing so requires being conscious of the ways that settler researchers have historically reproduced harm by conducting research on Indigenous communities without their full consent and in non-reciprocal ways. In some cases, these researchers have "good intentions" but their actions nonetheless reproduce harmful patterns, including paternalism, pathologization, extraction, appropriation, and romanticization.

Engaging with the ISP is not only about changing the (conscious and unconscious) habits, practices, policies, funding and governance structures that reproduce settler colonialism, but also, more crucially, it is about supporting Indigenous resurgence and Indigenous/Indigenous-led research about the CNE. For settler researchers, this may look like collaborating with individual Indigenous scholars in ways that deeply and equally (rather than tokenistically) value their knowledge and leadership, and/or supporting the aspirations of Indigenous communities through research itself - for instance securing funding for a community to lead and govern their own research about climate adaptation.

This work should challenge the colonial tendency to "pan-Indigenize" by recognizing that there are many different Indigenous communities that have different social, cultural, political, and knowledge systems. Furthermore, like all communities, Indigenous communities are as internally complex and heterogeneous as any other community. There is no one Indigenous "voice" or perspective. However, this fact should not be weaponized as a means to avoid the imperative to secure the informed consent of Indigenous communities that will be collaborating in or otherwise participating in research.

This work should also be informed by the fact that for settler researchers, unlearning colonial habits and logics can be a difficult, uncomfortable, and even painful task that has not only intellectual but also material, affective, and relational implications. For instance, because we are socialized within a colonial system, it is counterintuitive for settlers to decentre themselves, or to share control of their projects with Indigenous collaborators. Given this difficulty, through the process of unlearning, settlers often create more labour for Indigenous peoples, even as this labour is often invisible to settlers. Settler researchers should therefore be conscious of the costs of their own unlearning for Indigenous colleagues and collaborators, and commit to the work of building their

affective stamina and relational capacity so that they do not create more work for Indigenous people.

Questions you might consider as you answer this question:

- How are Indigenous communities impacted by the problem or question my research seeks to address? How might Indigenous communities be impacted by my research?
- Are there ways that my research project can support/fund/amplify the work that Indigenous academics and/or Indigenous communities are already doing?
- (For settler researchers) In what ways might my project be implicitly recentering my own priorities and perspectives, and/or the priorities and perspectives of settler communities? How can I try to interrupt this tendency?
- (For settler researchers) In what ways might my project be creating more labour for Indigenous academic and/or community collaborators? How can I minimize this labour? How can I ensure the project is mutually beneficial?
- Has or will my research team complete the ISP Self-Assessment? Did they approach it as a space for in-depth engagement with the challenges and complexities of this work, or did they treat it more like a "check-list"?
- How do the ISP goals relate to my project? How do other relevant documents, such as UNDRIP, the TRC Calls to Action, and the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls, relate to my project?
- What kind of support does my research team still need in order to help ensure we are not reproducing colonial patterns of relationship and knowledge production?
- Does my research respect Indigenous peoples' rights, sovereignty, and jurisdiction, particularly the Indigenous peoples on whose territories I will conduct my work?
- Even if my work has no direct Indigenous participation, do I need to seek Indigenous peoples' consent (e.g. for activities I will undertake on Indigenous lands)? If so, how will I do that (e.g. do I have existing relationships or do I need to build them)?