



VADE-MECUM

TO DEVELOP A COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

Document for students, academic
supervisors and stakeholders

Unil

UNIL | Université de Lausanne

Interface - Funding for
Collaborative Research

PREFACE AND CONTEXT

Over the past 30 years, the role of universities has changed significantly. Their contribution to society now goes beyond teaching within their walls and research governed primarily by academic logic. Universities are also committed to making the knowledge and expertise they produce available to citizens; this is their « third mission. » The resulting partnerships and collaborations with actors in the field (e.g., public administrations, associations, NGOs, companies, foundations, etc.) make it possible to respond to the challenges facing our society and enrich research practices. These collaborations, whether bilateral or multipartite, bring together worlds with different goals, missions, and constraints. This type of approach therefore requires mutual learning, so that sharing these different practices can create something that benefits each stakeholder, whether in the context of a large-scale project or the completion of a master's thesis.

UNIL has been committed to this approach for several decades and has integrated this type of collaboration into its strategic planning. In particular, it has initiated pilot projects such as *Vivre Ensemble dans l'Incertain* (Living Together in Uncertainty) in 2007, *Volte-face* in 2014 and 2021, *Interact* since 2018, and *Interface* starting in 2024.

DOCUMENT FOR STUDENTS, ACADEMIC SUPERVISORS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Students and stakeholders receive this document at the beginning of the collaboration process or when they meet with Interface's monitoring teams. It has been written to cover many of the questions that may arise when developing a partnership research project. It is designed as a guide to help stakeholders reflect on their decision to embark on a joint project. Its purpose is to support partners in creating a common dynamic of collaboration, to encourage and nurture exchanges, and to make adjustments as needed throughout the process so that the collaboration satisfies all parties. It also highlights specific elements of the training process for students engaged in partnership-based research. You will find a selection of questions that are useful to ask in the context of a partnership that brings together representatives from the world of research and representatives from the public, associative, or private sectors, foundations, or NGOs.

To make the document easier for students to read, we suggest using the table of contents as a checklist to prepare for collaboration with your field partner and supervisor. This table of contents lists the main questions to ask yourself in order to launch a project under the best conditions. You can then explore the necessary points in more depth during your discussions, using the specific sections and sub-questions that you feel are relevant to your project.

Throughout the collaboration, it is normal that the unpredictability and trial and error inherent in scientific research will lead you to reorient, adapt, and re-discuss the objectives and form of the work. If either party is dissatisfied, the support team can be contacted at any time to discuss how to readjust the project.

This document is a first draft intended to evolve as experience is gained.

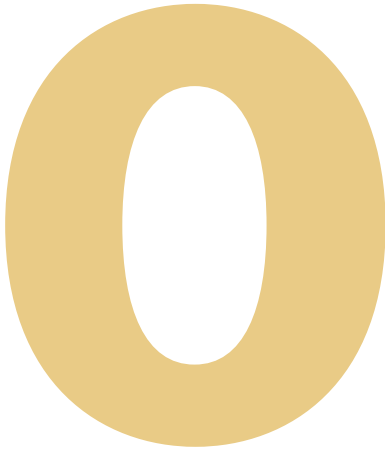
DETAILS ON THE VOCABULARY USED IN THE DOCUMENT

- **Student:** a person enrolled at UNIL to pursue a Bachelor's or Master's degree program.
- **Researcher:** a person who conducts research at UNIL and has obtained at least a master's degree.
- **Teacher or supervisor :** a person who teaches at UNIL. They are authorized to supervise Master's theses, in accordance with the specific academic requirements of the program.
- **Stakeholders:** people who are not registered and generally do not work with UNIL. Stakeholders may be representatives of a public administration, a company, an association, a foundation, an NGO, or a citizen collective. The partner presents a field need that the research must address.
- **Support or follow-up team :** the team that supports researchers and external partners in the context of a project supported by Interface.

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SOME EDUCATIONAL GUIDELINES



IS COLLABORATION WITH A STUDENT REALISTIC?

