

Community Engagement Guidelines

In-Person Workshop Module



Guidelines for Excellence
Community Engagement

Community Engagement Guidelines

In-Person Workshop Module

3-hours

Workshop objectives:

- Become familiar with Community Engagement Guidelines and how they can be used to improve the quality of EE practice.
- Identify tools for fostering community engagement strategies at your home organizations/contexts.
- Provide opportunities for participants to network and learn from each other.

Materials:

- projector & screen
- Newsprint
- Markers
- Tape
- copies of the Community Engagement Guidelines or online access
- PowerPoint presentation

Summary Agenda:

- Welcome, agenda, Guidelines for Excellence Overview
- Community Needs/Environmental Needs
- Getting into the Guidelines [quick overview of purpose and structure, small groups assigned a Key Characteristic, report out, creating an inclusive environment scenario]
- Guidelines Applications: Scenarios
- Wrap up and final questions

NOTE: Workshop handouts can be found at the end of the outline

Detailed Workshop Agenda

Welcome, Agenda, Guidelines for Excellence Overview [15 min]

Community Needs and Environmental Needs [15 min]

Divide the group into 2 groups. Give each person a notecard [$\frac{1}{2}$ are blue and $\frac{1}{2}$ are white]. Ask one group to write an environmental need [blue cards] that their community is experiencing (i.e. water quality; biodiversity). The other group [white cards] should write a community social or economic need (i.e. safety in the community, childhood obesity).

Think about that need for a moment:

- What is the nature of the need?
- Does it impact the whole community?
- Who are some of the organizations or agencies working on this need?
- Is this an historic need or something that has arisen within the recent past?

Once everyone has considered their need, ask participants to:

- Find a partner from the other group [blue cards find a white card] and
- Discuss your “needs” and what could you collaborate on that would meet both sets of needs.
- Ask the pairs to find another pair and continue the discussion [four in the group].

Wrap up:

Ask groups to report out:

- What were your “environmental” needs?
- What were your “social or economic” needs?
- What sort of collaboration did you discuss?
- Did you come up with a win-win situation?
- Did any group struggle to find a collaborative project?
- How did you identify the co-benefits and allies of your collaboration?
- What does this have to do with environmental education?

Getting into the Guidelines

Walk Through the Guidelines [10 min]

- Orient participants to the *Community Engagement: Guidelines for Excellence*.
- Hand out a copy of the Community Engagement Guidelines to each participant.
- PowerPoint to share Key Characteristics and how the guidelines document is organized

Jig Saw

In this activity, participants will become familiar with the key characteristics and supporting resources found in the Community Engagement Guidelines. **[25 minutes]**

- Form 5 small groups [3-5 people/group]. Each group should be assigned one of the five Key Characteristics (#1-5). If there are more than 25 participants, assign one or more groups one or more of the Supporting Resources to review.
- Give each group at least one copy of the handout that explains their task (see below).
- Ask participants to become familiar with their assigned Key Characteristic.

- As they become familiar with their Key Characteristic, ask participants to discuss the following:
 - What's something that surprised you in your reading? What inspired you?
 - What aligns with what you have already experienced?
 - What's creating some cognitive dissonance—something you read/learned that doesn't fit with what you already know?
 - What's the most important takeaway for you?
 - How does this apply to your work within your organization?

Ask each group to provide a short, 4-5 minute introduction to their Key Characteristic for the rest of the group. Ask them to address the following during their presentation **[30 minutes]**:

- Overview/walk thru your Key Characteristic (Supporting Resource)
- Highlights of your discussion
- Example(s) of how Key Characteristic (Supporting Resource) applies to your work
- Most important takeaway

Scenario – After KC #3 Reports Out [25 min]

You're the director of a nature center in a large city. The neighborhood surrounding the nature center is home to a large population of African Americans as well as a substantial population of immigrants from the Caribbean.

1. How do you make your center a welcoming place for all cultures and relevant to the needs of the community you serve? What are some possible strategies? How would you get started?
2. Review your proposed actions. What are the possible drawbacks or tradeoffs. How might you reduce these tradeoffs?

