Supporting government agencies to engage effectively with citizens and communities.

Ko te kai a te rangatira, he kōrero.
The food of chiefs is discussion.
Who is the guide for?

This guide is for public servants at all levels who interact with communities. If you are new to working with communities, this guide will help you learn about organising consultation processes, working in partnership, and building trusting relationships.

Experienced staff can use the guide to check their own practice, link to further in-depth information, and mentor staff who are new to engagement practices.

The guide also contains information for managers interested in creating workplace cultures that encourage internal and external participation, and for staff who want to contribute to such an environment.

Community organisations may find the guide useful, both in their own community engagement, and as a reference when working with government agencies.

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1. Vision and purpose

This guide outlines the key elements of good practice that government agencies need to follow when engaging citizens and communities in development of policy and services. Its vision is:

Central government engages effectively with citizens and communities, recognising the interdependence of government and communities in achieving the best outcomes for society.

To address complex issues in society, government agencies need to work with community organisations, tangata whenua and businesses. Citizens need to be involved in defining and resolving issues that affect them. Building relationships and engaging others in discussion are, therefore, a vital part of government activity.

Through this guide, the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector (OCVS) aims to make community engagement practices more effective and consistent across government. As a quick and concise outline of good engagement practice, the guide complements the broad and in-depth material on the OCVS website www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz.

The guide’s practical advice will support government agencies in implementing the 2011 Kia Tūtahi-Standing Together Relationship Accord, endorsed by Cabinet on 13 June 2011. This outlines aspirational principles for community-government relationships (see section 2.1).

1.2 What is “engagement”?

“Engagement” involves connecting with other people to share ideas and build understanding. It is a broad term that includes:

- building relationships (see section 2.1)
- undertaking consultation through written documents and dialogue (see section 3.3)
- partnering with other organisations for joint decisions (see section 3.4)
- supporting communities to make their own decisions (see section 3.5).

1.3 Why engage?

Government engagement with citizens and communities fosters good decision making. By building strong external relationships, you create connections that can easily be drawn on when you need input into your work. By collaborating with others, you can pool resources and skills to achieve mutual goals.

There is a requirement to consult in some legislation. You need to be aware of any statutory requirements or internal policies your agency may have around consultation.

To be effective in your engagement, the challenge is to balance good process, inclusiveness and cost. You will then reap the benefits of:

- policies and services that are well informed and have broader acceptance
- greater trust in government through openness and transparency
- enhanced community capacity to resolve issues.

For more information on the benefits of community engagement go to:

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1 Originally conceived by the Building Better Government Engagement project 2009 (see www.ocvs.govt.nz/publications)
2 Indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand
1.4 Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi

Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) places a responsibility on government agencies to effectively facilitate whānau, hapū and iwi\(^3\) participation in policy development and service delivery (see section 2.2).

All agencies must understand how the Treaty obligations of the Crown relate to their particular business. Some agencies have legislative requirements to actively engage with Māori on specified matters. Others have signed relationship protocols, accords or similar agreements that specify the nature, scope and parameters of engagement with specific iwi.

The principles of the Treaty have been variously interpreted. Three principles commonly recognised and first outlined in the Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988) are:

- **Partnership**: interactions between the Treaty partners must be based on mutual good faith, cooperation, tolerance, honesty and respect
- **Participation**: this principle secures active and equitable participation by tangata whenua
- **Protection**: government must protect whakapapa\(^4\), cultural practices and taonga\(^5\) including protocols, customs and language.


Treaty resources can be found at
www.nzhistory.net.nz/category/tid/133 and
www.waitangi-tribunal.govt.nz/treaty/ and

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\(^3\) Family, subtribe and tribe

\(^4\) Genealogy

\(^5\) Treasures

\(^6\) Knowledge, skills and values
2.1 Building strong relationships

The first step towards effective community engagement is to get to know your stakeholders – that is, the people who are interested in, or affected by, your work.

Fostering strong and trusting relationships is important in order to:
- draw the wisdom of a wider audience into your work
- spread knowledge of your role and interests
- enhance your understanding of the needs and views of citizens and communities
- build the trust needed to work together collaboratively
- ensure you have networks to draw on when tricky issues need tackling.

