

# **Decolonizing Global Partnerships: Are Canadian Universities Doing Enough?**

**by  
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## **Abstract**

In the fall of 2024, I had the opportunity to visit Tanzania in East Africa as a part of a larger delegation from Simon Fraser University to support the university's global reach and engagement activities in the region such as student programming and research collaborations. While I was abroad, I began to question how western universities approach their global university partnerships in a decolonial way so as to not perpetuate colonial legacies that might continue to exist. In this research report, I explored how those who work in Canadian universities, and participate in global engagement activities, might perceive working with their global partners in a decolonial way. Through my qualitative interviews with three participants, I found three themes which included the variations in terminology comprehension across participants, challenges navigating identity and imposter syndrome, and the importance of fostering mutuality in global partnerships. This report underscores the complexities and context-specific nature of decolonial practices within Canadian Higher Educational Institutions.

**Keywords:** decolonization; internationalization; higher education; global partnerships; Canada

## **Dedication**

To my supportive husband, Michael, who has always been my biggest cheerleader and supporter.

To my parents and family, for encouraging me to do hard things.

And to my sweet baby boy, you can do hard things.

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I am grateful to write, learn and research on the uninvited and unceded ancestral and traditional territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Səlílwətał (Tseil-Waututh), q̓ic̓əy̓ (Katzie), and kwikwəłəm (Kwikwetlem) Nations.

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## List of Acronyms

CBIE	Canadian Bureau for International Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
SFU	Simon Fraser University



# Introduction

Attending a recent visit to Tanzania alongside a delegation of high-level executives which included the president, vice-president, deans and faculty from Simon Fraser University (SFU), I had the opportunity to participate in engaging with the university's development of strategic partnerships and activities in the region on behalf of SFU International. SFU International is a unit that previously reported to the Vice President, Research and International but has since shifted to report to the Vice President, Academic. SFU International is the hub for the university's international relationships and the university's knowledge and resource mobilization that has global reach for SFU's teaching, research and community engagement. Some examples of this global reach include the leading of global visits to develop international relationships and advance strategic priorities. These types of visits typically include relationship building with our international university partners such as other universities in the region, meeting with the High Commission in the country, networking with alumni and discussing potential collaborations between SFU and our partner universities.

During this particular visit that I had the opportunity to attend, we spent time in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and visited universities that might be aligned with SFU's strategic goals. We engaged in dialogue with the prospective partners to determine if there were alignments in research interests or other opportunities to collaborate such as through the development of joint academic programming or opportunities for student mobility. While in Tanzania, we also visited our strategic partner, the Aga Khan University in Arusha, Tanzania where SFU had an active field school conducting research in the field on addressing global challenges at the time. The delegation traveled to visit the students, learn about the flagship program and continue relationship building with our partner universities in Arusha. As the Manager, Global Engagement for Africa with SFU International, I attended this visit to the region to support the delegation as a resource for logistics but also as a subject matter expert on all the meetings and discussions. Ahead of the visit I spent several months researching regional opportunities, developing briefing notes for the delegations and confirming logistics for travel. As this was a high-level delegation visit, any decisions regarding future collaboration were discussed and then in the follow up from our return, I supported the

operationalization of these global engagement activities such as providing strategic support for future field schools to the region and following up from meetings.

While we were in field, I began to notice the legacy of colonization in Tanzania as we moved through the visit. As the most junior person on the delegation, a colonial settler in Canada and visibly white, I recall in one example where I was sitting with members of the delegation who were not-white but a higher rank than myself; I was always served first since as I was the only white person sitting at the table. This made me feel uncomfortable as hierarchy is so important on these visits to ensure mutual respect for participants and their ranks. This colonial legacy of serving a white person over someone whom had a higher rank was just one example that led me to think about how I am showing up in my international work in East Africa and what other colonial legacies are being perpetuated unknowingly. During this experience I was able to reflect on my own positionality and assumptions that my work might have but also provoked me to think about how a western university might be presenting themselves in a country that has a colonial legacy. I questioned how SFU and other Canadian universities might engage globally on collaborations with universities in the global south without perpetuating a colonial relationship.

