**Research & Engagement Package December 2021**

**Pre-Amble**

Health Initiative for Men (HIM) values the role of both scientific research and mutually beneficial relationships that increase our communities’ capacity to make informed decisions. Researchers and institutions seeking letters of support or formal partnerships should review this document in full to ensure that our objectives are compatible.

**Collaborating with Health Initiative for Men**

**Step 1:**

* Once a desire to work with Health Initiative for Men has been established, we recommend reading our Research and Engagement Principles and reviewing our Research Application (RA) form (see below)

**Step 1.1 (optional):**

* Review the form below to confirm that our principles are congruent with the research or knowledge transfer proposal. If the proposal includes a sizeable contribution from HIM, the researcher or interested party may meet with the Manager of Health Promotion to further discuss HIM's philosophy and values to determine if their projects are compatible and what the researcher or interested party is requesting.
  + Simon Rayek, Manager of Health Promotion: simon@checkhimout.ca

**Step 2:**

* Submit completed RA form to Manager of Health Promotion: simon@checkhimout.ca

**Step 3:**

* The Manager of Health Promotion will review the RA with the support of other appropriate HIM staff, and external researchers or research experts when needed and as appropriate.

**Step 4:**

* The Manager of Health Promotion and/or Executive Director will decide how to proceed with the research proposal. Options include: Approval, Approval pending revisions, or refusal.

**Research & Engagement Principles**

**1. Rationale**

* 1. As an organization dedicated to strengthening the health and wellness of the communities of **gay, bi, queer men, and gender diverse people** (**GBQ+**) through trusted, tailored, targeted health promotion, Health Initiative for Men recognizes its role in fostering mutually beneficial relationships between researchers and GBQ+.

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* 1. In creating this document, Health Initiative for Men acknowledges its responsibility to address the need for protocols for both academic and corporate institutions seeking to conduct health research and/or knowledge translation to GBQ+.
  2. Researchers are knowledge brokers, people who have the power to construct legitimating arguments for or against ideas, theories or practices. They are collectors of information and producers of meaning, which can be used for, or against GBQ+.
  3. Institutions, both public and private, have the power to affect the health and wellness of GBQ+, by promoting certain beliefs and assumptions, through research findings and knowledge transfer.
  4. Health Initiative for Men offers our collective expertise to ensure that GBQ+ are approached in a way that is likely to be maximally effective in the conduct of your research and the dissemination of the resultant information.
  5. While Research Ethics Boards protect the rights of human research subjects, this protocol outlines a process for providing meaningful and respectful consultation with GBQ+, before engaging in research or knowledge transfer that affects them.

**2. Leading by Example**

At Health Initiative for Men we:

* Use local research from surveys such as Sex Now and Momentum, as well as research done in other jurisdictions to inform our campaigns, our services and our approach
* Engage the community using in-house surveys, focus groups, community consultations and evaluations to further our health promotion reach and ensure our services are aligned with current needs and trends
* Establish research priorities for the organization and work with researchers to ensure best results, including the development of research questions, recruitment of research participants and knowledge transfer
* Work with communities to provide them access to research and up-to-date information about their health through our health promotion and knowledge transfer services. This includes support of open-access publishing and distribution of research findings on our website.
* Engage researchers who are already or who could be working with GBQ+ to increase research activities that will be of benefit to our communities. We attend and participate in research spaces (e.g., the Annual Canadian HIV/AIDS Research Conference, the Community Based Research Centre’s Summit)

**3. Our Principles**

3.1 GBQ+ have the right to knowledge that allows them to make the most informed decisions

3.2 GBQ+ have a right to health and a role in deciding the manner in which healthcare services are delivered to them

3.3 Effective health promotion and service delivery engages the community and maintains relationships with community leaders and stakeholders

3.4 Research (including knowledge transfer) is a necessary component to health promotion that is most effective when conducted in a respectful and culturally appropriate manner

**4. Our Approach**

4.1 Research that involves GBQ+ as a focal interest (subject matter), whether directly or indirectly, should ensure that research protocols uphold the Guiding Principles of Community-Based Research, as outlined in 4.2

4.2 **Guiding Principles of Community-Based Research**

*4.2.1 Community benefit* – Research involving communities is research conducted **by and for** those communities. Its purpose is to build community capacities and provide knowledge with which to improve community conditions.

* + 1. *Capacity building* – In its conduct, research involving communities promotes and develops the inquiry skills of all participants. The aim of research involving communities is to build sustainable capacities within communities for self-informed, self-transpired transformation.
    2. *Collaboration* – A community’s experience is a resource that belongs to the community. As such, research initiatives should invite community participation as early as possible in their formation, to shape cooperative agreements about ethical issues, the treatment of data and the dissemination of findings.
    3. *Equity* – Research involving communities entails a special relationship between observers and observed, by involving participants in analysis of their own collective condition. In order to ensure respect, dignity and empowerment, relations between those conducting research and those participating must be negotiated in a collaborative spirit of equity.
    4. *Inclusion* – Research involving communities is broadly inclusive of community members in all its phases: the review of proposals, construction of protocols, collection of data, interpretation of results, and dissemination of findings.
    5. *Accessibility* – Community participation in the development of knowledge is a form of literacy work that builds capacities for collaborative inquiry. In this way, the language and methods used in the conduct of research involving communities must be broadly accessible to its diverse range of participants, because their research skills form the basis of community transformation.
    6. *Empowerment* – The conduct of research, the data it generates, and the results it produces are tools of the community’s empowerment and must be honored as such in all transactions. Community participants should be encouraged to conduct their own inquires and contribute findings to ongoing efforts to advance new knowledge.

