The Community Research Institutional Review Board (CRIRB) was developed by Michigan State University (MSU) and its community partners to streamline the Institutional Review Board (IRB) review process and to provide benefits to all parties. Potential benefits to CRIRB partner institutions include providing input into CRIRB review with final permission through concurrence to allow the research to be conducted at the institution, streamlining the review process saving time and resources, accessing MSU IRB educational programs, enhancing the functioning of the partner institution’s IRB through knowledge gained through participation, and enhancing and facilitating multi-site community research while maximizing the protection of human subjects. Potential benefits to MSU include streamlining the review process for MSU investigators, acquiring membership and experience from CRIRB members, and facilitating community research at CRIRB partner institutions.

An Institutional Authorization Agreement for reliance on CRIRB review describes the responsibilities of MSU and the CRIRB partner institution and is signed by both parties. Partner institutions list the CRIRB as an IRB on their Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP) approved Federal Wide Assurance. While the CRIRB is operated by MSU, its members include representatives from the CRIRB partner institutions. CRIRB partner institutions can nominate an IRB member for CRIRB who is then appointed in accordance with Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) Manual 5-3 “IRB Membership” or they can provide a consultant to be used only when research is conducted at their site. An institution can also formally join CRIRB without IRB representation if they choose. Any institution can discontinue membership in the CRIRB with written notification to the MSU Institutional Official.

The CRIRB reviews research that will be conducted at two or more CRIRB partner institutions or projects that require expertise in multi-site community-based research. Once approved by the CRIRB, each partner institution provides concurrence to allow the project to be performed at their site and to acknowledge that all continuing review will be conducted by the CRIRB. CRIRB meetings are conducted in accordance with HRPP Manual 5-5 “Meetings” and 8-3 “Full Board Review.” The CRIRB follows the policies and procedures of the HRPP Manual. MSU provides IRB education for investigators, IRB members, and IRB chairs from partner institutions through online training (e.g. CITI training) and other educational programs. A list of CRIRB partners is available at the HRPP website.