

# Mobilizing Justice – Authorship Policy

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide direction to Mobilizing Justice researchers in how to determine authorship, author orders, contributors and acknowledgements for peer reviewed articles and other products such as conference papers, presentations, reports and briefs. The guidelines are intended to reduce the risk of conflicts arising within research teams, to put forward a mutual understanding of what (co)authorship entails, and generate best practices in the management of co-authored work within the Mobilizing Justice partnership. This policy is essential to accurately confer credit for contributions made to collaborative work, and just as importantly, to allow a variety of audiences to assess who is accountable for the work's accuracy.

Much of this policy is adapted with permission from Team Interact.

## 2. Resources

With the rise in the size of collaborative teams working in the medical, physical, and now, the social sciences, standards of co-authorship practice have been generated and/or adopted by journals, associations, and other bodies. In our scan, the most commonly used guidelines are those presented by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). We encourage all members of the Mobilizing Justice partnership to read the brief document called "[Defining the Role of Authors and Contributors](#)". A second useful resource is the [CRediT \(Contributor Roles Taxonomy\)](#) author statement developed by a consortium of university, non-for-profit and publishing industry representations. The former is designed to assist collaborative groups to assess who can be listed as a co-author, while the latter is used to describe the specific types of contributions made to the work by each contributor, whether or not they are listed as an author or acknowledged only as a contributor.

## 3. Defining Authorship

### 3.1 Authorship

Mobilizing Justice will apply the definition of authorship as provided by the ICMJE. Authorship is only conferred to an individual if they have contributed in all four of the following ways:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
3. Final approval of the version to be published; AND
4. Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

The guidelines also dictate that all individuals who satisfy these four criteria must be included as authors. Contributors who do not satisfy these criteria should be included in the acknowledgements, as well as in the CRediT author statement if present.

### 3.2 Applying the Authorship Definitions in Practice

The authorship definition is not designed to exclude co-authors. Rather, contributors who have satisfied criteria 1: “made substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work, or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work”, should be given a reasonable opportunity to fulfil the remaining requirements to become a co-author. Discussions surrounding who composes the authorship team should come as early as is feasible, ideally before the work commences.

All authors should be involved in the writing and/or critical review of the manuscript pre-submission, and should be involved in the peer-review process post-submission. All authors should approve the final manuscript before it is submitted for publication.

Should a dispute regarding authorship arise, authors should first attempt to resolve the issue together. If that fails, the Mobilizing Justice Leadership Committee will assist with conflict resolution. As a last resort, a third party (someone not involved in the manuscript) will be asked to assist.

### 3.3 Lead Author

Each piece of work must have a lead author, or two or more people who are identified as co-leads. The lead author on any publications emanating directly from a student’s thesis or dissertation that is part of a Mobilizing Justice study should be the student.

The lead author’s responsibilities include:

1. Providing the Mobilizing Justice Research Coordinator with a working title, short description, and provisional authorship list for the work;
2. Inviting all individuals who have made a substantial contribution to a Mobilizing Justice study to participate in the authoring process;
3. Leading the author team in the writing process;
4. Integrating the various components of the manuscript so that the parts collectively present a coherent work;
5. Preparing a CRediT author statement describing each author’s contributions to the manuscript, and distributing the record to all authors to read, approve, sign, and return to the lead author for safekeeping;
6. Communicating with authors during the writing and editing process; and
7. Confirming authors prior to the manuscript’s submission.

### 3.4 Corresponding Author

The corresponding author should be identified as early as possible. The corresponding author commits to:

1. Obtaining written permission from all acknowledged individuals to be acknowledged in the work;
2. Collecting and confirming the correct and desired spelling of author names;

3. Collecting accurate contact information and other information as requested by the submission protocols;
4. Including accurate information about contributors (see Section 4), and including the required SSHRC statement of support (see SSHRC [Instructions](#));
5. Being available throughout the submission and peer review process;
6. Responding to the journal's editorial team in a timely manner;
7. Regularly communicating with co-authors regarding review progress; and
8. Being available after publication to address critiques and requests for further information.

### 3.5 Author Order

Author order should be determined as follows:

1. First author should be the individual who has made the most substantial contribution and/or taken the lead in writing the manuscript;
2. Additional authors should be listed immediately after the first author in the order of declining magnitude of the contribution; when several authors are deemed to have made a comparable contribution, names will be listed in alphabetical order.
3. The authorship team can determine whether or not to place as last author, the individual who has overall responsibility for the reported study.
4. Following discussion among the authorship team, alternative ordering rules may be applied to fit disciplinary norms of the lead author and their supervisor (if applicable). We encourage authorship groups to discuss this as early as possible, and if conflicts cannot be resolved, they can be referred to the Leadership Committee for resolution.

### 3.6 Prohibited Practices

This authorship policy explicitly prohibits the following authorship practices:

1. Ghost or relinquished authorship (i.e., when a person satisfies all of the criteria for authorship but is not listed as an author).
2. Gift or honorary authorship (i.e., the addition of an author who has not made a substantial contribution to the research or manuscript).
3. Planted authorship (i.e., where an individual has been named as author without his or her knowledge or consent).

