

Partnership Guidelines



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Humanities Action Lab: A Coalition of Relationships

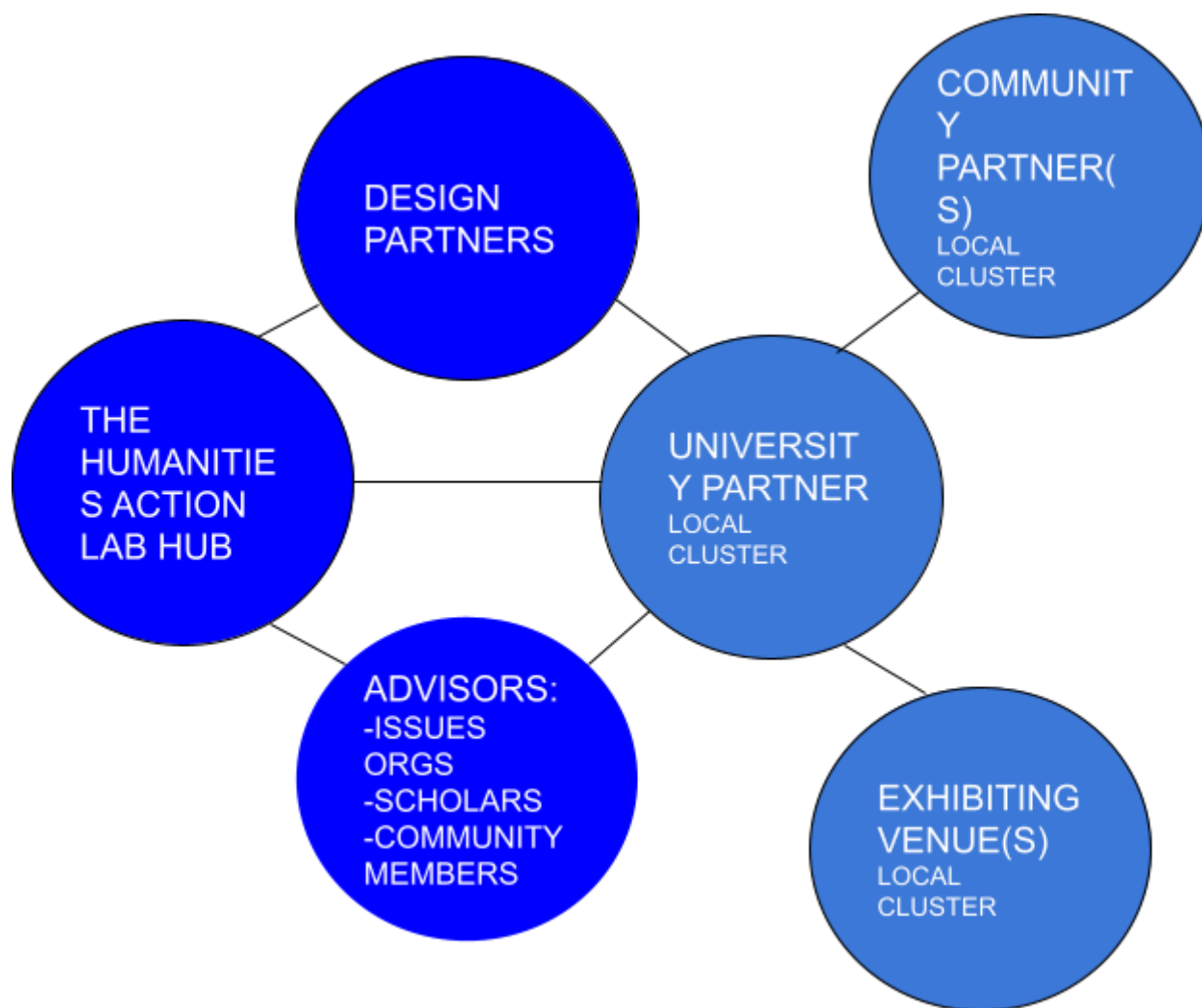


Fig. 1: The Humanities Action Lab is a coalition of universities, community organizations, and exhibiting venues. The Humanities Action Lab Hub works with advisors and designers to produce a traveling exhibition and digital platform to which the entire coalition contributes collectively. The Hub also supports and facilitates work with all partners. Currently 25 university partners are participating in the initiative on climate and environmental justice. Each university partner is part of a cluster in their locality: the university partner, the community partner, and the exhibiting venue. The Hub liaises with the university partners in each local cluster. The university partner liaises with their community partner(s) and exhibiting venue(s).

