



Missouri Collaborative on Firearms Research Planning Day Report

September 2023



SUMMARY

On September 7, 2023, nine representatives from the founding partner organizations associated with the Missouri Collaborative on Firearms Research (MCFR) met for a day of continued strategic planning. The group included representatives from Missouri Foundation for Health, Alive & Well Communities, Community Partnership of the Ozarks, the St. Louis Area Violence Prevention Commission, Washington University in St. Louis, and the University of Missouri. The event was hosted by Missouri Foundation for Health and facilitated by Openfields.

The goals of the planning day included:

- + Deepening our mutual understanding of MCFR's aims, values, and potential approaches
- + Establishing some early structure around roles and Collaborative decision-making processes
- + Identifying concrete next steps for the Collaborative

AGENDA

The agenda for the day included:

- + **Centering on Our Values and Vision**
Beginning today focused on what is most important and what we imagine and hope for the future of MCFR and the communities we seek to serve
- + **Roles & Responsibilities**
Reviewing current Core Partner, MFH, and Openfields roles and responsibilities in the context of the RAPID framework; addressing different roles for both the process and content of MCFR; introducing the role community members might play going forward
- + **Decision-Making Process**
Learning and practicing a consensus-driven decision-making framework for the CP Executive Committee going forward
- + **Vision, Mission, and Our Approach to Community Engagement**
Inspired by the earlier reflection on our values and vision, reviewing and potentially revising the working vision and mission statements; reviewing and potentially revising section VI. Of the working plan, "Our Approach to Community Engagement"
- + **Open Discussion & Final Reflections**
Identifying key questions to continue to work through together; discussing attendance at the National Research Conference on the Prevention of Firearm Related Harms + the potential for ongoing learning via Orchard



DECISIONS

- ✓ Adopt RAPID roles as outlined on Miro board (page 7), for now
- ✓ Adopt Fist-to-Five decision-making model for now, with each deciding organization having one vote
- ✓ Adopt statement on Approach to Community Engagement with minor revisions (described on page 10)
- ✓ At least one person from each Core Partner organization will attend the NRCPFRH on November 1-3, 2023

OTHER AGREEMENTS + NEXT STEPS

- + Openfields will revise the vision and mission statements based on everyone's feedback, and submit revisions to Core Partner Representatives and MFH for reconsideration.
- + Participants agreed that for now, the Community Engagement Principles encompass a sufficient set of values for MCFR and we will not write a separate values statement.
- + Participants will continue to meet monthly to define next steps for MCFR, with the next meeting on September 25, 2023.

Activity Reports

CENTERING ON OUR VALUES AND VISION

Beginning today focused on what is most important and what we imagine and hope for the future of MCFR and the communities we seek to serve

In this session, participants reflected individually and then together on the following prompt: *Think about your career, your organization, the communities – and the individuals – you serve. Reflect on MCFR and all of the potential this group represents. What is a story you want to be able to tell 10 years from now about what MCFR was able to accomplish? Who is involved? What happened? What does it mean?* Participants were encouraged to build on and ask questions of each other's responses.

What is a story you want to be able to tell 10 years from now about what MCFR was able to accomplish? Who is involved? What happened? What does it mean?

- + Real funding for projects that meet community needs (+ sustainable)
- + Paradigm shift: community members as partners + experts
- + Sustained partnerships between community and researchers
- + Accountability of researchers to communities
- + "Evidence" includes stories and experiences
- + Power distribution shifts – researchers respond to communities
- + Youth and young people engaged – upstream work
- + Field recognizes upstream connections >> firearms
- + Shifting narratives – firearms, upstream influences
- + Inform policy + community-specific solutions
- + Community-engaged research (CEnR) = the norm
- + Shifting ideas about evidence – Qual + quant, evidence from community
- + Community capacity to lead research
- + Welcoming seats at the table
- + Shine light on research barriers + eliminate
- + Build widespread community support + engagement on FID
- + Break down research/community divide
- + Timely + actionable research >> motivating
- + Researcher capacity to engage community + report out (plain language). Ongoing engagement > checking a box
- + Structures in place for sustainability + continuity. Funding partnerships > projects; communities keep access to data
- + Support researchers from impacted populations

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Reviewing current Core Partner, MFH, and Openfields roles and responsibilities in the context of the RAPID framework; addressing different roles for both the process and content of MCFR; introducing the role community members might play going forward

In this session participants discussed what roles MCFR stakeholders would play across several general areas of decision-making. The roles include (R)ecommend, (A)gree, (P)erform, (I)input, and (D)ecide.

