

Excellent - 5	Great - 4	Good - 3	Fair - 2	Poor - 1
Exceeds requirements in all outlined criteria; clear and detailed with concrete examples. All guiding questions thoroughly addressed.	Fully satisfies all outlined criteria with examples but may not have fully addressed 1-2 guiding questions.	Satisfies outlined criteria but more detail is desired. Some guiding questions not addressed at all.	Demonstrates inconsistencies or shortcomings in meeting the criteria.	Falls notably short of meeting the outlined criteria; substantial gaps or inadequacies, or no information included.
Strongly reflects all Principles of Engagement.	Reflects most Principles of Engagement.	Some Principles of Engagement are reflected.	Principles of Engagement are touched on, but very broadly.	Does not reflect the Principles of Engagement.
No information is missing. Reader has no unanswered questions and would recommend this as an exceptional example of a reciprocal partnership.	Some minor questions remain, but there is enough information to feel confident in the reciprocal nature of the partnership.	Reader is left wondering about some aspects of the proposal but still has a sense that the partnership is equitable.	Many unanswered questions leave doubts about the partnership's equity.	Partnership appears to be one-sided and not equitable.

Criteria	What We Are Measuring	Rationale	What Strong Responses Demonstrate	What Weak Responses May Show
Issue/Opportunity and Relevance	Clarity and community-identified relevance of the issue or opportunity	We expect projects that come from, or are informed, by experiences of community members; projects that are co-developed between the community and university partner	Clearly articulated, timely issue that is identified by the community; supported by context and urgency	Vague issue or academic-only driven need; unclear why this matters now or to the community
Partnership and Shared Goals	Strength of relationship and clarity of shared purpose	We want to understand where you are at in your partnership journey and why you are working together.  Note: CUES supports both new partnerships, as well as more long-term ones.	Evidence of relationship-building; clear, aligned goals; history of collaboration or thoughtful new partnership; mutual trust, respect, and shared values	Weak, one-sided or transactional partnership; little evidence of shared objectives or mutual benefit
Community Impact and Engagement	Anticipated benefits and meaningful involvement of community	We want to understand how your approach reflects and integrates the knowledge and lived experiences of the community	Specific, realistic short and long-term benefits outlined; community engagement is embedded as a core element of the project's design, implementation and evaluation, not treated as an afterthought	Generic or one-sided benefits; limited community involvement in design or implementation

Academic Contributions	Value of the project to academic work	We want to understand how this project integrates community knowledge and expertise to academic outputs	Academic impact with community relevance; clear link to research, teaching, student learning, or knowledge exchange practices	No clear academic connection or value; appears purely service-oriented or disconnected from scholarly goals
Roles, Decision-Making, and Resource Sharing	Clarity and equity in roles, decision-making, and resource allocation	We want to understand what each partner brings to the project (e.g. experience or expertise) how they will be involved and what they hope to get out of the project	Clear, well-defined roles, shared decision-making processes, thoughtful distribution of responsibilities and resources	Unclear or imbalanced roles; university-led without meaningful power-sharing, decision making or resource equity
Evaluation & Shared Learning	Plans for reflection, evaluation, and knowledge sharing	We are looking to understand how you will track progress toward your project's outcomes and use what you learn to guide improvements. We also want to understand how the knowledge and insights generated by your project will be shared with others	Thoughtful, practical evaluation strategies; methods and tools outlined (e.g., surveys, interviews), who will be involved in the process, and how findings will inform ongoing project decisions; openness to adapting based on learning; plans for sharing findings; knowledge generated is accessible and meaningful to relevant partners, including community members, researchers, and other engaged parties.	No clear plan for evaluation or reflection; no plans for sharing or leveraging project learning
Timeline & Feasibility	Realism and clarity of the project plan	We want to understand the time frame and key activities of your project  We understand your timeline may shift as your project unfolds, but it is helpful for us to see what steps and planning you anticipate taking place to consider the viability of your proposal	Clear milestones and project activities, realistic and achievable timeline; contingency planning	Overly ambitious or vague timeline; project activities do not relate to project milestones; no contingency planning
Equity & Inclusion Practices	Integration of equity and inclusion throughout project	We want to understand how you are ensuring equity throughout the project; this could be reflected through who you are engaging with (e.g., HSPM groups), or how you do your work (e.g., culturally informed	Active and intentional approaches to inclusion, informed by the relevant community, if applicable (e.g., culturally appropriate methods, IBPOC-led design); accessibility strategies (e.g., plain language	Superficial mention of equity or inclusion; no actionable strategies

		programming/training; offering hybrid meeting options; equitable pay rates, etc.)  If your project involves work with an Indigenous community, we want to know how you are considering Indigenous governance or protocols	materials; meeting within the community; equitable pay rates, etc.)	
Budget	Alignment between budget and project goals	We want to want to see a budget that reflects what was outlined in the application	Transparent, reasonable budget that reflects shared roles and priorities; includes fair, equitable compensation  (If applicable) In-Kind or leveraged funding is listed	Budget lacks detail; under-resources community participation