The educational scales presented below enable teachers to assess the relevance of the approach from an educational perspective, as well as the accessibility and authenticity of the project. These grids also enable you to identify obstacles and opportunities in the work and research context, in order to provide the best scientific and educational conditions for the implementation of this project.¹

These scales help answer two main questions:

To what extent is the challenge accessible to students?

If so, are there other aspects of the issue or sub-issues that would be more accessible?

To what extent is the challenge authentic for students?

If so, are there other aspects of the issue or sub-issues that would be more authentic?

An achievable challenge

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The issue is too difficult for students to understand. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Students have sufficient information, knowledge, and analytical and intellectual resources to understand the issue. |
| Students, the class, and/or teachers do not have access to the information, actors, decision-making forums, etc. necessary to address the issue. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Students, the class, and/or teachers have access to the information, actors, decision-making forums, etc. necessary to address the issue. |
| Students do not have the opportunity to influence actions and decision-making with a view to addressing the issue. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Students can influence actions and decision-making to address the issue, for example by proposing practical solutions or changes. |
| The research results or student actions will be available too late and/or before the actions are visible. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | The research results or actions of the students will be visible within a timeframe adjusted to the needs of the issue. |

A real challenge

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The answer to meet the needs within a given field is already available; now it needs to be implemented. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | There are no ready-made solutions that can be easily applied to meet the needs of the field. |
| As a teacher, I already know how to respond to practical needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | As a teacher, trying to solve this problem would require more in-depth research or experimentation than I can entrust to students. |
| There is a « right » way to solve the problem. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | The problem can be solved in various ways, which must be examined in context and compared. |
| Solutions to similar problems have already been found in other contexts and can easily be replicated or applied in the present context. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Although solutions to similar problems have already been found in other contexts, there are no ready-made answers to the question of whether and how these solutions can be applied in the present context. |

¹ Van Poeck, K., & Östman, L. (2020). *The risk and potentiality of engaging with sustainability problems in education – A pragmatist teaching approach*. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 54(4), 1003-1018. Free translation.

PURPOSE AND FORM OF COLLABORATION



Prior to the stakeholder meeting, we recommend that each stakeholder consider their expectations and needs, as well as the resources they can make available to the project and the constraints they face.

Then, when you meet, you will be able to share your **expectations**. You must be prepared to accept that your respective objectives and the outcomes you expect **may not be the same** depending on whether you are a student or a practitioner in the field. This is not an obstacle if you can explain them clearly and ensure that they are compatible, then find common ground. We also recommend that you set out each party's objectives in a document agreed by both parties, and, if necessary and depending on the context, to formalize it. The Interface support team is available to assist you as needed in discussions and in formalizing the collaboration.

This step repeats some of the questions proposed in section 0. Once completed individually, they must be pooled, discussed, and, if necessary, negotiated. The Interface monitoring team can assist you in this process if needed.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR COLLABORATION?

WHAT ARE YOUR OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS IN THIS COLLABORATION?

What is your objective in this collaborative research?

The objectives allow us to define the expectations for this work, both in terms of the form of collaboration and the deliverable you would like to obtain at the end of this work, or your interests in using scientific research.

- For example, **for students**: transfer and application of theoretical knowledge, development of scientific or cross-disciplinary skills, discovery of new research practices, first contact with the job market, articulation between theory and practice, practical and engaged experience, scientific response to field needs, development of an academic or professional network, etc.
- For example, **for stakeholders**: access to scientific knowledge or expertise, scientific support for measures, policies, or activities in your organization, raising student awareness of your field of activity, opening up new avenues for reflection or action in your organization or field of activity, inventing new mechanisms or modes of action, creating responses tailored to your context, etc.

Are the project objectives shared by all stakeholders?