### 3.7 Academic Research Staff and Authorship

Mobilizing Justice is composed of a large number of research teams/labs, each contributing different levels of staff resources, and having different norms for whether and how to incorporate contributing staff into author lists for research outputs. We acknowledge that these diverse practices may lead to conflict within multidisciplinary research teams, and encourage research teams to discuss such issues as soon as possible in the research process. It is desirable for such matters to be resolved by sub-award PIs and their teams internally on a case-by-case basis. Unresolved conflicts should be referred to the Leadership Committee for further action.

### 3.8 Partner Staff and Authorship

As a co-developed and collaborative endeavor, Mobilizing Justice allows and encourages representatives of partner organizations to co-author research outputs. Such interest should be

identified and discussed early on in the authorship process, especially within the context of the desire to conduct academic research that maintains a desirable separation from the partner institution and independence from external pressures such as shifting policy directions or changes in political leadership. Representatives of partner organizations will be acknowledged (see Section 4).3.9 Authorship for the Project Director, Research Coordinator, and Working Group Co-Leads

The requirements for authorship in 3.1 apply to every member of the Mobilizing Justice team, including the Project Director (PD), Research Coordinator (RC), and Working Group Co-Leads (WGCLs). As active contributors in defining research activities across many aspects of the project, the PD and RC may be invited to continue to contribute as co-authors in work from across the project, but there is no expectation of gift authorship (see section 3.6), or authorship being provided without fulfilling all of the requirements in 3.1. We recognize that it will not be desirable, appropriate, or feasible for the PD and RC to contribute as authors on every product. Lead authors are asked to consider and discuss with the authorship team whether contributions made by the PD and RC warrant an invitation to continue their involvement in the work as co-authors.

A similar philosophy should be applied to WGCLs who have played significant roles in defining the research activities of their working groups, but are not taking direct leadership over all research activities within the WG. Lead authors are asked to consider and discuss with the authorship team whether the contributions made by the WGCLs of their WG warrant their continued involvement in the work as co-authors.

When considering the continued involvement of the PD, RC, and WGCL leads in authorship roles, we ask authorship teams to specifically consider whether requirement 1 in 3.1 has been or is likely to be met, and if so, we suggest inviting these individuals to continue to participate as co-authors.

If conflict arises within a Working Group, it should be referred to the Leadership Committee (minus the WGCLs involved in the conflict) for resolution. If conflict arises with the RC or PD, it should be referred to the Leadership Committee (minus the RC and/or PD involved in the conflict).

## 4. Recognizing Contributions

Due to the emphasis on co-creation within Mobilizing Justice research, as well as the size of the overall research team, contributions made by non-authors need to be credited and acknowledged. These contributions may include, but are not limited to, oral or written contributions made by Mobilizing Justice researchers, representatives from partner institutions, as well as community and practitioner participants in workshops, review panels and other interactions with the research team. To recognize these efforts, that so often go uncredited, or worse, miscredited, the corresponding author of each study is tasked with writing an accurate and comprehensive statement of contributions of non-authoring contributors. The CRediT criteria should be used, except where the contributions being recognized do not fall under the specific categories within CRediT. In this case, authors are encouraged to express the nature of contributions in words by which they are best described. The corresponding author should ask each acknowledged contributor to review and approve the description of their contribution and seek permission to have their name used. The acknowledgement statement should be reviewed and approved by all authors prior to submission, and must appear in the acknowledgements section of any written product or presentation materials (e.g. slide decks).

### 4.1 Acknowledging SSHRC Funding

All outputs should include one of the following statements:

This [output] draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's partnership grant: Mobilizing justice: towards evidence-based transportation equity policy.

Or

[Researcher's name and/or Mobilizing Justice] is supported in part by funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's partnership grant: Mobilizing justice: towards evidence-based transportation equity policy.

See also [SSHRC policies](#) on using their signature in project outputs.

## 5. Conflict Resolution

From time to time, research teams may not be able to agree on the correct course of action regarding authorship rights and author orders. Unless otherwise specified in this document, Mobilizing Justice first encourages conflicts to be resolved within research teams by the relevant sub-award PI. Should any participant feel that the conflict has not been resolved fairly, they may appeal to the Leadership Committee by email. Any member of the leadership committee involved in the conflict must recuse themselves from committee deliberations. In the event that the Leadership Committee remains divided on an issue, the PD will make a final recommendation if the PD is not implicated in the conflict. If the PD is implicated in the conflict, and the Leadership Committee is divided, the Leadership Committee will create a subcommittee of three members of the Advisory Panel to advise on how best to resolve the conflict.

### 5.1 Disciplinary Differences

When a dispute involves differences between disciplines and their respective practices, the Leadership Committee is encouraged to defer to the standard practice of the sub-award PI's discipline.