Community Engagement in Research and Innovation

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Pathways to Impact
February 18, 2026

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
RESEARCH & PARTNERSHIPS
Societal Impact

Land Grant Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. Committed to diversity and inclusion, the University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.
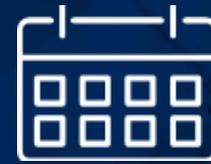
Today's Agenda

Moving from Outreach to Engagement

Tech Launch Arizona's Community Engagement

Community Engaged Research

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

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HOME   ABOUT US   EVENTS & WORKSHOPS   PARTNERS ▾

We believe *research impacts the shape of society and society impacts the shape of research. We work to translate the curiosity and expertise of researchers into policies, practices, and programs to benefit society, measuring reach not only in traditional academic metrics, but in lives touched and improved. Through every step of the research process, we help center real people and their real lives.*

Our **vision** is to advance a university where research and creative inquiry consistently and equitably improve lives in Arizona and beyond by centering communities, strengthening practices for impactful research, and embedding societal impact across the research enterprise.
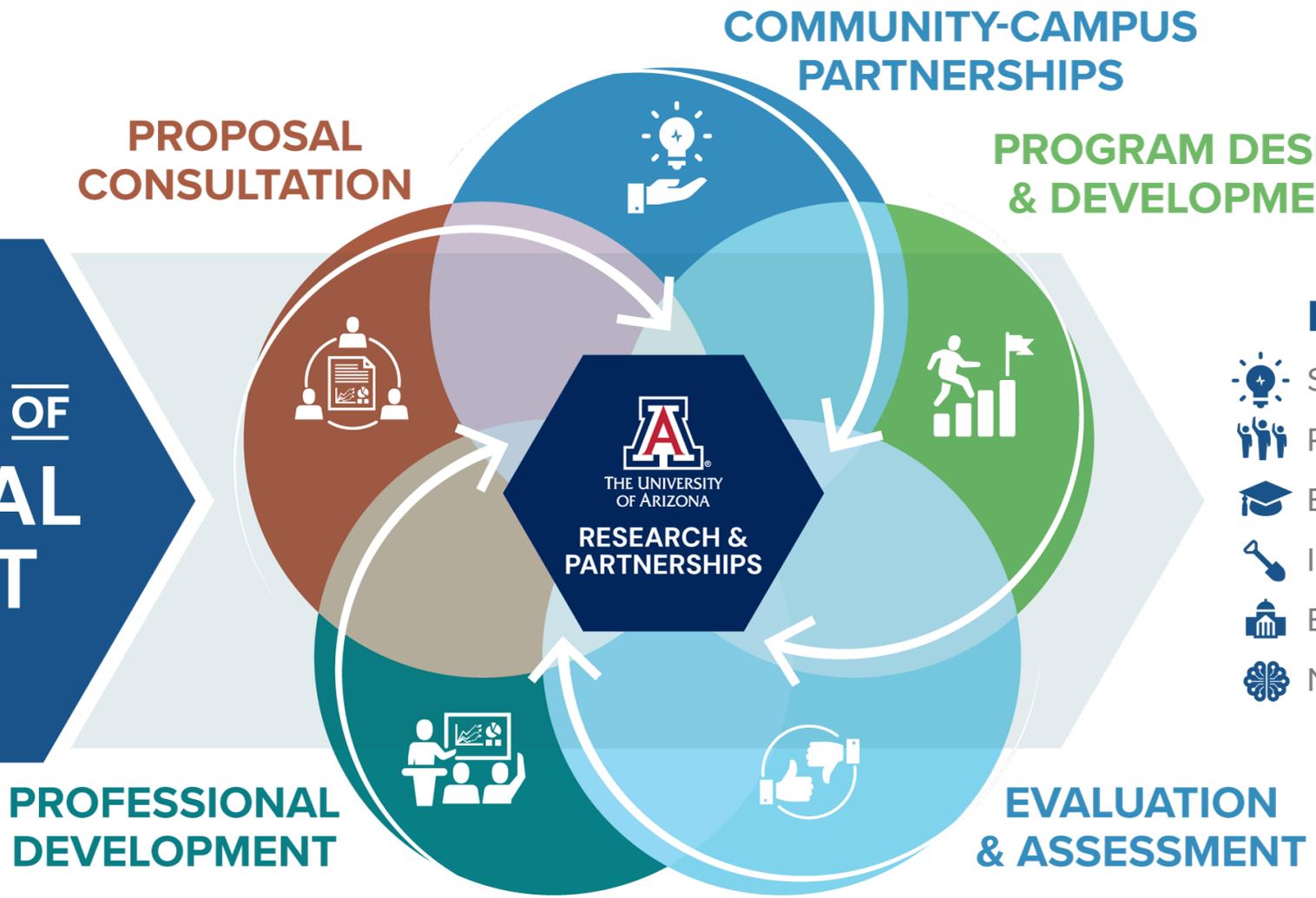
https://impact.arizona.edu
impact@arizona.edu

