National Conversations in Artificial Intelligence
Reimagining Regulation for the Age of AI Project Team

Hon Dr David Clark, Minister for the Digital Economy and Communications

The Government of New Zealand is proud to have worked alongside the World Economic Forum to produce this ground-breaking piece of work.

AI is no longer the domain of the technologist; it needs to be considered from the halls of government, to the boardroom, to across the factory floor, and beyond. We believe no matter where you are on the journey of AI adoption, engaging in open and constructive conversations will help to create and maintain much needed social licence as globally we look to advance the uptake of AI.

The New Zealand government is committed to using open and collaborative co-design processes across many of its programmes. This Playbook advocates for more open and inclusive processes predicated on advancing national conversations. These conversations will allow a range of voices to be heard across all aspects of society, on the socio-economic implications of this technology. It is only through holding these conversations that we all grow our knowledge and understanding, enabling us all to reach informed consensus.

Trust and transparency are fundamental elements for all regulatory endeavours, without this we risk being insular and prerogative in our decision making. Governments across the globe walk a fine line between encouraging and advancing new and emerging technologies with the need to have adequate checks and balances in place. Moving too soon in applying regulatory constraints can stifle innovation and growth, conversely acting too slowly could cause harm. By enabling national conversations, together we as society, can guide and direct what decisions are necessary, decide what we consider to be beneficial and agree to when and where we seek government action.

I wish you well as you start your conversation.

Kay Firth-Butterfield, Head of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, Member of the Executive Committee, World Economic Forum

Artificial Intelligence has emerged as the main engine driving the Fourth Industrial Revolution. AI-powered services are already affecting all areas of life, bringing with them great opportunities and challenges.

Governments across the world are being expected to act to both protect their societies from the risks of AI, while ensuring the right foundations are in place to seize the opportunities. A key component of this action is considered to be regulation, with arguments raging on what areas should be regulated and how it could be done. Views differ across regions and one of the big risks is that a lack of consensus will allow negative views to predominate, creating a risk averse environment and stifling innovation.

Good regulation starts with inclusive and wide ranging conversations. To this end, the World Economic Forum's Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution has been working with the New Zealand government on a multi-stakeholder project to look at ways to obtain social licence for the use of AI through an inclusive national conversation.

The aim of the approach is to identify tools and approaches that will promote innovation, protect society and build trust in AI use. New Zealand's bicultural foundation and multicultural make-up means it is committed to working with communities to build and maintain social licence for the use of technologies and it has a strong foundation of collaborative co-design in its government programmes.

This Playbook provides advice to those planning engagement activities on AI. Its key focus is that open and honest conversations with people are essential to build the trust and social licence needed to allow AI to be fully utilised. This trust and transparency forms the bedrock for all over regulatory endeavours. AI is a complicated technology, so important decisions need to be made on how AI can be made understandable to the ordinary person. Getting it right is vital, as trust is easily lost. For this reason, a clear focus of this conversation must be to gain the input of those whose voices are often not heard, and who are likely to be impacted by the future use of AI systems.

For governments, getting this public agreement is a key part of democracy, whereas for businesses, it is central to their success that their customers trust them and the services they provide. The Playbook sets out a series of steps, with tools and approaches, to help start conversations with people – but this is not a linear process: conversations on AI must be iterative and constant, providing up to date information and listening to the voices of the community.

This project has helped to identify useful ways to start conversations and raise awareness of AI in communities. We hope that this work will help different countries start to educate their populations on AI and build willingness to use a technology that has the potential to make all our lives better. The resource is available as a living document to encourage wide use, as well as ensure the guidelines can develop and evolve with use.

The World Economic Forum looks forward to continuing this work to help raise awareness across the globe and build trust in responsible and ethical AI.

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Introduction

Humans have been embracing technologies since our earliest beginnings, sometimes tentatively, sometimes wholeheartedly.

From the wheel to the printing press to the computer, these inventions have helped to change our societies and make our lives better.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) differs from previous technologies in that, for the first time in human history, we are handing over control to machines, enabling them to make decisions affecting us and our world without a human in the decision-making loop.

What is AI? The term was coined in 1956 by American computer scientist John McCarthy to describe "the science and engineering of making intelligent machines". Since then, AI has come to describe a broad spectrum of related technologies that seek to imitate and enhance aspects of human intelligence, such as the ability to identify patterns in information, and to understand language.

AI works by combining large amounts of data with fast, iterative processing and intelligent algorithms, allowing the software to learn automatically from patterns or features in the data, that is, to learn from "experience".

Most people already interact with AI-based systems on a daily basis. Common applications with embedded AI technologies include search engines, virtual voice assistants, spam filters, online shopping recommendations, and social media channels. AI and algorithms streamline our lives and give us more choices.

Our AI-enabled future, however, cannot be designed exclusively by just a few when the impacts, and potential risks, will affect us all.

Social licence and gaining people's trust

This leads us to the question: what is the public appetite for AI, and how much trust do people have, or need, in its use in our societies? And alongside that, how much input do governments and businesses want from people on the adoption and use of AI? Is the gaining of social licence critical to the full realisation of its potential?

For our purposes in this work, social licence is defined as an ethical issue. It refers to communities trusting governments and businesses to use AI for the maximum good, even where there may be associated risks.

Gaining social licence involves large-scale engagement with all segments of society. In our project, Reimagining Regulation for the Age of AI[1], we call this a "national conversation". National conversations are an important tool for gaining social licence and trust. They are two-way dialogues, enabling questions to be asked, answers to be given and issues to be debated. They allow messages to be tailored to the needs of different communities, giving them the tools and platforms to learn about issues and help co-design solutions, all within an equitable and respectful environment. Building an environment of trust and inclusion encourages wider participation, creates greater equity and promotes better understanding.

For governments, gaining public agreement is the key element of democracy. For businesses, engaging with and earning the trust of customers is central to their success. The *Reimagining Regulation for the Age of AI* project held two workshops with its global community of stakeholders (one in San Francisco and one in Wellington) and the two groups identified a set of issues and success factors for national conversations.

Trust is the single most important factor in gaining agreement and social licence. The process of engagement must be undertaken in good faith, with people knowing their input will be valued and respected. Furthermore, people must be sure that the material they are being given to comment on is unbiased and their input is not being used to validate something already decided.

Generally social licence encompasses a range of behaviours on the part of business and governments such as:

• acting within the law;

• being credible and accountable;

• acting fairly and responsibly;

• acting predictably and consistently;

• acting "ethically";

• aligning with societal expectations; and

• building and maintaining trusted relationships with relevant stakeholders.

Communities who are considering whether or not to give their permission to agencies should consider such issues as:

• How do we benefit from this?

• Is this fair?

• Does this reflect our values and aspirations?

• Is the government agency listening to us?

• Are they responsive to our needs and issues?

• Can we believe them?

• Can we trust them?

Widespread and animated engagement helps parties fully understand each others' needs and views. Trust is built through including people in decisions and valuing their contributions.

Open and transparent engagement requires courage. Conversations on new technologies that have the potential to change or even disrupt communities and economies are difficult. For example, by 2025, automation and a new division of labour between humans and machines will disrupt 85 million jobs globally in medium and large businesses across 15 industries and 26 economies. This is a frightening concept for people, until you realise that the AI revolution will create 97 million new jobs. These jobs will be different to those displaced, but workforces need to know that governments and businesses will support them into these new jobs and opportunities – and these conversations are what we are all seeking to have. No one party has all the answers, but being honest and open with one another are important first steps.

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1   https://www.weforum.org/whitepapers/reimagining-regulation-for-the-age-of-ai-new-zealand-pilot-project

Usefulness of national conversations in AI

AI is a technology that will have far reaching consequences for people's lives. Already its use and application are reaching into all aspects of human life: from jobs, to healthcare, our social lives, and education. Due to its universal and ubiquitous nature, people need to have a say in how they think this new technology should be used – and, to have a say, they need to understand the issues and be given the tools to engage in the conversations.

Gaining and maintaining trust requires commitment and ongoing maintenance of relationships formed between communities and government, and between consumers and businesses. Having the input and support of the public makes for better, stronger policy and greater trust and buy-in.

Empowering communities and businesses to better understand the risks, problems and issues will help them work alongside experts and regulators to shape solutions that work for us all.

Breakout Box

What is AI?

AI has many definitions and they are constantly changing. It is considered to be a general purpose technology – that is, a technology that is adopted across multiple industries, catalyses transformative socioeconomic change and redefines how humans work.

It is claimed that fewer than 30 GPTs have emerged through history (the wheel, the printing press, the steam engine, the telegraph, electricity and the internet[2]). AI is considered an emergent GPT, with potential to drive massive, global transformation.

Increased AI use will have wider benefits such as freeing humans up from tedious tasks; adding jobs that are more creative and challenging; and enhancing lifestyles through more efficient and data-driven businesses, smarter homes, sustainable energy usage and improved healthcare.

In general, AI can be described as an overarching term for a group of technologies that use data and algorithms to allow machines to operate with higher levels of intelligence to perform tasks or make decisions that would normally require human intelligence.

These technologies include things such as machine learning, machine reasoning, deep learning, real-time data analytics, natural language processing, robotics and machine vision. AI uses neural networks to allow these technologies to work and perform complex tasks.

These technologies are constantly advancing and growing, changing and expanding the definition of what AI is.

AI technologies include algorithms that form the basis of models; the sensors that collect data and the processors that let machines learn from data and information. An AI system is the complete integration of sensors, learning and decision-making models, and connected software or hardware that can be influenced or controlled.

All AI starts with data, which trains the system to carry out their functions. This data gives the system the ability to sense its environment, learn, solve problems and make predictions.

AI has advanced quickly, thanks to access to vast computing power and cloud, cheap data storage and processors, and increasing amounts of digitised data.

2   Lipsey, R, Carlaw, K, Bekar, C (2005). Economic Transformations: General Purpose Technologies and Long Term Economic Growth. Oxford University Press.

AI has different categories: *Narrow AI* performs a specific task (current working examples today are considered Narrow AI); *General AI* is currently theoretical, and is adaptable intelligence, where a machine could successfully perform any intellectual task as well as, or better than, a human; *Weak AI* is a system that appears to act intelligently but doesn't have any kind of consciousness about its actions; *Strong AI* describes actual thinking with a conscious, subjective mind.

AI is already here: it is becoming more common in applications and many people don't realise that AI and algorithms are already powering the technologies or applications they use every day. A PWC/World Economic Forum research (2017) projected that AI would add approximately 15 trillion to the global economy by 2030. AI will drive significant productivity gains, transform businesses, and have an impact across all sectors of the global economy. Global GDP will be 14% higher in 2030 as a result of AI.

AI will have a large impact across society and the economy. Exactly how it plays out and its effects will differ from country to country, but AI will transform the way humans live their lives.

Risks

Alongside its potential for benefit for humanity, AI also poses a number of risks. These centre around privacy, safety, security, bias, discrimination and inequality.

Currently, the risks posed by weak AI are not huge but as AI systems become stronger and can operate independently of humans, the repercussions and risks become greater. Strong AI may become smarter and better than humans in many areas. If this happens, it will be transformative, revolutionary change on par with the Industrial revolution and, while this will provide us with huge wins, any accidents or misuse could be disastrous.

One of the big issues with AI is that it is new and is developing rapidly. Very few people have enough understanding of it or its implications to be able to make informed decisions on the risks, meaning businesses will either adopt it in ways that could be dangerous, or will be too scared to use it at all.

Engaging with AI

Planning, process, approaches and evaluation engagement options are applicable to almost any type of engagement, but there are a few things to be aware of when beginning a large scale consultation on a technology such as AI.

Firstly, be aware that people's understanding of technologies may be limited and they may feel uncomfortable talking about a subject or giving their views on something they don't understand. Find ways to relate experiences or views of the technology to things that people will have knowledge of. For example, in the Engage section, New Zealand group, Toi Āria, talk about their use of the Comfort Board methodology, where people physically move themselves around the space to help articulate their level of 'comfort' with technology. Also, Toi Āria uses scenarios which come from people's lived experience, which makes the technology relatable to them.

Secondly, be aware that fast paced technologies such as AI will always be changing and expanding, creating new issues or areas for discussion, so you may need to think about ways to have ongoing engagement. One option is to seek views from your groups on how they want to or can be updated on future engagements.

Thirdly, the Playbook does not go into great detail on online tools, but as AI is a digital topic, you may want to look more closely at online engagement approaches and tools and ways, either as stand-alone approaches, or as part of a wider approach.

Finally, think about having your team run regular retrospectives throughout all phases (what worked well, what didn't, what learning should be taken into the next phase). This is useful for all engagements, and will help once you get to the Review stage, but it is particularly helpful when working with a complicated issue such as AI as it will allow your team to pivot and adjust the message to suit the audience.

How to use this Playbook

This Playbook grew from a stream of work in our "Reimagining Regulation for the Age of AI" project. It grew from our awareness that, before agreement would be given by our communities, they needed to be brought along on the AI journey: being given access to information that explained the technology and its impacts – both good and bad.

It was that people had strong views on AI and how it might operate in their lives. For us to fully recognise its potential, these views needed to be heard and taken into account when decisions on AI use were being made.

This playbook sets out some of the things to think about when planning and executing a large-scale, nationwide engagement. Good engagement needs to take several factors into account:

- **Influence.** Strong engagement operates with the understanding that participants have a mandate to drive change and an influence on the policy-making and the decisions ultimately made. This role can change depending on the decision so IAP2 – leaders in designing public participation processes that are inclusive – have designed a spectrum that defines different roles of participants in the process: informing, consulting, involving, collaborating or empowering. Its important that designers are clear about the role they want participants to play and the level of influence they'll have, otherwise trust will be lost.

- **Impact**. Engagement drives a strong "before and after," where discussions are linked to outcomes requested by governments, businesses and the people. Knowing they have directly influenced decisions creates trust and ensures people are more likely to engage again in future conversations.

- **Diversity.** there are many ways to ensure different voices are heard and a range of viewpoints are brought into the process. This means that people can chose to engage in ways that suit them and their situation. For example, people can choose to be involved in face-to-face meetings; or provide written feedback; or be part of discussion groups; or be a part of online forums.

- **Impartiality.** A key part of engagement is making sure that all voices are heard and that conversations are not biased or influenced by a subset of views. Ways to do this include making sure the process and structure of the conversations allows for a wide range of people to participate; constantly checking in to see who is participating and what voices might be missing; and relaying comments back to communities to get their reactions to the results and analysis.

- **Representative.** National conversations will be made up of concerns that are held widely, as well as issues that are of interest only to smaller groups. Part of the analysis of the engagement will look at the nature of issues to see how widespread or localised they are, and interventions and levers designed accordingly.

Successful conversations on AI or other emerging technologies are multi-stage processes, involving different players at different intervals to play important roles. A key part of any engagement is that both sides are respectful.

This Playbook is split into six core parts:

1. **Discovery**
2. **Design**
3. **Approaches**
4. **Engage**
5. **Report**
6. **Review**

Engagements will inevitably result in differing views or roadblocks. The steps can't prevent disagreements, but if the designers are open and honest from the start, trust is built early and reinforced through a transparent process, these disagreements should be able to be worked out and provide valuable insights and material that make the ultimate decisions stronger.

The Playbook can be used for almost any AI-related topic: AI is a complicated technology that requires perhaps more explanation and conversation upfront than other issues, but the basics remain: to be successful, engagement must be done in an open and transparent way, respecting the time given by people to attend the event, and taking into account their views on the best way forward.

Most of all, AI, and other technologies, are an ongoing conversation between governments, societies, communities and businesses: these conversations will never stop as we begin to shape our world into the new digital age.

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Discovery

The discovery stage is where the engagement team starts to collect information and research the issue to be consulted on – and starts to get a better understanding of the nature of the project, the points where engagement is wanted, and the shape of the engagement itself.

Essentially this discovery phase asks what is this engagement about?

This stage should allow you to define the scope, crystallise the issue, aspects of the issue to be consulted on, understand the rationale for engagement and identify your goals or outcomes. It allows you to develop the focus and parameters of the project and clarify the point and value proposition of the engagement.

It includes looking at the current context, identifying where we've come from and how this engagement will move us to a new, desired state.

You will identify the principles for the engagement, decide on the stakeholders you need, and the level of engagement you'll have with them.

You will also look at any limitations for the engagement and the barriers you might face. This stage is a chance to deal with any uncertainties in the project and think about ways to identify and tackle any problems that could arise.

The people with whom you engage will trust the process more if they can see the pathway you want to take, know they can input into the desired end goal, and understand they are helping to design some of the steps to reach the end goal.

Working alongside people will increase well-being in communities as people who are genuinely involved in decision-making will feel valued, have ownership of the work and its outcomes, and have a sense of pride in themselves and their communities for their involvement. Decisions made after an open and honest process will also be more credible, and are particularly important when the decision may result in changes to how people live and work.

Decisions made after an open and honest process will also be more credible.

Principles for the engagement

Good engagement relies on trust being built with the participants with their time being valued, their input being respected and the process being safe.

A set of principles, or values, should inform and guide every aspect of the process. This will ensure that the engagement is respectful and seen by participants as authentic.

Having that rapport and connection at the start will help ensure the relationships built are strong and enduring.

How to develop principles

Before you start the engagement, consider the relationship you want to have with your participants, how you want the process to run, and what behaviours you want to see throughout.

Understand the context you are working within, and what the high level values are that you need to reflect in this particular engagement.

Be very clear on what vision you have for this engagement and its place in your wider work.

A good principle offers guidance for the way you and your participants will interact. It needs to be inspiring and measurable. The principles will allow for assumptions and actions to be tested and have the process and content to be tailored to the community context.

| Brainstorm the behaviours, feelings and capabilities you think are important | Collect examples of existing principles | Draft new principles |

| Articulate your core values out of that list | Describe the values and the behaviours that go with it | Identify what values resonate with you | What might need to be added |
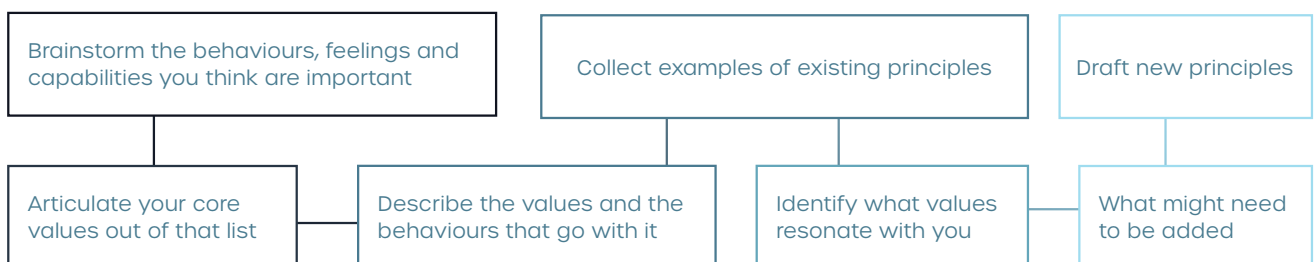
Examples of principles

There are many examples of engagement principles available. A number of these may be useful or relevant to your engagement.

Key to any engagement with AI is to understand that it is a topic that often evokes a deep sense of unease among people.

Creating safe spaces for people to articulate these fears will be important, as will the provision of impartial and understandable information. Below is a list of some examples from around the world to help you get started on identifying your own principles.

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Federation and Australasian chapter

- Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
- Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
- Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.

- Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
- Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
- Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

Top 5 Principles for Digital Engagement Success[1]

5 Ingredients for Succesful Online Engagement

Engaging online requires careful planning and consideration. These are the five essentials to think about before you start engaging.

Have a purpose

Identifying the 'why' should always be the starting point for any engagement - offline or online.

People will become disheartened if they sense you're simply checking a box, or if they have engaged on the topic frequently in the past without action.

Be sure to have a strong justification for conducting the engagement and set clear goals, objectives, and desired outcomes to guide the process forward.

Plan for success

Strategic, upfront planning is key to ensuring success and the more time you spend planning, the better positioned you will be.

Consider what success looks like and determine what questions you'll ask, how data and information will be collected and analysed, how you'll get a diversity of people participating, and how you'll promote and market the engagement.

Inspire interest and action

People's time is valuable and you need to convince them that their participation is worthwhile.

Dry text, long documents and boring surveys are not enough to compel people to action. Focus on developing digital first-content that delivers a 'wow factor' and explore using a variety of other creative tools to collect feedback.

This will inspire people to take notice and start interacting with you.

Bring people on the journey

True success can only be achieved when people truly feel like they are a valued part of the process.

Create opportunities to share, learn and grow to keep people involved throughout the duration of the project.

Making the engagement feel like a collaborative effort sends the message that this is a group effort bigger than any one individual's opinion.

Show you listened and learned

Ultimately, people want to know that you've listened to them and understood what they have to say.

Create as many opportunities for listening as you can, and reflect back what you heard and more importantly, what you learned.

Explicitly demonstrating how the feedback has influenced the process is the key to creating trust in the process and getting better outcomes.

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1   https://the-hive.com.au/blog/top-5-principles-digital-engagement-success

National Standards for Community Engagement: Reference Manual[2]

The involvement standard:
we will identify and involve the people and organisations with an interest in the focus of the engagement.

The support standard:
we will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement.

The planning standard:
we will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken.

The methods standard:
we will agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose.

The working with others standard:
we will work effectively with others with an interest in the engagement.

The improvement standard:
we will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence on all the participants.

The feedback standard:
we will feedback the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected.

The monitoring and evaluation standard:
we will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement meets its purpose and the national standards for community engagement.

Examples of stakeholder engagement principles[3]

10 key principles of stakeholder engagement

What community engagement involves[4]

Establishing a clear purpose:
Ensuring that the aims and boundaries of the participation are clear to all, and expectations and risks are managed.

Committing to process:
Following through and using the outcomes of participation in the way you said you would.