**Research Partnership Application**

**Researchers/Investigators:**

The Mission of HIM is to strengthen GBQ+ health and well-being through trusted, tailored, targeted research-based health promotion services and by engaging the community through volunteer involvement, online access and events. We foster mutually beneficial relationships among GBQ+ and health professionals to ensure the best possible outcomes. We do this because we value the ability of GBQ+ to make informed decisions, we value the role of our community in supporting the foundations for healthy living, and we value scientific research.

We also recognize that HIM has finite resources, and that supporting research may be resource and labour intensive. As such, and only where possible, we ask applicants to consider provision of resources (cash or in-kind) to offset what you are asking HIM to dedicate to your research project. This is not a requirement, but it may affect HIM’s capacity to engage in your research project and to what extent. Examples of and guidelines on such resourcing might include:

* Community Advisory Board participation (e.g., $100 per meeting)
* Staff time (rates vary on position, but roughly $35/hour)
* Space recovery (e.g., $25 square foot per year)
* Hosting a community forum ($1000 for space, catering, and organizing)
* Volunteer and interview participant honorarium ($25/h per volunteer or participant)
* Professional training session (e.g., $500 for preparation and delivery of 2-hour workshop)
* Boosted social media posts/advertising ($25-$500 depending on reach and duration)
* Health promotion campaign ($10,000-$25,000 for design, print and digital materials, website design, etc.)
* Provide in-kind volunteer time if eligible and training is complete (e.g., for programs, clinic reception)

HIM staff review research proposals with the support of external researchers and research experts as needed. The points considered when reviewing applications are detailed below at the end of the application. **Please complete this sheet and attach it to any documentation, including your proposal** (which may be at an early draft stage at this point).

When submitting a proposal please allow adequate time for review. HIM aims to review and decide on research projects within 1-2, but reserve the right to take as long as is needed.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title of Research Project** |  |
| Date of Funding Application Deadline |  |
| Date of Funding Notification |  |
| Project Start Date |  |
| Project End Date |  |
| **Principal Investigator/Researcher(s)** | |
| Name |  |
| Email |  |
| Phone |  |
| Title & Affiliation |  |
| **Co-Investigators Names** |  |

**Please prepare responses to the following sets of questions:**

1. **OVERVIEW: Describe the study (1000 words maximum).** Please detail:
   1. Major research questions
   2. Major objectives of the project and anticipated outcomes
   3. Methodology and methods
   4. Target populations and rationale for working in those communities and experience researcher has working with those communities
   5. Timeline for the project
2. **HIM’S ROLE (500 words maximum)**
   1. Why do you seek to partner with HIM?
   2. How you see HIM’s role in your research project? Please provide as specific details as possible
   3. How do you see the study aligning with HIM’s mission and values?
   4. How will HIM be involved in or consulted on the development of the research project?
   5. What cash or in-kind resources, if any, can you provide to offset HIM’s contributions to your research project?
3. **FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS (500 words maximum)**
   1. Outline any other partnerships related to this research project, if any.
   2. Describe how this research is being funded and from what sources (if funding is pending, please outline when a decision is forthcoming).
   3. Are there any costs related to this research? If so, who will bear these costs?
4. **ETHICS (500 words maximum)**
   1. Outline the ethical consideration of the research project. What steps have been taken to ensure that this project meets ethical consideration of doing research with GBQSMS populations, especially the populations HIM aims to outreach with its work (sex workers, trans men and non-binary people, communities of color and Indigenous communities, people with HIV/AIDS).
   2. Has this project received approval from an institutional ethics review board? If so, which one and what are the dates of the approval? If approval is pending, please provide anticipated timeline for approval. Also, please provide a copy of the approval with this application.
      1. If this project has not undergone institutional ethics review and there are no plans to do so, please explain the reasoning for such a decision.
5. **RESULTS AND COMMUNTIY IMPACT (500 words maximum)**
   1. How will the results of the research be used to benefit the populations that HIM engages (see Ethics 4a above)?
   2. How do you plan to share the results with HIM after the project is over?
   3. What are the plans, if any, to knowledge transfer the populations served by HIM?
6. **PRIOR COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS (500 words maximum)**
   1. Have you worked with HIM or other agencies that work with queer communities in the past?
   2. Please provide an example of a prior community collaboration or project (with GBQ+ if possible)
   3. Please provide the names and contact information for 2-3 community individuals that you have worked with in prior research engagement. These individuals may be contacted to provide a reference.

**Decision Making Considerations**

HIM will consider the following when determining whether to engage in a research project.

1. Does the applicant have a previous relationship with HIM?
2. Does this researcher have a good reputation and references (if checked)?
3. Does the researcher have realistic expectations?
4. Does the proposal fit with our mission of strengthening the health and well-being of GBQ+?
5. Is the research congruent with the organization’s research objectives? Goals?
6. What benefit does this research have for HIM? For GBQ+?
7. Are there any potentially negative consequences or risks involved with this research?
8. Will involvement in this research positively or negatively impact our reputation? Our communities?
9. What leverage do we have if the MOU/MOA is not followed? How do we ensure compliance?
10. Which staff member will be the lead liaison for this project?

**FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY:**

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| **Date Submitted:** |  |
| **Date of Review Result:** |  |
| **Date Applicant Informed:** |  |
| **Funder Notification Date:** |  |
| **HIM’s Role**  **(and people responsible)** | [ ] Co-PI: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  [ ] Co-Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  [ ] Collaborator: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  [ ] Letter of Support only  [ ] Other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Reviewers** | [ ] Manager, Health Promotion  [ ] Executive Director  [ ] Other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Review Result** | [ ] Approved  [ ] Provisional Approval \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  [ ] Denied |
| **Feedback** |  |
| **Concerns Raised** |  |