Moving from Outreach to Engagement:

"Outreach is a university-centric model that focuses on transactional relationships in which academic knowledge is privileged and flows unidirectionally. . .

Th[e] community partnership model emphasizes reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationships in which knowledge is co-created, multidirectional, and shared through collaboration among universities, communities, industry, and other knowledge groups."

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine,. 2025. Fulfilling the Public Mission of the Land-Grant System: Building Platforms for Collaboration and Impact. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/29092
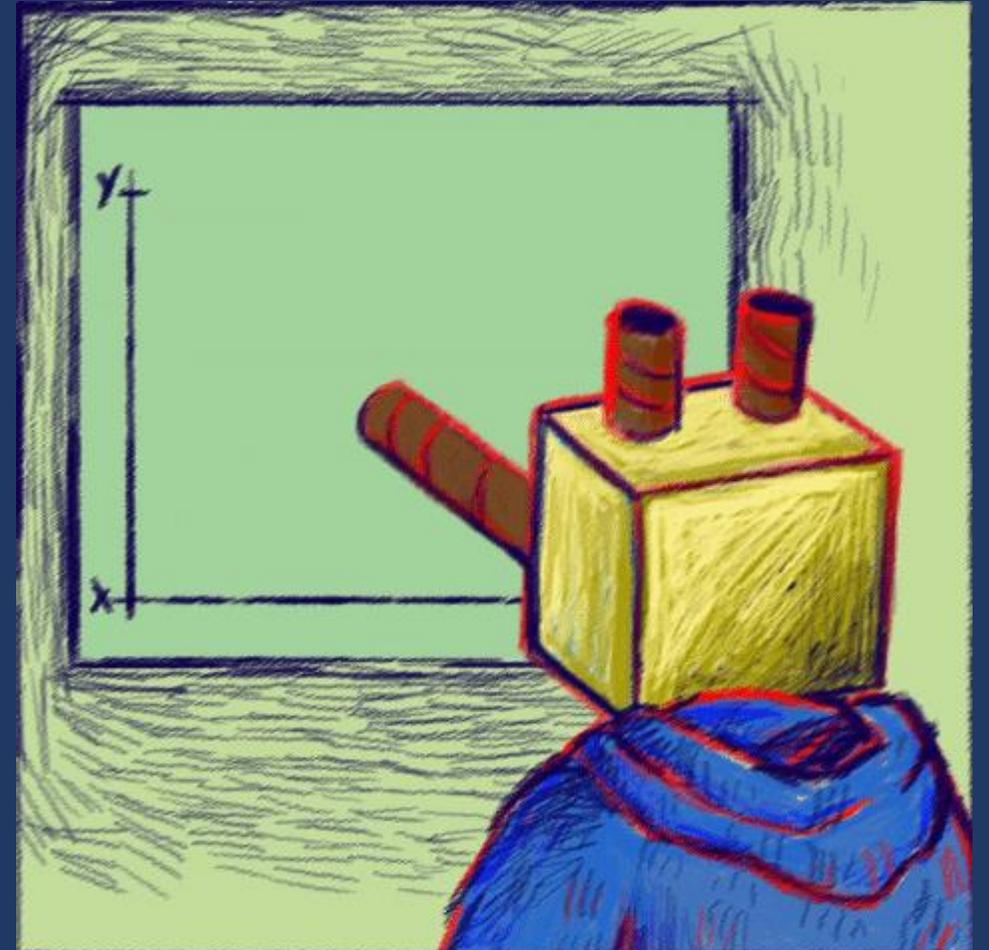
Moving from Outreach to Engagement:

