

FULL-LENGTH ARTICLES

Advocating for Participatory Action Research in the Tenure and Promotion Process: Advice for Scholars and Chairs

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Keywords: Participatory Action-Research, Early Career, Tenure and Promotion, Department Chair

<https://doi.org/10.35844/001c.153971>

Journal of Participatory Research Methods

Vol. 6, Issue 5, 2025

Participatory action-research (PAR), a research approach in which traditional power differentials between researchers and participants is removed via democratization of the research process, is increasingly popular as a methodological approach. PAR facilitates strong community-university relations, helps students draw clear connections between classroom content and people's lived experiences, and can be socially transformative. Despite the progress towards recognizing PAR as a rigorous, valuable, and institutionally supported form of scholarship, academic-based early career PAR scholars continue to experience substantial barriers to obtaining tenure and promotion at many institutions due to a disconnect between the traditional academic incentives for faculty output and the nature of PAR. Drawing on personal experiences as a faculty member who successfully navigated the tenure and promotion process and who has served as department chair, this paper provides practical advice for both tenure-track PAR scholars and their department chairs on how to best navigate the early career stages and advocate for PAR throughout the tenure and promotion review process. Attention is paid to the value of department chairs as brokers between early career PAR scholars and upper-level administrators, who have the power to change structures which center PAR scholarship. Drawing from personal experience in both faculty and chair roles, advice spans across the pre-tenure years, from negotiations after obtaining a job offer to preparing packet materials. The paper ends with a call to action to further reconfigure university systems to prioritize PAR, more deeply centering spaces of higher education around the public good.

Participatory action-research (PAR) is a research orientation which prioritizes democratic engagement of participants in the research process (Gronhaug & Olson, 1999) and utilization of research as a tool for social transformation (Collins et al., 2018; Cosgrove et al., 2020). At the heart of PAR is attenuation to power, and shared decision-making among researchers and community partners (Pickard et al., 2022). PAR can use a variety of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.

PAR is an increasingly popular research methodology (Gronhaug & Olson, 1999), particularly among marginalized scholars (Cosgrove et al., 2020). Tenure and promotion of PAR scholars is beneficial to academic institutions (Buys & Bursnall, 2007) and partnering communities (Hoeft et al., 2014). Communities working with PAR scholars often leave such partnerships more

empowered and prepared to engage in sustainable social change (Hughes, 2003; Mapfumo et al., 2013; Wittmayer & Schöpke, 2014). Adopting PAR approaches can increase the participation of racial and ethnic minorities in mental health research, reduce racialized health disparities, reestablish trust between communities and research partners, and reduce stigma (Brockie et al., 2022; Harb & Taylor, 2024; Roncoroni & Tucker, 2024). Engagement in PAR is additionally beneficial to students, providing them with experiential learning opportunities which deepen students' connections between academic instruction and lived experiences in diverse communities (Weinburg et al., 2018; Yan et al., 2022). Finally, PAR can lead to academic innovations (Michaelson et al., 2014), such as increasing the rigor and validity of scientific findings, improving research ethics, informing effective interventions and policies, and increasing science's reach into the public sphere (Balazas & Morello-Frosch, 2013; Collins et al., 2018; Corrigan & Oppenheim, 2024; O'Brien & Whitaker, 2011). With all of the benefits of PAR to institutions, retaining early career PAR scholars during the tenure and promotion process is paramount.

Recent years have brought improved support for PAR and PAR scholars in the academy. These include initiatives such as creating PAR-centered coursework or curricula (Leman et al., 2025; Postan-Aizik & Shdaimah, 2022), developing infrastructure to support and foster PAR collaborations (Ozer et al., 2021; Sastry, 2025), the establishment of academic journals – such as this one – which explicitly invite or prioritize publishing PAR work, conferences and professional organizations devoted to PAR scholarship (e.g., the Association for the Advancement of Participatory Sciences; the Engaged Scholarship Consortium; the Public Science Project), and the creation of a Carnegie Community Engagement campus classification, which provides institutional incentives for supporting community-based scholarship such as PAR (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). Yet, early career social science scholars engaging in PAR continue to face significant barriers to their scholarship, which can negatively impact their ability to attain tenure and promotion (Raynor, 2019). Academic cultures are not oriented around public-facing scholarship (McBride et al., 2019), often devaluing PAR in comparison to traditional research orientations which prioritize objectivity (Cosgrove et al., 2020; Pickard et al., 2022). This culture leads to a number of implicit and explicit challenges uniquely faced by PAR scholars. For instance, PAR may require greater funding than traditional research orientations, and, while federal grant funding mechanisms are increasingly open to PAR methodologies (Jacquez, 2014), funding for PAR remains less available through traditional funding mechanisms (Hoeft et al., 2014; Ozer et al., 2021). Further, the type of easily quantifiable academic metrics rewarded by most universities, such as the number of publications, can be more challenging for PAR researchers to attain (McBride et al., 2019). PAR is highly dependent on fostering strong working relationships prior to engaging

