



Making Waves in Equitable Coastal Resilience: A National Workshop on Social Equity and Coastal Resilience November 2022

Research-practice Collaborations to Address Equity through Implementable, On-the-ground Coastal Resilience Projects

Summary. The discussion of research-practice collaborations to address equity through implementable, on-the-ground projects and programs converged around several interconnected themes that included: (1) prioritizing equity focus in defining and measuring projects' success, (2) involving local communities in projects early on and through long-term monitoring, using interdisciplinary teams, and (3) incentivizing such projects through proper resourcing. Prioritizing equity in project measurement is only possible with the community's involvement, and proper resourcing would ensure that community partners are resourced appropriately to support their resilience efforts.

Important Factors for Successful Research-practice Collaborations

① Equity-focused metrics and evaluation.

- Communities and their considerations should be included from beginning to end of a project to ensure the focus on equity.
- Coastal resilience projects should be monitored and evaluated to ensure they are achieving their intended goals and are making a positive impact. This includes establishing definitions and metrics of successful projects and tools for measuring various aspects of equity and coastal resilience. Research partners should collect data and feedback from community partners and project stakeholders and adjust the project to ensure its success.
- Equity and needs assessments should be conducted before the funding programs or funding opportunities are created. Proposed projects should be assessed according to equity and need criteria before they are funded and/or pursued.

② Community involvement.

- Coastal resilience projects should prioritize equity and consider the needs of vulnerable populations, such as low-income communities and people of color, who are disproportionately affected by climate change. Projects should include community partners in

analyzing and addressing disparities in access to resources and opportunities to ensure the project benefits the community.

- Projects must be inclusive and consider the needs and perspectives of diverse residents of their communities. Research partners should engage with local stakeholders, including residents and community organizations, to ensure the project aligns with their specific needs and priorities.
- Research partners should work with community partners to identify feasible projects that can be implemented within existing constraints and resources, and that fit with the community's priorities.
- Research-practice collaborations should focus on implementable, on-the-ground coastal resilience projects that can be scaled up and replicated in other communities. However, these projects should not only be judged based on their replicability and scalability.

③ Resources.

- Flexible funding is needed to support co-production with communities and community partners, to compensate individuals or groups for their time and expertise, to undertake long-term monitoring or checking back on communities, to prioritize action-based applied projects, and to fund non-structural projects.
- University institutional and administrative support that can take the form of a supportive infrastructure and reflect administrators' understanding of the importance and value of applied and engaged research projects is needed. This includes providing structures, guidelines, staff, and other administrative and management support for engaged and applied research, and prioritizing relationship building as an important outcome. Universities should encourage and facilitate interdisciplinary project teams that bring together experts from disciplines such as natural sciences, social sciences, and engineering.

Recommended Next Steps for Encouraging Research-practice Collaborations for Equitable Coastal Resilience

- Prioritize projects that produce quick and visible results that can generate more support and time to do more challenging projects that do not bear the immediate result but may be more impactful in the long run for communities.
- Identify models and practices that are transferable and that are supported by flexible funding for the long term.
- Supplement grant funding with creative options to sustain specific activities, such as through business or entrepreneurial programs that focus on tangible outputs and service-learning components for students to apply their knowledge to real-world situations.

Direct questions to Dr. Wie Yusuf, School of Public Service, Old Dominion University (jyusuf@odu.edu)

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More information about the workshop:

<https://sites.wp.odu.edu/workshop>

