



Qualitative Research with Kūpuna

**A Guide to Respectful,
Collaborative Interviewing**

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Center for Native Hawaiian Elders**

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Note on Cover Image

The photo on the cover of this guide, a lehua mamo blossom, is provided by Hā Kūpuna staff member, Shelley Muneoka, taken at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa where our center is located. Literally meaning the mamo-colored lehua flower of the 'ōhi'a tree, the name mamo refers to an extinct Hawaiian honeycreeper, once prized for its choice yellow feathers that stood out against its mostly black plumage. The term hulu kupuna, which references feathers (hulu), is a term used with affection and pride to describe the cherished living elders in one's family. Mamo is also a word for one's descendants or posterity, fitting for the research we do at Hā Kūpuna aimed at improving the wellness of kūpuna so that they and their progeny will thrive.

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Qualitative Research with Kūpuna: A Guide to Respectful, Collaborative Interviewing

**Hā Kūpuna National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders
Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

Who We Are

This document was developed to guide qualitative interview research done with Native Hawaiian kūpuna (elders). Qualitative interview research involves interviewing participants and analyzing resulting transcripts to understand concepts, opinions, and experiences. It is a powerful way to gain in-depth insights into a phenomenon and can generate new ideas for research.

This guide was created by Hā Kūpuna National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders, a program of the Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa <https://manoa.hawaii.edu/hakupuna/>. In writing this guide, our hui (group), which includes Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) members as well as non-Native allies, hopes to help others conduct interviews in purposeful ways that are respectful and mutually beneficial, rather than extractive.



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The name of our center, Hā Kūpuna, was given to us by one of our early advisory council members, esteemed kupuna Dr. Kekuni Blaisdell. Hā means to breathe or to exhale, and kūpuna refers to one's grandparents, ancestors, or a source. Together, Hā Kūpuna refers to the ritual of passing the breath of life through methods such as mo'olelo (stories) from an elder to a chosen person who will carry on the mana, or spiritual essence, of the kupuna. In Kānaka Maoli culture, kūpuna are seen as invaluable sources of wisdom and are integral to transmitting important lessons to future generations who will one day themselves become kūpuna.

The purpose of Hā Kūpuna is to increase the healthy life expectancy of kūpuna so they have more opportunity to pass their hā to younger generations. We do this by enhancing knowledge about Native Hawaiian kūpuna to inform the development, testing, and enhancement of culturally informed strategies to improve their health and well-being.

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Purpose of the Guide

We identified the need for a qualitative interview research protocol for students and faculty who interact with Hawaiian communities. It is based on the collective ideas and experiences of our Hā Kūpuna hui. Although this guide focuses on Native Hawaiian elders, some of the tips are likely applicable for interview research with other Indigenous Peoples and age groups. We encourage you to use what is relevant to your research and to build on these ideas for better-informed service provision and research in Hawai'i and with older adults.

In this protocol, you will find a brief overview of Hawaiian history and past experiences with research. This is followed by a short summary of the research achievements of Native Hawaiian individuals working in concert with the community. We then provide a guide for researcher self-reflection, identify potential roles for kūpuna and other community members in research, and provide tips for each stage of the research process, from developing interview questions to gathering and reporting qualitative

data. The overall hope for this guide is to sincerely engage community and kūpuna in research that aims to improve community health and well-being.

Section I: Historical Context

Origins and Overthrow

Kānaka Maoli are the Indigenous people of the Hawaiian archipelago. They also call themselves Kānaka 'Ōiwi, or simply Kānaka, 'Ōiwi, or Native Hawaiians. Kānaka Maoli trace their genealogy to the land itself, as well as to other more-than-human ancestors, including plants, animals, and elemental forces such as water, wind, and stars. Kānaka Maoli have a special relationship to Hawai'i and have been uniquely impacted by US settler colonialism and imperialism in ways that continue to be reflected in socioeconomic and health disparities.

'Ōiwi voyaged from the South Pacific to Hawai'i in multiple waves of migration, settling and thriving in these islands for centuries. Kānaka lived in balance with the natural world, with a deep understanding that the health of both were inextricably entwined. Sophisticated governance and resource management systems allowed sustainable access to a range of resources for food, shelter, and the development of many Indigenous sciences and other cultural practices and craft. Kānaka Maoli also established and evolved a number of healing practices to address physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health conditions.

Although he was not the first European explorer to visit Hawai'i, Captain James Cook's arrival in 1778 is noted for bringing foreign diseases that decimated the Native Hawaiian population. Population estimates of Kānaka Maoli at the time of Cook's arrival range widely from 100,000 to 1.5 million people (OHA, 2017). A little more than one hundred years later in 1890, the population had collapsed to 40,000 people (a 60 - 97% decline) due to foreign diseases against which Kānaka Maoli had little immunity (Stannard, 2008). Today, Kānaka Maoli remain an ethnic minority in their homeland, with only 22% of the population identifying as Native Hawaiian (alone or in combination with other ethnicities).

During this time of drastic population decline, Hawaiian ali'i (chiefs) worked to establish a constitutional monarchy, becoming more recognizable to large world powers in an effort to

Samuel Kamakau's Hawaiian language account of Cook's time in Hawai'i was translated in Noenoe Silva's 2004 *Aloha Betrayed* (p. 22). It encapsulates the immediate and long-lasting effects of his short visit:

The fruits and the seeds that his [Cook's] actions planted, sprouted, and grew, and became trees that spread to devastate the people of these islands.

- Gonorrhea together with syphilis
- Prostitution
- The false idea that he was a god and worshipped
- Fleas and mosquitoes
- The spread of epidemic diseases
- Change in the air we breathe
- Weakening of our bodies
- Changes in plant life
- Change in the religions, put together with pagan religions
- Change in medical practice

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protect against foreign imperialist desires. Numerous treaties were signed, and international diplomatic relations were established and strengthened.

At the same time, the descendants of missionaries who had since become businesspeople, largely plantation owners, positioned themselves to seize political and economic power, leading to the disenfranchisement of Kānaka Maoli. Things came to a head in 1893 when a group of white missionary descendants, with the backing of John L. Stevens, the US Minister of Foreign Affairs, overthrew the last reigning monarch of Hawai'i, Queen Lili'uokalani. The usurpers proclaimed themselves to be the Provisional Government and the Republic of Hawai'i in 1894 and continuously pushed, against the wishes of Native Hawaiians, for the annexation of Hawai'i to America. Succeeding would mean they would no longer have to pay foreign tariffs on sugar sent to the US.

Kānaka Maoli launched a mass petition drive, producing 38,000 signatures (95% of the Native Hawaiians living at the time) against annexation in 1897. These were hand-delivered by Queen Lili'uokalani (Silva, 2004). The petitions successfully blocked the ratification of the requisite international treaty of annexation. However, in 1898 a joint resolution of the US Congress, called the Newlands Resolution, was passed that supported the illegal seizure of Hawai'i by the US. This historical wrong has yet to be remedied, and subsequent changes in political status (the Territory of Hawai'i and Statehood) were built upon the false premise of annexation (Sai, 2008, pp. 164-166). Thus, many Kānaka Maoli have complicated relationships with the US and the State of Hawai'i.

The current cohort of kūpuna (aged 65 or older) were born in the territorial period in Hawai'i, which spanned 1900-1959, after the illegal annexation and before statehood (Browne et al., 2009). American acculturation and patriotism were expected and prevalent in this era, particularly during the World Wars. Hawai'i became a major American military hub, and the US military currently occupies more than 228,000 acres of land. The tourism industry also expanded during this period, and although it increased visibility and representation of Kānaka Maoli, it also generated problematic stereotypes that persist, such as hypersexualized hula girls and kitschy tiki bars (Muneoka et al, 2021).

