**Supplementary file 1.**
List of Challenges Presented to Participants

Has (your organization) ever experienced any of the following challenges or difficulties related to development and management of partnerships with academic (university-based) researchers?

- Didn’t know how to find researchers with the expertise you needed?
- Weren’t sure how research could help?
- Regional timelines for action didn’t allow for research partnership development?
- Researcher interests were not priorities for the region?
- Research requirements were not realistic?
- Costs of research to the region were not recognized?
- The region did not have internal expertise?
- Mismatch of agendas between region and academia?
- Problems related to communication?
- Negative interactions with researchers?
- Structural changes within your organization?
- Any other challenges that I did not mention?