Public Engagement Framework

2021–2025
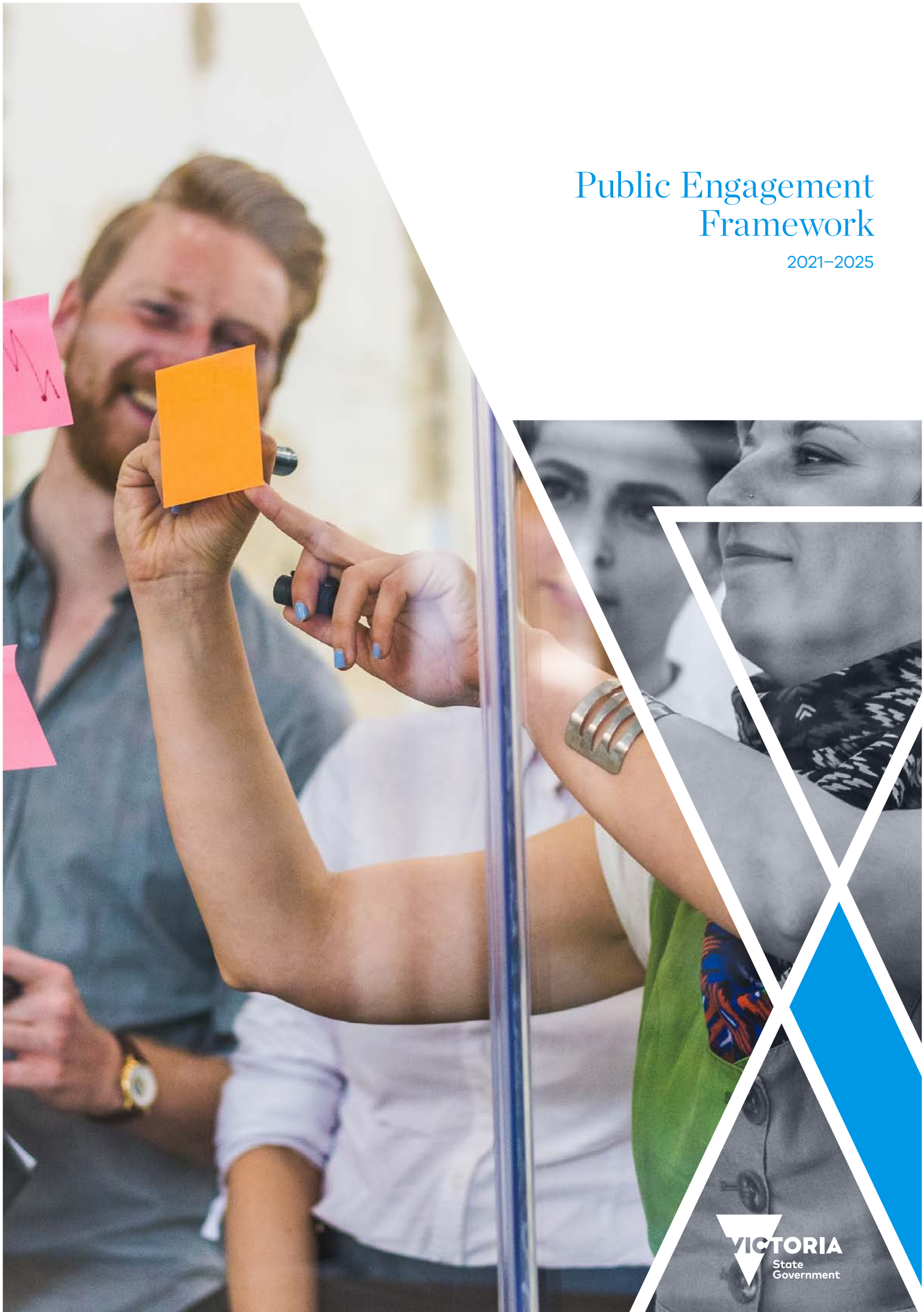
Victoria State Government

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Secretary's Welcome

The Victorian Government is committed to enabling meaningful and inclusive public engagement across the Victorian public sector.

The Public Engagement Framework (Framework) outlines the Government's approach to working with communities to make better decisions and improve the lives of all Victorians.

The Framework aims to:

→ build stronger relationships and engaged communities and

→ support the public sector to design and deliver best practice public engagement to ensure all Victorians can participate in the decisions that matter to them.

It reflects the collective knowledge of community engagement specialists and community feedback to ensure we understand Victorians' priorities and expectations when participating in Government decision-making that impacts their lives.

The Framework includes principles that underpin the design and delivery all Victorian Government public engagement to be:

→ meaningful by being genuine and informing the final decision

→ inclusive by being respectful and accessible

→ transparent by being clear and open about what the public can and cannot influence

→ informed by providing relevant and timely information to the public

→ accountable by being responsive to the public and

→ valuable for the community and government.

By implementing the Framework, we commit to continually working across the public sector to improve and strengthen meaningful engagement practices in Victoria to ultimately improve the lives of Victorians.

Jeremi Moule
Secretary

01

Introduction

The Victorian Government commits to meaningful, principled and inclusive public engagement. Inclusive engagement supports better decisions for all parts of government.

Infrastructure, regulation, policy, services, disaster prevention and recovery, benefit from engagement. Engagement helps to build more resilient communities.