## Literature Review

I reviewed the landscape of research as it related to HEI's global partnerships and decolonization. In the literature, I found three major themes being discussed which included relationships between North and South HEI partnerships: **Dependency and Exploitation, North to South Deficit and Legacies of Colonization.**

Before diving into the research, I explored the different terms related to the topic including Internationalization and global north – global south partners within HEI. The definition of internationalization in HEI's is wildly contested, internationalization is defined by the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) as “the active pursuit of activities which support the incorporation of an international perspective into all aspects of teaching and learning” (CBIE, 2019). Knight's definition (2012) has also been widely used and adopted in Canada (Beck & Pidgeon, 2020) that “internationalization is a process of integrating an international, intercultural, and global dimension into the goals, functions, and delivery of higher education” (p.2). For this study, I used Knight's (2012)

definition to contextualize internationalization in HEI since the CBIE definition is missing major components of internationalization that are happening in HEI's in Canada, which does not include international research and internationalization happening on campuses at home, such as diverse classrooms or virtual exchange. I also used the understanding of "global south" as nations in the southern hemisphere with lower economic indicators which may include a higher level of inequity and poverty compared to the "global north" as nations in the northern hemisphere which typically have higher levels of wealth and social equality (Universities Canada, 2018).

## **Dependency and Exploitation**

The first theme that I found in the literature demonstrated the continued dependency and exploitative nature that partnerships tend to have between partners from north to south. Lumb (2023) argued "that there are obvious hierarchical and exploitative patterns in how Global North-South partnerships are conceptualized" for example through using international partnerships to increase one's institutional rankings. This reinforced the global north as producers of knowledge which provides the global north the ability to have stronger international recruiting capabilities. Furthermore, scholars identified the extent to which institutions in the global south were prepared and able to share the costs of such partnerships which was unlikely as geo-political resourcing caused a level of dependency on global north partners to fund and drive the partnership activities (Canto & Hannah, 2001, Blithe & Carvalho, 2023). These types of relationships perpetuate a dependency on each other.

## **North to South Deficit**

Scholars argued that the reason partnerships between the north and south created a dependency or exploitative relationship was due to the global north partners viewing the global south partners through a deficit lens (Lumb, 2023, Jibeen & Khan, 2015). This led me to the second theme that is discussed in the literature which is applying this understanding that partnerships are viewed through a deficit lens (Lumb, 2023, Jibeen & Khan, 2015). As a result, the literature implies that the global south has something to gain from partnering with the global north but not that the global north would be able to gain anything from a partnership with the south. Furthermore, Jibeen and Khan (2015)

argued that “it is important to note that most of the countries identified commercialization, brain drain and low-quality education as the major risks associated with the internationalization of HE”. When international partnerships are set up to allow mobility from institutions it allows scholars and students from the global south to come to the global north, taking away the global south’s scholarship and all the benefits that might come from that scholarship.

## **Legacy of Colonization**

The exploitative practices, dependency and perspectives on deficit partnerships provided a breeding ground for partnerships to be oppressed and continue a colonial legacy. The literature reinforced this sentiment that education is another colonial resource which is that the global south serves the global north as another exploited resource (Lumb, 2023). The literature discussed the colonial history that is plagued with global partnerships; Blithe and Carvalho (2023) argued that University internationalization projects are steeped in international and colonial histories and required a critical decolonial perspective to understand how power imbalances can lead to oppressive organizational conditions. Further research should be conducted regarding how institutional actors can deconstruct the colonial ways of working (Lumb, 2023).

In this moment, Canada is trying to engage in reconciliation and it is a priority backdrop for Canadian universities as they engage in ways to address reconciliation globally. This literature review provided arguments that demonstrated the imbalances that global partnerships are facing as it relates to reconciliation. After reviewing the literature looking for a Canadian context, very little research had been conducted to better understand how HEI’s global engagement is engaging in their global activities in a decolonial way, let alone any lessons learned.

## **Methodology**

As I begun developing my research, I explored different options to engage in and I ultimately used qualitative research to conduct my research. I chose to use qualitative research because I collected data myself and examined the participants through interviews but also through observing their behavior and interpreting the data myself; I

also did not use any specific tool or instrument to collect or analyze this data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). When reviewing how I wanted to design my research, I found that qualitative research better captured the experiences and perspectives of participants compared to a quantitative research design (DeCarlo et al., 2022).