- Are certain objectives specific to a single stakeholder? If so, are they acceptable to the other stakeholder(s), particularly in view of the constraints they could impose on the project (extension of deadlines, excessive mobilization of resources, etc.)?
- Does the student's work adequately meet a practical need? Conversely, does it adequately meet the student's academic requirements? (see tables in the section « Some educational guidelines, » page 6)

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONDUCT COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH?

Les besoins sont les conditions minimales que vous souhaiteriez voir réunies pour élaborer un travail de qualité et dans un contexte de collaboration réussi.

- For example, **for students**: academic criteria regarding the type of work to be carried out, the form and intensity of supervision by the field partner and supervisor, collaboration with the field partner, desired learning outcomes, discovering new ways of collaborating, developing an academic and professional network, etc.
- For example, **for the stakeholders**: form and intensity of collaboration, supervision of the student's work, field needs that the research could investigate, desired theoretical and scientific references, network building, form of deliverable, etc.

WHAT SKILLS DO YOU NEED TO CARRY OUT YOUR PROJECT?

- What knowledge and/or skills can each stakeholder offer the other?
For example: data analysis, methodological approaches, knowledge of a particular structure, institutional anchoring, networking, originality of approaches, technical knowledge, professional or specific to a field of activity, scientific and field knowledge required for the project, etc.
- How is professional knowledge linked to scientific knowledge?
- Where can one find the skills that stakeholders do not have (expertise of a colleague, other completed projects, supervisor, etc.)? Under what conditions?

HOW MUCH AVAILABILITY CAN YOU OFFER YOUR PARTNER, AND HOW MUCH AVAILABILITY DO YOU EXPECT IN RETURN?

- For example, **common points**: regularity and duration of meetings, time available to answer questions from the partner/student, any travel to be taken into account, contact persons who should be included or contacted for the project, etc.
- For example, **for students**: organizing the time needed for the project in relation to academic obligations (classes, exams, end of the academic year) or other activities (jobs, vacations, and leisure activities), etc.

Is each stakeholder firmly committed to ensuring their availability for the project?

Compared to a mandate, for example, it is less a matter of delegation than of collaboration. Partnership-based research requires time for discussion between partners. This time is necessary to ensure the success of the project. It should enable the terms of collaboration and the expected results and deliverables to be defined. A realistic estimate of your availability and the assurance that you will be available throughout the project is a guarantee of success.

- To what extent can/should each stakeholder commit to the other, including helping the other meet their own needs (promoting or highlighting the project to its own audience)?
- How much time (number of working hours/ECTS/overtime) is required on both sides to complete the project?
- Is collaboration compatible with everyone's work schedules?

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

2

A clearly defined project management plan is key to the success of any collaborative project, just as it is for any other project. The challenge lies in reconciling the different habits and operating methods of the various stakeholders.

HOW IS THE PROJECT MANAGED?

How do stakeholders interact with each other throughout the project?

- Who is involved in the project?
- What is the distribution of responsibilities (student - teacher - stakeholders - other people involved)?
- What are the points of contact for each partner?
- What type of meetings are planned during the project and where will they take place (email, telephone, video conference, face-to-face meetings)?
- What are the communication arrangements between the partners during the project (frequency, channels, objectives, people involved, etc.)?

HOW DO YOU ENSURE THAT THE PROJECT IS PROGRESSING ACCORDING TO THE AGREED SCHEDULE?

If adjustments are necessary during the project—a common occurrence in research—it is advisable to discuss them collectively among the stakeholders and, if necessary, to inform the monitoring team.

- Who is responsible for a) setting and b) validating the project's milestones?
- Who is responsible for ensuring that these steps are followed? When and by whom are adjustments decided?

WHAT ARE YOUR CONSTRAINTS IN SETTING UP THIS COLLABORATION?

What are your constraints and deadlines for this work?

Constraints are potential obstacles that you will need to address so that they do not prevent you from completing the work within the agreed timeframe.

