Welcome to the Community Engagement Learning Network!

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Community engagement refers to the different ways in which health (& social) care organizations can reach out to, engage, and partner with people with lived experience, with the goal of working together to improve healthcare and achieve positive health outcomes.



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Please join us for our next session on **Jan 27th 2027 from 3-4:30pm ET**

Wishing you all a wonderful rest of the year!



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www.consumerpartnership.org/assessment

Welcome to INSPIRE's Community Engagement Assessment & Practice Library

This self-assessment takes less than 10 minutes to complete and offers customized suggestions, including 'easy wins' for your organization and community!

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Start Your Assessment

Start Now

Your responses will be used to provide recommendations about specific ways your organization can strengthen partnerships with PWLE.

We strongly recommend that you start with the self-assessment so we can help point you in the right direction, but you can choose to skip the self-assessment and explore our full Practice Library on your own.

- What is this self-assessment? +
- Who should take this self-assessment? +
- How to take this self-assessment: +

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Click to filter by practice category

- Building authentic and impactful relationships with PWLE
- Building organizational infrastructure for engaging PWLE
- Creating strategies and goals for engaging PWLE
- Measuring and evaluating your work with PWLE

Search resources...



Articulating A Clear Statement Of Purpose

Creating strategies and goals for engaging PWLE



Creating Engagement Opportunities

Building authentic and impactful relationships with PWLE



Engaging Executive Leaders

Building organizational infrastructure for engaging PWLE



Ensuring Representation

Creating strategies and goals for engaging PWLE



Establishing Feedback Loops That Support Action

Building organizational infrastructure for engaging PWLE



Hiring And Training Dedicated And Skilled Staff

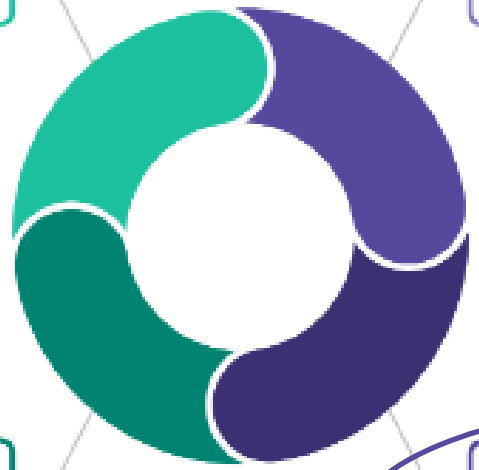
Building organizational infrastructure for engaging PWLE







inspire Framework for Engaging PWLE



Creating Strategies and Goals for Engaging PWLE

- Articulating a Clear Statement of Purpose
- Setting Specific Goals and Objectives
- Ensuring Representation

Building Organizational Infrastructure for Engaging PWLE

- Engaging Executive Leaders
- Hiring and Training Dedicated Staff
- Integrating PWLE Into Governance and Operations
- Establishing Feedback Loops That Support Action

Measuring and Evaluating Your Work With PWLE

- Process Measurement and Improvement
- Understanding the Impact and Outcomes of Engaging PWLE
- Measurement Tools and Processes

Building Authentic and Impactful Relationships With PWLE

- Creating Engagement Opportunities
- Recruitment and Onboarding
- Supporting Participation
- Training and Capacity Building
- Transparent Communication

CE LEARNING NETWORK · CAMDEN COALITION · OCTOBER 2026

Subgrants and Beyond...

Ethical Partnership with Community-Based Organizations

Tanisha Armstrong, MPH · Grant Manager, TidalHealth

TODAY

What we'll discuss

HOW 1

Identify the ethical obligations you assume when engaging CBOs

HOW 2

Recognize opportunities to resource and support CBOs

HOW 3

Design agreements that share data, decisions, and credit

HOW 4

Develop an action plan for ethically engaging CBOs

INTRODUCTION

Who I am

Grant Manager, TidalHealth

Build and manage grants infrastructure for a large health system

Independent consultant, 20 years

Strategy, sustainability, and board development for nonprofits and CBOs

Federal peer reviewer and panel chair

Evaluating proposals from the funder's side of the table



THE PROBLEM

Why this is an ethical issue

CBOs bring trust, relevance, and experience. Too often, the value flows one way.

