# Enabling National Initiatives to Take Democracy Beyond Elections

newDEMOCRACY

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The United Nations Democracy Fund
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A Project of the UN Democracy Fund
& the newDemocracy Foundation

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# Surgeons operate on the principle of informed consent.

**Doctors always respect that it is the patient’s decision to proceed, but we only act on that decision after they have heard from the anesthetist and the surgeon so that they understand their likelihood of recovery, their risk of death, and what the recovery process involves. Only when all of the doctors are satisfied they have comprehended do they act on their decision.**

**In contrast to this Parliament lacks or does not want the ability to get similar informed consent to Brexit from our citizens before proceeding with it, which is why we are in this predicament.”**

## Phillip Lee, Conservative MP, UK Parliament.

Former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State responsible for Youth Justice, Victims, Female Offenders & Offender Health at the **Ministry of Justice.**

He resigned from that role in July 2018 citing this need to re-think the way the Brexit process was being approached by the Parliament.

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# A note about reading this Handbook.

Each chapter has a specific intended audience. While we hope everyone has the time and interest to read cover to cover, everyone should start with the introduction followed by their intended section.

# Contents

# Introduction


# What is this handbook?

This handbook is a 'how-to' guide for the design and operation of more substantive and considered ways to make trusted democratic decisions.

While there are many ways to consult the community, the focus of this Handbook is the Citizens' Assembly model which uses a Civic Lottery to get a diversity of age, gender, viewpoints and perspectives together in an environment where people get a chance to think, discuss and work toward a common ground position.

These people will eventually provide government with a set of recommendations that summarise what they could agree to as a diverse group, and support this with the reasoning and facts which led to their agreeing this position.

Where a criminal jury offers a verdict (you'll often hear the term "Citizens' Jury" for a deliberative process), the main difference is that in a deliberative process citizens also provide reasoning and evidence for their decision as a way to give greater context to elected decision makers.

## There are four audiences:

**1** **You are in elected office** – or publicly appointed - and are finding the pressure of easily manipulated (and often easily inflamed) public opinion makes it hard to take complex decisions, resulting in these decisions being watered down or not taken. You are feeling pressure from social media campaigns over-simplifying issues, often with powerful special interests claiming to speak for the public dominating public comment.

**2** **You are in the public service** and need to understand how to commission and operate a process involving everyday people. You have been asked to consult the community and know you need to do something different from what you would usually do. Perhaps it's a result of someone in a political role saying *"Here, read this Handbook!"*. The Handbook offers you a simple place to start in designing a deeper role for citizens in a public decision.

**3** **You are a facilitator or engagement practitioner** who works with rooms full of citizens and want some specific guidance in how to deliver these project formats.

**4** **You are in NGO management or advocacy** and are seeking a new way to get through a deadlock. After you read about this approach you may choose to ask governments for a *process* rather than a *policy*.

**We'll start with the first step of thinking about selecting a politically tough decision which is well suited to these types of approach (and those which aren't!), then cover everything from things organisers must consider when designing the varying aspects of a project, right through to explanations of in-the-room facilitation materials and techniques to reach group decisions.**

This Handbook details all of the critical aspects of practical project design and delivery. Each aspect will slightly vary from project to project: unlike an election which is fairly standardised and repeatable regardless of size or population and local context, these projects are designed to match the depth and complexity of the decision involved. For this reason, it is important that organisers have a working understanding of the **principles** behind each individual aspect. If you accept and agree with the principles, then the specifics, variations and inclusions in differing contexts become easy to apply. While the principles seem very obvious, very few government engagements anywhere in the world apply any of them today.

# What is in it, what isn't?

This handbook takes a problems-based approach to democracy. This means focusing on the strengths and weaknesses specific political practices offer when addressing the different types of problems a democratic society might face.

There is a seemingly endless list of challenges that democratic societies face, ranging from political, moral or structural problems that each lend themselves to different methods of resolving them.

Citizens' Assemblies and Civic Lottery do not address all problems. They are in ways insufficient when it comes to the problems of inclusion and collective decision making. The best solution to political inclusion is franchise and political equality. Conversely, voting is a strong decision making and participatory mechanism but is also low-information and so functions rather poorly when it comes to collective agenda setting.

**Democracies function best when they make use of different mechanisms to take advantage of their strengths and weaknesses.**

**Citizens' Assemblies and Civic Lottery can confidently address problems including:**

- Uninformed public opinion
- Corruption in public institutions
- Political stalemate
- Tapping into local knowledge
- Dealing with ethical dilemmas
- Lack of trust in public institutions
- Complex problems
- Long-term issues vs. Short-term incentives
- There are clear winners and losers
- Entrenched political positions
- A lack of representation in the current political process

These issues focus around themes of trust, information and time. They take advantage of the benefits deliberative processes provide in all these of these themes to confidently address gaps in other democratic decision making methods such as voting or opinion polling.

With its focus on deliberation and civic lottery, this handbook informs one aspect of addressing these problems. Long-form deliberations should be complemented with wide community engagement strategies that ensure many different people can be involved including groups who don't normally have a say. As such, this is not a handbook documenting all public engagement. There are many great resources out there for community and public consultation and engagement, a long list of different tools, mechanisms and forums that you can make use of to hear from the community, each of which can be tailored to your needs.

This handbook is instead a guide to delivering the large, extended time format Citizens' Assembly process, and by applying the same principles to improving other different methods through the idea of deliberation. Deliberation is an approach to politics where citizens, not just experts or politicians, are deeply involved in community problem solving and public decision making. Making community engagement more deliberative means moving it away from adversarial or combative approaches to discussion and towards common ground solutions.

**This means that this book will reference a handful of different types of engagement regularly but not exhaustively – and often as a way of showing how different techniques can be used at different times and linked with one another.**

The theme of this handbook is that all manner of ways of involving the community in decision making can and should be made *more* deliberative.

# How to use this Handbook

Democracy is about communities making their own trusted decisions. Voting for representatives and proposals is one mechanism, but we start from the position that we need to do more.

This Handbook is meant to help those who want to do more to understand how to take that first step and deliver a successful project.

**This means that throughout the book, we *won't* tell you what to do: the emphasis is on posing questions so you can make a design with your local context in mind.**

No single project or process is a golden key letting any community make perfectly trusted local decisions. But there are a small number of fundamental principles that are repeated in each project. These principles are core to shifting how public decision-making is made – away from opinion and toward considered judgement.

To get started, you'll get the most of this Handbook if you read it and write all over it. We'll pose questions throughout, starting right here.

? **What's the hardest decision facing your community today?**

? **What issue or decision has been delayed for many years (think 5+) because no government wants to address it? Tax reform, climate & energy policy, and crowded prisons are examples to get you thinking.**

? **With this decision, what documents to read or people to hear from would someone need to be exposed to in order to make an informed judgment on the topic? Listing documents and speakers is a useful first step.**

This is a "do" book. Our intent is that you write in this and then hand the copy on. The handbook is freely available for download and free printed copies are also available.

Share the handbook and ask people for their response and what will work in your community.

**Ask for help. You can email us questions, request project advice and have us make time for a training call over the internet. Just email UNDEFproject@newdemocracy.com.au**

We are able to connect you to a community of practice which links together expertise locally and around the world.



# Language

In this handbook, there are regular references to deliberation in many different forms. No one type of deliberation is a purer form of deliberative democracy.

Similarly, there are many different ways for describing what in theory is a deliberative mini-public, a group of randomly selected members of a community who acquire knowledge and work together through facilitated deliberation to find a common ground and democratic decision.

In practice, a deliberative mini-public might be a citizens' jury, citizens' assembly, collaboration hub, observatorio, community solutions panel or a peoples' panel. This handbook will use these terms interchangeably. Each naming style has different benefits and disadvantages; what is important is that you understand that these different styles are all variations of the same core idea.

“We need to make our democracies more inclusive.

This requires bold and innovative reforms to bring in the young, the poor and minorities into the political system.

An interesting idea put forward by one of your speakers this week, Mr. van Reybrouck, would be to reintroduce the ancient Greek practice of selecting parliaments by lot instead of election. In other words, parliamentarians would no longer be nominated by political parties, but chosen at random for a limited term, in the way many jury systems work.”

**Kofi Annan**

New York Times Athens Democracy Forum, October 2017.

# Chapter 1: For Politicians-
## this helps leaders lead

# Why do this?

There are many and varied critics of elected politicians saying they are "lacking conviction" or the leadership skills to make hard decisions. We aren't among them.

## There are many hard problems faced by leaders:

**1** While **public opinion** has always been a factor, **social media** has made this many times more difficult. We know 'Government by Twitter' is something everyone wants to avoid: this will show you how.

**2** **Non-participation** by much of the community is the starting point for unrest and dissatisfaction – you may want to involve people, but cynicism holds people back. Demonstrating their ability to have a real connection to an informed decision and being genuinely heard in a process is essential to overcoming this.

**3** **Unequal power** is a reality everywhere, and the ability of special interests and advocates to get a greater hearing will never be eliminated, so instead it should be counter-balanced with a mandated voice for everyday people from all backgrounds and life experiences.

**4** **Community can know more than government.** While this is especially the case in developing countries, we hear examples of this everywhere. The bureaucracy can have a narrow perspective about ways to solve a public problem – and where underfunding or corruption are an issue this will be much worse. Especially for NGO-driven projects facing deployment issues, this can be a critical reason to consider the approaches here.

**5** **Corruption.** The use of a Civic Lottery is very hard to cheat. Adding a new voice which is neither special interest, nor the bureaucracy nor an opaquely funded campaign adds a new ability for government to operate with transparency.

Across these five problems, the deep involvement of everyday people is the critical missing ingredient to taking enduring, trusted decisions. This will give elected leaders some room to move.

> **A process run with genuine depth results in the participating citizens from all walks of life being willing to stand alongside political leaders and truly share the burden of a difficult decision which must otherwise be taken alone.**

The norms of political campaigning over the last 30 years have focused on control. Candidates often go to public appearances which are carefully screened and filtered by advisors in an effort to control the message and shape what the electorate hears.

## It isn't working. At all.

Being in power has many challenges beyond your control. We think the hardest of these is that citizens only ever have an incentive to get a passing knowledge about many topics which leads them to think there is an easy decision you are not taking. And on top of that they can be (justifiably) cynical and assume the worst of motives. It makes a tough job harder.

Politicians who have used Citizens' Assemblies and Citizens' Juries well have changed their view on the nature of their leadership. Rather than viewing leadership as selling a fixed view, they see the role as to put big decisions on the agenda then leading a public discussion to hear many potential solutions before taking the final decision.



We think a key problem we need to address is that raw public opinion has too much power and influence. **We ask people what they think before they have had time to think and the results get a momentum of their own.**

Many policy issues are hard to fix and will involve significant costs – and for some people to necessarily be made worse off. These people have a lot of incentive to complain, and public opinion can be quite easy to sway. Around the world, elections are almost always won by the side with the most money: this one statistic points to the fact that public opinion is easy to sway with slogans that fit within a short commercial or a shorter slogan on social media!

But this doesn't make the policy problems go away: if there was an easy answer, we assume someone would have used it and the problem would be solved. So how can governments overcome easily influenced and agitated public opinion and avoid 'Government by Twitter'? As you can't ignore it, then we suggest you find something better: **public judgment.**

An important idea to think about, and to contrast with, is that in many countries a trial jury is used to resolve important questions that can result in people being jailed for the rest of their lives. But a trial jury is not required to give their reasoning behind a decision. The citizen's assembly is required to provide such reasoning – assessing the logic of their thought process, testing their understanding of the facts, explaining the context its final decision.

You should note that *nowhere* applies justice by asking for the raw public opinion of thousands of citizens through a two minute polling exercise. If you were arrested, I'm sure you wouldn't like to have your guilt or innocence decided this way! The people of a jury are a small group who manage to move beyond public opinion by thinking and learning instead of just reacting. That will be the focus of this Handbook..

Of course, there is still a role for including public opinion, and we'll explore that as well. Overall, we are aiming to show what approach works best in what circumstances. Agenda-setting to find areas of public concern is a good example of a well-suited opinion approach.


**One of the major causes of large-scale protests is that parties and parliaments have become disconnected from the problems that people want their leaders to be addressing: airing these concerns and getting them on the agenda is a sound use of opinion mechanisms – especially digital tools.**

**Importantly, this approach can be paired with public judgment processes to help explore what *answers* an informed citizen wants parliaments to consider."**

Can we get citizens to think in depth and not act on self-interest and opinion? Yes. We are confident we can help by creating incentives for citizens to explore issues in the same depth you do, with the purpose of having them reach a point where a real mix of people of all ages and backgrounds can stand behind a common ground position - which helps you act on a tough policy problem.

Our vision of success is that governments from Left or Right can announce policies which contain tough decisions, but we reach a point as a society where the involvement of the rest of the population has sufficient depth and transparency that the tough decision is accepted.

## So, there's one reason to do this.

> **Done well, a diverse mix of everyday people will be willing to stand next to those in government and advocate for a decision.**

If you can accept that you are better off **sharing a problem rather than trying to sell a single solution,** then this approach can work well for you.

? **What problem am I willingly to publicly share - without offering my own view on its solution?**

? **On what issue would I most want a group of everyday people standing next to me when we announce a policy?**

? **Is this the same answer you gave on page 19? If no, what's changed?**

# What is my role if I do this?

You are not handing power to a 'mob'. You will:

**1** Sign off on the **question** put to a diverse group of citizens.

**2** Set some **boundary conditions.**
**a.** e.g. "The government is able to spend $3m on this issue."
**b.** e.g. "Anything within my portfolio I can act on. Anything outside my portfolio I will pass on to them to secure a response."

**3** **Authorise** and legitimise the project by owning the question and clearly showing people you intend to listen to a deep, informed discussion before taking your decision.

**4** Take a **final decision**. You are not "handing over" a decision: you are **owning** a more inclusive process which is designed to address those big problems listed at the beginning of the chapter.

As a representative you set the agenda and build a framework to listen before you take your decision. This document gives you the leading framework to help you achieve that.

In reviewing the process design, we suggest elected representatives think about *'What kind of process lets politicians truly trust the people?'*

# Where has this worked?

One story we think everyone in the world should look at comes from Ireland. It's not one of our projects: but it presents the clearest real-world example of a government being able to take some tough decisions.

We'll explore this in more detail later, but in a traditional and quite religious country, a Right-aligned government has been able to explore reforms in the areas of equal marriage rights and of abortion laws.

Centrally, what the Irish parliament did was open itself to a meaningful role for everyday citizens. Their first project involved blending 66 randomly selected citizens with a mix of 33 MPs as an exercise that built up mutual trust between the two groups. Subsequently, the government took advantage of a mechanism whereby they could refer a challenging issue to a randomly-selected group of 100 citizens and they referred them these hard issues. This group of randomly-selected citizens then heard from dozens of sources and discussed the issue among themselves for a number of months before finding some common ground. Their input into parliament helped leaders to lead.

We don't ask you to take a position on these laws, but instead, just to accept one idea: *does putting that issue on the political agenda seem like a politically difficult and risky thing to do?* If so, then this handbook will help you understand **how** they were able to do it.

In Uganda, a government had issues with its programs failing to dissuade local communities from living in an area frequently affected by flooding. In this case, the bureaucracy and some NGO's simply didn't have the right expertise and local experience that was found in people with a long history on the land. By being open to a new approach, a university was able to host a research project getting input from active interests in balance with a significant random sample of people.

Some tricky cultural norms, especially around age and gender, were overcome simply by explaining how the chosen process only works if it gets to everyone (a man can't take his wife or adult child's place for example).

At the outset, the process was limited to gathering information on a set of options presented by the government. Through speaking to stakeholders and residents they found that these options didn't account for the local context adequately.

In the end result, government policy was implemented with greater nuance and understanding of how people manage in times of flood, resulting in farmers being able to access land while government had the understanding of what those people would do (build homes on higher land while still farming in the flood zone; and being happy to travel to stay with extended family outside the affected area) in order to avoid a blanket ban on using valuable land.

The principle in each case was to share the decision and do so in a way which involves giving considerable time and access to information for a small random sample of the population picked in a Civic Lottery. Done well, those people will be the ones explaining the reasoning behind their recommendation to the rest of the population.

We live in a time when there is a popular trend to disrupt the political order by injecting outsiders and those who are seen (rightly or not!) as the 'anti-politician'. This handbook offers a series of ways to do that sensibly and constructively and not just as a further exercise in public opinion.

# How will we solve this problem? Introducing six principles.

We think there are six fundamental problems with the normal public sector approach to engagement, and these problems become your problems.

When you next think *"we need to consult the people on this issue"*, please think about -

**1** **Diversity of perspectives and life experiences is more important than volume of people involved.** *A few thinking is better than many shouting:* participation is not just a law of large numbers. Governments too often champion that they have spoken to thousands of people – but that engagement can be through a simple survey which doesn't result in people feeling heard. Think of the jury analogy earlier: perhaps a smaller number of people actually thinking is a better option, especially if the wider community trusts and identifies with that small group.

**2** **We need to openly share the hard problem.** You can't just sell people a solution, and we need to overcome a reluctance to say there are things that we don't have a clear solution for. Governments often consult on a draft suite of measures… and that draft doesn't change much as a result of the consultation. **Asking a clear question** should be a central part of how we do democracy beyond elections.

**3** **Too much opinion, not enough judgment. A better decision comes when people consider a range of information sources** and points of view, not just those they agree with. Think back to past attempts to involve the community and ask how many people supported their argument with facts or showed they had considered a range of perspectives. When a citizen process gives you their recommendations and supports it with the information they relied on, then you have a greater understanding of why they hold that view – helping you to respond and helping you to make a more enduring decision.

**4** **We need to balance insistent voices with invited voices.** Governments can't help but listen to the most actively interested. Offering a chance for comment or submission ensures that you hear from the most at stake, a group which is unlikely to be a representative sample of the wider community – and a skew in the reporting of what "the public" thinks about a policy. You need to have a balanced process to hear from both.

**5** **Participating is pointless because we think the decision has already been made.** It often is, so we need to start being clear about what aspects of the decision have been made, and which are the parts where they can make a genuine impact. Normal people need an incentive to participate (because noisy people will come anyway!). Tell them **what you will do with their decision (clear authority),** including dates and types of response, and you'll draw in a different audience.

**6** All this requires **time** and feeling rushed affects public trust. If you have a decade long problem, then why not give citizens six months to explore it and see how they would address it?

This may seem very obvious, but in most of our work around the world we find government consultations struggle to meet even one of these principles. The impact of that is that people take out their fury in other, unproductive, ways.

? **In a recent major decision where there was public involvement, how many of these principles do you think were met? What one change would have made the most difference?**



# What is required of you to make this work

This handbook doesn't give you a free pass. We need to ask two things of you,

**When are you willing to share the decision?**

**On that issue, are you willing to respond to any answer the community may offer, and to give that answer publicly and in detail?**

These are not loaded questions. There are some questions which governments may quite sensibly choose **not** to be willing to respond to at a certain time.

One example we have encountered with a Ministerial advisor focused on how to fund public transport. He noted that he had confidence in our ability to run a civic lottery to randomly-select a truly diverse group across the community. He had confidence that we would be able to have them engage with a broad range of contested sources. He had confidence that they would find common ground around a logical solution. His concern was that one logical solution they may arrive at would never be accepted by his party members. So while he was willing to share the decision, he was not willing to respond to some potential answers. It's a good reason for a project not to proceed.

This is the pair of critically important decisions for you to make before asking your department to act on these principles: what question do you want asked of the population, and what public commitment to respond to it (or enact it) are you willing to give?

# A new way to think: no “right” answers

There are few, if any, “right” decisions for a government; instead, the ideal decision is one that reflects a position of informed support from a wide cross-section of the community.

You have been elected to office because you have told your community you do have some clear answers. That’s absolutely fine: this is not a silver bullet mechanism for use in all situations. This is a complementary option for when you have a hard problem and can’t see a decision which will earn public trust.

Public safety and crime is one well-suited topic. If you don’t toughen laws, then you may be accused of being “asleep on the job” and “not protecting our kids and families”; but do the opposite and you can equally be attacked for being reactive and being the “fun police” and the “nanny state”. Hire experts to recommend policy and a cynical public will think lobbyists and donors wrote the important parts! You can’t win.

Energy policy is often difficult as our ‘public opinion’ way of thinking is to want everything to be renewable and for it to be free. If you have a strong preference for one policy approach, then that is a decision you should take as you normally would. If you are open to any solution, then you may benefit from asking your community how they would set the policy. Whether they answer this using pricing and taxing mechanisms, or subsidies or direct investment shouldn’t matter to you if you accept that there is no “right” decision, just one which works for your community.

**But to do this you will need to know the view of an informed public.**

# The big change: public opinion vs public judgment

Typically information is given to leaders in the form of public opinion polls (and voting of course). These are opinions from the community that are collected, often on short notice, without much *informed* thought on the matter. While this can have advantages in campaigning, it can make life difficult when in office.

