

# Guidelines for Evaluating Publicly-Engaged and Community-Engaged Scholarship at Rutgers<sup>1</sup>

## ***Definition of Publicly-Engaged and Community-Engaged Scholarship***

Rutgers University has a long-standing commitment to public and community engagement. Publicly-engaged and community-engaged scholarship (PES/CES) **integrates engagement with the public or the community into research and teaching activities (broadly defined)**. It describes research and other scholarship that is directly related to a faculty member's academic expertise, has a demonstrated public impact, is often produced in collaboration with external community partners, individuals, or organizations, is visible to and shared with community stakeholders, and reflects the mission of the University. PES/CES includes artistic, critical, scientific, and humanistic work that influences, enriches, and improves the lives of people beyond the academy. This scholarship requires the rigorous application of discipline-related expertise, breaks new ground or is innovative, can be replicated, documented, and has significant impact and public consequences. Concurrent, bi-directional engagement with the community is a vital attribute of these scholarly activities, not a separate activity. The product of this effort is disseminated in ways that are both rigorous and accessible to audiences beyond the academy.

## ***Guidelines for Evaluating Publicly-Engaged and Community-Engaged Scholarship***

Not all public or community engagement is necessarily scholarship. When preparing to evaluate PES/CES work, here are some questions to consider (as applicable):

- **Expertise:**
  - Is discipline-related expertise used to develop the PES/CES?
  - Is the work rigorous in its application of this expertise?
  - Is it innovative and/or novel?
  - Does it use expert knowledge to synthesize information, interpret findings, or outcomes of the work?
  
- **Product/Outcomes:**
  - Can the process and results be documented and disseminated?
  - Can the specific products resulting from this scholarship be evaluated by independent experts through modes of peer review?
  - Are the outcomes measurable in terms of impact and public consequences?
  
- **Bi-directional Impact:**
  - Does it involve translation of new knowledge to the public (such as the creation of policy papers, legislation, etc.)?
  - Is there a clearly-identified public audience?
  - Has the scholarship been shared with the academic community, and in what form?
  - Is bi-directional engagement with the community a key component of this research?
  - Is the work grounded in public/community needs and interests?
  - Does it involve active engagement with the public/community members and institutions as an intrinsic process of the work?

## ***Appendices***

**Appendix A** Guidance on Composing Personal Statements and Case Narratives Featuring PES/CES

**Appendix B** Soliciting Outside Letters on PES/CES

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<sup>1</sup> These guidelines were generated under the direction of EVPAA Moghe based on "Guidelines for Evaluating Publicly Engaged Scholarship", originally authored by the Publicly-Engaged Scholarship Committee in 2019 and subsequently reviewed and updated by the Offices of Academic Affairs and the provosts at Rutgers University in 2024.

## Appendices

### **A. *Guidance on Composing Personal Statements and Case Narratives Featuring PES/CES***

It is the candidate's responsibility in their personal statement to explain how and in what ways elements of their scholarship should be considered publicly-engaged or community-engaged scholarship as defined by Rutgers guidelines. Here are some recommendations for candidates, Chairs, and Deans as they compose their statements and narratives to ensure clarity and quality of review.

- Explain how the candidate's disciplinary expertise informed their research.
- In what ways is the candidate's work innovative?
- What are the specific products of the candidate's publicly/community-engaged scholarship?
- How has the work been disseminated to academic audiences? What new scholarship has this work stimulated?
- How has the work been recognized and valued by outside entities or partners? What forms of review have evaluated the work, and how are they based in specific disciplinary frameworks?
- If the work has been funded, what was the source? What role did the candidate play in raising funds?
- What is the predicted or actual impact of the work? Address impact on both academic disciplinary field(s) and the community.
- What are the measurable quantitative or qualitative outcomes of the work (e.g. economic, social, environmental, health)? What additional events/partnerships did the work stimulate?
- Does the work have implications for policy? For professional, community, or systemic practice?
- Explain the co-creation process that has produced the scholarship. Who was involved, what were the roles, and what did each partner contribute to the process? How was the candidate's work and the work of partners blended in the product(s) of the scholarship?
- What is the broader public or community interest in the work? Why does the work matter in terms of the community with whom the scholarship was conducted?
- How and when was the candidate's work publicly disseminated or shared with the community? What dissemination process was used? Are there clearly-identifiable public audiences for the work?
- Like other forms of scholarly activity, how was this effort/work integrated into teaching and/or mentoring?
- What are the candidate's concrete plans for future work, either related to this work or something new?

## ***B. Soliciting Outside Letters on PES/CES***

- Solicit letters from project partners, if applicable. Although these letters clearly will not be arm's-length, they should speak objectively about the work and should remain confidential from the candidate.
- Consider soliciting letters from leading public figures who can comment on the process, impact, and outcomes of the work, whether or not they have an academic connection.
- May also solicit letters from subject matter experts, such as government agencies, organizations (i.e. the American Cancer Society), leaders in a field (such as museum directors), well-respected practitioners (such as film directors, for example), or community-based organizations.
- If applicable, solicit letter(s) from an organizational representative benefitting from the publicly/community-engaged scholarship, rather than from a co-author or co-creator.