in research, which can take substantial time- sometimes years- to develop and must be sustained (D'Alonzo, 2010; Hoeft et al., 2014; Ozer et al., 2021; Pickard et al., 2022; Walter, 1998).

Even in academic settings in which PAR is viewed favorably, PAR can be more challenging to conduct due to the disconnect between PAR and academic timelines and reward structures (Millar et al., 2024; Ozer et al., 2021; Raynor, 2019; Renick & Turchi, 2024). Traditional academic goals, such as publishing research or obtaining grants, may not hold value with PAR collaborators, may not reach broader community members, and can potentially detract from the mutual benefit on which PAR is so reliant (Collins et al., 2018; Renick & Turchi, 2024). Prioritizing academic objectives – which primarily benefit the researcher and their career – may result in communities having limited control over the direction and implications of studies that impact them (Buckwalter, 2018; Grasswick, 2017), leading to communities feeling disconnected from the research process and outcomes. Instead of limiting research to these more traditional academic outputs, PAR work is more likely to include outputs such as community reports, newsletters, artwork, and campaign materials (Jacquez, 2014; Pain et al., 2007). When scholars seek to publish PAR in peer-reviewed academic journals, they often encounter difficulties, as many fields are biased towards publishing traditional post-positive research (Gronhaug & Olson, 1999) and lack reviewers with the appropriate expertise with which to evaluate PAR (Todd et al., 2024). For these reasons, the publication pipeline for PAR scholars is often substantially longer (McBride et al., 2019). Early career researchers also report a dearth of senior mentoring in PAR and need additional mentoring and training opportunities (Pickard et al., 2022; Yan et al., 2022).

Purpose of the Paper

PAR scholars face multiple challenges in attaining tenure and promotion within academic institutions. Thus, it's imperative that strategies be developed to facilitate retaining PAR scholars throughout the tenure and promotion process. Given that PAR methodologies are most likely to be adopted by scholars who are marginalized within the academy (Cosgrove et al., 2020), better-supporting PAR scholars has the added benefit of facilitating equity for marginalized faculty. Using an autoethnographic approach based on personal experience as a PAR researcher and professor who has previously served as department chair, this paper provides recommendations for supporting PAR scholarship throughout the tenure and promotion process. Recommendations are provided for tenure-track faculty and for department chairs. Finally, the paper concludes with broader systemic recommendations for universities looking to more deeply institutionalize and support participatory action-researchers at their institutions.

Institutional Context

The author is a full professor in a psychology department at a regional public comprehensive university in the United States and has served as department chair. During six years as chair, she oversaw the revision of tenure and promotion requirements to their current form. The institution serves approximately 7,000 students; the psychology department offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and minors in Cognitive Science, Gerontology, and Psychology. Thus, the author has exclusively worked with an undergraduate student population and has not taught or mentored graduate students. Faculty members work on a 10-month contract and teach a 12-credit load per semester (typically, three courses) with optional summer and winter teaching, which the author often did.

While the university prioritizes teaching, research productivity and evidence of service are required for tenure and promotion. Specifically, in addition to presentation of research at professional conferences, participating in post-graduate professional development opportunities, and applying for internal and external grants, faculty looking to receive tenure and promotion *must* publish a minimum of two manuscripts in empirical peer-reviewed journals, one of which must be first authored, as evidence of research productivity. Faculty are eligible for tenure and promotion after six years of tenure-track employment, however, incoming faculty who negotiated time shaved off the tenure track would have less time in which to meet these requirements.