Demonstrating ethical treatment, respect and sensitivity:
Understanding the individuals and groups involved in the participation and interacting with them in ethical ways that reflect awareness of their culture, circumstances and values.

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2   https://www.shb.scot.nhs.uk/board/pfpi/documents/pfpi-ce-referencemanual.pdf
3   https://www.apm.org.uk/resources/find-a-resource/stakeholder-engagement/key-principles/
4   https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/policy-project/policy-methods-toolbox/community-engagement

Ensuring diversity, accessibility and inclusiveness:
Ensuring equal and fair access to the participation process by all appropriate groups and individuals.

Communicating and feeding back:
Providing accurate and timely information, and ensuring that participants understand how their participation has been translated into action or change.

Engagement model[5]

1	**Embracing the Gifts of Diversity**
2	**Realizing the Role of Race, Power and Injustice**
3	**Radical Hospitality: Invitation and Listening**
4	**Trust-Building and Commitment**
5	**Honoring Dissent and Embracing Protest**
6	**Adaptability to Community Change**

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Principles of Community Engagement

Demonstrate integrity, trust and transparency:

- The levels of community influence and process for engagement must be clearly communicated from the start.
- Consultation and higher forms of engagement must be genuinely purposeful and not tokenistic.

Show respect:

- Value all contributions made and the time given.
- Provide timely feedback on the results of specific consultation.

Be inclusive:

- Ensure a diverse and representative range for stakeholders is engaged.
- Offer a range of accessible engagement opportunities to ensure that all people who may be affected by, or interested in, the outcome can participate.

Educate:

- Information provided should be clear, consistent and use common language wherever possible.
- Always educate the community on the relevant legislation, strategic and local context to allow them to make informed decisions.

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5   https://organizingengagement.org/models/six-principles-for-equitable-and-inclusive-civic-engagement/

Plan well:

- Strive to select a project scope and engagement activities that align with your objectives.
- Engagement requires informed judgement and planning in the approach and implementations to be effective, practical and suitably resourced.
- Make it simple and convenient for the community to engage in the project, engagement does not need to be complex but it does need to achieve the identified engagement objectives.

Work together:

- The goal is to 'do with' the community rather than 'do for' the community.
- Foster relationships with partners and the community by developing a solid understating of mutual obligations and reciprocal responsibilities and benefits.

Examples of principles[6]

DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Clear Remit

A clear, plain English challenge or question is placed before a group. This remit goes to the core of the issues and provides a strong and open platform for discussion about the trade-offs.

Information

Detailed, in-depth information provided from multiple, diverse sources is provided to the participants to help them understand the dilemmas. Stakeholders familiar with the dilemmas will be asked to help define some of the important sources to present to the group. By doing this the group can move beyond opinion to an informed and more balanced view. Not all participants read everything, but collectively an enormous amount is read, understood and used in the conversations and decisions.

Representative

A random sample of people affected by the decision are actively recruited to participate. Key filters are used to help stratify this sample to 'represent' the broader demographics.

Deliberative

The processes are built to ensure maximum involvement from all participants. It builds the thinking from individuals, to smaller groups to the whole group. The issues are weighed up and discussed in various ways before final recommendations are made.

Influential

The groups report must have weight. It needs to be considered at the highest level of decision-making and responded to directly. Some members of the group will be asked to present their report and recommendations directly to the decision-makers to demonstrate the gravitas of the report and the role of the process.

Blank Page Report

All deliberative processes enable the participants to prepare their own thinking and report 'from scratch'. We do not provide a draft position for review, or ask for comments on a pre-prepared document. This is allowing people to review the evidence, discuss and dialogue about the options, actively negotiate with each other, and finalise a shared solution for their report. Hence, the group's report is a 'blank page' - created by the deliberative group themselves – and presented unedited to decision-makers.

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6   https://www.mosaiclab.com.au/resources

Better Together principles[7]

PRINCIPLE 1	**We know why we are engaging**
PRINCIPLE 2	**We know who to engage**
PRINCIPLE 3	**We know the history**
PRINCIPLE 4	**We start together**
PRINCIPLE 5	**We are genuine**
PRINCIPLE 6	**We are relevant and engaging**

Examples of principles[8]

The Seven Core Principles for Public Engagement

These seven principles reflect the *common* beliefs and understandings of those working in the fields of public engagement, conflict resolution, and collaboration. In practice, people apply these and additional principles in many different ways.

1. **CAREFUL PLANNING AND PREPARATION**
   Through adequate and inclusive planning, ensure that the design, organization, and convening of the process serve both a clearly defined purpose and the needs of the participants.

2. **INCLUSION AND DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY**
   Equitably incorporate diverse people, voices, ideas, and information to lay the groundwork for quality outcomes and democratic legitimacy.

3. **COLLABORATION AND SHARED PURPOSE**
   Support and encourage participants, government and community institutions, and others to work together to advance the common good.

4. **OPENNESS AND LEARNING**
   Help all involved listen to each other, explore new ideas unconstrained by predetermined outcomes, learn and apply information in ways that generate new options, and rigorously evaluate public engagement activities for effectiveness.

5. **TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST**
   Be clear and open about the process, and provide a public record of the organizers, sponsors, outcomes, and range of views and ideas expressed.

6. **IMPACT AND ACTION**
   Ensure each participatory effort has real potential to make a difference, and that participants are aware of that potential.

7. **SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATORY CULTURE**
   Promote a culture of participation with programs and institutions that support ongoing quality public engagement.

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7   https://www.bettertogether.sa.gov.au
8   https://organizingengagement.org/models/core-principles-for-public-engagement/

The 6 principles of stakeholder engagement[9]

6 PRINCIPLES OF

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

1. Stakeholders should have a say in decisions that affect them

2. Stakeholders participation includes the promise that their contributiuons will influence decisions... and they are told how

3. Stakeholders engaement seeks out those potentially affected by, or interested in, a decision

4. Stakeholders engaement seeks input on how they may wish to participate

5. Stakeholders engaement provides information, time, and space to allow stakeholders to participate in a meaningful way

6. It never hurts to be polite

SOURCE: STAKEHOLDER-LED PROJECT MANAGEMENT / LOUISE M. WORSLEY

A Girl's Guide to
PROJECT MANAGEMENT
GirlsGuideToPM.com

Planning

Identifying your purpose, objectives and scope.

Key to your planning is identifying the purpose, objectives and scope of the engagement process.

The purpose of the engagement is the reason why you are doing this work, while the scope is the limitations or boundaries of the engagement process. Knowing both these things is the starting point to designing and running an effective engagement process.

Part of the scope is also thinking about how much input you want your stakeholders to have in inputting into the process. It may be that they have input into only parts of it, and they may have different levels of input. You will need a clear plan on this level of input and at what stage.

Knowing the purpose and scope is especially important in any engagement to do with AI, as it is a broad topic, so being very clear upfront on what areas of parts of AI and how you are defining it, and what you hope to achieve from the engagement process, will be critical to success.

Definitions of AI

There is no universally agreed or accepted definition for Artificial Intelligence.

The term was coined in 1956 by American computer scientist John McCarthy to describe "the science and engineering of making intelligent machines".

As the technology has evolved, it has come to be a term that describes a broad spectrum of related technologies that seek to imitate and enhance aspects of human intelligence, such as vision, identifying patterns in information, or understanding language. AI makes it possible for machines to learn from experience, adjust to new data and perform human-like tasks.

AI works by combining large amounts of data with fast, iterative processing and intelligent algorithms, allowing the software to learn automatically from patterns or features in the data.

Most people interact with AI-based systems on a daily basis: common applications that embed AI technologies include search engines, virtual voice assistants, spam filters, websites with online shopping recommendations, and social media channels.

AI is a broad term, covering a large range of topics. Because we are inundated with information on AI, its benefits and risks, its uses and applications – and because it has become an almost ubiquitous term – it can be hard to pinpoint exactly what it is.

Your objectives are the key goals or deliverables that you wish to see as a result of the engagement. They may be standalone or tied to a wider project of which your engagement is part. You will need to understand the best way for the engagement to achieve these priorities.

All of this will help you settle on the most appropriate tools and methods to use and enable you to communicate the point of the engagement clearly and succinctly to your participants.

Understand your needs	Be clear on what you are wanting to get out of this project, why you are doing it and how the engagement is contributing to it.
Define the purpose	Explain the reason for undertaking this engagement and what the problem be solved is.
Clarify the objectives	Explain the aim of this engagement and what you hope it will contribute to the wider project.
Outline the scope	Be clear on the limitations that will affect the size and shape of the engagement and the size and nature of the input from participants.
Identify parameters	Have transparency around the amount of influence the participants will have and what they can't change.

The following workbook will help you to define the purpose of your engagement and how it fits with your wider project or objectives.

Defining your purpose	Comments
What is the reason for the wider project? What are its values and mission? What is the problem it is trying to address?	
What is the key issue this engagement will address?	
Who is it an issue for?	
Why is it important to solve this issue?	
What factors (social, economic, cultural) are shaping this issue?	
What are the objectives you want from this engagement? What is its aim?	
How does this engagement and its objectives support the wider priority or project?	
Is the issue/topic for the engagement clearly defined? What will you be asking people about?	
How involved do you want your participants to be?	

What are your limitations for
the engagement?

Is engagement being sought on one or
many aspects of the engagement?

What are the areas that can be and can't
be influenced by participants?

How much ability will their involvement
have over the engagement outcome
and for the wider project?

What is the impact of this engagement
in general?
• to wider priorities and goals
• to this project

What will success look like?

Set up governance early

Strong governance is important to
provide direction, create the framework
for operation and keep key senior
stakeholders up to date.

Concentrate early on gaining key support
partners, and especially on getting buy-
in from people who could contribute
expertise to the scoping phase, and then
acted as project ambassadors throughout
the rest of the project.

When a topic and issues are as complex
and rapidly developing as AI, it is easier
to have a supportive group supporting the
work and working collaboratively with a
broad range of stakeholders.

Make sure your governance group is
well connected and help them build
partnerships early. This will give the project
a strong and supportive foundation.

Assess your readiness

Before you get into the planning, it pays to
assess your readiness for the engagement.
This will get you thinking about why
you want to do the engagement, what
you might need to do to prepare for the
engagement and checking that you
have all the right pieces in place for the
engagement to be successful and where
the gaps might be.

Below is a checklist of things to ask yourself so you're ready for the next steps.

Checklist

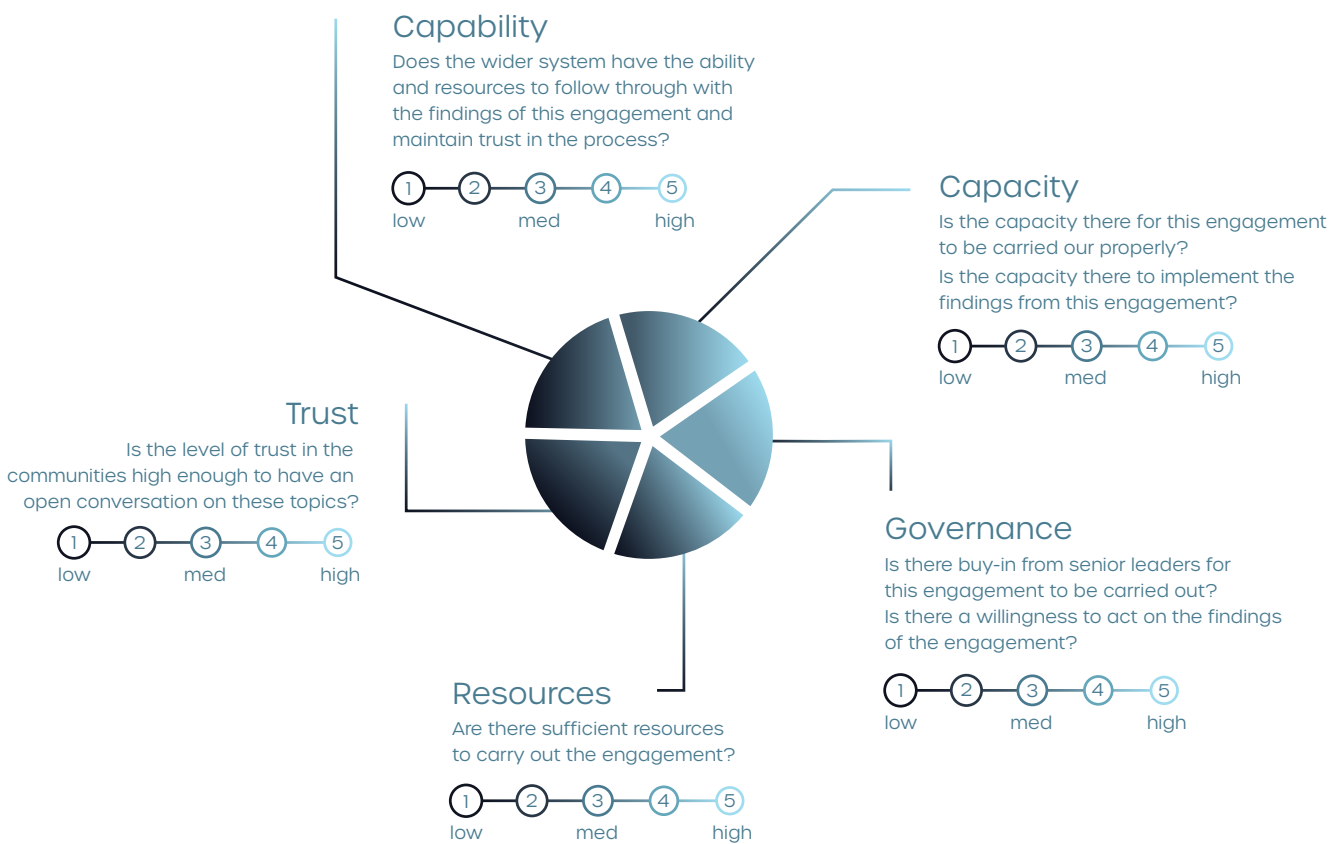|	
Is the issue/topic you need engagement on clearly defined?	
Are you clear on the purpose and scope of the engagement process?	
Is engagement being sought on some or all aspects of the project?	
Do you have senior leadership and buy-in for this project and its results?	
Who is the final decision maker for this work?	
Have you identified a project lead for engagement?	
Do you need a governance/working group?	
Have you identified what success looks like (more participants, more diversity, ongoing communication, etc.)?	
What are the benefits of engagement for the project?	
Do you know what you want to measure?	
Do you have a process to track and measure progress?	
How will you review progress?	
Are there opportunities to combine outreach efforts on multiple issues/projects or repurpose data from previous engagement efforts?	
What tools will you use – are they real world, digital, a mix?	
What feedback do you want to get from the groups and how will you get it?	

Checklist

Are you expecting barriers or limitations and if so, do you know how you will manage those?	
Do you know when engagement should be completed?	
What time commitment will this project take at all levels and for all participants?	
Is there enough time for meaningful engagement?	
Do you know what this engagement process will cost?	
Do you know what resources you will need?	
Do you have the right resources to provide educative and awareness-raising tools for this work?	
Do you know the cost of the resources – including any extra resources needed?	
Have you thought about how you will identify stakeholders?	
Do you know what level of participation you want?	
What sort of communication do you want with your participants and groups?	
Are there things you absolutely need to communicate and seek views on?	
Are there particular groups that you want to hear from?	
What are the stages of your engagement process?	
Is this issue/topic of high interest or importance within the community?	
How motivated is the community to be involved?	
Will this issue/topic have a significant impact?	
Is this issue/topic highly visible within the community?	
What is the relationship like between you/your agency and the participants/community?	
Do you know of any pre-existing issues with the relationship/within the community that might affect consultation?	
Is everyone participating in the process ready for meaningful public involvement?	
What are the benefits for participants?	

The following matrix lets you check your readiness in six different areas – Capacity, Governance, Resources, Trust and Capability.

The scale will let you see whether you have gaps in these six areas and, if so, whether the problem is low, medium or high. This will allow you to fill those gaps before the engagement starts.

The matrix looks beyond the engagement itself, asking whether there is the willingness and ability to implement the findings of the engagement.

Capability

Does the wider system have the ability and resources to follow through with the findings of this engagement and maintain trust in the process?

(1)——(2)——(3)——(4)——(5)
low   med   high

Capacity

Is the capacity there for this engagement to be carried our properly?
Is the capacity there to implement the findings from this engagement?

(1)——(2)——(3)——(4)——(5)
low   med   high

Trust

Is the level of trust in the communities high enough to have an open conversation on these topics?

(1)——(2)——(3)——(4)——(5)
low   med   high

Governance

Is there buy-in from senior leaders for this engagement to be carried out?
Is there a willingness to act on the findings of the engagement?

(1)——(2)——(3)——(4)——(5)
low   med   high

Resources

Are there sufficient resources to carry out the engagement?

(1)——(2)——(3)——(4)——(5)
low   med   high

Identifying and choosing stakeholders

Collecting data

Once you have agreed the purpose, objectives and scope of the engagement and understand how it fits in with any wider project or agency objectives, you can begin to identify and chose the right participants for the engagement.

As a first step, identify the places or areas where you wish to run engagement. This might be particular groups, geographical areas, segments of the community.

Within those broader areas, a more detailed understanding of the make-up and shape of the groups will help you identify places to concentrate, help determine what type of engagement and communication will be most useful, and will give you useful data to inform your later decision-making. So, for example, this data collection phase could involve:

- Looking at the demographic make-up of communities and areas;
- Identifying strong community groups and interest groups;
- Looking at the key ways that people get their sources of information (eg online, printed media, for one another);
- Any strong views held on technologies and Ai, and what the key issues may be for them in those areas.

This phase could also involve a scan of other work underway:

- Are there other agencies or projects undertaking engagement in these communities? If so, are there opportunities to leverage that work and connect up the engagement?
- Are there agencies or organisations that already have strong connections to and trust with these communities? If so, could you use them to introduce you to the right people?
- Are there ways to link the engagement to issues that the community cares about, explaining AI in ways that make it real to people?

Identifying stakeholders

Stakeholder identification will allow you to make informed decisions about who to engage with. Once you have collected the data, you will have a better idea of the communities: their level of interest in AI, who the best representatives and connectors are, and whether there are existing networks or groups that you can use or leverage off.

At this stage you will want to develop a list of the people who may be interested in your project. Think broadly, drawing from the data collected earlier and don't limit the list as this stage. Seek guidance from across the board: colleagues, communities, experts in the field. Once you have a broad list, you can begin to refine it, based on your resources, budget and timelines.

The tools below give some help in listing then identifying the right people.

■ Internal and External

Project specific
People on the wider project (and related programmes of work)

Experts
Key people and bodies in the AI community

Affected others
Other projects, affected communities

Critical audiences
Media, interest and lobby groups

Traditionally excluded groups
Excluded groups in digital such as older people, lower socioeconomic groups, refugees; minority groups

Influencial others
Academics, key leaders, business leaders, AI companies

General public
Ordinary tax payers, families, communities

Identifying participants

Category	Names
Who will be impacted by AI?	
Who has an interest in AI and/or this project?	
Who has traditionally been excluded from decision-making?	
Who is most likely to distrust AI?	
Who is likely to be distrustful of this process?	
Who are the key stakeholders who should be part of this?	
Whose views are likely to be on the edges?	
Who are the key influencers in this community?	
Who are the trusted voices in AI?	

Once you have a list of people who could participate, you will need to narrow down the list. You are aiming for a group that is a manageable size for the venue; has a mix of people whose view you wish or need to hear and which reflects the wider community.

The following criteria evaluation table can help with this, allowing you to see which groups will best allow you to meet your objectives.

	Participant A	Participant B	Participant C	Participant D	Participant E
Objective 1	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
Objective 2	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
Objective 3	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
Objective 4	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score

Diversity

When assembling people for the engagement, you may wish to include a range of people from specific groups: for example, people with some technical knowledge of aspects of AI; people representing particular communities or minority groups; a mix of demographics; business people etc.

The below matrix will help you identify the right mix of people for the engagement session.

Minority groups

Technical and AI experts

Diverse cultures

Business community

Demographic mix

Government

How many people have direct experience of the issue?

How many people have close experience of the issue?

How many people have no experience of the issue?

Geographic mix

Academics
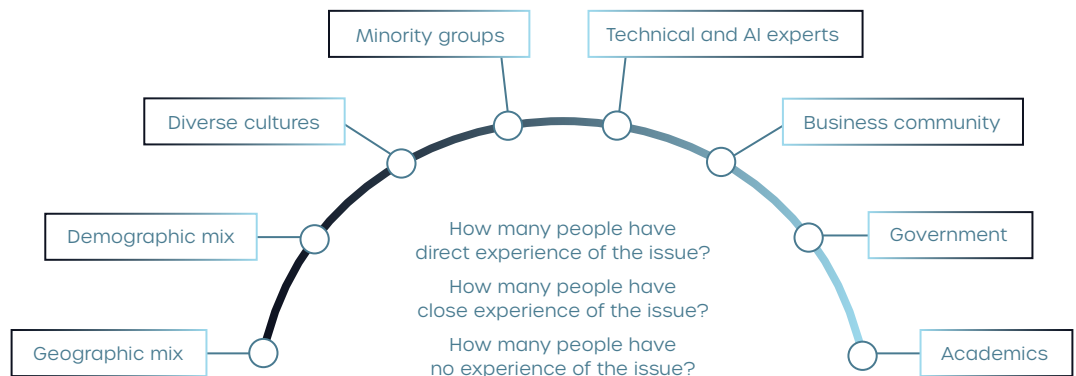
Building personas

A useful tool to use when trying to pick the right people for the event and understand how to best engage with them, is to devise personas.

This is one or more generic types who represent the views, needs, fears and experiences of your target audience. By creating a persona that represents this segment of your audience, you can ensure your eventual design and event will reflect the needs, pain points and concerns of your target group.

