

Action Research: Transforming the generation and application of knowledge.

We, the undersigned leaders and friends of the Action Research journal, believe that our journal flourishes by serving the community of action researchers and putting its contributions at the service of society and our planet. As a community we are committed to doing work that brings appreciable positive impact through the collaborative character of our research.

We see our work as providing models for increasing the relevance of conventional social research to wider society. What makes our work fundamental to the revitalization of social research more generally lies in its orientation towards taking action, its reflexivity, the significance of its impacts and that it evolves from partnership and participation.

By *partnership and participation* we are referring to the quality of the relationships we form with primary stakeholders and the extent to which all stakeholders are appropriately involved in the design and assessment of inquiry and change. By *actionable* we refer to the extent to which work provides new ideas that guide action in response to need as well as our concern with developing action research crafts of practice in their own terms. By *reflexive* we mean the extent to which the self is acknowledged as an instrument of change among change agents and our partner stakeholders. By *significant* we mean having meaning and relevance beyond an immediate context in support of the flourishing of persons, communities, and the wider ecology.

We agree that quality in knowledge production cannot flow from conventional reward systems unless and until they promote positive impact with stakeholders.

Transforming social research

At this time we are called to engage with unprecedented challenges that are inter-related and compounding; challenges such as poverty and injustice, climate change, globalization, the regulation of science and technology, the information and communication technology revolution, inequalities and fundamentalisms of all types. Conventional science and its conduct are part of these problems. Action researchers, therefore, are concerned with the conduct and application of research. We acknowledge the complexity of social phenomena and the non linearity of cause and effect and see that the best response to such complexity is to abandon the notion of understanding as a product of the enterprise of a lone researcher, and to engage local stakeholders, particularly those traditionally excluded from being part of the research process, in problem definition, research processes, interpretation of results, design for action, and evaluation of outcomes. In this way, we step beyond what has been labelled 'applied research,' into the democratization of research processes and program design, implementation strategies, and evaluation.

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