

Step 5: Community Consultation

The community consultation is a time for aligning the museum's mission, programs and services with the community's objectives to achieve mutual goals. Museums should serve and be responsive to their community, and by strengthening the relationship between the museum and the community, the museum is more likely to be relevant, ensure ongoing support, and be sustainable in the long term.

Goals of community consultation:

- Understand the museum's relevance and worth within the community and establish a desire to strengthen the relationship with the community
- Identify the assets within the community and opportunities for partnerships
- Generate ideas for programs and services that have meaning within your community
- Prioritize the ideas for programs and services to understand which are most important to the community
- Gauge interest in participation and leadership

STEPS

- 1) Schedule the consultation sessions and Invite participants (Working Group)
- 2) Facilitate Community Consultation sessions (Facilitator, Working Group, Community participants)
- 3) Follow up with the participants with notes and next steps

SNAPSHOT

Timeframe

Scheduling and inviting: 2 months' notice

Community Consultation: 1 day session, or three two hour sessions

Working Group debrief: 2 hour meeting

Participants

Working Group

Community Members

Facilitator

Materials

Listed by facilitation plan

1) Schedule and Invite

Use a Working Group meeting to work through the tasks associated with scheduling the community consultation sessions and inviting community participants.

Schedule the community consultation sessions

1. Determine whether one $\frac{3}{4}$ day session or three 2-hour sessions would be most desirable to the community.
2. Schedule dates and book a facility to host up to 60 people. If there is interest from more people, consider running the community consultation twice.

Who to invite

In order to gain rich and representative insight, it is important to invite key community groups, business representatives, government representatives, and community members to be involved. When creating the invite list, be sure to get representation from people in all four quadrants:

Community & School Groups	Business Representatives
Government Representatives	Community Members

Determining who to invite:

- Use the [Generating Ideas for Who to Invite to the Table](#) list to generate ideas for who to invite (p. 53)
- Write down the list of names or organizations and next to each write down who on the Working Group has the closest relationship with that person ([Inviting People to the Table](#)) (p. 54)
- Also consider an open invitation to the community. Have this invitation link to a sign up form so that you know how many people to expect. In the sign up form include a field for the individual to select their affiliation – Government Representative; Local Business Representative; Community Group Representative; Community Member. (There are many free form tools including Eventbrite, Google forms, and Survey Monkey)
- You are looking for 30-60 people in total and want equal representation across the four categories

How to invite:

- Invite participants to participate personally. Divide and conquer the list within the Working Group and each invite the people with whom you have a relationship
- Explain to each person why they are being invited, what their role will be, and what the outcomes of the process will be. (Use the [Invitation Template](#) for guidance, p. 55)
- Explain the time commitment and set clear expectations
- Generate excitement! They can directly influence future ideas and programs and enrich their community
- Track RSVPs as they come in and prepare a list of participants with complete contact information
- Confirm attendance for the workshop at least 3 days prior with directions and parking information

2) Community Consultation

The community consultation session is a rich time for connection and brainstorming to dream up the future of the museum and its relationship to the community.

Opening:

The opening can be led by the facilitator together with a museum representative and include the following items:

- Why the museum is undergoing this process (what triggered the museum, key issues, etc.)
- Describe successes to date in forming a relationship with the community. In this process we're allowed to re-think and improve upon these ideas too!
- Why they were invited (i.e. critical to collaborate with the community in developing ideas; representation from diverse groups)
- Overview of the *Engaging your Community* process and this session
- Getting in the right mindset (open-mindedness, creative thinking, critical thinking)
 - Share creative possibilities ([LatimerNow](#), p.56 ; [Re:Make](#), p. 57)
- Icebreaker
 - Suggestion: Speed Dating. Have three rounds of pairing up with someone you don't know really well.
 - Round 1: What's your favourite thing about this community?
 - Round 2: What do you like to do for fun?
 - Round 3: Why is it important that you are here today?

Facilitation options:

There are three different facilitation options for the community consultation ranging in style. Select the style that is the best fit for the museum and the participants.

Facilitation Option	Number of participants	Amount of facilitation	Community considerations	Page
A. Community Conversations	20 – 60 people	Less facilitation required	Accessible for any type of community	23
B. Serious Play	10 – 50 people	Some experience with facilitation needed	Requires more creativity and abstract thinking	28
C. Visioning Change	10 – 50 people	Experienced facilitator required	Helpful if some momentum has already been built around Community Engagement	33

3) Follow up with the participants with notes and next steps (Working Group Meeting)

The facilitator should capture all notes, discussion outcomes, and take photos of any completed grids/flip charts/ whiteboards from the session.

Set up a Working Group meeting to debrief the community consultation (2-3 hours).

- Review the notes and Community Consultation Outputs
 - Impact/Implementation grid
 - Top idea sheets
 - Wheel of Engagement sheets

- Create a notes document to share back with participants. Include:
 - Photos of charts, maps, whiteboards etc.
 - Whole group insights that were shared throughout the session
 - Top idea sheets
 - Do not include Wheel of Engagement sheets
 - You are purely sharing back the outputs from the community consultation; don't feel you need to weigh in on the feasibility of ideas or commit to any ideas at this stage

Compose an email to participants with the notes and next steps with timelines.

The next steps can be as simple as letting participants know that the Working Group will debrief on a certain date and will be creating an action plan over the coming X months. You can commit to sharing the action plan back with participants too and ask for further involvement at that stage if needed.