I focused specifically on data gathering through interviews with my participants and I chose this approach because I aimed to create rapport with each of the participants to allow them to feel more comfortable answering my questions that could be seen as challenging or controversial in nature. I used qualitative research because after I conducted the interviews, I organized my data into categories as they emerged throughout the interview and through the inductive and deductive analysis several I found several themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I used SFU Zoom to interview participants to learn of their experiences through their stories. I asked general questions before probing to try and not lead the participants in a certain perception while using neutral language. I conducted the interviews with a semi-structured protocol designed to examine each of the three themes I had identified in the literature review, which had guiding questions allowing for the conversation to shape and evolve naturally (Appendix A). This allowed me to shape the conversation with each participant based off their responses.

During my interviews, I used a purposive–typical case sampling (DeCarlo, Cummings, Agnelli & Laitsch, 2022) for my participants which allowed me to investigate trends that are specific to the work that those who are in global engagement in HEI. Since my participants worked and engaged with international partners in the global south, they had shared experiences across my sample selection. My participants had some baseline understandings of some of the major themes within global engagement with partnership activities in the global south.

## **The Research Questions**

This self-exploration led me to my research interest that I **wanted to understand if and how those who are working in global engagement in Canadian Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) approached their university partners in a decolonial way when engaging in global activities.** My research question served a dual purpose through

contributing to my own personal experiences as someone who works in global engagement. As well as, I was hoping to better inform my practice in addition to be able to contribute to the discussion of decolonization that is not prevalent in this space within Canada. Given the gaps in the literature, there appeared to be an opportunity to research and contribute to the dialogue in Canada.

## **Research Participants**

For my research participants, I selected participants who worked in international education in HEI for more than five years because I wanted to understand trends, and not just around the recent pandemic since there have been many atypical partnerships that evolved due to this. The five years of experiences allowed for my participants to have some non-pandemic experiences to reflect on. I selected administrators instead of academics as it related to their respective international offices to ensure that I was able to get at specific operationalization of their institution's activities not just strategic oversight. I did not include participants who were in exclusively student-facing roles but rather recruited those participants who worked with their institution's global university partnerships.

I did a direct call out through a notice on an online dashboard hosted through CBIE; I also had my colleagues in the network recommend participants. The online dashboard notice included who I was recruiting as my participants and summarized the research and expectations for what each participant would be required to do (such as the time commitment and how the data will be used). I had four participants express interest but only three followed through with their interviews and I ensured the confidentiality of information that I used to identify participants by anonymizing their names and removing any gender pronouns or specifics about their institutions such as location or names. Their anonymized names are as follows: **Atlas**, **Globe** and **Maps**. Once I had written confirmation from the participants, I provided them with my consent form and arranged the interview at a mutually beneficial time. I allowed the participants to respond to any questions in writing before the interview as well as at the onset of the virtual interview. I confirmed in the interviews about the consent form and asked if the participants had any specific concerns or questions.

## **Data Collection**

I conducted virtual interviews via Zoom at a convenient time for both me and the participants while I took into consideration the varying time differences. I conducted my interviews via Zoom due to the geographical separation between myself and the participants and not via telephone so we could see each other to build rapport and so I could see changes in body language or other visual cues. I allowed for 45 to 60 minutes for each interview and took notes, as well as recorded the interviews while using the Zoom transcribe feature. I collected data through these interviews and used purposive–typical case sampling (DeCarlo, Cummings, Agnelli & Laitsch, 2022) for my participants. I chose this since I knew that my intended participants worked and engaged with international partners in the global south, based off their connections to the CBIE network. I therefore assumed there would be a shared experience across my sample selection.

I designed the interview process with open-ended questions to allow participants to comment on anything that I, as the researcher might not have considered important to the conversation. I began the interview with a broad question, “tell me a bit about yourself, your journey to working with global partnerships in HEI’s and what type of work you do?”, which provided me with a baseline understanding of each participant’s background and understanding of the topic. This created trust and allowed me as the researcher to comment on any related topics that the participant might have shown more interest in. This allowed me to probe or relate to the participant individually. I then followed up my introductory question with asking the participants more pointed questions about their experiences regarding decoloniality within their practice. I created these interviews based off the literature review and the major themes that arose. My peers reviewed these questions and I was able to pilot and workshop the questions to allow for flow and to check any biases they might have had. These interview questions were created to identify and probe potential themes that the participant might not have connected.

