

Resource created in 2024

Case Study: *Agency X seeks to improve how it delivers its services, and expand participation and enhance public trust in its new environmental justice programs. To help achieve these goals, Agency X wants to implement PPCE approaches that ensure the Agency is able to broadly share information with and get feedback from those individuals impacted by these programs, including underserved communities (see E.O. 13985 for definition intended). The agency also wants to ensure its participation processes are inclusive and accessible, and that its efforts build trust with participants. The agency plans to use this diverse feedback to identify and address challenges that the public may face in accessing or participating in these programs. Agency X has historically only used Requests for Information (RFI) as a PPCE method with citizens. Generally, RFI responses are primarily received from industry associations. Agency X officials feel that this approach will be insufficient for garnering broad and diverse engagement in the development of its new environmental justice initiative it is planning. Agency X wants to implement PPCE approaches that will ensure it reaches broad audiences as intended, hears from many and diverse perspectives, and is accessible and inclusive in its efforts to engage with the public.*

Describe in a Use Case how Agency X can use the Evaluation Toolkit to aid it with the following questions:

- *What should Agency X consider when deciding what PPCE approaches, including methods of engagement, to implement?*
- *What does Agency X need to do as part of the implementation planning and roll-out to support evaluation of their chosen PPCE activity?*
- *What should Agency X measure and how?*
- *Overall, how would your toolkit be responsive to Agency X's need as described in the case study?*

Based on the case study provided, below we go through the [planning document](#) we developed, along with our interactive tools, and guides to demonstrate how our toolkit applies to this specific case. Since there was only limited information provided in the case study, we used our best judgment to provide example answers to the questions in our planning guide for demonstration purposes or we offered some suggestions for why answering that question is important. Those responses are in italics.

The process is divided into six phases: problem definition, resource allocation, pre-engagement, selecting a method for engagement, engagement, and post-engagement follow-up. Each section will demonstrate the responsiveness of our toolkit and provide answers to what Agency X should consider when deciding on PPCE approaches, as well as what they need to do for implementation planning, and what and how to measure the

PPCE. This same process can be used by any agency when they are planning to implement a Public Participation and Community Engagement Activity.

Phase I – Problem Definition- Roles and Responsibilities

1. What is the challenge they are trying to address?

- a. Understanding how to improve the services it delivers.
- b. Increase public participation by requesting feedback from the affected individuals/communities.
- c. Understanding how to increase public trust.
- d. Creating accessible and inclusive opportunities for the affected individuals.

2. Who is responsible for making decisions?

The agency is responsible for making decisions.

3. Who is being affected?

Individuals

4. To what extent are the public able to get involved?

- a. Inform
- b. Consult

Phase II – Resource Allocation & Goals

1. What are the goals of public participation?

- i. To inform the public about the agency's services.
- ii. To gather feedback about its new environmental justice initiative.
- iii. To gather feedback about the accessibility of the PPCE effort.
- iv. To build trust with the affected individuals.

2. How does public participation fit into the challenge that is being solved?

It's important to involve the public who are being affected by the new environmental justice policy to ensure a successful implementation of the policy. A well thought out inclusive PPCE process will also lead to more transparency which results in increasing trust in the government.

3. What are some metrics the agency is trying to achieve?

Diverse engagement¹ in terms of

- i. socioeconomically disadvantaged.
- ii. people with limited English proficiency.
- iii. geographically isolated or educationally disenfranchised people.
- iv. people of color as well as those of ethnic and national origin minorities.
- v. women and children.
- vi. individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; and seniors.

4. How many resources can be allocated to this effort?

Estimate \$15,000 (The Partnership is making an estimate)²

5. Are participants being paid for their time?

Agency X will have to decide in their resource allocation stage if they have funds to support participant time. This provides the most equitable participation by ensuring people are properly compensated for their time.

6. How much influence will the public have over the final decision?

The public will be consulted; however, the final decision will be determined by the agency.