This is not the fault of either the community or you as politicians – it is the result of the political systems we have designed. But the fundamental problem with this way of making public decisions is that it is responsive to the wrong input. Decisions are made responding to *public opinion* and not to *public judgment*.

Where public opinion measures the public's top of mind (1-2 minute) response to a question or issue, public judgment is their 30-50-hour response after having access to diverse sources of information, critical thinking and deliberation with other diverse members of their community.

**This combination of time, information and deliberation produces a deep understanding of a topic and the nuanced trade-offs involved in making difficult public decisions.**

They will likely find it confronting as they realise, they need to change their opinions. This is a good thing, as they will explain that uncomfortable experience to others.

This is the core of doing democracy better: we need more of the population to genuinely own the decision and not leave it to one or two people in office to own hard solutions on their own.

The distinction between public opinion and public judgment makes clear the problems with the way we currently 'do democracy'. Public opinion rewards the persuasiveness of an idea in an environment that lacks critical depth and breadth of thinking. It makes it difficult for elected political representatives to put forward complex long-term trade-off decisions because of the short-term electoral imperative. It ultimately leads to a more polarised and partisan political environment.

Creating a process that focuses on public judgment not only improves the contribution everyday people can make as a complementary mechanism for elected political bodies. It improves the ability for these political bodies to adequately deal with difficult decisions by adding a new voice to public discourse: that of the everyday person. Governments often hear from those representing lower income groups: this is a way to involve people actually affected not just those acting in their name. The wider community can tell the difference.

**The goal is to create community cohesion around trade-offs, compromise and consensus, giving society the ability to make hard decisions.**

Restoring the public's trust in political decision making can be achieved by letting people explore the trade-offs for themselves and being open to responding to their informed view.



# When NOT to use this approach

The golden rule is that you haven't already made the decision.

Secondly, the issue can't have reached such a position of controversy that the public no longer believe the sentence above! If you have, then people holding the opposing view will need to join you in supporting this **process** as a way of moving beyond the stalemate.

Thirdly, make sure you have time. Citizens who feel in any way rushed to a decision will think 'the fix is in' and be open to describing their mistrust.


By design, it is operationally impossible to get a random group of people to stand behind a decision they don't support: this is actually a key integrity measure. But this nuance can be lost: if there is a wide public belief that you will take a given decision anyway, then this is not the time.

**Thinking of your answers from a few pages earlier where you picked a hard issue:**

? **Have you already made a decision? Or have a single preferred result? Could you set that aside?**

? **Is the issue controversial – has it been on the front page of the newspapers multiple times in the last two months?**

? **Do I have at least 5 months before I need to make a decision?**

# Why use a Civic Lottery?

This remains the most common question we get from political leaders. Can't we do the process with people drawn from interest groups (who are making noise and need to be mollified)?

No.

A stratified (matched to basic population characteristics like age, gender, town) random selection of citizens remains the best way we have found to get genuinely representative groups of people together.

A key problem with a great deal of engagement and advocacy is that the noisiest voices dominate. Announce a new regulation for an industry and you will hear from those who are the most incensed by the decision and those with the most to lose: there is unequal power in all our societies and the government engagement process makes this worse. You should still make sure you listen to these voices! But we recommend adding a *counterbalancing* voice of a representative sample of the community.

Today, those advocates – often with completely opposing positions – come to your door, and they are very hard to make happy.

**Offering them the chance to make their case to a group of everyday citizens gives all a fair hearing and gives you the chance to hear a mediated view of where the community finds a fair trade-off between these advocated positions.**

This is both good policy and good politics.

For countries with the jury system, the jury tends to be a trusted institution – so random selection taps into that trust. Even without that, people trust random draws in lotteries and sporting competitions as something which is very hard to cheat.

Most important is what results: rather than elites and highly activist voices being the sole owners of a decision, random selection brings the casually interested into the decision. **Their calm voice sharing what they have learned is almost always missing today.**

Finding a way through the challenges every community faces involves making complex trade-off decisions that go beyond public opinion and wish-listing. A more informed understanding of the challenges and opportunities can expose what level of tolerance residents have for changes to their local community. The challenge is to hear from the full range of community members, stakeholders and generations, not just the special interest groups or noisy and active voices within the community.

When the community sees *'people like me'* engaging in high level co-decision exercises, they are significantly more likely to trust the complex trade-off decisions that need to be made. This empowers traditional representative political actors to put forward solutions to complex or controversial political problems. It complements their role in a way that improves the democratic process broadly and significantly.

? **Who (or what) does my community trust most today?**
e.g. in Islamic countries a simple draw done by an imam (random selection being expressed as 'chosen by god') has been seen as something most people will have faith in.

? **Do they trust anything involving random draws like lotteries or draws for football competitions?**

# What is deliberation?

At its simplest, deliberation involves participants in a discussion having equal chance to speak and contribute, balanced by the broadest access to sources of information.

**Deliberation is done by parliaments. When you face the hardest decision-making dilemmas, then make this same standard your expectation of citizens seeking to inform parliaments.**

Deliberation can be done as an individual or as a group. There are merits in both, but where sufficient time exists, we think the exploration of trade-off and compromise which comes from doing this as a group has the most value.

# What about the media?

Around the world, a very wide mix of media outlets have one thing in common: they are very sure that their readers and viewers would do a better job than the people in elected office. This methodology lets you agree with them: when you use a civic lottery, you are involving their readers. You should tell them this.

The media is an important partner because they help tell the story of 30-150 people and share it with a population many times larger. As a basic principle, you want the media to meet the citizens early on before they have had time to form strong views: the purpose of that is to show their readers that 'people like me' are involved in this decision.


Jay Weatherill, former Premier of South Australia at the South Australian Nuclear Fuel Cycle Jury in 2017.

# How can you deliver democracy beyond elections?

**1** Pick a long-term problem where public opinion is leading to a decision not being taken.

**2** Ask that your department produce a design based on some of the advice in this Handbook.

**3** Get in touch with us and we'll offer advice and can help connect you with a local partner familiar with the approach.

UNDEF
The United Nations Democracy Fund

FNUD
Fonds des Nations Unies pour la démocratie

# Chapter 2: For Department Heads - Are the conditions right for you to approve a Citizens' Assembly project?

Involving the community in public decisions can take many different forms. This handbook specifically takes a *good, better, best* approach. The principles should help you tweak what you do today and also suggests completely new formats you may not have seen before.

Not everything needs to use a long deliberation. There are many different circumstances where these types of project are **not** suitable. This is usually when the key principles (Pg. 38-39) would need to be severely compromised to make the project possible. In these situations, you can make other forms of community engagement more deliberative to achieve a better form of citizen involvement.

The goal with making surveys and town-hall meetings *more* deliberative is to channel the productive insight of the community in a way that is useful for you as a decision maker. Surveys are familiar to staff but not always useful. You can have quick successes by making small changes to your approach. By including the community in a **problem sharing** and **problem-solving** capacity you change the public conversation away from heated discussions toward finding common ground solutions based on an informed position.



# When not to do a major project

As mentioned, there are clear circumstances where long-form deliberations are either not suitable or not possible at all. Below are key criteria that will make or break a long deliberation. You will face a situation where an elected leader may ask for a jury having seen a successful example elsewhere. Here's when to say no.

## Red flag #1: Time

A considerable amount of time is required to properly operate and execute a long-term deliberative project. Participants often require more than 30 hours (much more than a single day and best when spread out with 2-3 weeks between meetings to help people slow down and think) to become sufficiently informed (this means that **the people** are satisfied that they have considered the right amount of breadth and depth of information sources), to discuss perspectives with one another and to form agreement on recommendations. This means that situations where decisions must be made quickly are not suitable for a Citizens' Assembly-style of project.

With less time, you can make scope or scale adjustments to provide limitations on the types of decisions you're asking a group to make. In these situations, it is important that you are transparent with the reasoning behind any scope limitations.

When people feel like they are deliberately being constrained or limited in any way, they become cynical or distrustful of the entire process (defeating its very purpose).

For example, you may want to have deliberative input into decisions around the construction of a new airport, train line or similar piece of major infrastructure. However, the decision has already been made to build the airport and you have a small time-window to complete a process. You may then limit the scope of the project to a specific part of the decision: a "how can we live with it question" which better reflects the part of the decision which is still open to being changed.

A *deliberative poll* that suggests some potential solutions require a shorter time frame and can capture changing positions on an issue, but it will not have the same impact of citizens' standing behind recommendations.

## For example, a government would like to address a budgetary issue:

- Surveys can gather views on values and priorities, over a period of 1-3 months.
- Wide community consultation can gather more considered and informed views, over a period of 1-2 months.
- A Deliberative Poll will gather considered and informed views before and after a period of deliberation, after some pre-reading and a weekend in-person involving expert presentations speaking to 3-4 alternatives being presented for consideration.
- A citizens' jury-type deliberation will get recommendations on a question such as 'How can we live within our means?', but will take ~3-4 months to plan and another ~3-4 months to operate.

## Red flag #2: Political context

This is not a last minute approach for where an issue gets very controversial: all the public will see is a government avoiding a decision rather than genuinely listening. Similarly, a project or topic clearly identified with a particular campaigned result makes a process untenable. Participants will see this immediately and the entire project will lose its legitimacy, undermining any effort to share the problem and likely also undermining any future deliberative projects.

Deliberative processes are centred on considered common-ground agreement that is undermined when they are placed as the focus of an entrenched political disagreement. Not because the participants are incapable of resolving an otherwise intractable problem, but because the additional pressure makes it more difficult for randomly-selected everyday people to patiently and appropriate consider all sides of an argument and reach agreement. The only exception here is where you can adequately address #4 below.

## Red flag #3: Size of the decision

Some decisions will impact an entire country or an entire state. These decisions should include people from all over and not just in major cities. For example, if you're making a decision on major infrastructure spending for the state but cannot run a process large enough to include people from regional and rural areas (where applicable) then you should change the format. Not including people impacted by a decision in the process is a sure way to undermine trust.



## Red flag #4: Beware of opposition parties opposed to the method

It is important that you include all political parties in the process. We strongly recommend briefings to opposition parties that brings them along with the process and explains their opportunities for contribution. Hostile opponents can impact the willingness of people to participate or increase the scepticism around commitments to implementation. Involve bi-partisan democratic reform groups or other trusted non-political organisations (this varies too much from country to country to give an example) to brief politicians from all sides, before a project is commissioned.

## Red flag #5: Heavy interagency dependencies

Some decisions will overlap with different departments or agencies. This will require that **both** CEOs are onboard. If citizens' cannot get answers to their questions it will erode trust in the project. If you commit authority to recommendations you do not have cooperative approval for and ultimately cannot implement recommendations that are made by everyday people, you will undermine trust in both your own government but in deliberative processes more broadly.

## Red flag #6: Uncontrolled result

You must be prepared for **any result.** You will not be able to shape the final decision of the group and so must be prepared to **respond to all** (not necessarily accept) possible recommendations. If the government cannot accept this then limiting the scope of the format is essential.

# Common blockers

Below are some common reactions that come up when trying to start a long form deliberative process. We've provided answers that will help you explain the positive and complementary role these types of processes can play in public decision-making.

## Common Blocker: "It won't solve the problem"

**Answer:** If the methods that you have previously used have worked, then you have no need for a long form deliberation.

But if you are stuck and your previous approaches haven't yielded a conversation that is helpful and considered then it is worth trying something new. This process (if done fully) will bring unusual voices into the room, and start to unpack the issue in more depth.

New perspectives bring new ideas forward that can assist in easy, quick and implementable options and provide insightful long-term guidance.

You will receive highly informed recommendations to explore – giving elected officials a starting point to work from and providing strong guidance around what the community wants.

## Common Blocker: "Loud activists will still get in the room – how will you handle this?"

**Answer:** People look for support and validation of their ideas from others. In a Citizens' Assembly process, you are unlikely to get multiple loud activists in the room. This is because of the nature of stratified random selection. This dilutes the power from the activists as they will be involved broadly in proportion with the wider population (*part* of the conversation, not *all* of the conversation).

As well as, others approaching the topic with critical thinking and patience.

As well as this, the format mixes people together, involves critical thinking and the patience of supporting answers with evidence. The size of the group and the facilitation approach will influence how these personalities are included in the dialogue.

## Common Blocker: "We don't have the resources"

**Answer:** Long form deliberative democracy is a big commitment in time and money. There are options to reduce the overall costs which can include the use of online platforms (webinars) and deliberative polling.

Time required by the organisation to prepare all the background documents depends on the amount of available information. Whilst it is a large up-front commitment of time, these background documents are invaluable in the future as it allows the organisation to draw upon their challenges and opportunities and build community understanding of these.

The up-front investment has a massive return on investment over the next 2 – 3 years as the Citizen's Jury recommendations unfold in the community.

### The long-term benefits include:

- Increased trust between elected officials and community
- Greater shared understanding of challenges and opportunities
- New, highly informed and considered ideas for implementation (that are well supported by the broader community).

## Common Blocker: "We don't have the mandate from above"

**Answer:** You cannot begin a deliberative democracy process without the support of decision makers. It is important to invest the time before commencing to educate and promote the benefits (short and long term) of the deliberative process. Take the time to get senior decision makers on board before you embark on a process like this. It must be given the influence it needs otherwise it will damage your organisational reputation and send the project backwards.

## Common Blocker: "It is too risky – we can't control the response"

**Answer:** Whilst elected officials cannot control the jury/ panel recommendations, they can control how and when recommendations are implemented. It is important that each recommendation is highly-considered by decision makers and is given time and appreciation. Some recommendations are just not possible to implement (legislation, policy, etc), but this must be clearly and transparently communicated back to the citizens.

Often, elected officials will find the participants' response is very reasonable, rational and considered. Randomly selected groups involved in deliberation approach tasks fundamentally differently than do self selected activist groups – and this new voice is not to be feared.

It is also beneficial to have decision makers attend the project as observers to ensure they understand the time, effort and commitment of the participants. This will highlight the struggles participants face weighing up pros and cons, the challenges and considerations they make. Decision makers will see how each idea is developed and explored, and not just thought up out of nowhere.

**Common Blocker: "Too technical: everyday people won't understand"**

**Answer:** It is important to use many forms of communication of information. Written, graphic, verbal and smaller group conversations can be used to ensure that the technical aspects are unpacked. You will be pleasantly surprised at how everyday people can understand quite technical information when they are given the time to understand it properly. They also often ask very good questions about the everyday work that helps the organisation to think differently about an 'old' problem.


**Common Blocker: "Decision makers have been elected/appointed to make decisions – it's their job and they can't be taken out of the decision process"**

**Answer:** Deliberative processes are complementary to existing political systems. This means that decision makers are involved in setting the parameters that participants work within and they ultimately make the final decision as to whether or not they will implement the recommendations of a deliberative process. They remain central to the decision process.

**Common Blocker: "Stakeholders and interest groups need to be involved"**

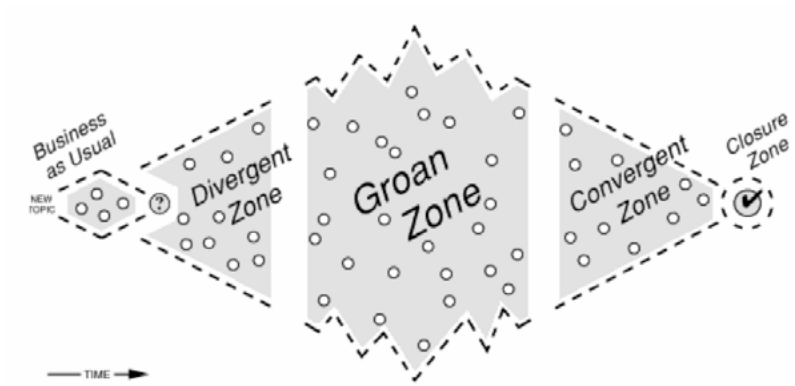
**Answer:** Stakeholders and interest groups have multiple avenues of involvement. They can be part of a reference group, can contribute information, can provide their own answer for the consideration of the jury, can have the chance to recommend speakers or even present to participants, and they can always observe the process as well.

**Common Blocker: "We can't share all the 'confidential' information required"**

**Answer:** You cannot undertake a deliberative process if you are not prepared to completely share the problem. If you still want to open up a specific part of the process you will need to be very clear about why some parts are confidential or off limits. Transparency is key here (as it is throughout the process).

# What to expect

Deliberative processes require a type of "coming to agreement" within a group that can be difficult to picture if you have not seen it before. This graphic is a commonly used explanation of what you can expect over the months of people meeting from Day 1 until they hand you their recommendations.




Sam Kaner – Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making

It compares what 'business as usual' might look like, with what a longer deliberative process and the 'coming to agreement' process often looks like.

## The steps a process will go through include:

- Information gathering, interrogating and judging (the divergent zone). This will involve participants gathering initial information, hearing from speakers, considering information gaps, requesting more speakers and ultimately deciding what information is important to their decision.

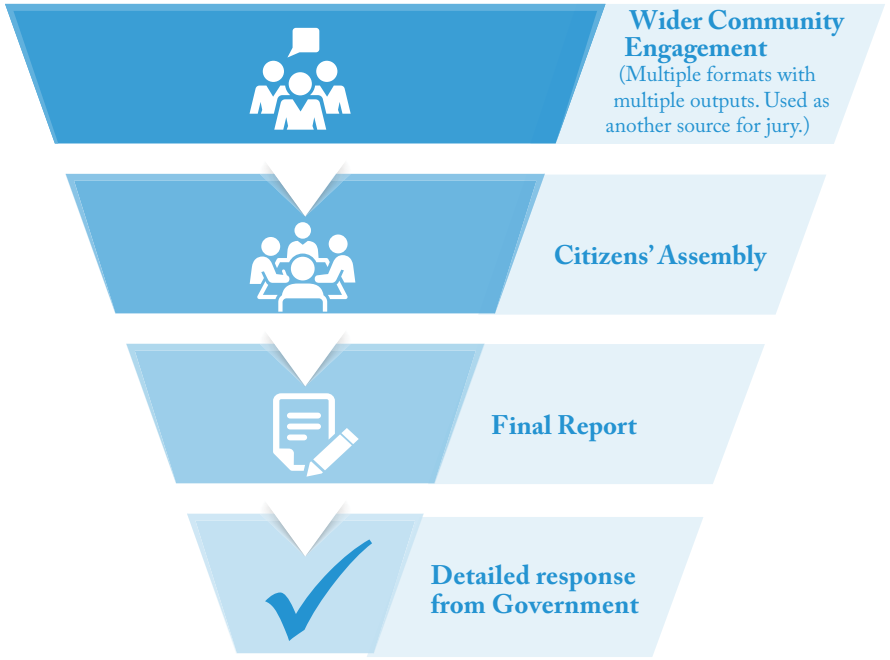
- Information consolidation and theming (groan zone). This involves participants stopping with the information gathering phase of the process. It is known as the groan zone because it's difficult: they now need to start making decisions around initial recommendations, the exercises change from asking for more information to participants deciding how they are going to answer the question.

- Decision making (convergent zone). This involves the group deciding how they are going to answer the question and coming up with their own recommendations, supported by the reasons and evidence that led them to this position. They will need to make decisions around what the group does and does not support.

- Coming to agreement (closure zone). The group will finally need to come to agreement on what recommendations will be in their final report.

# Where does this fit with wider community engagement?

Your wider community engagement strategy should feed into this process. The more information participants have the better informed they will be when making their decision. You can precede your deliberative process with some wider engagement that gathers views and values on the topic to feed into the deliberations. This is essentially a funnel-like process.




# Why don't all projects look the same?

We want people to make a decision based on information – the quality and types of that information will vary by topic. The sheer range of decisions governments are required to make and the different inputs they require provides a wider range of engagement options. The context of each project will not only ultimately inform the end decision itself, but the processes that are used along the way. These vary from how many people are involved in the decision, how much time they have to make the decision and what level of authority or complementary role they play in already established political institutions.

# What role will my team have?


Your department input will come at the beginning of the process. Your team's primary responsibility is producing the background information resource that shares the problem from your perspective. It should share the problem, what currently happens, what ideas you have for what could happen and who you see as impacted by the decision. Err on the side of too detailed and too long: it is an information kit to be read over a long period, not a brochure that needs to be read in a single sitting.

Your team will then have the opportunity to present this information along with answering any immediate questions. From this point onwards, your involvement will be citizen controlled. If needed, they will ask for your input through the facilitator.

## This most often takes the form of :

- answering information requests
- providing reports
- giving feedback on initial recommendations

# How do different contexts shape projects?

You should think about three main factors.

## 1 Social norms

What methods are available to you will be heavily shaped by your own social and cultural context. We're writing this book for the 190+ countries around the world that make any form of public decision. What is normal in Australia may not be normal in Spain and what is obvious in Peru may not be clear at all in Mongolia.