The author entered the tenure track just prior to the 2008 Great Recession. At the time she was the single mother of an infant, and very aware of her job precarity (an experience documented in Schlehofer, 2012). The institution has a strong public presence in the local community and a history of civic engagement. Nevertheless, the types of activities conducted by faculty at the institution tended to fall in the domain of volunteer service, rather than PAR. With a lack of access to PAR scholars on our campus to serve as mentors, and given her job precarity, the author decided to pursue a more traditional research agenda while simultaneously developing community contacts and establishing a community-engaged research arm. After tenure, the traditional research agenda was abandoned. This approach, however, is not ideal, and feels as if PAR scholars are managing two careers (Raynor, 2019). It additionally presents an opportunity cost, in which the university, students, and the community miss out on the transformative potential of PAR while other projects are pursued. As such, the recommendations in this paper are centered on ways to better-integrate PAR while on the tenure-track. Two distinct sets of recommendations are provided: those for tenure-track faculty, and those for department chairs or administrative heads. These recommendations are also summarized in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Strategies for navigating the tenure and promotion process for tenure track faculty and chairs.

	Tenure Track Faculty	Department Chairs
During the job search and acceptance offer process	- Carefully review mission statement, values - Read tenure and promotion criteria; get any clarifications in writing - Negotiate for research support and/or release time	- Clearly articulate value of PAR work and how it fits with institutional and departmental mission and values during the interview process - Advocate for more start-up support when hiring PAR scholars
On the tenure track	- Seek out research collaborators and mentors - Discuss scholarship in relation to the tenure and promotion evaluation metrics - Review prior successful packets for guidance on framing and realistic targets on metrics	- Provide clear guidance and recommendations for how PAR activities fit within existing evaluation metrics - Advocate "up the chain" for rewriting evaluation metrics to incentivize PAR scholarship and accept public-facing outputs along with traditional ones - Facilitate additional research supports for PAR scholars whose work is progressing - Facilitate research connections and mentors - Align teaching schedules
When preparing for tenure and promotion	- Secure letters of support from PAR-friendly collaborators - Reframe PAR activities out of service and into research and/or teaching	- Articulate benefits of PAR in letters of support - Recommend PAR-friendly external reviewers

Strategies for Tenure-Track Faculty

Institutions of higher education increasingly embrace community-centered research as part of larger trends of public engagement (Raynor, 2019), and it is that trend which PAR faculty on the tenure-track can and should lean into to support their scholarship. For faculty desiring a tenure-track position, the time to start thinking about tenure and promotion requirements is during the **job search process**. Select the position carefully and pay attention to the mission statement and values of institutions when applying. Take the time to research the scholarship of the faculty, not only in the department, but across the institution. Prior to interviewing for a tenure track position, the author researched the expertise of the faculty and soon noticed an absence of public-engaged scholarship. If a faculty member is the only participatory researcher in a department or on a campus, they might have to be in a position of continually educating their colleagues on the nature and value of their work. This may be an asset as it can set them apart in the department and on campus; however, it requires additional labor. Selecting a department in which community-based research is prioritized or integrated into the curriculum might bring benefits such as easier institutional buy-in for PAR work, however, it might also create conflicts if faculty vary in their ontological and methodological approaches, especially if those approaches conflict with the values-driven nature of PAR.

Once offered a position, **during contract negotiations** candidates with PAR specialization should ask for both the university and the department or school's tenure and promotion guidelines and assess the extent to which the work they do fits well within that existing framework. If there is a need for clarification on the guidelines, doing so before accepting a job offer can be advantageous. While some tenure and promotion guidelines are hyper-specific, with target numbers of publications and impact factors, many

might have ambiguous guidelines. If the guidelines are unclear, try to seek clarification from the tenure and promotion committee and/or department chair; get this information in writing so that it is documented. In the author's experience, the department's tenure and promotion guidelines were broad and vague. While this was designed to provide tenure track faculty with flexibility in meeting tenure and promotion requirements, it also leaves tenure track faculty without clear guidance on which metrics to hit. This, coupled with job precarity and the need to maintain employment as a single mother, resulted in the author overshooting publication metrics. Upon becoming chair, the author was in a position to form a faculty committee to revise the publication requirements for tenure and promotion to codify into the policy the number of publications and authorship expected for attaining tenure and promotion.

Before accepting a job offer is also the best time in which to negotiate for start up funds and release time to support PAR scholarship. PAR is more time-consuming and can also be more financially costly in comparison to most traditional research; it is helpful for all parties involved if faculty hires communicate funding needs clearly during the negotiations process and request any additional time and funding above and beyond the standard start-up costs they anticipate needing to support their research. Tenure track faculty should also negotiate funding to maintain connections with professional organizations that provide outlets for PAR scholarship. These connections are particularly valuable for early career researchers, providing opportunities to foster professional networks and permitting faculty to stay up to date on PAR innovations.