Power dynamics

Imbalanced power, privilege, and access undermines their impact

Asset-based transactions

CBOs stay subgrantees without the time, skills, or investment to lead



PAUSE & CONSIDER

Who benefits most from your current CBO partnerships? How would your partners answer?

Extraction vs. equity

	EXTRACTION	EQUITY
Engagement	Brought in after the plan is set	Co-designed from the start
Funding	Pass-through, minimal indirect	Full cost, fair indirect
Data	Collected for us	Shared and owned together
Credit	Our name on the outcomes	Shared recognition
Relationship	Ends with the grant	Lasts beyond the funding cycle

HOW 1 · IN PRACTICE

What this looks like



Recognize where support is needed

Barriers that keep CBOs as subgrantees

- Indirect cost limits
- Restrictive budgeting
- Short-term funding cycles
- Administrative burden

Partner needs assessment: ask

- What would it take to lead, not just deliver?
- What part of reporting is a burden?
- What technical assistance can we offer to help you move from subgrantee to lead?

Support you can provide

Fund the true cost

Fair indirect, advance payments, staff time

Reduce the burden

Right-sized reporting, simpler invoicing

Build capacity

Technical assistance, grant writing, finance systems

Open the door

Funder introductions, a path to lead applicant



PAUSE & CONSIDER

When does a CBO first hear about your grant: before or after the budget is set?



Shared Governance

Data

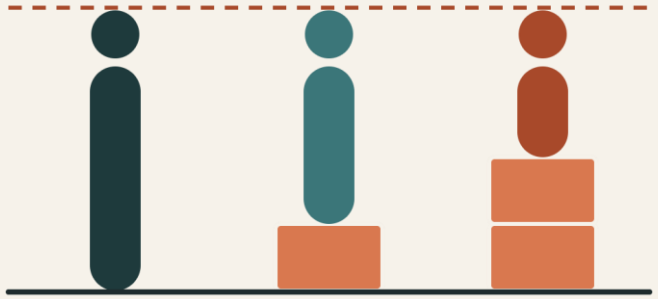
- Agree on ownership and access
- Share dashboards, not just requests

Decisions

- Everyone has a voice
- Work plans and budgets are co-developed

Credit

- Name partners in reports
- Co-present to funders
- Shared bylines and press



What this looks like



HOW 4 · ACTION PLAN

Build a business proposition

1	**The partner**	Which CBO partnership will you focus on?
2	**Ask questions**	What does your partner need to succeed?
3	**The gap**	What is inequitable about it today?
4	**The proposition**	What 1–2 elements will you change?
5	**The value**	What does each side gain?
6	**The first step**	How will you bring the CBO to the table, sharing data, voice, and credit?



PAUSE & CONSIDER

What is one change you could make before your next CBO subgrant agreement is signed?

Hold onto it. You'll build on it in the group activity.

UP NEXT

Questions & group activity

Use a case study or your own partnership to build a 1–2 element action plan.

Tanisha Armstrong, MPH · tanisha.armstrong@tidalhealth.org

OPTIONAL · CASE STUDY

When the budget gets cut

THE SCENARIO

$1M

A large organization has requested $1 million

The project depends on the CBO's connections with hard-to-reach community members

Funding negotiations require cuts

Build the business proposition

1. **The partner:** What does the CBO uniquely bring?
2. **Ask questions:** What does the CBO need to succeed?
3. **The gap:** Where would the cuts land first?
4. **The proposition:** What 1–2 elements will you protect or change?
5. **The value:** What is lost if the CBO's role is cut?
6. **The first step:** How will you bring the CBO to the table to decide the cuts together?

Community building

End of year reflections:

- What were some successes in your community engagement work this year?
- What are some goals or intentions you are carrying into 2027?