- For example, **for students/teachers**: the format of the final assignment, the level of expertise required for the project, the end of the semester, the (im)balance between the workload and the ECTS credits awarded, deadlines and the duration of the academic program, the assignment submission date, coordination with other professional or family commitments, etc.
- For example, **for the stakeholders**: political or project-specific timetable, expert reports, available financial or human resources, contract duration, events, funding opportunities or limitations, contacts to be expanded, etc.

- How will you reconcile your respective constraints in order to establish a fruitful collaboration?
- What are the specific deadlines for each stakeholder? (see examples above)
- How do these timeframes affect the project?

ARE THERE ANY OPPORTUNITIES TO BE SEIZED FOR THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OR ENHANCEMENT OF YOUR PROJECT?

For example: rotation, scientific conference, institutional symposium, media opportunity, etc.

HOW DO YOU ENSURE SUFFICIENT INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE SMOOTH RUNNING OF YOUR PROJECT?

- Can the stakeholder guarantee the backing, or even the support, of their superiors, which is essential for carrying out the project successfully and finding support in the event of any obstacles?
- Is the project sufficiently anchored in the field partner's institution to ensure its smooth running?
- Are there any institutional constraints that should be shared with the student before launching the project (communication about the project, governance of the institution and/or project, contact persons, practical constraints, etc.)?

WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THAT THE PROJECT HAS BEEN COMPLETED?

- If the collaboration extends beyond the initial schedule, how will you determine that the collaboration has come to an end? Are there other conditions besides the completion of the thesis or teaching?
- How do you determine that each party has satisfactorily fulfilled the contributions announced?

CONTRIBUTIONS AND FUNDING FOR THE PROJECT

3

Once you have defined the objective and approach of your project, you will need to determine the contributions of each stakeholder, and even which resources need to be sourced externally and under what conditions. A partnership does not necessarily imply equal contributions, especially since the benefits gained by each party may have different values, which is not a problem as long as everyone gets something out of it.

WHAT RESOURCES DO STAKEHOLDERS HAVE?

- **What resources (financial or in kind) can each stakeholder make available to the project and other partners?**
For example: data to be processed, access to software, working hours, premises, expertise, etc.
- **What knowledge and/or skills can each stakeholder offer the other?**
For example: data analysis, methodological approaches, knowledge of a particular structure, institutional anchoring, networking, technical or field-specific knowledge, business or scientific knowledge required for the project, etc.
- **Are benefits or services in kind possible?**
For example: working hours, access to a workplace, access to software, contact with colleagues, participation in internal processes, etc.
- **Does the partner provide data that can be used for research purposes?**
If so, how are they transmitted, processed, analyzed, and stored? Are they personal and/or sensitive data? If so, is it necessary to sign a confidentiality agreement?

WHAT BUDGET WOULD YOU NEED?

- What kind of expenses are you planning for?
For example: transportation, data collection equipment, events, compensation for survey participants, printing, technical equipment (voice recorder, camera, etc.), project promotion, etc.
- Can or does the stakeholder want to cover certain costs?
- How will the funding be managed?

RESPECT FOR ETHICAL RULES

4

In the context of collaboration, each stakeholder may be subject to ethical or professional rules specific to their field of activity, which may inconvenience the other stakeholder. For example, a researcher may be interested in data obtained during a census, but the census will only be able to provide these results with significant restrictions.

Furthermore, the principle of academic freedom implies that students or researchers may publish the results of scientific research, even if these results contradict the expectations of the field partner. It is therefore necessary for each stakeholder to set out the rules they are required to follow in carrying out the collaboration in a document signed by both parties.

Furthermore, the research framework in place at UNIL is explained on page 16 of this document. It includes references to academic freedom, intellectual property, copyright, data protection, conflicts of interest, and communication procedures, including specific clauses relating to student work.

WHAT ETHICAL RULES MUST YOU COMPLY WITH TO ENSURE THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF YOUR PROJECT?

- Are the ethical rules to which each stakeholder is subject explicit and taken into account by all stakeholders?
- In the case of a master's thesis, is academic freedom guaranteed in the student's work?
- Is IP sharing/rights session necessary at the end of the project?
- How are professional secrecy and the protection of external data ensured during and at the end of the project?