Participants identified the following MCFR stakeholders:

- + **MFH:** Strategists and Directors working closely with Core Partners, as well as MFH staff who manage legal and fiscal matters for the foundation.
- + **Core Partner Representatives (CP Reps):** The individuals from each of the five core partner organizations who serve on the Collaborative Executive Committee and hold voting power.
- + **Core Partner Organizations (CP Orgs):** The five organizations that make up the founding MCFR partners, and all the associated people whom we might involve in MCFR work, including CP representatives.
- + **Chair:** The person(s) from the organization serving as Lead Partner for a given year. For 2023, the Lead Partner is Washington University in St. Louis.
- + **Collaborative Members:** Future members of MCFR.
- + **Openfields:** The social innovation team contracted by MFH to support MCFR's design and activities.
- + **Other** consultants, facilitators, community members, researchers, community-based organizations, advisors, etc.



The Miro board on page 7 depicts whom participants assigned to these roles, subject to revision as MCFR progresses. The list below narrates what role stakeholders play with regard to which categories of decisions.

Grant structure, funding, timing, legal requirements, and bylaws: CP Representatives Recommend after gathering Input from each other, Collaborative Members, and MFH, and from researchers, advisors, community organizations and community members as needed. MFH staff Decide, and must Agree that grants fit financial and legal requirements. CP Organizations (including Representatives), Openfields, and other consultants or facilitators Perform grant requirements.

Vision, Mission, Values: Openfields Recommends after gathering Input from CP Organizations (including Representatives) and MFH. CP Representatives and MFH Decide. CP Representatives and MFH Perform the mission, vision and values – both inside of MCFR and when representing the Collaborative in other settings.

Strategies, Goals, Tactics: Openfields Recommends after gathering Input from CP Organizations (including Representatives) and MFH. CP Representatives Decide. These elements are Performed via activities (see below).

Activities: CP Organizations (including Representatives), community members, and others comprise Working Groups who collaborate with the Chair and Openfields to Recommend. Recommenders solicit Input from MFH, CP Organizations, Collaborative Members, Openfields, and national groups doing related work. Deciding on activities falls to CP Representatives, who at their discretion may give Decide power to Collaborative Members, MFH, or community members. Activities are Performed by MFH, CP Organizations (including Representatives), Collaborative Members, and other consultants or contractors. Openfields may Perform at the request of the Working Groups.

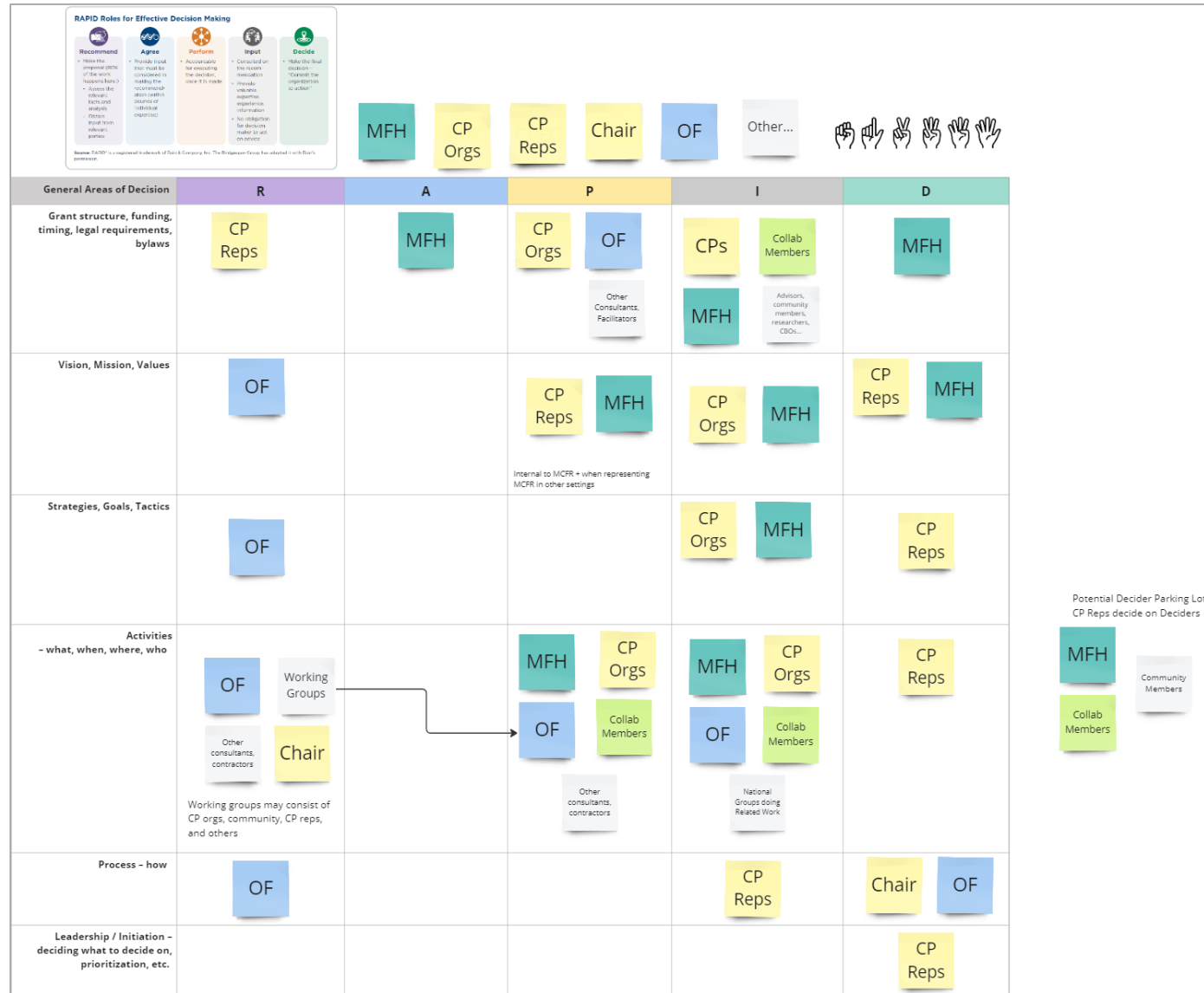
Process: Openfields Recommends after gathering Input from CP Representatives. Openfields and the Chair have the power to Decide on process.