On flip chart paper:

- List 2-3 actions your team can take to be more welcoming.
- Identify 1-2 Guidelines that include helpful "indicators" for this kind of work (note the page numbers).
- If you have time, find 1-2 resources that you can use to help you through this process (note the page numbers).

Continue with KC #4 and KC #5 Reports

Guidelines Applications: Scenarios [45 minutes]

Small group discussions about how the guidelines can be used in different situations. Participants design solutions based on promising practices, resources in the guidelines, and their experience.

Use the following scenarios:

Community Well-being
Community Engagement Tools
Individual & Organizational Readiness
Educational Tools

- Divide the group into new groups.
- Distribute a scenario to each group and ask them to identify tools and resources in the guidelines to help them engage each hypothetical community.
- Give groups **20-25 minutes** to complete this task.
- Gallery walk debrief – what was your scenario? What resources did they find in the Guidelines that helped their scenario?

Wrap Up, Evaluation, and Final Thoughts [15 min]

- Questions and Reflections
- Depending on time, ask participants to complete this sentence: When I think of EE and Community Engagement, I ...

Workshop Handouts Are On the Following Pages

Digging into the Key Characteristics – Small Group Work

Directions: Read through your assigned Key Characteristic. Each characteristic has 3-5 Guidelines that focus on what it takes to include that characteristic in our work. You'll also find indicators of what that characteristic would look like, case studies, and supporting resources. Although you might want to look at the "boxes" [Guidelines in Practice and Did You Know?], you will want to focus your attention on the guidelines and indicators.

1) In your small groups, use the following discussion questions as a guide to help you delve into your assigned Key Characteristic:

- What's something that surprised you in your reading? What inspired you?
- What aligns with what you have already experienced?
- What's creating some cognitive dissonance—something you read/learned that doesn't fit with what you already know?
- What's the most important take away for you?
- How does this apply to your work within your organization?

2) Write highlights of your discussion on flip chart paper. Be sure to provide an overview of the Key Characteristic.

3) If you have time, read and discuss the Supporting Resource selected for your assigned characteristic (see list of resource assignments on the back of this page).

4) Your small group will have 4 minutes to report out on:

- Overview of your Key Characteristic
- Example(s) of how your Key Characteristic applies to your work
- Quick overview of the assigned Supporting Resource and how it relates to the Key Characteristic
- Most important takeaway

Please feel free to be creative in how you share your learnings with the rest of the group.

Scenario – Creating an Inclusive Environment

You're the director of a nature center in a medium-sized city. The neighborhood surrounding the nature center is home to a large population of African Americans as well as a substantial population of immigrants from the Caribbean.

1. How do you make your center a welcoming place for all cultures and relevant to the needs of the community you serve? What are some possible strategies? How would you get started?
2. Review your proposed actions. What are the possible drawbacks or tradeoffs? How might you reduce these tradeoffs?

On flip chart paper:

- List 2-3 actions your team can take to be more welcoming.
- Looking back at Key Characteristics #1-3, identify 1-2 Guidelines that include helpful "indicators" for this kind of work (note the page numbers).
- If you have time, find 1-2 resources that you can use to help you through this process (note the page numbers).

Community Well-Being, Sustainability, and Resilience

You live in a medium-sized community in an area known for recreation (fishing, boating, golf) and agriculture. In addition to working in agriculture and tourism, many commute to a nearby urban area.

Climate change is affecting your region (e.g., dangerously high heat, heavier precipitation, sea level rise, flooding, increased salinity of estuaries & aquifers).

You are a member of a coalition interested in helping the community address these unprecedented issues. Your group decides that they should begin by exploring climate change issues through a lens of community well-being, sustainability, and resilience.