Strong relationships build over time and need to be maintained.

Building networks and relationships

Each work area in an agency needs a database of stakeholders relevant to their particular business. These stakeholders may be in:
- central and local government
- community and voluntary organisations
- business
- specific sections of the population (such as whānau, hapū and iwi, Pacific, ethnic communities, disabled people, seniors)
- tertiary institutions.

Identify new contacts by talking with people who already have the networks you need. They may be within your own organisation, or external (such as “umbrella” community organisations, which have coordination roles on behalf of other groups). Start with a couple of key people and ask them who else you need to know.

To foster relationships based on trust, respect and mutual understanding:
- invest time in developing relationships with key individuals
- be friendly, polite and approachable
- listen well to understand their interests and concerns
- communicate clearly and honestly
- recognise the pressures and issues they are experiencing
- be aware of any perceived power differences between you
- keep any commitments you make.

It helps to be self-aware about your own values and biases. Show an interest in learning about other people’s perspectives and backgrounds. Look for shared interests and common ground.
The 2011 Kia Tūtahi-Standing Together Relationship Accord between the Government and communities includes the following principles to guide your relationships. The full Accord can be found at www.ocvs.govt.nz.

We will respect Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- We recognise Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a foundation document of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- We respect all commitments that parties make under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- We will weave Te Tiriti through the work we do.

We have a collective responsibility to hear and respond to the voices of all.
- We will reach out to those who are not usually included and respond to the diversity in our communities.
- We will take account of the people whose daily lives are affected by our work.
- We will work to enable communities to determine their own destinies for the betterment of all.
- We will increase opportunities for people to participate and flourish in their communities.
- We will champion the principles and intent of this Accord.

We will act in good faith.
- We will do what we say we will do and put in place ways of making this clear to everyone.
- We will work cooperatively to resolve issues arising between us.
- We will act in the spirit of generosity towards each other.
- We will share our knowledge, celebrate success and learn from our experiences.

Our work together will be built on trust and mutual respect.
- We will be honest and open.
- We will develop and promote effective communication.
- We will be responsive to each other’s guidance and advice.
- We will respect the different roles and responsibilities we have.
2.2 Engaging with tangata whenua

Māori, as tangata whenua, have a partnership with the Crown. When seeking to engage, consider whether you are approaching Māori as:

- citizens who comprise a significant segment of the community
- tangata whenua, with particular rights derived from the Treaty of Waitangi (see section 1.4).

Māori expect the same rights as other New Zealand citizens in terms of good governance, distribution of State resources, and a safe environment and society in which to live.

The Government has signalled the intent to settle all historical Treaty claims by 2014. The increased economic base of iwi, and the terms of engagement outlined in their settlements, will change the way iwi expect to engage with government in the future.

Relationships with Māori

Invest time in building relationships with whānau, hapū and iwi in order to build trust and respect. Be committed to acting in good faith, fairly, reasonably and honourably toward the Treaty partner.


Be respectful of whānau, hapū and iwi expectations to exercise tino rangatiratanga7 by operating independently on particular issues. Look for ways to develop shared understandings and work together to advance the common good.

Designing processes for engaging with Māori

Here are some key pointers.

- Seek advice on project design and implementation from staff who have been appointed to support relations with iwi/Māori, and/or from Te Puni Kōkiri.
- Seek Māori involvement as early as possible, particularly if the issue has been identified as significant.
- Collaborate with Māori to agree mutual outcomes and processes for the engagement.
- Recognise the diverse realities of Māori and tailor events to meet the expectations of the specific group you are engaging with.
- When engaging with whānau, hapū and iwi as Treaty partners, make contact with the appropriate traditional representative group.
- For issues affecting Māori as part of the mainstream population, consider how you will address their needs, and contact organisations and collectives that represent their interests and views.
- For contacts, refer to Te Kāhui Māngai – Directory of Iwi and Māori Organisations at www.tkm.govt.nz/.