Once **on the tenure track**, there are a few concrete steps PAR scholars can take to prepare for tenure and promotion. Starting the first semester in a new position, seek research collaborators and research mentors, both from inside and outside the institution (McBride et al., 2019). Given that different mentors have different expertise and perspectives, one useful approach for PAR scholars is to adopt a constellation mentoring model (Nowell, 2022; Smith & Spooner, 2021; Zellers et al., 2017). In this approach, a range of mentors filling various mentoring functions – including mentors both inside and outside the institution – are tapped. As connections with professional organizations that support PAR scholars can facilitate this, the author recommends engaging with your professional organizations by stepping into service roles where possible. Research collaborators- particularly more established scholars- can be a considerable asset, boosting your research productivity by sharing the workload. Similarly, mentors- both in and outside the institution- can provide key feedback on the work of early career scholars. Mentors within the institution can also provide clarity on how to strategically and intentionally align PAR work with institutional expectations on annual evaluations, performance reviews, and tenure and promotion materials.

Further, these individuals may be references for a tenure and promotion packet or may be able to connect tenure and promotion candidates to external reviewers with the needed expertise to assess PAR.

When identifying collaborators and mentors, make sure to assess fit: is there an alignment of working style? Are personalities compatible, and is the relationship likely to be amiable, which is particularly important in times of stress? PAR scholars' knowledge of relationship-building with community collaborators also provides practical skills for assessing the fit of potential collaborators and mentors. Finally, expectations for the relationship, anticipated time commitment or amount of investment, delineation of duties, and, in the case of research collaborators, how authorship will be negotiated should be discussed in advance of forming collaborative relationships.

Early in the tenure track is also the time to start looking more closely at the tenure and promotion guidelines, including those for the institution *and* department, if multiple layers of guidelines exist. Faculty colleagues who have engaged in community-based work who have recently and successfully gone through the tenure and promotion process – either in or outside the department – can be an asset; requesting the portfolio of recent successful candidates can help PAR candidates determine where their portfolio stands in comparison. Recent packets are particularly helpful as they can illuminate implied standards that are currently in place, which may have shifted in the time since the tenure and promotion guidelines were developed. The tenure track is a great time to seek guidance from tenured faculty in the department and university on how to best frame PAR work in relation to the university mission, values, and tenure and promotion guidelines, and to establish realistic targets for tenure and promotion metrics.

Finally, integrating PAR work into teaching is a great way to build PAR while also developing teaching innovations. These types of synergistic activities make PAR feasible for many faculty. For instance, Jacquez (2014) describes using PAR in a research capstone course as a strategic way to incorporate research tasks and teaching tasks into one task instead of two. The author leaned into this approach on the tenure track; for example, by developing a community psychology course in which students assisted with a community-based needs assessment for a local government agency. In the tenure and promotion packet, this type of project can be discussed as research (including presentations about the project as evidence of research productivity), as teaching (including the number of students taught and skills they learned in the community psychology course as evidence of a teaching innovation), and as service (including the relationship with the partnering government agency as evidence of service contributions).

When **preparing the tenure and promotion packet**, leaning into the values of the profession (Cosgrove et al., 2020) if they align with PAR and/or the public service-oriented values of the institution can help make the case for tenure and promotion of PAR scholars. In addition to traditional metrics of faculty success (e.g., dollars obtained in external grants, number of

Table 2. Examples of PAR outputs that align with scholarship or research and teaching metrics.

Scholarship or Research	Teaching
• Writing scientific op-eds • Participating in media interviews • Writing white papers or policy briefs • Working with local, state, or national legislatures to develop public policy	• Developing or delivering community trainings • Providing students opportunities to engage with PAR • Working with students to develop advocacy skills • Teaching community partners PAR processes

publications, h-indices, and impact factors), PAR scholars can also highlight the community impact of scholarship (Massey & Barreras, 2013; McBride et al., 2019). Impact validity - the extent to which one's work creates social or community change (Massey & Barreras, 2013) –could be emphasized as an indicator of scholarship reach, as recommended by Lima and Bowman (2022). In the author's tenure and promotion materials, when discussing the aforementioned needs assessment course project, metrics such as the dollar worth of student volunteer hours that were saved by the government agency by the collaboration on the project were included as quantitative justification of the impact of the work. Other metrics that can be included are impact indices such as the number of times advocacy materials developed have been accessed online or referenced or used by advocacy organizations, the number of community members who attended public forums that PAR scholars organized, and the number of students engaged in community-based PAR projects. [Table 2](#) provides some suggestions for the types of PAR outputs that should be moved from “service” to evidence of scholarship and teaching.