Designing a persona will require you to know:

- What matters to your selected group?
- What would they consider to be a successful outcome?
- What risks and barriers do they see?
- How do they make decisions and what material or support would help them feel comfortable with AI?

A process to help design simple personas would be:

Assemble demographic data → Create a name and background for your persona → What matters to them? → What are their pain points? → How do they like learning or communicating? → What are their connections with their communities?

Barriers & risks

Common issues and barriers, with mitigations

There are a number of barriers that may impact your project. It makes sense to identify and understand these barriers or risk early and identify mitigations for them.

Disinclination to engage from decision-makers	There may be a lack of desire from people within the agency to go out and consult publically – particularly in areas such as AI, which is a specialised area, requiring some technical knowledge. Mitigate against this by making the case for social licence in AI use.
	Ensuring communities are provided with enough information and material prior to the engagement so they can engage with the topic in a way that will provide useful material.
Lack of trust	Know the context of the communities you are wanting to engage with and their level of trust in agencies, government, and business. Learn about, be sensitive to their concerns and history. Prepare material with people that responds to their concerns and alleviates any fears.
Not understanding the context	Be aware that participants and groups are the products of a varied bunch of views, ideas and incentives. Knowing this can help you shape the message that will best appeal to them
Defaulting to company/agency position	People often default to their company or agency policy position, or see the issue through a single lens (such as privacy). Make sure you have language and frameworks to pique interest and shock or force people out of comfort zones.
	Also, try to attract people to the consultation who could rise above the more granular issues and see the bigger picture.

Timing	Projects often need to be delivered to tight timeframes, which puts pressure on engagement to happen within short windows. This can have a negative impact on participants, who need time to understand, build trust and open up. Be aware of participant's needs and level of understanding, and plan timeframes accordingly.
Unclear purpose	Make use everyone in the team understands why the engagement is occurring, what it hopes to achieve and how it fits into the wider picture. Establish this understanding at the planning stage.
	Communicate the purpose through material provided to participants.
Talking at cross purposes	Having a common language may be a challenge – groups can talk at cross purposes, using their own technical language and definitions and interpreting the issue in many ways.
	Try and use existing definitions or frameworks to create a shared understanding of the issues and develop a common language.
Bad communication	Communicate what you are doing and why in clear ways. Make it easy for people to know what you are asking and why you want to know.
	Make it easy for then o engage, and provide feedback. Keep language simple and bureaucratic, and processes easy to navigate and use.
Community apathy	Topics such as AI can be seen by many as too hard, too technical and just not interesting. Make sure any communications provides a narrative that demonstrates the importance of the topic to people's lives and jobs – provide enough hooks that they want to engage and provide their views on matters that will affect them and their families.
Not tailoring engagement to the capacity and ability of participants	Understand and plan for the needs, capacities, skills and resources of stakeholders.
	Be clear that all views and levels of knowledge will be respected, are welcome and will be valuable to the end result.
	Provide materials that allow access for all – think about disabilities, different languages, different reading levels etc.
	Ensure meeting locations are accessible and appropriate.
Insufficient skills or resources	Know the resources available to you.
	Develop the engagement with a realistic understanding of what is available to you.
	Source skills from other places if you don't have them.

Funding	Tailor your engagement type and tools to the amount of funding you need. Ascertain what objectives or results are critical and make sure your funding will give you the engagement necessary to deliver this.
	Be aware that cost is a disincentive for people to participate – be aware that engaging is not always cheap for people who need to travel, get time of work, get childcare, find parking etc.
Limited understanding of topic and lack of access to information	Identify potential gaps in people's knowledge and ensure enough information is provided to them to allow them to engage in the dialogue.
Lack of diversity	Ensure you reach a range of diverse groups, including harder to reach groups (such as young people, older people, minority groups, rural populations).
Not being inclusive and culturally aware	Make sure you understand the cultural norms for the groups you are engaging with. Respect them, their values and their willingness to participate in the engagement. Be culturally responsive and aware, being accessible to all peoples, allocating extra resources and time to those who need it, and being respectful of difference and diversity.
Failing to get the right people along	Work with community groups and leaders to identify, invite and smooth the way for the right people to participate.
	Gain expert advice on local issues that may affect engagement, such as contested or divided communities, access issues, trust issues.
Engagement fatigue	Find out about previous engagements in the area and the topic, to understand the history of stakeholder engagement in your particular area and the most appropriate level of participation for your engagement.
	Where possible, coordinate with other engagements so people are not inundated with multiple engagements.
Managing expectations	People may have unrealistic expectations on what influence their input will have. Be open and transparent with them about the ability they will have to influence the project.
Failure to provide feedback	During the planning stage, think about the sort of feedback you want to provide at the end of the process. Build this gathering of information into the process as you go, and have a clear plan for how you will disseminate the feedback, and in what form.
Failure to evaluate	Evaluation of the process helps give a snapshot of what went well and what could be improved. Make sure time is built in to properly evaluate the engagement, with a plan for how this feedback will be implemented.

Risk assessment

Most of the barriers or issues won't be problems and can easily be managed through good planning. As the engagement is developed, however, some of the barriers may become actual risks that do need to be monitored and, in some cases, planned for with mitigations. The below matrix will help you decide on the level of risk posed by the barriers and issues and at what level you might need to manage those risks.

Low risk:
Managed by routine process

Medium risk:
Managed by the specific person

High risk:
Specify responsibilities for managing the risk

Extreme risk:
Immediate action required by senior people

Severity

Likelihood	Minor/Acceptable	Moderate/Tolerable	Major/Unacceptable
Unlikely	Low	Medium	Medium
Possible	Low	Medium	High
Likely	Medium	High	High

Chapter Contents

Design

The design stage is where the engagement team makes the key decisions on the shape of the engagement.

In this stage, options are narrowed down and choices made on the best way to conduct the engagement to obtainthe information required and meet the objectives.

Decisions will be based on the findings of the Discovery phase and will include what resources are needed, who will develop and present them to the audiences; and what sort of tools will be the best vehicles to engage the people you have identified as key to the process.

Critical for this stage is the development of an engagement plan that will define all aspects, key features and deliverables of the engagement process.

The design stage is answering the *how* question of the engagement.

In this section we talk about:

• How to engage with your participants

• Participation level

• Approaches, tools and content development

• Writing an engagement plan

• The invite

How to engage with your participants

In the Discovery stage, you've already identified at a high level the list of stakeholders that you want to engage with.

Now, it is time to work out how you will communicate and engage with them.

One of the key components in any engagement is the stakeholders and making sure you have the right tools, activities and approach for the various groups you wish to engage with.

Depending on your group(s) you may wish to tailor your plan to suit their preferences and roles.

Stakeholder analysis

A key part of your plan is to look closely at your selected participants to develop approaches that will suit them and their particular circumstances and issues, and identify those who will be most valuable to you at different stages of the project or engagement.

Key to this is knowing what understanding your participants already have of AI. This will help you to develop material for the engagement events – and will also provide you with a valuable baseline when you look at how effective your engagement has been as you will be able to measure how much their understanding and/or interest has grown through your work.

A common way to do this is through a matrix, looking at the level of influence and interest a person has. Those with a lot of influence and a large interest in the project are people who you want to convince to be a part of the project. You will need to form good working relationships with them and try to get support for the work.

Other stakeholders may be of high importance to your project – such as young people, older people, minority groups – but may not have as much influence, or you may find some people have a lot of influence but little or no interest in the work. You will need different approaches for these groups in your engagement plan.

The following matrix will show you what groups are most important to your success and how to ensure they get the right mix of involvement and effort to contribute to the process.

Interest

Influence	High Power/Low Interest **Keep Satisfied**	High Power/High Interest **Engage and Consult**
	Low Power/Low Interest **Monitor**	Low Power/High Interest **Keep Informed**

Understanding your participants

To make sure you get the best out of your participants, you will need to know a bit about them and what makes them tick.

Understanding their level of knowledge, their interest in the topic and who they are will allow you to tailor approaches and the content of the session to them specifically.

Understanding each participant/group

Question	Comments
Who are your priority groups?	
What is their interest in AI?	
What do they already know about AI?	
Would you characterise them as experts or novices in their understanding of AI?	
What do they need to know to be able to engage in the process?	
What will you need to do to build trust with this group or person?	
What do they care about or are concerned with?	

How engaged are they with this issue?

If a group, who are the key contacts?

What existing relationships exist
with them?

What power do they have to influence?

What level of input will they want?

What capacity do they have
to engage?

Do they have any limitations?

Are there any barriers to their
engagement?

What would be appropriate methods
of engagement?

What would be the best way to
approach and engage with them?

What additional resources might
be needed?

Once you have taken the effort to research
your participants a bit more. You can dig
into their stance on the topic.

AI is an area that evokes strong feelings
so it is helpful to know where on the
spectrum of knowledge or interest your
participants sit. You will design different
approaches and use different tools for
passionate advocates to committed
sceptics.

This table will help identify where on the spectrum of interest your participants sit, helping you to shape up approaches for them.

This can help you decide where more effort might be needed to encourage people to participate or which groups might need more resource or attention.

	Unaware	Resistant	Neutral	Supportive	Leading
Participant 1					
Participant 2					
Participant 3					
Participant 4					

Participation level

People can be involved in engagement and decision-making in a number of different ways to a range of degrees. In this section, we look at how you can decide what level of participation and involvement you want from your participants, and how much influence they will have on the end result.

IAP2 spectrum and the participation approaches

One of the most well known international frameworks for describing approaches to participation and engagement is the Spectrum of Public Participation produced by the International Association for Public Participation (www.iap2.org/mpage/Home).

The Spectrum has five levels of impact, from the less engaged Inform, up to the fully engaged Empower. Its aim is to define the role of participants in a public engagement process.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decision.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to Public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decisions.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

Inform: In this pillar, decisions have already been made, or will be made, by the agency or organisation. Participants are being given information or advised on a situation. Input is either not sought, or will be limited in nature.

This pillar is useful for providing information to people to help them understand an issue, presenting them with material on solutions, opportunities and benefits. This is helpful in areas such as AI, where awareness raising often needs to happen before deeper consultation and engagement take place.

Key to success in this pillar is the providing of truthful material and information that can be relied on. If the public or participants think they are being manipulated or give biased information, it will be harder to build trust and/or gain agreement for any decisions.

The aim here is to *keep people informed.*

Consult: Consulting will happen where the decision is going to be made by the agency/organisation, but input and advice is being sought from interested parties. People are asked to provide their viewpoints and opinions.

It is valuable in that it helps clarify the issues and options, allows for the start of relationships, and raises awareness and interest in particular topics. It will give decision-makers a more accurate understanding of the concerns, needs and priorities of people and communities.

Issues may arise if the feedback provided is not taken into consideration, or if important groups and communities are missed out of the process. In authentic or tick-box engagement processes will undermine trust.

The aim is to *receive and consider feedback and input.*

Involve: This pillar moves from consultation in that it allows people to become involved in the work in more tangible ways. Feedback is actively incorporated, checked and the work iterated with hands on help from participants.

It is helpful in bringing in multiple viewpoints and angles to options and advice, creating decisions based in real world experiences. It also allows communities and participants to develop skills in participating in decision-making.

To be truly successful, people must be equipped with the tools and skills they need to engage, and the opportunities provided for engagement must be genuine.

The aim is to *work directly and consider their input.*

Collaborate: Collaboration involves partnering and working together to achieve mutual goals. It is based on openness and respect, with all parties having equal status.

It is valuable in that leaders and participants work together to identify problems and find solutions and control is shared. It is important that this partnership and respect is maintained, and one side does not take advantage of the other side's work and contacts.

This process will also take time as true collaboration requires trust to be built and maintained.

The aim is to *partner on all aspects of the decision.*

Empower: This pillar allows participants and communities to take decision-making into their own hands, defining agendas, using their own skills and assets and finding solutions that work for them.

At its most effective, this pillar allows for decision-making to be devolved to those whom the decisions affect, building trust and getting resources and benefits into the grassroots communities.

Problems may arise if those being empowered don't have the skillsets or resources to decide and implement properly.

The aim is to *allow people to make the decision, based on robust information.*

Making the decision on what level works for you

It may be that different pillars will fit the aims and objectives of parts of the project or engagement – thee may be times when informing people is more appropriate than collaborating with them or empowering them. As part of this planning stage, considering the extent to which you want to involve people is important.

Understanding the nature of the project and/or the aim of the engagement is a good place to start when deciding on what level of participation you need.

Ultimately, the key thing you need to know is what decisions will be made, and how much of that decision-making are you able to devolve to the people you are engaging with.

You might want to ask yourself some questions about the project and/or engagement process.

Questions

What decisions need to be made?

How much of the decision are you able to devolve?

What level of involvement do you think different stakeholders might expect?

How complex is the project?

What is the impact of the project on the community?

How sensitive is the project?

What time is available to you to do this engagement?

How much resource do you have?

What opportunities are available to leverage off?

A simple spreadsheet (below) can also help you decide on the best level of participation for the project.

Goal/objectives	Why engage	Input needed	Role
Objective 1	To gain feedback on material already produced.	Low	Consult
Objective 2	Ascertain views on issues that are considered important and the next steps for this work	Medium	Involve
Objective 3	Identify key advocates to take the work into communities and embed it into practices	Very high	Empower

Once you have a sense of the nature of the process, the following flowchart can help you arrive at the right level for your engagement.

It is very important that you are open with participants about their power and influence, whatever level of participation you decide on.

It is not always possible to fully empower people and place decision-making in other people's hands, but as long as you are honest about what you are asking for and the influence people will have, you will maintain the trust of the participants.
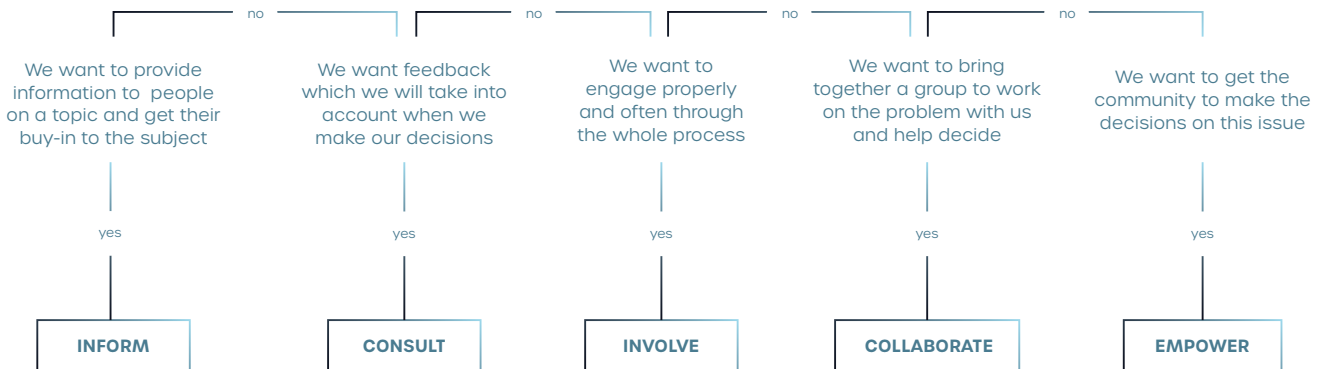
Content development, approaches and tools

You now know who your participants and stakeholders are and what level of involvement or influence they will have.

In this section we will look at how to choose the right methods or approaches for your participants.

Designing an approach

There are many methods and approaches to involve people in participation. Some are simple, and others are more complicated.

Use the following checklist to help you think about some of the important components in designing your approach. The column on the left can reflect the key attributes or parts of your purpose and objectives.

Aims	Remember your purpose and objectives in undertaking this engagement and what approaches will help you achieve them.
Complexity	How complicated or wide is your issue: can you explain it easily, or break it into digestible parts?
Size	How big is your participant list?
Timeframes	What are your timeframes for the engagement? How much time is available for different approaches?
Timeframes	How much engagement do you want through the process – is it one point of engagement or a continual process of informing/updating throughout?
Timeframes	Do you want ongoing feedback that comes in after the formal engagement? If so, how will you receive and use this feedback to inform future engagements?

Trust	What level of trust have you got with these groups – will you need approaches will help you build positive relationships?
Inclusive	How inclusive do you want this to be: are you targeting specific groups or are you happy for others to weigh in and for wider community engagement to occur? How will you capture or use this wider feedback?
Inclusive	Will you need different approaches for different groups? Are some tools and approaches less appropriate – for example, digital tools with an older population.
Inclusive	Have you thought about presentation and making difficult or complicated concepts understandable to all parts of the participant group?
Flexible	How flexible is your approach? Have you thought about refining or amending approaches if the initial methods aren't achieving the objectives?

Tools

There are a huge range of approaches and tools that can be used in engagements, all with different purposes.

The most appropriate approach or tool for you will need to arise from the nature of the issue being consulted on, the objectives you want to meet, your resources, timeframes and budget, and the type of participants you have.

Some people may prefer oral processes, such as interviews and workshops; whereas others will prefer to operate in an online or digital space.

A list of some of the approaches or tools you might want to think about is attached here **(see Approaches section)**, along with some pros and cons and some tips for a successful event. It is not an exhaustive list.

Knowing the level of influence you want will be one of the greatest helps in deciding on an approach and tools for the engagement. Informing people will require a very different set of tools to collaborating or empowering them.

Below is a list of tools that can be used with the different levels of influence you are seeking. Within these levels, however, you will still want to think about the issues raised above: how inclusive, wide-ranging, timebound etc you want the engagement to be.

Level	Aim	Tools
Inform	We will keep you informed and answer your questions	• Fact sheets • Websites • Open houses/open days
Consult	We will keep you informed, listen to feedback and describe how your feedback informed the decision	• Discussion papers • Interviews • Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Public/community meetings
Involve	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in alternatives	• Workshops • Open space • World cafe • Deliberate polling • Deliberate mapping
Collaborate	We will look to you for advice in creating alternatives and solutions	• Citizen advisory committees • Focus groups • Consensus-building • Participatory decision-making • Participatory appraisal
Empower	We will implement what you decide	• Citizen juries • Ballots • Delegated decisions

The following tool will help you select the right approach or tool for your needs, using information that you will have identified at points earlier in this process:

• the level of influence you want (for example, inform, collaborate, empower etc);

• the context within which the engagement is happening, which may colour the approaches and tools available to you (for example, tight timeframes, the need to talk to particular sections of the community;

• a need to provide a lot of educational material on AI, etc);

• whether the tool meets the purpose and objectives of your engagement, and

• whether it is appropriate to the size of group you intend having participate.

Tool or approach				
Description				
Level of influence				
Engagement context				
Engagement purpose				
Objectives				
Participant group size				

Finally, the below matrix is a way to identify tools that will best serve the level of influence and importance of your stakeholders.

This is based on the influence map designed earlier. Overlaying the map with tools for engagement allows you to see the spread of engagement you have and where much of your effort is going to be targeted.

Keep satisfied	Engage and consult
High Power/Low Interest • Blogs • Articles • Websites	High Power/High Interest • Co-design • Analysis
Monitor	Keep informed
Low Power/Low Interest • Tweets • Polls	Low Power/High Interest • Forums • Surveys

Developing content

Once you have settled on the participant list, the level of influence and engagement, the method of engagement and the best tools or activities to achieve your aims, you will need to know what content is needed and begin to prepare that, ready for the engagement.

The key is to produce accessible and easy to understand content that can be consumed by busy people. Multiple channels is probably helpful as different audiences like to get their information in different ways: something your early stakeholder analysis will have uncovered.

A basic plan to start would look like:

• The name of the activity

• A description of the activity

• Which stakeholder groups will be involved

• What actions need to happen to get the activity implemented

• What resources or budget will cover that specific action

• The timeframe for it

• Who is responsible

Some tips:

Keep your audience and your engagement tool in mind

Every word counts – content should be succinct and tell a story

Different documents require different approaches

People respond better to specific questions

Provide short versions of large documents

Structure your documents so that information is provided in easily readable sections

Find ways to encourage creative and lateral thinking

Have a multi-media approach

Don't just rely on the printed word

Make content relevant to people's situation

Make material attractive

Have FAQs ready to answer questions

Be clear about timelines for engagement and feedback

Be open about the context and drivers for the project

Make sure its clear what the ask is for people

Also think about how much information you will need – this will depend on the type of engagement you are doing but in general, a high level information sheet to accompany the invite will be useful, along with material for a website or social media.

A Comms plan, as part of your engagement plan, will help shape this material up. It doesn't need to be complicated, as the examples below show.

Participant group	Objectives	Message content	Delivery methods	Timeframes
Group 1				
Group 2				
Group 3				
Group 4				
Group 5				

Audience	Deliverable	Timeline	Description	Delivery method	Owner
Workshop group					
Wider community					
Government					
Business community					
Media					
Subject experts					

Audience	Type of communication	Timelines	Goal	Owner
Participants				
Wider community				
Key stakeholders				

The key pieces you want to think about in a communications strategy are:

Context:
What is going on and why are we doing this now?

Outcome:
What are we trying to achieve and what results do we want to see?

Message:
What key messages do we need to communicate?

Method:
What are the best ways to communicate this and what is the best vehicle to gain feedback?

Support:
What is needed for this to be successful?

Webpage

Having a webpage for your project is potentially useful as it allows you to put up additional information and material on the project.

Later in the process, the webpage can also be used to host discussion documents; feedback forms, online forums etc.

Online participation is a very useful tool for wide scale participation.

There are many useful tools for creating webpages, but some general tips are:

- Have a simple layout for the page
- Use white space to stop clutter and mess

- Use colours to highlight points and create the right feeling
- Have easy to read fonts
- Think about different languages or fonts to make sure all groups are included
- Make sure the site can be accessed from mobile devices
- Make it easy to navigate
- Have easy to find contact details
- Be clear what you're asking for and how people can engage

Preparing for feedback

Another thing to start thinking about at this stage is what you want to put into place to gather the right data and feedback from the engagement session to help inform your report and review in later stages.