Roles

Humanities Action Lab Hub *Rutgers University-Newark, Newark, New Jersey, USA*

The Humanities Action Lab Hub coordinates all communication, resources, support, and materials among partners.

Advisors *Global*

The Humanities Action Lab chooses a group of advisors to assist in shaping the project and to offer feedback on different outputs which include: project framework, curatorial guidelines, design guidelines, local story guidelines and more. To ensure that many perspectives are represented, our project advisors are part of issues organizations, and they are also scholars.

Design partners *Newark, New Jersey and New York, New York, USA*

The Humanities Action Lab Hub works directly with two design partners:

- MTWTF will design the traveling exhibition and digital platform
- Newest Americans will develop media, and create a toolkit for media training

University partners *Global*

25 university partners will work simultaneously to produce a traveling exhibition and digital platform for the initiative on climate and environmental justice. One or more faculty at each university will teach a course through which they will work with one or more community partners to: identify and explore a compelling local story; research and interpret that story; curate a local chapter of the traveling exhibition and digital platform. The university partner will also identify an exhibiting venue partner to host the traveling exhibition.

Community partners *Global*

Community partners work with their university partners to co-create their local piece of the traveling exhibition and digital platform. Together, partners will determine the local story they will explore, determine how to engage students in the organizing process, and develop tools and stories that advance their organization's goals.

Community partners are organizations that are made up of, or work with people directly affected by the climate and environmental justice issue that you are exploring. These organizations can include service organizations, advocacy organizations, educational organizations, and/or religious institutions. While students may have the opportunity to collaborate with groups of people from their community partner organization(s), faculty might find it easiest to designate one point person from the organization to work with on the administration of the partnership throughout the entire project.

Exhibiting venue partners *Global*

Exhibiting venue partners work primarily with university partners. They agree to host the traveling exhibition and may host related programming. Exhibiting venues may include public libraries, museums, community centers, and other public spaces.

Goals

Three measurable goals for university and community partners:

- 1.) Contribute local story to the international traveling exhibition, and share related information on the digital platform.
- 2.) Students will be able to: 1) identify environmental and climate injustice and resistance to it, centering the experiences of (im)migrants, African American, Indigenous and low income people; 2) identify how looking at environmental and climate issues historically can provide new perspective on current issues; 3) refine research methods and storytelling techniques to share their local story in compelling ways; and 4) have a strong grasp on current debates and policies.
- 3.) Community partners will identify needs that a public humanities project can fulfill, with a measurable goal for their organization's participation in the project.

At different points in the process the HAL Hub, project advisors, design partners and exhibiting venue will all work with university and community partners to achieve these three goals.

Identifying an Appropriate Partner

For community organizations, the HAL project can offer an international platform that provides exposure and a widespread audience through different modes of storytelling via visual art, video, and podcasts. Additionally, during the public programming phase of the project community organizations will also have space at the exhibition venue to share their work. Organizations that can benefit from these particular forms of recognition and advocacy are ideal for the project. If a community organization benefits most from the production of data and/or policy change, the HAL project might not be the most suitable. The community partner can and should define what it needs in order to advance its goals (showcasing digital archives, oral histories, etc). The university partner can define what it needs for its students in order to advance its pedagogical goals. Together, those goals become the bedrock of the co-creation for the local story.

Elements of a Strong Partnership

Co-production of knowledge: A clear structure for sharing creative authority in which all parties are clear how their ideas will be solicited, revised, and used, including how final decisions are made. There are a variety of ways partners may choose to work together (see chart below); all are fine as long as everyone is clear about them.

Ongoing reflection and communication: While good intentions are necessary, they will not carry partners through a collaborative and equitable project. Build in moments of reflection to acknowledge positive momentum, contestation, pace, and necessary adjustments. Consistently refer to the contract and evaluate if each partner is adhering to the document's terms.

Compensation and attention to division of labor: Community partners should be compensated for time spent on the project (HAL can provide up to \$3,000 in honoraria for community partners). University and community partners will review the different ways that community partners can contribute to the project. Based on the community partner's capacity, they will immediately determine which objectives they can fulfill. Community partners should also review the benefits of participating in and contributing to the project.

Contract or Memorandum of Understanding: These documents should be explicit about expectations, benefits for each partner, division of labor, honoraria for labor, and specific roles for faculty, students, and community organizations. By structuring engagement between classes and

communities, needs and capacities of each are recognized and utilized. These documents can also be used to hold all participating partners accountable. Separately, faculty should work with students to establish clear roles and responsibilities.