Finally, reach out to research collaborators and mentors for assistance. One great way collaborators and mentors can facilitate the successful navigation of tenure and promotion is by providing feedback on candidate's packet of materials. Collaborators and mentors can also be tapped to provide letters of support, or asked to help identify a short list of PAR-friendly external reviewers.

Suggestions for Department Chairs and Administrative Heads

Department chairs or administrative heads (hereafter referred to as “chairs”) hold considerable power over tenure-track faculty, and can either serve in gatekeeping roles, or in ways which facilitate the ability of participatory researchers to gain tenure and promotion. It is critical that chairs support tenure-track participatory researchers. Chairs and other mid-level university administrators who directly work with and mentor faculty are able to advocate upstream - to Deans, the Provost, the University President, and other executive administrators - the type of institutional reforms necessary for supporting PAR scholars. Chairs can advocate for structures such as logistics for identifying community partners and space and other support for community meetings (McBride et al., 2019).

Chairs can support tenure-track participatory researchers in several ways. As with the suggestions for faculty, the suggestions offered in this paper are grouped based on stage in the tenure and promotion process. **During the job search process**, department chairs should be articulating the value of

PAR work and how it fits within the broader institutional and departmental mission and values. It is important that this is communicated not just to prospective faculty, but existing faculty, to set the tone for embracing PAR tenure track scholars. Chairs should also advocate on behalf of PAR scholars for greater support at start-up (more funding, a reduced teaching or service load, etc.) given PAR's more demanding process.

Chairs should continue this advocacy for their PAR faculty once they are **on the tenure track**. Many of the strategies that chairs would employ to support tenure-track faculty more generally apply to supporting participatory researchers, as well. This includes facilitating negotiation of start-up funds and release time upon hire; providing tenure-track faculty with course rotations that minimize the number of separate course preps in any given semester, are in their wheelhouse of expertise, or are courses they have previously taught in order to reduce time devoted to teaching prep; and providing tenure track-faculty with advice on which types of institutional service opportunities have lower political risk and are less demanding of faculty time. All of these tactics are ones the author employed to support colleagues when serving as department chair.

The requirements for academic output (e.g., teaching, service requirements, thesis supervision, grants and publications) can leave early career researchers with little time left for PAR (Pickard et al., 2022); chairs can get involved as strong advocates for PAR scholars to help free up their time. For instance, chairs could facilitate additional research support for PAR tenure track faculty, such as additional professional development funding, support for writing retreats, or a reduced teaching schedule, whose work is progressing (McBride et al., 2019).

Chairs also play a vital role in providing faculty with clear guidance and recommendations for how their PAR activities fit within the existing evaluation metrics. Chairs should take an active role as a broker between the expectations of tenure track faculty set by the university, department, and tenure and promotion committee, and the faculty member's work. One of the consistent challenges that participatory researchers face is that much of PAR work is typically perceived as 'non-academic' (Raynor, 2019) and as equivalent to community service (Hoeft et al., 2014), which is typically considered the least important category of activities for rating faculty as suitable for tenure and promotion. It is therefore paramount that chairs support participatory researchers via broadening the scope of work to move activities more typically done by participatory researchers out of the "service" category and into the realm of accepted evidence of scholarship/research or teaching. Alignment of PAR with traditional metrics- particularly scholarship- can reduce burnout of early career scholars. For instance, a participatory researcher should be able to supplement or swap out op-ed writing with professional conference presentations without being evaluated as less scholarly. Community trainings can be and should be considered as evidence of teaching.

Chairs can also support their tenure track faculty by working with them to develop teaching schedules which align with their research. As PAR centers relationship-building, PAR scholars often need to be present in the community, which teaching schedules can either facilitate or impede. Chairs can work with PAR scholars to identify days and times in which they need to be in the field for research purposes and adjust teaching schedules around those needs. For instance, participatory researchers working with public schools might need to be available to travel to programming sites during the school day; course schedules during those hours would conflict with their ability to conduct research.

Finally, department chairs' advocacy for their PAR scholars should continue **when they are under consideration for tenure and promotion**. Department chairs should articulate the benefits of PAR to the university, department, students, and community in their letters of support, and facilitate securing PAR-friendly external reviewers. Traditionally trained scholars tasked with reviewing tenure and promotion materials may not be familiar with PAR, and may consequently devalue it (Jacquez, 2014). Thus, one critically important role department chairs can play is to ensure they actively provide training and guidance to tenure and promotion committee members on PAR and how to effectively evaluate it.