7. Who from the agency side is making the final decision?

Agency staff (the agency will need to decide this)

8. What are the responsibilities of the public and what are the responsibilities of the agency?

a. Responsibilities of the public:

- i. provide feedback on the new environmental policy.
- ii. provide feedback on the degree of accessibility of the PPCE effort.

b. Responsibilities of the agency X

- i. Inform the public about the agency's services

¹

<https://www.fema.gov/about/glossary/u#:~:text=Underserved%20Populations%2FCommunities,or%20that%20are%20otherwise%20disenfranchised.>

² <https://ciel.org/Publications/PublicParticipationConferenceProceedings.pdf>

- ii. Inform the public about the new environmental policy
- iii. After consulting with the public decide on the final policy
- iv. Inform the public of the final decision
- v. Implement accessibility recommendations gathered from the public.

9. Who will be responsible for implementing the decisions?

Agency X

10. Who is responsible for evaluating the success of public engagement?

Evaluation team of agency X, individuals planning the PPCE, or external evaluation consultants e.g. Partnership for Public Service

Phase III – Pre-engagement- Specifying who is being affected

1. Who will be directly affected by the new policy?

Individuals in this geographic location (names of the communities/cities, administrative areas)

2. Who will be indirectly affected by the new policy?

Businesses in this geographic location (names of the communities/cities, administrative areas)

3. Who is already engaged or has contacted agency X on this issue?

Nobody

4. Who can claim a legal standing (legal rights to...) that would be affected by the new policy?

Business associations

5. Have people not engaged in the past even though they are affected by the intervention?

Yes, previously only industry provided responses, not community members directly affected by the intervention.

6. Who is committed to the various interest groups, (such as community groups or business groups,) and will be responsible for acting as liaison and leader?

Community group, business group, local administrative bodies

7. How will the agency engage individuals from underserved communities?

The agency will have to decide which communities it wants to engage.

- a. socioeconomically disadvantaged: The agency can provide compensation for participating in the PPCE event.
- b. people with limited English proficiency: Ensure all information is accurately translated.
- c. geographically isolated or educationally disenfranchised people: Ensure all the materials needed for participation are at the individuals/communities' reading levels. Individuals will be unable to participate if the reading level of the text is higher. Enable hybrid events so individuals can choose how they want to participate.
- d. people of color as well as those of ethnic and national origin minorities: Use quotas for underrepresented communities/ethnic minorities in the sample when conducting the survey.
- e. women and children: Use quotas for women and children in the sample when conducting the survey.
- f. individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; and seniors: Plan for hybrid events so that individuals can choose how they want to participate in the event.

Phase IV Selecting a method for engagement


The agency has two options for selecting the method- the dashboard or the copilot. We provide screengrabs for both options, below:

1. What is the most appropriate method that can be used for the engagement?

Consult the [Partnership's resources](#)

- i. **Go to the Partnership's [Dashboard](#):**


PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
How to evaluate PPCE efforts



What is the level of engagement the agency would like?		What is the level of engagement the agency would like?	How much money can the agency spend on the engagement?	How many participants can be involved?	Method	How much time can the agency spend on the engagement?
Collaborate	Consult	Collaborate	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Focus groups	One day event
		Collaborate	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	In-depth interviews	One day event
		Collaborate	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Survey	One day event
		Collaborate	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several months
		Collaborate	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Participatory appraisal	Series of events running over several weeks
		Collaborate	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several weeks
		Collaborate	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Focus groups	Two day event
		Collaborate	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Participatory appraisal	Two day event
		Collaborate	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Youth empowerment	Two day event
		Collaborate	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Survey	One day event
		Collaborate	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several months
		Collaborate	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several weeks
		Collaborate	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Youth empowerment	Two day event
		Collaborate	\$20,000 - \$30,000	25	Consensus building	Two day event
		Collaborate	More than \$30,000	25	Consensus building	Series of events running over several months
		Collaborate	More than \$30,000	25	In-depth interviews	Series of events running over several months

ii. Select the outcome of the engagement:

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Collaborate	Consult	Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Community Data Presentation	One day event
		Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Focus groups	One day event
		Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	In-depth interviews	One day event
		Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Survey	One day event
		Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several months
		Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Community Data Presentation	Series of events running over several weeks
		Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Participatory appraisal	Series of events running over several weeks
		Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several weeks
		Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Community Data Presentation	Two day event
		Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Focus groups	Two day event
		Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Participatory appraisal	Two day event
		Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Youth empowerment	Two day event
		Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Survey	One day event
		Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several months
		Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several weeks
		Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Youth empowerment	Two day event

iii. Select how much money the agency can allocate for the engagement.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

How to evaluate PPCE efforts



What is the level of engagement that the agency would like?

