



bowman
PERFORMANCE CONSULTING

Emancipation from Colonization Declaration

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Core Values and Requirements for Partnerships

1. **The Western cultural perspective is not neutral. In fact, longitudinal data shows that it is the foundation of trauma, death, and harm to intergenerational Indigenous people/communities ever since European contact.** Essential for our work together with any partner is that potential partners' understand the values and assumptions underlying theories of change and are open to using the theories and methods we center. At BPC we will not support, perpetuate, or create new harm/trauma. We choose to create pathways to healing, regeneration, and sustainable, strong Native people, Tribal nations, and urban or rural Indigenous communities.
2. **BPC is interested in partnering with organizations that wish to be a good relative in the work we do, and who want to join us in centering and empowering Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities.** We value and use Indigenous scholarship, both published and oral traditions, to guide us in our work. We use complementary and restorative western or other sources to support Indigenous or other equity, social justice, decolonization, and anti-racist work, but we are not here to use western and/or pre-determined theories, designs, instruments, frameworks, or approaches that have not been proven to work for Indigenous populations. Partners must be welcomed in and approved by the community and Indigenous scholars that are leading or co-leading the initiative or project.
3. **There are multiple, valid, and compelling pathways to building credible "evidence,"** Western organizations and publications are not the only legitimate and valid pathways or places that valid, reliable, accurate, and generalizable data is developed. Often, Indigenous scholars, Native nations, and Indigenous communities are not part of the data sources or data sets seen in the mainstream literature or other curators of knowledge and evidence-making initiatives. We do not hold with the generalizability of policy, program, model, or any other curriculum or method of western design to Indigenous people or communities. Any approach or program that has not been effectively and ethically useful to Indigenous populations holds no scientific, community, or cultural legitimacy. Therefore, partners to BPC projects must be open to building new pathways and/or braiding current pathways with culturally responsive and community accepted ways for gathering and recognizing Indigenous evidence.
4. **When partnering with BPC, any non-Native partners should expect that they need to develop competencies, skills, capacities, resources, and behaviors for effectively and ethically working in and with Indigenous communities and Tribal Nations.** Just because an idea or approach isn't in the typical western literature doesn't mean it doesn't exist. Published materials and privileged positions do not take precedence over traditional knowledge and oral teachings from Indigenous people. Lived experiences (praxis) is of equal or greater value than scientific literature. The literature is not excluded, but rather it is one of many strategies used for BPC and partners to be good relatives and in good relations with the Tribal nations and Indigenous communities we serve.



Given these core statements, BPC's focus and intentional partner development must include these operational components in our formal contractual, project/study design, leadership/governance, and allocation of resources.

1. **Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities need to have input on the design, implementation, and findings of the evaluation.** They should be drivers and owners or co-owners of the evaluation. Data sovereignty and Nation-to-Nation agreements will be utilized in every aspect of our partnership and project. Therefore, we seek to work with humble, resourceful, and respectful partners that hold these same values. Operationally this means that every aspect of the project, from study design, human subjects or other protections protocols, through data ownership and governance over work products, publications, or other future materials, is at the discretion of the Indigenous scholars, Tribal nation, and/or Indigenous community or organization involved in the project.
2. **BPC must work in ways that are collaborative, ethical, culturally responsive, and evidence-informed/evidence-based.** An evidence base exists and developing it requires the active participation of Tribal nations, Indigenous scholars, and Native organizations. If our non-Native partners wish to work with Indigenous populations, Tribal nations, and within Native communities, they must refine their ways of understanding, behaving, and working in service to our Native communities, Nations and peoples. We need to ensure that partners BPC works with are safe, ethical, and culturally responsive when working with Tribes. Operationally this means following cultural, ethical, community, treaty, and tribal constitutional codes, policies, and protocols.
3. **BPC works with non-Native partners that have authentic, reciprocal, and respectful relations with Tribal Nations and partners for sustainable initiatives.**
 - a. BPC must ensure that the relationship with the partnering agency requesting engagement is authentic and trustworthy. Is BPC or the Tribal Nation or Indigenous agency there so the partner can check the Native box to simply give them credibility? Or is BPC, the Tribal nation, and/or the Indigenous agency there to truly partner on a study (with a research team, internal evaluation team, or other academic partners) and provide direct and sustained leadership or co-leadership? Operationally this is built into budgets, staffing patterns, study or project management designs, and provisions for equality in leadership responsibilities.
 - b. BPC must know what theories/methods/values underlie the partner's philosophy, programming, and resources for the study or initiative. Are they using social justice theories and methods such as decolonized approaches, tribal critical theory, or equity methods? Is there sufficient funding, staff, time, and other resources (infrastructure, capacities, policies, baseline awareness/knowledge, etc.) to have an equal partnership? If not, what is the partner willing to do for preparation, development, and continued growth in this area? Operationally this is built into the conceptual and operational work plan, budgets, and staffing patterns of a project. It is also included in contractual language and publications or other resource creations.



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4. **Partners must be open to reciprocal learning, not rescuing, saving, blocking, or ignoring the needs of Tribal nations and the strengths and scholarly contributions from Indigenous people and sources.** This is engaged and multi-directional, multi-modal, and multi-disciplinary learning. We see ourselves as learning partners who also provide direct evaluation, research, project, training, or technical assistance. Operationally, partners must be open to learning before going into the field as well as while working together because there is little to no graduate school, professional development or other scientific/technical training that has given non-Native partners these scientific competencies and skills for working with Indigenous populations. This would be an embedded and value-added aspect of our experiential learning partnership.
 5. **Partners must be willing to accept that Tribal nations are sovereign and build that into the design, implementation, and resources of the initiative or project.** Tribal Nations govern their own cultural and human protections, so partners need to work with BPC and the Tribal Nations or Indigenous partners to ensure that the legal/political, treaty, and cultural rights of Tribes are always included and deferred to first. BPC's team represents and is interested in the reclamation, protection, and proliferation of Indigenous, culture, language, and community (Nation to Nation) content, process, and values as approved by Indigenous and community participants and stakeholders. All aspects of our work will require a "by us and for us" (Wehipeihana, 2018) framework. We will use critical, decolonized, and indigenous ways to co-construct our work with Tribal scholars, Native nations, and Indigenous community members. We will uphold treaties and utilize Tribally Driven Participatory Research, Tribal Critical Theory, Indigenous theory/protocols (locally defined) and Tribal Critical Systems Theory in all aspects of our work. This includes data governance, data sovereignty, Tribal IRBs, and use of formal memorandums of agreement that include linguistic and cultural protocols and protection of cultural and intellectual property rights.
 6. **Evaluation is not research.** There is a difference, and partners need to understand that and act accordingly. We need to be transparent about this and jointly create related pathways for research, development, training, technical assistance, evaluation, policy, programming, governance, and partners so every project will be in harmony when carrying out interdependent work on behalf of Tribal nations and Indigenous communities. Operationally we will have unique roles and responsibilities, but our interdependent partnership makes the work successful.
 7. **Indigenous evaluation is not western evaluation.** If you don't know why, then right now you need to do some research, reading, developing, and reflecting. Perhaps start with the "Our Scholarship" page on the BPC website. After that, come back to see us. We'll be here!

