Advanced Engagement Steering Committee

Meeting Notes

7.20.2023

*Attendance: [Sophia – Grant Staff; Taylor – Student; Missy – Grant Staff; Erin – Grant Staff*; Odette – Funder; Marcus – Funder, Tamara Cadet – Academic, Kate Wilber – Academic, Janet- Older Adult]

## Welcome, Review of Agenda & Materials

The group reviewed the agenda, meeting materials, and meeting guidelines. Several topics were highlighted:

* Steering Committee member bios
  + As the Steering Committee expands, it includes a broad range of lenses and experiences, but the group has little time to get to know one another. To provide more insight into the membership for new and old members alike, grant staff requested all SC members provide bios. When all SC members have shared their bios, they will be provided to the group via email. Additionally, SC members should share their preferences as to whether their bio can be shared publicly (via email to other members, on the Aging Research Network, on the public project webpage. Sharing is not required, and members should only select those options they are comfortable with. Those bios with permission for public sharing will be added to the new SC committee webpage. Members may visit the webpage to learn about the group at their convenience. The webpage will also provide insight to others interested in the diverse perspectives and expertise guiding our project. Grant staff will reach out to members to request bios and sharing permissions.
* Funder tool development update
  + In this project, we have an opportunity to create a tool to promote engagement in research targeting funders. To supplement meeting discussions, grant staff met with funder representatives on the Steering Committee to further inform tool development. Based on this input, grant staff are drafting initial documents. Steering Committee members will continue to be engaged throughout the development process.
* New project update- Measurement Matters!
  + UMass Boston, Collective Insight, and researchers from Boston College are teaming up for a project focused on refining and validating a PCOR engagement measure. We are one of seven projects that have been chosen for funding through this [PCORI funding announcement](https://www.pcori.org/funding-opportunities/announcement/advancing-science-engagement-pcori-funding-announcement-cycle-1-2023) to support measurement of engagement within comparative clinical effectiveness research.

## Training and Mentorship

Training and mentorship play a critical role in shifting the research paradigm to include older adults as research partners, rather than merely research subjects. To support researchers and students to meaningfully engage older adults in research, we provide individual and small group training at no cost to trainees. To inform the groups discussion of outreaching for this program, grant staff reviewed the history of the program and new elements.

### Training and Mentorship Program Overview

* In phase 1 of the Aging PCOR Learning Collaborative, we trained three groups of researchers to incorporate engagement into their research
* Groups attended monthly training session with grant staff as well as met with mentors specializing in their areas of interest, and attended ad hoc advisory session with our Older Adult Subcommittee
* In phase 2 of the project, two trainees returned for additional training focused on designing an engaged research proposal

### What’s New

Due to the success of ad hoc meetings with the Subcommittee during training in phase 1, we are formally introducing the opportunity in this phase of the program. The team engaged the Older Adult Subcommittee to inform the process. Based on Subcommittee feedback, we developed the following processes:

* We will host research 101 training for Older Adult Subcommittee members to ensure members feel prepared to have conversations with researchers
* We will implement a process to prepare researchers to engage with the Subcommittee and ensure all research materials are submitted to members ahead of time and in an accessible, jargon-free format

### Outreach

The team discussed target audiences and the best methods for training and mentorship outreach:

#### Target Audiences

* Target audiences identified by Steering Committee members previously:
  + People from programs outside of Gerontology
  + Research Consortiums
  + State government
* Additional target audiences include:
  + A research consortium on aging in California of which Dr. Kate Wilber is a member
  + Professional associations like the gerontological society and academy health
    - Members felt the best way to get these in place is to ask them or have those who are members post to their existing forums
    - One member highlighted Age Social Work as a potential avenue
      * <https://agesw.org/>
  + Emerging Scholar and Professional Organization (ESPO) within the Gerontological Society of America (GSA)

#### Methods for Reaching Trainees

* Members agreed on the importance of pushing our recruitment materials through those individuals who typically share things in a department or program, as these avenues are likely to reach the top of busy student and researcher inboxes.
* Older adult trainees can be reached through the groups that our older adult partners are members of. We could also target senior centers in the community to find older adult trainees
* Odette, a member representing the funder lens, identified Clinician Investigators as a mechanism through which funders can find researchers at all training levels and career stages who are doing clinically relevant research. She works within the National Institute on Aging research centers collaborative network and could potentially share our training opportunity with researchers there.

Student Curriculum

In this project, we will develop an educational tool targeting students to build values and skills essential to engaged research early. Currently, this opportunity is referred to as the student curriculum, which may change as tool design is informed through engagement of our partners. The group discussed their goals for the tool and provided recommendations:

### Curriculum Priorities and Methods

* Members felt it is essential to clearly identify the “why.” We must focus on the motivation to complete the curriculum.
* The curriculum should identify skills necessary to engagement generally as well as engaging older adults specifically.
* Members felt that using videos for this training tool would be well-received by students.
* Members emphasized the need for people to hear directly from older adults. A little snippet or tape would be beneficial and should be made by a mix of diverse older adults.

### Outreach

* There are opportunities to share this curriculum with training institutes for students. Groups like Age Social Work may want us to come speak to students that are chosen for institutes like Hartford scholars
* Make sure academic representatives in the Steering Committee receive the link to the website so they can share our training as soon as possible
* People who often share resources within a department or organization, who have high credibility, can effectively reach students with our outreach materials

### Incentives

* Lack of confidence on the topic is a major deterrent for faculty to teach students about engagement. Members discussed the fact that engaged research has made its way onto syllabi but that often it is pushed to the end and not covered in great detail. Making it easy for faculty with limited experience in engagement to add our resources to their syllabus will be critical.
* Certifications like those from the Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) can be used as a lever to require that our curriculum is utilized
* To decrease intimidation of a tool, for faculty and students, members recommended highlighting how faculty may already be doing engagement.

### Next Steps

* Sophia will send Steering Committee members the training flyer
* Steering Committee members will send their bios to Sophia and inform her what level of public sharing they are comfortable with
* Odette will share our training flyers with researchers identified in the National Institute on Aging research centers collaborative network
* Taylor will send Kate and Tamara the project webpage link
* Kate will mention the training and mentoring program at the California State Consortium on Aging Meeting