\$1,000 - 10,000

\$10,000 - 20,000

\$20,000-\$30,000

More than \$30,000

All

How many participants can be involved?

All

Method

All


Control Click to clear all selection

What is the level of engagement the agency would like?	How much money can the agency spend on the engagement?	How many participants can be involved?	Method	How much time can the agency spend on the engagement?
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Community Data Presentation	One day event
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Focus groups	One day event
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	In-depth interviews	One day event
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Survey	One day event
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several months
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Community Data Presentation	Series of events running over several weeks
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Participatory appraisal	Series of events running over several weeks
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several weeks
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Community Data Presentation	Two day event
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Focus groups	Two day event
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Participatory appraisal	Two day event
Consult	\$1,000 - 10,000	25	Youth empowerment	Two day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Survey	One day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several months
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several weeks

iv. Select the number of participants agency X wants to involve.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

How to evaluate PPCE efforts



What is the level of engagement the agency would like?

Collaborate **Consult**

25

50

100

500

All

Method

All


Control Click to clear all selection

What is the level of engagement the agency would like?	How much money can the agency spend on the engagement?	How many participants can be involved?	Method	How much time can the agency spend on the engagement?
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Survey	One day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several months
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several weeks
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	25	Youth empowerment	Two day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	50	Survey	One day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	50	Participatory appraisal	Series of events running over several months
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	50	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several months
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	50	Youth empowerment	Series of events running over several weeks
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	50	Focus groups	Two day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	50	Youth empowerment	Two day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	100	Survey	One day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	100	Community Data Presentation	Series of events running over several months
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	100	Participatory appraisal	Series of events running over several months
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	100	Focus groups	Two day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	500	Focus groups	One day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	500	Survey	One day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	500	Community Data	Series of events running over

v. Select the method(s) agency X wants to use for the PPCE effort.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

How to evaluate PPCE efforts



What is the level of engagement the agency would like?

Collaborate	Consult
Empower	Inform

- Community Data Presentation
- Focus groups
- Participatory appraisal
- Survey

All


Control Click to clear all selection

What is the level of engagement the agency would like?	How much money can the agency spend on the engagement?	How many participants can be involved?	Method	How much time can the agency spend on the engagement?
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	100	Survey	One day event
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	100	Community Data Presentation	Series of events running over several months
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	100	Participatory appraisal	Series of events running over several months
Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	100	Focus groups	Two day event

vi. Click on the method(s) for more information.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

How to evaluate PPCE efforts



What is the level of engagement the agency would like?

Collaborate	Consult
Empower	Inform

How much money can the agency spend on the ...

\$10,000 - 20,000

How many participants can be involved?