Try and design a process that allows for a number of points where people's views can be seen to have been incorporated. Make the process flexible enough to add in extra stages to allow for more consultation or airing of views – a flexible process can also help when unexpected events (such as COVID-19) happen.

Feedback is often important at all stages of the process so use a wide range of tools to gather feedback and views, taking onboard what people have to say.

This could involve developing a separate survey to specifically target feedback on the event and people's views of it after the event; leaving a sheet at the event to be filled out there and collected by the event organisers; holding interviews afterwards; putting a questionnaire online to be filled in by willing participants, etc.

Whatever method you chose, make sure it is factored into your engagement plan and is part of the content developed for the day.

Writing an engagement plan

The engagement plan is the central document for the engagement you will carry out, so you want it to be as detailed and clear as possible. It sets out how the engagement team will interact and communicate with the participants.

It is your document to let the public know what you are asking them to engage on, how you will engage, how and why their feedback with used, and what ongoing involvement they might have with you and/ or the project.

Openness and transparency is a core part of building trust with participants. Having proper documentation of the thinking and processes, and making sure that the documentation is easily accessible, will build trust in the process.

It is important to design an engagement approach that meets the needs of stakeholders and helps you achieve your engagement objectives. A flexible approach will allow you to customise the engagement to the different needs of diverse participants. It should be a live document that you can change and adjust as needed.

All participants will have different levels of engagement and may have their own motivations and expectations for the process and the wider project. A plan will help manage these expectations.

An engagement plan will identify the participants, approaches and tools for engagement and outline the activities for the engagement process.

A checklist to help structure the engagement plan, and ensure you have covered off the critical points, follows.

Checklist for engagement plan

Are you clear on the purpose and objectives of the main project?

Do you know the purpose of the engagement?

Have you defined the objectives that the engagement will achieve?

Do you know the scope of the engagement?

Do you know what data you need to support your decision-making?

Do you know the key influences on the engagement?

Do you know who you want to have participating in the work?

Have you identified priority groups to engage with?

Have you undertaken stakeholder analysis?

Have you determined the level of engagement and the role of the community in decision-making?

Have you established clear parameters with your stakeholders around their level of involvement?

Are you clear on how you want participants engaging and what they will need to do?

Have you decided on the engagement phases and timeframes?

Are you engaging early enough in the process?

Are your timeframes and resources realistic?

Do you know what engagement methods or tools you will use?

Do you need awareness raising materials?

Do you have a communications plan?

Do you have the necessary authority and resources to undertake the chosen engagement methods?

Do you know what resources will be needed?

Do you know what resource and funding you have available to you?

Have you designed an implementation plan?

Do you know how feedback will be provided back to the participants?

Do you know how you will know the engagement has been successful?

Have you thought about what measures you will need in place to judge the success?

What a plan could look like

A plan can include all or parts of the following.

Project name	What is the overarching project that this engagement is supporting?
Project owner	Who is the project owner? Is the engagement owner a different person?
Project timeframe	What are the timeframes for the whole project and at what points is the engagement happening?
Project governance	Is there a governance group for the project and, if so, what involvement will they have with the engagement?
Engagement purpose	Why is the engagement happening – what is the point of doing it?
Engagement objectives	What things are you hoping to achieve from engaging?
Engagement phases	Have you got phases for the engagement: for example, preparation, different groups, evaluation?
Roles & responsibilities	Who is reponsible for different parts of the engagement process?
Budget & resources	Do you have the money and resource available for each part of the engagement process?
Barriers & risks	Do you know any risks or barriers and have you done a mitigation document for them?
Stakeholders	Have you identified the stakeholders, where they are and what their needs might be?
Engagement approaches	What engagement approaches/methods have you decided will work well with your chosen stakeholders?
Engagement timelines	What timelines have you got for the different phases of the engagement?
Engagement channels	Have you decided on channels to communicate the engagement and/or solicit further feedback from participants?
Key messages	What are the key messages you want to communicate to participants and/or wider communities?
Evaluation	Have you decided on how you will evaluate the success of the engagement? Do you need to build measures into the process?
Feedback	What feedback do you want to provide to participants and how will you gather and use this?

The invite

So now you're ready to invite people to your event.

First things first: send out an invite to your selected group to ascertain their interest in being a part of the engagement, and getting them to hold the date.

The point of your invite is to encourage people to agree to attend your event.

So, a few tips for the invite are:

- make sure the invitees know what they will be getting out of the event and what you're asking of them
- include all the information they will need to make an informed decision to attend
- stay on brand so the invite is clearly associated with the work of your project
- look for ways to make the invite fresh or engaging

- keep it simple but with all the relevant information
- look for ways to personally invite people if you have a relationship with them

The invite will include any material that is necessary to help them prepare for the engagement: information sheets, awareness raising material, any questions you want answered, etc.

If you have a lot of material, it might pay to put it onto an engagement-specific website.

Approach/tool:

Action research

Description	Action research is a process whereby the group (government officials, stake holders and communities) engages in a collaborative way to examine problems and find solutions. Key to action research is that it is about developing understanding and taking action – learning by doing. It actively involves people as participants in the testing and learning process.
Pros	• inclusive and able to be used by any type of stakeholder group. • supports problem solving and solution testing. • flexible, responsive approach that allows ideas and conclusions to be iterated and retested through the process.
Cons	• time consuming process so participation may not be representative. • research question needs to be tight to provide a strong focus.

Advisory committees

Description	Advisory committees are a representative group of people appointed to provide specific advice and input.
Pros	• provides a broad range of knowledge and expertise. • sits easily with other engagement and consultation processes. • provides avenues to wider community and expert groups.
Cons	• participation may not be representative. • group may have strong opinions and entrenched views. • groups may lose focus and drive.

Brainstorming

Description	Brainstorming is a technique whereby the group contribute spontaneous and creative ideas as solutions to a problem. The key is to be open to all suggestions, without looking at any limitations. Once the ideas have been generated they can be analysed and explored using more conventional methods to judge their workability.
Pros	• can help break the ice with group participants. • encourages outside the box, creative thinking.
Cons	• ideas can be unrealistic. • difficult to capture the energy and ideas. • takes time for the group to trust one another with unformed thoughts.

Approach/tool:

Tips for running	• Select participants from walks of life to get lots of different ideas in the session. • Encourage an enthusiastic, uncritical attitude. • Do not allow any one train of thought to dominate for too long. • Do not criticise or evaluate. • Record ideas no matter how unrealistic. • Record all ideas where all participants can see them.

Citizens' juries

Description	A citizens' jury is a group of randomly selected but representative people who meet for a period of time (3-6 days) to examine a complex issue, often of public significance or concern. Jurors hear from and cross examine a variety of experts with differing opinions, before deliberating and debating. On the final day, the jury reaches an agreement or presents it recommendations.
Pros	• useful mix of real world experience and good sense. • an open and transparent process. • creates interest and knowledge in sections of the community. • can be used to gain community perspectives on potentially controversial issues. • a collective, collaborative process.
Cons	• can be expensive and time consuming. • a lot of preparation is necessary. • many skills are needed for the juries to succeed: facilitation, conflict resolution, critical thinking, etc. • work needs to go into having true representation. • excludes those who are unable to get time off work, are time poor, can't speak English. • jury selection needs to open and non-biased. • influence and impact of the jury on final decision needs to be clear.
Tips for running	• Be clear on the question you want debated and select a jury who have both the skills to analyse complex issues and who represent a broad swathe of the community. • Find expert witnesses who can speak clearly and succinctly to the topic. • Think about getting in an independent moderator to assist the process of deliberation.

Citizens' panels

Description	A citizens' panel is bigger than jury, involving large and ongoing panels of representatives who provide comment and advice on an issue. The panel can be appointed to reflect particular skills or knowledge, or can be nominated by their own communities.

Approach/tool:

Pros	• involves a range of people.
	• allows for dissemination of material to wider communities.
	• provides opportunities to raise awareness of issues.
	• produces a nuanced agreement based on multiple viewpoints and perspectives.
Cons	• selection processes need to managed carefully to get the right spread and mix.
	• the group needs to be managed carefully to keep it focussed and on track with the key issue.
	• maybe expensive and time-consuming to provide support for the group over this length of time.
Tips for running	• Make sure the groups most affected, or whose views you most want, are include don the panel.
	• Be clear on the role of the panel.
	• Work closely with the committee during its formation. Think about getting in facilitators to manage any issues or conflict.
	• Work with the group to ensure they communicate back with their communities.

Community reference groups

Description	Community reference groups are a set of representatives from communities with a particular interest in the topic. They provide views and feedback on the development of plans and strategies.
Pros	• generates ideas and brings different viewpoints to the table.
	• can be used to build awareness.
	• lets you get an understanding of the community vies on a topic .
Cons	• can be time consuming for members.
	• may be hijacked by more vocal people and lose true representation.
	• might not be truly representative as it is a time commitment to be a part of it.
Tips for running	• Ensure resources and support so people can participate.
	• Publicise the work of the group to generate interest and build wider awareness in the communities.

Conference

Description	A conference can range from a small meeting to a large scale event, with the aim of sharing information, meeting people to share ideas and learn.
Pros	• good networking opportunities.
	• generates ideas through listening to experts and by talking with colleagues/like-minded participants.
	• allows for information sharing with large groups.

Approach/tool:

Cons	• might not be truly representative as attendees will be limited by time and geography. • can take a lot of organising.
Tips for running	• Think about the venue and what it needs to do and book early. • Publicise the event well and let people know it is happening. • Think about what outcomes you want. • Find inspiring speakers who will resonate with your audience.

Creative visioning

Description	Creative or community visioning is a technique to get groups to imagine how their community could evolve and what it will look like in the future. Once the group have got an agreed vision of the future, follow up activities will see them translating this vision into plans, with steps for how to get from now to the ideal future.
Pros	• can involve large numbers of people. • is a creative and positive way of exploring issues and finding solutions. • helps bring communities together.
Cons	• some people may be outside their comfort zone and feel uncomfortable predicting the future. • facilitators may be needed to create sense and help order material into usable themes. • analysing the material into tangible outcomes may be difficult.
Tips for running	• Ensure you have an experienced presenter who can set the scene and get people to think. • Provide supporting material to act as conversation starters – and provide evidence to base visioning on.

Deliberative polling

Description	Deliberative polling is when selected participants are sent material on a topic and given time to consider it in detail before being surveyed. It can involve written information or access to experts and face-to-face discussion with people knowledgeable about the topic.
Pros	• is a small and highly representative sample of people. • can be scaled up or down – community, city, national level. • can extrapolate results to a wider community. • can be part of an awareness raising exercise.
Cons	• need to tightly define the topic to be discussed. • expensive: need materials, experts, access to people with knowledge.

Approach/tool:

Tips for running	• Give people plenty of time to read and understand the material and get prepared to engage. • Mix up methods for getting feedback and views (eg surveys, discussions, polls) so that strong voices are not the only ones being heard. • Look for opportunities to use experts in getting the messages across to other parts of their communities.

Discussion groups and workshops

Description	Discussion groups can be used to uncover a range of views within the community. The sessions can be unstructured – open-ended dialogue – or structured, focusing on a particular topic of set of questions.
Pros	• can be set up to reflect different communities or to achieve different outcomes. • can be an on-going event, building on the group's knowledge to explore more complex issues. • can be used as part of awareness-raising or capability building. • draws on the concerns and energy already within a community.
Cons	• may not be representative, only attracting people with already strong views. • will need good analysis skills to go through the data.
Tips for running	• Having specific topics and a facilitator will help with gaining more usable data at the end.

Discussion paper and submissions

Description	Discussion papers can present information, policy ideas and proposals in ways that are accessible to a large audience. People are asked to submit feedback on the paper/proposals and have their say or present their views. This feedback can be incorporated back into the decision-making process.
Pros	• can provide a large amount of information. • can reach a wide audience. • can be prepared over time drawing on many experts and views. • can be completed in the participant's own timeframe (within limits). • range of responses gives a good all round view of community thoughts.
Cons	• cannot guarantee people will receive the material or engage with it. • lack of a personal touch may put some people off engaging. • no opportunity to discuss or debate issues or spark off one another. • may only attract strong voices on each end of the spectrum.

Approach/tool:

Tips for running	• Think carefully about the target audience and tailor the material accordingly. • Publicise the discussion document and be clear what you are asking for. • Provide enough time for people to engage, think about the topic, and prepare their response. • Make sure you feedback what you have done with the responses and how they have informed the final decisions.

Displays and exhibits

Description	Displays and exhibits are events set up to provide information to the public about a project or particular issues. They can be interactive and be part of something wider (a conference, workshop etc) or can be a standalone event. They can also be interactive, utilising tools to allow people to engage with the material and present their views and ideas.
Pros	• can provide a large amount of information. • useful way to focus community attention on an issue. • can be tailored to different levels of awareness or interest. • gives a useful snapshot of community concerns, issues and interest level.
Cons	• can be difficult to attract public. • need a presenter to explain work and gather feedback in its context.
Tips for running	• Choose a time to display when a lot of people will be around (holiday, event, good weather, etc). • Think about the audience, the message and the best ways to convey large amounts of information. • Advertise the event to draw people in. • Think about time to set up, people need to staff the display and provide help.

Drop-in centres

Description	Drop in centres/open houses provide a place for people to come to discuss issues, air concerns and learn more about a topic. It can be relatively informal, creating an environment where people feel comfortable dropping in and asking anything. Material for the event is varied: posters, hand outs, displays etc. Staff in the centre ought to be able to answer questions on the topic and work underway.
Pros	• good way to start an awareness raising drive or to get publicity for a project. • can also be used at the end of a project to get feedback. • relaxed environment, allowing for open and frank communications. • good for building trust and credibility. • fits with participants' timeframes.

Approach/tool:

Cons	• may not attract a lot of people. • may only attract people on different ends of the spectrum. • people may not want to engage one on one. • may not feel formal enough to some people.
Tips for running	• Be clear on the purpose of the event, including who you want to attract and your objectives. • The location is a critical part: it needs to be central and in a place where people will feel comfortable dropping in – using a public space such as a library may be helpful. • Make sure your staff are welcoming and non threatening. • Think about best ways to convey large amounts of information. • Build in processes to gather the views and feedback from the participants.

Expert panel

Description	Expert panels provide specialised input and views into a project. They are often used when the topic is contentious or difficult, or where there are legal or high stakes issues on the table. Panels can be interactive, allowing for discussion and debate, both between the experts on the panel or with the audience.
Pros	• used to provide credible and expert views. • helpful to inject seem calm and reasoned facts into contentious or difficult conversations.
Cons	• might be hard to find experts and may need long lead in times to secure their services. • will need people who are seen as credible or impartial. • not really a tool for public views – is useful for informing and educating.
Tips for running	• Be clear on the aim of the event and what you hope to achieve. • Think about how you will sue the expert advice and what weight it has alongside views from the general public.

Focus groups

Description	Focus groups are a way to explore the views, concerns and understanding of a group of people. It is an active process, usually led by a facilitator who takes the group through the process, allowing participants to share their thoughts on particular topics.

Approach/tool:

Pros	• good for in depth exploration of views as opinions can be probed and teased out in the session. • a fluid format that can be done at various stages of the process or can be used with particular groups of people. • good for identifying the reasons behind people's perceptions and concerns. • good for people who like face-to-face engagement, rather than surveys or questionnaires. • efficient way of getting a lot of views in a short time. • can provide good data in a short timeframe.
Cons	• small numbers involved so need to get good representation of community views. • risk of 'group think' or of sessions being hijacked by strong voices. • people may be shy about contributing, particularly on complicated issues such as AI. • may need to follow-up on material with phone calls etc.
Tips for running	• Provide good introductory material. • Have good facilitators to manage sessions. • Break group into smaller groups, with table facilitators who can guide conversations and capture insights.

Forums

Description	A forum is a meeting of people who represent different groups and who get together to discuss a specific topic or interest area.
Pros	• good at maintaining momentum on a topic. • creates enthusiasm and wider participation. • can be used to address areas of interest to particular groups.
Cons	• may be talkfests without any actions. • potential to become very bureaucratic. • may not be fully representative.
Tips for running	• Look for participants from groups that are often not involved in decision making.

Futures thinking

Description	Futures thinking is a participative method often used to develop a shared future vision and plan for a community. Futures thinking focus on identifying desirable futures and then concentrating on ways to achieve them. They are intensive events, usually taking place over a number of days. Participants are people who have power to make decisions, experts or information holders, and people who may be affected by any resulting decisions or outcomes.

Approach/tool:

Pros	• good for strategic thinking and developing a vision for a future. • builds trust and consensus for a direction of travel. • allows for diverse and differing views to be analysed in safe spaces. • can identify a multitude of issues early, allowing for mitigations to be developed. • useful in soliciting many views.
Cons	• the process may be dominated by loud voices or interest groups if not carefully planned and • facilitated. • can be expensive and take a lot of preparation and planning. • needs an experienced facilitator.
Tips for running	• prepare properly, with material that allows participants to understand the context and make informed decisions. • establish some common ground on which participants can build and then develop a plan.

Information hotline

Description	An information hotline provides material, information and assistance on a particular topic.
Pros	• not expensive. • good for awareness raising. • easy way to provide updates. • good for publicity, information and public input. • shows openness and transparency.
Cons	• needs to be properly advertised to be successful. • can be time consuming. • needs people with expertise on the other end of the information channel.
Tips for running	• Ensure good advertising of the service. • Make sure you have well-trained staff who can deal with all sorts of callers and who know where to direct difficult or detailed queries.

Information hub

Description	Information hubs are places to store project information and members of the community are able to access the information.
Pros	• can double as distribution centres for project information. • useful resource for the project and to draw on for report writing.
Cons	• need to be in an easy to reach place, with well organised material, to be useful to the public.

Approach/tool:

Tips for running	• Have good curation processes to choose the material.
	• Need a central, easy to reach location.
	• Publicise the existence of the repository.

Interviews

Description	Interviews involve talking to individuals with a set of questions. They can be more general, targeting a large group, or in-depth.
	The aim of in-depth interviews is to explore the reasons underlying a problem or practice in a target group and to gather ideas and information.

Pros	• more detailed information will be provided than in a public forum.
	• is useful to gain views on sensitive or
	• complex issues.
	• can be conducted in many different languages or in different ways to cater for different needs.

Cons	• expertise in qualitative analysis is required to write the report.
	• can be resource intensive.

Tips for running	• Think about the sort of information required.
	• Pick a way of engaging that will garner the right participants – door-to-door, phone, online etc.

Key stakeholder interviews

Description	Interviews with key stakeholders are longer interviews where specialists/ experts talk about the issue and give valuable insights.

Pros	• useful for targeting key stakeholders who have specific knowledge about an issue.
	• good sources of information.
	• useful for raising interest and awareness.

Cons	• can be expensive and time consuming.
	• requires skilled interviewers.

Tips for running	• Ensure you have the right people in terms of expertise, representation of group.
	• Think of ways to best use the material: both for a report but also to use as awareness-raising material.

Kitchen table discussion

Description	Kitchen table discussions are small group meetings in an informal setting. People are comfortable in these more relaxed and are more willing to discuss issues. A kitchen table discussion group is a small collection of people who get together in someone's home to talk, listen and share ideas on subjects of mutual interest. Kitchen table discussions can also be held online, where anyone can join in to discuss an issue.

Approach/tool:

Pros	• provides an ideal setting to scope for early conflicts. • neutral space means arguments are less likely. • builds social networks within the community.
Cons	• needs relaxed, easy-going facilitators who are polite and relaxed. • requires resource and time to reach a large number of people. • be sensitive when organising and facilitating meetings as people may be nervous of participation.
Tips for running	• Best for small group discussions. • Remind people that there are no right or wrong ideas, and that everyone's contribution is valuable. • Encourage people to listen, to ask questions, avoid arguing or interrupting. • Select a centralised, neutral space.

Mind mapping

Description	Mind mapping is a way to build a map of key words and themes around a topic.
Pros	• helps recognise links between key concepts. • good to help organise ideas and thoughts into a coherent shape. • open-ended and easy to add material and create new connections.
Cons	• can't be used as a planning or decision-making tool. • don't use mind. • the tool is not be as effective with a lot of creators involved. • mind maps are most effective at the individual level as they reflect the users thought patterns.
Tips for running	• Don't structure the mind map – just let the ideas flow.

Online engagement

Description	Online engagement helps people contribute their views and opinions to government in a digital environment. Also allows government and businesses to provide information and feedback to people. Online engagement can be used as a part of a range of other consultative tools.
Pros	• people can choose a convenient time and place to participate. • cost effective. • useful in creating debate and exchange of views. • less time consuming than attending a workshop or public meeting.

Approach/tool:

Cons	• may require a moderator to manage comments – could be expensive and time consuming. • excludes people without access to the internet. • needs to be properly publicised.
Tips for running	• Think about the tools you want to use and how to format them. • Have online tools as part of a package of methods.

Open days

Description	Open days give people access to an area that they would not normally go into, for a limited period of time, to enable them to learn about an issue or topic. They provide learning opportunities for interested groups and give people a chance to raise concerns. Open days can include other material such as displays, printed materials presentations and question and answer sessions.
Pros	• provides first hand, learning opportunities. • shows the team is transparent. • fun way to share information.
Cons	• can be resource intensive. • needs people onsite to answer questions. • access issues need to be considered.
Tips for running	• Make sure you plan, advertise and resource the event.