Loss of language, land, history, and knowledge stemming from colonization and from past and continued lack of equity in social and political institutions have created pervasive health disparities. For example, Kānaka Maoli experience shorter lives and fewer years in good health compared to Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, and White residents of Hawai'i (Wu et al., 2019).

The scholarship in the field of Hawaiian studies is ever evolving as Kānaka rediscover Hawaiian-language materials and piece together a fuller picture of their history. It is the responsibility of any researcher working with Hawaiian communities to take time and energy to learn this history and to examine their own role in the healing of past hurts and/or the perpetuation of harms. A basic understanding of this history provides important context for negative health and socioeconomic statistics that may seed prejudgment and bias. As researchers and health practitioners, we must constantly work towards a compassionate understanding of the diverse experiences in any community we work with, which may include intergenerational historical or cultural trauma. This means being vigilant against paternalistic and judgmental attitudes, especially in ourselves. We will discuss this more in the section on Researcher Self-Knowledge and Reflection.

Native Hawaiian Research History

Long before the arrival of Europeans, Kānaka Maoli had an established system of observation and research that led to many unique technological advances. Hawaiian empiricism focused on the intersection of physical senses and spiritual observation and the ability to interpret these from an experienced cultural standpoint (Aluli-Meyer, 2006; Meyer, 1998). Traditional Polynesian navigation systems, for example, were based on conclusions drawn from careful observations of the stars, seabirds, currents and swells, volcanic activity, clouds, scents, island reflections, and even floating marine debris (Bruce, 1976). Detailed observations of ecological systems allowed Hawaiians to sustainably manage resources through the implementation of the kapu system, which protected key species through the prohibition of fishing and other practices during vulnerable periods like spawning, while promoting resource stewardship to assure species would flourish (Winter et al., 2018). Native Hawaiians also developed sophisticated systems of healing, including the use of plants, palpitation, midwifery techniques, prayer, massage, bone setting, and surgery.

“From the vantage point of the colonized, a position from which I write, and choose to privilege, the term ‘research’ is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. The word itself, ‘research,’ is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world’s vocabulary. When mentioned in many indigenous contexts, it stirs up silence, it conjures up bad memories, it raises a smile that is knowing and distrustful.... The ways in which scientific research is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism remains a powerful remembered history for many of the world’s colonized people.”

—Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith
(2012, p. 1).

As a result of missionary influence, laws were put in place that created barriers to and stigmatized Native Hawaiian practices. These included laws against sexual relations outside of Christian marriage and laws that banned hula and the drinking of ‘awa (Nuuhiwa, 2013). After the self-proclaimed Republic of Hawai‘i passed Act 57, which replaced ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) as the medium of instruction in schools, teachers punished students for speaking ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. This contributed to the sharp reduction in Hawaiian-language speakers, from about 40,000 in 1896 to 2,000 in 1978 (HCR130, 2022). Educational institutions, holding negative stereotypes against Native Hawaiians as lazy and simple, steered them away from higher education and professional careers.

As noted by Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith and others, research in Indigenous communities has been based on Eurocentric frameworks and methods. This Eurocentric focus ignores Indigenous worldviews and cultural norms and has resulted in both individual and group harms (Braun et al., 2014). Early European colonizers set the standard for what was “right” and compared Indigenous societies against these standards, even though European standards did not fit the environment or the sociocultural context of the people they were researching. Findings have led to negative portrayals of Indigenous peoples that attached stigma and notoriety to the group and have been used to justify continued racist behaviors and policies.

Examples of Research Harms

Euro-Americans started conducting research on the Native Hawaiian population in the 1800s with the rise of colonization (Santos, 2008). An early example was the banishment of Kānaka Maoli with Hansen's disease, commonly called leprosy, to Kalaupapa on the island of Moloka'i. Because this area of the island did not have adequate provisions, infrastructure, or order, the colony experienced a 46% mortality rate its first year. Meanwhile, there are accounts of a white scientist who experimented on kōkua (family members who accompanied those in exile to assist them) to determine the mode of transmission, and a white physician who grafted a fist-sized lump of leprous flesh from a young girl onto a Hawaiian man convicted of murder. Compulsory sterilization policies also were put in place (Cheung, 2018).

Kānaka Maoli and their allies also have protested against genetic research in Hawai'i. For example, in 2006, the University of Hawai'i (UH) was forced by activists to relinquish its patents on hybridized versions of kalo (taro) (Farran, 2014). For Native Hawaiians, kalo is not just a staple plant but an ancestor, and patenting kalo represented another attempt to further control and erase Hawaiian culture. In another case, scientists exploring a genetic disease in a Native Hawaiian family failed to consider family views and wishes. Findings from their study led to stigmatization of the family and heightening mistrust of genetic research across the community (Chang & Lowenthal, 2001).

In recognition of the need for caution, the Paoakalani Declaration of 2003 recognized that "colonialism is perpetuated through the intellectual property regimes of the west" and called upon "all peoples residing on our territories to acknowledge, adopt, and respect the cultural protocols of our peoples to maintain and protect Hawai'i and its great wealth of biodiversity." The declaration confirms that Native Hawaiians retain their right to "exclude from use those who would exploit, privatize, and unfairly commercialize our traditional knowledge, cultural expressions and artforms, natural resources, biological material, and intellectual properties" (Paoakalani Declaration, 2003).

Much of the research by Euro-Americans on Indigenous populations have used extractive research practices. Research universities, organizations, and governments send their experts to a community, extract information from subjects, and take away the data to write their papers and reports, with no reciprocity or feedback to the community (Santos, 2008). Although some Euro-American research frameworks may be useful, researchers must be aware of the potential harms these approaches can cause. We believe researchers must honor the frameworks and worldviews of the cultures they work with, provide genuinely helpful research findings, and allow for positive experiences with research (Braun et al., 2014).

Kānaka Maoli Research Today

Western imperialism in research began to change in Hawai'i in the late 20th century when a critical mass of Native Hawaiians gained footholds in law, medicine, and other professional fields. A group of dedicated Native Hawaiian health professionals focused attention on the health, educational, and economic disparities experienced by Indigenous people of this land in their 1985 report *E Ola Mau: The Native Hawaiian Health Needs Assessment*. This report helped secure federal recognition of disparities and led to the passage of the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act of 1988. This Act supports Papa Ola Lōkahi, the five Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems (NHHCS), and scholarships for Native Hawaiians pursuing careers in the health professions.

Also in the 1980s, Native Hawaiians increased their demands to participate as equal partners in research projects. On Molokaʻi, Dr. Noa Emmett Aluli and other community members agreed to collaborate on an international study of blood pressure, naming their local initiative Nā Puʻuwai Molokaʻi Heart Study. This began a 35+ year engagement in heart health research that Molokaʻi initially participated in and later led to improve healthy aging on the island. Follow-on studies directed by the community included Ka Hoʻokē ʻAi Molokaʻi Diet Study, the Native Hawaiian Heart Health Initiative (NHHI), and Hua Kanawao Ka Liko, a generational study of heart health among the Hawaiian people on Molokaʻi (Braun et al., 2022).

The Waiʻanae Cancer Research Project, funded by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), was guided by a community advisory committee, and community members were involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating a Kōkua Group intervention to increase breast cancer screening. Because the project employed community members, they also gained skills in research and program delivery (DeCambra et al., 1992; Matsunaga et al., 1996). Also in the 1990s, the Waiʻanae Coast Comprehensive Health Center established its own Institutional Review Board (IRB), which requires researchers to obtain their approval prior to conducting research with residents of the Leeward Coast.