1. As a group, brainstorm ways in which these issues affect community well-being, sustainability, and resilience. [Refer to page 64 for definitions of each.]
 - ✓ Who might benefit from the crisis?
 - ✓ Who might be negatively affected?
 - ✓ How is the local environment impacted?
2. Review the diagram on page 65 – *Understand the Interconnecting Systems* [Resource #1]. The diagram suggests that community well-being, sustainability, and resilience are affected by social equity, economic prosperity, cultural vitality, and environmental sustainability.
3. On your chart paper, reproduce the Venn diagram on page 65. For each of the domains (social equity, economic prosperity, cultural vitality, and environmental sustainability) list ways that they affect or are affected by the drought.
4. Discuss how the domains are connected with one another (i.e., the overlapping parts of the Venn diagram). For example, in terms of the drought, what is the relationship between social equity and environmental sustainability?
5. Discuss as a group: How might you use your analysis as you begin to design a community engagement strategy? Include your ideas on the chart.

Community Engagement Strategies

You live in a medium-sized community in an area known for recreation (fishing, boating, golf) and agriculture. In addition to working in agriculture and tourism, many commute to a nearby urban area.

Climate change is affecting your region (e.g., dangerously high heat, heavier precipitation, sea level rise, flooding, increased salinity of estuaries & aquifers).

You have been asked by the local municipality to design a civic engagement strategy that will help the community address these unprecedented issues.

1. As you begin to develop your strategy, discuss the following questions:
 - ✓ How complex is this issue?
 - ✓ How politically sensitive is the issue?
 - ✓ As possible solutions to these issues are developed, what are the potential community impacts and/or outrage?
2. Now, consider the following questions:
 - ✓ What do you wish to achieve with your civic engagement strategy?
 - ✓ Who do you want to involve?
3. Read page 99 – *Identify Civic engagement Goals* [Resource #10]. Given your analysis, which of the civic engagement goals (Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and/or Empower) match your needs? Why?
5. Read page 100 – *Match Civic Engagement Techniques and Goals*. Given the goals you identified, what technique or techniques would you propose?
6. Using chart paper, create a presentation for municipal leaders.

Individual and Organizational Readiness

You live in a medium-sized community in an area known for recreation (fishing, boating, golf) and agriculture. In addition to working in agriculture and tourism, many commute to a nearby urban area.

Climate change is affecting your region (e.g., dangerously high heat, heavier precipitation, sea level rise, flooding, increased salinity of estuaries & aquifers).

You know that there are individuals and groups in the community wanting to help the community address these unprecedented issues.

1. Imagine that you and your organization are thinking about becoming involved in finding community-based solutions to this crisis.
2. Develop a list of questions that would help you assess your individual readiness to jump into a community engagement project. [Write them on chart paper]
3. Develop a list of questions that would help your organization assess its readiness to take on a community engagement project. [Write them on chart paper]
4. Compare your lists to the readiness questions proposed in Resource #4, page 80. What is similar? What is different? Do you want to add any items to your lists?
5. Individually, think about an issue facing your community. Using the lists, complete a self-assessment for yourself and your organization.

Educational Tools

You live in a medium-sized community in an area known for recreation (fishing, boating, golf) and agriculture. In addition to working in agriculture and tourism, many commute to a nearby urban area.

Climate change is affecting your region (e.g., dangerously high heat, heavier precipitation, sea level rise, flooding, increased salinity of estuaries & aquifers).

You are part of a coalition of community groups interested in addressing these unprecedented issues. The coalition has identified education as one of its possible strategies.

1. As you begin to develop your strategy, discuss the following questions:

- ✓ How complex is this issue?
- ✓ How politically sensitive is the issue?
- ✓ As possible solutions to these issues are developed, what are the potential community impacts and/or outrage?

2. Now, consider the following questions:

- ✓ What do you wish to achieve through education?
- ✓ Who do you want to involve?

3. Read page 92 and 93 [resource # 8]. Given your analysis, which of the four education categories (convey information, build understanding, improve skills, enable sustainable actions) match your needs? Why?

5. Read page 94 (Table 1). Given the education category or categories you identified, what strategies would you propose?

6. Using chart paper, create a presentation for coalition members.

7. As time permits, discuss the following questions:

- a. Can one EE initiative work for multiple communities? Why or why not?
- b. What do you think are the most commonly employed strategies and tools used to launch an EE initiative? What are the least common strategies and tools? Why?