

# The Compensation Series: Practices to better include older people from disadvantaged groups in research

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**AGE-WELL CC1 Knowledge Mobilization**

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# Agenda for today's discussion:

1. Context and Rationale
2. What is Compensation?
3. Inclusive, Equitable, and Fair Practices
4. Disadvantage and Vulnerability
5. From Exclusion to Inclusion
6. Concluding Thoughts



# Situating the Knowledge Gap

- Little research on meaningful compensation
- No comprehensive standards on rates of compensation
- Few guidelines on compensating older people
- Particularly problematic with regards to disadvantage

## The Compensation Series:

- A 5-part compensation toolkit designed to guide funders, universities, and academics carrying out research in the context of tri-council research policies across the county

(<https://amandagrenier.com/pubs/research-compensation-series/>)

# The Research Compensation Series

## Part 1 – What is Compensation?

- Compensation is not the same thing as reimbursement
  - Reimbursement is the repayment of out-of-pocket expenses
- Compensation may be monetary or non-monetary
- Compensation may be considered similar to payment for labour or as a culturally appropriate gift
- Compensation must not create an undue incentive to participate
  
- Why is it Important?
  - To acknowledge the time and effort of research participants
  - To reduce financial barriers to research participation
  - To meaningfully involve diverse groups of older people
  - To hear voices and insights that are often overlooked

**We suggest thinking about compensation through a lens of inclusion, equity and fairness.**

Questions to ask include:

1. What is the best form of compensation for this group?

What does the group say about this? (ask them)

2. Is this compensation is practical, equitable and fair?

3. How can we communicate the form, amount, and process for compensation in a transparent and clear manner?

## Questions to Consider in Planning Inclusive, Equitable, and Fair Practices of Research Compensation:

### 1. Best Form of Compensation:

- What is the best way to acknowledge the participant's time and effort?
- What are the most appropriate models of compensation for this project? (Recognition, payment for labour, and/or cultural gifts.)
- What rate should be used? (e.g., minimum wage.)
- How can the participant/group's unique circumstances be considered and acknowledged? Are there particular cultural conventions or norms?
- Does using this form of compensation limit who can participate or create unequal access?

### 2. Ethical and Practical:

- What expenses did (or will) the participants incur?
- Have all out-of-pocket expenses been reimbursed?
- Is the amount of compensation proportional to the time and effort for participation?
- Is it equal in type and amount for all participants and groups?
- Is the amount too small to be meaningful (unfair) or too large (coercive)?
- What is the impact on the participant/group/research?

### 3. Communication and Transparency:

- Did you hold early planning meetings with stakeholders and groups to discuss compensation forms and practices?
- Have you properly communicated consent and compensation as per ethical guidelines?
- Has there been open dialogue and discussion about compensation and the potential implications of accepting compensation?
- Does the participant/group understand their rights to reimbursement and compensation?

Grenier, A., Kobayashi, K., Imahori, D., Burke, E., Chohan, F. (2021) Part 2 –Inclusive, Equitable and Fair Practices. In The Research Compensation Series. Output of AGE-WELL CC1 Crosscutting Theme on Knowledge Mobilization and Commercialization.

# The Research Compensation Series

## Part 3 - Disadvantage, Vulnerability, and Inclusion

How to align your research with best practices on compensation:

- **Consult with participants** to identify fair compensation and eliminate barriers
- Discussions should be based on **fair, accessible, inclusive, meaningful participation** that is not coercive and does not result in additional unmet costs
- Model practices that **respect decision making, autonomy, and privacy rights**
- Implement **safeguards and ensure the protection, safety, and rights** of older people
- Research **budgets should include compensation** for 'lived experiences' at all stages
- **\*\*\* The compensation offered to older people from disadvantaged groups should not differ from that offered to the general population of participants\*\*\***

# Best Practices for Accessible and Fair Compensation: Moving from Exclusion to Meaningful Inclusion

Grenier, A., Kobayashi, K., Imahori, D., Burke, E., Chohan, F. (2021) Part 4 – Best Practices for Accessible and Fair Compensation: Moving from Exclusion to Meaningful Inclusion. In The Research Compensation Series. Output of AGE-WELL CC1 Crosscutting Theme on Knowledge Mobilization and Commercialization