In 2000, Papa Ola Lōkahi also established an IRB, reviewing all research that was conducted with Papa Ola Lōkahi, the NHHCS, and the ʻImi Hale Native Hawaiian Cancer Network. ʻImi Hale, also funded by NCI (2000-2018), trained hundreds of Native Hawaiians in research, supported them in obtaining advanced degrees, and helped them secure grants for community-engaged research projects to increase cancer awareness, screening, and treatment completion (Braun et al., 2006). Several ʻImi Hale trainees were affiliated with the Department of Native Hawaiian Health (DNHH) at the John A. Burns School of Medicine. Established in 2003, the DNHH has secured numerous grants to develop and test community-



Photo by Patricia Barden, "Mele Kalikimaka," licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/47375190@N00/4226951569>

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grounded interventions, including the Partnership for Improving Lifestyle Intervention (PILI) and KāHolo, to improve the health of Kānaka Maoli (Kaholokula et al., 2017; Kaholokula et al., 2018; Mau et al., 2010).

Today, UH health professional schools offer advanced degrees in community-based and translational research and have secured federal grants to train and support faculty who want to conduct community-based research. Meanwhile, more communities have established their own IRBs or other mechanisms to review and guide research in their areas. For example, the Waimānalo Pono Research Hui, created in 2017, is guided by the recognition that the community possesses numerous strengths and assets, including a strong history of grassroots advocacy and programming (Ho-Lastimosa et al., 2019). The Hui combines community participatory methodologies and mixed-methods to document evidence of individual and collective transformations. Monthly gatherings with community members and academic researchers are held to identify community needs and priorities that shape research and programming rooted in Hawaiian values. The Waimānalo Pono Research Hui also vets research proposals and holds researchers to their community research standards. Trust building and *pilina pono* (good relationships) between researchers, community members, and *‘āina* (land) are fundamental to this process (Chung-Do et al., 2019).

As more research about Native Hawaiians is conducted by Native Hawaiians themselves, it will rightfully become increasingly difficult for “outsiders” to conduct research aimed at simply extracting information from Kānaka Maoli without engaging the community and showing how research will benefit participants.

Native Hawaiian Research Frameworks

Since the 1980s, Kānaka Maoli researchers have developed and used research frameworks and paradigms that better reflect the Hawaiian worldview and/or weave together Hawaiian and Western approaches. While these research frameworks have varied from project to project, they all share key aspects that lead to successful projects. All stress the importance of engaging community members in developing research questions and informing research processes. They also all incorporate an Indigenous view of wellness that extends beyond physical and mental health measures to include ancestral knowledge, cultural practices, connections to land, relationships, and self-determination. By having Native Hawaiian researchers assist or lead the research process, they are able to bring their own cultural understandings and personal insights of the lived experiences of Kānaka Maoli into the work. Research based on these frameworks, which reflect Native Hawaiian culture and epistemology, has improved research integrity and led to benefits for Hawaiian communities.

When looking to utilize a framework for conducting research with Indigenous communities, it is important to first reach out to the community to see if they have established their own research paradigm. If there is no established research paradigm, it is highly recommended that you examine the Indigenous frameworks noted in the Appendix and adapt one to fit the community and research contexts. The frameworks, protocols, methods, and definitions of wellness used in research should honor shared power and decision-making between researchers and community members. Robust discussion and mutual agreement on frameworks, protocols, and methods are essential for establishing a positive working relationship for research.

Section II: Research Roles & Processes

Introduction

In this section, we provide a guide for researcher self-reflection, identify potential roles for kūpuna and other community members in research, and provide tips for each stage of the research process, from developing qualitative research questions to gathering and reporting meaningful findings. When possible, key tips or steps are presented in bullet form for easy reading.

Researcher Self-Knowledge and Reflection

In research, “reflexivity” refers to the self-reflection process by which researchers disclose why they are drawn to this research, any biases they may have, and potential power differentials that may jeopardize the honesty of responses to research questions. Without the process of self-reflection, researchers may unknowingly inflict harm on community members that could negatively affect the research project and create an unwanted power dynamic between researchers and participants. Here are some self-reflection questions that are important to think about before entering the community. Be prepared to discuss your answers with community members.



Photo by Governor Neil Abercrombie, “Nā Kūpuna Makamae Groundbreaking,” licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/14508943@N00/15015924077>

Identity questions

- Where is “home” for me?
- Who is my “community”?
- Which social group(s) do I choose to affiliate with and why?
- Who and what do societal institutions (schools, religious institutions, media, law) say I am?

Power and positionality questions

- What is my position based on my social indicators and titles?
- What privileges do I hold?
- How much power do I have in this world and in the context of this community?
- How does my positionality and power affect how I interact with community members?
- Why am I entering this community?
- What is the purpose and objectives of my interview project?
- What steps do I need to take to ensure that the space I hold in this community does not lead to harm?

Keep in mind that researchers are often viewed by the community as holding positions of authority and power, especially if they control resources that could benefit the community. Thus, they cannot assume that community silence or ambiguity, or even initial agreement, means approval of their ideas. Take the time to discuss things fully and win trust through listening and accurately reflecting what you hear. Give the community time to think about and discuss their involvement in research without your presence. Once you have the approval to proceed, pursue ideas the community clearly wants or at least approves of and share progress throughout the process, making sure to share and discuss the project’s findings with community members.



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<https://unsplash.com/photos/iHduHG-ouXI>

Building Relationships and Entering the Community

It is necessary to establish relationships with individuals and/or groups within the community of interest before you can be “invited in.” As in building any relationship, researchers need to be willing to give if they expect to take. Reciprocity is everything in relationships and, without it, there will be no forward movement. Here are some things that researchers can give to demonstrate their willingness to develop reciprocal relations with a community.

- **Do your homework** before attempting to engage with the community you are interested in or potential groups and organizations that you may partner with. Do your best to learn about previous research initiatives and how they went. Pay attention to past harms that may have resulted in particular sensitivities, as well as to projects that may have gone very well. It is important to obtain knowledge beforehand to facilitate a relationship grounded in mutual trust and respect.
- **Build on existing relationships**, such as those of a mentor already working in the community, or consider partnering with groups that already have experience with conducting research. It is important to understand that building research capacity takes time and resources.
- **Volunteer or attend community events** to develop relationships and get to know the community you are interested in working with.
- **Approach communities with an emphasis** that you are looking to jointly develop a research project that is responsive to community needs. Be ready to disclose your positionality. This means presenting your reasons why you are drawn to this research and community, any biases you may have, and potential power differentials that may need to be monitored. See the section on Researcher Self-Knowledge and Reflection.
- **Avoid selecting sensitive or potentially kapu (taboo) topics** for a research project without strong pre-existing relationships in place. Topics that may be too sensitive for a new partnership include explorations of domestic violence, substance use, poverty, and homelessness. Sensitivities to a topic may also vary with gender and age.
- **Offer your services outside of the research.** For example, offer to provide a talk or to arrange training in an area that community members express interest in. To the extent possible, link interested community members to resources, jobs, and academic degree programs to advance their status and skills.
- **Consider how community members may want to serve** in various roles in research. Communities and organizations that already have engaged in research may expect that their members serve in one or more of these roles, and they may expect to be compensated for roles that come with strenuous and/or time-consuming duties.
- **Try your best not to take things personally.** Of course, you should not tolerate abusive behavior. But as a general rule, try to stay open when receiving critical feedback or when you are in disagreement with community partners. Avoid focusing on your personal feelings. Instead, zoom out to locate yourself in a broader social and historical context that includes the experiences of your partners. It is important to process your personal experiences (including trauma and triggers) with a trusted friend or mentor so you can learn and grow from your experiences and change behaviors that may interfere with your good work.

