



## Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference summarize the mission, purpose, objectives, guiding principles, meeting procedures and governance structure of the *Acting Together Steering Committee*, within the ethics and funding mandate of the SSHRC-CURA.

### Mission Statement:

The *Acting Together Steering Committee* (ATSC) works to collaboratively identify and nurture youth strengths and to reduce youth involvement in gang-related violence in Surrey. The committee oversees the development and implementation of a comprehensive research, training, and knowledge dissemination program to meet the diverse needs of youth and their families. The ATSC will ensure the research program will be practical, relevant and meaningful to the larger community of Surrey.

### Objectives of *Acting Together* project:

1. **Identify** culturally relevant protective factors and youth strengths that help prevent involvement of youth in gang-related violence.
2. Make recommendations to **Modify** existing programs to better target the identified protective factors.
3. **Disseminate** knowledge through training workshops for service and program agencies, as well as through on-going community conversations, and through academic, public, and electronic media including a website.
4. **Empower** the community for evidence based advocacy to influence law and policy makers and program funders.
5. **Improve** the media images of our community and youth.

### Purpose:

The purpose of the ATSC is as follows:

- The ATSC will play the key role in ensuring that the project unfolds in a manner consistent with the identified needs of the Surrey community.
- The ATSC will invite representation of youth, parents, service providers, community leaders, and policy makers to contribute towards evidence-based research, training, and knowledge dissemination plans.



- The ATSC will be responsible to the dynamic needs of the community and will determine collaboratively the best course of action.
- Any modification in the research or project tasks will be determined by the ATSC following consultations with the membership at large.
- The ATSC will ensure collaboration between researchers and community partners so that the ownership of the project is balanced equally.

### Guiding Principles<sup>1</sup>:

1. Partners agree to support the purpose and objectives of the project, and agree to contribute in a variety of ways, including skills, knowledge, resources and other forms of support, to meet project goals.
2. Partners agree to communicate openly with the ATSC team, sharing relevant information, knowledge, rationales, decisions, and concerns. Diverse points of view are welcomed and will be treated with respect and tolerance.
3. Partners acknowledge that participation and leadership are distributed among all. Partners agree to work cooperatively to reach the best solutions and share responsibilities among all members.
4. Partners agree to meet the requirements as outlined by the funder (SSHRC-CURA) within a timely manner, including contributions to annual reports, budgets, community and project updates, and other information required for accountability.
5. Partners understand that the partnership between community agencies and academic institutions may be dynamic and shift over the duration of the project. As a result, partners strive to balance the needs identified by the community with the aims of the project.
6. Partners are responsible for accurate reporting and representation of research results in the public and academic domain. Partners will respect the confidentiality of data gathering, disseminating and storing of information as outlined in the *Tri-Council Ethical Guidelines*.

### Meeting procedures:

- The ATSC will meet quarterly. Special meetings may be called as necessary, in addition to regular meetings.

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<sup>1</sup> We acknowledge the Memorandum of Understanding from UNBC and Tl'azt'en Nation CURA project which provided a framework for developing our Acting Together-CURA project guiding principles.



- ATSC sub-committees may be established to address specific elements of the research program.
- ATSC members are expected to attend all meetings. If an ATSC member is unable to attend, a representative may be sent in their place, or the member may provide input through phone or email.
- ATSC meetings will be facilitated by a member on a rotating basis. At the end of each meeting, an ATSC member will be asked to volunteer to facilitate the next meeting.
- The Kwantlen team (Leadership and Research Staff) is responsible for developing and circulating meeting agendas. Input for the agenda will be solicited from all ATSC members at least one week prior to meetings. A project update will be provided to ATSC at least 2 weeks prior to meetings.
- Meeting locations may rotate among ATSC organizations which have space to hold such a meeting.
- The Kwantlen team will be responsible for meeting minutes. Minutes will be circulated to members no later than two weeks following each meeting for any revision. Upon adoption of the minutes at the next ATSC meeting, minutes will be posted to the *Acting Together* web-site ([www.actingtogether.ca](http://www.actingtogether.ca)). The minutes will identify specific action items and those on the committee who have agreed to take responsibility for each.

