

Digital Civics, Fall 2018

Week 7: Designing for Civics



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How are things?



Do we know what works best?

- ▶ What are the goals of public participation?
- ▶ What are the activities?
- ▶ How to run effective public participation?

Citizen participation goals

1. Informing and educating the general public
2. Improving government decisions
3. Creating opportunities for citizens to shape/determine public policy
4. Legitimizing government decisions Involving citizens in monitoring the outcomes of policy for evaluation
5. Improving the quality of public life by restoring the trust

“Creating democracy is ... harder than rocket science.”

Ira Harkavy

Rule of thumbs for public participation

1. Clarify goals for the participants
2. Begin participation early
3. Provide aid for participants, they should understand what is going on and how to contribute
4. Various forms of public participation
5. Participate in the discussion and use technology to facilitate engagement.
6. Collect feedback

Caron Chess and Kristen Purcell. Public participation and the environment: Do we know what works?. In ACS Publications, 1999.

Designing for public engagement is an iterative process



In class activity

- ▶ Write down 3-4 design principles that applies to your projects

Successful deliberative features

1. Realistic expectation of influence
2. Inclusive, representative process
3. Informed discussion to find common ground
4. A neutral, professional staff for a fair agenda
5. Earn broad public support for final recommendations
6. Prove sustainable over time

Design dimensions for online deliberation

1. Purpose
2. Population
3. Spatiotemporal distance
4. Communication medium
5. Deliberative process

Consideration for the designs of online deliberation

1. Design to attract contribution
2. Design for navigability
3. Design for usability
4. Design for quality content
5. Design for adoption

Five design principles for crowdsourced policymaking

1. Inclusiveness
2. Accountability
3. Transparency
4. Modularity
5. Synthesis

Tanja Aitamurto and Helene E Landemore. Five design principles for crowdsourced policymaking: Assessing the case of crowdsourced off-road traffic law in Finland, 2015.

What I add to the list

- ▶ Supporting accessibility
 - ▶ Language fluency, technological literacy, design expertise, physical, mental and social disabilities
- ▶ Breaking complex tasks to bite-sized consumable pieces
- ▶ Considering people's available bandwidth
- ▶ Balancing between designing structured tasks/openness