Project Context-Project Name

# Delete all blue text before final submission. File name: Project Context-Project Name, Location: Phase 1 Box Folder

# Description:

The social context of your community partner reflects a complex matrix of variables (social, cultural, economic, political, and /or organizational) that influences the operation of your project partner and how your project partner responds to the particular social issue outlined in their stated mission and goals. At all stages of the design of your project these “social facts” (and your perception or understanding of them) constitutes the larger social reality into which your design solution will be embedded. Therefore, it is important that you be able to describe and begin to understand the social context of your project partner; this understanding is a critical starting point in being able to assess the implications of any design decisions you make and how these decisions will impact the stakeholders in the project.

The following are important questions and factors to consider in writing out your description of the social context of your project partner:

# Instructions:

1. Use what you already know, google search, and talk to your community partner to answer these questions.
2. Write abstract for Context Document (this abstract will be modified with each new section)

# Abstract:

Write one sentence for each section:

1. Describe the purpose of the activity.
2. Describe what steps you took to perform the activity.
3. What were the results?
4. How will the results help the project?

# Social Context:

* What is the mission of my project partner?
  + Or more particularly, what is in-depth the larger social challenge your project partner is attempting to address (e.g., drug use; poverty; science, technology, and math education; students with disabilities)?
* Who are the clients that your project partner serves and the particular challenges these clients face in their situation?
* Are there stereotypes or prejudices associated with these clients?
* Are there differences in cultural understanding or behavior that affect the issue your project partner confronts or how the issue is framed?
* How do the following factors impact the project partner or the people they serve: socio-economic status (especially issues of poverty and lack of resources), gender, race, ethnicity and/or physical or cognitive disability?

# Organizational Context:

* How does my project partner’s organization interface with other groups or organizations?
* How is my project partner organized?
  + What body or persons govern the behavior of my project partner?
* How is my project partner funded?
  + What constraints do funding put on the organization?
* What institution(s) impact the patterns of behaviors expected of my project partner and how the organization responds to particular social issue (i.e., family, education, economic, political, religious, health-care, social service)?
* Are there regulations (city, county, state, federal, and/or professional) that dictate the behavior or guide the operation of your project partner?

# Example

# Abstract

Understanding the context of the project is necessary to successfully addressing all the needs of the project. The team spoke with Monique Kolster and other UCM affiliates to understand how the reserve works and functions at UC Merced. The team identified possible constraints and new stakeholders who may need to be apprised of the progress of the project. This work will allow the team to develop the project in a complex system such as UC Merced.

# Social Context:

What is the mission of my project partner? Or more particularly, what is in-depth the larger social challenge your project partner is attempting to address (e.g., drug use; poverty; science, technology, and math education; students with disabilities)?

* (copy/pasted from website) The mission of the University of California Natural Reserve System is to contribute to the understanding and wise stewardship of the Earth and its natural systems by supporting university-level teaching, research, and public service at protected natural areas throughout California. Read more at: [http://nrs.ucop.edu.](http://nrs.ucop.edu/) (<http://vernalpools.ucmerced.edu/about/mission-statement/mssion-statement>)
* (copy/pasted from website) In furthering that mission, campus leaders and faculty will use 6,500 protected acres adjacent to the university to conduct research and to offer education that will benefit the university and the Central Valley, as well as national and global communities. UC Merced will manage the Reserve ecosystem to protect the rare and endangered organisms and to allow university students and faculty to investigate ecological research questions that have relevance at local, national and global scales.
* The campus faculty, Merced community, and state environmental leaders agreed with founding campus leaders that the Reserve lands should be conserved forever, protecting their unique ecosystems and maintaining the pastoral grazing lands northeast of the campus.
* The Reserve lands are also environmental mitigation lands and are subject to federal and state permit conditions and regulations. In addition, environmental easements serve to protect the lands in perpetuity from damage or development.
* We also plan to involve the community as well as primary and secondary schools so that they can learn alongside of researchers and students, getting up-close views and gaining first-hand experience with the fascinating springtime pools, their fragile flora and endangered fauna, and exploring the unique soils found in this region. (<http://vernalpools.ucmerced.edu/vision>)

Who are the clients that your project partner serves and the particular challenges these clients face in their situation?

* Clients are researchers, primary and secondary schools. Researchers need access to restricted areas, and security for experiments to not be disturbed. Primary and secondary schools need access to and information on seasonal vernal pools.

Are there stereotypes or prejudices associated with these clients?

* Stereotypes
  + Researchers are arrogant, and don’t think of others. They want what they want, when they want it.
  + K-12 students are impatient. They want easy digestible information and access to fun and engaging sites.

Are there differences in cultural understanding or behavior that affect the issue your project partner confronts or how the issue is framed?

* We don’t know, but this is a good question. Some groups feel excluded by UC Merced.

How do the following factors impact the project partner or the people they serve: socio-economic status (especially issues of poverty and lack of resources), gender, race, ethnicity and/or physical or cognitive disability?

* Clients:
* Researchers: no impact from socio-economics, gender, race, or disability
* Students: may not have $/resources to visit Vernal pools. Physical disabilities can impact K-12 students.

# Organizational Context:

How does my project partner’s organization interface with other groups or organizations?

* Provides access to researcher
* Outreach K-12
* Supported by UCM Office of Research

How is my project partner organized?

* Office of Research
* Executive committee

How is my project partner funded?

* Office of Research
* Grants

What institution(s) impact the patterns of behaviors expected of my project partner and how the organization responds to particular social issue (i.e., family, education, economic, political, religious, health-care, social service)?

* Research focuses
* Political (UC Merced, UCOP)
* CA Dept Fish and Wildlife
* Army Corps of Engineers
* UC Reserve System
* UC Merced
* County of Merced

Are there regulations (city, county, state, federal, and/or professional) that dictate the behavior or guide the operation of your project partner?

* Insert regulations relevant to project
  + HIPPA
  + FERPA
  + American Disabilities Act