Get to Know the *Promise Zone Research Connection*: Supporting Community Voices in Research

Who We Are

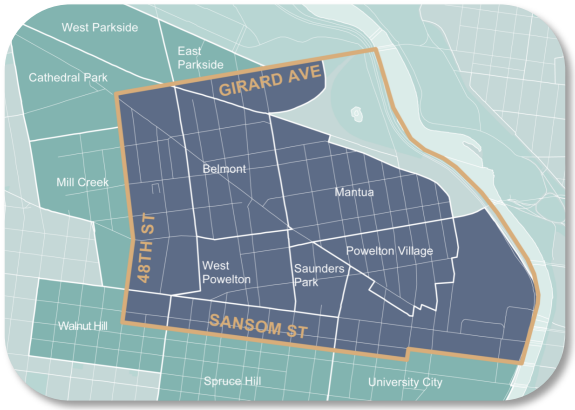
The **Promise Zone Research Connection (PZRC)** is a community-led non-profit organization committed to making research in West Philadelphia ethical, transparent, and beneficial for those who live and work here.

We connect residents, community organizations, and researchers to ensure that studies are grounded in community priorities and provide actual benefits.

Our Mission

The mission of the PZRC is to ensure that research positively impacts residents of the West Philadelphia Promise Zone (see map) by

1) advocating for research that protects, respects, and benefits Promise Zone residents, and
2) educating Promise Zone residents on their rights against research abuse.



What We Do

1. **Community-Engaged Research:** The PZRC supports projects that engage community members and community-based organizations in decision-making, provides meaningful roles for community residents, and disseminates results back to study participants and the community at large.

2. **Outreach and Education:** The PZRC hosts community meetings and events to help residents learn about ethical research, know their rights as research participants, and connect residents with relevant resources. We also host **West Philly Research Day** annually to connect researchers with residents and community-based organizations and provide a forum for sharing research findings.

3. **Community Research Review Board:** The PZRC operates the city's only **Community Research Review Board (CRRB)**. The CRRB is composed of community residents and institutional allies who are trained and certified in research ethics. The board provides feedback to researchers planning studies in West Philadelphia and either endorses them or suggests changes.

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The CRRB protects and strengthens community voices by:

- Reviewing research that is planned for West Philadelphia—ideally before anything is approved by an institution or before residents are asked to participate.
- Giving honest, community centered feedback to improve how studies are designed and carried out.
- Advocating for transparency, sharing power, and ensuring real benefits for residents whenever research happens in our neighborhoods.

How the CRRB can help community organizations:

- We can offer guidance when researchers approach you about partnerships or recruitment.
- We can help you ask the right questions before agreeing to partner or participate in any study.
- We can support you in making sure any research that recruits from or partners with your organization benefits your members and neighbors.

Getting study requests?
Let's keep the community safe when partnering with researchers.

Research teams frequently reach out to community organizations to help with recruitment or data collection.

This CRRB is designed to help organizations pause, ask thoughtful questions, and make informed decisions, so that any research you engage with protects, respects, and ultimately benefits your neighbors and the broader community.

Ask first:

"Has this project been reviewed by the PZRC's Community Research Review Board (CRRB)?"

- If **yes** → Ask the researcher to provide their CRRB Letter of Endorsement
- If **no** or you are **not sure** → Refer them to the PZRC (www.pzrc.org or email info@pzrc.org).

Why insist on a CRRB review for studies that recruit your neighbors?

- Community Safety — Safeguards the community against research that may cause harm.
- Transparency & Trust — Shows neighbors that research isn't happening to them *but* ***with*** them.

How to communicate about CRRB endorsement with researchers:

Below is some helpful language that you can use or adapt:

"To uphold transparency and ensure that this research delivers meaningful benefit to the community, [Your Organization Name] requires that all projects secure endorsement from the Promise Zone Research Connection's Community Research Review Board before proceeding. We would therefore like to refer you to this organization via their email, info@pzrc.org."

Questions?

Contact the PZRC Project Coordinator at info@pzrc.org and check out our website, pzrc.org.

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