You need to consider many different aspects of how people interact with one another normally in your country before you embark on dramatically changing the way you involve them in political decisions.

### Some of these considerations will include:

- Are people used to **speaking openly** in front of others? What about on issues affecting government or government decisions? Whether or not you have these norms or even protections will impact the ability for people to disagree with some political ideas. This will dramatically impact the way deliberation occurs and your ability to get people to participate. If, for example, someone cannot speak out about a law they disagree with then deliberation cannot happen. You should consider using types of engagement that will let you gather information from people in a way close to existing norms.

- Do men and women to have equal responsibilities and opportunities in public life? This will determine how you include men and women in sharing public decisions. You may have to think of ways to ensure women have an opportunity to contribute while being sensitive to the role they would otherwise play in public life.

- What experience does your country have with democracy? Are democratic norms widely accepted in your country? Is your country only newly 'democratic'? If democracy itself is only new to your country, then you may experience less push back against innovation and changes to how democracy is done. Whereas, if your country has a long history of democracy and voting, you may find that there is considerable resistance to the idea of changing how democracy is done.

- What is your country's literacy rate? If your country has a low literacy rate, then you will need to take into consideration how you can inform participants through methods that involve in-person educating or shared learning exercises that bring people along with learning through a process (such as videos).

- How is disagreement often handled? What type of cultural norms might prevent face-to-face disagreement or questioning? Are there social hierarchies that might mean some demographic defer to others for answers or advice? You will need to balance these considerations to ensure the room can work together to find solutions.

## 2 Geography

Rural communities and urban communities most obviously require different processes for reaching community decisions. City-based projects heavily benefit from ease-of-access to venues. This means that participants can reliably take the time to travel to a venue. Comparatively, rural communities may be disparate and require many hour-long drives to reach a suitably central venue for in-person deliberation.

These two dramatically different experiences might mean that rural deliberations run on back-to-back days to accommodate for the heavy time-investment travelling to and from (and may require additional funding for overnight accommodation for some participants). While urban or suburban communities can have more regular but spread out in-person meetings. This also reveals a dynamic where-by people have different relationships to others in their community. People in the city often do not know each other while members of small communities have more local exposure when participating in a public process.

## 3 Resources

The size and capacity of your project will be shaped by the resources available. Larger projects are, unsurprisingly, more expensive.

**However, there are other resource restrictions that might make long form deliberative projects not possible, including:**

- access to skilled facilitation;
- expert input;
- the ability to get a diversity of people in the room for deliberation.

The resource constraints will mean that you will have to choose a method for community input that suits your resource availability.

Activities that encourage people to mix with one another and exchange perspectives are highly effective for a range of reasons: its more interesting, they hear viewpoints other than their own, and they naturally start to attempt to seek commonality and common ground on the matter being discussed.

# Topic selection

Share the **hardest** problem. This should motivate your thinking whenever you seek community input to a public decision. Openly describing the task, specifically what makes it difficult, starts the conversation around how to find a solution. This is different from presenting a possible solution and only receiving feedback on that one option.

Rather than asking people what services they would like, you should frame the question around the difficult task of making trade-off decisions.

For example:

**We need to find a balance between price and service which is fair for everyone. How should we do this?**

Instead of:

**What services do you want from your water utility?**

The first example clearly shares the problem, balancing costs and services. The second example neglects the trade-off in favour of giving the participants a chance to wish-list what they want (ultimately not very useful information without costings).

**When making a decision on a topic for a long deliberative process, your focus when choosing a topic should be on sharing difficult issues that no one would otherwise touch. This is where you will have the greatest benefit.**

**Aim for topics with contested sources, difficult or complex trade-off choices and issues where the time frame requires long-term thinking.**

*"Can we agree that this is the scope of the remit?"* is a question you may ask at the outset of a heated project. If the decision is controversial, you may need to include a process around agreeing on the scope of the project. You will need to consider if you are prepared to have this conversation. In a situation like this, you may want to ask the participants *"This is the remit, can you live with it?"* This will be useful in setting the limits on what the group considers but with dramatically change what happens on Day 1 of a process. Any jurisdictional issues should be resolved by providing clarity and setting expectations about what *can* happen.


> **In Geelong, Australia, a process asked participants for 'practical recommendations' on the structure of their local government. These were immediate changes that could be made and passed through parliament.**
>
> **Anything that went beyond this scope was considered an 'aspirational' change and would require more work by the government generate support to pass the legislation, however, this allowed the participants to make recommendations in two different categories: practical and aspirational.**
>
> **This distinction is often useful in opening up an entire decision while ensuring answers to immediate decisions."**

# Political authority

The level of authority given to a process links directly to the level of commitment shown by the participants. The more people can see that their decisions will have an impact (and not be consumed by bureaucracy) the more seriously they will allocate their own time.

There are varying degrees to which authority can be given to a process. A good response is to give a **detailed, direct public answer** to each recommendation. A clear public record of the participants' work and the seriousness with which their effort is being taken both affirms their commitment and places enough weight that it cannot be shied away from. Public responses to the recommendations should be a transparent explanation of how the government both understands and plans to implement any recommendations. If for whatever reason, the government intends to differ from the report, it must make a public explanation for why – or face the public criticism of not listening to an informed community decision. Anything short of a commitment to provide a public response runs the risk of being too shallow of a commitment.

A *better* response is to make a **commitment to implementing** the recommendations. This level of empowerment makes it clear to the group that they do not need to worry about the political feasibility of their recommendations. They can focus on solutions to a hard problem.

The *best* response is to **create an institutional role** for everyday people in public decision making. This has most recently been done in Ostbelgien where a permanent citizens' chamber of parliament has been established.

# Your budget

How to rapidly cost a project.

## Invitations

Printing:_____

_____

_____

Postage/Distribution:

_____

_____

_____

_____

PR (letting people know):_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

## Facilitator

1-2 per 35-40 citizens

Number of days_____

x Rate per day_____

Preparation time:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Do you want them doing this too?)

## Information

Prepare & publish kit:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Publicity available website:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Stakeholders and internet groups:

_____

_____

_____

## Venues & Catering

Room hire:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Catering (days x people):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

## Citizens

Daily payment_____

x number of days_____

## Overnight

Services to a university or independant group, esp. useful around recruitment:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

# Chapter 3: For Project Owners - Your Key Design Decisions

# Introduction

In any engagement, your starting point for any project is to isolate and identify a 'problem issue' where there is a role for engagement and involvement in the public decision. It sounds obvious, but there are some forms of engagement where government does not want to share the decision, there is significant political risk, or the goal is simply to inform.

This problem-based approach to decisions allows for governments and decision makers to find the right *democratic tool* in order to solve their issue – different approaches for different problems.

## The issue could be:

- exposing a single, specific trade-off dilemma (e.g. limited funds so infrastructure spending needs to be prioritised; or addressing growing obesity in the community) or;
- multiple competing dilemmas (e.g. an issue like climate change where one part of the solution involving energy mix or pricing creates new dilemmas around equity of impact, loss of jobs in affected communities etc).

Note that neither of these two challenges is either just informing the community or getting sign off feedback on a planned solution. You should think about which democratic practice is most suitable to your problem. Does it require deliberation? Or does it require a different type of democratic practice? It will be useful to take a look at the Red Flags on pg 61-65 as well to see if any apply to your situation.

## An example:

For an electoral reform project where you are asking your community how many people get elected in each district, you have many options. Take the specific issue of whether or not people would like multi-member wards, single member wards or no wards at all. If you do not have much time, you can use a survey that asks for responses on principles, values and priorities.

What is important to you in your local political representative? That they live near you? That they have the same views as you? That they have a similar lived experience to you? These questions ask for responses that are not direct yes or no answer to a technical question. They still give you insight into what is important to the community without limiting the framing.

If you do have time, you can use a long form deliberation that involves members of the community assessing a diversity of relevant sources before making a common ground decision on the various aspects of an issue. Using the previous example, this might include an electoral authority, governance or politics academics, former politicians, people who thought about running or were unsuccessful in a previous campaign being asked to help inform citizens and exposing them to a mix of views.

? **What is the problem?**

? **What is hard about it?**

? **Who is impacted?**

? **What information do people need to read to get a good understanding?**

? **How many active interests need to contribute a perspective? List them.**

? **What solutions will they offer?**

? **Is a potential solution being missed? Why? Who would offer that view?**

Solving hard political issues with randomly selected people, time and deliberation requires unique process design that takes into account the context of a decision. There are a number of core elements that focus on who is involved in a process, what decision is being made, what question is posed, and the logistics of time, place, size and scale.

Each element is unique to a specific project, however, there are general principles and guidelines that apply. These guidelines inform which direction or aspect of each element is changed to accommodate contextual elements.

This table compares design decisions for a long-term project. It shouldn't be read as a list of either/or decisions that you must make. Instead, it highlights the challenges or risks associated with each choice.

| Design Choices | | Trade-Offs | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Participant Selection** | **Self-Selection** | **Advantages:** More participation, more voice for advocates, less likely that advocates run against process | **Disadvantages:** Process populated with loud voices, unrepresentative of affected people, 'usual voices' that are often already involved in other processes |
| | **Lottery** | **Advantages:** Easier to involve a mix of people from all across the community, includes unorganized voices/perspectives and those that are not normally involved in engagement, deliberation is often easier among the less intensely interested | **Disadvantages:** Lower participation, higher chances that excluded advocates will run against the process if not engaged in another way |

| Design Choices | | Trade-Offs | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Participant Selection** | **Stakeholders** | **Advantages:** Decisions more likely to be effective because they link more closely to those in positions of power, often the people and their positions are known well in advance | **Disadvantages:** Less likely to include ordinary people and perspectives, less likely to include new/different solutions to those that have already considered |
| | **Public** | **Advantages:** More likely to include ordinary people and perspectives, more likely to consider new/different solutions to old problems (no history or locked in views) | **Disadvantages:** Less likely to be effective with fewer linkages to stakeholders or to be dismissed by powerful vested stakeholders, positions are unknown going into the process which for some means higher risk |

| Design Choices | Trade-Offs | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Size** | **Larger** | **Advantages:** Easier to demonstrate broad public inclusion, easier to scale to larger jurisdictions | **Disadvantages: :** More challenging to construct high-quality deliberation; more expensive |
| | **Smaller** | **Advantages:** Easier to construct high quality deliberation; less expensive | **Disadvantages:** More challenging to communicate the involvement of all parts of the community; more difficult to scale to larger jurisdictions, harder to select a representative sample |
| **Duration** | **Longer** | **Advantages:** More time for learning, deeper deliberation, more opportunities to connect to wider community, longer means more commitment and ownership of the outcome | **Disadvantages:** Not suitable for crises or short decision timelines; more expensive; requires greater time commitments from participants which can bias toward those with time. |

| Design Choices | Trade-Offs | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Duration** | **Shorter** | **Advantages:** More suitable for crises or short decision horizons, less expensive, easier to include those with less free time | **Disadvantages:** Less learning, shallower deliberation, fewer opportunities to connect to wider community |
| **Remit/task** | **Broader** | **Advantages:** Often more significant, easier to connect complex issues together | **Disadvantages:** Can impose high learning demands, produce scattered or shallow deliberation, more difficult to reach decisions, can conflict with jurisdictional powers or produce broad conclusions that are less likely to be actionable |
| | **Narrower** | **Advantages:** Easier learning, deeper (but narrower) deliberation, more likely to produce specific actionable results | **Disadvantages:** Participants often resist narrowing complex or difficult issues; tasks may seem less significant and thus reduce the commitment of participants |

| Design Choices | | Trade-Offs | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Resources** | **More** | **Advantages:** Easier to organize and run high quality, well-supported processes | **Disadvantages:** May drain resources from other worthy purposes; can cause public officials to avoid processes just because they seem too expensive |
| | **Fewer** | **Advantages:** Easier to justify public expenditures, easier to conduct more processes on more issues | **Disadvantages:** Processes that are poorly supported more likely to fail, with reputational damage to both the kind of process and the organizers |

The fundamental question, before consideration of any of the core elements, is whether or not the specific issue that is to be addressed is appropriate for citizen-based deliberation. This takes into consideration the type of issue and what the answer looks like (refer back to the problems-based approach from the introduction – Pg. 8).

Ideal topics or issues focus on **trade-off decisions** that require a public to deliberate on and form a common ground view for what the community's ethical or moral position should be, their preparedness to pay (and to what level) and thus their preferred intent for the direction of a public decision.

This means that questions that get to 'What is fair?' are often the focus of a project. Applying 'fairness' to specific topics requires members of a community to stand behind and justify the decisions they have made to other community members.

## Think of some public decisions in your community. Some starter questions should be:

? **What trade-offs exist in the decision?**

? **Who is the affected community? Make sure you think broadly here.** For example, the community impacted by a decision on public housing will include those who are tenants, those who are on a waitlist and the wider community who contribute resources.

? **What makes the decision difficult?**

## We will now step you through your eight main decision points as you create a design.

Decisions around siting an airport or its operating hours are a good topic for deliberation. As people factor in the complex tradeoffs around cost and fairness of impact a challenging political decision can give way to a common ground solution.

# Step 1: Remit or 'The Question'

This is your most important decision. You need to focus people on the task at hand rather than a general "have your say" or comment on the problem.

Even at a simple online engagement level, you should still pose **specific** questions to the community to get feedback on an issue. These questions should match to the type of engagement you're undertaking. Surveys and online feedback should not ask complex questions about a recommendation that require a lot of background reading to properly answer. These questions should aim to bring out values and priorities without asking simple yes/no or direct questions. The most valuable feedback is *why* the community wants something, not strictly *what* they want when given a limited range of options or with little to no information to inform themselves.

Having decided an *issue* requires a deep level of citizen deliberation and involvement in the decision (e.g. Citizens' Assembly or Jury), the next step is deciding on the right way to write the question. When framing this inquiry, question or remit, the chosen words need to be broad in order to be open, but not so broad that participants are side-tracked into irrelevant discussions. If it is too narrow, it will confine the group's thinking and the group will, understandably, demand explanations—why are we confined to this or that?

**You should start with a problem definition.**

**? What is the problem you are trying to solve?**

E.g. You may be weighing up increasing bus fares, but the fundamental problem is 'How should we pay for public transport?'

**? What solution do you need from participants?**

**? What answers will be most useful?**

**Your focus here is to be clear about what problem you are trying to solve. You can then build a question that focuses on this problem rather than trying to come up with a good question from scratch.**

## A good remit saves time, a poor remit can be saved with extra time.

This example is from a project with limited time that necessitated a focused remit.

The Government is drafting a Gender Equality Bill. The setting of quotas for public sector organisations is a key part of this.

### What Gender Equality quotas are fair?

### How can they be best implemented?

Remits often specifically benefit from a simple statement to set the scene and give the reader some context – by definition this is not what they think about every day. In this case, clearly stating that the Government has made the decision that a Gender Equality Bill is being developed draws the discussion on the decision to be made and away from *'should we have a Gender Equality Bill?'* This focuses the discussion and takes political attention away from the process and its participants.

Embedded in the question should be any constraints or trade-offs that have been encountered. Parameters are also carefully and fully described. Confusion and ambiguity must be avoided, and language kept simple – so test yourself how this could be answered 'off-topic'. Here's an example of a remit for a water utility that worked extremely well and included the trade-off, expressed as a need to find balance between service and price:

**We need to find a balance between price & service which is fair for everyone. How should we do this?**

A good remit passes the "barista test"—anyone sharing a coffee can hear it and understand why it's hard, what is required and what the focus is.

Remits *should* be open; this gives citizens freedom to have their say rather than be boxed in. Processes are more valuable to everyone the more information a government or government agency can get from an informed and deliberative group of citizens. This means that open questions that allow participants to consider creative or aspirational answers tend to be more useful than narrow questions. For example, two different remits on the same topic:

**Should we build a second airport?**
**or**
**How should we meet our air travel needs?**

The first remit narrows the decision to a yes or no decision on a second airport. The second remit includes any considerations of a second airport within other recommendations on air travel more generally. With the second remit, it is likely that the participants will make recommendations on the need for a second airport, but they are also given the room to recommend other solutions – whether this focuses on having a number of smaller airports to improve accessibility and sharing noise, or alternatively, increasing taxes to reduce demand. Open questions generate the most insightful recommendations.

This is more useful for everyone involved as it neither constrains the community's involvement in the problem or limit the extent of valuable advice they can provide to decision-makers. A survey process may ask about values in the decision. Online engagement might ask who they want as experts and what questions they have for them. All of these options go to principles about diversity of sources and not rushing to a decision.

Remits become very important for a deliberation. This is not a consultation exercise where communities are asked for input or feedback. They are addressing real challenges and have to provide viable recommendations. **They need a task.**

Of course, one of the impediments to a viable remit may well be obstruction by a decision maker who does not want to admit that a problem exists. This is a key qualifier for a project from the outset – *that elected representatives feel they can safely say there is a problem.*

# Step 2: Time

## How much time does the community need?

Time is going to be the factor that most shapes what type of process you use to involve the community in public decisions. Put simply, if you do not have much time, you should opt for a short turn-around survey or online engagement that gives you as much useful information as possible within the timeframe. With a little more time, you should make use of a wider community engagement model, where you can produce a booklet that shares the problem and seeks community feedback on possible options and priorities. With even more time, you can look to longer form deliberations that involve everyday members of the community over a few months. Most policy problems that warrant the investment in a jury will be complex topics, so we need to allow people the time to educate and immerse themselves in the topic.

Each of the above options can be combined (into a sequence or a funnel). The main limiting factor here is that running many linked processes obviously comes with added costs.

## How many days?

Typically, deliberative processes take around six months to deliver the project from beginning to end – as a guide, start from the idea that citizens need at least 40 hours in person, meeting four to six times to meaningfully deliberate and find common ground without feeling pushed toward a pre-ordained outcome. Some topics will be less complex than others, making them more suitable to shorter lengths of deliberation. Complexity can be managed by altering the remit.

## How long are the days?

What is normal where you live? Days are roughly the length of a working day. This depends on what is possible, how many meetings are happening and what content is being covered. It is common to have a weekday evening 'meet-and-greet' session where participants meet one another, the facilitators and the sponsoring agency before stepping in to full day sessions for the rest of the process.

What matters here is that participants have enough time face-to-face to ask a lot of questions, receive and think about answers, discuss things with experts (some of whom they choose), explore information, form recommendations and write their own report. This means that a process could have three 3-hour sessions and two full-day sessions and still find the right balance between information exploration, deliberation and recommendation forming. The important factor is that citizens feel sufficiently informed and had enough of a chance to discuss it that they 'own' the decision. It will be generally be above 30 hours.

## What if they need longer?

It is not uncommon that, at the end of a project, the participants ask for more time. This happens when participants feel a significant commitment to the quality of their output but have run out of available time. Adding additional sessions to a project can be difficult because of the inflexibility of deadlines.

One approach is to ensure that the participants form basic recommendations on the most crucial aspects of their remit before the close of the second last scheduled session. This then gives them the ability to schedule another session that suits as many people as possible (while not being too far disjointed from the final session). It is crucial that as many people attend additional sessions as possible, and that this is noted alongside any additional recommendations because it is a clear differentiation in the process for how the two sets of recommendations are made. An approach here can be to schedule two short sessions with the aim of the whole group attending at least one of the two meetings.

That a group will need more time becomes clear at the end of the second last meeting. If the group is not close to draft recommendations or they are stuck on finding agreement on a core issue, then preparation should be made for both additional sessions and focus on resolving at least core recommendations by the end of the final scheduled session.

There are different forms of deliberation that can reduce the time frame from start to finish. These processes, like Deliberative Polls, manage a trade-off between the added time in the room and the efficiency of the process. Different contexts will sometimes make this preferable, such as when the decision must be made quickly and where there is widespread agreement that the pool of potential answers is limited. In this case, some deliberation is better than none.

Time should not be compromised on. Processes and decisions that are designed around long periods of in-person deliberation heavily require the full time commitment. Reducing the time allowed leads to rushed decisions and undermines the trust building between government and the participants.



# Step 3: Size

## Or, "How many people do we need?"

The starting point for this consideration is working backwards from the decision from the perspective of an everyday person: *how many people do you need to see were involved?*

Trade-off decisions and the kind of in-depth engagement that suits them, require people take the time to consider competing viewpoints and deliberate together. The depth of this engagement makes it suitable to small groups. Conducting a deliberation with over 300 people is possible but has many challenges that outweigh the benefits. (In practice it involves breaking the group into smaller units of 30-40 people for the majority of the time and bringing them together once they have explored sources and key areas of agreement as a smaller group).

