

Receiving Youth-Generated Feedback for Researchers: From Defense to Co-design

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Introduction

To combat the exclusion of youth voices and the transactional nature of the current youth engagement work being done in research, the UBC Youth Research Advisory Panel aspires to allow youth and researchers to co-design research surrounding youth health. The panel provides feedback to researchers on grant proposals, leading with their lived experiences and knowledge of the challenges the healthcare system presents to patients. The co-creation relationship allows the youth panel members to engage in bridging the gap between the views and priorities of the researchers with the views and priorities of the youth.

Objectives

This project examined the feedback provided by the members of the UBC YRAP to researchers on draft grant proposals, as well as the general criteria the youth use to assess the quality and impact of the proposals. The YRAP members shared the elements that they believe are important to include when designing research processes and spaces intended for youth, to include youth, or to benefit youth.

Approach/Methods

A panel was created, comprised of youth with lived or living experience (n=10, age range 13-25). This panel worked alongside researchers to inform researchers on the youth engagement work taking place within their proposed research projects. The panel reviewed, collaborated and co-created engagement strategies with researchers when they were applying for grant funding. The panel did this through a series of virtual zoom meetings in which they talked through and workshopped their feedback with the researchers.

Results

A When evaluating the draft grant proposals and study ideas brought forth by researchers, factors considered include:

- Representation - How will the researchers ensure that there is adequate representation across relevant identifying factors such as ethnicity or gender?
- Safety of Youth - Will the research pose a psychological and/or safety risk to the youth before, during, or after participating in the research?
- Practicality - Is the outcome of the research directly benefiting youth? Can the outcomes of the research be applied and utilized readily?
- Accessibility - Are there accommodations in the study for youth with physical disabilities? How about youth without access to any technology needed for the study?

- Nuance - Are there some details that come from lived experience as a young person accessing the healthcare system, that might have been overlooked when designing the study?

Conclusion

Consulting youth when designing research that is meant for youth helps bridge the knowledge gap between the perspectives of researchers and the perspectives of young people. Youth who have lived experience accessing the healthcare system can be a valuable resource for researchers as they attempt to make the outcomes of their research more applicable in the lives of young people. Enlisting youth to provide feedback when designing such research and being aware of the factors young people use to evaluate the proposals not only empowers youth, but also makes the research outcomes much more powerful.