Developing relationships in the community is the most important step in any research project with Indigenous communities. This protocol continually prioritizes this element because it is paramount to a successful research venture.

Research Roles of Elders

Indigenous elders hold prestigious roles within their communities as keepers and protectors of ancestral knowledge. In conducting research with kūpuna, involve them early on to ask permission to enter their community. Seek their input on how the study should be designed and which protocols should be followed. Kūpuna can offer insights into promising partners, potential pitfalls, and the history of their community. Elders are often piko (centers, points of connection/convergence) of their families and communities, so consent and buy-in from them is key to successful partnerships with Indigenous communities. Do not feel entitled to their time and knowledge. Rather, approach with humility and respect. Some things you might ask kūpuna to do include:

- **Teach you about the community's history**, strengths, and experiences with research.
- **Identify best communication practices** for sharing information with their community.
- **Point you to community information** and resources.
- **Identify acceptable data collection** approaches and sampling strategies.
- **Teach you how to explain research protocols** in ways that are understandable and respectful.
- **Recruit or recommend research participants**.
- **Facilitate individual and community consent** to participate in research.
- **Serve as ethical and cultural consultants** in decision-making processes when dilemmas arise.
- **Serve as mediators** for conflict resolution.
- **Serve as key members** of the analysis team to offer local context important in data interpretation.
- **Determine if information may be too sensitive** to disclose, potentially causing individual or group harm.
- **Engage in ceremonial roles** like offering opening and closing pule, oli, and mele.
- **Advise on appropriate makana (gifts)** for participants.

Research-related Titles for Community and Kūpuna Partners

Kūpuna and other community partners should be given appropriate titles that honor their contributions to a project. Remember, everyone deserves to be recognized for their work. Here are some possible titles and their associated responsibilities for you to consider.

- **Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI):** This kupuna or community member will work as part of a team with another Principal Investigator to design and direct the research and to disseminate its findings. Often this may be someone in a key leadership role in a community organization. This position is usually compensated.

- **Co-Investigator (Co-I):** This kupuna or community member will have significant input into the design, direction, and success of a research project, but would defer ultimate decision making to the Principal Investigator(s). This position is usually compensated.
- **Advisory Council Member:** Many community-based research projects establish advisory councils to provide oversight and guidance for the project. If partnering with a community organization, they may already have an advisory council in place to oversee programming, and this body may also agree to advise and provide oversight for a research project. Council members usually are not compensated, but all expenses related to meeting together should be covered by the research project, and providing a meaningful gift may be appropriate.
- **Community Consultant:** A community consultant provides input and guidance into a research project's design and serves as a liaison to the broader community. Community consultants should be paid at the same rate as other experts on the project, regardless of their degree of formal education.
- **Project Staff:** Many community-engaged research projects enlist community members as research staff to collect necessary data, and these positions are always compensated.
- **Authors and Presenters:** In addition to the investigators, community members that help conceptualize the study, interpret the data, and edit reports should also serve as authors on manuscripts and presenters of research findings. Engaging community members as authors and presenters builds their research skills and, perhaps, their appreciation of research. Most importantly, community members are the best people to write and present about their own communities.



Photo by Governor Neil Abercrombie, "Kūpuna Power Day at the Legislature, 2014," licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/14508943@N00/13891922811>

Use of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i in Research Projects

Kānaka Maoli have a rich oral and literary tradition that places significant value in the many layers of meaning that can be embedded in language. Names of places and people are of particular importance and should be given extra care. What may seem like trivial, semantic matters should not be dismissed, but instead given the necessary time and attention to talk through and resolve.

It is important to remember that the parents and grandparents of today's elders grew up in a time where there was heavy shame and corporal punishment for speaking 'Ōlelo Hawai'i. As a result, many did not teach 'Ōlelo Hawai'i to their children and grandchildren, and only spoke the language in private and specifically when they did not want young people to understand what was being discussed.

When working with Native Hawaiian kūpuna, they may use Hawaiian vocabulary in their English or Hawaiian Pidgin. These words may be some of the few they picked up in their families or learned in adulthood through college, community classes, or workshops. While it is acceptable to ask for clarification, it is not appropriate to correct a kupuna's pronunciation or usage of words. It is important to remember that the loss of language is still painful for many people and should be treated with care. Let your interviewee lead the way, and be sensitive to their level of comfort and familiarity with 'Ōlelo Hawai'i. When at all possible, include researchers on your team who have some fluency in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i. If a kupuna you are interviewing is fluent in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, do your best to provide an interviewer who can understand and converse with them.



Photo by pvandyke3, "Nā Kūpuna o Kona Hema 'ukulele band, licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/21635569@N06/16076965463>

Here are some tips for researchers when considering if and how to incorporate 'Ōlelo Hawai'i into project materials and reports:

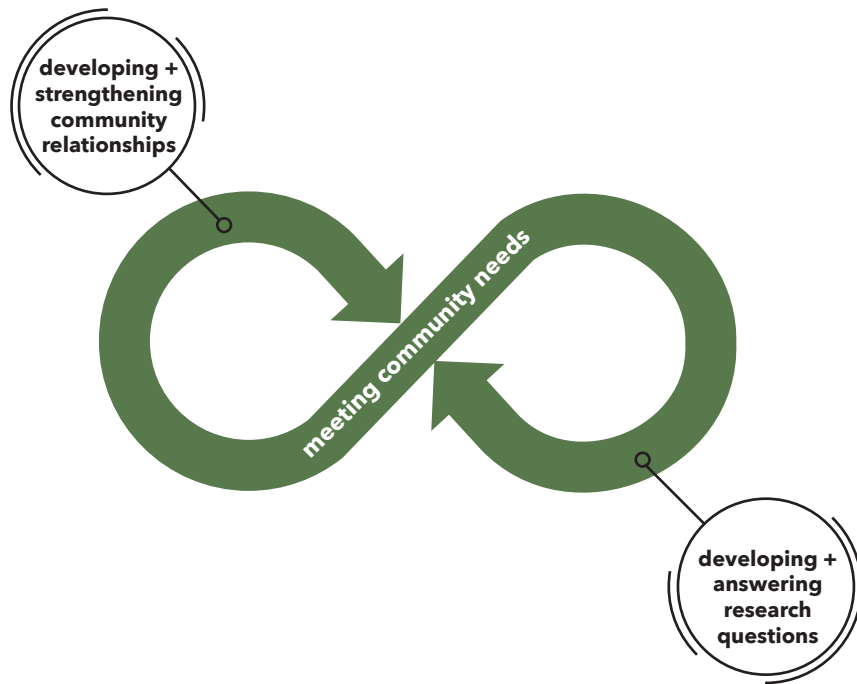
- **Avoid using Hawaiian vocabulary** in your project just to use it. Ask yourself, "Why am I using 'Ōlelo Hawai'i? Will it increase the accessibility or relatability of the materials? Do project participants themselves use these words?" Kānaka Maoli have seen their culture commodified and commercialized and may be sensitive to anything that feels tokenizing.
- **Do not use Hawaiian terms** if you don't fully understand the many layers of associated meaning. This is particularly important if you are choosing a Hawaiian name for a project. Seek advice from fluent speakers of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i that have knowledge in your research topics and familiarity with the community with whom you're partnering.
- **Take time to learn and practice the pronunciation** of names, especially place names, people's names, and common Hawaiian words. Consider enrolling in Hawaiian language courses, not to become an expert, but to take on the burden of your own learning and to avoid placing such a burden on community partners and project participants to educate you.
- **Do not assume that community members speak** the language. The privilege of learning 'Ōlelo Hawai'i has not been afforded to all Kānaka Maoli, and reminders of this can be a source of pain and shame.
- **Honor the self-determination of each community** to choose the best terms to describe their own people. For example, the terms "Kānaka Maoli," "Kānaka 'Ōiwi," or simply "Kānaka" may be preferred over "Native Hawaiian." "Kanaka" refers to a single Native Hawaiian person; "Kānaka" with a kahakō is the pluralized form.
- **Never refer to residents of the state of "Hawaiians"** in the way you may refer to a California resident as a "Californian." Colloquially, "Hawaiian" connotes "Native Hawaiian," a term that should only be used in reference to individuals whose ancestors pre-date the arrival of Captain Cook in 1778.
- **Include the diacritical markings** ('okina and kahakō) of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i in all project documentation deliverables. Though these markings were not used in Hawaiian language newspapers (1834-1948), readers at that time were native speakers who could easily infer meaning and pronunciation through context. Because that is largely not the case today, diacritical markings should be used to aid readers and decrease the chances of misinterpretation. Fluent speakers, however, may opt not to use diacritical markings to intentionally allow for multiple meanings and word play.
- **Do not italicize the name of the language** nor Hawaiian language terms in reports and publications. Italicization is for foreign languages, and 'Ōlelo Hawai'i is not a foreign language in Hawai'i.

