

Whose Work Are We Doing?

A Self-Assessment Tool for Researchers in a Partnership

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In their article, “Design experimentation and mutual appropriation: Two strategies for university/collaborative after-school interventions”, Deborah Downing-Wilson, Robert Locusay, and Michael Cole underscore the value for partnerships of a mix of different kinds of work. Some work we researchers do to help our partner out—it’s neither our joint work or work we would do on our own if the partnership didn’t exist. Other work is hybrid, building on some innovation that already existed in the education setting. The third category of work is comprised of new things we design and implement together.

Below are examples from their article, which focused on a partnership between the University of California San Diego and a local Boys and Girls Club:

<i>Activity that was part of their education partner’s work, but not the researchers’ work</i>	Helping with tutoring at the club
<i>Activity that was hybrid: It existed in the educational setting already, but researchers modified it</i>	Helping build up the garden and improving the health value of snacks at the club
<i>Activity that the partnership designed and implemented together</i>	A science afterschool program

Researchers can use this self-assessment tool to help diagnose the extent to which they are engaged in these different forms of work. We hypothesize that a healthy partnership has a mix of activities in each of these categories.

	RESEARCHER ACTIVITIES	
	We've done this activity in the past	We're doing this activity now or planning to do it
Activities that are part of our education partner's work, but not our work.		
Activities that are hybrid: The activity existed in the educational setting, but researchers change it in some way through their activity		
Activities to design and implement innovations together		

Reference:

Downing-Wilson, D., Locusay, R., & Cole, M. (2011). Design experimentation and mutual appropriation: Two strategies for university/collaborative after-school interventions. *Theory & Psychology, 21*(5), 656-680.