Moving forward: Shifts for systemic change

Despite increased institutional efforts to support PAR, academic culture is misaligned with the very values orientation that underpins this methodology (McBride et al., 2019). Traditional research endeavors continue to be prioritized by many institutions of higher education, a prioritization which is reinforced by research-based institution designations (McBride et al., 2019). As tenure and promotion guidelines reflect university culture (McBride et al., 2019), PAR researchers remain at an inherent disadvantage in successfully navigating the tenure-track. While this paper provides some strategies for early career scholars and their chairs for navigating the tenure and promotion process, the guidance given in here would be considerably strengthened by systematic inclusion of multiple faculty and Chair perspectives which represent a wider range of PAR work and institutions PAR scholars work in. Further, the recommendations provided here are neoliberal solutions, focusing on how to better incorporate the work of scholars into existing academic reward systems. Given that existing reward systems are inherently misaligned with PAR (McBride et al., 2019), a broader restructuring of academic culture would open more opportunities for PAR. Thus, while the strategies presented in this manuscript are comprised of practical changes which PAR scholars and Chairs can implement fairly immediately, this paper closes with some suggestions for working towards the types of broader institutional restructuring that would support PAR in such a way to not necessitate the need for PAR scholars to continually justify and - in some cases - modify their work for purposes of meeting tenure and promotion metrics.

Ultimately, the work of PAR scholars would be centered within the academy via modification of tenure and promotion guidelines to align with public scholarship, as suggested by Ozer and colleagues (2021). Institutions must shift away from traditional metrics of faculty “success” such as number of publications, grant funding dollars, and impact factors. While participatory researchers might write and secure grant funding, present at professional conferences, and publish in peer-reviewed journals, they are also highly likely to engage in a number of additional public-facing research dissemination practices which more directly benefit communities (Collins et al., 2018), such as writing op-eds or letters to the editor for print and digital media, participating in media interviews on pressing issues, writing white papers or policy briefs, and engaging in a wide range of advocacy work. Academic institutions do their faculty, students, and broader community a disservice when they relegate these public-facing research dissemination tasks as merely community service, which is often the least-valued evaluation criteria. Rather than continue to relegate PAR to the sidelines, institutions of higher education should be proactively redefining public scholarship as legitimate forms of evidence of scholarship or research which can supplement traditional mechanisms.

When working towards these broader institutional shifts, one mechanism that can be leveraged is the Carnegie Community Engagement Classified Campus designation (American Council on Education, 2025). This framework, which incorporates PAR scholarship, provides institutions with an incentive structure for supporting PAR work and retaining PAR scholars. As this classification is awarded based on review of institutionally-prepared materials, it creates a culture in which institutions are encouraged to embed community engagement – to include PAR – in the academic culture and institutional structure (Saltmarsh & Johnson, 2020). One long-term strategy for PAR scholars to adopt post-tenure is to encourage their institutions to pursue this campus designation, as doing so will encourage shifts in the institutional culture.

Ultimately, such longer-term shifts are critical in ensuring the sustainability of our institutions. PAR pushes academic institutions to more deeply orient their missions towards serving the public good. United States-based institutions of higher education are currently under significant threat (Finucane, 2025), and many are questioning the public good of colleges and universities (Kelderman, 2023). The promise of centering PAR at the heart of faculty scholarship is to fundamentally reshape the nature of our institutions to reorient them to explicitly meeting the public good. This type of reorientation of the purpose of academic scholarship offers significant benefits, including empowering communities, increasing the rigor and validity of scientific findings, improving research ethics, informing effective interventions and policies, and increasing science’s reach into the public sphere (Balazas & Morello-Frosch, 2013; Collins et al., 2018; Corrigan & Oppenheim, 2024; O’Brien & Whitaker, 2011). Ultimately, PAR can increase

the participation of marginalized, underserved communities in research and can establish trust in communities (Christopher et al., 2008; Harb & Taylor, 2024; Roncoroni & Tucker, 2024). By centering PAR at the heart of the academy, institutions of higher education are working to reestablish the value of higher education within local communities and ensure their future relevancy.

Submitted: May 25, 2025 EDT. Accepted: November 06, 2025 EDT. Published: January 02, 2026 EDT.



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