A lot of people use the term 'mini-public'. It indicates an assembly that is a population-in-miniature, as these people will 'stand in' for a much larger population. The aim is to satisfy an important deliberative democracy principle: representativeness – "is someone like me a part of the decision?". We think this is best achieved through **stratified random selection.**

Stratified random selection is where you have categories or criteria for who needs to be in the room. This means you are randomly selecting people, to the point where you have enough of a certain type of person. If I require half the room to be made up of male participants, then I will randomly select participants until I have enough men. From that point onwards I will not accept any more men because my quota of men is full. This is the stratification aspect.

A *degree* of self-selection still occurs with the stratified random selection in a civic lottery because potential participants are free to decide whether or not to accept the invitation (unless somehow participation is compulsory in a similar manner to a jury service). Despite that, a cross section of any community drawn this way is far more representative and diverse than would occur through an open call for participation and is less open to influence from special interests. You will mostly reach people you've never seen before.

Selection processes do not need to make claims of being a perfect statistical match (in a survey there is a fixed pool of answers so it's easy to test repeatability; this is harder to answer with an open extended process where people freely respond). You should instead aim to achieve a *descriptive* match to the population: aim to get **"people like me"** involved in the decision, something that you can consistently achieve with groups of 30-45 people. Think of this in terms of people with different jobs and lives.

This group size is large enough that it captures a wide descriptive diversity while also being manageably small enough that the facilitation task does not become too complex. You should resist the tendency to equate size with legitimacy. More people might mean more diversity in the room, but it also makes it harder for the facilitator to get people to deliberate an find common ground. Put simply, reaching common ground between 300 people is much more difficult than with 30 people. And if you're one of 30 people you tend to take more responsibility for your role than in a large group where you can hide.

# Step 4: Scale

## Or: How big is the decision? How many places do I need to go?

Linked heavily to the number of participants is the scale of the consultation. Is this a local council decision or a state-wide decision? Decisions that cover broad geographic distances or areas that have acutely different experiences of a policy problem may warrant two (or more) separate processes.

An example of this is a decision that was made on infrastructure across a state with a capital city, other towns and rural areas. There were two distinct juries, one Metropolitan and one Regional. Two different juries allowed the government to get informed recommendations that were heavily situated in their geographic contexts which goes to the *'people like me'* criterion.

National conversations will almost always include more than one group of participants. This is crucial to capturing the experiences and descriptiveness of the entire country. How many groups and where will depend on the problem and the way it is experienced differently across a state or country.

Scale can be a way of diversifying the geographic voices in the room. This is important for large decisions but sometimes not necessary when the type of decision does not evoke experiences that would not heavily differ from one community to the next. This is not to say that all communities are the same, but that state-wide decisions on planning and energy may speak to different experiences and therefore require different types of scaling.

In terms of exactly *how* to scale, you should first think about the total area or amount of people impacted by a decision. Their geographic or experience diversity will help inform if you need to facilitate groups apart from one another before bringing them together for a final decision. Some examples of what this might look like:

- A large metropolitan city requires a broad strategic plan for its future growth. The city has 3 distinct regions or areas within it and these are clear experiential markers for levels of current and future growth. You may want to run groups of 30 participants in each of these areas individually, before bringing all three groups together for a final meeting that combines the outcomes of each of the distinct groups.

- A state-wide decision needs to be made on energy use and production. Electricity use and production impacts different parts of the state in different ways and so it is important that those from rural or regional areas have an input as well as populated metropolitan centres. You might want to identify 3-4 key regions of the state that have distinctly different life experiences (i.e. Metro, Rural, Regional 1, Regional 2). These different groups would meet on their own before feeding in to a combined deliberation. This ensures discussions are held all around the state, participants do not regularly need to travel far and ultimately a considered response can reflect the state-wide experience.

**?** **What sort of jobs do people in the community have? (think in terms of broad categories – mainly blue collar or mainly white collar? Is there a dominant industry? e.g. in a city a café owner may see 'people like me' in any other hospitality or service business, so it doesn't need to be overly specific.)**

**?** **How many 'places' do people in the community come from?**



# Step 5: Do you need Civic Lottery?

## Who should be involved?

There is a role for active voices in different types of engagement, especially when exploring the exact nature of a problem. There is also a role for a representative sample of the community to contribute to decision making. Think about **both** from the outset.

Governments inevitably hear from the noisiest voices who insist on being heard. In contrast, society trusts 12 randomly-selected people on a criminal jury to assess evidence, discuss their views and reach a consensus recommendation because random selection generates "people like us". Random-selection is a process that gets beyond the enraged and the articulate because the public would perceive them as having a bias.

Random-selection may not suit every form of engagement or decision making. It fundamentally improves the community's trust in a decision, but sometimes what makes a decision difficult is not the trust in the decision but reaching agreement between two parties. This means that you should consider whether or not you require a representative sample of the community to either get beyond regular voices or contribute a different type of legitimacy or authenticity to a decision.

## Some alternatives to random selection include:

- **Blended** - Curating a blended group by inviting key stakeholders from both sides of a decision into the process by giving them a set number of places within the group of participants.
- **Self-selected** - allowing participants to openly self-select their participation, this improves the inclusivity of a process but increases the risk of having more active voices in the room.

# Step 6: Demographics

## What does your community look like? Who needs to contribute to the decision and give a perspective to citizens?

You need to think about exactly *who* you involve in whichever engagement you opt for. Surveys and online engagements generally want to hear from as many people as possible. There are some occasions where you might want to hear from a specific part of the community on a topic that impacts them uniquely (think location specific decisions or youth advice on a problem that impacts them more than others).

If you're looking to hear feedback or recommendations on complex trade-offs or even prioritisation, then you might want to hear the judgement of a representative mix of the community rather than gathering everyone's quick opinion. If you aren't going to involve as many people as possible, you need to think about what type of people need to be in the discussion so that everyone else can trust the process.

## How do you get a representative group?

Simple demographic filters (age, gender, location) are used to help stratify the random sample to represent broader demographics. You can use more filters, but a balance is required. Over-engineering who is in the room can lead to accusations of 'fixing' or having too much control over the 'random' nature of a civic lottery. At worst, actively 'excluding' people from the process will undermine trust in the process. There is one exception here: we suggest that anyone who is in political office, or actively involved in the decision from within government, be ineligible for participation.

With this method, you are not trying to fit every single 'type' of person into the room. This would mean bringing everyone in the entire community into the room for each meeting. People share their lived experiences with people like them.

### What simple characteristics will lead to most people seeing someone like them involved?

The demographic filters that are included are important. The above simple filters are recommended to achieve *broad* descriptive representation. This is because other types of representation are taken into consideration through the design process so that strictly who is or is not in the room as a participant is not the limit of representation.

You should think about what your community looks like. Beyond the simple filters, will there be anyone who would not be in the room? How do people identify themselves in your community? E.g. in cities this can be commercial and residential taxpayers. In regional areas this might be earning your income from agricultural or not.

It is important to balance both descriptive representation and minority representation. With a group of 30 people, it is likely that minority voices will be small (much like they are in the wider community). You may choose to remedy this by increasing their stratification quota, which would change the way the room descriptively represents the community. You might also overemphasise their role in the wider community engagement that occurs outside of the deliberative process. It is ok to specifically run a separate process to get their view in the room – you just need to be sure to do it in a transparent way.

Another way of including minority voices and experiences in the deliberative process is to include them as information sources from the outset (as presenters or by answering questions). This ensures they have a presence in the room, without playing a role in shaping the group in a desired way. The less 'shaping' or modification of the stratification the better. People are rightly cynical of any attempts to adjust, steer or exert influence over a process.



# Step 7: Information

### What information do participants need to know in order to make informed recommendations?

This principle addresses two aspects about information sources and the way they interact with each process.

- Diversity of information
- Importance of giving citizens' control.

**Primarily, diversity of sources is key.** Breadth of information increases the ability for participants to weigh up different points of view, but it also ensures that all the voices within a community or on a topic are being heard. This is critical because it complements the diversity of people in the selection process with a diversity of viewpoints in information sources.

Information and judgement are required in equal parts to reach decisions, and while the judgement of everyday people has been shown to achieve very high levels of public trust it is imperative that the method of provision of information does not erode that trust. This means that information you provide to participants cannot be a brochure of government successes, or even worse, marketing for a result. It also has a large political impact in terms of the public perception of the process.

Allowing citizens to control what information they do and do not receive is fundamental to building trust into any process. With limited time, surveys or online discussions that ask people for questions and sources that they trust will be of higher value than making space for general and unsupported comments of opinion. Citizens should be given the power to choose who they hear from. This addresses a mistrust of experts but also ensures they do not feel led into a particular outcome because of any impression their information sources were restricted.

## Participants should have access to three core pillars of information:

- government,
- stakeholders or active voices,
- citizen selected sources.

## These core pillars of information are reflected in the following sources:

1 **A baseline-information kit.** Written in plain language, this should candidly describe the current situation, issues and challenges, and the known options available for taking action. This should not be a brochure, instead it should err on the side of providing *too much detail* rather than too little.

Specifically, it should identify and address the issues around the key points the citizens are asked to make recommendations on. As the information kit is the **primary resource** for the participants – it is crucial that the information clearly **shares the problem** at hand without shying away from detail or data.

## The kit should cover:

- the problem and what answers are needed from the participants,
- the context of the process,
- what is on the table,
- the current approach or thinking on the topic,
- a deep set of data required to make a decision,
- information from other government agencies whose responsibilities interact with the decision.

You will need to decide who is responsible for producing the briefing booklet. Typically, this is done by either the government agency who is sponsoring the project or by an independent institution such as a university. **Each of these has pros and cons.**

| Source | Pro | Con |
|---|---|---|
| **Government** | Clear statement of the Government's view and position on the current problem – allows a transparent 'sharing of the problem' outlet for the government. | Is perceived as having a 'bias' because it is from the Government. This means that people may be suspicious of information included or left out. |
| **Independent** | Perceived as 'independent' source of information because it is not from the decision-maker. This means that participants might be more trusting of the information within. | Perception of independence can lead some readers not to properly interrogate the information or seek a diversity of sources – often equating independence with a lack of bias. |

Ultimately, the goal here is to provide a comprehensive starting point for participants. Answering as many questions as possible and providing as much of a baseline set of information as possible. Having a document from 'government' with a clear indication that that is the source can allow participants to get a piece of information where they are sure of the possible biases or blind spots within it.

Information kits for citizens' jury-style deliberations should aim for 50–200-page documents that explain as much of the problem as possible. The more information that you can provide at the outset, the more time you save with initial questioning in the room. Information provides the baselines knowledge for informed and considered discussion.

**2** **Submissions from stakeholders** will provide a complementary set of information to round out perspectives on the topic. Stakeholders are often invited to submit their perspectives on the different concerns through the convening of stakeholder information sessions and public submission processes.

Government should help identify key industry and community stakeholders and seek their contribution in the room. Importantly, these stakeholders should represent many different perspectives on the topics. They're invited to speak to the participants on the first day – providing an example of the diversity of views.

### Stakeholders can provide information in a number of different mediums:

a. Written
b. Record a video
c. Invite to speak
d. Contribute to a list of other potential sources

3 Central to the open, non-leading nature of what these processes focus on is to simply ask participants **"What do you need to know and who do you trust to inform you?".** This question should be posed to participants as part of their deliberations – after their first two weeks of discussion they might also be tasked with a refined version of the question – *"What more do you need to know to make an informed decision?"*.

This question enables participants to identify information gaps present in what they have read or heard from and choose who they trust as a source of that information. Remembering that not all information requires an in-person speaker, a useful criterion is that often quantitative information can be answered specifically and in writing, while qualitative responses are better given in person and explored through questioning (though this is not a hard and fast rule).

It is vital that this information is both **diverse** and **deep.** It improves their questioning of sources and ultimately saves the group time otherwise spent asking questions that could have been clarified in the pre-reading. Diversity of sources and perspectives is also crucial for the processes' political credibility. Presenting all sides of the topic and openly sharing the problem alleviates any public perception of the Government selling a result.



# Step 8: Final output

## How can you get useable recommendations?

Thinking about the type of answer you need informs Step 1 (Remit) but it will impact what kind of output you receive.

The final recommendation report **should be written entirely by the citizen participants and un-edited by anyone** (this includes the facilitation team, the oversight team or government staff). The unedited form of the report lends significant authenticity to the final document, which increases its popular legitimacy as a product of everyday people (compared to polished consultant documents for example). It is okay if it is a bit rough – this shows its authenticity.

There many different ways in which this report can be completed (there are 'get started' templates included in this handbook). What is important is that participants are given the opportunity to start writing from a blank page. This freedom gives them assurance that they can say whatever they would like, contributing to their autonomy in the process.

When writing recommendations, a good framework to have in mind is that participants (topic depending) should aim to give recommendations on what to do but not how to do it specifically. The guiding principle here is **clarity of intent**. Rigid recommendations can become counter intuitive in flexible policy spaces that can sometimes produce consequences that are inconsistent with the principles or values that inform why a group made a specific recommendation. By allowing government the flexibility to use whatever tools they have to address a recommendation, the participants can focus on clarity of their intent while ensuring this intent can be implemented in future, changing environments.

**Specific report writing activities, guides and prompts are available in Chapter 5.**

# Step 9: Government response

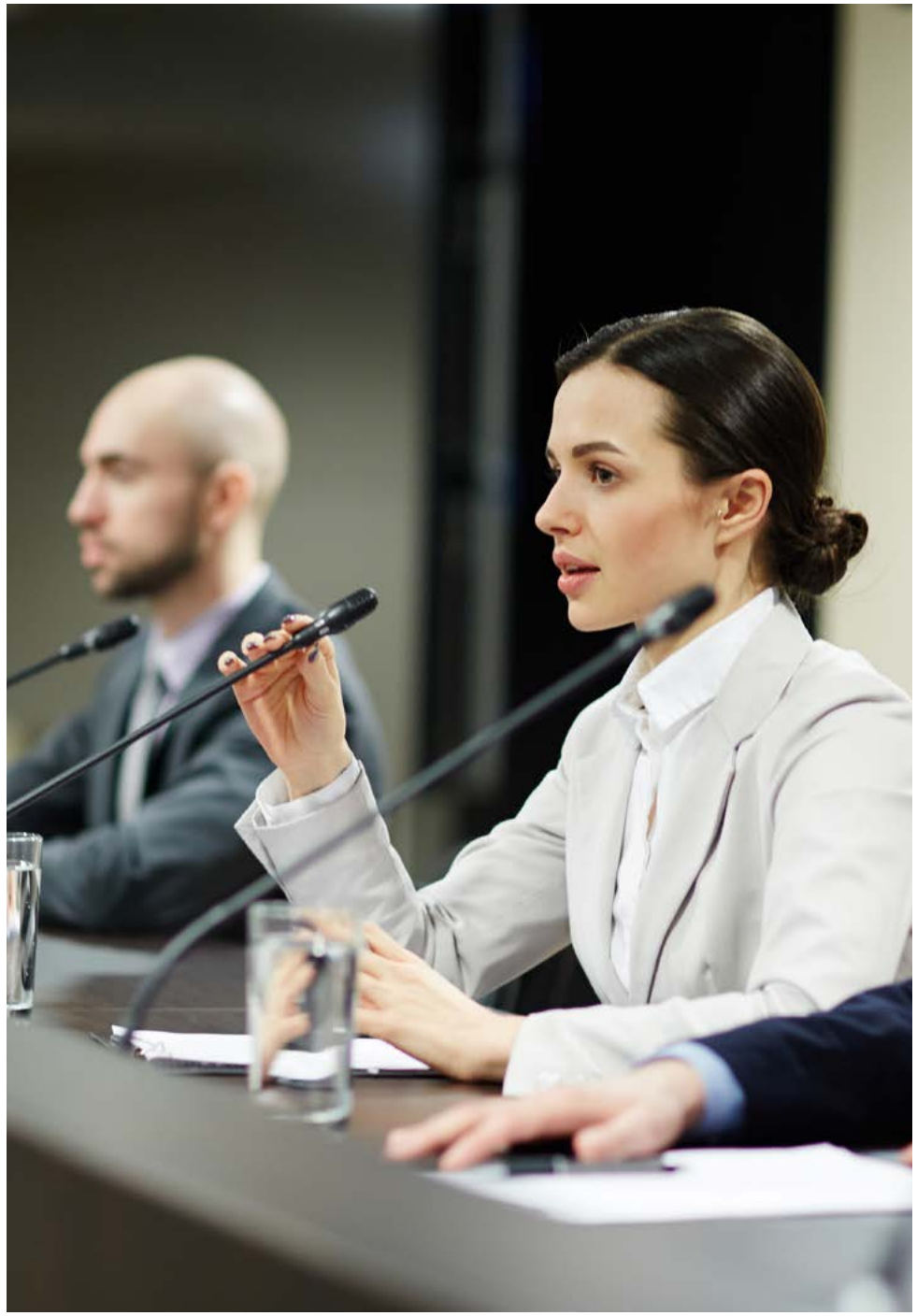
## How you will you respond?

Your response will be shaped by the commitment you make at the beginning of the process.

## You should consider:

- Assume their report is immediately public.
- Making a response in person.
- A response document that details an official position on each recommendation and closes the loop for participants.
- Updates on the implementation of recommendations.

It is important that you continue to communicate the progress of each recommendation. At first this might be a closing the loop meeting that might see you inviting participants back for an update 6-months later. You might then opt to maintain regular email contact with participants at key points of implementation. This approach is valuable for government because participants can continue to give insight into how recommendations could or should be implemented. It also continues to bring participants into the decision-making process ensuring they remain advocates of the outputs.



# Success

## What does success look like?

Success is sensible, useful and usable input from a diversity of community reflected in the final decision made by government. People from all walks of life tell their wider community how they were able to find common ground in an answer to a difficult question.

The ultimate success of a longer deliberation rests on a group of randomly selected everyday citizens standing behind recommendations they wrote themselves. People outside of the process need to see something clearly fair, where someone like them contributed to the decision.

It is not dependent on the *result*. Whatever the participants decide, success is indicated by their ability to articulate, with clarity, the intent in their recommendations and the reasoning behind them.

## Different measures of success:

| Measure | What does it mean? |
|---|---|
| **Participants stayed until the end** | This is a strong measurement of the integrity of the process. Early on, participants will get a sense of the commitment from government and the integrity of the project. If they sense that something is not genuine or that it is a waste of their time, they will opt out of the process. |
| **Participants felt empowered by the process and provide common ground recommendations to government** | This is a strong measurement of community support for common ground solutions to a problem. It successfully demonstrates that there is a path forward for the community that shares wide support. |
| **Participants endorse recommendations and government commitment to media and community** | This communicates the participants' sense of ownership of their report or recommendations and the role they now play alongside government in implementation. |
| **Participants publicly stand alongside elected representatives to endorse recommendations** | This similar demonstrates the participants' ownership of their output but in a way that places a much stronger emphasis on the role of everyday people in the decision. |
| **Politicians act on recommendations** | Contribution of citizens clearly helped leaders to lead |

# Chapter 4: For Project Teams - How to deliver

# Introduction

By this point, you should have already decided on a **topic** and decided on which methods or **formats** you're going to need. You now need to make key functional decisions for how to operate a project.

**? What method/s are you using?**

**? What key pieces of information do you need to prepare?**

Surveys and the broader community engagement process you choose to complement any deliberative process require different types of decision making. The best way you can improve these methods is by changing the type of questions you ask. You should be asking questions that frame the decision around priorities, values and trade-offs (away from a rush to solutions in the absence of answered questions and background information).

Asking wish-list questions in surveys does not give you very useful information – everyone wants more services and lower taxes. Asking participants what they *prefer* gives you information about what they would like, but weights this against competing interests to help you decide what to do first.

Design decisions are more important when it comes to town-hall meetings and long deliberative projects. This is mostly because you have more things that you can change and control to give you a more robust outcome, but also because, in-person meetings have more variables.

# Step 1: Recruitment

You should now have a clear idea of who needs to be heard from a mix of **insisted** voices and **invited** voices. You now need to have a plan for **how** you're going to reach and involve those people.

?

**Who are active interest groups? (These will form the basis of a Stakeholder Group).**

?

**Who is the overall community impacted by a decision? Think broadly first. Then think of types of people. For example, a public transport question may affect a whole city. But within that city people who work in a particular part of the city may be a distinct audience: this helps you know what voices you want in the room.**

Recruitment decisions have already started with the design decisions of **scale, demographics and random-selection.** (Steps 3-6 in previous chapter).

In-depth deliberative processes rely on recruiting a much smaller number of participants who are descriptively representative of the community. We recommend that you use a process of **Civic Lottery** that filters participants by the four standard variables discussed earlier:

- Age
- Gender
- geographic locality
- Optional: add a demographic indicator to ensure a mix of income and education levels. Geographic locality will address part of this. In Australia, we ask people if they own or rent where they live. Look for a question people are happy to answer honestly.

