

Webinar & Live Discussion

# Underclass Sisterhood of Solidarity: Radically Imagining Universities

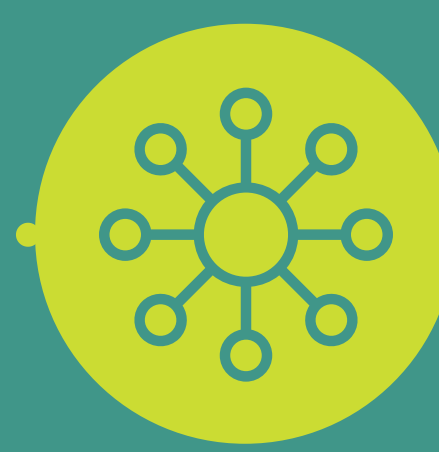


On November 24th, 2022, CBRCanada members joined presenters: Elaine Laberge, Founder & Director, Shoestring Initiative; Alexandra Ages, Executive Director, Council of Alberta University Students; and Charity Slobod, Community Connect Lead & Professional Development Coordinator, Faculty of Graduate Studies & Research, University of Alberta, for a webinar and live discussion to explore how to use community-based research to facilitate change for “poverty-class” students pursuing university education in Canada.



During the live discussion, participants reflected on how to ensure lived experience is centered in community-based research, how to do this research in an action-oriented way that creates positive change, and what language is best used when referring to folks with lived experience of being ‘poverty class’. This summary highlights the participants' reflections during the live discussion.

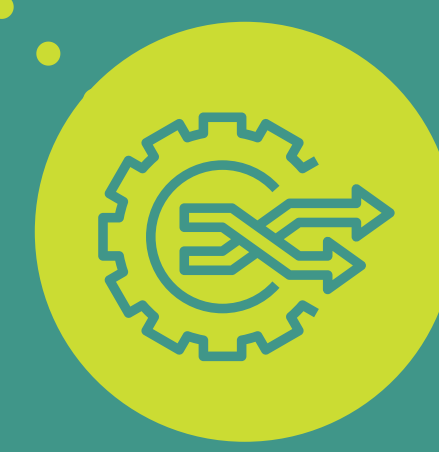
## Participants' Reflections



### Centering lived experience

To center lived experience of poverty-class students in community-based research, it's necessary for researchers to:

- Put effort into building meaningful relationships with folks with lived experience
- Practice reflexivity about their own role, privilege, and assumptions
- Reimagine traditional research ethics to also include a sense of accountability from the researcher to the community
- Create spaces where poverty-class students can access and equitably participate in research in a meaningful way



### Creating tangible change

To do research that is oriented towards creating tangible change in policies or public narratives, researchers must consider:

- How research can be done in a collaborative way that will allow people to apply their strengths and/or leverage their position to translate research findings to action
- Whether activism from the ‘outside’ or advocacy from the ‘inside’ of a system will be more impactful to change the system/institution being targeted
- What role they can play in ‘pushing a system that doesn’t want to be pushed’, and where they need to step back



### Considering the use of language

The label of ‘poverty-class’ students is currently used by this group; some considerations when applying a label to a group of people with a shared lived experience include:

- Certain labels may have assumptions, stigmas, or narratives attached to them, and these may be different from person-to-person
- It can be best to let the insiders of a community define themselves
- Everyone within a community may have a different way of ‘storying’ themselves or making sense of their experience and this should be respected

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