EXPLOITATION AND VALORIZATION OF RESULTS

5

We cannot wait for the results to arrive, which everyone will be happy to claim as their own, to define who will formally own and control their use, promotion, and communication. These points, which must be formalized at the start of the collaboration, concern both the form and type of products required to achieve the objectives set out in part 1 of this document, and the methods of exploitation, promotion, and communication of the results. This reflection will also allow us to explore all the opportunities offered by the results obtained.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO PRODUCE AND IN WHAT FORM?

- **What deliverable does the field partner want to obtain at the end of the project?**

For example: a short report of xx pages, an exhibition, advocacy support, training, a conference, flyers, recommendations, a journal, literature, etc.

- **How will scientific outputs be adapted to the format expected by the stakeholder?**

For example: when an 80-page thesis is produced to meet the academic and educational requirements of a Master's program, how will it be transformed or translated into a 10-page report, a conference presentation, or a brochure that can be used more directly by the field partner? How would you like Interface to assist you in carrying out this translation?

- **Do both parties agree on the nature and form of the deliverables needed to meet the common or respective objectives of the project?**

(See box on p. 6)

- **What are the communication requirements?**

For example: responsible institution, use of logos, graphic charters, timing, joint validation process, available resources, etc. The section on disseminating and promoting results (p. 23) can also help you with your communication strategy.

WHO COMMUNICATES ABOUT THE PROJECT, WHAT, WHEN, AND HOW?

- Are there any obstacles to communication (confidential data)? On the contrary, what would be the requirements and deadlines (political and academic agenda, events, etc.)?
- What resources would be needed to carry out this communication?

FORM OF DELIVERABLES

The production of scientific publications resulting from partnership research projects is an obvious need for UNIL researchers to promote their work. Where possible, analyses of situations and results will be produced jointly by the stakeholders in order to ensure the greatest possible « social robustness » and relevance of the analyses.

Alongside such publications, projects supported by Interface will often result in deliverables in various forms (concise reports, recommendations, leaflets, exhibitions in museums or urban settings, cultural or scientific mediation, educational materials or training courses, video clips, conferences, etc.). These deliverables should enable the field partner to improve their environment, their services to their clients or beneficiaries, or to strengthen the implementation of high-quality public policies, among other things.

Where possible, analyses of situations and results will be produced jointly by stakeholders in order to ensure the greatest possible « social robustness » and relevance of the analyses.

In addition, each stakeholder will endeavor to share with their partner the knowledge necessary for the subsequent implementation of such a project, to the extent possible. Collaboration may also consist of establishing a process or mechanism that will be continued after the collaboration has ended (e.g., citizen consultation protocol, co-design protocol, community health approach, etc.). Projects may also aim to collaboratively design a prototype that will be tested during or after the collaboration project (e.g., software prototype, urban signage prototype, sensor prototype for analyzing air pollutants or human activity, qualitative or quantitative indicator prototype, etc.).

Finally, projects may also lead to the production of cultural and educational content (exhibitions in museums or urban settings, cultural mediation, educational materials as part of a prevention campaign, books, etc.).

This corresponds to the ideal of partnership-based research, which aims not only to transfer results, but also to exchange and perpetuate skills and know-how.

TERMS OF USE OF RESULTS

- **Communication:** this can take the form of raising awareness (making oneself known to the general public), mobilizing stakeholders and resources, promoting the project's ideas to the authorities or the general public, etc.
- **Valorization:** this refers to all activities that make the results of a research project available to relevant social actors and the general public, so that they can make use of them. This transfer complements the criteria of excellence developed in the academic world with criteria of relevance and social robustness.
- **Exploitation:** leveraging results in line with the objectives that were set. For a student, this might involve promoting their thesis work. For practitioners in the field, it might involve rolling out a service or implementing a policy, administrative practice, design, or cultural initiative supported by the new knowledge that has been developed, for example.

CURRENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AT UNIL

Research and collaborations conducted at UNIL are subject to a specific legal and institutional framework. This framework provides a structure for the work carried out, the academic freedom enjoyed by researchers, and ensures the reasonable use of their data. This framework, the main points of which are outlined below, will enable you to formalize the necessary terms and conditions at the outset of your collaboration, in accordance with the research being conducted and the partners involved.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Academic freedom guarantees the **autonomous and independent** conduct of research and the resulting findings. It is **guaranteed** for all students and researchers by the Constitution and the LUL.

LEGAL REFERENCES

Academic freedom is a multidimensional concept that is essential to the missions and activities of the University. This concept is enshrined in several areas of national law, ranging from freedom of science in Article 20 of the Federal Constitution to academic freedom in Article 15 of the [Law on the University of Lausanne \(LUL\)](#). In Switzerland, it is therefore a constitutional freedom. It is also an integral part of the Magna Carta Universitatum signed by UNIL in 1988.

This freedom covers important aspects concerning the entire academic community. In particular, it guarantees the necessary independence and autonomy in research and generally accompanies the duty of integrity by establishing the essential framework for scientific integrity to be effective.

In terms of collaboration, this means, for example, that the independence of UNIL employees must be contractually guaranteed so that the results are not subject to any external influence.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The concept of « intellectual property » encompasses **intellectual creations**, including inventions, literary and artistic works, designs and models, as well as symbols, names, and images used in commerce.

This property is protected by law (through patents, copyrights, and trademark registrations). The resulting legal recognition allows creators to own their inventions/creations or receive financial benefits for their inventions or creations (WIPO).

LEGAL REFERENCES

In general, the intellectual property rights to research conducted and its **results belong to UNIL, except for copyright** (see below), which belongs to the researchers. The rights to use software created by researchers belong to UNIL.

Intellectual property at UNIL is governed by Articles 70 to 72 of the LUL: « With the exception of copyright, the University is the owner of intellectual property rights relating to all technical intellectual creations and research results obtained by members of the teaching staff in the course of their activities in the service of the University. »

All UNIL employees are required to report any intellectual property (inventions or software) they have created to PACTT. This declaration is made using a form available on the PACTT website, which must be sent to the following address: pactt.license@chuv.ch

Unlike researchers, students are not employees of UNIL and therefore retain intellectual property rights over their creations.

In an inter-institutional partnership, there are no predefined institutional rules regarding the distribution of intellectual property. The rules set out above may be waived by contract or agreement. When several partners are involved in the creation of intellectual property, a contract must therefore be drawn up to organize this joint ownership, its conditions, and how it will be managed. In the context of an Interface project, simply enter the relevant information in the submission form, and PACTT or the legal department will draw up the contract.

In cases where students participate in a project, it may be important for UNIL to ensure that it retains intellectual property rights (usually by signing a contract transferring rights) if results are shared with partners in the field.

COPYRIGHT

In Switzerland, copyright law grants creators of literary, artistic, musical, and other works (including software) **protection and control over the use and distribution** of their creations (reproduction, distribution, making them available to the public, adaptation, and public performance). Copyright allows the author **to be recognized as such (authorship of the work) and to oppose any modification that would damage their reputation or the integrity of the work (moral rights)**.

LEGAL REFERENCES

Copyright law aims to protect literary and artistic works. Software is also considered a work within the meaning of the Federal Act on Copyright.

Once again, the rules depend on the terms of the collaboration agreement negotiated with the partner. With the exception of federal legislation, the rules of the LUL and institutional policy (Policy on Intellectual Property, November 2015, in the case of collaborations with the CHUV), there are no pre-established rules on the ownership of intellectual property resulting from a collaboration. **Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that academic freedom and scientific integrity may require the retention of intellectual property rights over research.**

DATA PROTECTION

Data protection refers to all measures and practices imposed by law that **guarantee the protection of individuals against the misuse of personal data concerning them**. Among other things, the law defines who is responsible for data processing, how data must be collected, to whom it may be transmitted and under what conditions, and when it must be destroyed or anonymized. It is therefore important to consider the various stages of data processing, including **collection, recording, storage, processing, and transmission, so that data is processed in accordance with the law throughout its entire lifecycle**. At UNIL, recommendations on the processing of personal data **can be found on the dedicated website** (UNIL, Data Protection).

