

# Decolonising Methodologies Through Collaboration

Reflections on Partnerships and Funding Flows from  
Working Between the South and the North

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## Introduction

This chapter explores how we can adopt a decolonial approach to methodologies within linguistics through critical examination of the role of partnerships within academic collaborations in the so-called “Global North” and “Global South”. We recognise that the North–South dichotomy is artificial and reductionist. However, for the purposes of the current chapter we employ these terms to reflect conceptualisations in our workplaces, as seen in funding schemes which explicitly require relationships between individuals and/or institutions in the North and South. We acknowledge, however, that the terminology is problematic and fraught, and we explore some of the issues involved in further detail below.

Decolonisation is a “double operation that includes both colonized and colonizer” (Mignolo, 2007, p. 458; cf. Fanon, 1952), and consequently we “are all today in the colonial matrix of power” (Mignolo, 2018, p. 108). While we recognise that the colonised and coloniser operate from different positions, we argue that collaborative partnership is crucial for pursuing the challenge

of decolonisation and must involve individuals working from different positionalities, histories, geographies, disciplines, and epistemologies. In creating decolonial partnerships, we can “make room for new ideas and the scholars who produce them” and thereby “disrupt traditional departmental and disciplinary identities” (Charity Hudley et al., 2020, p. 312). In linguistics, this will involve challenging ideas around what language practices and contexts are valued as objects of study, and considering who gets to do research or be considered an expert on particular language practices.

There is increasing awareness of the importance of collaboration in academic research and a growing acknowledgement of the necessity of South–North research collaboration to tackle real-world challenges. There is also a heightened awareness of the inequalities which are inherent in this type of work (Coetzee, 2019; Mutua & Swadener, 2004; Tilley & Kalina, 2021). When taking a decolonial approach, collaborations can give rise to challenges and opportunities because decolonisation is a process which seeks to disrupt “the long-standing patterns of power that survive colonialism” (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 243) and move towards “the possibilities of an otherwise” (Walsh, 2018, p. 17).

In this chapter we discuss the challenges and opportunities for decolonial disruption which exist when working in academic partnership, with a focus on linguistics research. We develop an autoethnographic account based on our experiences of working on several international collaborative research projects. We draw on experiences of collaborative academic partnerships between researchers based in Africa and Europe, involving different individuals and institutions, as well as on our experiences of working together on a project which focused on decolonising the curriculum at the University of Essex (UK) and the University of the Western Cape (South Africa). The chapter is structured around three sections: (1) the need to decolonise linguistics; (2) reflections on decolonial partnerships as one strategy towards that goal; and (3) suggestions for best practice in such partnerships.

We ask: What can we as individuals do to work towards decolonial research partnerships? What can the institutions at which we are based do to facilitate more equitable and decolonial research partnerships between North and South contexts? What is the role of funders in supporting these international research collaborations, particularly in light of colonial histories which continue to impact on present-day power relations and inequalities?

We recognise that not all collaborations are funded. However, we focus here on both internally and externally funded research projects to highlight the way that while funding may enable collaborations and projects which would not otherwise be possible, it can also impact and characterise these partnerships

and the associated research goals and agendas. We consider funding as a clear area in which there are inequities relating to opportunities for access. Funding is often influenced by institutional affiliation, geographical location, and the availability of pre-existing resources, as well as what type of research and work they support and enable. It is also an area in which there are differences in the contexts we draw on as researchers based in South Africa and the UK. There are also differences with regard to expected outputs from projects, how these are viewed and assessed, the impact that they have for individuals' career progression (see also Riestenberg et al., this volume), and the availability of broader research infrastructure and administrative support.