## **Data Analysis**

The interviews were audio-recorded using Zoom which provided me with a transcript of the interview. I edited the transcript to ensure for accuracy; alongside the transcript, I

used my notes to add to the description of the interview including any shift in body language, redactions or non-verbal cues such as if the participant was feeling uncomfortable. I then created a summary of each of the interviews to summarize or cluster the main components of the conversation and wrote any insights I had about the interview based off my experiences (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2019).

I then used a highlighter and began reading the transcripts to find similar themes across the interviews and noted any trends I saw. Once I read through the transcripts several times individually, I took all the themes that arose across the participants and began to see if there were any connections across all three interviews that could be considered common across all the participants. I used what Freeman (2017) has called categorical thinking, “to create criteria from which to identify and organize data units” (p. 11). Thus, I identified themes through the stories and examples that the participants provided. I identified these themes through re-reading the transcripts several times, picking up on key words or ideas. I wrote these in my notes and re-visited them as I worked through all three of the interviews. This process allowed me to identify the major themes.

## **Trustworthiness**

To maintain trustworthiness in my study, I attempted to ensure that the questions I asked the participants were clear and understandable by providing examples if needed while also providing the opportunity for them to ask clarifying questions. I triangulated the different interviews' data and found that all three themes were common across all the data sets which provided validity to my research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I also used peer debriefing to validate the research through sharing with my classmates (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). My classmates understood the political land scape at SFU and they provided considerations and questions surrounding my qualitative research such as ways to not lead the participants in a particular direction that might skew the results. I ran a pilot test with my peers to review the questions to ensure they were clear and concise but to also help me with ensuring I didn't provide too many leading questions or biases. Due to the limitations in time, I was unable to verify the transcripts with participants however I did allow them to follow up with me regarding any other statements they might have wished to be used in the interviews. Two of the three



participants did follow up with supplemental materials on the topics discussed during the interviews.

## **Findings**

Three major themes emerged across the three interviews I conducted that were surprising to me compared to what the literature presented. As the interviewer and someone who worked in HEI working with global partners, I assumed that most individuals working in this field would have a baseline understanding of major concepts and themes as it related to decolonial practices in Canadian HEI's, this was not the case. The three major themes I observed from these conversations were: the understandings of the differences in terminology, navigating identity and imposter syndrome and lastly, fostering mutuality: creating win-win scenarios in partnerships. I have discussed these findings and presented some thoughts on ways that Canadian HEI's can move their decolonial practices forward within their global partnerships.

These findings are a major disconnect from what I anticipated from my literature review. I thought that from the literature review I would have found similar experiences but in a Canadian context; I however found that due to the lack of understanding and experiences from Atlas, Globe and Maps there was still a lot of work that needed to be done in Canada around this.

## **Understanding the Differences in Terminology**

In the context of how decolonization is perceived in Canadian HEI's I observed that there are varying degrees of the understanding of these concepts. All three of the interviews I conducted touched on this. I found that in two of the three interviews, I needed to provide examples of decolonization in university partnership management to probe the participants to answer. Although I thought the interview questions were simple regarding the role their institutions might take as it relates to decolonial practices with their global university partners, I found that all my participants found that the term "decolonial" is only used within Canada and internal practices compared to how their international university partners might approach the actions of a decolonial approach.

When I asked the participant, Maps about how their university partners perceive or talk about their partnerships with Canada in a decolonial way, they responded with “No, you know what they will tell you. They ask how was your experience partnering with [UNIVERSITY NAME], did you feel that you were an equal partner? Were your thoughts and ideas heard?”. In this example it demonstrated to me that these concepts in Canada surrounding decolonial practices are inherently Canadian and as we work internationally there are different ways to look at these practices that we might classify as “decolonial”. Another participant, Atlas expanded on this by explicitly stating that “..so rather than using the word decolonization, we stress participatory approach because that's a term that's recognized” and another participant, Globe, who immigrated to Canada notes that since they “come from a developing country context and because of this, when we learn about practice in the field, we don't actually call it decolonization and these kind of foreign terms... I guess the Western world has put these framing of terms for the actions which we don't identify with because it's very much advocacy activism... that's the kind of term we use, activism”.

