# Brave Research (A Living Document)

The purpose of these standards is to acknowledge that academia, like any other domain, is not a uniformly safe or representative space for everyone. Some voices—historically cis-white male, Canadian citizen, Official Language (primarily English) as a first language, heterosexual, Christian, able-bodied, neurotypical, and wealthy—are amplified, while others are traditionally marginalized, silenced, or overlooked.

In conducting and discussing research, I will uphold these standards and remain conscious of the broader context.

1. **Acknowledging Vulnerability and Rights in Research -** I recognize that engaging with challenging topics, diverse perspectives, and cultural identities can provoke fear and vulnerability. These emotions are valid and part of the research growth process. All participants in research, including artists, have a right to work in environments free from harm, harassment, and bullying.
2. **Listening with Curiosity and Openness -** I will challenge myself to “hear differently” by engaging with research and discourse with curiosity. I will remain open to alternative methodologies, viewpoints, and cultural expressions, welcoming diverse ways of knowing and being in the academic space.
3. **Staying Present and Culturally Conscious in Discourse -** I commit to staying fully engaged in research discussions, whether in-person or virtual. I will also remain sensitive to the cultural contexts of all participants and respect their traditions, practices, and boundaries, ensuring culturally safe interactions.
4. **Balancing Knowledge, Learning, and Representation -** I will embrace the dual role of being a learner and a knower. I will step back when necessary to make room for others’ contributions and step forward when my expertise can enrich the conversation. I acknowledge that collaborators and participants have the right to challenge how their identity or lived experience is represented in research.
5. **Civility, Respect, and Cultural Safety in Collaboration -** In all collaborations, I will maintain civility and respect for everyone’s contributions. I will refrain from tone policing and ensure that the research space is culturally safe, allowing participants to express their needs without fear of retribution.
6. **Prioritizing Impact Over Intention -** I recognize that the impact of my words, research, and actions may not always align with my intentions. I will prioritize the impact on others, particularly those from marginalized communities, and will be accountable if any participant feels unsafe or violated in the process.
7. **No Harmful Actions and Affirmation of Rights -** I commit to not engaging in harmful actions—whether verbal, written, or physical—in my academic pursuits. Participants have the right to seek reprieve from discomfort or harm, and I will take their concerns seriously, even if I do not perceive the harm. Participants are entitled to safe working conditions, culturally appropriate resources, and protections from retribution.
8. **Seeking Understanding and Supporting Cultural Expression -** My goal in research is to deepen understanding, not to prove myself right. I will engage with others’ research and perspectives to broaden my understanding, while also supporting the cultural, spiritual, and traditional practices of participants by providing space and time as needed.
9. **Acknowledging Non-Linear and Inclusive Learning -** I recognize that inclusive and equitable research is a non-linear process. I am responsible for my own learning and will approach all topics with humility, embracing the diverse ways in which learning occurs, while ensuring that all participants have access to culturally appropriate resources and support.
10. **Accountability, Transparency, and Conflict Resolution -** I will foster transparency and accountability in the research process. Should conflicts arise, a neutral third party will be engaged for resolution, and no participant will be asked to commit to non-disclosure agreements. I commit to resolving issues promptly and to continually seek feedback on how these standards are upheld, ensuring participants feel heard and respected throughout the process.

# Protocol for Checking in on Brave Research Standards

**Objective:**

Ensure that the team remains mindful of the **Brave Research Standards**, creating a space for accountability, reflection, and any necessary adjustments to uphold cultural safety and respect.

**Procedure for Check-Ins (5-10 minutes at the beginning of each meeting):**

1. **Opening Acknowledgment -** The meeting facilitator briefly reminds the group of the purpose of the **Brave Research Standards**: fostering an inclusive, culturally safe, and respectful research environment for all collaborators and participants.  
     
   Example: “As we begin today, I want to acknowledge that we are committed to the **Brave Research Standards** to ensure everyone feels safe, heard, and respected in our collaboration. This is an ongoing commitment, and we’re open to reflections or concerns as we move forward.”
2. **Quick Status Check -** The facilitator invites the team to reflect on their experiences since the last meeting. This can be done verbally or via a quick anonymous poll using a digital tool (if virtual). Questions can include:
   * “Has everyone felt that the standards were upheld in our recent work?”
   * “Do we need to adjust or revisit any of the standards based on our experiences?”
   * “Does anyone have concerns or ideas for improvements they’d like to raise?”
3. **Sharing and Addressing Concerns -** Open the floor for anyone who wishes to share. Encourage both positive reflections and concerns. If sensitive topics are raised, the facilitator should gently guide the conversation toward solutions while emphasizing respect and cultural safety. If a concern is too sensitive or personal for the group, individuals can be encouraged to address it privately with the monitoring sub-group.
4. **Action Plan for Issues Raised -** If any issues or concerns are raised, establish an immediate action plan for how they will be addressed. This could involve:
   * Direct discussion and resolution within the meeting.
   * Delegating the concern to the monitoring sub-group for further follow-up.
   * Scheduling a separate session for more in-depth discussion.
5. **Close with Affirmation -** Conclude the check-in by affirming the group’s commitment to continuously uphold and improve these standards.

# Monitoring, Follow-Up, and Updating

The core team, with interested partners representative of the research team, with regularly visit the Brave Research Standards to regularly assess that we’re meeting our commitment to adherence to the standards, addressing concerns, and suggesting updates to ensure they remain relevant and effective.

1. **Regular Check-Ins:** Conduct quarterly check-ins with the research team to assess the overall adherence to the standards.
2. **Anonymous Feedback Mechanism:** Set up a confidential channel (e.g., an anonymous form) where collaborators can raise concerns or suggestions at any time. This allows team members to express issues they may not feel comfortable raising in a group setting.
3. **Follow-Up on Concerns:** If a concern is raised, the team will reach out to the individual (if not anonymous) and assess the best way to address the issue. This could include facilitating conversations between collaborators, bringing the issue to a group meeting, or engaging a third-party mediator.
4. **Transparency and Reporting:** provide quarterly reports (brief and anonymized) to the larger research team, summarizing key themes from feedback and any actions taken to address concerns. This report will also include suggestions for ongoing improvements and affirm the commitment to cultural safety and respect.
5. **Conflict Resolution:** If any conflicts arise that cannot be resolved within the immediate research team, the sub-group will facilitate the engagement of a neutral third-party mediator to assist in the resolution process.

## Procedure to Raise Concerns:

1. **Informal Discussion:** Collaborators are encouraged to raise concerns informally during meetings or privately with a member of the team. This is often the first step for addressing minor issues.
2. **Formal Reporting:** If the concern requires formal attention, collaborators can submit a confidential report via the anonymous feedback mechanism or request a private meeting with the team to discuss their concerns.
3. **Mediation and Resolution:** If a concern cannot be addressed through informal means, a sub-group will work with the collaborator to explore mediation options and ensure that a fair and culturally respectful resolution process is followed. All resolutions will be transparent, and no retribution will be tolerated for those who raise concerns.

The **Brave Research Standards** are a living document, and all team members are encouraged to engage with them regularly. As research collaborators, we commit to creating a space that supports growth, inclusivity, and cultural safety, recognizing that this is an evolving and collaborative process.