Developing Research Questions

As mutual trust is established, community buy-in and investment in the research increases. Early successes will further trust-building among partners. As your relationships within the community are strengthened, members may identify additional research questions

to pursue. Ideally, this relationship between researchers and community members is a positive feedback loop that can benefit the community while advancing research (See Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Positive Feedback Loop Between Researchers and Community Members



When specifically looking to create research questions with a community, please consider the following:

- **Be respectful of community partners' time.** Remember that community partners have their own jobs outside of your project. Arrange meetings when it's convenient with community partners, and let them dictate the timeline.
- **Your research question should align with community needs.** Tailor your research questions so they also align with needs and interests already identified by your community partners or through existing needs assessments.
- **Bring something to the table.** You should come with some ideas to share so that you're not starting from scratch with your partners. But be open to receiving critical feedback and to the possibility that community partners have something different in mind.
- **Start broad, then brainstorm.** Once you've developed a general research topic, work with your partners to brainstorm specific research questions. Researchers should take on the responsibility of note taking during brainstorms and decision-making.
- **Consider creating or working with an advisory council.** Some communities may already have an existing group that can serve as an advisory council. If not, consult your partners about creating one. Advisory councils can be especially helpful in identifying how Hawaiian values, practices, and protocols can be incorporated into all phases of the research process.

Developing a Research Proposal

Once the researcher and community have agreed on a research question, it's time to work on a research proposal. A written research proposal spells out the research question(s) you are asking and why and specifically how you will seek the answer(s). It also is needed if you seek funding, and it is often needed if this research is being conducted as part of an academic degree program. Finally, it is necessary for the seeking ethics approvals.

Everyone has a role in proposal development. Community members must contribute their ideas and state their expectations. Academic researchers must translate and assure compliance with the bureaucratic demands of funders and universities. Your research proposal will look different depending on the rules of the entity you write it for, but in general, it should include:

- The aims of your research project
- A brief review of existing literature
- A write-up of your proposed methods
- Resources you will need to carry out the project, with an associated budget
- A data-sharing agreement
- A timeline for your project

For qualitative projects, it's important that you identify an overall research methodology (i.e. brief ethnography, grounded theory, narrative analysis) from the beginning. This will determine the kind of data you collect, how you collect it, and how you analyze it, all of which must be included in your proposal (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; Mayan, 2009).

Creating a Data-Sharing Agreement

Even if it is not required by your academic program, ethics boards, or funders, a critical and often overlooked component of any community-based research project is a data-sharing agreement. A data-sharing agreement is a formal contract that documents which data are to be shared and how these data can be used. Data-sharing agreements can support data sovereignty and specify data ownership and stewardship. See this resource by Jarquín (2012) on creating data-sharing agreements http://trailhead.institute/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/tips_for_creating_data_sharing_agreements_for_partnerships.pdf

- **Data Sovereignty** is the notion that all peoples, including Indigenous Peoples, have the right to control the collection of and access to data that pertains to their communities.
- **Data Ownership** refers to who holds the intellectual property rights for the data collected, for example, the recordings and transcripts. Some universities, community organizations, or grants have specific requirements for data ownership, and these may vary based on whether the principal investigator is a student or a professor. It is important to find out what data ownership rules apply to your project and how they can be challenged if needed.
- **Data Stewardship** has to do with who takes care of, protects, or watches over the data.

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These concepts are best understood in the context of an example. For a recent project with a Hawaiian community on O'ahu, the data-sharing agreement stipulated that ownership of the data remained with the participants, and stewardship of the data was shared between the university and academic partners. For the duration of the project, both partners had equal access to and responsibility for protecting the data. Participants received a copy of their data, as well as the chance to review how their quotes might be used in publications and presentations. After the project was over, the research partners destroyed their copies of the data, so that all remaining copies of the data were with the participants themselves, and the data cannot be re-analyzed.

Discussions regarding the ownership, storage, and return or destruction of data collected from the community should be held at the early stages of the research process (Claw et al., 2018). Here are some questions that can help in the creation of a meaningful data-sharing agreement.

- **How will you agree on what is collected?** Remember that data should only be collected to answer a specific research question, and not used for other purposes. Only collect what you "need to know" to answer the question.
- **Who will collect the data,** where will it be stored, and how will it be protected?
- **How long will data be held?** After the study is completed, will the data be destroyed or transferred to participants?
- **How will you ensure that the data are not used** in ways that can hurt individuals or stigmatize the community?
- **If products are produced, who owns the patent** and benefits from the sale of the product?

Community and Institutional Review Boards (IRBs)

Students and faculty members always need to seek approval for research from the university IRB. For community-based projects, you may also need to get approval from a community research review board. Partner organizations may have their own formal or informal process for approving research projects. If your community does not have its own community research review board, you still need to gain approval from your community partners. Community approvals should be documented.

- **IRB applications always require:** 1) a summary of your research plan; 2) details on recruitment of participants; 3) consent forms; 4) data collection tools, including interview questions, and 5) makana for participants. These areas are discussed in more detail below.
- **Plan for the IRB process** to take at least two months from the first submission of your project. This process may take longer if you are working with a community board.
- **Consult with your university IRB and community boards** to meet and create a timeline. Both may have specific deadlines by which you need to submit your project proposal for review. Also, the university IRB may want to see a community approval letter before approving your project.
- **Community boards will be interested in the community impact** of your research project, whereas university IRBs will be solely concerned with the protection of individual participants.

- **Keep in mind that what is considered best practice** for a university IRB may not be best practice for Indigenous communities. For example, if doing a project on traditional knowledge, respondents may wish to have the opportunity to be identified by name rather than remain anonymous (as is common in most university-approved studies). Being identified and respected as an expert on a particular topic and not merely an anonymous informant is important to practitioners not only for matters of prestige, but also as a means of accountability among one's community of practice.
- **Agree on your recruitment strategy** and research protocol with your community partners, and pretest your data collection tools with several potential participants. You will receive invaluable feedback that will save you time and effort down the road.
- **When designing your recruitment plan**, pay careful attention to how you are allowed to contact participants. For example, if you want to collect phone numbers and email addresses so you can later share research results with participants, you will need participants to specify this permission on their consent forms and provide contact information on a separate form.
- **Create a plan A, plan B, and plan C** for recruiting participants, and apply for permission to do all. For example, if e-mail recruitment does not work, you need specific permission to contact potential participants via phone.
- **Standard incentives such as gift cards** may not be the most appropriate or meaningful for all participants. See the section on Reciprocity and Makana.
- **Remember that any significant deviation from the protocol** outlined in your IRB application will require an IRB modification with both the community board and the university IRB.