Within the funding landscape, funding schemes such as the UK's Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF; see the UK Research and Innovation website for further details) explicitly require North–South partnerships, albeit with the funding primarily administered in the North. The GCRF was a £1.5 billion funding scheme established in 2015 that was directly linked with the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget. Projects funded by the scheme therefore have to work with, and in, countries deemed eligible to receive ODA and funds must be spent following ODA guidelines. Due to the UK Conservative Government's 2021 decision to neglect their commitment to spending 0.7% of Gross National Income on ODA, and to cut the ODA budget by around £4 billion, the GCRF scheme was stopped and researchers working within it have been negatively affected (Phipps, 2021). The impacts not only affected the future of the scheme, but projects which had been awarded funding but had not commenced, and projects which were already underway and had their funding cut. As Phipps (2021, p. 40) writes, in this process there “was no respect at all for the partnerships overseas or the careful way in which researchers had built up participatory models and equitable partnerships.” This example illustrates how funding structures can impact partnerships and how we need to reimagine how funding operates if we are to move towards decolonial practices. Our autoethnographic reflections in this piece focus on the role which funding has in international research partnerships, within both the GCRF scheme and other funding schemes.

We come together in our collaborations acknowledging, as Walter D. Mignolo (1994) puts it, that we all speak from a different locus of enunciation. Acknowledging our positionalities and reflecting on how they affect our work is an integral part of working towards effective collaborations; accordingly, we begin this chapter with brief positionality statements from all three of us as authors, these show not only who we are in respect to the work we carry out but also how our lived experiences influence our perspectives on the topic of collaborative research.

## Rajendra

I am a Black South African, and I work in the field of language education with specific emphasis on the training of language teachers. The South African context with regard to language is complex given the entanglement of language with race, class and ethnicity and the role of language in the oppression of Black bodies. My commitment to the decolonial turn foregrounds the imperative to encompass values and dispositions that unlearn, re-form, and deconstruct linguistics and language studies. Radical intellectualism in linguistics should engage with the hidden violence of language. My thesis is that we need new ways of thinking around language, and that dominant academic cultures cannot disrupt old ways of working on and thinking about knowledge.

## Hannah

I am a Black woman who grew up in the UK with a mixed Jamaican and English background. The views I share here have their origins in my experiences of working with academic colleagues in Eastern and Southern Africa as part of collaborative research projects. In these contexts, I carry substantial privilege as someone from the UK who is supported by Northern institutions both personally and professionally. I am committed to partnerships and to working with and, contributing to, the local research community. However, my experiences have only strengthened my belief that research and research partnerships need to be approached through a decolonial lens and that Northern research institutes and agendas need to be challenged where they perpetuate inequalities and do not acknowledge the ways in which colonial legacies continue to shape research.

## Colin

I work in applied linguistics, focusing on multilingualism and language policy. I have worked primarily in Malawi, and also in Ghana, Botswana, Tanzania, and Zambia. As a white Scottish man based in higher education institutions in the UK, I am able to choose to conduct this type of research, and my ability to be accepted as a researcher within this field is indicative of the inherent privileges that I possess. While I am precariously employed as an early career researcher, my positionality still affords me a disproportionate amount of privilege within academia, which I have a responsibility to use to challenge the inequities faced by other colleagues within linguistics.

The intellectual and material burden of decolonisation within linguistics is one that must be shared, and I have an increasing commitment to collaborative work.

## The Need to Decolonise Linguistics

Colonialism is intimately linked to language: as Felix Ndhlovu and Leketi Makalela (2021, p. 8) write, “the twin processes of colonial imperialism and Christian modernity have had the most significant influence on the spread of monolingual thinking.” Not surprisingly then, linguistics as a field has “been deeply implicated in the colonial project of conquest and control” (Mazrui 2009, p. 361; Errington, 2001), and the widespread dominance of both English and monoglossic bias that pervades our research agendas and methodologies is a product of coloniality (McKinney, 2020; Pennycook & Makoni, 2020). Addressing and acknowledging the colonial history of our field is an essential step in delinking from it and improving the practice of linguistics as a discipline (Mufwene, 2020; Ndhlovu, 2020). In order to do so, we must actively move away from Euro-modernist epistemologies (Mignolo, 2018; Ndhlovu & Makalela, 2021).

As Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2008) writes, “the term ‘research’ is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism” (p. 1). Linguistics methodologies have been built on a specific Euro-modernist worldview that does not necessarily allow us to capture the lived linguistic realities of people’s lives (Mufwene, 2020; Ndhlovu, 2020). To decolonise linguistics, we must both decolonise the research that informs our teaching and decolonise how we undertake that research. This process involves addressing the ways in which knowledge is produced and whose knowledge is valued and promoted. The priority for the radical intellectual is to reflect on the ways that academic practices signify, restrain, or empower decolonial turns not only in curricula or the research process but also in real-life concerns of domination, emancipation, justice, and liberation of the increasing number of oppressed people globally. When Northern and Southern scholars collaborate, there is always the question of who speaks for whom, especially in research on the lived experience of the “subaltern” (Spivak, 1988). A crucial consideration for decolonising methodologies is the observation that in many academic endeavours, it is not the voices or intellectual production of the subaltern that are foregrounded, but the interpretation and utility of their experiences from a scholar’s perspective. This can occur when scholars are operating from a Northern perspective or a Southern perspective and this must be challenged if we are to engage in research that is not exploitative.

## Reflections On Power and Trust in Decolonial Partnerships

Collaborations between the North and South do not automatically mean that research partnerships are engaging with decoloniality. To do so in a meaningful way, this engagement has to include the hybrid spaces of the “Norths in the South,” and the “Souths in the North,” given the colonial history of spatial injustice. Moving beyond the North–South dichotomy, researchers should be guided by a commitment to radical humanism and focus on how nuances of the historical process of coloniality contribute to its invisibility in many aspects of present-day research. Radical humanism as a philosophy insists on the freedom of an individual and places emphasis on the personality of the individual as a human being. Frantz Fanon’s (1952, p. 230) radical humanism sustains a capacity to speak with real power to many of the ways in which the question of the human is posed, and contested, from within contemporary forms of resistance undertaken by the subaltern in zones of social exclusion and domination.

Concerns about equitable partnerships are widespread within collaborative research, particularly when these partnerships are between colleagues from the South and North (Asare et al., 2022; Costley & Reilly, 2021; Dodsworth, 2019; Grieve & Mitchell, 2020; Kontinen & Nguyahambi, 2020; Perry, 2020; Price et al., 2020). These concerns often centre around issues of power and resources within partnerships—who has access to power and resources, and how are these used? Such considerations are affected by the history of colonialism and contemporary systems of coloniality which influence how power and resources are allocated (Dodsworth, 2019). As Mia Perry (2020, p. 1) writes, “partnerships begin on the basis of histories, understandings, and layers of contexts that are not always immediately evident, not always directly connected to you, but always influencing the starting positions and the potentials of the collaboration ahead.”

Similarly, Walter Mignolo (2018) reminds us that we always speak from a particular location in power structures, be it in the North or South, and that no one escapes the class, sexual, gender, spiritual, linguistic, geographical, and racial hierarchies of the modern, capitalist, and patriarchal world-system. Therefore, a key aspect of collaborative work involves understanding, and discussing, how different aspects of the research are affected by coloniality—including which knowledge and worldviews are valued or defaulted to and how collaborators are able to influence fundamental parts of the research design (Jentsch, 2004; Perry, 2020). Without discussing the epistemological foundations and assumptions that undergird or influence any research

endeavour, there is a danger of perpetuating epistemic injustice (Meredith & Quito-Niño, 2021).

An important reflection from our own collaborative work is that there are multiple roles and processes which may be visible or invisible and explicit or implicit to varying degrees. Individuals may automatically assume certain roles and responsibilities. While it is not necessary for everyone to participate to an equal degree in all aspects of a project, it is important to make visible and explicit the roles which all collaborators have, to discuss these as our awareness emerges and changes, and to reflect on these in an iterative and ongoing basis. Practical examples of this process include discussing who is responsible for arranging meetings, around whose schedules are they arranged and who gets to set the agenda? (For reflections on collaborative research partnerships in linguistics see Costley & Reilly 2021, Reilly et al., 2023.)