Consider Resources:
- Your time
- Project timeline
- Budget

Consider People:
- Participants
- Stakeholders
- Influencers

Moving from Outreach to Engagement:

Consider Resources:

- Your time & Project timeline – may increase from outreach to engagement
  - o Build relationships with participants, stakeholders, & influencers
  - o Create partnerships
  - o Develop collaborations
  - o Manage collaborators & collaborations
  - o Meet/Manage expectations of stakeholders & influencers
  - o **OSI can help**

- Budget – may increase from outreach to engagement
  - o Project costs
  - o Participant stipends
  - o Compensating collaborator contributions

Network of Domain Experts

- Business leaders
- Deep domain expertise
- Market insight
- Technical assessment

TECH
LAUNCH
ARIZONA

Commercialization Partners

- Volunteer group
- Monthly meetings
- Asset Development advisors
- Project team members

Mentors-in-Residence

- "Been There – Done That"
- Extensive industry experience
- Provide guidance & advice

TECH LAUNCH ARIZONA

Advisory Board

MARA ASPINALL

Bluestone Venture Partners

BENJAMIN BROCKWELL

Partner, AZ-VC

HARRY GEORGE

Solstice Capital Partnership

ROBERT GRIFFIN

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UAVenture Capital

JOHN-PAUL ROCZNIAK

UA Foundation

DAVID SMALLHOUSE

Miramar Ventures

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I-Corps Training

All programs focus on hypothesis testing and customer discovery. This process will help you gather crucial insights on problem/solution fit, maximizing your innovation's impact.

High-performing teams could also earn a spot in the National I-Corps Teams program, with potential grants of $50,000 to further develop their ventures through deeper customer discovery.

https://desertpacificicorps.org/
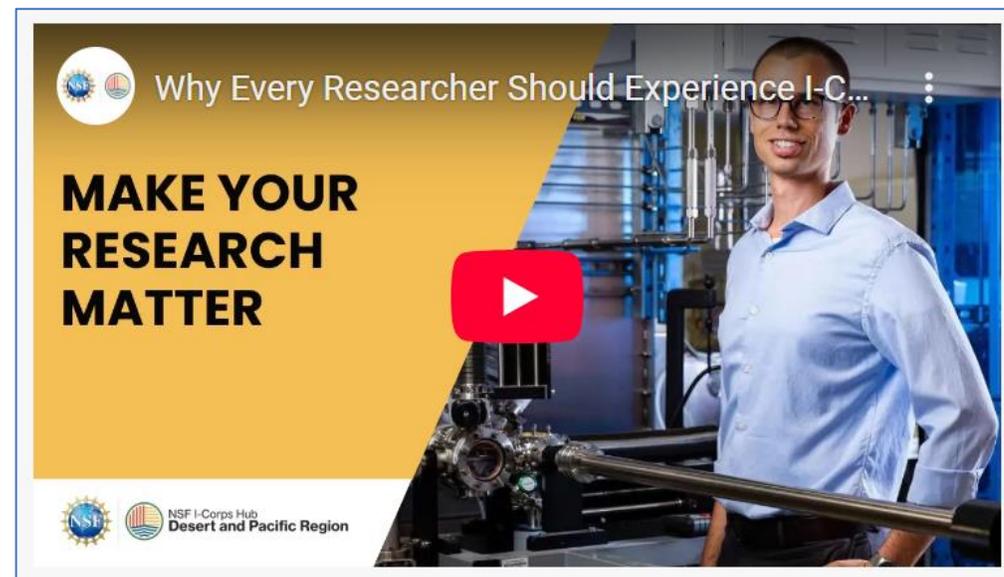
Engaged Research

An approach to research in which non-academic partners and their lived experience, expertise, and knowledges are meaningfully involved as equal participants in the research process.

The goal of engaged research is to generate *useful research* and *solutions to problems* too complex for traditional disciplinary approaches.

Related terms: community-based participatory research (CBPR), transdisciplinary research, action research, co-production of knowledge, knowledge exchange.