100

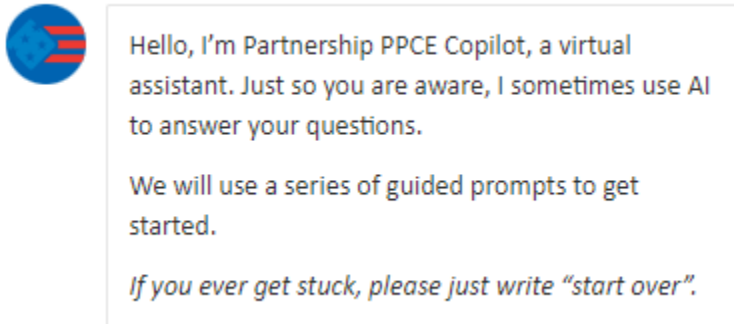
Method

All

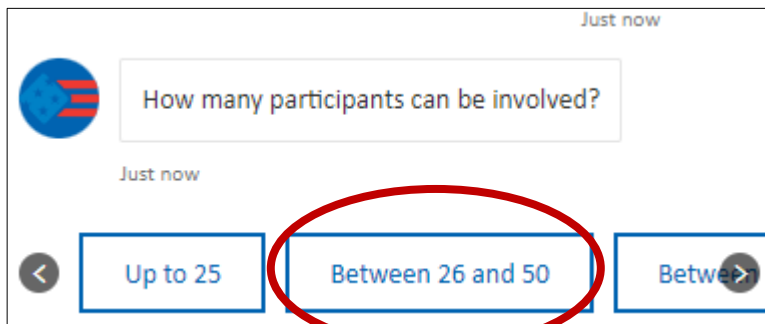
Control Click to clear all selection

What is the level of engagement the agency would like?	How much money can the agency spend on the engagement?	How many participants can be involved?	Method	How much time can the agency spend on the engagement?
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Consult	\$10,000 - 20,000	100	Focus groups	Two day event

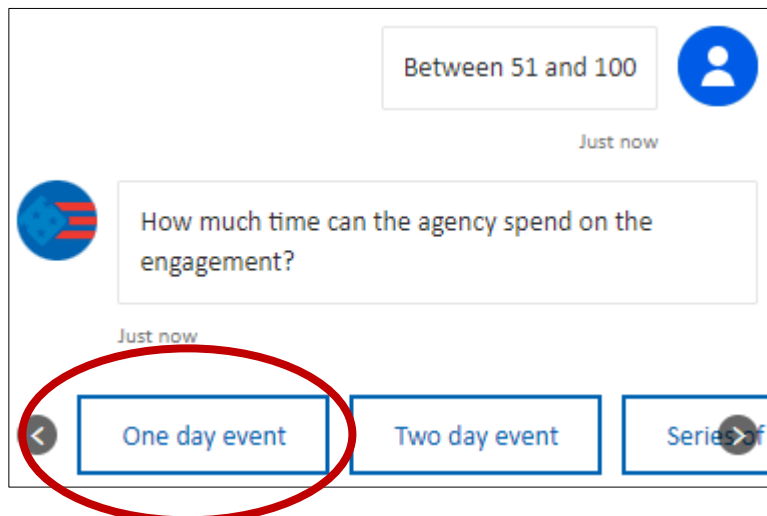
Or: Go to the [Partnership's PPCE Copilot](#):



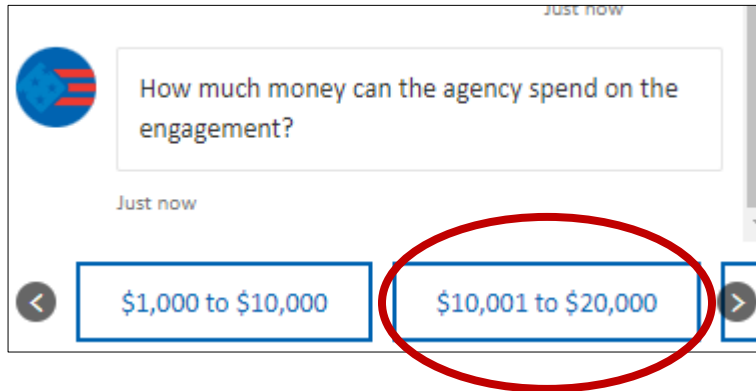
i. Select the number of participants:



ii. Select the amount of time the agency can spend on the engagement:



iii. Select how much money the agency can spend:



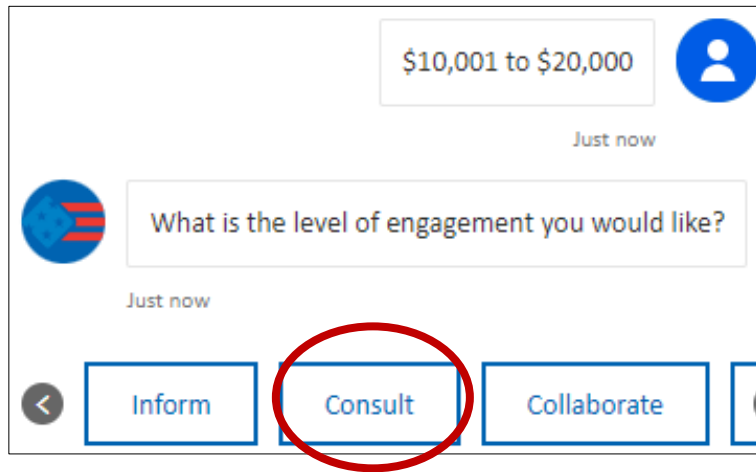
Just now

How much money can the agency spend on the engagement?