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7 Self determination
In planning a hui, there is no such thing as one size fits all. Seek advice on the best way to plan your process so that positive mutual outcomes can be achieved. Issues to consider are:

- What level of formality is appropriate?
  - A formal hui involves tikanga and may require sufficient time for decision making by consensus.
  - A less formal event may involve karakia and mihimihi.
- What capabilities are required of the team?
  - A formal hui requires at least one team member who is skilled in te reo Māori and knowledgeable in tikanga. Although this capability is desirable for less formal events, it is not a requirement.
- What is the best venue for the event?
  - A formal hui will take place at a marae or an alternative venue at which marae tikanga is used. Less formal venues (e.g., school halls, sports halls) are appropriate for less formal events.
- What aspects of the event should be carefully managed?
  - Payment processes need to be determined. This may require koha, as well as payment for contracted services such as marae/venue hire and catering.
  - In your communications strategy, consider use of Māori radio, television or press, as well as organisations that represent Māori interests such as iwi authorities and providers of services to Māori.

**Undertaking engagement:**

The principles that generally underpin engagement processes involving whānau, hapū and iwi are:

**Whakamana i te Tangata – Respect:** Show respect by understanding and supporting Māori tikanga and kawa, including any regional differences.

**Whakapapa – Kinship:** Connections are important. When you meet, find out where people come from, be clear about who you represent, and acknowledge any connections you have.

**Whanaungatanga – Relationship:** Foster a sense of connection when engaging with a group. Relationships between participants are important irrespective of who they represent.

**Rangatira ki te Rangatira – “Chief-to-Chief”**: Make the best endeavours to have staff involved in the engagement who are of similar status to those they are meeting with.

**Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi – Face-to-face:** Where possible, engage in person, not just by paper or email.

**Manaakitanga – Caring for others:** You should show hospitality, for example by spending time together over food. Also show integrity and caring in how you relate to people, for instance by acknowledging contributions that people have made.

**Kotahitanga – Accord, unity:** While people may hold diverse views, it is important to identify a shared sense of purpose. Meeting with facilitators in advance helps achieve this.

Also note the following:

- The Māori worldview is holistic, so be prepared to consider issues that may seem outside your immediate focus.
- Pay attention to the atmosphere in the room to judge whether the process is working well.
- While strong views may be aired, facilitate a process that enables everyone to respect the mana of others at the event.


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8 Meeting
9 Traditional customs and protocols
10 Prayer
11 A short greeting
12 Māori language
13 Financial or other contribution
14 Ceremony
15 Authority
2.3 Inclusion and diversity

Processes for involving the public in dialogue and decision making need to:

- identify and reach out to diverse communities affected by the issue under discussion
- respect a range of values and perspectives
- find ways to appropriately include different sections of the population.

Starting out

Build contacts who can help you reach diverse communities. If you are new to your agency, make enquiries about internal people and networks that can help you.

When seeking to involve communities who will be impacted by a particular project, consider ways to include people whose voices tend to be marginalised due to:

- socio-economic disadvantage
- ethnicity
- age
- gender
- remote location
- disability
- communication and language barriers
- sexuality.

Government offices that can advise about engagement with specific population groups include:

- Māori: Te Puni Kōkiri
- Pacific peoples: Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs
- Ethnic communities: Office of Ethnic Affairs
- Senior citizens: Office for Senior Citizens
- Disabled people: Office for Disability Issues
- Youth: Ministry of Youth Development
- Women: Ministry of Women's Affairs.

Pacific peoples

Pacific people identify with Pacific Island nations such as Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau and Tuvalu. Pacific people will be encouraged to participate if you:

- invest time in building relationships – build links through Pacific people in your agency, Pacific churches, or Pacific community groups
- ensure that Pacific-focused meetings take into account the distinct cultures, languages and values within each of the Pacific nations
- show respect for Pacific customs and protocols such as opening the meeting with a prayer
- acknowledge individuals who have cultural status in the meeting, such as Tongan nobility, church ministers, Samoan Matai and others.

See www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/working-with-specific-groups/pacific-islander/index.html. The bullet points in the section below are also relevant.

