



## **Research Philosophy and Methodology**

*The Alianza Arkana Research Team is committed to research that is relevant and useful for the Shipibo communities in which we work. This challenges academic researchers to think through not only how their work can contribute to academic theory and academic knowledge products like publications, but how their research can also work to collaboratively create knowledge products that can be put into use by communities “on the ground”. However, this is not always straightforward, and it is always an iterative process. We find that community-based, participatory approaches to research are the most ethical and decolonial approaches for working in indigenous communities. These approaches acknowledge colonially-informed power relations, and attempt to disrupt hierarchies of knowing (in which researchers are privileged knowers) by inviting community participation and collaboration in the research to varying degrees. Ideally, this means that community stakeholders help to set the goals, agenda, and outcomes of the research, and are involved in the research process from design to implementation to outcome, so that learning is achieved together, in dialogue. This approach orients us so that our research works **for** the communities to help evaluate opportunities or constraints, or aid in making informed decisions. Our research aim is to understand the struggles of the communities we work with and use our resources to ally ourselves with those struggles as collaborative facilitators toward the community’s self-determined goals. While we recognize that not all research will fit into this framework, we ask researchers we collaborate with to work with us and the partner communities to develop a participatory or community-based component to their work.*