Photo by Governor Neil Abercrombie, "Nā Kūpuna Makamae Groundbreaking," licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/14508943@N00/15199460971>

Consent Forms

Consent forms outline the research and provide documentation that a participant agrees to be involved in the research. Most universities provide templates that can be downloaded and adapted to create a consent form that includes all the elements required by the federal government and good community research. These include:

- **A statement that the study involves research**
- **An explanation of the research purpose**, the expected duration of a subject's participation, the approximate number of subjects involved in the study, the procedures to be followed, and the makana
- **A description of any foreseeable risks** or discomforts to the participant. For research involving more than minimal risk (which is not common in qualitative research), an explanation of the compensation and medical treatments available if injury occurs, and where further information may be obtained
- **A description of any benefits** to the participant or to society that may reasonably be expected from the research
- **A statement that taking part in the study is voluntary** and that discontinuing participation will not result in penalty or loss of benefits the participant is otherwise entitled to
- **A statement about how and when identifiable information** will be collected and how confidentiality of records will be maintained
- **Information about which data will be returned** to participants, what opportunities participants will have to correct and interpret data, and how data will be reported
- **A statement about the use of participants' data** in future research studies
- **Information on who participants can contact** if they have questions about the research and their rights or need to report a research-related injury

Consent forms should be written in easy-to-understand language that avoids jargon. When unavoidable, difficult vocabulary and complex ideas should be explained in plain language. A copy of the form **MUST** be given to the subject. Consent forms should be explained verbally so there is an active conversation about the project and participants' rights. When creating consent forms, remember the rights of Indigenous People to "free, prior, and informed consent" as codified in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP). For members of the University of Hawai'i community, please use the templates provided here: <https://research.hawaii.edu/orc/human-studies/forms/>

Developing the Interview Guide

Interview questions need to be articulated in your proposal and must be included in your IRB application. Remember that your questions need to be open-ended, meaning that you want to hear a long answer, not just a "yes" or "no". Also, remember that your questions must be respectful. As a data collector, you are not there to judge, teach, or blame. You are the listener, and there are no wrong answers.

After discussions with your community partner, draft the interview questions that can solicit the information you hope to gain. Depending on what you want to learn, questions could be informed by a theory or framework. For example, if you are conducting interviews about supports and barriers to participating in cancer screening, you could design questions based on the Socio-Ecological Model of micro, mezzo, and macro influences. Following this model, questions could include: What in your personal life supports you to get screening (micro level)? How does your family support or hinder you from getting screened; How is your doctor influential (mezzo level)? What about the place you need to go for screening – how does it present barriers, e.g., in its location, hours of operation, affordability, and so forth (macro level)?

Then add language introducing the project and introducing yourself, including where you are from and why you are interested in this research. Always confirm consent to participate. Start with easy general questions, moving to more specific questions in the middle of the interview. End on a positive note, for example by summing up what you've heard and asking for the participant's advice about the topic. After you ask your questions, ask if the interviewee has questions, and then answer them.

Make sure your interview guide includes an outline of how to close the interview. For example, add prompts to thank the interviewee and review what will happen to the data and when and how the interviewee will receive research findings. If you want interviewees to help interpret findings, share how this will happen. Always pretest your interview guide with someone you hope to include in your study to make sure questions are clear and your interviewing technique is respectful.



Photo by Ian Schneider on Unsplash, <https://unsplash.com/photos/Zff-V01AnrE>

Conducting Interviews with Kūpuna

Conducting a research interview requires you to balance your need to ask the questions and your need to be a respectful listener. Remember, you are being given a gift of the kupuna's knowledge and time, and this must be appreciated. Here are some tips on conducting a successful research interview with kūpuna.

Where should the interview occur?

- **Identify a private location** where the kupuna feels comfortable to share. This could be a quiet room in a family home or a familiar community gathering place. To assure a good quality audio recording, avoid windy places or rooms with lots of background noise (like a television or noisy traffic).
- **Ideally, there will be limited interruptions** and distractions to ensure a focused interview and to avoid miscommunication.
- **If the interview will occur on Zoom** or another online format, make sure the kupuna has access to a computer and technical assistance as needed. Make sure the internet connection can support the call.

Who should conduct the interviews?

- **Having two interviewers** – one lead and one support – can help an interview go smoothly. The lead interviewer will ask the pre-scripted questions and most follow-up questions. The support person should oversee the recording, take notes as needed, and be actively listening for topics that may warrant more exploration or clarification. Sometimes sensitive topics may come up in an interview, and having a partner to support a transition or redirect the conversation can be helpful. If needed, the two interviewers can communicate with each other using the private chat function if the interview is online.
- **When interviewing kupuna**, it is preferable that at least one of the interviewers shares the cultural identity and/or is familiar with local contexts and references the kupuna may share. Expressing familiarity with local context and references signals to the kupuna that the interviewer can appreciate their stories and is worthy to receive them.
- **It may be important that the interviewer** be of the same gender as the participant, especially when discussing healthcare.
- **Think about how the age/generation** of the interviewer relative to the kupuna interviewee may influence what is shared. An older interviewer may be viewed as a peer, whereas a younger interviewer may be seen as representative of future generations.
- **Interviewers should practice interviewing** so that they know the interview questions well enough to adapt to a kupuna's pace, comprehension, and the flow of conversation.
- **Interviewers should be respectful and tactful** in asking questions, listening to responses, prompting or clarifying as needed, and expressing gratitude for the kupuna's willingness to share.

Opening the interview

- **Before you begin recording**, the interviewers should introduce themselves and engage in informal conversation. It is a chance for the interviewee to get over any jitters and get comfortable.
- **It is helpful to identify people, places, and activities** that the interviewer may have in common with the kupuna, as this can increase comfort and familiarity.
- **Explain why the research partnership** and the interviewer are engaged in this research.
- **Review the consent form and explain the study**, name of the organization or institution the researcher represents, purpose of the study, how it is connected to the kupuna's community, and how the kupuna was selected.
- **Discuss the benefits of the study** and the duration of their participation. Remind the kupuna that participation is voluntary and how data will be protected, used, and shared.
- **Express appreciation** for the kupuna's participation.
- **Remind participants that they can take a break** at any time and that they are welcome to decline answering any questions with which they are not comfortable.
- **Remind participants that there are no right or wrong answers.**
- **Be sure to invite questions** throughout the interview, particularly at the opening (before the recording has begun) and closing.
- **Let the kupuna know when you will begin recording.**
- **It may be helpful to explain to the interviewee** that you will remain muted for most of a Zoom interview to preserve the quality of the audio recording. This can make for awkward pauses that can be eased by visual confirmations like nodding, smiling, sympathetic facial expressions, etc.

