

Deliberative Planning Guide











WHAT:

- Tool used to bring people together to deliberate on policy issues, which may be used to influence decision-makers.
- Can include things like participatory budgeting, participatory planning, study circles, opinion polls, issue forums, or mapping.
- Participants help to develop solutions.
- Can be combined with focus groups or interviews or other evaluation methods to collect more data.

WHY:

- Enables the evaluator to collect applied data, that can be immediately incorporated into the policy or decision-making process.
- It can be a good tool to build trust, resolve conflict, and build or improve relationships between groups that may not always be included in decisions.
- Measures of success are built into the design and end result- was consensus reached, were the audiences that are most affected included, did everyone participate, etc. .

HOW:

 Determine the goals and objectives the agency would like to meet by the end of the session.	 Consider using small study groups to focus on key topics.
 Determine format (i.e. web-based, in-person, asynchronous, live).	 Consider using visual tools for participants to engage with and to use for the development of the solutions/strategies.
 Identify the participant selection strategy- generally individuals who have concerns, ideas for solutions, or will be directly impacted by the outcome.	 Ensure all materials are accessible, including plain and inclusive language, and options for people without internet access.
 If applicable, use polling tools, such as MS Forms, Google Forms, Survey Monkey, etc.	 Identify accountability strategy and what the agency role is in implementing results of the deliberation.



OPTIONS TO EMBED EVALUATION:

Level of Engagement	Key PPCE Activities	Options to Embed Evaluation	Analysis
Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations or exhibitions • Meetings or workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QR code on flyer to track use of the informational materials • Website/social media analytics • Counts of informational materials distributed • Flip charts/virtual white boards • AI assisted notes from meeting • Participant worksheets • Short meeting polls conducted in real-time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of key themes • Dashboard of relevant meeting metrics • Dashboard of poll results displayed on agency webpage or intranet
Collaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web-based and asynchronous collaboration platforms • Photo voice 	<p>All of the items from Consult plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web analytics • Collaborative document • Pictures/video themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of key themes • Journey map/photo montage • Dashboard of relevant meeting metrics



OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES:

Outputs	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear understanding of how the agency is defining the problem. • Individuals and communities were clear about their role. • List of individuals who may be affected by the decision. • Identification of “who” has the deciding authority. • Identification of the resources needed to conduct public participation. • Clear understanding of how the information will be used. • Identification of the level of participation. • List of relevant groups/individuals who need to be engaged. • List of relevant groups who are already engaged and can be a resource for the agency. • Any barriers to access were addressed by the agency. • Time spent with individuals/communities.. • Understanding how communities/individuals feel about the federal government. • Understanding the reason behind unfavorable or favorable views. • Understanding if there are differences in perception based on demographics. • Written reports by participants. 	<p>Short-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant groups and communities agree on the problem. • Meetings are accessible to all. • All communication material is accessible to all. • Resources are allocated equitably. <p>Medium and Long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy-in from public and relevant groups. • Agency does not overpromise participants about the influence they have on final decisions. • Agency is better prepared to conduct the participatory process. • Effective public participation process is designed. • Participants are satisfied with the process and outcomes. • The full range of perspectives needed to conduct meaningful public participation is achieved. • Changing perception of federal government. • Participants are fully aware of and understand what is being communicated. • Effective participation by individuals and community members. • Increasing trust in federal institutions. • Barriers to public participation are alleviated. • Participatory process enables people/communities to influence the decisions and actions that affect their lives.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [University Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension: Deliberative Governance Tools, Guides, and Selected Reading](#)
- [Federation of American Scientists: A Guide to Public Deliberation](#)