It became evident to me through these conversations that the ideas and understandings of decolonial practices, and how we use them from province to province, HEI to HEI and internationally, vary from context to context and person to person and as such might not hold the same value. As the conversations progressed it became evident that each of the participants had their own understandings of decolonial practices. It was recommended by participant Atlas, that those who are working in global engagement in Canada should have a universal understanding of the concepts which might provide “a standard, change of ideas and best practices” for those implementing their global engagement strategies.

## **Navigating Identity and Imposter Syndrome**

Another common theme that arose amongst the participants was surrounding their own identity within the context of discussing trends and experiences working in Canadian HEI's towards decolonial practices. When I asked the participants about their experiences in these areas, Atlas mentioned “I don't know because I am not an expert in decolonization” and another mentioned several times confirming whether or not the interview was going to be anonymous when I started recording the interviews as if there were some things they wished to remain not included on the record. This idea of

imposter syndrome amongst participants that they aren't experts although they were working in the field and working in this space as shown by their responses to the questions, I posed around decolonialization in their workplace notes that there was a disconnect between how each of the participants saw themselves working towards these decolonial practices.

Another participant mentioned in their interview the inclusion of race and how that may play in navigating one's identity and work within the landscape of decolonization. Since I, the researcher, am visibly a Caucasian person, the participant pointed out, Globe stated that since they are not Caucasian and that I am, that I may be "bringing in colonial guilt" and that I "won't be comfortable addressing certain things because you feel... "do I have a right to say this"?". These conversations suggested to me that everyone has a different approach to the way they present themselves and can act in their efforts to be more decolonial in their practices. Participants had a hard time realizing that their efforts are decolonial and this theme of imposter syndrome arose as they discussed their identity within their work.

## **Fostering Mutuality: Creating Win-Win Scenarios in Partnerships**

One thing that was agreed upon across all participants was that global partners, to be decolonial in their approach, needed to foster mutuality in their partnership to ensure win-win scenarios for those involved.

When I asked the participants about their perceptions about the relationship between Canadian HEI and managing their student's international recruitment strategies to address budget deficits, the concept of "win-win" emerged and ultimately as participant Atlas stated, "there has to be a benefit to the university", with the sentiments of ensuring that university had a benefit but at both ends. Global engagement offices are then asked to find ways to provide benefits to these partners and countries to ensure that they truly are win-win situations. An example arose how some international students leave their conflict-ridden country to seek a better life, while Canadian HEI's charge hefty international fees but have no intention to return to their home countries due to the conflicts. Questions arose from participants about how this could be a win-win situation given the inevitable brain drain from their home countries. One participant, Map agreed

that “it's about ethical internationalization first and foremost” and therefore it is up to us as global engagement offices to find ways to engage with these partners.

When pressed about how to ensure there are benefits to both sides of the partnerships the concepts of mutuality arose and not necessarily the same outcome. Participant Map stated, “we have to consider how each side can benefit in whatever format in whatever goal that they want to achieve”. This might look like student mobility for one institution and research collaboration or capacity building for another. The activities don't need to be the same but to provide benefits to all partners involved.

## **Discussion**

After reviewing the results of the research and the literature it is no wonder I have felt so uncomfortable with the experience that I had in East Africa. Scholars have identified many aspects of power imbalances with global partnerships, that paired with the responses from these participants and demonstrates that there are still major gaps in the Canadian context that needs to be addressed to move towards reconciliation. After reviewing the results of this study several recommendations from the participants and my own experiences have emerged for further discussion.

As noted, the literature in Canada is very limited surrounding Canadian HEI's global engagement and its role in decolonial practices with their international partners. The dialogue across Canada surrounding appropriate terminology is lacking while these concepts of imposter syndrome arose for those working in the field. These three outcomes combined provided those working in global engagement major challenges and barriers to be effective working in decolonial ways. The literature review that I conducted in preparing for this study found themes common in development work that I thought would be presented during this study. I especially thought that the concepts of exploitation would have come up more in interviews as dialogues across Canada recently have shifted surrounding international student recruitment practices and the career immigration mills (Immigration, 2024). Despite this shift, the concept of exploitation was not present in my data.