Ethnic communities

When engaging with culturally diverse communities:

- learn about communities’ worldviews and settlement history (some may have been in New Zealand for several generations, while others may be more recent immigrants)
- if possible, be introduced by a person with credible links to the community
- remove barriers to participation like complex documents full of jargon, or venues requiring considerable travel for attendees
- identify the “movers and shakers” in the community and those who have the community mandate
- find out whether different sections of the community need separate opportunities to discuss important issues (such as men, women, youth, elderly)
- for those people who may feel uncomfortable speaking out in a community meeting, provide alternative mechanisms for input
- use facilitators skilled in intercultural communication
• use interpreters and translate documents if necessary
• be sensitive to cultural values and protocols, such as prayers, and recognise the important community institutions, such as places of worship
• understand how the community passes on and shares information – who gets it and who does not
• be aware of times in the calendar that may not be ideal for consultation for some communities, for instance, the month of Ramadan
• use media that specifically focus on the community you are trying to reach.

For more advice, visit www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/working-with-specific-groups/other-ethnic/index.html.

Disabled people

If you are planning a meeting, consider who will be attending and how to make your meeting accessible. Enquire about what assistance participants may need. This could include:
• a wheelchair-accessible venue
• user-friendly furniture and lighting
• special parking or transport requirements
• a hearing loop
• New Zealand sign language interpreters
• special dietary requirements
• a support person
• a guide dog
• video conferencing for people who cannot easily attend
• online documentation in accessible formats for people with visual impairment.

3.1 Initial planning
Your project plan needs to identify objectives, deliverables, milestones, timeframes, costs and the project team. You will need to clarify:
• the outcomes you are seeking, including your Minister’s expectations
• the scope of the issues to be addressed
• the nature and extent of citizen and community involvement.
There is a useful process planner at www.peopleandparticipation.net and a planning workbook at www.dse.vic.gov.au/effective-engagement.

Project governance
Consider involving stakeholder representatives in overseeing the project. If you choose to do so, consider how members will be invited, for example by:
• personal invitation to a selected range of people
• calling for nominations through appropriate networks.

The appointment method will depend on the significance of the project. Selections may be made by Cabinet Committee, your Minister, a panel, or the manager responsible for the project.

Be clear whether the group is advisory or has decision-making power. Include people with diverse views (reflecting the main external interests) and a chair with strong facilitation skills who can draw the group to consensus. Determine fees for non-government members using the Cabinet Office fees framework. See www.dpmc.govt.nz/cabinet/circulars/co09/5.html

Even if you do not set up a formal group, think which external stakeholders you could regularly touch base with, to test out your thinking and plans.

Stakeholder identification
A stakeholder is a person, group or organisation who affects, or can be affected by, your organisation’s actions.

For each project, identify the relevant stakeholders. Consider:
• whether the issues are of wide interest to many citizens, or of primary interest to particular audiences
• which stakeholders are likely to have a strong impact/influence on the issue.

You can create a chart that maps your key stakeholders’ level of interest (low-high) against level of influence (low-high).

Stakeholders who have high interest/high impact generally require the most time and effort. You also need to consider hard-to-reach populations who will be impacted but may not be aware of how to input into the process (see section 2.3).

Planning communications
You need a communications strategy that considers:
• what key messages your stakeholders need to know
• potential risks for your Minister/agency/other parties, and how these can be mitigated
• what information citizens and communities need to know in order to understand the project and contribute where appropriate.

Effective communication planning identifies who your audiences are, what is important to them, and how to reach them. This impacts on the language you choose, the means of communication (written, visual, face-to-face, electronic, etc) and the timing.
Levels of engagement

Early on in planning a policy or service delivery initiative, consider the extent to which citizens and communities are going to be involved.

Fig 1 shows a spectrum of citizen and community engagement:
- informing citizens of decisions made with minimal input (first quadrant)
- consulting citizens before making decisions (second quadrant)
- collaborating and partnering for joint decisions (third quadrant)
- supporting devolved decision making (fourth quadrant).

Increasingly there is a focus on partnering and community involvement in problem solving. The ideals of open, transparent, citizen-centred government can be supported by building good practice in the second, third and fourth engagement quadrants.

Any given project may involve a mix of these levels. For instance, you may form a partnership with other agencies, and decide together that your strategy will involve consultation with other parties.

