**Facilitating Collaborative Research**

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**Why?**

* Issues are complex and require multi-disciplinary teams to provide solutions (*e.g*., advanced materials, aging, climate change, community health, family violence, immigrant settlement, terrorism, water, and youth). *Advancement of knowledge through investigator-driven, disciplinary research in a broad range of fields, will continue to drive future innovations, policy development, and cultural growth.*
* Collaborations can be local, regional, national, and global
* Advancements in ICT (*e.g*., email, Skype, Line app, Wechat)
* Co-supervision of research trainees: co-funding, co-expertise etc.
* Solutions are more comprehensive and usually bigger than the sum of the parts
* Interesting phenomena occur at the interfaces of different disciplines
* Co-authorships are a good indicator of growth
* Good way to support start-up and mid-career researchers

**Some tips for successful collaborations**

* Listen to and respect the opinion, knowledge, and perspectives of others
* Diverse perspectives lead to a better understanding of problems and hence better solutions
* Discuss early who will do what (*e.g*., which experiments, develop certain questions for the survey, analyses of data, writing of sections of reports and manuscripts, when to publish or present?)
* How will the order of authorship be decided? Do not minimize the contributions of students/PDFs/ RAs
* How will IP ownership will be decided and shared?
* How will the proceeds from IP be shared? It is easy to agree on principles when money is not at the table.
* If an issue (political, social) arises, no matter how small, deal with it immediately, do not let it fester for too long, when it can become unmanageable and time consuming to resolve
* Clear lines of communication (regular meetings help, many meetings may be necessary, never stifle productive discussion by imposing artificially limited times for discussion)
* Allow people to raise “crazy” questions throughout but during early planning stages
* Discuss dispute resolution mechanism
* Who will have what authority to make the final decision on certain aspects?
* Establish: data sharing protocols, material sharing protocols, sharing of lab equipment, sharing of technical personnel (be equitable in sharing)
* Answer enquiries quickly from other team members (including research trainees)
* Connect research trainees across labs
* Abide by terms in MTAs, Research Agreements, Regulatory protocols
* Discuss training requirements