Integrate reflection opportunities: Schedule moments of reflection throughout the partnership to identify problems and strengths, propose solutions, and reconfigure the work plan if necessary. Because universities and community organizations operate at different paces with different access to resources, there is a structural tension between university partners' needs and community partners' needs. Sometimes this causes a shift in focus during the semester, as faculty may move from concern with the partners to learning outcomes for students. Take note of when these momentum shifts occur, and make the necessary adjustments.

Ideas for Structuring Community Partnerships

Consider outcomes and processes that are most beneficial to your project when choosing a community partner.

Types of Community Partnerships				
	Informers	Consultants	Advisors	Deciders/ Implementers
Outcomes	Students and faculty improve their understanding of climate and environmental justice in their locality Student and faculty learn community concerns, needs, and strategies that have been used in the past to address both	Students and faculty receive feedback on project materials they create: local story draft, foundational documents (design plan, evaluation plan, curriculum, etc.)	Students and community partners gain consensus on what the local story should be and priority issues/aspects to emphasize.	Project that reflects co-authorship of students and community partners.
Level of sharing authority	Students use community perspectives as a source of inspiration. They remain primary authors and retain final editorial decision-making over text, image choice. University remains primary planner of public	Students discuss community feedback and integrate what they feel advances the project. Students remain primary authors and retain final editorial decision-making over text, image choice. University remains primary	Students make commitment to integrate the perspectives and feedback of their partners as much as possible. Students remain primary authors and retain final editorial decision-making over text, image	Students and community partners write all text, choose all images, and design all public programming through consensus. One or the other partner may draft, but nothing is finalized without approval of all parties.

	programs and actions.	planner of public programs and actions.	choice. University remains primary planner of public programs and actions.	
Types of Community Partnerships				
	Informers	Consultants	Advisors	Deciders/ Implementers
Sample processes (with university, community organization, and broader community members)	<p>Facilitated dialogues: throughout different points in the semester, students host conversations with stakeholders to get a sense of the history of organizing, family histories, and memories related to climate and environmental justice in their locality. They will also discuss the histories that have been overlooked that community members would like for students to investigate.</p> <p>Forums: Students can organize a panel discussion inviting different stakeholders to share their experiences, and how they think the local story should be grounded.</p>	<p>Public presentations: students present a draft of their story idea in a public meeting of people directly impacted by the issue, and invite feedback.</p> <p>Community visioning: community members share their ideas about what they want their local story to look like. This is typically a creative process that can involve: producing storyboards, encouraging members to bring in visuals that share a story or represent project goals and values they would like to be included in the project.</p>	<p>Workshops: 3-4 times throughout the semester, students and community partners hold a 2-3 hour meeting, either in the classroom or in the community organization. The first meeting might decide the major themes and issues the project should address; in the second meeting, students might share examples of stories and images that could address those themes; in the third, students might share a first draft, and in the last, a final draft.</p>	<p>Implementation committee: a group of representatives from one or more community partner organization. They might conduct the same activities as described in the “workshops” section, but decisions would be made by consensus and students/university would share ultimate editorial control.</p>
When to utilize this focus	Early on, to lay the foundation of the project and make connections with	Want to get feedback on proposals and build trust	Want to develop agreement on the exhibition’s basic interpretive	Want to engage a community partner throughout the entire process and

	broader community		direction, and on what type of public actions the partners will engage together as a supplement to the exhibition	formalize the relationship beyond the project arc. This type of community partner has the deepest level of investment and will engage nearly all aspects of the project.
Types of Community Partnerships				
	Informers	Consultants	Advisors	Deciders/ Implementers
How to create room for success	Partners commit to attend and contribute to initial conversations	Partners agree to initial conversations and connecting project with community members	Participants willing to invest time to see the project to the end	Participants willing to invest time to see the project to the end and ensure that it is sustained

To present students with a range of perspectives on a single locality, faculty may choose to work with multiple community partners. Consult the table below to consider the benefits of each option, and different points to consider to ensure an equitable and effective partnership.