These levels of engagement are explained further in the following sections. You can also refer to the International Association of Public Participation’s spectrum at www.iap2.org.

Examples of good process principles to guide engagement.

OECD – Guiding Principles for Open and Inclusive Policy Making

United Nations Declaration on Community Engagement
www.iap2.org.au/resources/cid/24/parent/0/t/resources

National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation (USA) – Core Principles for Public Engagement
http://ncdd.org/rc/item/3643

City of Portland - Public Involvement Principles, Indicators and Outcomes
www.portlandonline.com/oni/index.cfm?c=51069&a=312804

International Association for Public Participation – Core Values of Public Participation
www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/CoreValues.pdf

Involve - Deliberative Public Engagement: Nine Principles
www.involve.org.uk/deliberative-public-engagement-nine-principles/
3.2 Inform
In the first quadrant of the engagement spectrum (refer Fig 1), decisions are made by the government agency or Ministers, and citizens and communities are advised. External input does not occur or is very selective. This may be because:
• Ministers are elected on the understanding that certain actions will be taken
• in-depth information may already be available from previous public debate
• rapid action is required.
Careful consideration should be given to whether diverse perspectives have been weighed up before any decisions are made. Open communication will be needed on the implications of the decision. Consider which people will need to know first and how the information will be conveyed. Resources may be required for responding to public reactions if citizens feel their views have not been taken into account.
Providing information is also important in other quadrants of the engagement spectrum. For instance:
• early in a consultation, information assists people in understanding issues, alternatives, opportunities and solutions
• at the end of a consultation, people will want to know how their input affected the end result, and how things will move forward
• in a partnership, sharing information builds trust and mutual understanding
• community-led decisions can be empowered by sharing your knowledge.

3.3 Consult
Consultation involves seeking and considering others’ views on an issue where the ultimate decision-making responsibility lies with your organisation (or, in the case of government agencies, the ultimate responsibility may lie with Ministers).
By following good practice, you can ensure that:
• you obtain valuable input
• participants find their involvement satisfying and meaningful.

Legal considerations
A number of statutes require formal consultation with interested parties. If you are unsure, your legal staff can tell you which statutes relate to your agency.
In the case of Wellington International Airport v Air New Zealand (1993) the Court of Appeal provided guidance on how agencies should consult affected parties. See www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/levels-of-participation/one-off-consultation/index.html.

Clear purpose
Be clear about what you wish to achieve by consulting, and the key questions you are looking to answer. Remember that genuine consultation involves more than simply providing information. You need to seek and be open to feedback and respond to what you hear.

Careful planning
Identify a consultation approach that:
• ensures external input early in the process to make sure the right issues and options are being identified
• is in proportion (in cost and scale) to the significance of the issue under consideration
• takes into account any previous or concurrent consultations that are relevant
• enables a range of relevant stakeholders to provide input.
If an issue is of widespread interest, you need to allow several months for citizens and communities to provide input. Note that:

- responding to government consultations places pressure on the resources of community organisations (many of which are run by volunteers) and they are often dealing with multiple consultation requests
- during Christmas and January, many people are on holidays and community organisations may not have anyone available to respond
- governing boards of larger community organisations may want to provide input to, or to sign off on, their organisation’s submission, but may meet only monthly or bi-monthly
- knowledge of a consultation often spreads by word-of-mouth, and this takes time.

Consider whether to involve external stakeholders in the project governance structure (see section 3.1) or in organising aspects of the consultation (such as inviting community organisations in local areas to host meetings).

**Ensuring good process**

Use a range of communication methods to ensure your target audience is aware of the consultation, and knows how to provide input. Publicise your consultation on [http://newzealand.govt.nz/participate/have-your-say/](http://newzealand.govt.nz/participate/have-your-say/) and other places relevant to your audience.

Ensure any written consultation documents:

- are straightforward and clearly presented
- explain the issue being addressed
- include clear questions on which views are being sought
- cover the likely costs and benefits of any proposals
- explain what decisions, if any, have already been made
- include an indication of expected next steps and timing
- have instructions on who to respond to, how to respond, and by when
- are pre-tested before release
- have an associated communications plan.

