

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS FOR ARTS-BASED CIVIC DIALOGUE: A WORKSHEET

What do you want your arts-based civic dialogue to accomplish?
Who should participate in the dialogue and how can you attract them?
Who needs to be involved in planning?
How is art being employed as a stimulus or process for dialogue?
What settings, formats and approaches to facilitation will best support dialogue?
What elements of the dialogue should be documented and how?

A. PLANNING FOR ARTS-BASED CIVIC DIALOGUE

What do you want your art-based civic dialogue to accomplish?

What difference do you hope to make as a result of creating dialogue?

How would you “name and frame” the civic issue(s) in your project so that it will interest and be relevant to the publics you seek to engage?

What would be reasonable and meaningful goals and outcomes of dialogue related to the civic issue?

- Increased visibility for or awareness of the issue
- Deepened understanding of the complex dimensions of the issue
- People learn causes and effects related to the issue
- Increased tolerance and respect among people who hold different beliefs or values
- Participants have increased sense of self-efficacy to take action on the issue
- People recognize their own role in and responsibility for community norms and values
- People believe they do have a voice
- Civic leaders gain deeper understanding of citizen perspectives on the issue
- Broadened participation in dialogue about the issue, including people who are concerned about the issue but don't typically become engaged

Who should participate in the dialogue and how can you attract and engage them?

What perspectives on the issue need to be represented in the dialogue groups?

What are motivations and obstacles to participation?

What approaches might help with recruiting participation from hard-to-reach or reluctant groups or individuals?

Who needs to be involved in planning dialogue?

What is the history of the issue in the community?
Who are the stakeholders?
Is the lead organization perceived as a credible convener of dialogue?
With which organizations do you need/want to partner in order to be effective?
What is necessary to gain their support and participation?

B. DESIGNING AND FACILITATING DIALOGUE

Based on goals for dialogue and audiences targeted:

How is art being employed as a stimulus or process for dialogue?

When and how are you utilizing art and/or artistic practice as a stimulus or process for dialogue?
How might dialogue activities be integrated with the artistic/cultural experiences?
What are ways to make a transition from discussion that focuses on the artistic or cultural experience to dialogue on the civic issue?

What settings, formats, and approaches to facilitation will best support dialogue?

What are factors to consider in creating an environment that is safe and conducive for honest and open dialogue?

Time and place for your project's dialogues
Length and number of sessions
Size of dialogue groups
Approaches/formats for structuring dialogues

Who will design/ facilitate your dialogues? What role(s) will they play?

Is the facilitation strategy consistent or compatible with the artistic expression, tone, culture, and community(ies) to be convened?

How should groups be composed to ensure multiple perspectives and diversity (ethnic, racial, gender, class or other relevant characteristics)?

What elements of this dialogue should be documented and how?

Animating Democracy is a program of Americans for the Arts and is made possible with support from the Ford Foundation. For more information visit:www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AnimatingDemocracy.