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# How Engaged Are You Really?

Bristow & Lloyd

<sup>1</sup> Helguera, P. (2011) Education for socially engaged art, New York: Jorge Pinto Books

## HOW ENGAGED ARE YOU REALLY?

Public engagement is a term that is increasingly used in cultural and academic circles amongst others. But what does it mean and how engaged are you *really*?

### Public engagement - what does it mean?

Before we begin, it is useful to locate yourself within the term 'public' by ticking which of the following describe you:

- A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC
- PART OF A COMMUNITY / GROUP
- A SUBJECT
- A REPRESENTATIVE OF AN INSTITUTION
- A PROFESSIONAL
- A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL FAMILY
- A CITIZEN
- OUTSIDE SOCIETY

Members of the public come from all different walks of life with a wealth of personal and social experiences that shape their views on the world. Please list three significant incidents that have shaped who you are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### How engaged do you like to be?

Please select from the following:  
I LIKE TO FEEL INCLUDED / I LIKE TO MAKE DECISIONS / I WANT TO BE IN CHARGE / I LIKE TO FEEL CONSULTED / I NEED TO BE INVOLVED IN EVERY DECISION, NO MATTER HOW SMALL / I LIKE TO HAVE CHOICES GIVEN TO ME / I COULDN'T CARE LESS / I AM HAPPY TO WATCH FROM A DISTANCE / I HAVE STRONG OPINIONS AND WANT THEM LISTENED TO / ITS NICE TO BE ASKED / PLEASE LEAVE ME ALONE /

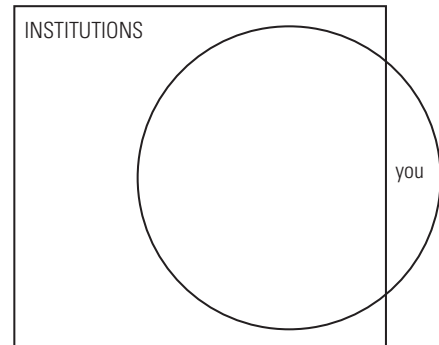
### Describing public engagement

Which of the following statements best describes what you think public engagement does:

- It's a two-way process
- It takes place between institutions and individuals
- It should be a congenial dialogue or conversation
- It can be confrontational
- It's a way to share information
- It's a form of participatory democracy
- It's a way to gather opinions
- It's a consultation process
- It creates an illusion of transparency
- It's a process to make people feel included
- It proves decision makers are listening
- It's a tool used by those in charge
- It's an exchange of ideas
- It's a better way to do things
- It's a creative exchange
- It's what politicians do when they're out and about
- It's what I do everyday

### How do you currently connect?

Use the handy diagram below to list the Institutions you currently engage with and the ways you connect with them. For example you may write regular letters to your local newspaper, object to planning applications (public or civic engagement), visit theatres (engagement with the arts), or find yourself in trouble with the authorities (anti-social behaviour).



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### **Modes of engagement**

Engaging can take lots of forms, please use the follow list to pick out the ways that you often engage:

WATCHING / TALKING / LISTENING / AS A MEMBER OF AN AUDIENCE / FILLING IN FORMS / COMMENTING ONLINE / VOTING / PUTTING MY HAND UP / VISITING / READING / ENTERING A DIALOGUE / HAVING A LAUGH / WRITING THINGS DOWN / VOICING MY OPINION / MAKING AN INFORMED DECISION / CHOOSING THINGS / COMPLAINING / PRESSING BUTTONS / FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS / RE-ENACTING / BEING PRESENT / ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO DO THE SAME / INCITING / COLLABORATING / COMPLETING SIMPLE TASKS TO CONTRIBUTE TO SOMETHING BIGGER / REFLECTING / JOINING IN / I TRY NOT TO ENGAGE /

### **Engagement with the arts**

Engaging with the arts takes many forms, please select which forms best describe your engagement: VIEWING / INTERPRETING / ENCOUNTERING / SITTING AND LOOKING / LISTENING / SINGING ALONG / THINKING ABOUT THE THINGS I'VE SEEN OR HEARD / WALKING ABOUT WHILE LOOKING / BROWSING / COLOURING IN / CONTEMPLATING / CONTRIBUTING / STEALING / CRITIQUING / COPYING / WATCHING OTHER PEOPLE ENGAGE / HECKLING.

### **Socially engaged arts projects**

Many artists, designers and architects have used ideas of public engagement to develop 'socially engaged practices' to include people into creative projects or processes. Which of the following would you rather:

BE ASKED TO JOIN IN A PRE-EXISTING PROJECT  
CHOOSE WHO RUNS A PROJECT, THEN JOIN IN  
CHOOSE WHAT A PROJECT IS FOR  
RUN MY OWN PROJECT  
SCRUTINISE WHAT ARTISTS AND DESIGNERS DO  
BECOME AN ARTIST OR DESIGNER MYSELF  
GET SOMEBODY LOCAL TO DO IT  
USE THE PROJECT FUNDING FOR SOMETHING ELSE  
NOT TO BE ASKED TO JOIN IN

### **What motivates you to engage?**

IT'S MY JOB / CIVIC DUTY / CALLING  
IT'S INTERESTING / ON OFFER / FREE  
TEA & BISCUITS / OTHER INCENTIVES  
I LIKE TO MEET PEOPLE / GET INVOLVED  
IT'S CREATIVE / IMPORTANT / INTERESTING  
IT'S A WAY TO ENACT MY DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS  
IT GETS ME OUT OF THE HOUSE

### **How have you engaged with this publication?**

Please select the statements that best describe your levels of engagement with this publication:

I HAVE FILLED IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE  
I HAVE READ AND THOUGHT ABOUT EVERYTHING  
I HAVE READ EVERYTHING  
I AM IN THE PROCESS OF READING EVERYTHING  
I HAVE READ SOME OF IT  
I HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT READING IT  
I FLICKED THROUGH IT, LINGERING OCCASIONALLY  
I FLICKED THROUGH IT WITHOUT LINGERING  
I THOUGHT ABOUT FLICKING THROUGH IT  
I PICKED IT UP  
I SAW IT ON THE SHELF / DESK  
I HAVE USED IT FOR AN UNINTENDED PURPOSE  
I NEEDED A PEN TO ENGAGE  
I HAVE DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING ELSE

### **Measuring the impact**

Measuring the impact of public engagement on members of the public can be useful to see if the intended outcomes have been achieved. How has public engagement impacted on you:  
CONSIDERABLY / ALL THE TIME / SOME OF THE TIME / NOT VERY MUCH / A BIT / LESS THAN I THOUGHT / TREMENDOUSLY / NOT SURE / I DON'T THINK ANYTHING HAS HAPPENED YET / CAN YOU ASK ME IN A FEW DAYS / MONTHS / YEARS TIME

Questionnaires always run the risk of bias by asking leading questions. With this in mind, please state what question you would rather be asked:

*We hope we have enabled you to better understand yourself when engaging in the public sphere.  
Bristow & Lloyd*