Many community members value face-to-face discussion. Important points for meetings are:

- be clear at the start about the purpose and process
- consider culturally appropriate processes (see sections 2.2 and 2.3), for instance opening karakia, and opportunities to caucus in cultural groupings (for a Treaty-based model see [http://cst.org.nz/about/publications/a_new_way_of_working.pdf](http://cst.org.nz/about/publications/a_new_way_of_working.pdf))
- agree on any “ground rules” such as speaking one at a time and showing respect for each others’ views
- be honest about any limitations to the consultation – that is, what is on the table for discussion and what is not
- consider using processes that foster dialogue and deliberation (such as world café, appreciative inquiry, focus groups, open space technology- see [www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/techniques/index.html](http://www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/techniques/index.html))
- pose stimulating questions and ensure everyone has a say
- take a record of what is said
- be flexible in exploring emerging issues and ideas
- listen well and reflect back what you have heard
- let people know what will happen next.

Show appreciation for the input received, for instance by providing refreshments and (if possible) reimbursing the travel costs of non-government participants.

Consider use of online engagement tools such as discussion forums.

Follow-up and evaluation

Provide feedback to the people consulted on how the views gathered have been incorporated into the decision-making process.

Keep lines of communication open after the consultation, so that people are updated on progress or can advise you of new developments of relevance.

Deliver on any commitments you made during the consultation, or be transparent about any changes in plan.

Seek feedback on the consultation process, for instance through a simple online survey.

Evaluate such factors as:
- did we do what we said we would do?
- who did we reach?
- was anyone left out who should have been included?
- were participants satisfied with the processes used?
- did people feel well treated (listened to, heard, respected)?
- did we provide feedback on how the input was used?
- was the process useful for achieving the project outcomes?
- were time and money used efficiently?
- were there any unintended consequences?
- what would we do differently and why?


3.4 Partner

Increasingly, government is looking to develop collaborations and partnerships with external organisations, based on respect and openness. Instead of government controlling the decision making, a partnership approach involves joining up with one or more organisations to:
- accomplish mutual goals, such as shared services
- share resources, risks and benefits
- make decisions together.


Setting up a partnership

Be clear who your essential partners are. They may be from community organisations, private businesses, and/or other parts of the public sector.

Be clear what you hope to gain from collaboration, and how risks will be addressed.

Clarify with your partners:
- what your shared interests are and mutual, compelling goals (both short and long-term)
- whether the partnership can be managed by existing staff, or whether a new entity is necessary
- what resources you can each offer (for instance, knowledge and information, staff time and skills, finances, equipment, networks)
- how you will work together (for example, how frequently you will meet)
- who will be responsible for which tasks
- what your respective “bottom lines” are
- what processes you will use to deal with conflict
- what measures you will use for monitoring progress.

Consider whether having an independent chairperson who does not belong to the partner organisations would be helpful.
Formal agreements

The resource *Putting Pen to Paper* outlines key elements of partnership agreements. See [www.communityoutcomes.govt.nz](http://www.communityoutcomes.govt.nz/).

Working together

Some tips are:

- share control and talk through what partnership means to you both
- look for common interests
- keep focused on the outcome, not just the outputs
- ensure everyone is up-to-speed and kept well informed
- allow time for trust to develop, especially if you have not worked together before, or the previous experience of doing so was less than satisfactory
- give wholehearted commitment
- be open and honest about possibilities and limits on what you can/cannot do
- think “outside the box”
- value each others’ perspectives as differences can bring innovative ideas
- regularly review progress
- celebrate achievements together
- agree processes for ending or continuing after the first phase (that is, renegotiate or manage closure).

3.5 Empower

Community ingenuity and knowledge is invaluable in resolving local issues. Government can help create an enabling environment where strong communities:

- define their own agendas and vision
- work together to harness their own skills and assets
- connect to external sources of support, where needed
- find their own solutions that fit the local context.