Leadership/Initiation: This category includes responsibilities like deciding what to decide on and prioritizing decisions. CP Representatives Decide in this category.

Role of the Rotating Chair

- Liaison with MFH and Openfields
- Setting and directing agendas
- Calling votes or moving things along

RAPID Roles and Responsibilities Miro Board



DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Learning and practicing a consensus-driven decision-making framework for the CP Executive Committee going forward

In this session, participants discussed general pros and cons related to group governance based on past experiences. The group then considered the Fist to Five decision-making model. In this model, decision-makers vote by holding up a number of fingers on one hand. The number of fingers corresponds to a participant's level of agreement with the decision, from no fingers (veto) to five fingers (strong support). *Consensus* is reached when all votes are at three fingers or above, and *consent* when all votes are at one finger or above.

The group engaged in a practice decision-making scenario ("What kind of cuisine will we have for dinner tonight?") that integrated RAPID roles with Fist-to-Five decision-making. Then the Chair called votes regarding adoption of RAPID roles as outlined in the previous session and adoption of the Fist-to-Five decision-making model. Each organization – MFH and each of the five Core Partner organizations – had one vote. Both decisions passed at the level of consensus (three fingers or above).

- ✓ Adopt RAPID roles as outlined on Miro board (page 7), for now
- ✓ Adopt Fist-to-Five decision-making model for now, with each deciding organization having one vote



Decision Making Process

- **Consensus-based decision making**
 - Full agreement, everyone is 3 or above
 - Anyone below a 3 three is asked to share their perspective and what would need to change
 - Concerns are addressed, revisions are made
 - A new vote is taken
- **Consent-based decision making**
 - Agreement to try a course of action for a period of time
 - Everyone is 1 or above

What pros and cons have we experienced related to group governance?	
Pros (+)	Cons (-)
[Enables] advocacy Adds credibility to certain audiences [Creates] clear expectations Equality/not equity (+ or -?) Mechanism for deference Feel like a decision is made Shared ownership	[People can still be] ignored Power imbalance Takes training/knowledge (* a parliamentarian) Creates uncertainty Separates governors from do-ers

VISION, MISSION, AND OUR APPROACH TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Inspired by the earlier reflection on our values and vision, reviewing and potentially revising the working vision and mission statements; reviewing and potentially revising section VI. Of the working plan, “Our Approach to Community Engagement”

In this session, participants first reflected individually on the following questions regarding the working vision statement, mission statements:

- + Does this working vision statement reflect a future you are inspired by and committed to? Does it reflect the group? If anything, what would you want to change?
- + Does this working mission statement feel aligned with the direction, intent and resources of MCFR?
- + Do you have questions?