UNIL may process the personal data of its partners in accordance with the legal framework and through appropriate agreements. Contact the research coordinator or *data steward* at your faculty for all the necessary information on the practices to be adopted for the processing of personal data.

LEGAL REFERENCES

The Data Protection Act protects data subjects against the processing of personal data that infringes on their personality rights or privacy. This right is enshrined in [Article 13 of the Swiss Constitution](#).

Data processing under the responsibility of UNIL is subject [to the Canton of Vaud Law on the Protection of Personal Data \(LPrD\)](#). Partnership research projects must comply with the legal obligations imposed by the law and follow UNIL's recommendations.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest involves a conflict between **the public duties and private interests of a public official**. In a conflict of interest, a public official **has private interests** that could unduly influence **the way they perform their duties and responsibilities** (OECD). Any conflict of interest in a project supported by Interface must be disclosed when the project is submitted.

Conflicts of interest relate in particular to activities that:

- conflict with the interests of UNIL;
- influence or risk influencing the professional and scientific judgment of employees—particularly through private relationships in the workplace;
- would generate financial interests related to research or a project, for themselves or members of their family;
- include any influence of a potential sponsor on the research.

At UNIL, the person responsible for a research project and their collaborators must declare any conflicts of interest, their financial interests related to the research, and the financial interests of their family members (spouse, children, siblings, parents, and parents-in-law), in accordance with Directive 4.2. on scientific integrity in research and the procedure to be followed in the event of a breach of integrity.

LEGAL REFERENCES

Conflicts of interest are regulated in [Directive 4.2](#) on scientific integrity in research and [Directive 1.25](#) on ancillary activities. These directives address issues related to financial interests, shareholdings, and conflicts of interest in the context of research and scientific expertise. They define the subjective limits of academic freedom in terms of work, research, and integrity at the institutional level. More specifically, PACTT has an obligation to report any conflicts of interest it identifies during its mission to the department's steering committee. This obligation stems from [the 2009 UNIL-CHUV Executive Board Directive](#) and refers to [Management Directive 1.25](#) on ancillary activities and [Management Directive 4.2](#) on scientific integrity in research.

DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS

The results and outputs of the collaboration will be communicated, promoted, and exploited. The framework below will allow you to explore all the opportunities offered by the results obtained and their exploitation, in accordance with the research conducted and the partners involved.

With regard to non-scientific publications resulting from collaborative research projects, **joint validation** by each stakeholder is possible. The terms of communication must be discussed within the framework of each project. They may be formalized contractually. Nevertheless, a principle of **joint communication prevails**, including in particular the joint presentation of the partners' names and/or graphics, the joint logos of UNIL and field partners, and the support of Interface, for all communication related to the project.

LEGAL REFERENCES

In order to protect the expertise of UNIL employees and partners, it may also be crucial to put confidentiality agreements in place prior to discussions about collaboration, for example, so that confidential information is not disclosed.

Scientific publications (articles, publications in books, etc.) are reserved. Here again, it is important to guarantee academic freedom in order to preserve scientific integrity as much as possible. UNIL encourages the scientific publication of results, and embargoes are relatively rare. When they are applied, they must be reasonable and justified by the circumstances of the project or the results.

It is essential to notify PACTT in the event of an invention or software before its publication. In some cases, for example if you wish to protect an invention, its publication may prevent any subsequent form of protection and thus jeopardize the exploitation of the results.

FURTHER READING: SOME KEY POINTS ABOUT COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

Collaborations between UNIL students and external partners that are developed with the support of Interface require a different kind of investment from stakeholders than a traditional Master's thesis. Creating a dynamic of collaboration, fostering and nurturing exchanges, and making adjustments as needed throughout the process represents a significant investment for everyone involved. This is also what makes this approach so valuable.

