ArtsEngageCanada
Community Engagement Workshop Handout

What is the purpose and scope of the community engagement project?
- Be clear
- A clear purpose will help identify engagement objectives, anticipated outcomes and help determine the scope and depth
- Often communities will need support to help them engage meaningfully

What level of participation?
- Users and beneficiaries
- Advisers
- Contributors – management
- Decision makers
- Deliverers

Planning and designing a community engagement project:
- Works best as an ongoing, cumulative process enabling relationships and trust to build and strengthen over time.
- Community or volunteer groups may want to participate at a range of levels.

Questions and issues to help plan and design community engagement project:
- What level of participation to be achieved?
- How to identify stakeholders?
- Communications – strategy/types?
- Stage of the engagement process?
- Resources?
- Are there any limitations?
- Feedback – next steps?
- Tools/methods

Identifying Stakeholders
- Local residents/area based groups
- Communities of interest
- Faith based groups
- Racial, ethnic, cultural groups
- Local community and voluntary groups
- Web-based or virtual groups
- Artists/others (social, health, inclusion)
- Funders
- Municipality
- Schools
- Decision makers

Barriers to engagement:

Potential Barrier	Design Issue
(examples below)	
Location/isolation	community space/familiarity/outdoors/transportation
Workload/busy	social event – research
Fear of change	safe space
Language…	translators…

Mapping….Audit…Finding
- Public meetings
- Workshops & focus groups
- Web based engagement
- Third parties – specialist agency
- Street stalls/foyer of venue
- Round tables
- Walking the neighbourhood
- Community surveys
- Face to face
- Contact intermediaries (e.g. school or church)
- Radio – press – papers
- Passers by
- Arts councils/artists
- Shops

Evaluation & Monitoring
- Purpose
- Rationale
- Structure
- Types & numbers
- What partnerships bring
- Baseline (where are they starting from)
    - Evidence (Baseline….mid-point of project….end of project)
- Effectiveness
- Quality – experience – participants/partnerships
- Potential – long-term
- Others your project may have affected?

Other considerations:
- Time and resources
- Limitations
- Timely feedback and next steps
- Flexibility within the process
- Evaluation

- Quality standards
- Tools (website)
- Choosing engagement methods
- Design
  - Objectives
  - Target audience
  - Sensitivity
- Process planner
  - Scope
  - Purpose
  - Participants
  - Context
  - Follow-up
  - Results

Ten Handy Hints in Community Engagement

1 Built in, not bolted on
Effective community engagement means thinking about it at the outset. Involving people at every stage of the process can greatly improve the quality and the sense of ownership with what's happening

2 Kill apathy as a concept
Despite a widespread belief that people aren't interested, the reality is that they do care about the issues that affect them. Start where people are at, not where you want them to be.

3 Be clear about the constraints
Don't promise the world if you can't deliver it! It's better to offer something small that you can deliver then to offer something big that you can't. Try to be clear where the boundaries are, who makes the final decisions and what resources are available.

4 It's a marathon not a sprint
Delivering change and regenerating communities takes a long time. Be prepared for the long haul; everyone gets disheartened if things take forever to happen, but try to be realistic about how long things take too.

5 Communication X10
Show what has been achieved – it's not just about doing, it's also about letting people know what is being done. Make sure you let people know what is going on – information is always the first stage! Two-way dialogue is critical to any change process.

6 Have a champion
The most successful strategies have someone – or sometimes lots of people at different levels – pushing them forward who really believe in the cause. If community engagement is important, make sure it's included as part of people's roles.

7 Make it meaningful

Remember that any plans you make should lead to action. Everyone gets bored of participating when nothing actually happens. As people see things happening, confidence in the process will follow and soon there'll be no holding them back!

8 Assess your goals at every stage
Keep asking yourself – is what we are trying to do realistic? Targets should be clear and achievable and have milestones along the way. But don't be afraid to change direction as you go along if that makes more sense.

9 Be prepared to be unprepared
If you think you know exactly what's going to happen, it's probably not engagement. Don't try to stifle or control the process too much. Be flexible and prepared to respond to what's happening around you.

10 Have Fun!
Anything new can be scary but remember to have fun! If you want people to get involved it's got to appeal. After all, having fun makes us happy and well-being is important to us all.

10 Standards for Community Engagement

Involvement:	We will identify and involve the people and organizations with an interest in the focus of the engagement.
Support:	We will identify and overcome barriers to involvement.
Planning:	We will gather evidence of the needs and resources and use this to the agreed purpose, scope and timescale and actions to be taken.
Methods:	We will agree on the use of methods of engagement that are fit for purpose.
Working Together:	We will agree on and use clear procedures to enable the participants to work with one another efficiently and effectively.
Sharing Information:	We will ensure necessary information is communicated between the participants.
Working with others:	We will work effectively with other with an interest in the engagement.
Improvement:	We will actively develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of <u>all</u> the participants.
Feedback:	We will feedback the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected.
Monitoring & evaluation:	We will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement meets its purposes.