Just now

\$1,000 to \$10,000 \$10,001 to \$20,000

iv. Select the level of engagement:



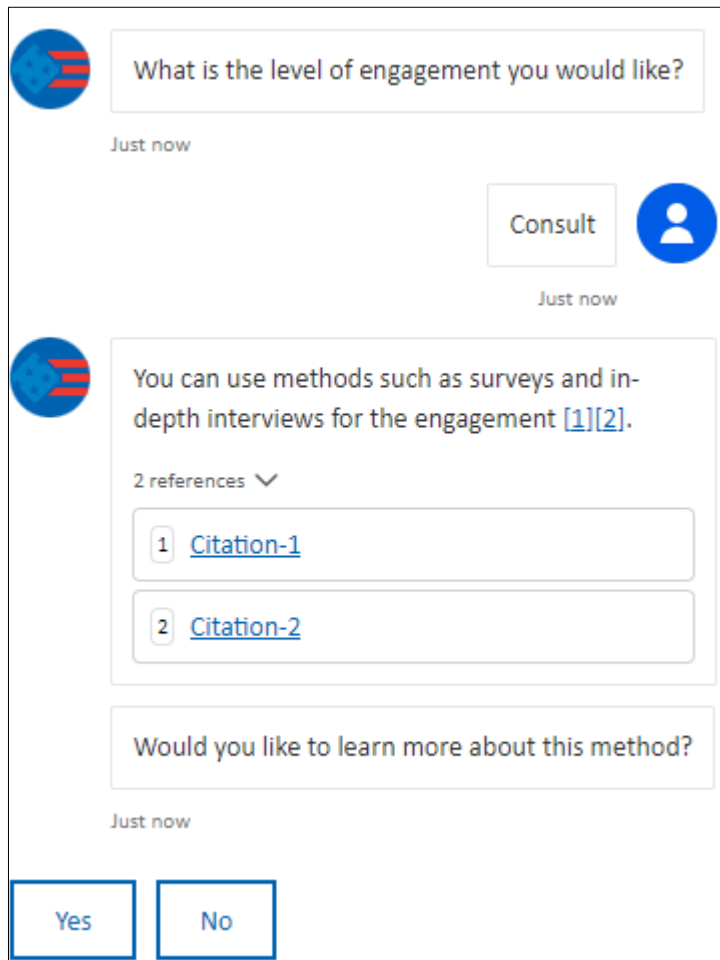
\$10,001 to \$20,000

Just now

What is the level of engagement you would like?

Just now

Inform Consult Collaborate



The screenshot shows a digital engagement interface. At the top, a blue circular icon with a white American flag pattern is next to a text box containing the question: "What is the level of engagement you would like?". Below this is the text "Just now". To the right, there is a "Consult" button and a blue circular icon with a white person silhouette, with "Just now" below it. Below this is another blue circular icon with a white American flag pattern, next to a text box containing: "You can use methods such as surveys and in-depth interviews for the engagement [1][2].". Below this is "2 references" with a downward arrow. There are two numbered citation boxes: "1 Citation-1" and "2 Citation-2". Below these is a text box with the question: "Would you like to learn more about this method?". Below this is "Just now". At the bottom, there are two buttons: "Yes" and "No".

Review the [survey guide](#) and [online forum guide](#) to learn more about the “what”, “why”, and “how” to implement those specific methods, along with embedded evaluation suggestions, example outputs and outcomes, and links to additional resources.