As part of Interface's activities, we aim to provide a framework conducive to welcoming partners in the field and enabling students to acquire cross-disciplinary knowledge and skills. Interface is committed to supporting students and stakeholders throughout the process, facilitating the emergence of common issues, covering work-related expenses, and responding to needs as they arise.

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH: WHAT IS IT?

At UNIL; partnership-based research refers to any form of research involving at least one member of the UNIL community (student, researcher, etc.) and an expert in the field, regardless of the methodology used. The forms of collaboration are very diverse, including collaborative research, action research, participatory research, citizen science, research-creation, etc.

In general, partnership-based research aims to **a) produce knowledge, b) contribute to a need identified by a partner in the field, or c) exchange knowledge**. For partners in the field, whether public or private, collaboration in the training process can enable them to better understand the opportunities and constraints of their environment in order to improve their professional practices or the quality of the public policies they implement. For researchers in academia, this type of collaboration provides access to new areas of research, with greater depth. It also constitutes a mutual enrichment through the exchange of heterogeneous knowledge and practices that is often not offered by « traditional » fundamental research.

a) Knowledge production

There are four types of knowledge:

- **Scientific knowledge** that undergoes peer review procedures in the academic community;
- **Knowledge for expertise** that is action- and decision-oriented (e.g., risk assessment, product approval, legal assessment of a situation, etc.);
- **Practical knowledge** relating to the use of certain devices, procedures, and professional skills (e.g., use of software, technical skills related to urban planning, management techniques, etc.);
- **Experiential knowledge** related to individual and subjective experiences of certain situations (e.g., chronic illness, use of social services, experiences of civil servants in conflict situations with users of public services, etc.).

The boundary between these different forms of knowledge can sometimes be difficult to define, as the production of scientific knowledge, for example, also draws on practical and experiential knowledge. In the context of a research partnership, keeping these four types of knowledge in mind helps to articulate the criterion of academic excellence (essential for academic stakeholders) with those of relevance and social robustness (essential for students, researchers, and field partners).

Scientific knowledge can be said to be « socially robust » if: 1) its validity has been tested under controlled conditions or using a reliable and valid methodology in the outside world; 2) its production involved a wide variety of actors beyond academic experts alone: users, residents, patients, affected groups, etc.; 3) it is the result of a series of repeated tests and trials aimed at refining it and making it more relevant to all actors.²

b) Contribute to a need identified by a stakeholder

Some projects seek to address concrete issues by combining scientific knowledge, practical knowledge, and experiential knowledge. The university provides a reflective and informed framework for analyzing these situations and mobilizing relevant knowledge. This knowledge can come from all stakeholders (students, supervisors, and field partners), with the project and joint work facilitating its sharing.

c) Knowledge exchange

Scientists can provide the conceptual basis necessary for the mission of field partners (for example, through training), while the latter can in turn contribute their professional expertise to research or university teaching.

² Adapted definition by Nowotny H., *Democratising expertise and socially robust knowledge*, Science and Public Policy, volume 30, number 3, June 2003, pages 151–156, Beech Tree Publishing, 10 Watford Close, Guildford, Surrey GU1 2EP, England.

FORM OF RESEARCH AND DELIVERABLES

For Master's students, writing a thesis is a common way to showcase their work.

However, in addition to such publications, joint projects may also result in other deliverables, including, for example, the formulation of recommendations. These recommendations, intended to strengthen the implementation of high-quality public policies, will be developed jointly by the partners as far as possible. If a methodology is used by one of the stakeholders within the framework of the project, that stakeholder will endeavor, as far as possible, to pass on to the other stakeholder the knowledge necessary for its subsequent implementation.

Partnership-based research aims not only to jointly produce results and transfer or apply them to professional practices, but also to exchange and perpetuate skills and know-how.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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