Conducting the interview

- **The interviewer should arrive early** and start the interview on time, leaving grace for a possible late start to accommodate the kupuna.
- **If the interview is virtual**, be prepared to provide technical assistance. For this reason, it is recommended that interviews with kupuna not be scheduled back-to-back in the event that there are technical difficulties before or during the interview.
- **The interviewer should speak clearly, calmly, and conversationally.** It also is good to provide the participant with a copy of the questions, as some may have hearing impairments.
- **Be sure to receive what the kupuna has shared** by expressing understanding ("Wow, that's a far walk!"), asking follow-up questions, connecting it briefly to a personal experience ("Oh yes, I remember eating that with my grandma.") or simply thanking them for sharing.
- **Avoid asking yes or no questions**, except when seeking clarification about a particular detail.

- **Where appropriate, tie questions** to things the kupuna has previously shared. For example, “You mentioned that your tūtū kāne prepared medicines for family members. Can you say more about that? Are there things that you remember him doing that you still do today?”
- **If the kupuna wanders off topic**, listen for a break where you can respectfully redirect them. Listen for something that you can connect to your research topic. This may be something you can practice doing as a team.
- **Questions should be as simple** as possible. Ask each question how it’s written and explain, if necessary, but do not change the meaning. However, take note of questions that are repeatedly difficult to answer. This may indicate a need to revise the question.
- **Avoid leading the kupuna** to a particular answer.

Closing the interview

- **It can be helpful for time management** to mention when you are approaching or are at the last question. “We have just one more question for you today...”
- **Invite the kupuna to share** anything else that may be relevant to the interview.
- **Thank the kupuna** for the time spent and information shared.
- **Ask if the kupuna has any questions** for you and answer them.
- **Explain to the kupuna what happens next.** For example, how will participants be able to check the transcript or help interpret the findings? How and in what format will interviewees receive the transcript and/or a summary of the findings? How will the data be used?
- **Again, thank the kupuna** for the time spent and the information shared.

Reciprocity and Makana

To honor the value of reciprocity, researchers cannot expect to just “take” from the community without thought of “return.” Community members involved in your project should receive benefits for their participation, and these benefits should be discussed and agreed upon with community partners as the research project is being planned. Compensation can include direct payment, but also may consist of makana, food for meetings, co-authorship on publications, or volunteer hours that a researcher may donate to the community, e.g., to provide training or engage in community work.

In Kānaka Maoli culture, physical and emotional displays of gratitude are common when expressing appreciation. These displays serve as signs of respect and can help strengthen bonds between researchers and community partners. Makana should not be viewed as incentives for participation, but rather as an expression of the researchers’ gratitude and the value of the contribution offered by kūpuna. When possible and practical, researchers should participate in gathering, processing, or creating makana. If purchasing makana from a local farm, the research team should consider attending a workday there to participate directly in the cultivation of the makana. It can be a chance for the team to bond and reflect on the privilege to hear the stories of elders.

Makana need to be negotiated within reasonable budgetary and bureaucratic limits. Some universities discourage the use of monetary gift cards as incentives because tax laws

require the collection of signatures, receipts, and sometimes social security numbers as proof of the transfer of funds. Gifts that are associated with the research are best, e.g., water bottles and pedometers for participants of research on physical activity or food packets for participants of research on diet or food security.

For example, in a 2020-2025 study, kūpuna participated in three interviews to share about their lives, the values they learned from their kūpuna and want to pass to the next generations, their experiences with healthcare, and advice for providers. Each kupuna received as makana a two-page story about his/her life, including values they learned from parents and grandparents and are passing to children and grandchildren. Each also received a bound report that included the printed transcripts of the three interviews. A thumbdrive was also provided that included the audio and video interview recordings and digital version of the transcripts in both pdf and editable word formats. Finally, they received packets of māmaki tea, pa’akai, and dried bananas purchased from local vendors.

Meaningful items for makana may include:

- **Health promotion items**, like water bottles, pedometers, and blood pressure machines
- **‘Ai pono** (healthy foods), like taro (kalo)/poi, breadfruit (‘ulu), sweet potato (‘uala), dried fish, and local fruits
- **Pa’akai** (Hawaiian salt)
- **Māmaki tea** or other medicinal herbs like ‘ōlena, ginger, ko’oko’olau
- **Lei** or plants
- **Reports** from the research
- **Audio and video** interview recordings

Addressing Challenges and Setbacks

Things can go awry in any project, including research. Researchers must be understanding and flexible as they face and address these problems. Stay positive! Here are some specific tips for issues that may arise in interview projects.

- **It’s easy to get behind with your project.** Timelines can be delayed by the IRB, participants may be difficult to recruit, interviews can be difficult to schedule, and scheduled interviews may need to be postponed because of unforeseen circumstances such as illness or power outages, etc. Assume things will take longer than expected, and give yourself credit for small steps. Make sure things like “entering the community,” “building trust,” “agreeing on interview questions,” and so forth are included in your timeline.
- **New technology, like video conferencing,** can be intimidating for interviewees. Offer to meet a few days before the interview for a “tech check” to work out any bugs and to decrease anxiety about the logistics of joining a call. Even if you do run into trouble, this provides an opportunity for you to show the kupuna that you are patient and that you will figure things out together. If possible, have someone who can assist the elder in person, for example a family member if the kupuna is being interviewed on Zoom from his/her home. Have an alternate way, like a phone number, for kupuna to contact you in the event of technical issues.

- **If an interviewee has a hearing impairment**, be sure to speak slowly and clearly. Ensure your mouth is visible. Having the kupuna use headphones (especially the kind that goes over the ears) can help. Be patient and assure interviewees they are welcome to ask for things to be repeated.
- **Sometimes kūpuna have a spouse**, family member, friend or other caregiver present for the interview to assist them. Whenever possible try to avoid having the helper answer for the interviewee. In the event that does happen, redirect the question to the interviewee to get his/her thoughts. For example, if a spouse jumps in and answers a question, you can say, “I heard Uncle say xyz...Has that been your experience too?”
- **If you hear misinformation** during an interview, do not correct individuals. Instead, arrange to provide educational materials and linkages to resources. For example, if you conduct interviews on dementia, also send educational materials from the Alzheimer’s Association and links on where to get more information or help, e.g., from their county’s Area Agency on Aging.
- **Sometimes you as a researcher and “outsider”** may do or say something that is interpreted as hurtful or arrogant. If this happens, try hard to hear the complaint without getting defensive. Remember there is a difference between intention and impact – so, though you did not intend to hurt someone, they can in fact be hurt. Thank the person for letting you know that you were offensive, apologize, and acknowledge and appreciate the courage it takes for people to voice concerns. Consult with your mentors and trusted community partners about when and how to apologize. Learn from your mistakes.
- **For non-Native Hawaiian interviewers**, recognize that Native Hawaiian members may be carrying the expectations and kuleana of both the research team and the Hawaiian community partners and will be held accountable by both. Kānaka Maoli researchers may see themselves and their families in the stories and findings being surfaced. Acknowledge that Kānaka Maoli team members have additional burden placed on them to translate and navigate two worldviews as they interview and transcribe. Offer to think and talk through sticky issues that Hawaiian team members may be asked to reconcile. Reflect on how you can use your relative privileged position (as a White person, senior faculty, etc.) to deliver a message that may be dismissed if raised by your Native Hawaiian or junior colleague.

Dissemination of Findings

Responsible research requires that you keep community members informed about the study as it progresses and enlist their help to resolve any issues that arise. Findings must be shared with the community before being shared outside the community, and ideally you will engage community partners in interpreting and presenting the findings. Early discussions between researchers and community partners should consider these questions.

- **If community members are interviewed**, when will they receive transcripts and/or videos of their interviews to check them for accuracy and/or to share with their families?
- **How will community partners** be involved in interpreting and reporting the data?
- **As the study progresses**, how will community partners be kept informed about study accomplishments and any issues that might come up?