Open Space Technology

Description	Open Space Technology gets people to suggest topics for discussion and get others to participate according to their interest. The idea is that people will take ownership of issues they wish to address.
Pros	• can be organised quickly, with little cost and minimal preparation. • good for addressing difficult issues as it breaks down traditional 'us and them' barriers. • builds motivation and commitment. • leadership comes from people not necessarily seen to be leaders in the community. • appropriate for use where there is a need for new ideas. • absence of formal rules or control helps build trust.
Cons	• not likely to draw a lot of people to attend. • need a powerful theme or idea to generate ideas. • some important issues can be lost in the discussion. • can be difficult to get accurate records of results.

Approach/tool:

Tips for running	• Determine whether the open space technology process is the most appropriate technique for your situation as it is very fluid. • Ensure you have the right materials to encourage collaboration and the free flow of ideas.

Participatory editing

Description	Participatory editing provides people with a chance to shape written reports and documents. Draft documents are made available and people add comments and feedback. A revised version is produced, given to contributors, and the process repeated until consensus on the paper is reached.
Pros	• builds ownership of report. • allows people to participate at times. • wide range of feedback.
Cons	• time consuming process. • need well-informed contributors. • can raise expectations that may not be able to be met.
Tips for running	• Ensure a cross section of stakeholders. • Inform participants about the steps involved and need to understand that their comments may not automatically be included, but will inform the editor's improvements.

Polls

Description	Polls involve posing closed questions to a range of people in order to identify common opinions and provide a snapshot of public opinion at one moment in time. Opinions may change as people gain more knowledge or engage more in the topic. Polls can be a useful addition to other activities.
Pros	• gives a quantitative assessment of participants' opinions. • quick, inexpensive and easy to collate.
Cons	• doesn't provide information so views may be a bit uninformed or skewed to a position. • not a two-way conversation.
Tips for running	• Ensure the group sampled is representative.

Poster competition

Description	Poster competitions are a useful way to raise awareness of an issue. They provide simple, colourful ways to communicate topics and ideas and will generate discussion and publicity.

Approach/tool:

Pros	• provides basic information in a fast, concise and clear way. • good for creating publicity. • useful way for lost less literate or good at english to get information. • fun way to introduce the topic, generate ideas and encourage people to seek more information.
Cons	• may need more information to explain posters or put the topic into context – have staff on hand, or contextual material around posters.
Tips for running	• Decide on the topic for posters. • Advertise competition, with details of where, when and how to deliver the posters, and how they will be judged, and where the finalists will be displayed. • Prepare a report on the issues raised in the posters and the feedback, and forward this to relevant authorities.

Presentation

Description	Presentations are a way of providing information on a specific issue. They can be delivered by an expert from the topic area and are often followed by questions and discussions. Useful to tailor to particular groups which may have an interest in an element or part of the issue.
Pros	• useful when groups are more interested or affected by an issue. • provides a forum to interact directly. • allows for detailed explanation of issues. • allows presentations to be tailored with specific information suited to different groups.
Cons	• needs to be properly targeted. • be clear on purpose of presentation. • could annoy people who want to provide feedback and influence the decision-making process.
Tips for running	• Prepare presentation with the target audience in mind. • Think about promotional material (flyers, posters, newsletter articles). • Provide opportunities for participation in the project by the audience.

Printed material

Description	Printed material is a simple way to provide information on a topic. It can include fact sheets, flyers, newsletters, brochures, issues papers, reports, surveys etc and can be distributed in a range of ways – newsletters, hand to hand, made available for the public to pick up, or mailed out, etc.
Pros	• can reach a lot of people. • can gain input if questionnaires are included. • is a low-cost means of publicity.

Approach/tool:

Cons	• limited space available to communicate complicated concepts.
	• no guarantee that the materials will be read.

Tips for running	• Plan your messages well.
	• Make it eye catching, simple and easy to understand – do not overload with information.
	• Provide contact details and opportunities for people to engage further with the project.

Prioritisation matrix

Description	A prioritisation matrix helps rank problems or issues (usually generated through brainstorming or other techniques) by a particular criterion that is important to the project, as defined by the participants.
	Prioritisation matrices are used to determine what participants consider to be the most pressing issues in a topic.

Pros	• will help define the most important issues in participation projects.
	• provides an inclusive and transparent device for determining priorities.
	• can provide a focus for action.

Cons	• setting up criteria can be problematic, if the brainstorming process raises a large number of issues.
	• some issues may not be considered because they are not raised by participants.

Tips for running	• Conduct a brainstorming session on issues that participants wish to explore in relation to a topic.
	• List all the issues, to determine the frequency with which problems arise in relation to an issue, the importance the people give to this, and to count the votes to determine what is seen by the majority of people as a priority.

Public conversations

Description	Public conversations allow you to talk to participants in a direct and personal manner. They can be informal and free-ranging chats, moderated by a facilitator.
	It is a useful tool to identify issues, attitudes, skills and knowledge and can support other engagement approaches.

Pros	• can help gather information and understand people's viewpoints.
	• helps identify individuals and groups with an interest in the topic.
	• good for establishing or maintaining good community relations.
	• allows people to be directly involved.

Cons	• can be expensive and time consuming.
	• might be difficult to incorporate discussions into participation findings.
	• opinions may not be representative.

Approach/tool:

Tips for running	• Get a good mix of people in to have the discussions. • Be flexible with the shape of the discussion and let it range or go to the areas of interest of your participants. • Be clear on the final result to be produced and how it will contribute to any decision-making process.

Public meetings

Description	Public meetings allow for consultation with large numbers of people. People come together on a specific topic and there are often opportunities for participants to set or influence the agenda and to ask questions. From our experience small groups are an essential element of public meeting to engage people effectively. Public meetings are familiar, established ways for people to come together. They can build a feeling of community and attendance levels provide an indicator of the level of interest within a community on a particular issue. Smaller focus group meetings can be made up of people with common concerns who may not feel confident speaking up in a larger public gathering (e.g. women, those who speak English as a second language, Indigenous groups).
Pros	• provide a good focal point for media interest in an event. • may act as a springboard for the establishment of a common-interest group which will continue to act on the issues raised and suggestions made. • enables large numbers of people to have their say. • demonstrates openness and transparency. • can attract publicity or be used as a launch event. • enables participants to develop networks and consensus for action on complex issues that affect the broad community. • provides opportunities for exploring alternative strategies and building consensus.
Cons	• not everyone has the time or inclination to attend. • attendance is often low unless people feel personally or deeply concerned. • some people are likely to be inhibited from speaking in a large group. • traditional formats can limit audience contribution.
Tips for running	• Be clear on why you need to consult the community. • Consider the circumstances of the community and the issues. • Publicise and advertise the meeting. • Cater for people with disabilities or from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Questionnaires

Description	Questionnaires are used to collect mass amounts of information. Questionnaires ensure that exactly the same questions are presented to each person, allowing for reliability of the results. Questionnaires can be delivered in various ways – for example face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, self-complete forms, mail-outs or online.

Approach/tool:

Pros	• can be anonymous, allowing for more honest answers. • can reach respondents in diverse or far away places. • provides information from those unlikely to attend meetings and workshops. • allows the respondent to fill out at a convenient time. • economical and less labour intensive than other tools.
Cons	• low response rates can bias the results. • might need further efforts to chase up results. • depends on a high degree of literacy.
Tips for running	• Make sure questions are worded in ways that are unambiguous to avoid bias. • Pre-test questions where you can.

Road shows

Description	Road shows are a presentation used to seek feedback. It travels around a district or country, gaining input on an issue. Road shows travel to where the people are located.
Pros	• inclusive as the roadshow travels to the people. • ensures consistency of the information. • provided to different communities. • can be tied in to local events.
Cons	• can be resource intensive, especially with travel costs. • outcomes can be difficult to interpret across different communities.
Tips for running	• Make sure you have good advertising and appropriate local media exposure.

Roundtable discussions

Description	Roundtable discussions are discussion groups where all views are equal. They can be used as a tool for consensus building with multi-stakeholder involvement.
Pros	• good for consensus building. • encourages open discussion and helps break down barriers. • aims to create 'win-win' situations, rather than 'win-lose' scenarios.
Cons	• not always easy to get wide participation. • requires considerable preparation. • will need skilled facilitators. • could be dominated by loud voices or powerful interests.
Tips for running	• Look for broad representation. • Hire a good facilitator.

Approach/tool:

Scenario planning

Description	Scenario planning is a way of creating views of the future. They are based on a combination of facts, trends and assumptions which, when put together, create a number of views of how the world might turn out. They are useful to identify the forces that are going to cause disruption, identify areas that will affect your work, and allow you to understand the situation and context in which you are working and how a number of factors will have an impact on your work.
Pros	• provides an understanding of the wider context. • gives you the ability to project possible futures and identify ways to manage risks. • a fun way to build team spirit and start thinking about the project.
Cons	• is only a possibility, not an actual future. • may not appeal to some people who dislike dealing with assumptions not facts.
Tips for running	• Spend time on producing material for participants that shows the underlying trends, themes, driving forces, uncertainties etc that are shaping our world. • Invite people who can see connections and think laterally. • Have a writer who can bring together the brainstorming and thinking into coherent narratives and stories that explain the scenarios and the pros and cons of each one.

Shopfront

Description	Shopfronts are similar to drop in centres, using a busy location as a way to bring attention to an issue. Unlike drop in centres, they are more transitory and fluid, able to be easily taken down and reassembled at a different location.
Pros	• helpful way to get the attention of people not normally interested or canvassed. • good for informal and relaxed view gathering. • convenient and nonthreatening for people.
Cons	• can be seen as frivolous. • may not produce useful material for decision-making and may be a better tool for awareness-raising.
Tips for running	• Choose friendly staff, able to communicate ideas is accessible ways. • Provide eye-catching frontage and material to draw people in. • Make sure the environment is comfortable. • Provide multiple opportunities for feedback and views to be gathered.

Soapbox events

Approach/tool:

Description	Soapbox events are opportunities for a group of people to speak on a particular topic or issue.
	People can be experts, or ordinary people affected the issue and giving their views and experiences.
	Soapboxes can be organised events and are usually a relaxed forum for debate.
Pros	• fun way to raise awareness and educate on issues.
	• useful to hear different sides of an issue, or personalise an issue and make it real.
Cons	• very fluid event, hard to control and keep on track.
	• may attract activist types and not allow for balance and varied views.
Tips for running	• Choose some speakers to get event started.
	• Have clear rules for engagement – time limits, respectful argument, no heckling etc.
	• Think about how to use the results in the subsequent report.

Street stalls

Description	A street stall is a display hosted outside that showcases an issue and sets out to capture the views of large numbers of the community.
	A number of tools can be used to generate interest and get feedback: posters, idea walls, maps, surveys, questionnaires, vox pops.
Pros	• good way to get the views of large numbers.
	• generates interest and raises awareness.
	• may attract people who aren't interested in more formal engagement.
Cons	• needs a lot of planning and preparation.
	• outdoors event could be impacted by weather, temperatures etc.
Tips for running	• Choose a busy location .
	• Think about leveraging off other community events.

Summits

Description	A summit is a session aimed at bringing together a wide range of people to explore and discuss a topic.
	Summits are interactive and structured, held over several days, and aimed at giving large amounts of information and eliciting recommendations for direction.

Approach/tool:

Pros	• allows for engagement and sharing across a range of sectors and communities.
	• open and inclusive environment where everyone can share views and contribute.
	• high profile, large scale opportunity to raise awareness of an issue.
Cons	• needs a lot of planning and preparation.
	• good stakeholder management needed.
	• needs good analysis of results.
Tips for running	• Think about ways to introduce the topic and capture interest – speakers, experts, etc.
	• Have a variety of tools and approaches to keep people interested and elicit views from them.

Surveys

Description	Surveys are a set of questions used to get understanding of people's views of an issue or to gauge their interest or understanding of a topic.
	There are a range of tools used for surveys: face to face interviews, internet surveys, telephone interviews, questionnaires etc.
	Data collected can be qualitative or quantitative.
Pros	• feedback can be gained from a broad and widely spread group.
	• reasonably cheap way to gain information.
	• can provide a lot of data.
	• data can be compared across groups, regions and over time.
	• provides a useful snapshot of an issue.
Cons	• skill needed in designing the questions to avoid skewed results.
	• may exclude those with poor literacy or language skills or with disabilities.
	• data gained may be limited in scope. not giving the full picture of people's views or understanding.
	• people may ignore a survey as it is impersonal – response rates are usually low.
	• preparing and then collating the data is time consuming.
	• no ability to engage or debate or share views.
Tips for running	• Think about the other tools you want to work alongside your survey.
	• Do work upfront to check in with people and get an understanding of the context and issues in the community you are surveying – talk to locals do some focus groups etc.

Approach/tool:

Workshops

Description	A workshop invites a group together to work on an issue or a common problem.
	It can be held over several days and set up in a range of ways to allow participants to identify key problems, debate solutions and opportunities and suggest recommendations or action plans.
	A workshop is action focussed and participatory, rather than an awareness raising opportunity.
Pros	• good for building relationships between communities and different groups. • promotes collaboration. • creates ownership of goals and outcomes.
Cons	• need trained facilitators to manage the event. • may exclude some groups who are unable to attend. • may have strong voices or dissenting views taking over the event. • need to be clear on how much influence this group will have on decision-making.
Tips for running	• Be very clear on details such as catering, room arrangement, break out areas, tools for brainstorming and collaboration etc. • Make sure your team and the facilitator know what the aims of the day are and what you want to achieve.

World cafés

Description	A World café creates an environment for discussion and the sharing of views and information.
	Can be done online or in the real world and in big groups or, more usually, in smaller groups within a bigger community.
Pros	• inclusive, allowing for a wide range of people to contribute. • simple, inexpensive method of engagement. • allows for information to be widely shared. • useful tool to build online communities.
Cons	• need to manage and moderate material and information carefully. • requires facilitation and planning.
Tips for running	• Set up the session to encourage circulation, with people engaging in multiple topics. • Take opportunities to bring group together and build on their sense of community and connecting the themes and issues arising out of each group.
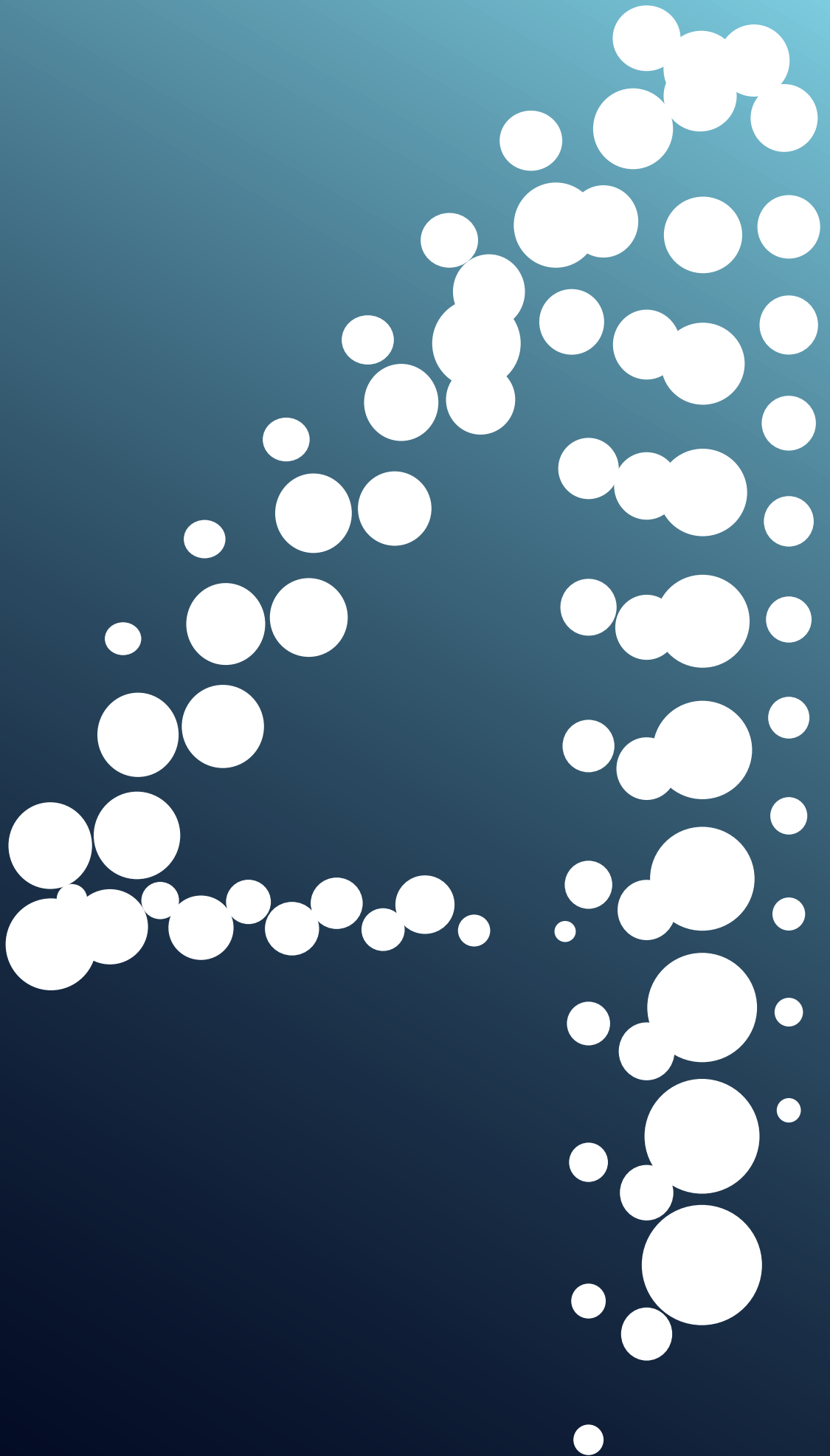
Chapter Contents

Engage

The engage stage is where the interaction with your chosen stakeholders happens.

It involves the process of consultation, building relationships with the groups, seeking answers to your questions.

Successful engagement starts with a shared commitment to the purpose and objectives of the project and that all members of the process feel valued for their contributions and involvement.

Engagements are also more likely to be successful where participants have been given access to information and have had time to think about the questions and their views. This includes the removal of any barriers that some groups of people may encounter in contributing.

The Discovery and Design stages will have done the preparation work, meaning on the day, you will be able to concentrate on delivering a fun experience for your participants – one which results in useful feedback and data for your project.

This section looks at methods and techniques for getting the best out of your consultation and engagement, and gives tips on how to capture the material being surfaced in the groups.

Preparing for the engagement

As you begin to prepare for the actual engagement, it is important that all people involved in the engagement process are clear about what is happening and what their involvement or role will be.

Before the day, put thought into how you want the event to run. This will include how prepared you want the participants to be, to how the room needs to be set up and the event managed to facilitate the kind of conversations you want, to how you can build trust amongst the participants, to what processes you need in place to collect feedback and material for evaluation after the event.

Be as open and transparent as you can about the decisions made and the expected impact that is possible.

And, make sure that your process includes a way to provide feedback or updated information later that links the engagement to results: it is respectful to people to know that the time and energy they gave has contributed to an outcome.

Key questions

- Do you know who is attending and what their background is?
- What is their understanding of AI?

- Do you know why people are interested in attending your event?
- What has motivated them to attend and are you catering to this interest with ways to channel it and use it for your project?

- Have you provided introductory and awareness material for the participants?
- Have you shared relevant background material on previous events, decisions etc that may affect this engagement and its results?
- Do you need to include copies of this at the venue?

- Is your vision and purpose for the event clear and is it and any branding being displayed at the event?

- Are you and your team aware of the relevant data and analysis that has shaped the issue and able to communicate this to attendees?
- If not, do you need subject matter experts on hand?

Key questions

- Is your focus for the day clear? Do you have a good agenda?

- Have you thought about what messages and thoughts you want the participants to leave with?
- Do you want them to do anything afterwards?

- Are staff clear on the engagement plan and their role in the delivery?

- Do you have a strong moderator who can control the room and keep things on track?

- Are the participants aware of what level of influence they will have on the day and are they comfortable with this?

- How will you manage any conflict or disappointment on the day?

- Do you have enough resources to deliver the event?

- Does your venue suit your needs?
- Have you got a plan B if more or less people turn up or if things don't go according to plan?

- Have you taken everyone's needs into consideration with the room and its set up?

- Have you agreed on a shape for the room: set up, flow etc?

- Have you got all the equipment and tools ready?

- Have you got coffee, tea, food etc organised?

- Do you have a runsheet for the engagement?

- Have you prepared for the unexpected?
- Do you have someone nominated as a trouble shooter if things go wrong?

- Do you have a facilitator to manage the room and direct the conversation?

- Do you have a plan for encouraging all voices to be heard, even the shy or reserved ones?

- Have you provided outlines of the key issues, opportunities etc to be discussed?

- Have you put processes in place to gather feedback?

- Have you put processes in place to evaluate the programme?

Building trust

Building trust is a key part of a successful engagement.

You will want to ensure you and your participants have the same understanding of the engagement process.

Thinking about how to build this trust can be done at an earlier stage of the process, during the Design stage when you are looking at how to best engage your participants and what level of influence they will have but reaching out and starting to build relationships can happen prior to the actual engagement event and reinforced on the day.

Ways to build trust:

• Investing time in getting to know each participant and group and building relationships with them.

• Invite people to engage with the process with early thoughts or views.

• Listen the interests, concerns and views of those people in a friendly and polite way.

• Be honest and clear in any communications.

• Be cognisant of any pressures that may be affecting them, including time pressures, issues to do with their communities or context.

• Be aware of your own biases and views.

• Make sure you keep any promises you make.

And on the day:

• make sure you greet people warmly and either reinforce or establish a connection with them.

• Be a good host, introduce people, partner people up, find common ground between them.

• Help them feel comfortable in the room and with the other participants.

The aim at the end of the day is to have a group who have bought into the topic and the work. By the end of the vent, you want your participants to understand the bigger picture and how they are helping to get there.

People who feel a part of the journey and have a connection to the work and its outcomes are more likely to stay engaged and become cheerleaders for the project.