Single Community Partner vs. Multiple Community Partners		
	Single Community Partner	Multiple Community Partners
Perspective on climate and environmental justice and local story	Working with a single community organization partner can offer a deeper, more focused perspective on how one particular community organization addresses climate and environmental justice.	Working with different partners may provide a greater diversity of perspectives for students and for the project's final publics.
Distribution of resources	HAL can provide up to \$3,000 as honoraria for time and labor that community partners contribute to the project. This \$3,000 is for the entire duration of the project.	University partners must decide how they will use the \$3,000 honoraria from HAL to support contributions from multiple partners.
Relationship building/establishing an environment for effective co-creation	University partners need only coordinate collaboration with a single organization. This may enable universities to structure a process of substantial sharing of knowledge and creative decision-making.	University partners will be responsible for arranging and facilitating meetings/collaboration among all community partners. The project will benefit from more diverse perspectives, but organizations may not have the same level of creative decision-making as a project with a single community partner.
Distribution of labor/contribution	University partner will work with the suggested guidelines and levels of engagement section of this document to craft a project that benefits both students and community organization partners.	Early on, university partners should facilitate a meeting to discuss how each organization can contribute to the project. All partners should agree on the final work plan. For example, one organization may have more presence in the classroom, while another organization may create immersive learning experiences with students outside the classroom.

Levels of Engagement

HAL can offer honoraria up to \$3,000 for each participating university to support their community partner(s). Because community partners are integral to Humanities Action Lab praxis and pedagogy, the HAL Hub has developed a list of suggested engagements to ensure that community partners have concrete ways to contribute to the project based on their capacity and honoraria. University and

community organization partners can use these suggestions to develop an MOU that highlights responsibilities, along with what both partners hope to gain from the project.

This list includes all aspects of engagement the HAL Hub thinks university and community partners can ideally pursue together. We understand that not all partners have the capacity to commit to this level of work. University and community partners should decide which engagements they can pursue together.

Spring (January-May) 2018:

1. Review materials the HAL Hub sends, provide feedback
 - a. Materials might include: surveys, project framework documents, best practices and guidelines on co-creation, resources on immersive learning and pedagogy, project timelines, evaluation tools, etc.
2. Participate in 3 two-hour Zoom conference calls; the HAL Hub will facilitate these Zoom conference calls with university/community partners based on their time zone. Each call will take place during the following time periods:
 - a. Call 1- Local story/Co-creation: May 1- May 11
 - b. Call 2- Installation and Digital Platform Design: Between May 15 and May 25
 - c. Call 3- Evaluation: Between May 31 and June 8

Summer (June-August) 2018:

1. Review all outputs (design, evaluation, co-creation model, other)

Summer/Fall (August-December) 2018:

1. Work with faculty to design course
 - a. Methods/research course intended to: identify the local story, identify the archives, and map out a plan for using these materials for the production course
 - b. With faculty, determine the best mediums to present the local story (audio, visual, data visualization, etc.)
 - c. With faculty, develop immersive learning experiences for students. For example, community partners might arrange for students to visit the organization, volunteer, or attend a campaign/rally/hearing
2. With faculty, determine curatorial strategies
 - a. After students collect data and sources, determine how they will narrow down their data set to best tell the local story given the parameters from the design partner
3. Identify other community members invested in climate and environmental justice and how they may assist in building an audience and broader participation
4. Contribute blog post to the web platform

Spring (January-May) 2019; this is the essential moment for partnership and engagement:

1. Engage/oversee co-creation with students
2. Contribute to digital platform

Fall (August-December) 2019:

1. Participate in international exhibition launch in Newark
 - a. Facilitate dialogues while there (HAL Hub covers travel, lodging)
 - b. Participate in reflective sessions

Spring (January-May) 2020 onward:

1. Participate in planning and executing local programs
2. Work to extend engagement beyond the project cycle

Looking Ahead: Developing Relationships with Exhibiting Venues

University partners should begin to think about potential venues to host the exhibition as early as possible. While some venues may not be able to commit to the project far in advance, it is still worthwhile to start a list of possible venues. Partners should start contacting venues in January 2019 so that the venue is prepared to host the project, and contribute in a meaningful way. University partners should use the following guidelines when deciding on a venue.

Accessibility: The space must be open to the general public. Also consider potential barriers like location, admission fees, and structures prohibiting differently-abled community members' full experience of the installation.

Timing: Partners must confirm that the venue can host the exhibition for at least three weeks.

Capacity: Partners must confirm that the venue has staff to install, deinstall, pack and ship the exhibition, conduct visitor evaluations, and promote the exhibition.

*Partners should also discuss if the exhibiting venue has the capacity to plan programming, assist in outreach, and supplement the exhibition with objects from their collection.

Partnering with Artists

While HAL has secured funds to provide honoraria for community organization partners, we do not have funds to support your work with artists. Additionally, we cannot accommodate this work traveling with the larger project. If you have the capacity to work with local artists, we encourage you to think about how your work with artists may enhance your local project, especially when your locality hosts the travelling exhibition.

Resources: Equitable Partnerships in Public Humanities

- [University of Kansas Community Toolbox](#)
- [MASS Action Toolkit](#)