This approach is not claimed as a statistically perfect method, instead it delivers a *more* mixed and diverse sample than any other community process. The strength of this selection process lies in the wider community clearly seeing *"people like me"* in decision making positions – descriptive representation in this way fosters trust in the group and any decisions they end up making.

**A note on gender representation:** in some cultural contexts you may need to navigate social structures that would typically see a male represent the household in public decisions. People who have delivered projects where this occurs manage this by explaining why you are choosing a woman and not a man for this project – and that if you do not get a balance then the project will not work at all. This combination of a clear explanation of *why* and that if it does not happen then a decision cannot happen, will help you achieve a diverse group.

# Step 2: Invitations

Who you want in the room will shape how you invite them. Reaching a representative sample of the population will require an approach that **reaches as many people as possible** and gives them a good reason to come. Separately, reaching out to active interest groups to involve stakeholders will require you to think about who a stakeholder is and how best to reach them.

**?** **Who do you need in the room?**

**?** **Who is a stakeholder or active interest group?**

**?** **How can you best reach your target demographics?**

**?** **Who is normally missed?**

All invitations should clearly explain the topic and where people's input will go. A good learning from principles is to have an **achievable task:** perhaps this is agreeing a list of questions for an agency rather than a general outpouring of opinion. You should be framing the topic around problem solving. This means you can set the tone for the meeting as one where participants give you their views to help you solve a problem. This can be applied to any meeting even if not a Citizens' Assembly. Too often, town-hall meetings are venting exercises where the only productive exercise is people getting things off of their chest. This is because happy people do not turn up.

With long-form deliberations, it is essential to avoid only reaching those who would normally participate in community engagement processes. It can be hard to do, so think about behaviour and incentives.

To generate a large enough pool of people from which to randomly select, you should work with government agencies that have access to a large database to extend a physical invitation to a random sample of the community: addresses are more important than names. If you cannot get access to a large database through a government agency then you may want to ask postal company or shipping service if you can get access to their physical address database.

## A physical invitation has a number of benefits:

- Hard-copy invitations have a longer life;
- They look more formal and important (people feel valued and that they're needed);
- They're easier to accurately distribute to homes.

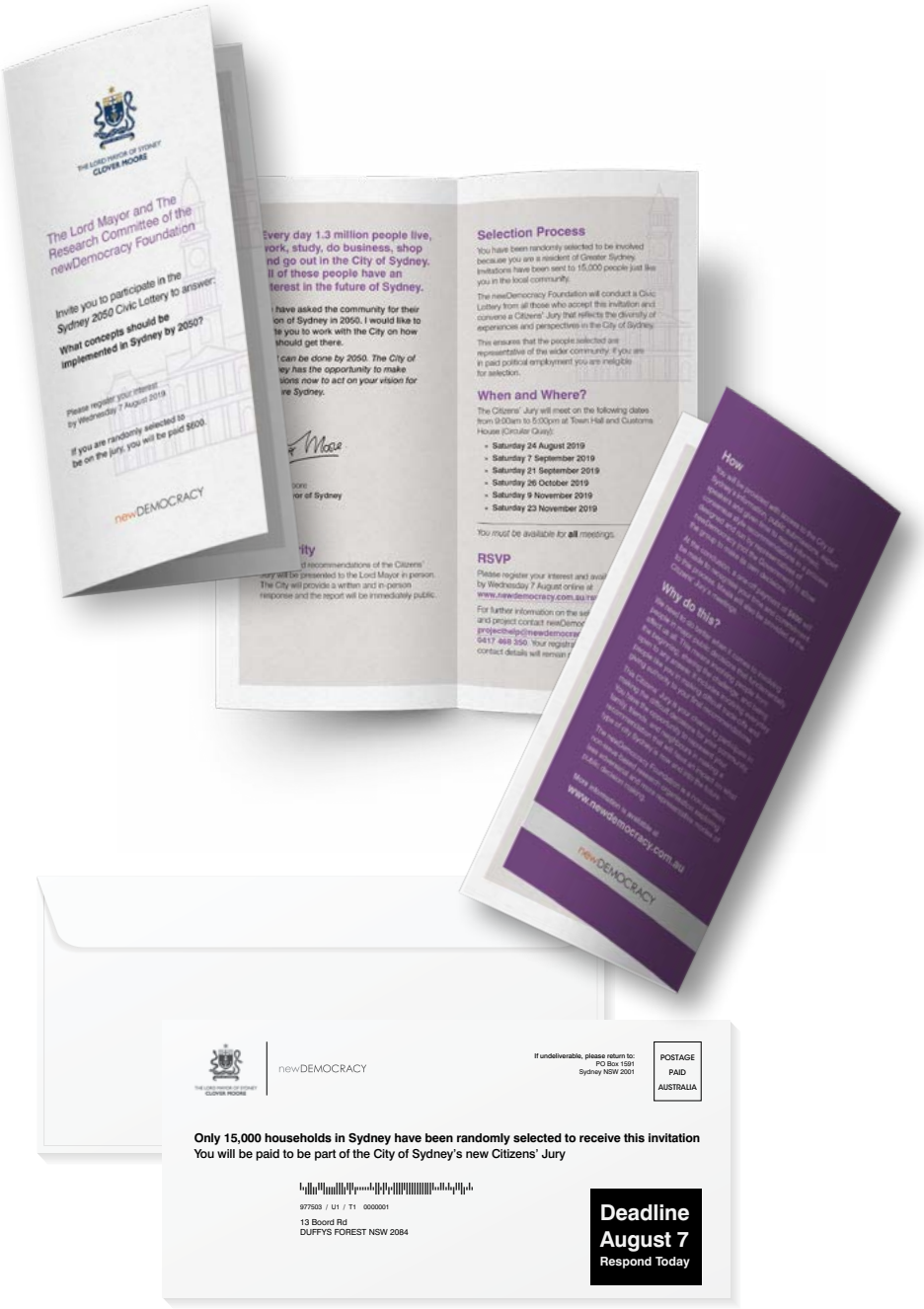
If you cannot use a physical invitation (it is an expensive method), you can use cheaper methods that involve in-person postcards for quick name and phone number taking at local events – you just need to emphasise it is only for that random person by writing their name on it at the point of distribution. You can also make use of either digital recruitment or phone recruitment (may also be expensive).

With digital recruitment (email and online advertising), it is too difficult to accurately randomise who receives an invitation. This means that you will not have the benefit of a first round of randomisation in building a sample to pick participants from. You should instead aim for building as big of a pool as possible **and then** drawing randomly from this big group of available people. Selecting from many people will dilute the chance of only choosing those whose who are impacted by or involved in a decision.

## You should always use the largest available database to access your random address sample.

? **What databases will cover the community affected by the decision?**

? **Do you have access to land titles? Electoral rolls? Postal databases?**




The primary emphasis here is on the physical addresses and not the names of the people who may reside or own the property. The aim is to simply get the invitation to the people that are there.

When faced with insufficient response rates from specific demographics, you can add to your sample with specialised targeted databases. Trade schools, sports teams or a University are great to target youth response rates as an example.

## How many invitations do you need?

The total number of invites is often between 20,000 to 30,000 for a population of approximately 500,000 and for a group size of 40-50. Population size and group size change how many invitations are required but, the key factor determining this number will be your expected response rate and the availability of demographics to draw from. It is much harder to get fresh RSVPs than it is to send out extra invitations at the outset.

These invitations will be sent to random physical addresses with no name, so as to not discriminate between those who own or rent their property. From this round of invitations, an **expected response rate of 3-5%** will return a pool of approximately 500-1000. The size of this pool in combination with random selection reduces concerns of the narrowness of the reach and any skew that might entail.

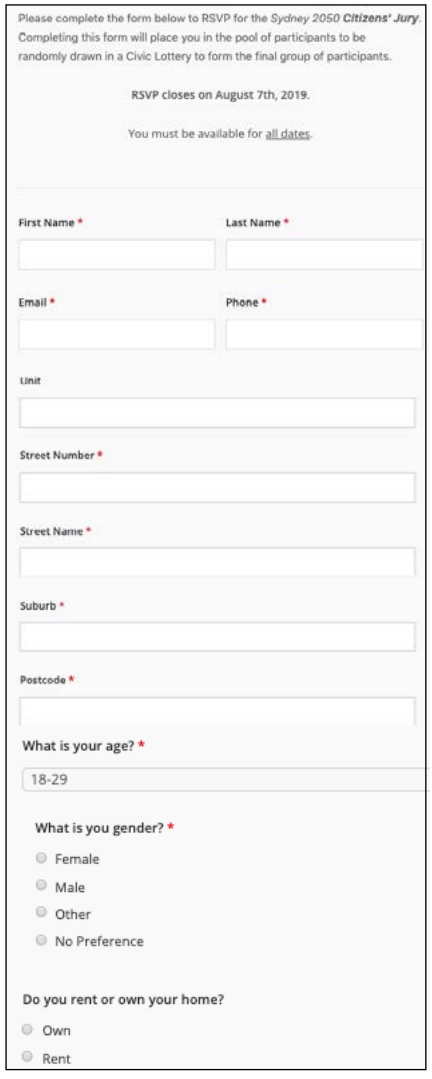
**?** **What it would take for you to answer and register your interest?**

The invitations should have the authority of a Minister, Mayor or visible government representative, emphasising the remit task they are being given and commitments made. Emphasis should also be made to note the independence of the selection process as outside the control of the sponsoring agency or department.

One useful technique is to place an emphasis on the element of doing democracy better. This will be different depending on your local relationship to democracy. However, this link to democratic reform can be useful for capturing people's interest; it builds upon underlying dissatisfaction or distrust with public decision making by reinforcing the uniqueness of this opportunity.



# Step 3: Doing the final selection




The easiest method for registering RSVPs is with an online form. This should have a simple URL and let people complete the relevant demographic information as well as their name, address and contact details. You should also provide the option of people calling or SMS'ing in (if they do not have the internet). Another option is to include a mail-in form with the invite, that allows people to post back their RSVP.

Once your RSVP period has closed, you should do the random draw. There are a number of different ways to do this. One of the easiest is by using the RAND() function in Microsoft Excel.

**With this method:**

- Give each RSVP a random number between 0 and 1 – using the RAND() function. Try typing =RAND() into Microsoft Excel. Now copy that down for some rows in a column.
- Excel will keep regenerating a random number in that cell, which we don't want to have happen. So just copy your column of numbers and **Paste Values** to just keep the random numbers, not the formula.

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Suburb | Postcode | Age | Gender | Home | Education | Random | Selection |
| 2 | Suffolk Park | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Own | High School Diploma | 0.3958359 | |
| 3 | Byron bay | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Own | High School Diploma | 0.7155131 | |
| 4 | Mullumbimb | 2482 | 18-29 | Female | Own | Postgraduate Degree | 0.4778845 | |
| 5 | Coorabell | 2479 | 18-29 | Female | Own | Postgraduate Degree | 0.5561473 | |
| 6 | Brunswick H | 2483 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | High School Diploma | 0.2728877 | |
| 7 | Byron Bay | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Postgraduate Degree | 0.1558312 | |
| 8 | Ocean shore | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Postgraduate Degree | 0.3562551 | |
| 9 | Bogangar | 2484 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Undergraduate Degree | 0.3084182 | |
| 10 | Goonengerry | 2482 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Undergraduate Degree | 0.4340491 | |

- Then sort the entries by the random number (either ascending or descending, as long as they are sorted).

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Suburb | Postcode | Age | Gender | Home | Education | Random | Selection |
| 2 | Bangalow | 2479 | 60+ | Female | Own | Postgraduate Degree | 0.0006366 | |
| 3 | EUREKA | 2480 | 40-49 | Female | Own | Undergraduate Degree | 0.0080141 | |
| 4 | BRUNSWICK | 2483 | 60+ | Male | Own | High School Diploma | 0.0109706 | |
| 5 | Possum cree | 2479 | 50-59 | Male | Own | Postgraduate Degree | 0.0115839 | |
| 6 | Ocean Shore | 2483 | 60+ | Male | Own | Undergraduate Degree | 0.0124746 | |
| 7 | Byron Bay | 2481 | 30-39 | Male | Rent | High School Diploma | 0.0126875 | |
| 8 | Byron bay | 2481 | 60+ | Male | Own | High School Diploma | 0.0163298 | |
| 9 | Suffolk Park | 2481 | 50-59 | Male | Own | High School Diploma | 0.0180183 | |
| 10 | Sunrise | 2481 | 40-49 | Male | Rent | Undergraduate Degree | 0.0220035 | |





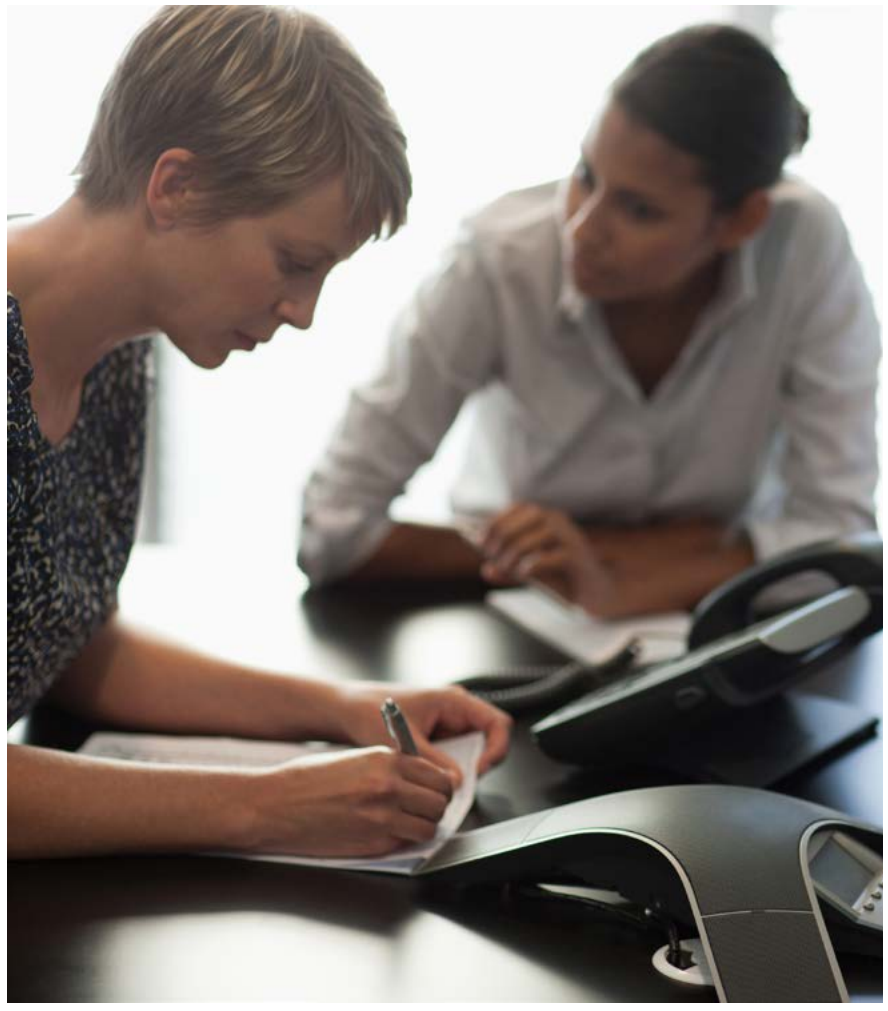
- Then sort again by your demographic criteria. This will group your entries in demographics, sorted by the random number.

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Suburb | Postcode | Age | Gender | Home | Education | Random | Selection |
| 2 | Suffolk Park | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Own | High School Diploma | 0.3958359 | |
| 3 | Byron bay | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Own | High School Diploma | 0.7155131 | |
| 4 | Mullumbimb | 2482 | 18-29 | Female | Own | Postgraduate Degree | 0.4778845 | |
| 5 | Coorabell | 2479 | 18-29 | Female | Own | Postgraduate Degree | 0.5561473 | |
| 6 | Brunswick H | 2483 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | High School Diploma | 0.2728877 | |
| 7 | Byron Bay | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Postgraduate Degree | 0.1558312 | |
| 8 | Ocean shore | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Postgraduate Degree | 0.3562551 | |
| 9 | Bogangar | 2484 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Undergraduate Degree | 0.3084182 | |
| 10 | The pocket | 2483 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Undergraduate Degree | 0.3439394 | |

- Then begin to choose your participants, taking the first random person and continuing to choose one from each demographic until you have filled up each 'box'.
- Just type "Yes" next to each person so you can see who has been drawn."

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Suburb | Postcode | Age | Gender | Home | Education | Random | Selection |
| 2 | Suffolk Park | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Own | High School Diploma | 0.3958359 | Yes |
| 3 | Byron bay | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Own | High School Diploma | 0.7155131 | |
| 4 | Mullumbimb | 2482 | 18-29 | Female | Own | Postgraduate Degree | 0.4778845 | Yes |
| 5 | Coorabell | 2479 | 18-29 | Female | Own | Postgraduate Degree | 0.5561473 | |
| 6 | Brunswick H | 2483 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | High School Diploma | 0.2728877 | Yes |
| 7 | Byron Bay | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Postgraduate Degree | 0.1558312 | |
| 8 | Ocean shore | 2481 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Postgraduate Degree | 0.3562551 | |
| 9 | Bogangar | 2484 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Undergraduate Degree | 0.3084182 | |
| 10 | The pocket | 2483 | 18-29 | Female | Rent | Undergraduate Degree | 0.3439394 | |

**Note that we are selecting the 'first' from each 'category' – in this instance, Females who own their home or rent their home are different 'categories'.**



Those who are selected should then be contacted by an email seeking a **confirmation in writing** from the participant. The email should match the authority of the invitation and be clear about why this is a good use of their time. It is often useful to emphasise any reimbursement, childcare or meals that will be made available.

You should also **contact each participant by phone** prior to the first meeting to build a strong personal commitment to participating, noting that once underway we cannot backfill for non-attendees. People are much more likely to attend when they've spoken to you on the phone prior, when compared to only having answered an email.

Remember any exclusions you are considering for your project. People who are in political employment or have any form of involvement in the issue should opt out of selection. Outside of this criterion, it can be hard to draw a firm line for who is or is not eligible for selection. One nuanced way of determining eligibility is to ask a potential participant to reflect on if it were public knowledge that they were involved as a participant would people think that it was fair or not?

This handbook is not an Excel course so we won't list everything here, but it is also good practice to match the database of randomly selected addresses (or phone numbers) to the people you have drawn – just to check they really were randomly drawn and haven't just pushed in! You can do this with the VLOOKUP function in Excel which checks to see records match.

# Step 4: Reimbursements

You must decide whether or not you will reimburse people for their participation in your processes. Depending on the time commitment, payment will generally encourage more people to participate than otherwise. This changes the type of people who RSVP from those with the time and financial stability to contribute to a broader group of people – especially younger people and those with lower incomes. You may want to mirror the amount people in your country are reimbursed for jury duty if this is common practice.

There are a number of different ways in which you may want to reimburse participants. You might want to think about the structural support systems you can make available to participants to help them attend. This might include an option for child-care, a cash reimbursement for costs incurred attending or in some cases it might be a basic needs provision.

**We strongly recommend paying participants and making this clear on the invitations.**

# Step 5: Stakeholder Involvement

In any public decision, a small group is directly affected. This group will include: those who the decision directly impacts, those working in the sector that supports those affected, and any external groups who will feel flow on effects.

? **Who will be impacted by a decision?**

? **Who are the active voices in this space?**

? **Who would you brief on your topic?**

There are a number of ways of including them meaningfully in the process. This ranges from deep participation in a Stakeholder Reference Group where they will get an understanding of all parts of the project and see that the design is fair and the recommendations are clearly in the citizens' hands; to simple attendance at a single briefing to understand how they can be heard. Remember, the decision on how much to involve these active voices is simply informed by the goal "how can we reach a trusted decision?". If there is low trust, then these active voices will need to be more involved in order to trust the result.

## Broadly, their contributions will fall in the following categories:

- Appearing as a speaker to give a perspective/ expert view.
- Offering a written answer or response to the question the jury are going to answer.
- Recommending other sources to read or speakers to hear from.
- Attending as Observers to satisfy themselves (and tell others!) that the process was fair.

You can involve stakeholders in your broader community engagement. There is much more room for their involvement in town-hall meetings. This could range from a conversational role on stage to their help in fielding specific questions on their related issues. Many traditional formats can draw on deliberative principles (in this case, diversity of information).

It is important that stakeholders have a genuine opportunity (often through multiple formats) to make their case to the public, and in order to accommodate the participation of stakeholders, you should use a number of approaches to integrate them into deliberations. **Here are a few examples:**

As a minimum, an **early briefing** for stakeholders is worthwhile, to enable them to understand how the process will work, check for biases and any objections, and to ensure their participation is appropriately scoped. It is also a helpful (and common) practice to have stakeholders on a "Steering Group" to satisfy themselves (and the media and the public) first-hand that the deliberations are not stacked against them.