Undertaking the engagement

Tips by an expert: engaging by design

Jim Scully, Founder ThinkPlace New Zealand

Have you ever attended a workshop or series of engagements and been amazed by the amount of talent and experience there? You may have come away with a sense that the event you just attended has moved the dial towards a better future... or was it a lost day or week?

I have been fortunate enough to facilitate national and international efforts over the years, sometimes in a support role and others time a lead role. These events have ranged from a handful of people to a few hundred people. At times, they have been with senior leaders, other times with young talented people. What they have all had in common is that they grappled with challenging topics which drew on the talent/ experience present to create better futures.

Here are a few thoughts and tips from these experiences. Every time you gather a group of people together, you have a unique and powerful opportunity to create something meaningful. You also have an extraordinary amount of talent and experience present. Here are four key things to consider:

- Get aligned on the Why
- Design the whole experience
- Manage the energy
- Design for self-leadership.

Get aligned on the Why

As they say, start with the end in mind. Too many events, especially workshops, are not focused enough on the outcomes they aim to achieve. Sometimes the focus is mixed, vague or simply has too many objectives. Ask yourself, why will this gathering be worth the time investment of you and others? What will you make?

Picture yourself at the end of engagement, ask yourself – what three things will mark this as a great success. Maybe you have created new knowledge, a shared agenda, a community or overcome system blockers. Get clear on the 'Why', and how might this be a powerful and unique investment of time.

Design the whole experience

In human-centred design (HCD) we use a simple but powerful framework for designing any service experience – the compelling experience framework (Doblin Group). Every experience consists of five stages – attraction, entry, engagement, exit and extension.

All engagements are experiences, you can and should intentionally design the whole experience.

Attraction

How are your participants going to become aware of what you are doing? How will you invite or attract them? What do they need to know, or do, prior to attending?

Entry

How will your participants enter? How might you make this part of the theme or outcome you are aiming for? We once had people follow red tape from the carpark to the event and then cut some on entry – why? The workshop was about how government might reduce the burden of 'red tape' on small to medium businesses.

Engagement

The core of the engagement. How do you design the day, days, week etc to achieve the outcome/s and ensure people leave having both contributed and gained some personal value.

Exit

Most people don't design for this. How might people leave the gathering in a way that reinforces the outcomes for the gathering. The 'I like, I wish, I will' exercise is one example of this.

Extension

Most people also do not intentionally design for extension. All great service experiences think about how to extend the experience. It could be as simple as a follow-up one month later or sending out some key output after the event/s.

Manage the energy

Every engagement has its own energy. As the facilitator you need to know what this is and then actively manage it. At times, this may look like standing back and allowing the group to do the work while at other times, it may require you to take a very directive role and/or inject energy into the event. The key is to understand what the cadence should be, and then calibrate the workshop towards it.

Design for self-leadership

The reality is the larger the group the less active facilitation you can do, especially if you are leading it without a facilitation team. So if you have a large group (over 50 people), design for self-leadership – create easy-to-run exercises that foster connection in small groups (tables) and enable each small group to lead themselves – with only time calls from the front of the room.

Other tips

There are many tips for running large engagements well, and you will gain the most important of these from experience. Here are three simple tips to get started:

- **Get everyone connected fast.** Go beyond the simple introduction if you can and get people to express their true self – this could be the real reason they are present, one thing they are excited or nervous about or something unique about themselves (experience, an object, an interest). Our team in Kenya developed some great ThinkCards for this purpose, and there are many other great activities online.

- **Play.** I once attended a design bootcamp at Chicago's Institute of Design. Half of the first day was spent at Second City, famed for its comedic celebrities, where we did a series of improvs. We walked in as strangers, but walked out with a common experience of play. It really set the dynamic for the week. In some settings, playfulness breaks down barriers and gets people into the zone. For example, imagine 120 young talented people from 60 different countries gathered for climate action innovation – spelling their names with their hips!

- **Getting attention.** In really large groups, young and old, the simple clapping method works wonders to get everyone's attention above the collaborative noise you unleashed. At the beginning of the event, give this simple instruction "if you hear me clap once, clap once", "if you hear me clap twice, clap twice". The largest event I have seen this work at is one with 1000 people attending (apart from the Queen's concert – We will Rock You!!).

Good luck with all the engagements you are planning – each can be a unique and powerful opportunity to nudge an important topic or create lasting change.

During the event

Once you have everyone in the room, there are a few tips for how to make sure the event goes smoothly and you keep your participants fully engaged throughout the event.
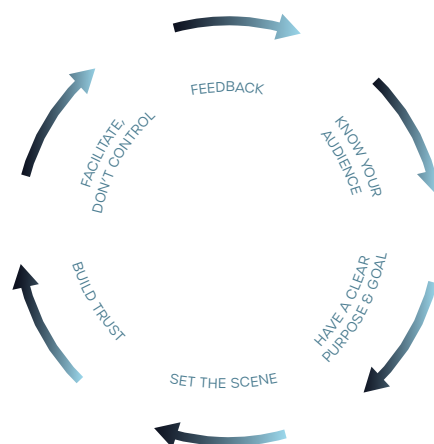
- Start with a check-in – create a relaxed atmosphere by inviting people to talk about their mood and their hopes for the event.

- Focus on building trust and creating connections so people will want to continue on the journey once they leave.

- Encourage people to participate – call on the quieter people, explain concepts, go around the group and draw out different views.

- Have topics prepared and prepare a series of angles or aspects too, to help stimulate discussion and get conversation moving.

- Get a sense of the room: who are the experts, who needs more help to understand? Who is going to be chatty, and who will need to be coaxed into speaking?

- Think of innovative ways to engage people that may not be as confrontational as asking in front of others: team exercises, small groups, post-it notes etc.

- Mix it up: have a range of activities that will appeal to all types of personality, from small discussions to creative drawing to brainstorming to speakers.

- Make it easy for people to interact, participate and ask questions.

- Get people moving and interacting – talking to different groups and in different areas will help spark ideas and create debates.

- Create spaces where people feel safe expressing their views and emotions. Listening and acknowledging emotions can build trust and help people feel respected.

- Think of ways to break down cliques: create spaces to mingle and mix; break up the serious side with some fun activities.

- Tease out the themes and patterns in the discussion and relay it back to participants in various ways: post its, report backs, butcher's paper, posters

- Make sure you involve everyone and keep conversation moving, especially when there are stronger personalities at the table.

- Think about how you can use technology in innovative ways.

- Do a check-in at the end: how do the participants feel about the day? Were there things that went well; what could have been done better? What will they take away from the day?

- Let people know what the next steps are and what opportunities there might be for them to remain involved.

- Finally, did you reach your goal for the event?

The role of the facilitator

Depending on the event you've chosen, you will probably want a facilitator. The facilitators' role is to lead the activity and help the group come together and provide useful material as an input into the project.

Facilitation is all about allowing each person to contribute, leading to a shared and collaborative outcome.

Being impartial and objective is central to the facilitator's role. The end result will not reflect their views, but will be the best combined efforts of the group.

Goals that a facilitator wants to achieve will be:

- Participation from all attendees

- Inclusion – everyone's view is important

- Collaboration – everyone is part of the decision-making

- Shared responsibility for the end result.
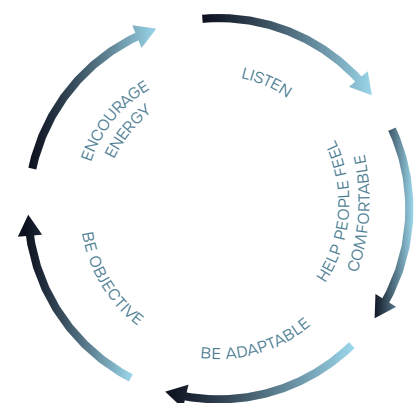
Gaining feedback

Providing feedback to your participants will achieve a number of things. Firstly, it is polite, as these people have given you their time and effort to help your process and provide material for your work. Saying thank you is a small thing but a very important step.

Secondly, it gives you an insight as to how well your approach is working and where you might want to improve it.

It will also give you information on your participants and communities, and what matters to them: which may not be issues or topics you had previously considered.

Building feedback into design

As we mentioned earlier, the Design stage ought to think about how and when feedback will be sought from participants within the process, and what form this feedback will take when fed back to them later. The nature of the engagement will often inform how feedback is gathered and provided.

Importantly, the feedback should give participants the opportunity to validate or agree with the representation of their views, as well as offering them opportunities to ask questions, get further information and, in some cases, to remain involved.

A feedback plan may have already been thought of and included as part of the Engagement Plan **(see Design section)**.

All significant engagement and formal consultation should have reporting/ feedback loops incorporated into the engagement.

The feedback should explain how their input contributed to the outcomes and recommendations of the project.

It should also respond to any issues raised by the participants, be clear on any changes to the process or deliverables, and deliver on any commitments that may have been, made through the engagement.

Key to its success is considering the needs and capacities of the participants: how will they best want to be communicated with and updated?

Key questions to ask about feedback

What input did your stakeholders have and how was it used?

How will you provide feedback to participants?

What communication methods will you use?

How will you communicate your engagement outcomes and learnings?

How will you document the engagement process in the report?

Feedback methods

Feedback on the event and how people thought it went is important. Getting this feedback can easily be done with a simple template (below).

How did you find the workshop?	Good	Medium	Bad
What did you like?			
What could have been done better?			
Was the content and material helpful?			
If not, what could have been improved?			

However, you will also be seeking feedback on the material and topics presented at the event, to understand where people's issues and hot spots are. This feedback will be valuable to you when writing your report.

Feedback can be provided in a number of different ways. How you chose to do it will depend on your event, the group of participants you had and how involved there continue to be, the amount of ongoing involvement you want from them, etc.

In general, there are a few pointers to designing a feedback survey or questionnaire:

- keep it short – target the questions to your goal and remember people are busy and don't want to answer a lot of questions.

- Closed questions are easier for people to answer so use these in the main.

- Have an open-ended question or a comments section for people who do have a lot to say on the topic.

- Use unbiased, neutral language in the questions.

- Don't ask two things at once: have one question for one topic.

- Don't ask the same questions in different ways.

The usual ways to gain feedback are through surveys or questionnaires. These can be provided on the tables at the events; sent to people afterwards (either as a hard copy, or a link to an online document), put online on a web page, links provided through social media: there are many options and how you do it will affect the shape of the questionnaire.

You may also want to talk in person to people, through phone calls or face-to-face interviews.

In general, people tend to be more comfortable giving open and honest feedback – good and bad – if they feel a sense of inclusion in the project and trust that their input is valued.

Data collection

In the next stages, you will want to report on how the engagement went and how successful it was in achieving your aims and objectives.

Putting in place a system during the engagement to collect the information and data you need for this reporting will help make your job easier later.

In general, you will want to collect data on how many people participated, where they were from and who they represented; the issues and key topics that were discussed; the hot topics that came up; any areas of agreement or difference.

A useful tool – either for each activity within the engagement, or for the whole day is listed below. It will allow for the collection of data on the day to inform subsequent evaluation of the giving of feedback to others.

Name of activity/session	
Date of engagement	
Number of participants	
Participant details – where from, group representing, etc	

Resources provided	
Outcome wanted	
Key messages given	
Input provided by participants	
Feedback to be given to participants from this session	
What went well?	
What didn't go well?	
Next steps?	
Notes	
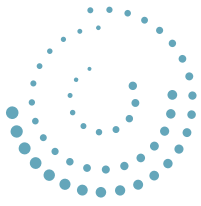
Rwanda National AI Policy

Case study

Rwanda began developing its National Artificial Intelligence Policy in 2019 with the aim of accelerating AI adoption, empowering AI developers, users and citizens and supporting the growth of beneficial and ethical AI.

Rwanda will harness AI to support development goals and capacity building, become an ICT and Innovation Hub, and position itself as a leader on the African and global stage. The AI Policy and a practical implementation plan will provide the roadmap for Rwanda to achieve its goals.

The Future Society is working with the Rwanda government in the AI Policy development. The growth and adoption of AI has the potential to dramatically improve lives and livelihoods across Rwanda, and make strong progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

AI opportunities also come with risks, which will require foresight and mitigation. This mitigation will require adherence to defined ethical principles throughout the entire implementation lifecycle, from strategy inception to operationalisation. A national AI policy framework, which includes ethical guidelines and an implementation strategy that is fit for the local context, will be important for success.

Developing the AI Policy involved a number of stages:

- An in-depth analysis of the local strengths, challenges, needs and opportunities to help define the direction.

- Leveraging of international expertise in AI policy, governance and ethics, including in harnessing AI for development, national AI policies, and AI for SDGs (e.g. Research by The Future Society, World Bank Digital Development Partnership, OECD AI Policy Observatory, World Economic Forum).

- An environmental scan of the existing landscape of policies and initiatives.

- Key sector engagement of local stakeholders, including workshops and forums.

- International engagement to build on the research work undertaken.

Collective Intelligence Workshops

The process for designing the AI Policy began with a collective intelligence workshop in September 2020.

A group of stakeholders with a wide range of interests and backgrounds came together to identify and prioritise key AI opportunities, risks, and socio-ethical implications in Rwanda.

Following the workshop, the findings were collated, and the team continued to gather perspectives from government representatives, private sector leaders, academics, and members of the civil society in order to prepare the draft National AI Policy.

A second workshop will be held to discuss the key parts of the draft AI Policy, including the seven categories for intervention, and the implementation pathways for each one.

Methodology

Rwanda's AI policy is based on a thorough knowledge of Rwanda's context (what the country requires in terms of its demographic needs, strategic priorities, urgent concerns, resource constraints, and geopolitical considerations), strategic objectives, and stakeholders, as well as recommendations drawn from local and worldwide best practices.

An In-depth sectoral and cross-sectoral analysis of local strengths, needs, opportunities, challenges, policies (e.g., Rwanda's Data Revolution Policy, Vision 2050, Smart Rwanda Master Plan, Draft Data Privacy & Protection Law, etc.) and meaningful engagement of local stakeholders were all part of the strategy development methodology. It is founded on Rwanda's long-term strategic priorities and a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis of the AI ecosystem.

The implementation plan turned policy into action, with extensive management and measurement suggestions. The policy is the result of multi-stakeholder discussions that gathered feedback from a varied range of stakeholders throughout the process.

Policy design

The policy design process involved the following steps:

- Desk research of Rwanda's existing digital economy, AI and policy context

- 30+ Expert Interviews (public sector, private sector, AI entrepreneurs, academia).

- Leveraging of international expertise in AI policy, governance and ethics, including in harnessing AI for development, national AI policies, and AI for SDGs (e.g. Research by The Future Society, World Bank Digital Development Partnership, OECD AI Policy Observatory, World Economic Forum).

- Analytical assessment framework to prioritize top policy recommendations.

- Deliberation among project partners including Ministry of Information Technology and Communication and Innovation (MINICT), Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA), GIZ, The Future Society, and key actors e.g., Rwanda Information Society Authority (RISA), Smart Africa, WEF C4IR.

- Two multi-stakeholder 'collective intelligence' workshops (September 8, 2020; February 25, 2021).

- Broad public consultations (e.g., Internet Governance Forum Rwanda) .

Principles

The following list of principles guided the project methodology:

- **Diversity and Inclusiveness:** Engagement of a diverse set of stakeholders through rigorous collective intelligence processes.

- **Evidence-based Analysis:** Customization to Rwanda's existing strategies, policies and context – while leveraging emerging international 'best practice' in national AI policies.

- **Actionable and Feasible:** Action-oriented implementation plan with stakeholders' buy-in and partners' support.

- **Collaborative:** Sustained involvement and coordination with partners and stakeholders.

- **Agile:** Flexibility to respond to transforming stakeholders' needs, evolutions in Rwanda's AI and policy landscapes, and evolving national and global uncertainties.

Actionable implementation plan

- As a last step towards the implementation plan, Rwanda is conducting a validation exercise to ensure that the plan is actionable (that is, it is designed to deliver specific targets and objectives).

- This exercise is being undertaken by the technical team, represented by the future society, government, C4IR Rwanda and the private sector.

- The approach is to take each action item, define the baseline where data exists and define quantitative/ qualitative output indicators.

- This will ensure that at the monitoring phase, progress can be tracked for each action item: what is being achieved; when it will be achieved; what progress is being made.

- The exercise is conducted in a round table format where each member of the technical team is required to contribute.

- All recommendations are captured on a shared Google doc and once the team has approved the recommendation, it is then captured in the policy/ implementation plan.

Some key learnings of the process so far

- Respecting people's culture is important in the development of a national policy. There will be many different views and cultural aspects across a society: all must be heard and respected, and ways found to include everyone's views and manage any conflicting cultural norms and values.

- Civil society are an important bridge between the public and the private sector. Their involvement is vital for building trust and bringing people along on the journey.

- Leveraging international relationships is helpful in gaining additional knowledge and understanding best practice.

- Need to build understanding among people that AI is more than just a tool: it is an increasingly ubiquitous part of our lives and it is changing our societies. We want all communities to understand its impact, its benefits and risks, and contribute to the conversations.

- Setting in place the right frameworks is critical: there needs to be a strong foundation so AI can be safely used and trust built and maintained with people.

- Translating the recommendations into actions is difficult: you need good data and the ability to create tangible outcomes for people. With new technologies like AI, this is not always easy to do.
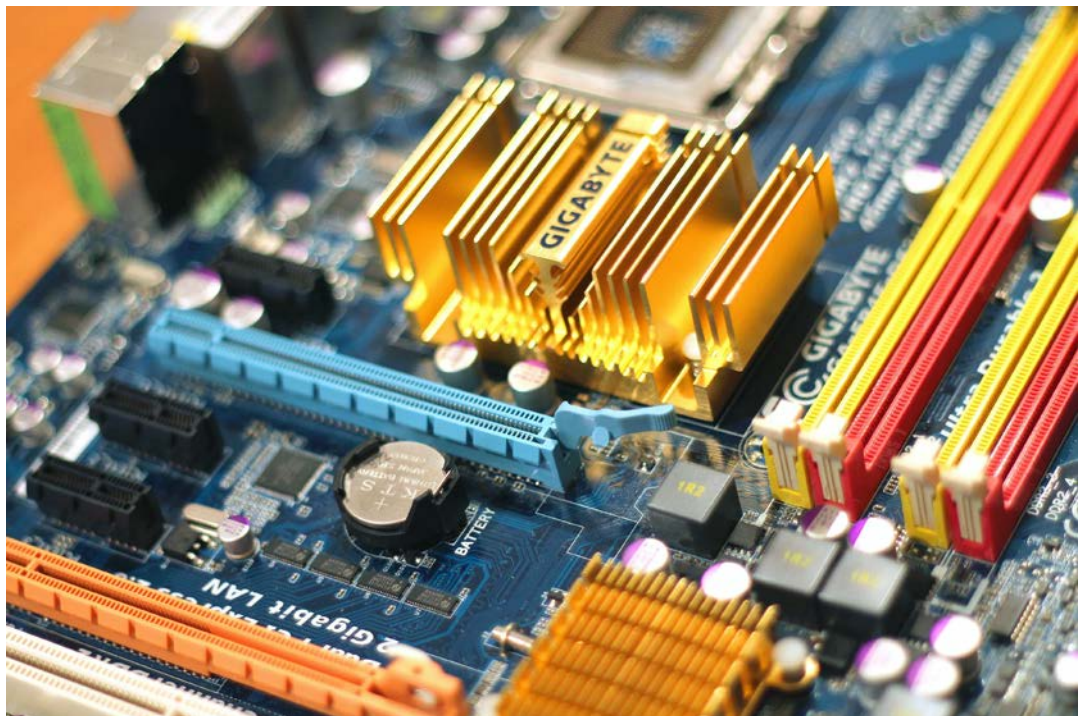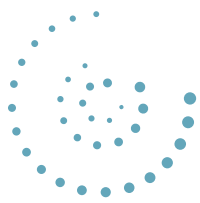
New Zealand – Toi Āria: Design for Public Good

During September and October 2020, Toi Āria: Design for Public Good, a research unit at Massey University, facilitated a series of in-person and online workshops across Aotearoa called 'Algorithms and decisions, where do you stand?'

Workshops were held in Christchurch, Wellington, Palmerston North, and online with participants from around Aotearoa. The online workshops were held over Zoom using a digital collaboration tool called Miro.

Who we spoke to

For the workshops, the Digital Council wanted to hear from people who are most affected by ADM systems but whose insights and expertise are not often listened to when it comes to their development or use. We aimed to speak to people with a range of experiences and backgrounds, and worked with organisations and community advocates to recruit workshop participants from their stakeholder communities. Workshops were attended by people from the following groups:

- Blind and vision impaired people
- Ethnic community leaders
- Ethnic community youth
- General public
- Māori and Pacific youth
- Pacific youth leaders
- Women with migrant and refugee backgrounds
- Whānau Ora navigators
- Young people with care experience

We knew that the participatory component of this project would not be able to be statistically representative of Aotearoa. This was in part due to the result of COVID-19 restrictions, and the consequence of resource constraints. For example, we did not hold specific workshops with people living in Auckland, with people from the wider disabled community or people in rural areas. We did ensure to engage widely outside the workshops, for example with the Disabled People's Organisations Coalition, and insights from this and other expert groups informed our analysis.

Demographics of participants

We asked workshop participants some questions about themselves to help us understand the demographics of the people we spoke to.

It was important to us that participants could self-identify around ethnicity and disability. This let us better capture the broad range of participants' life experiences. For instance, instead of just providing 'Pacific,' as an option, we were able to see that participants had diverse backgrounds across many Pacific nations. The higher percentage of female than male participants is something we often see in voluntary community workshops, and is not necessarily indicative of which genders are more affected by algorithms.

While only one of our workshops specifically brought together disabled participants (blind and vision impaired people, in this case), there were people across all workshop groups that identified as disabled or having an impairment. This broad spread and overlapping of demographic groups highlights the intersectional nature of the topics we discussed.