In community-led processes, decision-making power lies with communities. If, as a government agency, you are seeking to support local action, consider:

- what is the issue that the community wants to address?
- how can I learn about this community’s priorities and concerns?
- who are the key people locally who have networks and influence?
- how will a range of people be involved?
- what is the history of similar initiatives in this community?
- how will this initiative draw on local skills and build capacity?
- how can my agency add value in a way that empowers this community?
To support local action, government agencies can:

- provide information on government systems, programmes and policies
- look for opportunities to work in partnership (see section 3.4)
- provide capacity building funding and advice
- facilitate community meetings, if such assistance is sought
- help build connections between different communities
- initiate devolved deliberative methods like citizens juries (and be sure to honour the decisions made by the participants)
- put forward staff for community internships (see www.dia.govt.nz/Services-Community-Internship-Programme-Index)
- support active citizenship by staff, for instance through payroll giving and employee volunteering.

4.1 Organisational culture
Organisations that encourage staff to participate and collaborate internally are more likely to be effective in building relationships with external stakeholders.

Organisations that excel in the future will be those that provide environments where staff feel respected and able to contribute their strengths. Participatory organisations value diverse opinions and talents, and reward people for innovating and finding solutions.

Agencies getting these things right will be better at engaging with the people they serve and better partners for other organisations.

4.2 Inspiring participation and engagement
Building a participatory culture that inspires effective external engagement requires conscious effort. Participatory leadership encourages:

• everyone in the workplace to practise good listening and model respectful behaviours
• sharing of viewpoints and expertise across different levels and teams within the organisation, and appreciating a diversity of perspectives
• respect for the capability of staff to find solutions to issues
• personal responsibility for developing and maintaining relationships
• regular use of feedback tools to assess the working environment, followed by action to reinforce what is working well, and to address what is not.

While the role of leaders in making decisions is ultimately important, in a participatory culture there is an increased emphasis on facilitating the involvement of others and empowering others to act.

Actions for management
Some actions managers can take, with an internal focus, are:

• hold regular open forums between the chief executive and staff, where staff can raise any topics of interest
• encourage sharing of ideas across different parts of the organisation, including collaboration between policy and operational staff
• support development of cultural networks (such as Māori or Pacific) for staff
• experiment with innovative engagement techniques when holding staff forums
• involve all staff in meaningful discussions about strategic directions for the organisation
• encourage conversations about work successes and difficulties, in the spirit of learning together
• undertake regular surveys to test how involved and engaged staff feel.

Some actions with an external focus, are:

• provide clear messages about the importance of collaboration with other government and non-government agencies, and model this
• ensure everyone in the agency has the skills, strategies and resources they need to undertake effective external engagement
• include discussions on team meeting agendas about what engagement has recently taken place and is planned
• convene regular forums with community and voluntary organisations within your sphere of interest to discuss relationships and policy issues
• demonstrate respectful and mutually beneficial relationships with mana whenua
• undertake regular surveys of external stakeholders to judge their perception of the agency
• build staff knowledge and experience through support for employee volunteering (see www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/building-governance-capability/human-resources-actions/index.html), and secondments to (or exchanges with) external organisations.

16 Māori with authority in a particular geographic area
Strategising and planning

A commitment to effective external relationships and engagement, and to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, should be integrated into key planning documents.

Your agency’s Statement of Intent is an important place to outline how stakeholder relationships will support the outcomes your agency is seeking.

Staff responsible for stakeholder relationship strategies for their organisations need to:
• draw on knowledge from across the agency to identify relationships that are of strategic importance and influence
• plan ways to maintain the most important relationships sustainably over time
• ensure the various work areas in the agency are able to develop and implement stakeholder engagement plans.

What you will notice

You can expect to see, hear and experience:
• policy staff who are interested in finding out what others think, and do so with open minds
• staff making appointments with external stakeholders, and more visitors to your workplace
• less negative feedback from external sources
• potentially fewer Ministerials and Official Information Requests, and less litigation
• project plans that include time and funds for meaningful community engagement
• more long-term thinking about enduring relationships, beyond the life of a particular project
• a more diverse workforce, as a wide range of people are comfortable within the work environment
• an increased emphasis in communications strategies on creating dialogue opportunities
• information sharing between staff about external relationships.