5. What is the plan for evaluating the success of the engagement?

- a. The agency can use the resource section of [survey](#) and [online forums](#) to help them embed the evaluation into the PPCE events.
- b. The agency can also choose to select an evaluation partner – e.g. Partnership for Public Service monitoring, evaluation and learning team (mel@ourpublicservice.org)

Phase V Engagement- Preparing for the Engagement

1. Was the method of engagement selected according to the desired outcome?

Yes. Survey was selected as a method of gathering feedback from the participants and online forum was selected as a method of informing the participants. These two methods were selected because these methods can reach a comparatively higher number of participants in a short period of time. These methods will also produce quantitative information needed for evaluation at a later stage.

2. What are the outreach methods being used to create awareness?

Refer to the resource section of [survey](#) and [online forums](#).

3. Are the outreach methods reaching the intended communities/audiences?

Yes, if all the other phases in the process have been followed and addressed.

4. Is the information being disseminated accurate?

Yes. Somebody from agency X is responsible for communicating with the participants, or agency X has consulted an external partner to administer the survey and online forum.

5. How is the information being disseminated/provided?

The agency will have to determine this. Examples of mediums that agency x can use to disseminate the information: (a) Via social media (b) by holding town halls

6. Does the information need to be translated?

If the affected community has people with limited English proficiency, the information will need to be translated to make the survey and the online forum more inclusive and accessible.

7. Is the meeting location accessible?

Yes.

8. Is it expensive to travel to the meeting location?

If participants must travel to complete the questionnaire or participate in the town hall the location of the meeting will need to be a central location.

9. Is the meeting set for a convenient time?

The meeting needs to be set at a time that is convenient for individuals. E.g. after work or during weekends. This is important when engaging women who might also be care providers for children. In such situations, the time of the meeting is essential for their participation.

10. If the meeting is hybrid or virtual, do all the participants have access to a reliable internet connection?

In case the agency decides that the survey can be completed both online and in-person, they must ensure that individuals have reliable internet connection to complete the survey. This is even more crucial if the agency is trying to engage individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, and seniors.

11. Is the meeting formation culturally sensitive and appropriate?

It is always best practice to ensure that staff who will lead PPCE events are from the community that the intervention is taking place, or familiar with the community and the history of experiences and any trauma that community has faced. This will ensure buy-in and helps to build trust and psychological safety.

12. Who is responsible for planning the event?

This will have to be decided by agency X. Either staff members of the agency can plan the meetings, or they can work with community members to plan the meetings, or they can do a mixture of the two.

13. Has the agency staff (not from the community), learned about the historical and current trauma that communities have faced?

It is always best practice to ensure that staff who will lead PPCE events are aware of any trauma that the community might have experienced in the past. That way they can be sensitive to the needs of the community and use culturally appropriate language/processes. This also helps build trust.

Phase VI post-engagement follow-up

1. Who is responsible for communicating with the community after the event?

The agency needs to decide who will communicate the results of the PPCE event. The agency should also share how it used the information gathered from the participants. If there were any lessons learned, they should share how they plan to incorporate them in the future.

2. What will be the platforms used for communication?

Social media, website, newsletter, meeting minutes etc.

3. Was the evaluation of the public engagement completed?

Yes, this was thoughtfully planned in the pre-engagement phase.

4. Did the agency achieve the metrics set in phase II?

This will be answered through the evaluation. For this case study, agency X can conduct a survey and gather information around the demographics of the participants. Additional potential outcomes and outputs can be found by reviewing the survey and online forum resource guides. Then they can compare the demographic data with either the census data for the general population in that area, or they might have set a target metric in phase II. They can also include questions around accessibility of the events and how to make future engagements more accessible.

5. What were the lessons learned from the engagement(s)?

This can be answered from the [survey](#) and [online forums](#) resource guides.

6. How does the agency plan to apply the lessons learned?

This will also have to be decided by agency X. Once decided, this information should be communicated back to the communities/individuals. This helps in creating trust.

7. How will the information be shared with other agencies?

- a. *The agency will consider sharing their evaluation findings with the [Digital.gov U.S. Public Participation Playbook](#), to enable other agencies to continue to learn from their PPCE activity and evaluation.*
- b. *The agency will also consider sharing with the [Chief Evaluation Officer Council](#) so that the results can be incorporated into another agency's work as applicable.*