- **What methods will be used** to report findings to those involved in the research and how often? Think about community presentations, newsletters, and stories.
- **How can the findings be useful** in improving things in the community, especially for those who provide data?
- **How can community partners become co-authors** and co-presenters of research findings that are shared in academic journals or at conferences?
- **How else will the contributions** of community partners and research participants be acknowledged?

Community Benefit

Research should not be done with groups that will not benefit from the results of the study. Benefits can include:

- **Improved health and/or social status** of participants
- **Enhanced or additional services** for the community
- **Increased community capacity**, e.g., through training, work, advisory, and leadership opportunities for community members
- **Community access to research resources**, e.g., by hiring community members to assist with recruitment, data collection and interpretation, and dissemination of findings. It often works best to share research funds with community partners by subcontracting for these services.
- **Recognition of community contributions** to research
- **Assistance using research findings** to prepare grant proposals and advocate for other benefits
- **Encouragement of individuals** from the community to pursue further education so that they can become research leaders for their own community

Conclusion

In this guide, we provided a qualitative interview research protocol for students and faculty who interact with Hawaiian communities. It is based on the collective ideas and experiences of our Hā Kūpuna hui at the Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, which has been conducting qualitative research with kūpuna since 2006. Although this guide focuses on Native Hawaiian elders, some of the tips are likely applicable for interview research with other groups. We encourage you to use what is relevant to your research and to build upon these ideas for better-informed service provision and research in Hawai'i.

Key points from this guide include:

1. Establish positive and trust-worthy relationships.
2. Consult community on all aspects of research.
3. Give more than you take.
4. Honor Indigenous rights to uphold traditional ceremonies or protocols as needed and protected traditional knowledge.
5. Do no harm.
6. Express gratitude.

After reading this, you may be interested in reading a companion guide on conducting focus groups. This guide was first developed in 1999 by the Pacific Diabetes Today Resource Center and refined by 'Imi Hale Native Hawaiian Cancer Network, both programs of Papa Ola Lōkahi. The guide was updated most recently in 2021 and can be found on the Hā Kūpuna website here <https://manoa.hawaii.edu/hakupuna/>.

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Appendix A.

Hawaiian Research and Evaluation Models

Several Kānaka Maoli researchers have created new research frameworks or woven together Hawaiian and Western methodologies by adapting existing frameworks to a Hawai'i context. These approaches lay the foundation for decolonized, social justice, sovereignty-minded, research in Hawai'i. Key to the success of these research projects was the incorporation of community members to facilitate and inform the research process. Below are a few examples of Hawaiian research frameworks.

Mā'awe Pono

This Hawaiian Research Methodology was developed by Dr. Kū Kahakalau. The methodology outlines phases for conducting research in Hawaiian communities grounded in Hawaiian worldviews. The eight phases include:

1. 'Imi na'auao – search for wisdom
2. Ho'oliuliu – preparation of project
3. Hailona – pilot testing through action research project
4. Ho'olu'u – immersion
5. Ho'omohala – incubation
6. Ha'iola'a – articulation of solution(s)
7. Hō'ike – demonstration of knowledge
8. Kūkulu kumuhana – pooling of strengths

This research methodology emphasizes the recognition of a unique Hawaiian epistemology (theory of knowledge) that can produce research that aligns with Hawaiian worldviews. For more on Mā'awe Pono, read Dr. Kahakalau's chapter in Nālani Wilson Hokowhitu's 2019 anthology *The past before us: Mo'okū'auhau as methodology*. (pp. 9-27)

Pilinahā or the Four Connections Framework

This framework was developed by residents and health workers at Kōkua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services, a community health center. It addresses four vital connections that people typically seek to feel whole and healthy in their lives (Odom et al., 2019).

1. **Connection to place** – to have a kinship with 'āina
2. **Connection to community** – to love and be loved; to understand and be understood
3. **Connection to past and future** – to have *kuleana* (a purpose in the world)
4. **Connection to your better self** – to find and know yourself

To read more about the framework, visit: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31453426/>

Kūkulu Kumuhana

This is a framework for Native Hawaiian wellbeing. It was developed through the collective wisdom of representatives from Lili'uokalani Trust, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), Kamehameha Schools (KS), Consuelo Foundation, CREA-HI, the Department of Native Hawaiian Health – John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM), and the Kualoa-He'eia Ecumenical Youth (KEY) Project (Lili'uokalani Trust, 2018). The creators pledged to use this framework to guide Native Hawaiian programming, policy development, and the development of research and evaluation indicators.

1. **Ea:** sovereignty and self-determination
2. **‘Āina momona:** healthy and productive land and people
3. **Pilina:** mutually sustaining relationships
4. **Waiwai:** ancestral knowledge and collective wealth
5. **‘Ō ‘ō** (cultural identity and native intelligence)
6. **Ke akua mana** (spirituality and the sacredness of mana)

To view the full report, visit this case sensitive link: bit.ly/QLTKukuluKumuhana

Nā Pou Kihī

The name of the framework, Nā Pou Kihī, refers to the corner posts of a house. It was developed by the Department of Native Hawaiian Health at the John A. Burns School of Medicine as a framework to achieve social and health equity for Native Hawaiians. The four posts and their principles or strategies include:

1. **Ke Ao ‘Ōiwi** (Native Place and Space): Achieving optimal health for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (Native Hawaiians) requires the preservation of and access to cultural spaces and places to support their preferred modes of living and aspirations.
2. **Ka Mālama Nohona** (Nurturing environments): Achieving optimal health for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi requires the environments in which they live, work, learn, play, and age to be culturally safe and well-resourced to set a strong foundation for healthy living.
3. **Ka Hana Pono** (Healthy lifestyle): Achieving optimal health for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi requires healthy patterns of living that are supported by the development of a strong cultural, spiritual, and physical environments.
4. **Ka Wai Ola** (Benefits of society): Achieving optimal health for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi requires a focus on social justice (equitable share to the benefits of society) and the ability to exercise their Indigenous prerogatives.

View the full framework at: https://nimhd.nih.gov/docs/hawaiian-framework_2020.pdf

Evaluation with ALOHA: A Framework for Working in Native Hawaiian Context

This framework incorporates mo'olelo (stories) and the value of ea (sovereignty and self-determination) to ensure that communities are included in and benefit from evaluation services (Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation-Hawai'i [CREA-HI], 2019). The framework is built on these core beliefs:

1. **Native Hawaiian evaluation must honor ea:** the kuleana (responsibility and privilege) of a people to make sovereign decisions and to perpetuate and live in ways that reflect their worldview and way of life. Ea is a right of individuals, the 'ohana (family units), kaiāulu (communities), and the lāhui (nation).
2. **As evaluators working in Native Hawaiian contexts,** our highest kuleana is to intended beneficiaries and their communities.
3. **Evaluation should (minimally) support or (optimally) advance** the perpetuation of Native Hawaiian culture and ways of being and knowing ('ike Hawai'i, 'ike nohona).
4. **Evaluation *practitioners and practice* must be pili** (closely entwined) with key stakeholders, including the intended beneficiaries of the program, service, policy or other evaluand (object of an evaluation).

For a copy of this report, visit: <https://www.creahawaii.com/aloha>.

For more on this topic see the Hawaiian and Indigenous Methodologies, Epistemologies, and Ethics reading list in this guide.

Appendix B. Reading List

Settler Colonialism and American Imperialism

- Arvin, M. R. (2019). *Possessing Polynesians: The science of settler colonial whiteness in Hawai'i and Oceania*. Durham: Duke University Press. (pp. 1-66, 96-124).
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