Community

A group of people who share:
- Geography
- History
- Culture
- Religion/Faith
- Profession
- Interests
- Or other characteristics that link them together

Community Engaged Research

- Recognizes and builds on the strengths of community members and organizations
- Partnerships are built on respect, cooperation, and collaboration
- Addresses a research topic that is important to the community
- Negotiates terms of engagement for research partnerships
  - Level and intensity of engagement will vary depending on community context
  - Decisions about community involvement should be community-driven
- Combines knowledge with action

Modes of Engaged Research

contractual
- Unidirectional flow of information from researchers to community
- Views and opinions of community are not emphasized

consultative
- Researchers consult with community to try to diagnose the problem
- Community views primarily filtered through a third party

collaborative
- Community and researchers are partners
- Community is actively involved in research process

collegial
- Researchers actively encourage and support community research and development capacity
- Community members direct research process

Meadow, Alison M., Daniel B. Ferguson, Zack Guido, Alexandra Horangic, Gigi Owen, and Tamara Wall. 2015. Moving toward the Deliberate Coproduction of Climate Science Knowledge. *Weather, Climate, and Society* 7 (2):179-191 https://doi.org/10.1175/WCAS-D-14-00050.1

Why Practice Engaged Research?

Social Contract

"Society currently expects two outcomes from its investment in science. The first is the production of the best possible science regardless of area; the second is the *production of something useful*."

—Jane Lubchenco, 1998

Land grant mission

As the Arizona land-grant institution, the U of A capitalizes on its unique location, top-tier research status, and the expertise of Arizona's people to drive social, cultural, and economic impact within the state. Land-grant universities link their research to critical sectors of the state's economy and the practical improvement of key indicators like health outcomes, educational attainment, and quality of life.

https://research.arizona.edu/land-grant-mission

Land grant mission

"Our universities were founded specifically to benefit the public, and the research that public and land-grant universities produce serves this need . . . We also need to emphasize the value of *collaborative research with communities—not just about communities*."

Scholarship of Engagement

"[Our] outstanding universities and colleges remain, in my opinion, one of the greatest hopes for intellectual and civic progress in this country. I'm convinced that for this hope to be fulfilled, the academy must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic and moral problems, and must reaffirm its historic commitment to what I call the scholarship of engagement."

- Ernest Boyer, 1996

Boyer, E. L. (1996). The scholarship of engagement. *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, *49*(7), 18-33.

It's good for science

UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science

Open science has the potential of making the scientific process more transparent, inclusive and democratic. Open science:

- increases scientific collaborations and sharing of information for the benefits of science and society;

- makes multilingual scientific knowledge openly available, accessible and reusable for everyone;

- ***opens the processes of scientific knowledge creation, evaluation and communication to societal actors beyond the traditional scientific community***.

https://www.unesco.org/en/open-science/about

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PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

Fall 2025

September 16 — Research & Societal Impact in a Changing Landscape

October 15 — Building Authentic Partnerships to Maximize Impact

November 18 — Innovation & Entrepreneurship as Impact

December 9 — Developing Your Research Impact Identity

Spring 2026

January 22 — Communicating Your Research Impact to Multiple Audiences

February 18 — Community Engagement in Research & Innovation

March 17 — Collaborative Project Management for Multi-Organizational Teams

April 21 — Evaluating your Societal Impact Outcomes

May 1 — Assessing Research Impact at the Organizational Level

Questions?
Email
impact@arizona.edu

Register at
impact.arizona.edu

Register Here

**All seminars via Zoom
12:00 - 1:00pm MST
with extended Q&A until 1:30**

Leverage your research to benefit society

Join the office of Societal Impact for our Pathways to Impact webinar series, where we'll dive deeper into defining and refining how your research makes a difference beyond the lab or field. Whether you're just starting out or looking to sharpen your focus, these sessions will help you turn ideas into action and impact.

Thank You

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- Bruce Burgess ~ bruceburgess@arizona.edu

- Alison Meadow ~ meadow@arizona.edu

- UA Societal Impact: impact@arizona.edu

- Tech Launch Arizona: https://techlaunch.arizona.edu/

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