Similarly, when engaging with academic outputs such as conference talks or journal articles, the division of labour—as well as its rationale—is often not made explicit from the outset. Increasing attention must be paid to the importance of author credit within collaborative linguistics work (Amfo, 2021; Costley & Reilly, 2021). This is of course true for collaborations with colleagues based in the same country or at the same institution, but international collaborative research brings additional potential challenges, especially when different academic currencies hold at different institutions and in different contexts. For example, are publications expected in order to secure academic jobs? Are publications needed in order to apply for promotions? Are externally funded research grants valued and/or expected? It can be easy to assume that these issues are viewed similarly across contexts, but this is not the case. Having explicit discussions about who will be responsible for putting together an initial draft of a paper, which conferences will be attended and by which members of the collaboration, has the potential to mitigate against some of these complications, at least those that are within our control. Often these discussions take place against the background of constraints which us as individuals are not in a position to overhaul, however we should identify the areas in which we do have individual capacity to make a difference, and to call for wider systematic restructuring for broader constraints.

## Funding Flows in Collaborations

Having briefly reviewed issues which we believe are pertinent to decolonising linguistics, we now turn to how we have experienced coloniality in our own research partnerships. We focus here particularly on funding systems and



reflect on questions such as: How does the funding landscape and funder's agendas affect the possibility of equitable collaboration? How do institutional systems and processes impact trust between collaborators?

## Colin

Within many of my collaborative projects, and in much of the funding available from schemes in the Global North, the UK-based institution acts as the “award-holder.” Our partner institutions can only gain access to funding through the UK institution. Despite the fact that a requirement to get GCRF funding, as discussed above, is that a “least developed country/lower-middle income country” is involved both in the project and in development of the grant application itself, the systems and processes within UK universities are not set up to efficiently work with universities in the Global South. In the majority of cases, partnership agreements, largely written in dense legalese by institutional representatives in the UK, must be signed by all partners. This process can lead to lengthy and drawn-out negotiations. It can also potentially lead to misunderstandings and inequity in negotiations, depending on the non-UK-based collaborators' familiarity with the language of these documents, as well as local expectations and regulations in relation to the agreement.

The project which all three of us worked on together examined the link between language policy and broader issues involved in decolonising the university. As it was a short-term project, there was not sufficient time to set up the University of the Western Cape (UWC) as a formal “partner” for the University of Essex. Our remaining option—to ensure that the funding which we had allocated in our proposal for activities led by UWC could get to UWC—was for UWC to invoice the University of Essex. We had planned for the bulk of funding to go towards hiring two student research assistants from UWC to work alongside students at the University of Essex. However, invoices could only be paid retroactively, meaning that UWC would have to set up a contract, employ, and pay students to work on the project and then claim the money from Essex. However, they could not do so without having the funding available first. This double-bind meant that due to the financial systems involved, we were unable to send any funds to UWC or to employ any students from South Africa on the project, despite the fact that this aspect of our research had been specified in our successful funding application. Our student research assistants at Essex were all excellent, producing valuable work for the project and gaining research experience and skills at the same time. Yet it was



to the detriment of the project that we were not also able work with research assistants based at UWC. That one of the topics we were investigating was the decolonisation of curriculums in South Africa and the UK made the whole experience more frustrating because our South African students were not able to participate in the project on an equal level as our UK students, thereby perpetuating these inequitable relations.

In any research partnership, multiple collaborators may be involved at different levels and stages, including researchers, communities, institutions, and funders. They may all have different priorities and pressures that affects the research and how the partnership can operate. As the above example demonstrates, we cannot have equitable partnerships if the funding systems and processes that we employ are not equitable and do not allow for sharing resources effectively between all partners. Even if there is a commitment amongst individuals involved in a research project to adopt a decolonial stance as we produce knowledge, many of the institutional systems we are operating within in the UK, and universities themselves, are products of coloniality and may reproduce these processes in ways that individual researchers and other partners, despite our best efforts, are unable to overcome.

