

ICMA Equity & Inclusion Toolkit: Community Relations – County of King

To prepare for community engagement events, King County, Washington, utilizes the *Community Engagement Continuum and Worksheet* below to properly prepare for these events so that the intended goals can be focused upon and success made more likely. This document, which is easily adaptable to any community, will help prepare involved staff for many of the social and logistical complexities involved with community outreach.

The *Community Engagement Continuum and Worksheet* was provided by the County of King for use by ICMA. The entire document can be accessed [here](#).

Community Engagement Worksheet

Project Title:

Project Lead:

Program Name:

Timeline: to

How to use this worksheet:

This worksheet will assist you in thinking about your process, purpose, primary audience, potential barriers, impacts and strategies to inform and involve your intended audience before you begin. Below are some key questions with prompts to guide and direct you before beginning and during your engagement process. You may reference the Community Engagement Continuum to determine the level and methods of engagement that best suit the type work you are doing.

What is the purpose of your engagement?

1. State briefly why you are doing the community engagement:

What do you hope to achieve? What is your main purpose for involving community members? Where does your engagement fit best on the continuum? Is there enough time to carry out the engagement properly?

Stakeholders and audiences

2. Who are the key stakeholders or partners? Who is affected by, involved in, or has a specific interest in the issue?

What steps will you take to ensure impacted communities that have not historically been included in the initial decision-making phase be included? Are there specific communities that will be impacted/affected by decisions or processes related to engagement? How will you utilize internal staff expertise to provide technical assistance or consultation to ensure inclusive stakeholder involvement? Are stakeholder groups defined (e.g., neighborhoods, topic area, ethnic or racial, language, gender, tribal, etc.)? Do you or others in the county have appropriate partnerships or contacts in place to initiate and support the adequate county level of engagement?

What strategies will you use to ensure you have information from and research about the relevant groups and communities?

3. Have you gathered adequate background information about the affected populations you intend to reach? (i.e., language or dialect spoken, customs, historical or geographic data, relevant data reports). For example, see [Communities Count – Indicators for King County](#)). What other research will you need to better know and understand your public? How will you identify community strengths and assets?

4. How will you make sure you are effectively reaching all of your audiences?

A. How do you plan to address language and literacy needs including translations, interpretations and reading levels? (See the [Plain Language Style Guide](#) and [King County executive order on written language translation](#)) and Guidelines for Accessible Printed Materials kcweb.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre/printguide.pdf

B. Have you taken into account that alternative and non-traditional approaches to consider before proceeding? Does your intended audience have their own engagement practices that should be considered? Alternatively, does your audience or community use new and social media (e.g., web videos, texting), and could this be an effective way of reaching them?

Barriers and risks

5. What do you perceive as barriers and risks to doing this work?

Are there trust issues among members of the public or a community that may prevent full engagement (i.e., social, political, tribal, gender specific)? How will you address the diverse cultural differences among affected communities? Is there adequate justification for proceeding with your project concept (i.e. time, cost, level of interest)? Is there community and public support for your project? What are some unintended consequences of the project if not done effectively? Are there strategies in place to address unintended consequences?

Decision-making process and communications

6A. If there are decisions to be made, how does the engagement fit into the overall decision-making process?

Are there processes in place to involve affected communities in decisions at different levels and phases? Do you have representation from affected communities in decisions? What decisions need to be made after the engagement and how will the community be involved in that process? How will the affected community be informed of final decisions? Do you have a standard point of contact for community members?

6B. What is in place to inform community of benchmarks or progress about your project?

How will you recognize the contributions of community members? Will there be opportunities for formal project/program updates and feedback (i.e. meetings, website updates, phone calls, e-mail)? Is there budget for printing and circulating a report on the outcomes? Who will inform the community on impacts of final decisions? What steps will be taken to maintain opportunities for future collaboration or engagement?

Evaluation and monitoring of success

7. How will you evaluate the success of your project both in terms of process and outcomes?

Were you able to successfully reach the intended audience? Did people receive the necessary information they needed to make a relevant response? Did you choose the right type or level of engagement to match the purpose? Was feedback received from the community positive or negative? Did the community feel like they received proper feedback

on the results of the engagement? Did they indicate they want to be part of a similar process again? If not, why not? What would you do differently to make the process better, more inclusive, and more impactful?

| Logistics and things to consider for planning community meetings: | |
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| <i>The logistics of community engagement is critical for turnout and community interest. Paying attention to a number of logistical issues will enhance participation and improve the overall effort. Some things to consider:</i> | |
| Venue | Making meetings geographically close to communities or stakeholders is critical to get a good turnout. Choosing a site that is community centered may be more familiar and comfortable for attendees. Does the venue accommodate for public parking and transportation? |
| Host | If inviting public officials, make sure you have followed appropriate channels before inviting them to participate. Clarify in advance the role for County Executive, Council members, Public Information Officer and community members prior to the engagement. |
| Staffing | Will you use program staff, other King County staff or partner staff to help with set up, welcoming, and meeting facilitation? |
| Budget | Is your budget adequate to provide resources for advertising, communication and promotion, rental space, refreshments/food, transportation, child care, translation/interpretation? |
| Accessibility | Is the location wheelchair accessible and code approved for people with disabilities? |
| Time | Do you have staff that can attend evening or weekend meetings? Can you accommodate community members to hold evening or weekend meetings? |