### Governance Structure and Rules:

1. The ATSC is composed of the Principal Investigator, Co-Investigators, and Community partners, and will provide 'General Governance' for The *Acting Together* Project.
2. The overall role of the ATSC, in the context of multiple layers of *Acting Together* project responsibilities, is described in Figure 1 below.
3. Decision making in meetings will be guided by a consensus process. If consensus cannot be reached, the ATSC members will have voting privileges, with a two-thirds majority needed for agreement.
4. New partners may be invited to join the Project. Any steering committee member may propose the name of a new partner at a regular steering committee meeting, or through communicating with the PI.
5. New partners can be proposed as ATSC members (with voting privileges) or as Associated Partners (without voting privileges on the ATSC).
6. Decisions regarding new partners will be made through consensus of all current ATSC members attending a meeting in person or by phone.



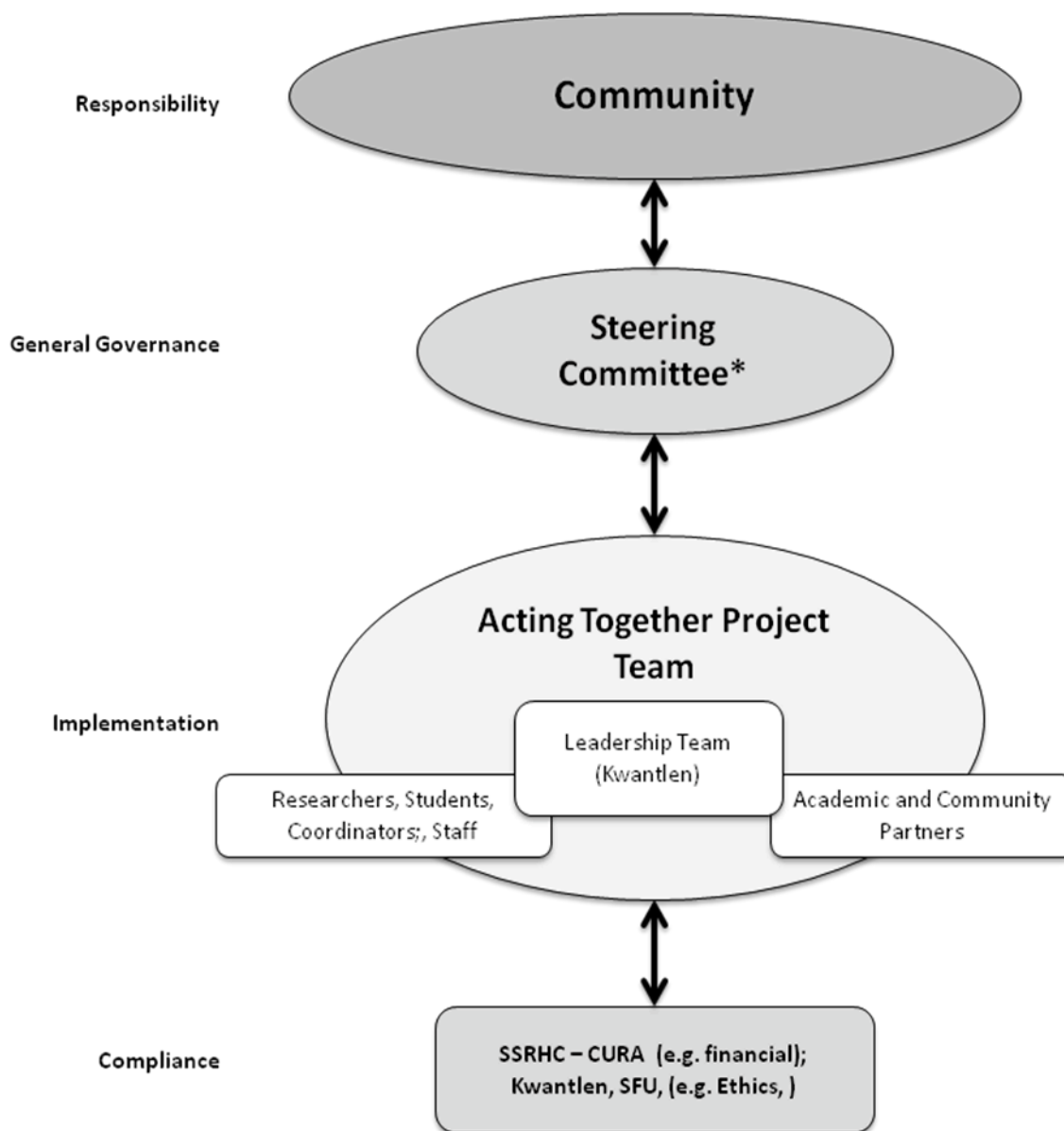
7. All new partners as ATSC members will be required to follow the procedures set out by the SSHRC-CURA guidelines for formally joining the project.
8. We encourage ATSC members to attend all meetings to facilitate diverse and representative discussion.
9. In the event that it becomes necessary for ATSC members to withdraw from *Acting Together*, the agency or organization they represent can provide a replacement member without formal review by the ATSC.
10. In the event that it becomes necessary for an agency or organization to withdraw from *Acting Together*, this decision will be formally communicated to the PI in writing.