4.3 Human resource strategies

Below are further actions that can enhance your engagement capability. For more information, go to: www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/building-government-capability/index.html.

Recruitment and induction

Employ people with passion for involving citizens and communities in issues that affect them, and experience and knowledge in such areas as:
• stakeholder engagement
• facilitation, mediation and conflict resolution
• working in, or with, community-based organisations
• working with whānau, hapū and iwi
• working with Pacific peoples and ethnic communities
• working with other diverse communities, such as disabled people, seniors, youth and GLBTI17 populations.

Employ specialist staff who:
• are dedicated professionals in the stakeholder engagement field, including some who are located in, or strongly aligned with policy teams
• mentor others in engagement processes
• know other skilled facilitators who can be called on when required
• can provide advice on effectively engaging with Māori.

Include modules on stakeholder engagement in induction programmes.

17 Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex
Performance management
In performance assessments, consider the extent of skill shown in:
• communication and relationship management
• organising and running processes across the engagement spectrum (see section 3.1).
Seek feedback from internal and external stakeholders on individual and team performance.

Staff development
Encourage training, peer support and mentoring to build confidence and capability in such areas as:
• facilitation, mediation and conflict resolution
• giving presentations
• running engagement processes
• techniques for dialogue and deliberation
• online engagement tools
• evaluating community engagement processes
• te reo and tikanga Māori
• working with the range of Pacific and ethnic communities
• communicating in ways that do not exclude disabled people.

Learning State, the industry training organisation for the State sector, can help identify the best learning pathways for employees – www.learningstate.govt.nz.

Encourage attendance at good practice seminars run by the OCVS.
Promote www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz and this guide.
Support staff involvement in professional associations such as the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) or Australasian Facilitators Network.
Hold internal forums for sharing experiences of processes, both the successes and difficulties.

Succession planning
When staff responsible for key stakeholder relationships move on, seek to minimise disruption to relationships. For example, the departing employee may induct their replacement into the history and nuances of the relationships, and arrange introductions.
4.4 Starting a dialogue in your agency

We encourage you to discuss with your colleagues:

- What are the benefits and challenges for your agency in engaging with citizens and communities?
- How does your organisation engage in good faith with the Treaty partner?
- How can your organisation’s internal culture foster participation and good engagement?
- What steps can your agency take to improve its engagement with citizens and communities?
5.1 Related resources

Fig 2 links to key Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector resources. For in-depth engagement advice, focused on the New Zealand context, see www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz.

Other useful sources of information.

**International**
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [www.oecd.org/document/20/0,3343,en_2649_33735_40755604_1_1_1_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/20/0,3343,en_2649_33735_40755604_1_1_1_1,00.html)
- International Association for Public Participation [www.iap2.org.au/](http://www.iap2.org.au/)

**Australia**

**United Kingdom**
- Involve [website www.involve.org.uk/](http://www.involve.org.uk/)
- People and Participation [website www.peopleandparticipation.net](http://www.peopleandparticipation.net)

**United States**
- National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation [http://ncdd.org/rc/](http://ncdd.org/rc/)
- White House – Office for Public Engagement [www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ope](http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ope)
5.2 Checklist

- Are you regularly meeting with key stakeholders to build relationships? (page 4)
- Are you familiar with the Kia Tūtahi–Standing Together Relationship Accord principles? (page 5)
- Have you considered how the Treaty of Waitangi relates to your work? (page 3)
- Are you taking steps to build strong relationships with tangata whenua? (page 6)

When setting up an engagement process, have you considered:

- ways to ensure diverse voices are heard? (page 8)
- whether to involve stakeholders in the project governance or delivery? (page 10)
- whether you are aiming to inform, consult, partner or empower? (page 11)
- any legislation or internal policies that outline consultation requirements for your agency? (page 12)
- how you will evaluate the engagement process including seeking feedback? (page 14)
- Have you considered ways you can help build a culture of participation and collaboration within your agency? (page 17)

5.3 Feedback and revisions

Do you have ideas on the content of this guide or www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz? You can email o cvs@dia.govt.nz.
Ko te iwi te rangatira o te rangatira.

People are the chiefs of the chiefs.