## A checklist for accessible and fair research compensation:

### Type

- Monetary compensation is offered. Cash is often the preferred method of compensation. If not cash, there must be flexibility with choice of gift card. It is important to ask people what they want.
- Reimbursement of expenses is offered separately, in addition to compensation. It is important to find out what is best for participants including up front transfer, reimbursement, or fees to be paid by research team. Covering expenses prior to participation is the best/most accessible option.
- Rates and appropriate forms of compensation have been discussed with participants and stakeholders, including options for individual or collective compensation.
- Culturally meaningful practices have been accounted for, appropriately acknowledged, and incorporated into the budget and design.

### Amount

- Compensation is meaningful enough to acknowledge the efforts of participation without being coercive. All costs incurred to participate have been paid in advance or reimbursed, and provisions for time and effort have been made.
- Compensation rates are easily understood and correspond to hourly wages or other established metrics.

### Accessibility

- Needs of potential participants are well understood and accounted for (e.g., food, accessibility, transportation, translation, etc).
- Payment of expenses cover the full costs of participation. Expenses have been covered prior to participation where possible; if reimbursed, the participant is not expected to carry the costs or incur delays in reimbursement.
- Payment was offered in a safe, appropriate, and non-stigmatizing manner.
- The team has made efforts to ensure the participant understands the amount, methods, and timing of compensation they are expecting to receive. Everyone on the research team is briefed to ensure clear and consistent messaging. There is an easy point of contact for participants to reach out to for all questions related to compensation.

# Key Takeaways

- Achieving accessible and fair compensation in research is necessary to meaningfully include diverse older people
- Compensation guidelines vary across provinces, institutions, and organizations
- Researchers must consult with participants to understand the best form of compensation
- We suggest including compensation in budgets at standard minimum wage



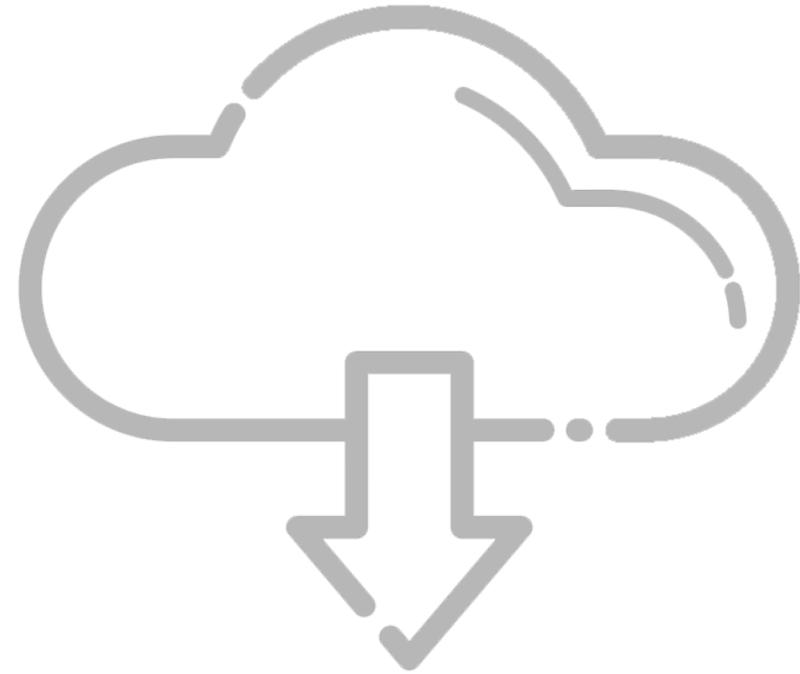
# Thank you

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<https://amandagrenier.com/pubs/research-compensation-series/>



\*Grenier, A., Kobayashi, K. (2019–2021) CC1 K–MOB Research: Understanding and enacting Kmb in large teams and across AGE-WELL: An interactive action orientated project.