Workshop methodology

In each workshop, participants were given a number of scenarios based on real-world situations where algorithms are used. While the Council's research question uses the terminology 'automated decision-making', the workshops acknowledged that, for most people, the word 'algorithm' is more familiar. This choice of wording was reflected in the workshop conversations, and is used throughout this section of the report.

Toi Āria facilitators used the Comfort Board method of research they developed in 2017 for public engagement about the use of personal data[1]. This method provides a structure for meaningful conversations about subject matter that is both technically complex and potentially emotionally challenging.

We developed 6 scenarios for the workshops, which outlined situations where people were subject to, or affected by, decisions that were informed by algorithms. These were delivered in two parts, each with different considerations about the use of data and impacts on peoples' lives. Workshop participants were asked about their levels of trust in, and perceived benefit of, the use of algorithms for each scenario. Participants were then invited to identify what would increase their comfort. Finally, they were asked to identify and prioritise the themes and concerns they consider most important to increasing comfort.

Discussions took part in small groups, each with one or two facilitators. Participants were encouraged to have open and frank discussions in the workshops on the basis that the findings are reported anonymously to protect individual privacy.

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1   This methodology was developed for the Data Futures Partnership's Our Data, Our Way project.

About the scenarios

The scenarios were developed by the Digital Council research team, and drew on the literature review carried out by Brainbox and publicly available information. The scenarios were fictional two-part narratives based on real-world uses of algorithm systems. Each narrative was designed to explore a different type of algorithm system, in a way that allows participants to quickly understand the broad strokes and to imagine themselves or their whānau in the scenario. The algorithms discussed in the scenarios provided a jumping off point for teasing out generalisable observations about ADM more broadly.

The scenarios are:

- **Recruitment:** This scenario was based around search engine and CV filtering algorithms. The first part asked participants to consider their comfort with a search engine that sorts job search results and collects personal data in the process. The second part explored their comfort with an algorithm being used to filter their CV as part of a recruitment process.

- **Youth Support:** This scenario was based around the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) algorithm used by the Ministry of Social Development to identify, and provide support to, young people. The first part asked participants to consider their comfort with their teenage school leaver being proactively contacted with an offer of support as a result of an algorithmic risk score. The second part explored their comfort around aspects of the algorithm's accuracy and the outcomes of the assistance given to school leavers.

- **Immigration:** This scenario was based around a risk analysis algorithm used by Immigration New Zealand to inform decisions about visa applications. The first part asked participants to consider their comfort with the algorithm being used to assist and speed up decision-making. The second part explored their comfort with the assessment process in the event of an appeal.

- **Criminal Justice:** This scenario was based around the Risk of ReConviction x Risk of Imprisonment algorithm (ROC*ROI) used by the Department of Corrections. This algorithm produces a risk score to inform a range of decisions, including whether people are granted parole. The first part invited participants to consider their comfort with algorithmic scoring to assess the risk of reconviction/reimprisonment. The second part explored their comfort with the statistical and social fairness of the tool.

- **Health:** This scenario was based around a nationally-recognised algorithm used by District Health Boards to inform decisions about waiting list priority. The first part invited people to consider their comfort with algorithmic waiting list prioritisation. The second part explored their comfort with adjustments for equity based on Māori and Pacific health indicators.

- **Media:** This scenario was based around algorithms used to inform what music and movies are recommended to people on streaming services. The first part invited participants to consider their comfort with their data being used to curate and recommend content. The second part explored their comfort with providing more information to the streaming service provider to help refine its recommendations.
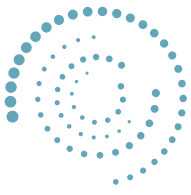
AI National Plan Argentina 2030

By Patricio Pagani, Government Advisor
patricio@theblackpuma.com

Collective Co-Creation Process

The increasing complexity and interdependence of public policy topics is forcing governments to find a new paradigm in collaborative governance. In this scenario, the concept of open innovation was born to involve the citizenship and different stakeholders in society in the life-cycle of public policy making.

To develop the AI National Plan for Argentina we used the Open Government framework, reinterpreting and adapting agile methods, prototyping and co-creation and applying them to policy making.

We collected input from different stakeholders from private sector, technology infrastructure companies that worked together with the different areas of the government that would be impacted by the implementation of the AI Plan (effectively most of the government).

The open innovation collective co-creation approach allowed to blend the government vision about the future potential of AI as an 'key enabler of the future' with that of each strategic player that would eventually become part of how that vision would be developed.

The entire process took nine months and involved 7 government areas, 400 experts, 45 different national/international bodies and 82 companies. More than 50 working sessions with different formats were done: unconferences, brainstorming, creativity workshops, scenario planning, agile sessions, etc.

Eventually, the collective group was distilled into 13 strategic corridors, each with their own strategic objectives and action plans. In parallel, to identify national priority corridors within the government we organized cross-area working sessions, where officers contributed to the long-term vision and prioritisation.

The result was a plan we are all very proud of, with several ideas -like the AI SuperLAB- that are first-in-the-world.
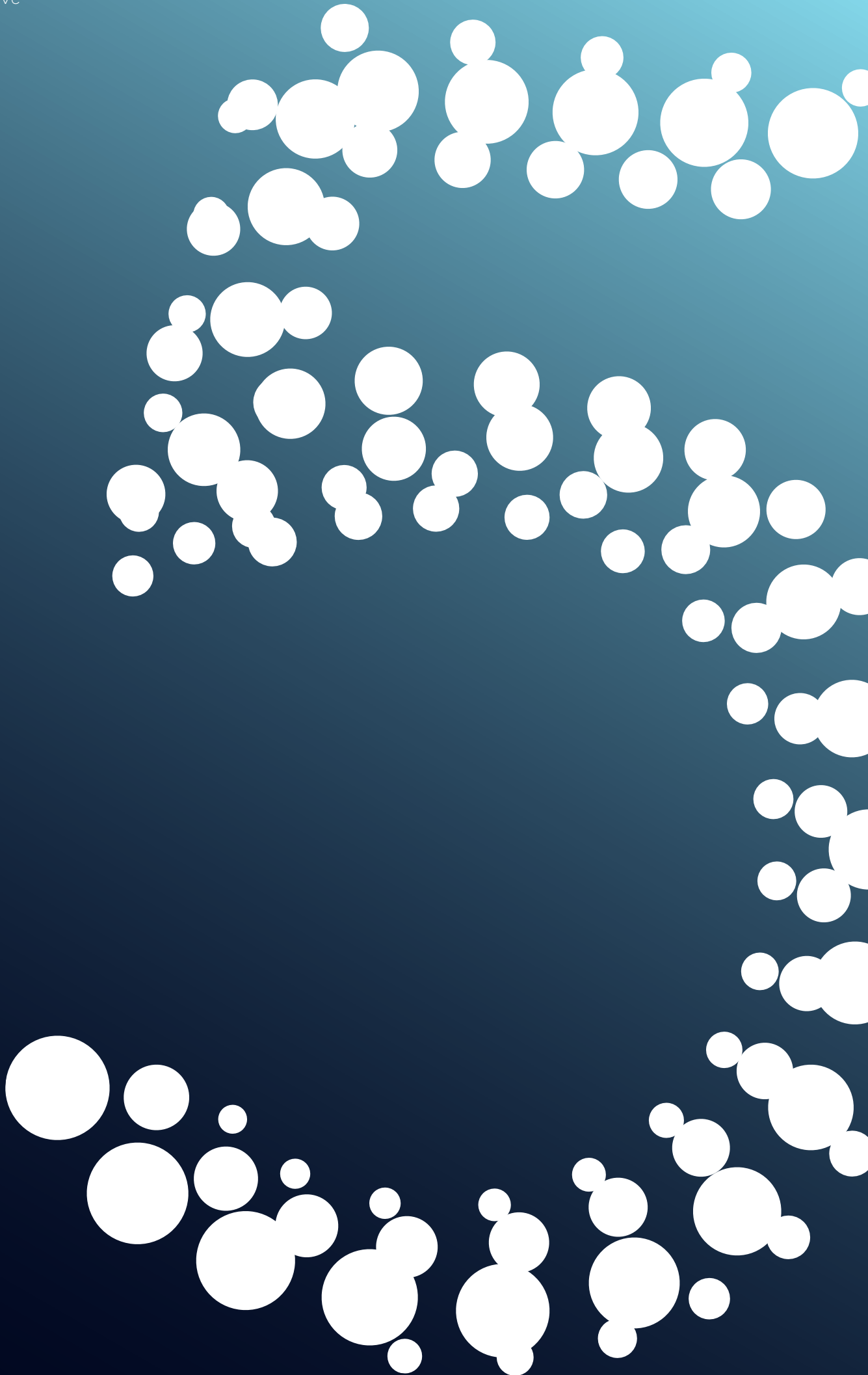
Chapter Contents

Report

The report stage is all about analysing and synthesising the material gained through the engagement, and shaping it into a report.

One of the ways in which largescale engagements can fail is if the participants feel their views have not been taken into account, nothing has changed as a result of their efforts and they perceive that their engagement has been a waste of time.

There are key components that need to be taken into account while analysing the data. Inputs need to be adjusted for any possible bias, vested interests, monopoly of views or strong voices that will skew the findings.

Another key part of this stage is the providing of honest feedback to participants on what happened with their input and how it has contributed to the next steps.

The findings will need to be presented to key stakeholders.

These findings will include recommendations on how the engagement research will be used (that is, it will inform or change the decision) and the next steps.
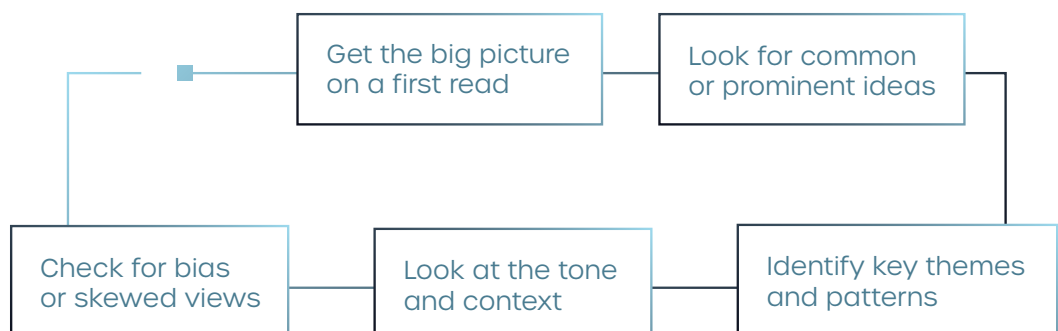
Analysis

Central to the process is taking the feedback from your sessions and engagement sessions and distilling it into material that can be used to develop recommendations or inform your wider work.

In the first instance, you will need to organise the material you have collected into useable elements.

A simple summary of the material would allow you to see the main points and identify the contributions made by various people, but to be usable, the material needs to analysed, with arguments or interpretation of the data given and some conclusions reached.

A BASIC ANALYSIS

```
Get the big picture        Look for common
on a first read            or prominent ideas


Check for bias    Look at the tone     Identify key themes
or skewed views   and context          and patterns
```

Key things to look for in analysis could include the following:

Find the patterns

Look at data and recognise patterns – for example, if a few key types of feedback keep coming up, group those responses together.

Look at language/words used by participants – negative language might suggest a negative sentiment; positive language might suggest they feel more supportive towards the topic.

Make sure you analyse all the material – even the outliers.

Organise the patterns into categories

Group similar thoughts and ideas into categories.

You can use a classification tree which will layer topics together.

Identify root causes

What are the key underlying concerns?

Are there any causal factors that contribute to the issue? How important are these?

Look for trends

Look for areas where many people say the same thing across different groups.

Also look for new ideas or views – they might be the start of something bigger, or an issue about to come.

Importance

Discuss the importance of each element.

How do the elements connect together?

How effective would each intervention be?

Different groups of participant

Is the feedback different across different groups? If so, do you know why? And how will this shape up your recommendations and next steps?

Preparing the report

Once you've considered the feedback, think about what it tells you and what the best way to respond to it is.
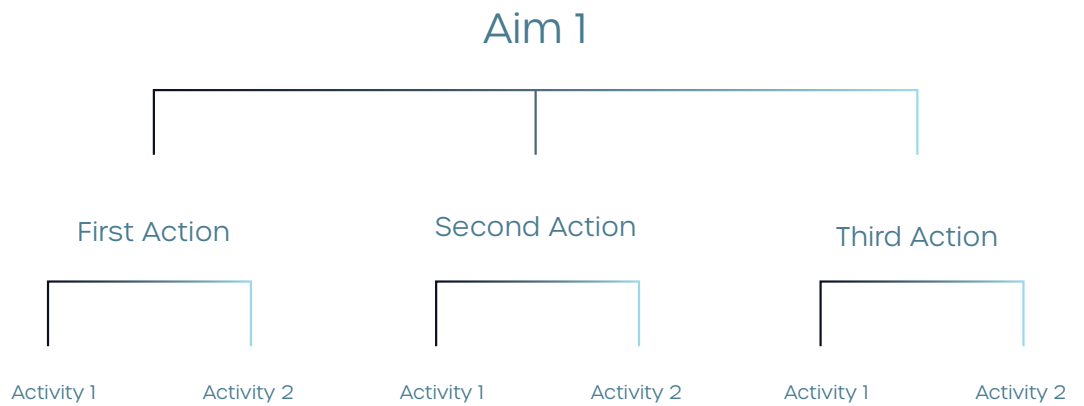
How Will It Inform the wider project?

Engage with the people who will need to implement the recommendations, or take the work forward.

Make sure your recommendations are able to be actioned.

Once the key points have been ascertained, the below worksheet will help shape up the material into an action plan or set of recommendations.

The aim will be something you wish to achieve, based on the material and feedback from the participants.

This aim can be achieved through a set of actions, with each action having a number of specific activities under it.

Aim 1

First Action		Second Action		Third Action	
Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 1	Activity 2

So, for example, your aim might be to build trust with communities on AI use.

Your three actions and activities could be:

1. to provide awareness-raising material to increase skills and knowledge

- bring together repositories of best practice materials
- develop information sheets and other material for easy use and reference
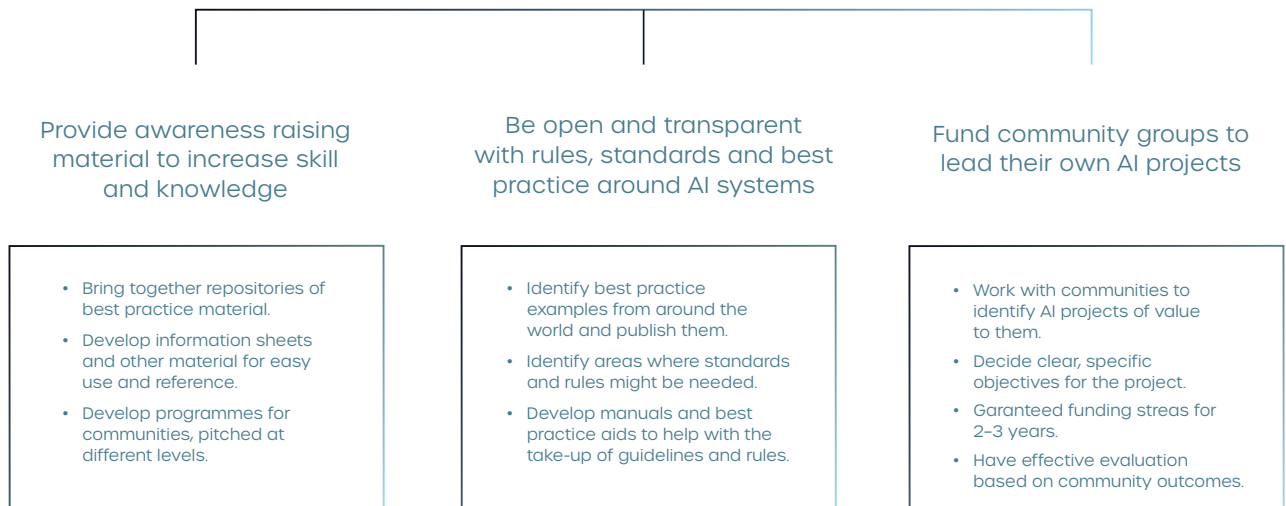- develop programmes for communities, pitched at different levels

2. to be open and transparent with the rules, standards and best practice in place around AI systems

- identify best practice examples from around the world and publish them
- identify areas where standards and rules might be needed
- develop manuals and best practice aids to help with the take-up of guidelines and rules

3. to fund community groups to lead their own AI projects

- work with communities to identify AI projects of value to them
- decide clear, specific objectives for the project
- guaranteed funding streams for 2-3 years
- have effective evaluation based on community outcomes

Build trust with communities on AI use

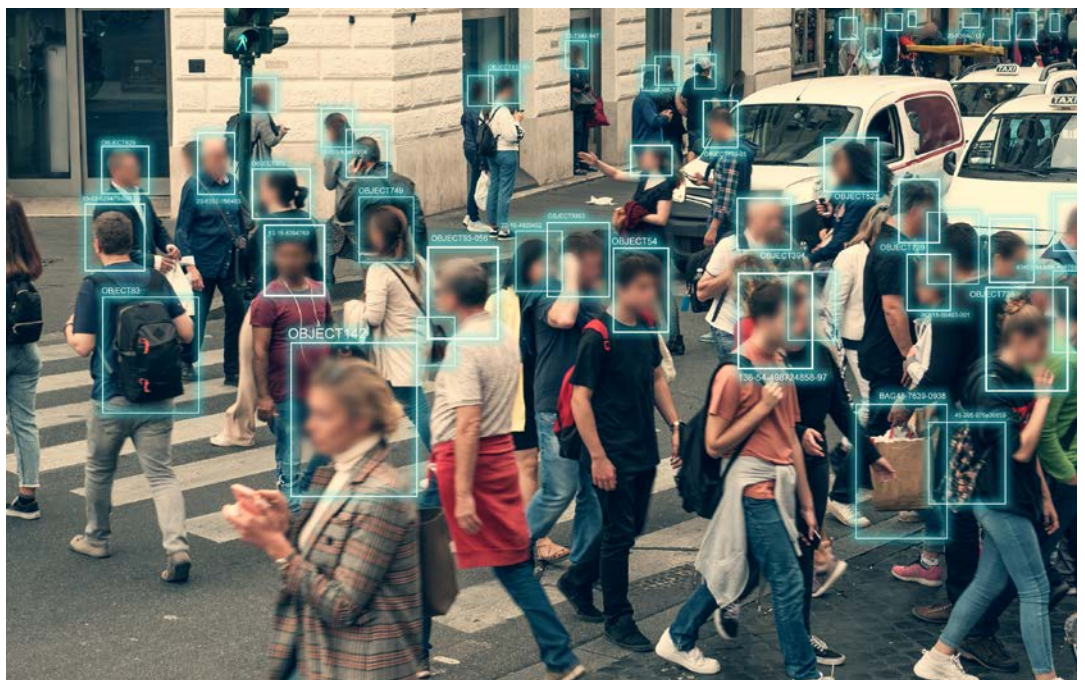| Provide awareness raising material to increase skill and knowledge	Be open and transparent with rules, standards and best practice around AI systems	Fund community groups to lead their own AI projects
• Bring together repositories of best practice material. • Develop information sheets and other material for easy use and reference. • Develop programmes for communities, pitched at different levels.	• Identify best practice examples from around the world and publish them. • Identify areas where standards and rules might be needed. • Develop manuals and best practice aids to help with the take-up of guidelines and rules.	• Work with communities to identify AI projects of value to them. • Decide clear, specific objectives for the project. • Garanteed funding streas for 2–3 years. • Have effective evaluation based on community outcomes.

Countering bias

People tend to seek out information that confirms our own opinions. This means that when reading feedback from others, we will unconsciously seek for evidence to confirm our own views and values, and see it in the data before us.

We will frequently fixate on what we first see or hear, and fail to take onboard any subsequent information.

It is natural to see things from our own perspectives and interpret information through this lens. We unconsciously make sure that what we see and hear from others will reflect what we think, thus confirming our perspective as the correct one.

In many cases, the bias may have been present at the start of the design process, influencing how the engagement was set up, how the questions were written, which will then affect the information and feedback we receive.

Pre-engagement bias • Flawed engagement design • Selection bias	People are selected with the aim of getting a particular set of views.	**Mitigate through** • using robust criteria to select participants. • having multiple sources of hep to identify potential participants. • ask yourself what bias might be there; what possibilities might be limited by going down this path.
Bias during engagement • Interviewer/facilitator bias • Recall bias • Misclassification	Information is elicited or recorded in ways that reflect the interviewer's/facilitator's views, not what is actually being said.	**Mitigate through** • having note takers write down exactly what is said, without refining, editing or clarifying comments.
Bias after engagement	Results and data are analysed through lens of the analyst, seeing what they expect to see in the data.	**Mitigate through** • having several people organise/code the results. • feed the results back to participants to confirm it represents what they said. • triangulate results with other literature/examples of engagement.

So how can we fix it?

The key thing to fixing bias in analysis is to be aware of your own biases or assumptions.

The ladder of Interference, first suggested by Chris Argyris[1], helps you understand the steps you take in jumping to the wrong conclusions.

We start with facts and reality but from there, we select based on our own experiences and beliefs and interpret meaning based on assumptions. What we believe is then derived from these conclusions, leading to actions which seem right, based on what we feel is correct and stemming from our own experiences and reality.