This stakeholder group can also perform an oversight role throughout the life of a project – first by reviewing the initial design document and providing comment on many of the design and functional decisions.

Once involved in the planning stages of a process, stakeholders can then be incorporated into deliberations in several ways depending on the scope and needs of the project.

## The most common approaches to stakeholder involvement include:

- drafting briefing documents,
- providing expert testimony,
- evaluating recommendations and findings,
- recommending lists of speakers with important knowledge or perspectives

A starting point for any deliberation is establishing a list of expert speakers. Stakeholders can be requested to nominate speakers and asked, **"who are the voices that citizens should hear from?"** You should always provide randomly-selected citizens with the opportunity to request further expert speakers in order to address all unanswered questions.

You should also *always* make space for stakeholders to attend deliberations as observers; not to interrupt or interfere with citizens' deliberations but to observe the robustness of the process.

A truly successful process is one in which not just citizens, but policy makers and even polarised stakeholders with very different points of view are able to say, "we respect the process, we can see randomly-selected citizens have considered all perspectives, and we accept their decisions."

# Step 6: Oversight

The oversight and operation of a deliberative process is often undertaken by an independent body. Sometimes this is distinct from the facilitation team to act as a truly independent source of scrutiny (contracted facilitators or community engagement practitioners can be seen to be delivering results because of the way they are paid to complete a task – while this generally isn't the case, it is the *perception* and the way it undermines trust that matters). This is dependent on the scale of the project. Large public decisions will be subject to heavier scrutiny, sometimes necessitating independent oversight.

Whoever is undertaking operational control of the process is responsible for the delivery of the project from start to finish. This is ownership of everything within this handbook, cover to cover.

## This requires the organisation to play two roles:

1. To act as an intermediary between the participants and government to maintain the integrity of the process and the trust of the participants.

2. To manage the government's expectations between desired results and the outcome of the process.

## The oversight role is ultimately about:

a. Neutrality

b. Citizens' owning the process

This can be performed by a university, a judge or an independent organisation. The role should place a primary focus on transparency and seek to build trust in the integrity of the process for any outside observer.



# Step 7: The media

The media is an element that you will likely not have much control over. You should be as welcoming as possible to any media outlets who can attend and cover the process. This is in keeping with the fundamental transparency of each process and crucial to the public facing impact of the process beyond its conclusion.

A useful approach might be to have journalists interview some participants throughout the process, checking in with the same participants to see their changes in view and to tell a bit of their personal story – this helps convey the sense that there are 'people like me' in the room making decisions.

It is important that the wider public have an opportunity to 'meet' the participants. This should occur *before* a decision is made. This allows the wider community to relate to the participants and the process without relating it to any particular result or decision. This helps scale the impact of the process – the message is spread throughout the community that people like them are involved in making a significant decision for their community.

Participants need to be instructed not to pre-judge any recommendations. This is because all decisions are not final until they are decided on by the entire group and included in the final report.

# Step 8: Your role when things are underway

In the room, government staff and anyone not either a part of the facilitation or oversight teams are in the room as an observer. This means that the role of the decision-maker in the room is to demonstrate a commitment to the process while maintaining an observational role – **not an active role.**

There are situations where government staff are best placed to answer off-the-cuff questions arising from participants. Typically, they are either too eager or very hesitant to play this role – often concerned about providing their perspectives on a problem because of the way it can be construed as the "government's" own position.

With citizen control and facilitated involvement in the room, an environment can be created that enables government staff to provide real-time fact checks or grounding statements that help the participants find their way to their own decisions. **The simple rule is that the participants decide when they want to hear from staff and that staff only act on directions from the facilitator.**

This role is invaluable. Staff can orient the participants, for example, around areas where the government needs advice, and enables the participants to enter into a consensus-seeking conversation where **government advice is on-tap but not on-top.**

# Step 9: Your role when things are over

Closing the loop is an important part of all processes. You now have an informed group of people who are valuable resources in sharing decisions with the community and raising awareness of what exactly government does. This means you should regularly check in with them on implementation of their recommendations and get their feedback on your progress.

The most critical step is to provide a detailed written response to each recommendation explaining what you will do, and when. Take a look at the examples on the following pages – these are very good examples of clear responses by a government closing the loop with participants.

You may even want to establish an 'alumni' group that allows participants of the different deliberations you operate to stay in touch. Examples of this include one called "I deliberated – now what?" is an exclusive group open only to those who have been involved in deliberative engagement processes facilitated by the Australian engagement team MosaicLab.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Total of 11 councillors, elected from four wards encompassing:**
- **the Bellarine coastal region (3 councillors)**
- **the Northern region (3 councillors)**
- **suburban Geelong (3 councillors)**
- **central Geelong (2 councillors)**

The citizens jury agreed as a 'super majority' on a four ward structure, comprising of 11 councillors in total. We suggest these wards be divided into rough geographical areas, dependent on the electoral population of the areas. The proposed wards would encompass the Bellarine coastal region, the Northern region, suburban Geelong and central Geelong. The preferred distribution of councillors would be three in each ward except for central Geelong, which would have two.

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE: SUPPORT.**

**Action:**

- **DRAFT a Bill to implement prior to the October 2017 election of a new Council.**

**Comment:**

The Government has approved the preparation of a Bill to give effect to this recommendation. The jury's recommendation for non-uniform multi-member wards is consistent with the recommendation made by the Commission of Inquiry which was to replace the individual councillor ward electoral system with multi-councillor wards to share representative responsibilities.

This government response by Local Government Victoria took what the citizens write themselves (in grey) and then answered each point in turn with a detailed response.

## RECOMMENDATION:

### Maximum size of Victorian municipalities

**Rationale:**

To minimise disparity of representation among different municipalities and to ensure Councils don't get too big.

To distinguish local level government from higher-level government, i.e. state etc.

Fewer larger multi Councillor wards, provide compromise between diversity of local representation and focus on municipality wide issues, ensuring strategic view of issues.

This may occur by:

Proposed upper limit on number of councillors and resident/voter to Councillor ratio.

- Maximum number of councillors per municipality be increased from 12 to 15 (including mayor)
- Maximum resident/ratepayer to Councillor ratio be limited
- If maximum resident/ratepayer to Councillor is exceeded, municipality to be subdivided
- If number of COGG councillors is increased to 15, then recommended ward structure is 5 wards of 3 councillors.

## GOVERNMENT RESPONSE: SUPPORT-IN-PRINCIPLE.

**Action:**

- **CONSIDER as part of the current Local Government Act Review.**

**Comment:**

The Government recognises the challenges of achieving reasonable resident/voter to councillor ratios when Victoria is experiencing significant population growth.

Rather than achieving this through the creation of new Councils, the Government's approach has been to propose – through the Local Government Act Review - an increase in the allowable band of councillor numbers per Council from 5-12 to 5-15.

The expectation is that a new upper limit of 15 councillors would apply in Councils with more than 250,000 residents.

Where 15 councillors are to be elected, it is proposed that a ward structure of five wards each with three councillors will be allowable if proposed reforms to the Local Government Act 1989 are implemented.

This government response by Local Government Victoria took what the citizens write themselves (in grey) and then answered each point in turn with a detailed response.

In addition to closing the loop, you are also responsible for disseminating and scaling the decision. This means raising public awareness of both the decision and the role everyday people played in making it. The previously mentioned role of the media is useful here. You might also seek to include a communications or publicity aspect to the process from the beginning. An effective form of this is recording video interviews with participants that captures their 'journey' throughout the deliberation.

There are two important narratives to explain here: first, that the people in the room are everyday people; second, that they spent time learning and talking with one another before arriving at a common ground decision independent from government influence.

You should encourage participants to talk about their experience at their school, sport club, workplace or on social media. This helps the experience of 30 informed citizens spread to a wider – and still diverse – mix of several thousand people. People often place more trust in familiar faces than in the news.

Clearly communicating the independence of the process and who made the decision are the major factors in increasing public trust in a decision.


# Chapter 5: For Facilitators - A Practical Guide

Not everything needs facilitation. Surveys, online and other forms of engagement are all processes that are self-explanatory. You will benefit from having a facilitation team help you through their production if the output of your survey is an input for a longer deliberation.

Town-hall meetings benefit heavily from facilitation. The facilitator's role here is to keep the meeting on track for the goals originally set out (See Chapter 4.2). Without a facilitator, these types of meetings can become unproductive or create their own new problems. In a citizens' assembly style format, where the emphasis is on helping groups **jointly agree and complete tasks,** this is even more important. This is the focus of this section.

**Facilitation is one of the single most important aspects of any deliberative process.** It involves the management of everything that happens "inside the room", group cohesion, assistance with thinking critically (rather than a simple exchange of opinions)and task completion. The facilitation team are responsible for taking a selection of everyday people with generally only a basic understanding about a topic, through a shared citizen-led learning experience, to making decisions together that will shape the future of their community, and to do so in a neutral, non-leading way. It's as hard as it sounds.

## There are many important factors to consider here.

# The role of the facilitator

**The facilitator's role begins with contributing to the design of the process.** They should be an advisor on all the key design decisions including the number of days, number of participants and even the remit. This is because they will be directly involved with fulfilling each aspect of the process and because they have unique insight into the feasibility of each design decision. A bad outcome is when design decisions are made without facilitator involvement and they end up impractical, dysfunctional or at worst impossible to fulfil.

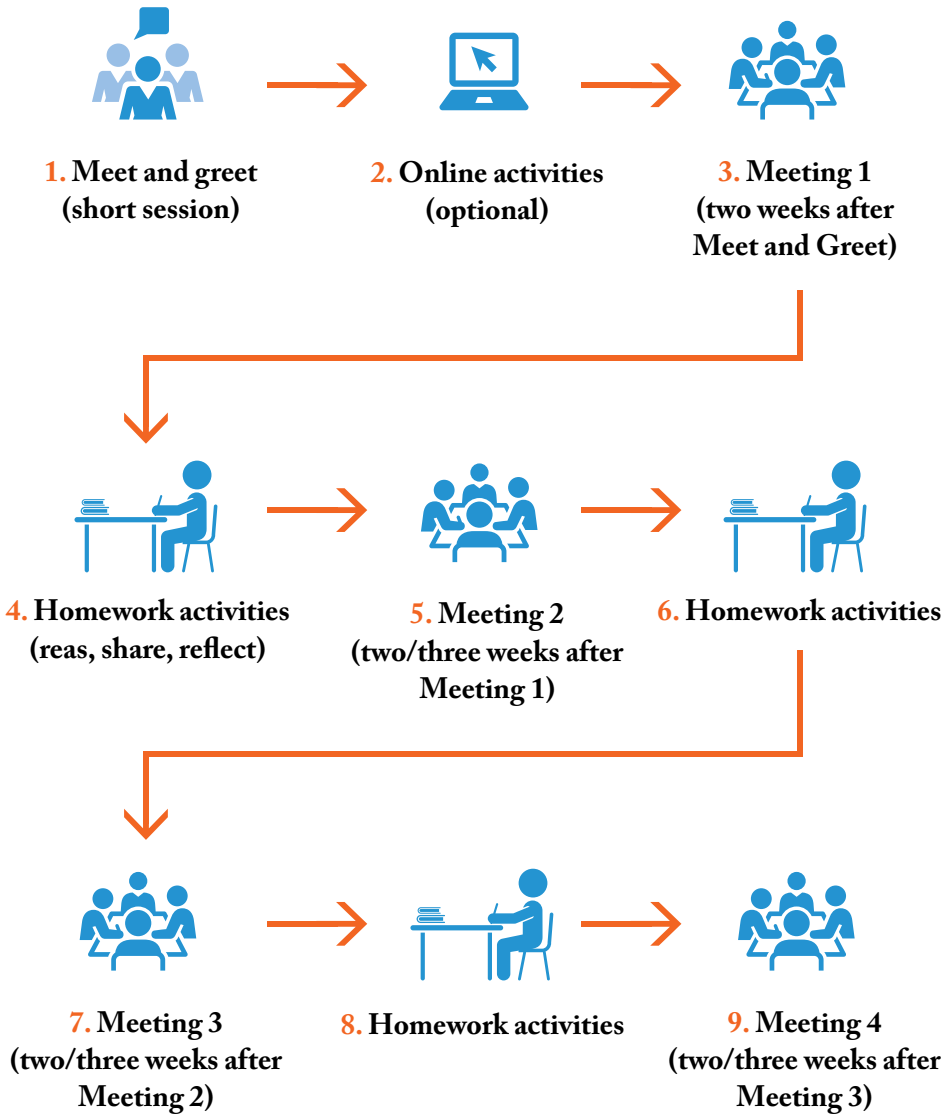
The facilitator's role is to come up with a process that flows step by step, with a set of activities that move people through **getting information, understanding information, coming up with ideas, reviewing, prioritising and refining.** All with an eye on how data is managed – both inputs to the process and the outputs from each step. This role requires an overall facilitation plan and detailed runsheets for each session or meeting.

# Principles of facilitation

| Principle | Behaviour of Facilitators |
|---|---|
| **Transparency** | • We are open to more than one answer – there is no one fixed answer<br>• We share project dilemmas with participants<br>• We won't speak or comment on decisions we don't agree with<br>• We ask you to present directly to participants |
| **Collaboration** | • We require all decision makers to be part of the project meetings so that agreed actions and process are not undermined/changed later<br>• We need to collaborate early on the project design |
| **Independence** | • We serve the public good no matter who pays us. We are advocates for the good process – we do not represent the auspicing organisation or their views but represent the process |
| **Respectful** | • We believe the participants are smart and can do this work<br>• We develop a respectful tone in the room that ensure equal voices and evens out the power dynamics |
| **Empower** | • We get the group to do the work (they write their report, we take no notes for them, they cluster their own ideas, they make their own decisions, they write their own recommendation report). |

Here is an overview of steps that are taken in a citizens' assembly-style deliberation. They are: getting started, bringing in information, generating ideas, writing and review, testing draft recommendations, final review and rewrite, final agreement, presentation and closing, post-event.

## They also follow the rough generic timeline of:



# Step 1: Getting started

## 1 Pre-deliberation survey

A pre-deliberation survey is a useful tool to gather the thoughts of your participants before they enter into 'the room' (not to be confused with a *deliberative poll)*.

You should ask questions around values and principles and **not** for their answer to the remit. This might include questions around their trust in government, previous involvement in community engagement and their likelihood of future involvement.

Asking for answers when they have not heard information or deliberated can contribute to encouraging them to form views that they may find hard to shift from (this makes your task even harder). For example, if in your pre-deliberation survey you ask participants if they think you should have a new airport, you may end up placing your participants into *for* or *against* groups that will now focuses the conversation around who does or does not want an airport. Most people are not sure how they feel about any given policy problem because they have not seen a diversity of information or spent much time thinking about the problem. If you ask them for views on solutions at the outset you risk nudging them toward premature conclusions.

## 2 Host welcome, Overview and Authority

It is important that the source of the processes' authority (e.g. Mayor, Minister) is able to welcome the participants. This is an easy way of ensuring the importance of the process is communicated to those giving up their time to be a part of a public decision.

## 3 Facilitator introduction – Remit, Process, Path to output

From the outset, the facilitator should be clear about what the problem is that the group is solving and what process they will be using the get there. This can take the form of a quick run through the dates (what will happen at each meeting) and an overview of what will be accomplished by the end. It is helpful to have the remit visible in the room at *all times* as an easy reminder (up on the wall or on a projector screen).

Have citizens do their own sorting and clustering so they own the work and there is minimal opportunity for (or perception of) bias

## 4 Decision making process

At the outset, the facilitator should also be very clear about the process for coming to a decision. Deliberative processes can vary in the threshold they use for a recommendation being "agreed" – 80% agreement in the room is a common threshold. It captures wide support while allowing for some disagreement, noting that the group needs to strike a balance between making recommendations that everyone can agree to and finding compromise where they can.

## 5 Relationship building & group work - introductions, social styles, bias and critical thinking

Once you've done the explaining of how the project will unfold, it is time to begin introduction exercises that introduce the participants to one another. These are activities designed to both get people to meet one another but also to give them a sense of *who* from their community is in the room. There are a few key activities here.

The first is having everyone standing and getting the room to break into their different demographics. You might first ask them to split by their age groups, then come back together and split by where they live. The visual nature of having them stand and form their groups means people can clearly see that there is a mix of everyday people in the room. They can be told that this is the case but seeing the diversity and how people mix between groups tells a clear story.

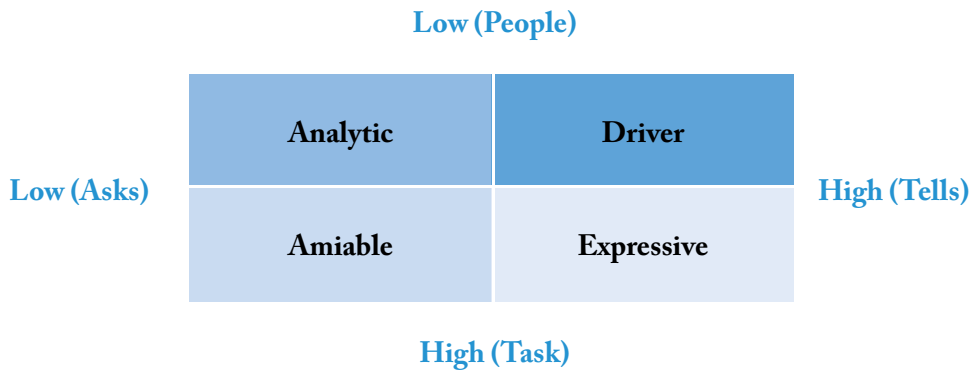
The second is introduce the idea that different people behave differently in social situations. There are many different 'social styles' exercises that can fulfil this function, you should choose your favourite (and one that works for your cultural background).

A simple one is to have everyone choose whether or not they tend to 'ask' or tend to 'tell', and whether they are task-oriented or people-oriented. It may be important to stress that this is just an exercise and people shouldn't worry too much about where it places them, but that the purpose is to make it clear that different people have different social styles. You can make reference to this exercise throughout facilitation to ensure small group work has a mix of social styles.

### Social styles inform a person's communication style and preferences in terms of the:

- type of information they want
- form of the information
- way in which they communicate

By understanding a person's dominant style, you can tailor the way in which you communicate to improve their understanding of a project, and to improve your connection.



The third exercise is walking through critical thinking and biases.

**newDemocracy has produced two videos that are available online.**
**https://www.newdemocracy.com.au/videos/**

These clips walk through the concept of critical thinking and biases and some ways of thinking that will be helpful for participants when it comes to interrogating information.

**Critical thinking** – this exercise is about training participants to examine the information they receive through 6 different aspects:

- Clarity – Is a piece of information clear and specific?
- Accuracy – Is a statement actually true or supported by data?
- Relevance – Is the point relevant to the question?
- Depth – Does the information address the complexity of the topic? Is it detailed enough?
- Breadth – What other points of view might be missing?
- Logic – Does the information make sense? Is it logically consistent?

**Biases** – there are 6 types of biases that can shape how people think about information or a question, this exercise explains them and how to limit their impacts:

- Anchoring bias
- Group think
- Blind spot
- Confirmation bias
- Information bias
- Authority bias

It will be useful to have these list as posters or handheld cards in the room as an ongoing prompt to assist citizens as they consider a range of information.

## 6 Working Agreements

Participants need to come to an agreement on **how they will work together as a group.** This means considering how they should work together and what key agreements they will refer back to later in the process. Some examples for when participants feel stuck on this point: share of voice (hearing from everyone and not just those who like talking), respecting difference of view and encouraging everyone to be inquisitive. This is also useful as a first exercise in agreeing on something as a group (let them know they did this).

## 7 Remit – understanding

The next step is to spend time thinking about the remit. Participants will need to make their own interpretation of what the remit is asking of them, what aspects of it they need to address and how this will shape any solution they recommend. This is an opportunity for the group to seek clarity around what they are making a decision on and if there is anything 'off-limits'.

# Step 2: Working in small groups

## 8 Regularly mixing small table groups

The primary tool you will use through a public judgement (deliberation) is regularly mixing small groups. Small groups (5-6 people) allow a mix of voice, more time with information and close relationship building. Through the project you should make use of small groups to cover lots of information at the same time, to generate many ideas at the same time and to work together on refining ideas at the same time.

You should regularly mix groups because we all tend to sit with people like us – and the purpose is to find common ground **across the whole diverse group.** You're ensuring that participants do not accidentally or intentionally form cliques. You should make sure to pay attention to group dynamics, sometimes people do not get along or they are unproductive when paired in the same group. Mixing groups up between exercises keeps things energised and allows you to distribute different social styles and demographics evenly. Having a good mix of task-based and people-based social styles in a group can ensure they stick to time instructions while also going into detail, for example.