Then, as a group, participants discussed the following for each statement: What most inspires you? What questions does each statement raise? Any specific changes you would like to see?

The group agreed that Openfields will revise the vision and mission statements based on everyone’s feedback, and submit revisions to Core Partner Representatives and MFH for reconsideration.

Working Vision Statement	
<i>We envision a future in which the Missourians most impacted by firearm injury and death are respected partners in determining and implementing solutions.</i>	
Plus (+)	Delta (Δ)
Impacted people are at the table “We envision a future...”	Change “respected partner” to something that centers/shifts power Add <u>results</u> of implementing solutions Determining, implementing, and evaluating? Also understanding, defining the problem Mention accountability “Most impacted” – who decides?

Working Mission Statement	
<i>MCFR’s mission is to foster equitable relationships between researchers and communities that result in informed action to reduce firearm injury and death.</i>	
Plus (+)	Delta (Δ)
Includes both evidence and action	Reduce FID <u>through</u> relationships Informed action <i>and</i> accountability Want to break down the community/research divide Include geographic scope? “reduce” = metric? Shift phrase about reducing FID to vision statement? + structural change/infrastructure + increase community support for FID prevention efforts Which communities?

Next, participants engaged in a paired “walk-and-talk” exercise to read and reflect on the statement on MCFR’s Approach to Community Engagement. Participants considered what most inspired them, what they wanted to change, and what it could look like for MCFR to be held accountable to its community engagement principles. After discussion, the group identified the following revisions to the statement:

- + Replacing the last sentence of the second paragraph with the sentence, “We aim to support research that addresses structural factors that contribute to and prevent FID.”
- + Adding the principle of Transparency, with a statement about MCFR’s commitment to clearly communicate its aims and activities to the broader public
- + Adding the principle of Humanity + Humility. This section will include statements about MCFR’s commitments to recognizing the dignity of every person, valuing the perspective of every person, and recognizing that individual perspectives are inherently limited. It will also include a statement about extending grace to each other as we engage in Collaborative work.

The group voted to adopt the Community Engagement Statement with the revisions above. The group also discussed whether any additional MCFR values need to be identified at this time. Participants agreed that for now, the Community Engagement Principles encompass a sufficient set of values.

- ✓ Adopt statement on [Approach to Community Engagement with the revisions described above](#)

Approach to Community Engagement Statement Specific to hold us accountable to our values and vision	
Check (Keep)	Minus (Change)
Right direction	Challenging others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spokespeople - Public transparency - Acknowledge/work through tension Humanity + Humility

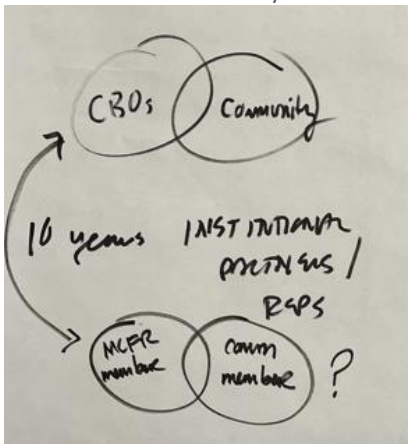
Community Engagement Accountability Mechanisms, Feedback Loops
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Revisit values in each meeting – moment to reflect + Acknowledging when values are exercised → consensus-based decision making + Revisit at each decision point + Acknowledging discomfort (physical/mental) as a moment to reflect + Working to ensure all are heard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Relational conversation/redirection o GRACE + Transparent feedback loops on participant participation + State all values and work transparently <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Clear membership expectations + Clear communication channels for external feedback

OPEN DISCUSSION + FINAL REFLECTIONS

In the last session of the day, the group discussed whether to attend the National Research Conference for the Prevention of Firearm Related Harms. We reviewed potential opportunities to connect with other groups and individuals who are doing community-engaged research and/or who are interested in doing community-engaged research on FID. After discussion group agreed, via Fist-to-Five vote, to send at least one person from each Core Partner Organization to the conference.

Openfields presented on the Orchard systems intelligence tool as a mechanism for curating news and research on FID and community-engaged research. Participants were open to receiving sample Insight Briefs from Orchard on these topics.

- ✓ At least one person from each Core Partner organization will attend the NRCFPRH on November 1-3, 2023

Items to Address	Questions to Work Through
<p>Conference Orchard Overlap between CBOs and community, MCFR members and community members</p>  <p>Definition of research</p>	<p>Do individuals/orgs represent MCFR? Rotating chair – timeline Where/when/what role should community members play if we are living into our values?</p>