As the participants from this study have noted, the differences in terminology across the field and country varies drastically. We need to establish clear understanding across Canadian HEI's and support the use of specific terminology as it relates to decolonial practices. Doing so will allow those working in the field to have a baseline understanding of what could be used in different scenarios. I am not arguing for one universal term but a set of understandings across the industry in Canada that might allow those who work in the industry to grasp these concepts better. Having definitions or understandings will allow institutions the ability to understand their impacts and address any possible unintended colonial practices that might come from their work. Suggestions to work with CBIE's network to discuss this could lend to the evolution of the CBIE lexicon that is already maintained and provides practitioners with a guideline for their work.

Furthermore, global engagement offices should encourage their staff and institutions to continue to develop their understanding and identity of what decolonization means to them and their institution. By providing a space for individuals to champion the cause towards decolonial practices within their organization and allowing practitioners to become subject matter experts, this should begin to mitigate the imposter syndrome that I found in my research.

As partnerships evolve and develop, considerations for creating mutuality in the relationship also emerged as a theme. A mutual partnership which provides a win-win outcome requires different mechanisms and flexibility for partnership outcome delivery. Program deliveries that only focus on 1:1 student mobility for example will not provide substantial win-win outcome. Rather examples of student mobility for one partner and capacity building with staff for another partner could produce this mutual outcome. Canadian partners need to be flexible and open to developing mechanisms to allow for this scenario instead of being bureaucratic in their approaches.

## **Conclusion**

In this study I investigated how and if Canadian HEI's engaged in decolonial practices when engaging with their global partners, particularly with those from the global south. This research found gaps in the existing literature within the Canadian context and through my interviews with three participants I found several other themes emerge:

variations in terminology and nuances across Canada, challenges related to navigating identity and imposter syndrome and finally that partnership should be fostering mutuality in a win-win situation. These findings highlighted the complexities that Canadian HEI's are facing in their attempts to decolonize their work globally.

The findings suggested that there is still a lot of work that needs to be done in Canada to truly be able to decolonize our global partnerships. Further exploration of how we, as global engagement stewards, participate and manage our partners in a decolonial way needs to be considered more. There also needs to be flexibility across how we look at these partnerships to ensure there truly is mutual beneficial relationships. More research and dialogue should be done to continue this discourse in Canada. Canadian HEI can advance their decolonial global engagement activities by continuing to have these discussions and share best practices amongst their colleagues.

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## Appendix A. Interview Questions

1. Tell me a bit about yourself, your journey to working with global partnerships in HEI's and what type of work you do?
  - a. Probe: Length of time working in HEI?
  - b. Purpose: Understand journey and background, any biases that may come up
  - c. Purpose: Understand where they are in their career and how much experience they have.
2. What does a "decolonial" approach to your work mean, working in Global Engagement in HEI?
  - a. Purpose: Getting a baseline of understanding of concepts. Understand if we are using similar language or implying different understandings of the term.

### COLONIAL HISTORY

3. Does your office/team/university work/discuss ways to approach decolonizing your global activities when working with partners in the global south?
  - a. Probe: What does that look like? Can you provide examples of initiatives or projects where efforts have been particularly impactful in global partnerships?
  - b. Probe: This could be workshops, meetings, or water cooler conversations. Is this being discussed? What value does it hold on the team?
  - c. Probe: If they do not, do you think there is space to do so? What is your sense of how this would work on your campus?
  - d. Purpose: Understand the action of what they are doing.
4. Does your office/team/university have any underlying or undisclosed motives for engaging with some partners in the global south that could perpetuate a colonial relationship? For example, some institutions use international students as a source

of revenue compared to the social enrichment and diversity they might bring to campuses.

- a. Probe: How does this impact the partnership?
  - b. Probe: Can you provide examples of how your institution communicates its intentions and actions both internally and within partner institutions? What are the differences?
5. Does see itself as colonial or existing within a colonial context that might influence the relationships it develops with international partners?
  6. Does your institution see itself as colonial, or as existing within a colonial context that might influence the relationships it develops with international partners?
    - a. Probe: Are there ongoing efforts to critically examine past practices and make necessary adjustments to current approaches?

#### MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR DEPENDENCY, BRAIN DRAIN AND DEFICIENCY LENS

7. How does your institution guard against any exploitative practices that may inadvertently emerge in international collaborations, especially in contexts with power imbalances?
8. Are there specific policies or guidelines in place to prevent the exploitation of resources, knowledge, or labor from partners in the Global South?
9. What is your institution doing well when it comes to decolonial practices with their global south partners?
10. What could your institution be doing more to be decolonial in their ways of interacting with their global south partners?
11. Does your institution have policies that guide your work with global-south partners? If so, could you share them? How did your institution create policies and procedures for working with partners in a decolonial way?

12. What gaps do you think there are in your institution or in Canadian HEI's as it relates to how we are engaging with our global south partners?

13. Do you have anything else to add?

# Appendix B. Interview Consent Form

## De-colonial Approaches in Canadian Higher Education Institutions Global Partnerships

Study Number: #

Thank you for considering participating in an interview about **De-colonial Approaches in Canadian Higher Education Institutions Global Partnerships**. Before you decide whether to participate, please take time to review the following information. If you have any questions or need additional information, please ask! If, after reviewing this information, you are still interested in participating, then we will go forward with the interview.

I, <NAME> am conducting this interview as part of a research project exploring decolonial approaches in Canadian Higher Education Institutions Global Partners. I am the Manager, Global Engagement and this project is a requirement for the Masters in Educational Leadership Program at SFU. This research is being supervised by Dr. NAME in the Faculty of Education. I will write up the results of this research in the form of a research report, and I will present share them in the form of a public presentation at SFU during the summer of 2024.

The purpose of this research is to explore how other Canadian Higher Education Institutions are approaching their work or if they are, in a decolonial manner as it related to their global partners. If you choose to participate, I will arrange a 45-60 in zoom interview to explore your perspective on this topic.

During this interview, I will ask you to talk about your experience working in higher education, your understanding of decolonization in international education and your experience with decolonial partnerships. You may choose not to answer any of my questions, and you may also end the interview at any point during the scheduled time. Your decision to participate (or not) will not be shared with anyone. There are no negative consequences for withdrawing your participation, and I will erase/destroy any information already collected from you.

There are no anticipated risks or benefits to you by participating in this research. The interview will be recorded. Any information you share during your interview **will remain confidential**. I will ask you to choose a pseudonym for use in the research study. I will ensure that the confidentiality of all participants will be preserved by not revealing their names and identity in the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the study findings. I will also shield the identity of the school itself. I will transcribe the interview myself, using that pseudonym, and the resulting transcript will not include any information that could be traced back to you. Audio-recordings, transcripts will be stored on SFU OneDrive, a secure password protected file hosting program, and the written consent forms will be stored in a locked drawer in my home office. The list matching participant information and pseudonyms will be stored separately on SFU OneDrive. Upon completion of the project, the list will be destroyed. Any data you provide may be transmitted and stored in countries outside of Canada, as well as in Canada. It is

important to remember that privacy laws vary in different countries and may not be the same as in Canada

In reporting on my findings from this project, I will continue to keep your identity and participation confidential. I will be using the interview data to write a report for my MEd program. I will also share findings at a public presentation at SFU in July. In addition to producing the final report and presentation required of my M.Ed. program, I may seek publication in journals or share with colleagues on the findings. The report will be made available upon request to those participants who would like to read it. I can provide an electronic copy via email or a paper copy to those who like one.

Once I complete all my MEd degree requirements, I will destroy the audio recordings, and I will keep the anonymized transcripts for no more than five years after the completion of the project.

I can be reached at email and phone. If you would like to talk to my faculty supervisor, you can reach <INFO>.

If you have any concerns about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, please contact the Director, SFU Office of Research Ethics, at <INFO>.

**Signing this consent form indicates that:**

- You agree to participate in this research and to having the interview audio-recorded.
- You understand that you are free to stop participating in this research project at any time.
- You have not waived any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.

Please indicate you consent for the interview to be audio recorded

- YES
- NO

---

Signature of Participant  
(MM/DD/YYYY)

Date

---

Printed Name of Participant

## Appendix C. Interview Script

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you for considering participating in an interview about your experience working with international partnerships in the global south. If you have any questions or need additional information, please ask!

