

Transforming Inner-city and Aboriginal Communities.

Focus of research:

This project will examine the potential of community development strategies for solving the deepening and increasingly complex problems of poverty and social exclusion in Manitoba's inner-city and Aboriginal communities.

Parameters for research proposals:

As per our proposal to SSHRC, our broad goal is to produce original work that is rooted in the community experience and that is accountable to the community. We want to build local capacity, produce *concrete* deliverables for community organization, and we want to engage and impact policy. Our most important goal is to contribute to a body of theory and knowledge that will help other communities to replicate the transformative experience. Our projects must be "by, with and for" the people.

The Alliance recognizes the relations of power within society. In the inner-city, we find a combination of class, gender race at play; these in turn have generational and spatial considerations. We want to understand how these dynamics contribute to the continued exclusion and subordination of particular groups of people. Our research will include a combination of approaches: participative, qualitative, and action-oriented.

Traditionally there has been limited integration between academic and community-based research, policy and practice. Marginalized groups have been excluded from the official production of knowledge. These groups may have different issues, customs and approaches to the investigation, knowledge building and ownership of information. To actively move our research beyond the mainstream, many different community groups are involved in the research process and play a vital role in establishing the research agenda.

Our projects are participatory and combine three activities: research, education and action. Our collective methodology will seek to be transformative in and of itself. We will draw on the field of transformative learning as academics, community-based-organization researchers and community participants interact with and learn from each other, and in the process, transform their understanding of self, community and the larger local and global institutions.

The four research streams are:

1. Justice, Safety and Security;
2. Neighbourhood Revitalization and Housing;
3. Skill and Capacity Building, and Employment;
4. Community Economic Development.

Proposals should be relevant to at least one of the four research streams.