## Hannah

I reflect here on the initial stages of a different international collaborative linguistics-focused research project involving two institutions in the UK and two institutions based in Africa. Unlike the programme that Colin discusses above, the funding scheme that supports this project is not restricted to joint research projects nor to working with international collaborators from specific countries. However, it allows for international partners and collaborators, which is the basis on which the proposal was made. I highlight here the practical but also the interpersonal consequences of being required to enter into formal contracts and engage with systems of compliance before the collaborative elements of the research on the project had begun.

In this case, both the Africa-based partners and I had to act as intermediaries in the communication between the UK grant-holding institution and the Co-Applicants' respective institutions. Before any funds can be transferred to any of the institutions, a due diligence process must be completed. The academic project members were responsible for obtaining the information required to complete the process. Many of the questions on the 11-page form are not those that academic staff are in a position to answer due to the nature of our job roles. This included a range of questions about institutional accounts,

processes and procedures. Substantial time and effort is therefore needed not only to obtain the correct information but to also ensure that the form is signed by the relevant responsible person with the correct level of seniority.

Working on the UK side, I found this to be a deeply frustrating process. It is time-consuming and, I felt, a job that the academic partners should not be expected to do—not least because these were questions that we did not know the answers to. This requirement also meant that the first months of the project were filled with communication about the due diligence and the draft collaboration agreement rather than the focus of the research. I felt fortunate that the project partners were people I already knew—which is not the case in every partnership of this kind—and that I had collaborated extensively with one of them in the past. Were this not the case, it would be a particularly difficult note on which to start the project. And of course, on a practical level, it is frustrating to have to expend so much time and energy on such details at the outset of a project when partners are eager to begin the research.

These issues also reveal the assumptions on which funding and funding flows are based. Many UK institutions have research offices and research development support. This is because research is a key aspect of the work of UK universities, and because there is funding within the UK to which researchers are able to apply. There is therefore a larger research infrastructure which supports the research environment at my own and many other institutions, including skilled colleagues who can help with the application process, can provide figures and advice about costings, and who are familiar with online submission portals, the expectations of specific schemes and funders. It is easy for both researchers and funders in the Global North to forget that such structures and infrastructures are not found everywhere.

When researchers think about the terms on which collaborative research projects are established, run, and administered, it is therefore crucial to also think about the ways in which the ongoing and potential collaborations of those involved in the project can be supported from the outset. These interactions and collaborations must proceed in equitable and sustainable ways that invest in the research capacity of institutions and individuals both in the North and the South, as well as across all institutions and countries.

## Rajendra

I think researchers, regardless of the Northern or Southern context, are conditioned and influenced by dominant philosophies and ideologies that form an essential part of their “settled” knowledge, what Frantz Fanon (1952, p. 11)

refers to as their situated dimension of being human. These ideologies have a major influence on research activities and funding. Hence, the priority for the radical intellectual is to reflect seriously on the ways academic practices like funding mechanisms and programmes may be stuck in traditional, colonising ways of seeing and interacting with the “other.” In my research collaboration with Northern scholars for the past two decades, I have become aware of the distinct dangers of subliminal racism and patronising behaviours towards the lived experience of the subaltern in Africa. The capitalist social order of the West is reinforced in European research funding when the lion’s share of the funding is channelled directly to consultants, travel agents, experts, keynote speakers, and so on from the host country. For example, an annual literacy conference in Cape Town is funded by the British Council with the strict proviso that the keynote speaker will be a scholar from the UK, chosen by the British Council. In all the conferences held thus far, however, the keynote speakers have made no contribution to local literacy debates. They may well be experts in the UK, but this does not mean that their knowledge has universal relevance, given the integral role that local context plays in literacy debates.