I, <NAME> am conducting this interview as part of a research project to understand how select Canadian institutions approach their global-south partners in a decolonial way when they are engaging in global activities. I am the Manager, Global Engagement with SFU International, and this project is a requirement for the Masters in Educational Leadership Program at SFU. This research is being supervised by <Dr. NAME> in the Faculty of Education. I will write up the results of this research in the form of a research report, and I will present share them in the form of a public presentation at SFU during the summer of 2024.

### 2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to note that I am grateful to write, learn and research on the uninvited and unceded ancestral and traditional territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Səlílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh), qíçəy̓ (Katzie), and k<sup>w</sup>ik<sup>w</sup>əłəm (Kwkwetlem) Nations.

### 3. INTERVIEW

During this interview, I will ask you to talk about your experiences with your activities in the global south and how you might approach the work in a decolonial way. You may choose not to answer any of my questions, and you may also end the interview at any point during the scheduled time. Your decision to participate (or not) will not be shared with anyone. There are no negative consequences for withdrawing your participation, and I will erase/destroy any information already collected from you.

There are no anticipated risks or benefits to you by participating in this research. The interview will be recorded via zoom. Any information you share during your interview **will remain confidential**. I will ask you to choose a pseudonym for use

in the research study. I will ensure that the confidentiality of all participants will be preserved by not revealing their names and identity in the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the study findings. I will also shield the identity of the school itself. I will transcribe the interview myself, using that pseudonym, and the resulting transcript will not include any information that could be traced back to you. Audio-recordings, transcripts will be stored on SFU OneDrive, a secure password protected file hosting program, and the written consent forms will be stored in a locked drawer in my home office. The list matching participant information and pseudonyms will be stored separately on SFU OneDrive. Upon completion of the project, the list will be destroyed.

In reporting on my findings from this project, I will continue to keep your identity and participation confidential. I will be using the interview data to write a report for my MEd program. I will also share my findings at a public presentation at SFU in July. In addition to producing the final report and presentation required of my M.Ed. program, I may share results with those interested in the study as well as those who may have been involved with the development of ideas and concepts. I may also share this with global engagement offices throughout Canada or present the data at conferences. The report will be made available upon request to those participants who would like to read it. I can provide an electronic copy via email or a paper copy to those who like one.

Once I complete all of my MEd degree requirements, I will destroy the audio recordings, and I will keep the anonymized transcripts for no more than five years after the completion of the project.

I can be reached at email and phone <INFO>. If you would like to talk to my faculty supervisor, you can reach <NAME AND INFO>.

#### 4. NEXT:

This interview will be like a conversation and I want you to feel comfortable to ask questions and share. This is a judgement free conversation and if you would like to have some components of the conversation not included in the study you can let me know.

Do you have any questions for me before we move forward?

# Appendix D. Research Ethics Approval



## Minimal Risk Research Ethics Approval Certificate – Delegated

**Study Number:** 30002385

**Study Title:** De-colonial Approaches in Canadian Higher Education Institutions Global Partnerships

**Approval Date:** April 5, 2024

**Expiration Date:** April 5, 2025

**Principal Investigator:** Daniel Laitsch

**SFU Position:** Faculty

**Faculty/Department:** Education

**Student Lead:** Miranda Cross

**SFU Collaborator(s):** N/A

**Research Personnel:** N/A

**External Collaborator(s):** N/A

**Funder:** N/A

**Funding Title:** N/A

**Funding Number:** N/A

**Document(s) Approved in this Application:**

Consent Form, version 3 dated March 27, 2024

Interview Script, version 2 dated March 27, 2024

Online Portal Recruitment Script, version 2 dated March 27, 2024

**Research Team Members TCPS 2 CORE Tutorial Certificates:**

Miranda Cross, dated July 29, 2023

The application for ethical review and the document(s) listed above have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human participants.

The approval for this Study expires on the Expiration Date. **An Annual Renewal must be completed every year prior to the Expiration Date. Failure to submit an Annual Renewal will lead to your study being suspended and potentially terminated.** The Board reviews and may amend decisions or subsequent amendments made independently by the authorized delegated reviewer at its regular monthly meeting.

This letter is your official ethics approval documentation for this project. Please keep this document for reference purposes.

This study has been approved by an authorized delegated reviewer.