# Step 3: Bringing in Information

## 9 Information (written)

Participants will receive information in two different ways, the first is through written material. You cannot expect everyone in a group to read everything. This is a shared learning exercise where participants will cover what is most interesting to them and share their new-found information with others. You should design exercises around the idea of **'shared learning'.**

### a. Briefing booklets or information kits

The first source of information for participants will be their briefing book or information kit. Whatever form this background material comes in, it will be the primary reference material for most of the process. Participants should be spending some time in the room sharing the learning task by flagging key learnings, the most useful pieces of information (or anything that they want to question) and anything that changes the way they have thought about the problem. Done in small groups, each group reports back to the whole on what was most interesting and also what they doubted or wanted to challenge.

### b. Wider engagement reports

Another source of information will be any other forms of engagement that have been held on this topic. This includes survey results and online feedback. The aim here is to give the group an insight into how the wider community feels while giving them context on what the method was. You should deliver on a promise that those citizens (from the wider engagement) are being listened to by other people like them.

### c. Submissions

A common way to receive feedback from the wider community is to make a submission process available to **anyone** – and actively distribute it to active interest groups known to government. This allows anyone interested in the process to have a direct line to the participants. One way of improving the usefulness of submissions is to provide a template that offers 3-4 questions that submitters answer.

- Who should participants hear from to become informed?
- What questions should participants ask of expert speakers?
- What is your answer to the remit?
- What do you think participants should consider? Why?

These questions draw out useful pieces of information from the community without requiring the participants to read through pages and pages of free-form opinion on the topic.

### d. Requested additional information

Fundamental to any mini-public-like deliberation is the ability for participants to ask questions, receive answers and request information **from sources of their choosing.** The best way to do this is for participants to make information requests and ask questions and then provide answers between meetings. In small groups, they should find agreement around information gaps, what questions they need answering and who they trust as a source. This allows the government agency (primarily the body answering most questions) the time to gather all the answers and provide them before the next meeting. The group should be clear about their questions and why they are asking them.

# 10

## Information (speakers):

The second form in which participants will receive information is through expert speakers in the room. There are a number of different ways speakers can present their information, what method you choose will come down to how much time you have, what kind of information is being presented, and ultimately what the group prefers. Most will start with a chance for speakers to deliver a short 3-5 minute opening response to the question being answered by the citizens before breaking up into small groups for questioning.

One method is 'speed dialogue', an exercise where speakers sit at small groups and quickly answer questions, rotating speakers every 10 minutes or so. This ensures there are many parallel conversations happening at the same time, increasing the amount of information the group can absorb at one time. It also reduces the groupthink which often occurs in large group settings, where the direction of the first question prompts others to ask related questions.

Another method, that will be useful when cost or location is difficult, is through an online video call (Skype, Zoom etc.) If you have the space, you can put a remote speaker on a laptop in another room, allowing them to take part in a speed dialogue. Otherwise, you will need to change the format speakers present in to accommodate someone speaking remotely. Sometimes, information can only effectively be presented through the use of visual aid, this lends itself to speakers presenting to the whole group at once (takes more time but ensures the information is communicated clearly).

When choosing speakers you must place a strong emphasis on transparency by explaining how you arrived at the set of speakers you are presenting. This can take the form of a 1-page document that explains who is presenting, how they were chosen and why they were chosen.

### a. Government speakers

At the beginning of a process, it is important for the government or sponsoring agency to share the problem and key background information in a short presentation (guideline: 30-40min speaking and a similar time for questions). This is best done by managers who are hands-on with the problem who can share their experience.

### b. Government nominated speakers

Additionally, the government may want to nominate speakers that they think the participants should hear from. These should provide a diversity of views on the topic and not be a panel of speakers all supporting to government's position on any given issue. This means that you may need to be involved in curating the selection to ensure a *diversity of views* is present.

**For transparency, facilitators should always make clear why a speaker is there i.e. who selected them and what their background is.**

### c. Stakeholder/interest group nominated speakers

One way of harnessing stakeholder input into the process is to give them the task of choosing a diversity of speakers to present to the group. The emphasis here is on the balance of views and that stakeholders agree to the whole panel. The motivating question here is *"Who should they hear from in order to make an informed recommendation?"*

### d. Jury/panel member nominated speakers

After hearing from organisation and stakeholder nominated speakers, the group now has the chance to choose speakers to fill information gaps they have identified themselves. You should ask them: What information is missing? And, who do you trust to give you this information? One way of ensuring there is a diversity of views presented to the group is to nominate speakers in pairs that have differing views on an issue or contested piece of information.



## 11 Information and trust building - dialogue with key decision makers

At the outset, participants should have an opportunity to ask questions of key decision makers who are giving their authority to the process. This is an important step because it builds trust within the group that their recommendations will be taken seriously. They will ask questions like: Why are you undertaking this process? What will you do with our recommendations? How can we trust that you will not go back on your word? You should close this loop at the conclusion of the process to reinforce the commitment made.

## 12 Information - sense making

The first half of any deliberation is making sense of the information. Participants should be given a lot of time to interrogate information, ask questions, receive answers and ask follow-up questions. The shared learning exercise takes time and cannot be rushed. Participants will push back on any attempt to restrict information from them, it can look like you're not letting them see the complete picture or pushing them in a certain direction.

The primary emphasis at this phase is to refer back to **critical thinking and biases training** that they have gone through and ensure they are hearing from a diversity of sources.

Participants do this after every piece of information given to them. This means that the beginning of the process is a constant back and forth of gathering information and then making sense of the information. In each instance, any tasks related to note taking and reporting back are done by the citizens. Apply a light touch.

# Step 4: Generating Ideas

The next phase of a long-form deliberation is idea generation. Coming up with initial solutions to a problem can be a difficult part of the process. Some participants will still want to seek more information, this can be counterintuitive because sometimes more information does not lead to more clarity. At some point, the group will need to stop getting more information and start working on condensing down into generating ideas. We are aiming to make them informed citizens, not subject experts.

The primary focus at this stage is *clarity of intent*. This phrase should motivate all the recommendations that are produced. The aim for the group is **not to describe exactly *how*** something should be done but instead, be **clear about *what*** they would like to happen and *why*. **Communicating the *'why'*** ensures that the organisation understands the **reasoning behind the recommendation** and can flexibly apply this same reasoning to other aspects of the issue. Strict recommendations that focus on the how can restrict problem solving by being inflexible when circumstances change.

## 13 Ideas generation - encourage dissent, make sure people know last call for ideas

Coming up with ideas can be easy for some groups and hard for others. You should encourage them to focus on *clarity of intent* and to stay away from *wish-list* recommendations that do not factor in any trade-offs required to make something happen.

Ideas generation exercises should start broad. People should be encouraged to disagree and come up with competing ideas. Remember to refer back to work agreements, critical thinking and biases training to ensure the group works together cohesively.

It is important to be clear about when the final call for ideas occurs. Once you move beyond this point you cannot go back to idea generation. If you are not clear, and someone misses an opportunity to make their recommendation you risk losing the trust of the group.

## 14 Prioritising and combining ideas

Are there any ideas that are similar or could be combined into one recommendation? Once the group has generated ideas they should look to combine and even group recommendations in themes. Logically organising recommendations into topics or themes can help give the final report a clearer narrative.

# Step 5: Writing and Review

Writing recommendations is an iterative process. You should start from basic ideas and add more detail step-by-step. This means that at each point, the group can reflect back and add clarity to the purpose of a recommendation before the split into groups again and work in parallel.

## 15 Collaborative writing

The task of writing an entire recommendations report that can be supported by the group requires parallel work. Participants will need to split up, refine recommendations and ultimately write them into their report at the same time. There are different methods for this but most centre on the use of templates that ensure each recommendation is in the same format. This is can be as simple as 3 headings: **recommendation** (approx. 2-line summary of what they want to say) **rationale** (longer explanation of *why* with a focus on *clarity of intent*), and any **sources or evidence** used to support the recommendation. These headings focus on being precise with language noting that the more complexity introduced into a recommendation the higher the chance of it being misinterpreted. Any template should be a 'light touch' to avoid being leading – the example here is just 5 words suggesting the type of content.

Technology can help *dramatically* with this process. Online documents like Google Docs can allow many groups to contribute to the same document at the same time. Otherwise, you will need to come up with a method for integrating all the different recommendations into the same document.

**The key point here is to write in bullet points. These are easier to add and delete as you work toward agreement.**

A word of advice: most groups' first attempts to write recommendations will be fairly rough. At this time you may question if the project can succeed! Its ok, all groups do this. All that is required is to start the first writing task early enough (well before the last meeting) so that you can print what they have written for them to review between meetings. They will invariably find one part of the group's writing is clear, simple and well argued and thus discover for themselves what they need to change in future versions. Generally three rounds of writing sessions, broken with reading breaks, are needed to get to a clear report."

## 16 Review

Coming to agreement on what is and is not in the final report requires the group to test the recommendations with one another. There are many different methods for this that can involve facilitation techniques ranging from **dotmocracy** (fast process) to **sociograms** (involved process that gets immediate feedback on recommendations).

The focus of the review stage is on agreement and clarity. You should be asking the group questions around what might need to change to get the required amount of support from the group. At this point, the group should not worry about grammar and tiny mistakes in recommendations, the intent is to capture whether or not the recommendation has support (not the way the recommendation is written).

A key concept to apply here is to ask groups *"Can I live with this?"* and whether they would be prepared to stand behind a statement and agree that it reflects the view of the room. You should avoid voting as this can cause people to get entrenched into positions – you are looking for feedback on how a recommendation can meet the two tests just mentioned.



# Step 6: Testing Draft Recommendations

## 17 Sponsoring organisation feedback on draft

One of the best ways to test whether recommendations are clear is to pass them to the decision maker (or source of the citizens' choosing) and get feedback. This is most useful when the organisation can give clear comments on how they interpret each recommendation and what it would mean if it was implemented (this can only be done at the request or with the consent of the citizens). Some key things to keep in mind are whether or not a recommendation has a high cost or complex trade-off that may not have been considered or whether or not a recommendation is outside of the jurisdiction of the sponsoring agency.

The focus here should remain on **clarity of intent.** If the feedback indicates that a recommendation is not doing what it was intended to do, then it will need to be reworded in a way that captures both the *intent* and the *why* of the recommendation so that it is not misinterpreted by the organisation.

Facilitators should take care at this point to the remind the group it is their report and their recommendations: they should be informed by this advice, but not led by them.

# Step 7: Final Review and Rewrite

## 18 Rewrite

Once the group has feedback, they can revisit their recommendations and make any changes. You should remind them that they do not need to write long and complex recommendations, their focus is on clarity of intent. It's good practice to ensure you are continuing to mix the small writing groups so that the final words are owned by everyone rather than just a passionate small subset of the group.

## 19 Review

Rewritten recommendations will need to be reviewed by the whole group to ensure their original intent has not been lost in the rewrite. This can be as simple as printing the recommendation and having them posted for feedback around the room

## 20 Rewrite

If any adjustments or corrections are required, the group can split into small work groups to complete their final rewrite or clean-up of each recommendation. Final emphasis on *clarity of intent.*

# Step 8: Final agreement

## 21 Testing super majority

Once the final rewrite is complete, the group will need to step through each of the recommendations and ensure there is super-majority agreement on each and every point in the report.

This is best done with a quick raise of hands and a count : using the prompt question "can I live with this recommendation?". It can be simplest to ask who can't live with it as you are seeking to elicit and 'showstopper' points. The test is not "is this perfect" – it's about whether you have struck something which reflects where broad agreement can be found. You will probably need to politely encourage people in a friendly way not to treat it as a lesson in grammar – it's about intent!

If any one recommendation is on the borderline you can have a discussion about minor changes but this late into the process is not the time to do *major* rewrites of any recommendations (this should have been completed previously).
Minor changes are crucial to getting people 'over the line' and supporting recommendations enough to include them in the final report. The key thing to keep in mind at this point is that any adjustments should not change the *intent* of a recommendation. Keep reiterating this to the group.

Depending on the size of your group, you may need to use some different tools to help speed up the process of testing each recommendation. One method is to work in small groups, each group deliberates and decides whether or not the group supports a recommendation. If a majority of groups support a recommendation, then it passes. Streamlining this process loses the nuance of minor changes so should be used with large groups under time constraints.

You can also make use of digital polling software that allows participants to immediately vote on a recommendation – this will speed up the 'hand count' process and allows for a fluid voting dynamic where people can change while having a conversation about tweaks and changes.

The core of this step is that you are ensuring you have agreement and consent from the group that each recommendation has sufficient support from the group to be in the report.

## 22 Minority reports

If there are recommendations that do not receive enough support, but some participants feel that decision makers would benefit from seeing, then a minority report can be included in the final report. This is a recommendation that **clearly** explains that it did not reach the required level of support to be included as a recommendation, but that a minority held a certain view. This can be useful information for the decision maker to keep in mind while not taking the place of a full recommendation.

The *minority* is not a one-person exercise. At least 10% of people (preferably more) should be supporting each point.

## 23 Panel finalise recommendations

Once each recommendation has been agreed, the group can now finalise the report by nominating, or writing together, an introduction that tells a quick narrative of the process. The idea to keep in mind at this point is that someone picking up the report at the bus-stop or in a local café will need to be able to understand what the process was to arrive at this report (i.e. Who wrote it? What was the question? Who did they hear from? How did they come to agreement? What do I need to know?).

## 24 Taking the report back to the community

The group should discuss the commitments they will make to share and talk about this experience as a way of scaling the impact of their work. A small amount of time brainstorming ways they can increase their impact can inspire new and easy ideas in members of the group.

# Step 9: Presentation and Closing

## 25 Presentation to decision maker by participants

The group should decide themselves who they think should present the final report. At most 3 participants should give a quick speech re-capping the process and telling the story to decision makers. This is a powerful aspect of the process because it is a chance for everyday people to speak directly to decision makers on a topic that they have spent a lot of time learning and deliberating on. It conveys the ability of everyday people and gives additional weight to the recommendations in the report.

## 26 Closing

Wrapping up a long deliberation often involves the decision maker reiterating their commitment to the authority they gave the participants at the outset. They will obviously not have had time to read the entire report already, but an affirmation of the process keeps that trust between participants and decision makers.

Participants should be given their own opportunity to reflect on the process. A good way of doing this is by allowing each person to say a few words while everyone stands in a circle. This is often a nice affirmation of the integrity of the process.

# Step 10: Post Event

## 27 Post-deliberation surveys

This survey should be very similar to the pre-deliberation survey, it is an interesting measurement of how the participant's views have changed. You should also ask additional feedback questions around the process for learning and improvement. These processes can always adjust for their local context and learning what does and does not work from people who have participated in one is the best way of adjusting.

## 28 Response back from decision makers to participants

Decision makers should close the loop for participants by providing an **in-depth response** to the recommendations report. It should clearly explain what the government's response is to each recommendation, whether it has been accepted, what will happen with each recommendation from here. Clear communication about why each decision has been made and on what points the decision maker agrees with the participants is important for broad public trust in the process. (Refer to pp 160-161 for examples of this.)

## 29 Panel reconvene to hear feedback from wider community and advise any changes to recommendations

Continuing the conversation after the government's response is an important part of bringing the broader community along with the decision. Part of the power of these processes lies in everyday people standing behind their recommendations report and explaining it to members of their community. Hearing feedback from this community can contribute to how decision makers implement or adjust recommendations.

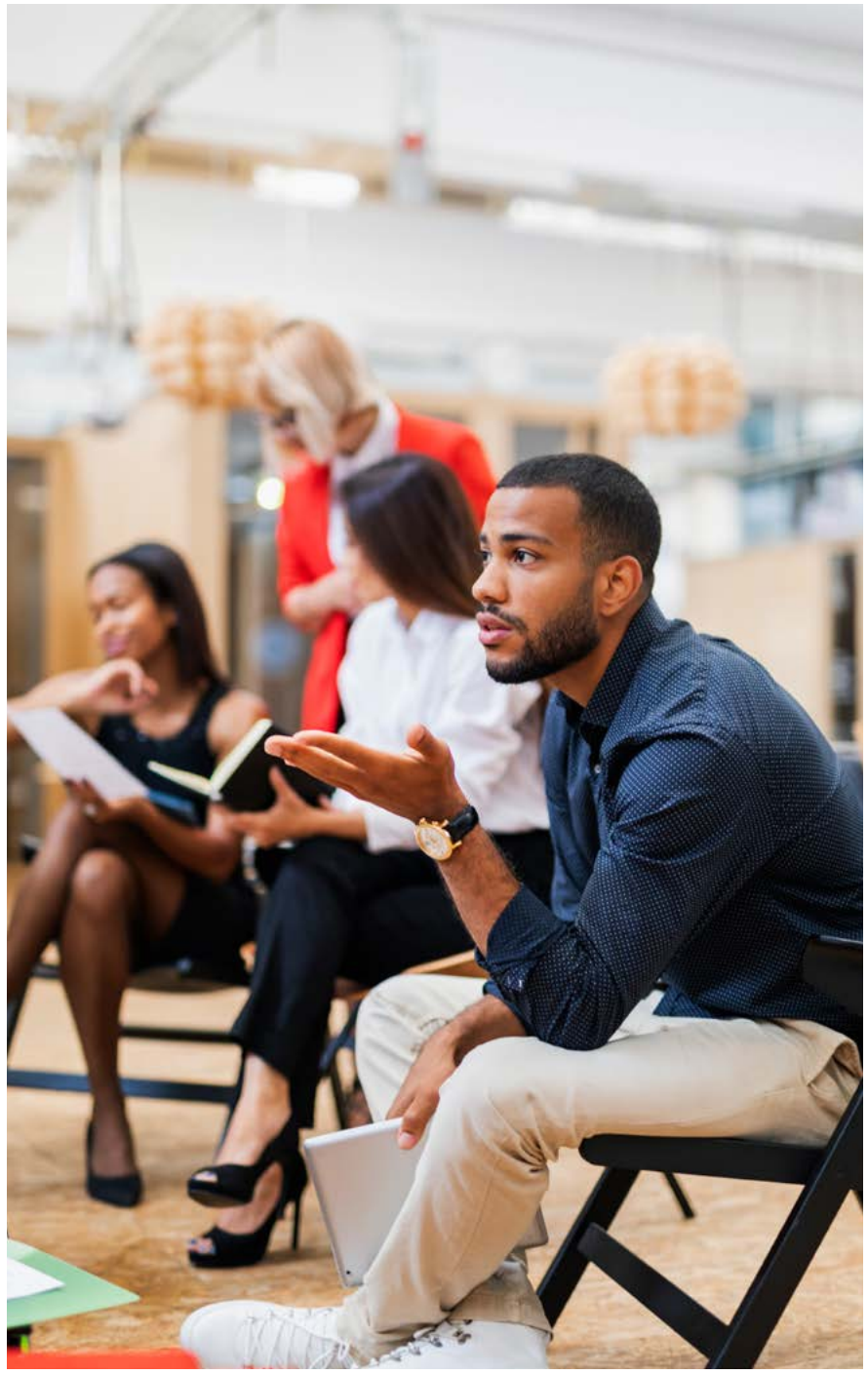
You should schedule this meeting prior to the end of the process – this allows participants to make their own arrangements with enough time and gives them the surety that they have a commitment to be included in the review process.

In this meeting, you should be reflecting on any feedback you have received from the wider community as well as the participants' views on your current progress in implementing recommendations. You might need further comment or advice on what was intended at a specific step or have options you'd like participants to advise you on.

# Things to avoid or watch out for

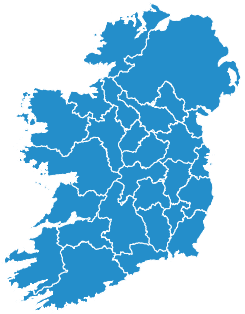
- Ensuring mix of voice – it is important that groups do not become dominated by participants who feel more comfortable speaking in the group or hold strong views.

- The feeling of being led – you should be extremely careful around any perception that the group is being led to a certain decision by either you (the facilitator) or the decision maker or anyone else. Continue to check in with the group to ensure they are feeling comfortable on this front. Do not contribute your views on a topic. The views of 'others' (authorities or official or observers) should only be shared if the group asks for them.



# Chapter 6: For Everyone -
## Evidence from around the world

# Ireland



Ireland's 2008 financial crash produced anger at the political systems failings. Over the course of 2011, a time when people felt adrift and disconnected from power, a group of political scientists established *We the Citizens*. This project resulted in Ireland's first national citizens' assembly in June 2011. This proved the ability of everyday Irish citizens to weigh up complex trade-off decisions and reach common ground.

Immediately following *We the Citizens,* the Irish government established the Irish Constitutional Convention (ICC). The ICC featured 100 members (66 randomly-selected citizens, 33 national-level politicians and an independent chair appointed by the government) who met for 10 weekends over a 14-month period. The ICC's deliberations led to a national referendum on marriage equality, with Ireland becoming the first country to endorse such a move by popular vote.