ACTIONS

BELIEFS

CONCLUSIONS

ASSUMPTIONS

INTERPRETED REALITY

SELECTED REALITY

REALITY AND FACTS
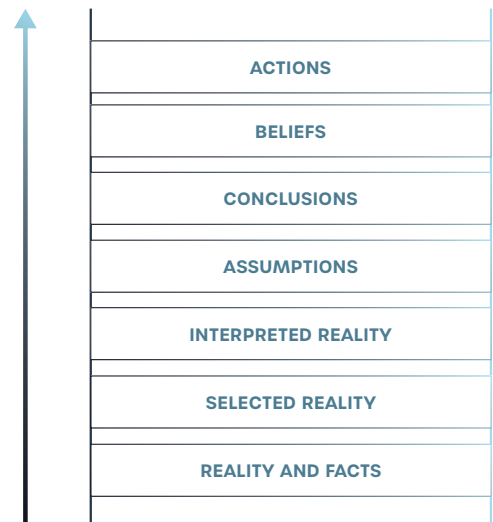
This creates a cycle where new ideas and experiences can't be incorporated.

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1   Chris Argyris. Overcoming organizational defenses: facilitating organizational learning. 1st edition 1990, Pearson Education Inc, Upper Saddle River, NJ

The following checklist can help to identify some useful questions to ask yourself to identify any possible problem areas.

Checklist

Question why you are making the assumptions you are	
Have you selected only parts of the feedback and data and left bits out?	
Ask if there are other ways of looking at this	
Once you have your actions, are there other actions you could have considered?	
Query why the feedback says what it says	
Understand the risk factors for bias	
Seek multiple perspectives on the issues	
Have you tested your interpretations and assumptions with diverse stakeholders?	
Search for other information and data to test thinking against	
Reflect on your own views and values and routinely check for bias	
What conversation do we need to have to: (a) discuss disparities and their causes and (b) surface our blind spots regarding privilege and bias?	
Check your reasoning with peers and colleagues	
Have people who are not afraid to act as questioners and challenge the status quo	

Preparing the report

Once you have collated the data you have and done the analysis, you are ready to prepare your report.

The form it takes will depend on your project stakeholders and what information is most useful to them but you will want to present the findings of the work you have done, and showcase the material that your participants have provided you with.

Title

Table of contents

Synopsis

Introduction

Body of the report

Conclusion

Recommendations

Annexes

Key tips for report writing are to know what you want to communicate and stay focused on this.
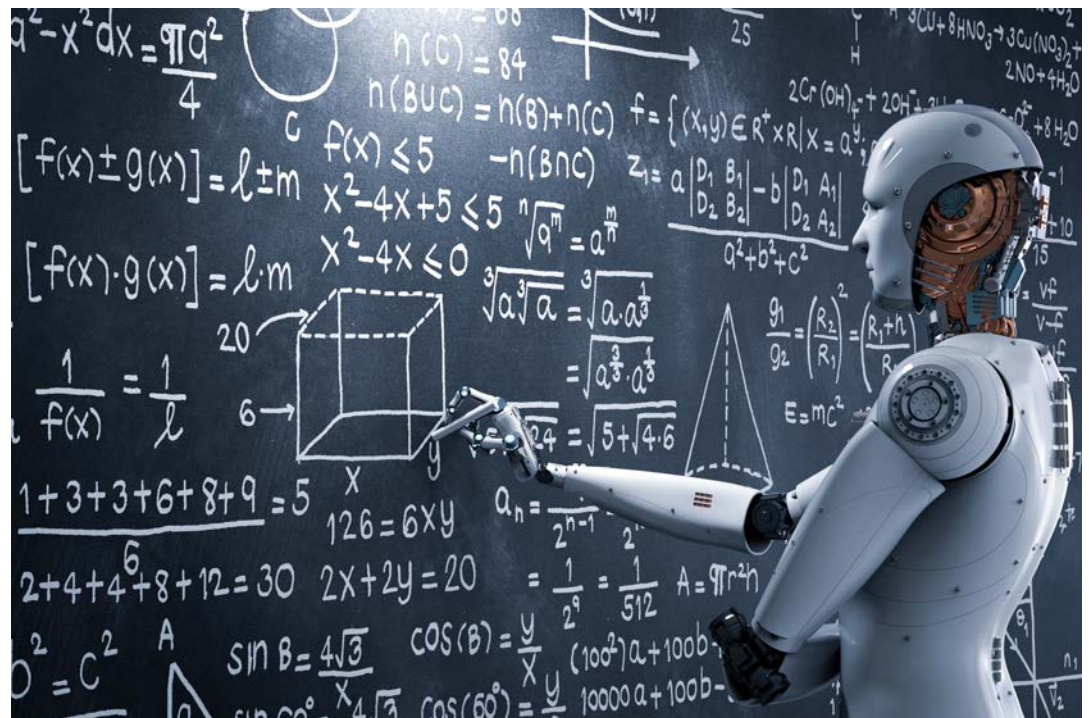
Write in clear language, using figures, pictures and graphs where necessary to convey messages simply and help people navigate the text.

Some tips for a document are:

• Background for the engagement – how it fits into a wider project (if applicable) or what the aims for it where.

• The context for the work.

• A brief description of the event and why this format was chosen.

• Provide a summary of the issues that came out of the event.

• Provide a break down for the feedback and response you received – provide quotes if this is helpful.

• Include your analysis.

• Use data, evidence, infographics and figures to help people engage with the material.

Think about the structure and the best way to present your findings.

Edit the work once you've done and make sure you get someone to proof read it for any mistakes.

• Be transparent about the process, the people involved and any bias or skewing that may have occurred, together with any work you have undertaken to ensure the report's findings are unbiased.

• Provide information on any next steps, including your plans for feeding back to the participants.

• Provide recommendations.

• Be clear on how much raw material will be published and how issues such as privacy will be managed.

Letting people know how their input was used

Feedback to people is important as it lets people know their input was valued, and shows them how their views were listened to and used to inform the decision-making process.

It also explains the next steps, including whether there will be further opportunities to be involved or provide input again.

In general, people may not agree with the decisions that are ultimately made, but they will accept it if they feel the process to get there has been open, honest and respectful.

People who feel respected and see that their views have been considered are also more likely to have built trust in the process and organisations undertaking the engagement and will engage again in future events. Seeing engagement as worthwhile strengthens democracy and builds social licence: all vital when considering issues to do with adopting AI and other emerging technologies.

Hopefully, a good engagement and feedback process will help promote ongoing dialogue with communities and groups, empowering them to be more involved in these issues. In an area such as AI, this is valuable as upskilling and awareness raising is critical to success.

Below is a template to help identify what views were provided by different groups, and how feedback could be provided to the various groups.

| Comment |
| --- |
| Participant |
| What input was provided? |
| How was the input used? |
| How will you feed this back? |
| Any further actions? |

Once you have your feedback and know how you've used it, you need to choose a method to communicate back to your participants.

You may wish to both communicate personally to the group, followed by a wider explanation on the progress of the project and where it is going.

Some feedback methods

- Written feedback to participants
- Phone calls to participants
- Hold small follow-up meetings
- Additional events/focus groups
- A discussion paper
- Produce a newsletter
- Website updates

- Roadshows and large scale campaigns
- Provide reports (of workshops, meetings etc)
- Presentations to interested groups
- Social media channels
- News media stories
- Update community forums
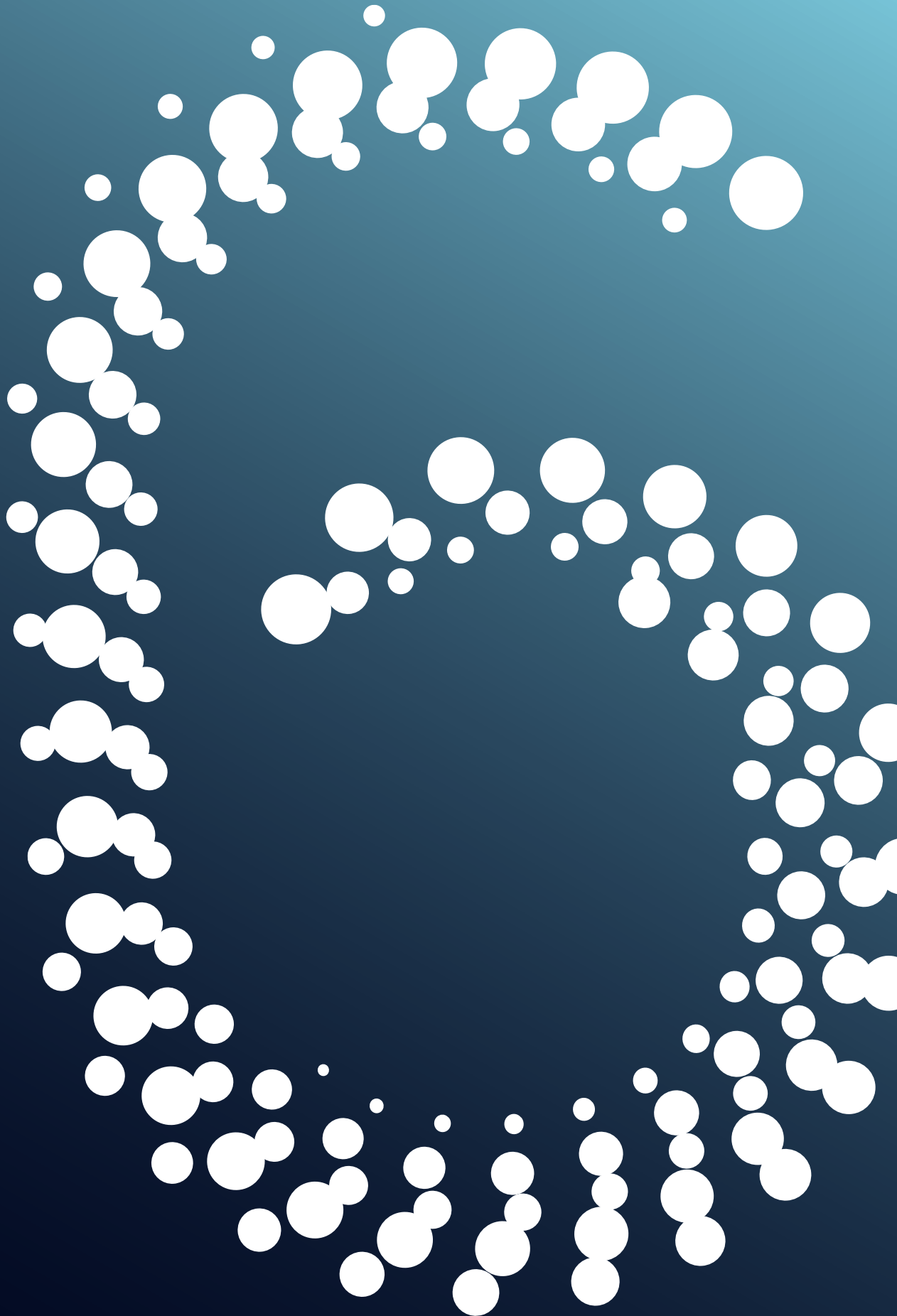
Chapter Contents

Review

Finally, the whole process should be reviewed and evaluated, either by the design team or by an independent group, progress and ongoing steps monitored, and any learnings taken onboard to inform future engagements.

This will help identify what went well and what didn't, giving valuable insights for future engagements.

The review can be done in many ways: interviews/surveys with the participants and design team is a useful way to review the process from both sides.
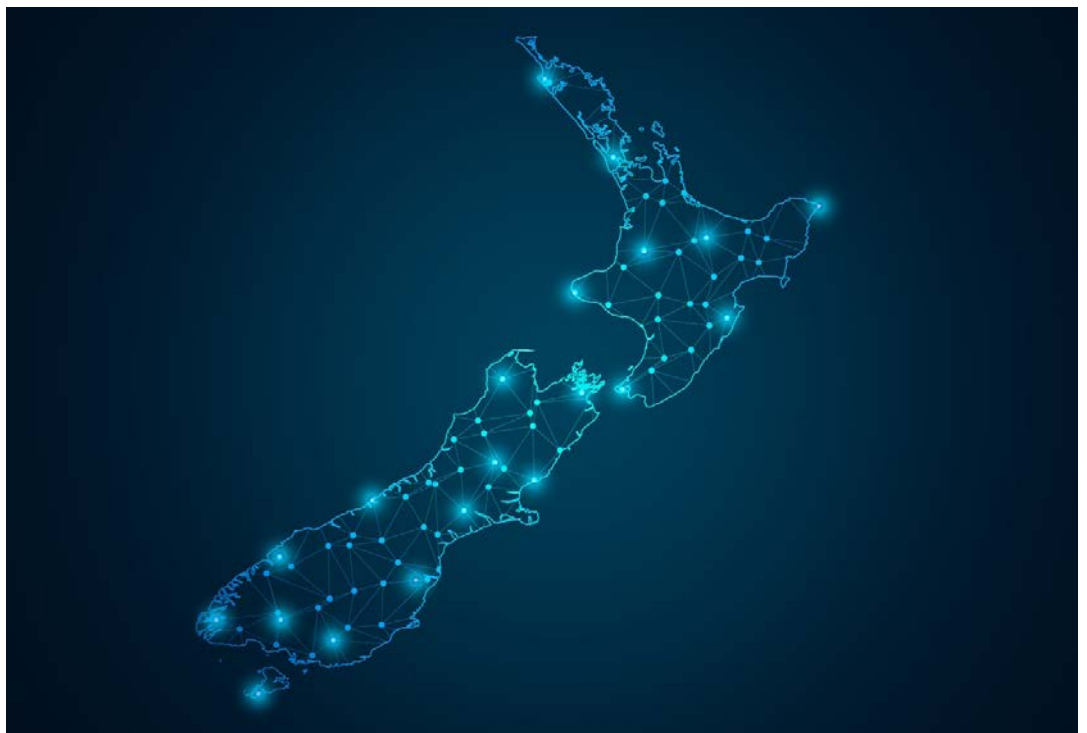
Evaluation

Evaluating the engagement process will help you show how successful the engagement was, what results were achieved, and how well you met your objectives.

The benefits of evaluation are many, including:

- demonstrating the value of engagement

- showing the success or progress of your project to your stakeholders (both internal and external)

- providing data on how effective the programme has been

- providing useful material on what works or doesn't work, and why

- providing best practice and allowing for the success to be built upon

- identifying any issues and providing advice to others on how to avoid those issues and mistakes

- identifying costs and seeing if it was cost effective

- being able to adapt an ongoing engagement process to increase its effectiveness

- help check direction and see if there need to be changes

- help plan for the future

- capturing learnings to help plan future engagement processes.

Evaluation can be qualitative, measuring intangible things, or quantitative, measuring things like numbers who attended events. There are also different types of evaluation, with formative looking at how you could do better, to summative, which looks at whether the process was successful.

The below graphic demonstrates how you might want to think about evaluation within your programme.

Before the project starts	As the project starts	During the project	At the end of the project

FORMATIVE   SUMMATIVE

Evaluation can happen at many points in the process and take different forms, depending on what is wanted. So, for example, a needs assessment could be undertaken at the start of the engagement to see who needs the project and how great that need is. Throughout the project, feedback from participants can be used to evaluate how well the project is succeeding in its aims – and identify any potential issues that might be arising. And finally, at the end of a project, a more formal look at how the objectives were achieved may happen, or data collected over a longer period of time (including into the future) on what the impact of the engagement was.

It can be carried out by an external person, or undertaken by the people working on the project. There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches: externals can be impartial, but they do not know the ins and outs of the project. Internals know the project well but may find it hard to be objective.

Evaluate factors in the project such as:

• were the vision and objectives properly defined and usable?

• did we do what we said we would do?

• did we reach the people we wanted to reach?

• was anyone left out who should have been included?

• were participants satisfied with the processes used?

• did people feel well treated, listened to and heard and respected?

• did we provide feedback on how the input was used?

• was the process useful for achieving the project outcomes?

• was the project delivered on time?

• were time and money used efficiently?

• were there any unintended consequences?

• what would we do differently?

And ask yourself questions like:

- To what extent did the engagement process meet the engagement objectives?
- To what extent did the engagement process contribute to the overall project objectives?
- To what extent was the engagement process responsive to diverse communities?
- Did you reach out to a range of communities?

- Were there any unexpected challenges?
- What has worked well?
- What were the big successes?
- What could be done differently?
- Are participants satisfied?
- Has it built trust with participants?
- How will you use what you've learnt to inform future work?

A simple template to collect useful information for an evaluation might look like:

Activity

Delivered on time? If no, why not?

Delivered on budget? If not, why not?

Did the activity met the project's objectives? If not, why not?
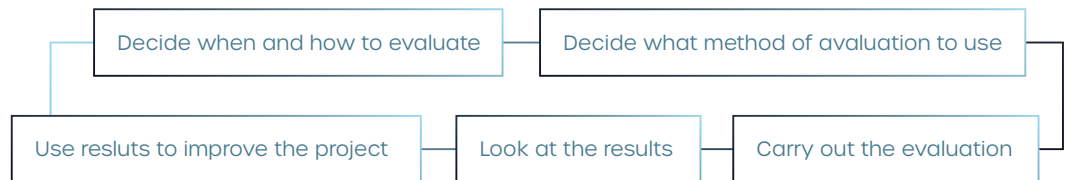
Was the activity inclusive? If not, why not?

What went well and why?

What didn't go well and why?

How can you communicate these lessons to others?

Regardless of the type of evaluation, the material and data generated should be fed back into the process to help refine future engagements.

Knowing what was successful and what was not will allow you to make better choices and decisions in the next engagement you undertake.

Decide when and how to evaluate	Decide what method of avaluation to use
Use resluts to improve the project	Look at the results	Carry out the evaluation

Monitoring impact

Beyond evaluating how well a project or engagement delivered on its outcome, it helps to know what impact the engagement may have had and what changes it has led.

People involved in the engagement may have experienced the project in ways that are not easily quantifiable but which will have a tangible effect on the ongoing work.

This may be particularly true in areas to do with trust and social licence, or in the growth of people's awareness of AI issues and heighted comfort level with the topic.

Qualitative tools are useful in monitoring the impact of your project and how successful the engagement was to people's understanding, awareness or in building trust. This is similar to the feedback you received, but it more focused on the effect the engagement had one them, and less about how they perceived the event.

To know the impact, you will need to have a baseline that at you recorded at the start of the project. This may be as simple as a survey or questionnaire, asking people about their knowledge of AI issues, for example, or their comfort with using AI-based tools and services. The data you collect at the end (in tools such as those listed below), and over a time period thereafter if you so wish, will give you the data to compare with your baseline.

Monitoring ongoing impact may require some of these things to be done on a regular basis to see the progress of some areas. Ultimately your aim is have an impact that goes wider than the participants and spreads out to their communities.

|	
Observing	Watch your participants before and after events. See what language they are using and whether they seem excited, interested, enthusiastic.
Surveys	Take the pulse of a group before the start of a project, then after it has been completed. Can be done online or face-to-face.
Interviews	Follow up from engagement events with interviews with people to get more detail about how they found the event.
Case studies	Choose a couple of participants or groups and do an in-depth look at them following their engagement.
Group sessions	Run some sessions after the engagement to hear from people about what impact they feel the event had on them. This is also useful in providing ideas for next steps.

Evaluation report and action plan

The final step of the process is knowing how you will build your learnings and findings into your work.

Action Plan

Begin with an Action Plan that identifies the learnings from the project, the project goals they are contributing too and how they should be implemented. The learnings may well sit with other parts of your agency or business. Include such things as:

- A description of the goals to be achieved

- The steps need to achieve the goal

- Who will be involved

- Timelines and deliverables

- Resources needed

- Measures to evaluate progress

An Action Plan gives you a clear way forward for the work your engagement has produced. You, your participants and your key stakeholders will know what steps should be taken and what progress can be expected.
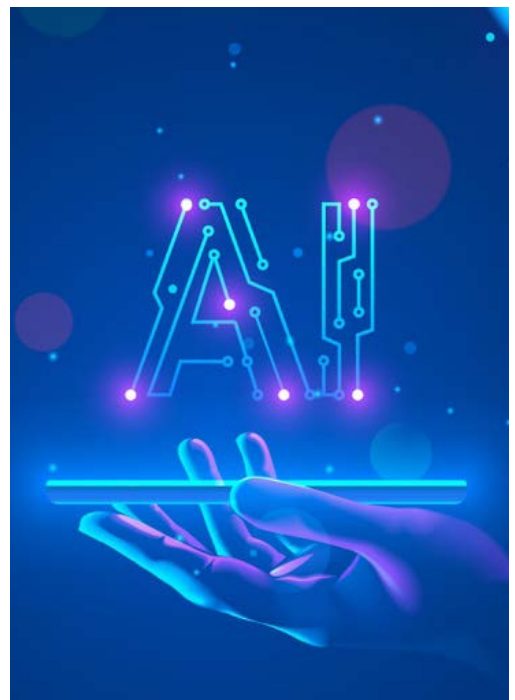
A template could like the following.

Goal 1

Action	Description	Responsible

Deadline	Resources	Risks

Goal 2

Action	Description	Responsible

Deadline	Resources	Risks

Goal 3

Action	Description	Responsible

Deadline	Resources	Risks

A template could like the following.

Evaluation report

An evaluation report, bringing together everything you have learnt, is a good tool to provide for key stakeholders to show them how the engagement process has contributed to a body of evidence and how that evidence will be used.

| Identify the learnings that will be useful | Analyse the learnings to draw out the best practice | Document and store the material | Publicise the stores o that people know there is a useful repository of material for future projects |

The report will show how you monitored and evaluated your engagement and should contain recommendations for improvement or to how you will use it to guide future work in the area.

The report can contain sections on:

- What we set out to do
- What we actually did
- Evaluation design and methodology
- Challenges and barriers
- Successes and key learnings
- Overall findings and conclusions
- Implementation plan
- The difference we made
- What next?

Finally, ensuring the material is curated and safely stored will ensure that your work is useful for future users, and is not lost.

It also shows your process has been transparent and open over the lifecycle of the engagement, and remains so for the future.