***Criteria for partnership***

1. The capacity for research support.
2. Access to target populations (youth, parents, teachers, policy-makers, and media).
3. Potential for shared training & education.
4. Commitment of resources for project tasks (e.g., research, training, knowledge dissemination).



## Acting Together Governance Structure



\* Please see page 7 for list of Steering Committee members



## Glossary of Terms

- **SSHRC**  
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council; a federal funding agency.
- **CURA**  
Community University Research Alliance; a funding award administered by SSHRC.
- **Acting Together**  
Name of the project.
- **Principal Investigator (PI) / Project Director**  
Individual who is primarily responsible for the a) overall leadership of the project team, b) intellectual direction of the research, and c) administration of the grant.
- **Co-Investigators**  
Individuals who a) make a significant contribution to the intellectual direction of the research project, and b) play a significant role in the conduct of the research project.
- **Steering Committee**  
Designated representatives of the academic institutions and community organizations who have formal partnership for the project.
- **The Leadership Team**  
The PI/Project Director and two Co-investigators from the Lead Institution.
- **Lead Institution**  
The entity that has received the SSHRC-CURA funding.
- **Collaborators**  
Scholars or researchers who may play various roles in the project including participating in setting its intellectual direction.
- **Academic Partners**  
Post-Secondary Institutions who are formal partners of the project and are expected to support the research and project tasks.
- **Community Partners**  
Community-based organizations (not individuals) which are formal partners of the project, and are expected to i) contribute intellectually, ii) participate in the research and project tasks, and iii) identify individuals who act as contact persons.
- **Research Coordinator**  
Individual employed to assist the research team to meet its project goals.
- **Network Coordinator**  
Individual employed to liaison with all partners.
- **Research Assistants**  
Undergraduate and graduate students hired to assist with the research and project tasks.

## \* Steering Committee Members



Acting  
Together

A CURA project



RCMP (CSFEU Gang Task Force)



South Asian Community Coalition Against Youth Violence  
(SACCAYV)



Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS)





**A c t i n g  
T o g e t h e r**

A **CURA** project

*Diversecity*



Sikh Alliance Against Youth Violence (VIRSA)



South Asian Student Advocacy by Teachers (SASAT)



Shaw Cablesystems



The Indo-Canadian Voice