The widely supported success of the ICC led to the establishment of the Irish Citizens' Assembly (ICA). The ICA was comprised of 99 randomly-selected citizens and an independent chair. It has led to important policy outcomes and constitutional changes including the nation-wide referendum on abortion law.

Ireland has demonstrated the complementary role that deliberative mini-publics can play in resolving challenging issues.

# Madrid

## Observatory of the City

Amidst corruption scandals and declining public confidence in local government in Spain and around the world, Madrid City Council, in 2015, designed and launched a digital participation platform called Decide Madrid. The online platform aimed to widen public participation in Council decision-making and spending processes by creating a direct democracy mechanism that allowed anyone in Madrid to make a proposal for the improvement of the city. Proposals that received enough support would be passed through to a city-wide referendum.

This mechanism worked, involving thousands of Madrid residents in participatory budgeting and making their own online proposals. However, there was room for improvement in the way proposals were accepted. To date, only 2 proposals had received the required 1% of the population support to pass on to a referendum – and each of those were an expression of public opinion which would not be able to be acted on by government. A complementary deliberative body was designed to work with the information gathered from Decide Madrid and weigh up which proposals they believed should be sent to a city-wide referendum after having fact-checking and tradeoff conversations.

The City Council of Madrid's *Observatory of the City* is a permanent body of citizen participation. Sitting alongside the 57-member City Council, a group of 49 people chosen at random address and propose solutions for key issues for the life of the citizens of Madrid. It plays a monitoring role for municipal actions and makes recommendations for improvement during a one-year term.

## The Observatory has two main functions:

- to analyze citizen proposals created in Decide Madrid.
- to analyze Council policies, defining its own agenda, with the possibility of sending their own proposals to referendum.

On February 5, 2019, 30,000 letters were sent randomly to homes with an invitation to participate. On March 12, 49 people were selected in the second sortition, according to gender criteria (the city of Madrid is composed of 53% women), age (5 age groups) and city location (5 areas in the city were defined based on income levels).

# Toronto

## Toronto Planning Review Panel

The Toronto Planning Review Panel is a group of Toronto residents brought together to learn about, discuss, and provide input to City Planning staff on important city planning issues.

The members of the Toronto Planning Review Panel are selected through a Civic Lottery in which thousands of invitations are sent to randomly selected households across Toronto. Invitations are distributed across the city in rough proportion to the population living in the different areas of Toronto. They are transferable to anyone aged 18 or over living in the household. Those who receive a letter are asked to donate their time as a form of public service. Volunteers are not offered payment to participate, but any cost incurred (such as childcare, eldercare, food and travel) will be covered by the City.

In November 2017, 10,000 randomly-selected Toronto households received a letter in the mail from the Planning Division inviting them to volunteer to become a member of the Panel. Over 425 Torontonians applied, and 32 were randomly selected to sit on the Panel, in a manner that ensured proportionate representation of Torontonians of different ages, genders, household tenures, and geographies, proportionate representation of racialized people, as well as guaranteed inclusion of Indigenous and disabled individuals. The Panel's recruitment method reaches out beyond those who usually participate in a standard public meeting and brings in the voices of individuals who often do not.

Members of the Panel will learn first-hand about the city and its planning process from independent experts as well as City staff; contribute their own perspectives and learn about the views of others; and provide input to the Planning Division on important issues shaping the city.

The Planning Division will request input from the Planning Review Panel on issues such as transportation plans, the desired density and character of different neighbourhoods, the importance of historic buildings and public art, and the location of new community amenities like parks, libraries, and community centres. Members will not review individual development applications.

The Planning Review Panel is intended to be an influential body and an important source of input that will help the Planning Division provide effective advice to City Council. The Panel's perspectives, insights, and priorities will be referenced in reports to Council and published on the City of Toronto's website.

# China

## Wenling City Deliberative Poll

In late 2004, local government officials in Zeguo, Wenling City expressed the need to reduce conflicts of interest and perceptions of corruption in selecting priorities for upcoming budgetary projects. Some of the projects to be considered included new bridges, roads, a new school, and city gardens. In total, the projects were estimated to cost around 136 million yuan (US$17m), but due to a change in government policy, only an estimated 40 million yuan (US$5m) could be spent on urban planning and infrastructure.

The government of Zeguo identified deliberative and consultative meetings as a potential channel for citizens and interest groups to express their preferences in prioritising these proposed development projects. A working committee of party officials from both Wenling City and Zeguo district identified and applied a Deliberative Polling as a means of deciding which infrastructure projects could be funded during the upcoming fiscal year.

Zeguo Township in Wenling City, at the time, had a permanent population of around 119,200 and a migrant population estimated at 120,000. Of this entire population, 275 people were selected to participate. Selection of potential participants for the Deliberative Poll was done through a process of random sampling. It was hoped that, by using this method, the Poll would include a diverse and fairly representative microcosm of the views of the general population – both those who are active in politics and disengaged from the process.

This event used participatory budgeting as its main methodology although this was executed using the Deliberative Polling method.

Following the day of deliberation, the ranked preferences of participants changed significantly from the initial questionnaires. Among the highest rated projects, support from participants increased markedly for three sewage treatment plants, producing a plan for the overall city design, extensive repairs to the village's principal road, and the construction of a 'Citizen's Park'. Support decreased from a number of other projects, including a number of minor roads and maintenance to an already existing public park.

Crucial to the success of the Wenling Deliberative Poll was whether or not the ranked preferences of participants would have any impact the policymaking process. The results of the Poll were officially presented to Zeguo's local People's Congress on April 30, 2005 for further debate and deliberation. In Congress, a majority of the people's deputies voted for the Democratic Poll's top twelve projects and the Zeguo town government implemented this decision.

# Belgium

## Ostbelgien Model

The German-speaking region of Belgium has become the first region to institute a **permanent** role for everyday citizens selected in a Civic Lottery as part of how they do democracy.

The citizens' role is divided into two separate, independently-operating parts. One body of 24 randomly-selected citizens will set the agenda of topics to be considered by a second body. The bureaucracy will then produce an information kit of starting point materials and available experts to assist the second group: 25-50 people in randomly selected 'juries' of citizens brought together to find common ground on one of the issues. It is anticipated that up to three such assemblies will be conducted each year.

The Parliament of the German-speaking region has committed itself to implement these recommendations in their policymaking process. During its plenary session on the 25th of February 2019, the Parliament of the German speaking region of Belgium in Eupen voted unanimously to institutionalise citizens selected by civic lottery in political decision-making.

The German Speaking region of Belgium had already experimented with a Citizen Dialogue on childcare. The results were so encouraging that several political parties started looking for ways of making this citizens' dialogue permanent. This appears to demonstrate the value of project trials as a means to enable subsequent structural implementations.

# Chapter 7: Appendixes

# Glossary

**Biases –** There are many ways our brains actively work to bias our thinking and, therefore, our decision making. Each of these different sorts of biases can stop us from seeing an issue from a different perspective. This tendency can limit our understanding of new and different evidence and therefore restrict our ability to make the best overall decision. By understanding these biases and using different tools to help question others and ourselves we can access more information and weigh up data more thoroughly.

**Citizens' Assembly –** A citizens' assembly is a group of people who are brought together to discuss an issue or issues and reach a conclusion about what they think should happen. Often randomly selected, the people who take part are chosen so they reflect the wider population in terms of demographics. Citizens' assemblies give members of the public the time and opportunity to learn about and discuss a topic, before reaching conclusions. Assembly participants are asked to make trade-offs and arrive at workable recommendations. Commonly used to describe large format or national deliberations

**See also:**
Citizens' Jury
Mini-public
Long-form deliberation

**Civic Lottery –** The Civic Lottery is a process for randomly choosing individuals from within a specific population to address a policy issue. The process is based on a simple, random, and fair procedure that has been used throughout the world for centuries — the drawing of lots.

A civic lottery process draws lots by randomly selecting individuals in such a way that the selected participants match the demographic criteria for representation (for instance, an even gender balance).

**See also:**
Random selection

**Critical thinking –** the objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgement. Participants rarely claim to know a great deal and that means their minds are available for critical thinking. The combination of explanation and instruction about the use of critical thinking, along with opportunities to identify questionable facts, or missing information, provides excellent preparation for asking high value questions of speakers and source documents.

**Deliberation –** A long and careful consideration or discussion. A process of deliberation will offer people equal share of a discussion, and the broadest range of sources being considered

**Deliberative Democracy –** When used with the term 'democracy', deliberation is about participants considering relevant facts from multiple points of view, talking with others to think critically about options before them and enlarging their perspectives, opinions and understandings.

Deliberative democracy is different from representative democracy because it puts conversations, diverse perspectives and understanding at the centre of the decision rather than relying on polling and voting.

**Deliberative Poll –** A Deliberative Poll takes a representative sample of the population, provides them with information about an issue and time to deliberate about it before coming up with a considered opinion. These results are then used as a guide to what the whole population would think if they had a similar chance to deliberate.

**Dotmocracy –** an established facilitation method used to describe voting with dot stickers or marks with a marker pen.

In dot-voting participants vote on their chosen options using a limited number of stickers or marks with pens — dot stickers being the most common. This sticker voting approach is a form of cumulative voting.

**Facilitation –** a process in which a person who is acceptable to all members of a group, substantively neutral and has no decision-making authority, intervenes to help a group improve the way it identifies and solves problems and makes decisions in order to increase the group's effectiveness.

**Facilitator –** one who contributes structure and processes so groups are able the function effectively and make high quality decisions.

**Government –** the political system or group of people given the authority to govern a community. In the case of its broad definition, government normally consists of legislature, executive, and judiciary.

**Opinion Polling –** A scientific, non-biased public opinion poll is a type of survey or inquiry designed to measure the public's views regarding a particular topic or series of topics. Trained interviewers ask questions of people chosen at random from the population being measured. Responses are given, and interpretations are made based on the results. It is important in a random sample that everyone in the population being studied has an equal chance of participating. Otherwise, the results could be biased and, therefore, not representative of the population. Representative samples are chosen in order to make generalizations about a particular population being studied.

**Process Design –** A document that explains and justifies the different decisions made when designing a project.



**Public Service –** The term 'public service' refers broadly to the entities that exist and people employed for public purpose. The public sector service all arms of government – including the 'executive' arm (the Government of the day), the 'legislature' (Parliament) and the 'judiciary' (judges of the various courts).

**Remit –** this is the question or task being given to citizens. It should be expressed simply so anyone casually looking at it can see the problem which needs to be solved.

**Sociograms –** A graphic representation of the links or views held by an individual or a group. In group work, a sociogram can be used with really people standing in designated areas to perform the representation of links or spread of views. For example, standing on a 1-5 scale of for or against an idea. A group can distribute themselves along the line and get a visual representation of the views of the room much faster than asking everyone one-by-one.

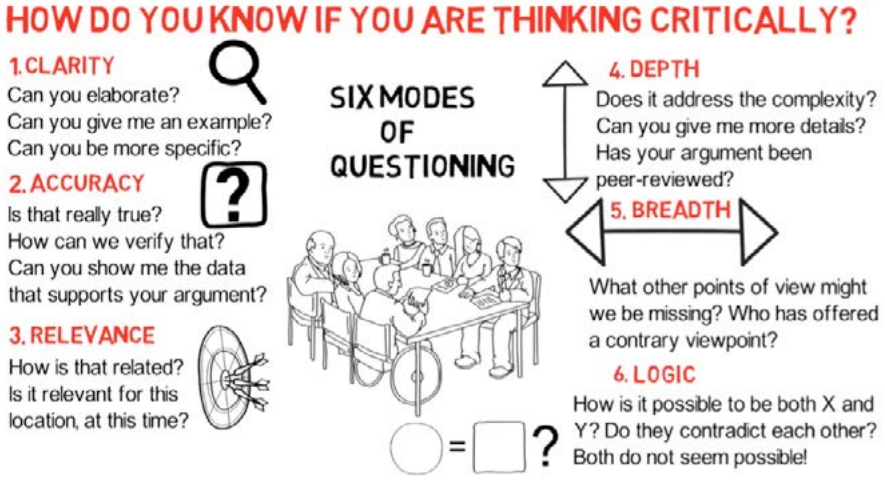
**Stratification –** A method of selection that ensuring that proportional numbers of subpopulations (according to gender, age, location, and so forth) can be randomly selected in a way that mirrors the wider population.

# Appendixes: Resources and documents for you to use

## Critical Thinking

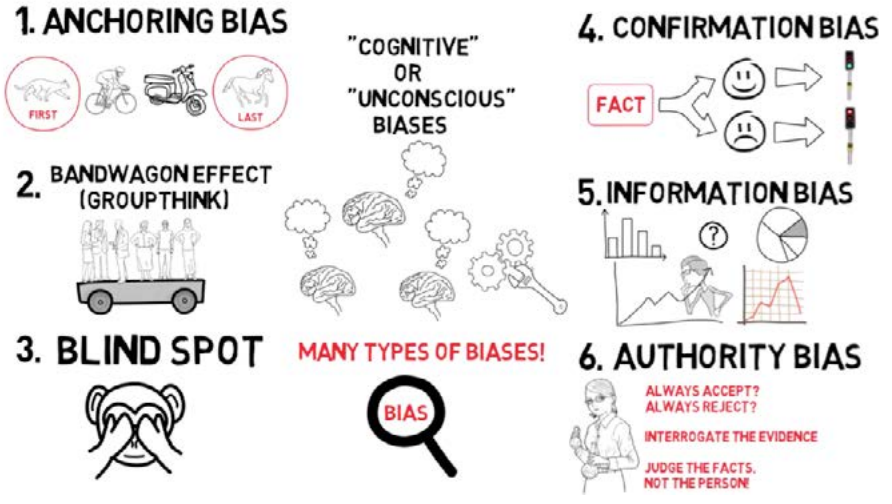
Here is an example of a critical thinking exercise where participants are given questions and techniques for how they can think critically about information and conversations they have.

You might want to take each of these specific points and make cards for them, giving them to participants so they have an on-hand reminder of critical thinking techniques.




## Unconscious Biases

Here is an example of an unconscious biases exercise where, similar to critical thinking, participants learn techniques and questions for how they can think about biases in information and conversations they have.



## Recommendations template example

Here is an example template you might want to use to help participants frame their writing of recommendations. The template focuses on developing a precise recommendation and expanding with a rationale and sources of evidence.

Recommendation Template
Remember to focus on the clarity of your intent. Clear expression and precise language are important.

| **Recommendation**<br>One to two sentence explanation of the recommendation. |
|---|
| |
| **Rationale**<br>Justification of *why* you are making this recommendation. What problems does it address? How does it do this? |
| |
| **Evidence**<br>What sources or information does this recommendation rely on? |
| |

## Report examples

Here are some report examples from previous processes. It is important to note that these reports were written entirely by participants. They're unedited by facilitators, sponsoring agencies or independent convenors.

They build on the recommendation templates by describing the idea or recommendation and justifying it with a rationale.

### NEED 7: PROVIDE BETTER ACCESS TO HOUSING FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE VICTORIANS


**AHR** – Affordable And Social Housing Targeted Development

The jury recommends introducing inclusionary zoning, or the mandatory provision of more affordable rental housing through amendments to the State Planning Policy Framework and appropriate legislation.

7.1 – Rent to Buy (New Option)

Co-contribution for home ownership with priority to the most vulnerable in the community. Perhaps suggest means or needs testing if the background is disadvantage. The recipient contributes to the deposit on an existing house, unit or flat and the state or a housing organisation provides rest of funds required to purchase the property. The buyer then pays rent to the organisation. If the property is paid for in full, ownership transfers to the buyer (renter). If the buyer dies the property is sold and the contributions paid to the housing organisation plus a percentage of capital gains is paid to any beneficiaries.

### NEED 8 – ADDRESS EXPANDING DEMAND ON THE JUSTICE SYSTEM


**NEW OPTION** - Early Intervention Programs For At Risk Juveniles

The Jury recommends providing Police early intervention program into schools.

The role of the Police Liaison officer would be to demonstrate the role of a police officer in Australia. Which may be quite different from what they may have been used to. This role could be extended, where appropriate, to counselling and mentoring individuals or groups with a view to altering anti-social behavior. It would also be of value in areas of social disadvantage where unemployment is entrenched.

The Jury recommends this option/s for the following reasons:

- A similar program operated in Queensland between 2001 - 2011*, focusing on families of Indigenous and socially disadvantaged students. The primary focus was on in school behaviors which improved markedly. While no official follow-up has been done, anecdotal evidence suggests that there was a noticeable improvement in out of school behaviors.
- Provides an unthreatening environment for introducing Australian Policing through well designed and maintained programs.
- Documented evidence proves prevention is better socially and financially - Professor Karen Gelb.
- This addresses social issues that feed into the criminal justice system and brings related services together including courts, police education and support services.
- Funds are better spent on diversion and prevention.
- Diversion rates have a 94% success rate for young offenders (Gelb)
- Young offenders require different programs to adult offenders. (Australian Institute of Criminology)
- Community corrections provide economic advantages over the prison system.
- Diversion reduces the load on the justice system.

## Idea/Recommendation 3

**Idea/Recommendation:**
Access to two sources of water of different qualities;

1. High quality water used for drinking
2. Lower quality water used for toilet flushing, washing clothes, gardening etc

**Objective this relates to:**

1. Delivering high quality safe, clean drinking water
2. Reduce the amount of water being taken from our water catchments
3. Establishing the path for future development for water re-use as a priority in structural planning

**How will this achieve your 'fair for everyone' criteria:**
When customers have both high quality water for consumption, and lower quality water for everything else this allows for:

- multiple usage of water, rather than currently being used once
- Less water being taken from the dams/ reservoirs for non drinking purposes.
- Preservation of water resources for long term benefit
- Preservation of highest quality water for health / drinking purposes

Have a cost effective plan to introduce an alternate water source for different water qualities to existing, urbanised neighbourhoods. A structured long term phased approach for investment burden shared by developers, consumers, YVW.
A greater burden in the short term by those that will directly benefit from access to recycled water.

**Suggested changes to the service level: More/Less/Same**
Continue investment into new development / homes for recycled water facilities.
YVW would need to look at how to get recycled water to the existing houses.

Synchronise implementation with the ongoing maintenance of the growing system / network.

Maintain current practices for new developments.

**Rationale or Reasoning:**
Preserving and safeguarding our precious water as a finite resource acknowledge responsibility towards future generations and our critical dependence on water.

YVW should work towards a future objective of the majority of customers have access to alternative qualities of water.

## Runsheet example

Below is an example facilitator's runsheet. Key details are included so that on the day of the meeting, everyone can follow the agenda with responsibilities and needed equipment.

This one is the beginning of a generic day where participants develop some key questions and watch a video on unconscious biases before they hear from expert speakers

| Time | Session | Activity | Content | Speaker | Equipment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7.30-8.30am | Bump in | Set-up | Set-up seating and equipment for sessions | Whole team | Tables, chairs, audio, video |
| 8.30am-9.00am - as participants arrive | Arrival | Welcome and give materials as needed | Tea and coffee made available for people to get comfortable and prepared for the day | Whole team | Refreshments, name tags |
| 9.00am-9.30am | Welcome | Process walk through | Welcome back, introduce the agenda for the day<br><br>Discuss any feedback from the previous meetings | Facilitator | |
| 9.30am | Exercise 1 | Question generation | Small table discussions, mixing twice, generating questions for the speakers after morning tea | Facilitator | Pens, paper |
| 10:15am | Exercise 2 | Plenary | Discussion around emerging questions, do we have any gaps? | Facilitator | Chairs, audio |
| 11.00am | Morning tea | | Morning tea | | |
| 11.15am | Introduce Exercise | Plenary<br>Watch Biases | Explaining how the speaker session is going to work.<br><br>**Watching Unconscious Biases video** | Facilitator | Audio, Video |
| 11.30am | Speakers | Hear from expert speakers | Speakers present their short introductions and comments about the task (3 minutes each)<br><br>They then split into one per table and rotate every 10 minutes until they've been to every table. | Speakers<br>Facilitator | Pens, paper, |
| 1:30pm | Lunch | | | | |

# Notes

The newDemocracy Foundation (nDF) explores ways to do democracy better. While many complain about problems with our current system, nDF aims to research, trial and implement processes which will result in trusted public decisions.

The methods used focus on exploring a complementary role for randomly-selected everyday people alongside elected representatives. nDF's processes involve giving citizens vastly extended time and access to multiple sources of information to see if they can find common ground.

With citizens seeking to disrupt established democracies through the injection of outsiders, this offers a way to include an 'outsider' voice in a considered and constructive way which is complementary to the role of elected leaders.

This Handbook will be progressively released in 8 languages in 2019 and 2020. Three demonstration projects will also be undertaken.

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