Collaborative projects between the North and South also often reflect and embody the ideological tension between the West’s individualism and the South’s collectivism or “ubuntu.” The intellectual production that emerges from the collaborative project almost always foregrounds the voice of scholars from the North. It is the intellectual practice of *speaking for* the subaltern that has generally characterised leftist thought in postcolonial countries, a practice that tends to reproduce and maintain subalternisation (Walsh 2012, p. 14). More importantly, and from a decolonial perspective, I feel that research on the subaltern in Africa must include the voice of the subaltern and their intellectual production, and should disrupt the practice where the scholar speaks for the participants or the scholar interprets their lived experience from a Western perspective. I will illustrate this danger of “who speaks for whom; and can the subaltern speak” (Spivak, 1988) with a recent example from a British funded project in South Africa.

In November 2019, a multimillion rand UKRI grant was awarded to a UK university for research in informal settlements in the Cape Flats. The research team also consisted of academics from the University of the Western Cape and the University of Cape Town, including me, and two white community workers. I was the only Black team member. The community workers received the lion’s share of the funding for their “intervention work” with fire and water in three sites in the Cape Flats. Conspicuously, both civic organisations that currently engage with these issues and inhabitants of the informal settlements

that experience the hazard of fire were excluded. The leader of the project from the UK dismissed my questions around the methodological framing of the project which was clearly stuck in a colonial paradigm. She argued that the proposal had been peer-reviewed by the funder and the methodology found to be appropriate. In response, I drew upon my work with the shack-dwellers in informal settlements and shared with her how the subaltern views scholars' reasoning on shack fires by passing along a press statement issued by a local organisation that advocates for settlement residents, which reads in part:

We have heard many people suddenly becoming experts on shack fires. Some are saying the reasons that shack fires exist is because we build too close to one another. Others blame the forms of lighting or heating that people use. In some cases alcohol is said to be the cause of the fires. It is typical for middle class and elite people to think in this way. They want to blame the oppressed for their suffering rather than to blame the systems that cause oppressions. (baseMjondolo, 2018)

An important point here from a linguistic perspective is that doing research on the “other,” the subaltern, requires careful consideration not only of the language spoken by the people being researched but also of the notions of who speaks for whom, who has voice, and who can speak but does not. I was ultimately forced to withdraw from the project given the reactionary stance of the project leader. My withdrawal resulted in a dichotomous situation with all white researchers and all Black research subjects. It is evident in this example that the colonial process of knowing about the “native” is far from being disrupted given the financial power and developmental agenda of empire.

## **Suggestions for Best Practice in Research Partnerships**

We draw on our experiences as well as the literature on decolonisation and collaboration to make suggestions for linguists seeking to approach collaborative work from a decolonial perspective. Western canonical traditions of knowledge production have become hegemonic. The dominance of epistemologically conservative scholars actively reinforces these traditions in the guise of values and standards. This hegemonic notion of knowledge production involves a particular process of knowing about Native and Indigenous others that is rooted in colonialism and never fully acknowledges the other as a thinking and knowledge-producing subject. The epistemic traditions of the imagined Native and Indigenous other are disregarded, which is a form of cognitive injustice (de Santos, 2007, p. 49). A prerequisite of cognitive justice

is recognising the presence of different forms of understanding, knowing, and explaining the world. The commitment from all scholars who aim for cognitive justice should be towards a radical humanism that engages with the voices and scholarship of the subaltern. For Western scholars who are already operating in privileged positions within academia, the need for this is particularly acute. This step is a crucial foundation for decolonising collaborative research.

We cannot view our collaborations as separate from the various loci and wider systems in which we operate. In this chapter we have called for actively and explicitly talking about and reflecting upon the nature of South–North collaborations from the outset and for providing regular spaces for review and discussion on shared and distinct expectations and pressures. Where appropriate and helpful, we also advocate for creating spaces for autoethnographic work as part of the research collaboration itself, as we have put forward in this chapter. These spaces are crucial for the emergence of creative responses and interactions with the changing world in which the collaboration takes place.

