MEC Strategic Initiatives Overview

Priorities for 2026-2027

ICORD Meaningful Engagement Committee



Process of Selecting Initiatives

On October 2, 2026, members of the ICORD Meaningful Engagement Committee (MEC) Management Team (MT) gathered to reveiw MEC activities and outcomes from the previous year, reflect on feedback gathered from the Learning Community (LC) in September, and apply this learning to planning initiatives and priorities for 2026–2027.

A key objective of the MT meeting was to review and discuss the LC's suggestions for priority activities in the coming year that would advance the MEC's three strategic goals. Together, the MT considered feasibility, alignment, and potential value for each suggestion to identify key priorities to work towards in the coming year. The team also discussed approaches for evaluating these initiatives as they move forward to gauge reach, uptake, and effectiveness in promoting meaningful engagement in SCI research.

This document outlines the initiatives the MEC will prioritize in 2026-2027 according to its three strategic goals: **1) strengthen relationships and networks, 2) build capacity for meaningful engagement,** and **3) promote and sustain meaningful engagement practices.**

Goal 1: Strengthen relationships and networks

Throughout 2026-2027, the MEC aims to:

- Select 3-5 key community-based organizations to build meaningful relationships, to expand reach and connection within SCI communities
- Host a community-facing event at the ICORD Annual Research Meeting
- Host two ‘Community Research Nights’ - one in Vancouver, and one in Kelowna
- Continue to regularly attend ‘Coffee Connection’ with the Learning Community located in the Okanagan (Kelowna)
- Invite the Learning Community located in the lower mainland to regularly attend the ‘Blusson Coffee Break’
- Organize a shared ICORD and SCI BC ‘Blusson Coffee Break’
- Strengthen relationship with GF Strong and its clinicians and explore opportunities for collaboration
- In collaboration with ICORD leadership, strengthen relationships with Vancouver Coastal Health and Interior Health clinicians
- Strengthen relationship with Praxis to foster clinician and MEC connections

Goal 2: Build capacity for engagement

Throughout 2026-2027, the MEC aims to:

- Focus MECx (MEC Exchange) discussions on:
  - Engaging Clinicians in SCI Research
  - Ethics Boards & Partnered Research
  - Partnering as Trainees
  - Knowledge Dissemination and Sharing Results
- Create resources:
  - A promotional resource describing the MEC
  - Reference guide on partner and participant roles in research
  - Reference guide and examples of ethics applications using a partnered approach promotional resource (i.e., video) - What is the MEC?

- Complete the ICORD Partnership Training Course and make broadly available to researchers
- Add the MEC into ICORD Onboarding
- Build relationships with Medical/FLEX students about the MEC
- Strengthen relationship with the ICORD Trainee Committee & their initiatives

Goal 3: Promote and sustain engagement practices

Throughout 2026-2027, the MEC aims to:

- Make ‘Ask me how I engaged’ stickers available for name badges at conferences and events
- Share the MEC’s current and future involvement via a bi-annual newsletter (December/April)
- At the Annual Research Meeting:
  - Host an event specific to the MEC (e.g. a panel on experiences and insights in partnered research)
  - Present the MEC Award for Excellence in Engagement
  - Engage community-based organizations and people with lived experience of SCI in ARM poster judging with a succession or mentorship plan to promote ongoing engagement in poster judging
- ICORD Seed Grants:
  - Engage community-based organizations and people with lived experience of SCI in Seed Grant review process with a succession or mentioship plan to promote ongoing engagement in Seed Grant review
- As part of ICORD’s annual reporting process, collect annual partnership updates and features these updates in a ‘You said/we did’ MEC newsletter or spotlight
- Develop a Research Engagement Opportunity Process to support researchers seeking assistance with engagement activities and opportunities

The MEC is creating action plans to begin working towards these priorities over the 2026-2027 year. Updates and opportunities to get involved will be shared via the MEC mailing list, bi-annual newsletter, website, and ICORD's Blusson Buzz.

Further details and more information on ICORD and the MEC can be found at:

https://icord.org/
https://icord.org/mec/

We look forward to supporting meaningful engagement together!

While its members are scattered across Turtle Island or what is colonially known as North America, the Meaningful Engagement Committee often gathers on the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil- Waututh) Nations, and on the unceded territory of the Syilx (Okanagan) Peoples.