We offer the following questions which we hope will help all researchers to pursue the goal of decolonial research partnerships. We suggest these as useful points for consideration, while also acknowledging that collaborators may respond differently to them and may be in different positions to actively redress any inequitable practices.

## For Individual Researchers and Collaborators

- How can we as individuals ensure that the interpersonal relationships that necessarily form or are strengthened as the result of a collaboration are given the optimal chance to develop positively?
- Can all individual researchers collaboratively define the terms, at least initially, on which the collaboration will take place in a way that honours the responsibilities, needs and demands of all of those involved? This issue relates to what is valued in a particular context, institution, or system, as well as what is important to individuals.
- Are the outputs of the research equally valuable and accessible to all involved in the process? This includes considerations of Open Access and posting hard copies of publications, as well as acknowledgements and authorship (see Villarreal & Collister, this volume),
- How can we ensure that all project participants are able to maximally participate and benefit in the collaborative projects?

Further resources: Mia Perry (2020) and Rafael Mitchell, Arjen Wals and Ashley Jay Brockwell (2020) for resources on creating ethical partnerships;

Chad Wellmon and Andrew Piper (2017), Jeroen Bosman and Bianca Kramer (2018) for critical discussion of Open Access; Samuel Asare, Rafael Mitchell, and Pauline Rose (2022) for research of equity in outputs and discussion of project initiations; and Melanie Walker and Carmen Martinez-Vargas (2020) for suggestions on promoting epistemic equality.

## For Institutions

- Are there procedures and processes that can be delayed or delegated to other people so that the academic collaborators are not also positioned as the gatekeepers, controlling the funding flowing from the North?
- Are there processes that can be sped up or started at an earlier stage so that the work can still take place and/or timelines are not unduly impacted by the complexities of international collaborations?
- Can space be made to acknowledge that different institutions and contexts have different systems and processes in place? Can we ensure that it is not the Northern institution which dictates the terms on which these collaborations take place and on which funding flows?

Further resources: See Jude Fransman et al. (2018) for suggestions on establishing equitable partnerships; Victoria Henson-Apollonio (2005) on establishing collaboration agreements; Tiina Kontinen & Ajali M Nyuyahambib (2020), Romina Israti and Alex Lewis (2020), and Richard Axelby, Bethel Worku-Dix, and Emma Crewe (2022) for reflections, and best practice suggestions, for institutional partnership.

## For Funders

- Do we need to establish or look for alternative funding models? What would a decolonial funding system look like?
- Can we rethink how funds are created? How grants are assessed? How funds are disbursed and shared? Does the way in which success is measured in the eyes of the funder align with the needs and interests of all parties?

See Tigist Grieve and Rafael Mitchell (2020) for a discussion of GCRF funding criteria; Gilles Carbonnier and Tiina Kontinen (2014) on a range

of collaboration issues including funding; Hilary Footitt, Angela Crack, and Wine Tesseur (2018) on issues including language use in multilingual contexts, and funding.

It is crucially important to create spaces in which different individuals and institutions are able to come together to collaborate on a project. It is also important to acknowledge from the outset that there might be differing priorities and expectations, that this is not in itself a problem. If we can acknowledge the complexities inherent in South–North collaborations, we are better positioned to move towards and operate from a position of best practice, allowing truly collaborative and equitable partnerships to be formed.

However, we are also conscious of the need to guard against decolonisation becoming a matter of virtue signalling, whereby researchers engage in performative discourses and measurement rhetoric. Additionally, we need to be wary of technical compliance, symbolic activities and tokenism, actions that are not based on any intention to radically change our discipline, but a need to show very quickly that something is being done (Behari-Leak and Chetty 2021, p. 16). These approaches leave Eurocentric worldviews intact and ultimately do not support either the best partnerships or the best research. In our partnerships, we must actively, and collaboratively, interrogate the processes and power dynamics involved as a key step in ensuring equitable collaborations.

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