The Framework provides principles, a how-to guide and measures for engagement evaluation. It aims to strengthen meaningful engagement practice in Victoria.

The Public Engagement Framework

OVERVIEW

The Framework includes

A consistent public engagement vision for Victoria.
Principles and definitions for engagement.
A how-to guide for the design and delivery of engagement.
Evaluation outcomes, indicators and measures.
A promise to the public.

WE BUILT THIS TOGETHER

Engagement specialists from across the Victorian Government collaborated to develop the Framework. They considered existing and emerging practice, new research, ideas, policies and barriers. They also ran a public engagement to test a draft Framework with the Victorian community. This Framework reflects the collective knowledge of the community and engagement specialists. It applies to the whole of Victorian Government.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT DEFINITION

Public engagement is a planned process to support decision making. It encourages people to get involved in decisions that are of interest to them. Engagement refers to a range of opportunities including:

- Educating people about a topic (i.e. road safety or health awareness);

- Obtaining feedback on a project (i.e. planning new housing); and

- Working with stakeholders to address local issues (i.e. traffic safety and planning).

Public engagement activities may include:

- Workshops, forums, reference groups or consultative committees

- Deliberative, participatory budgeting and co-design processes

- Online discussion forums, surveys, mapping tools or social media commentary

- Submissions, feedback forms or questionnaires

- Communications materials like fact sheets, newsletters, displays or letters

- Focus groups, interviews, phone surveys or door-knocks.

Vision, goals and outcomes

The public engagement vision is *Working together to make better decisions and improve the lives of Victorians.*

The vision was endorsed by the Victorian Secretaries' Board in 2018. Alongside the vision are two domains (community and system) and a series of outcomes. The domains outline the priorities for building stronger relationships and engaging with Victorians. The outcomes focus on engagement success for the community and government.

DOMAIN ONE

Community outcomes

Building stronger relationships and engaged communities

People are involved

People engage and know their views have been listened to and used by Government

People have choice and flexibility

People can choose how they would like to be involved

Communities are well represented

We collect representative views and build strong relationships with communities

DOMAIN TWO

System outcomes

A public sector that engages effectively with Victorians

Our workforce values engagement and uses it to inform decisions

Our workforce has the skills, resources and competencies to engage with Victorians effectively

Our systems enable engagement

We will make better use of data and information, and insights from public engagement to inform government decision-making

" Working together to make better decisions and improve the lives of Victorians. "

Legislation, policy and best practice

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Public engagement is embedded in a broad range of legislation, regulations and directives. They guide why, when and how Victorians are engaged on government projects and decisions. Legislation and policies that have informed the Framework are:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- The Child Safe Standards, Commission for Children and Young People
- Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees 2015
- Code of Ethical Practice, Youth Affairs Council of Victoria 2007
- Disability Act 2006
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Heritage Act 2017
- Information Privacy Act 2000
- National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2018
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Outcomes Reform in Victoria 2018
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2004
- Public Administration Act 2004
- Public Participation in Government Decision-making, Better Practice Guide, Victorian Auditor-General's Office 2015
- Subordinate Legislation Act 1994
- Transport Integration Act 2010
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2007
- Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023
- Victorian Guide to Regulation 2016
- Victorian Public Sector Values
- Victorian State-Local Government Agreement 2014
- Victoria's Value Creation and Capture Framework 2016

Other legislation and policy was indirectly considered as part of the development of the Framework. These have not been listed above.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICE

The Public Engagement Framework provides a guide to best practice. It builds on the values and standards developed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2), and nuances this for the Victorian Government context. IAP2 is a leading organisation in public engagement practice. IAP2 has a series of tools which support the delivery of engagement, including:

Core Values

→ informing best practice engagement and defining expectations of the process.

Public Participation Spectrum

→ defining the role of the public in engagement processes.

Code of Ethics for Public Participation Practitioners

→ a guide for ethics in public engagement

Quality Assurance Standard

→ describes the important elements of public engagement processes.

Engagement practitioners must be familiar with the IAP2 values, spectrum, ethics and quality assurance standard. These tools should inform engagements with the public.

How does good engagement benefit the public?

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT benefits people by providing opportunities to exercise their right to take part in decision making. These decisions support our systems, policies, services, infrastructure and legislation. They ultimately affect our lives.

ENGAGEMENT is a process to build knowledge, share feedback and ideas, discuss priorities and / or identify solutions. It also provides opportunities to hear other people's views and learn from their experiences. Good public engagement leads to stronger communities by involving people in creating better outcomes for everyone.

How does good engagement benefit government?

ENGAGEMENT enables government to make decisions that take into consideration the rights, needs, preferences and values of the public. It enhances the process of sustainable decision making by drawing on the public's knowledge and experience.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT can help identify issues early, so they can be addressed. Additionally, engagement can help the public to understand the decision making process. Good engagement leads to increased public confidence and trust in government.

Victorian Government engagement principles

Outlined below are six public engagement principles. The principles are of equal importance. They underpin the design and delivery of all Victorian Government public engagement.

PRINCIPLE 1:
Meaningful

The process of public engagement is genuine and informs the final decision. In practice this looks like:

→ The purpose and objectives are clear and shared with the public.

→ The public has adequate time, resources and opportunities to provide feedback before decision-making.

→ The public can take part in decisions that affect their lives.

→ Decision-makers consider the views of the public.

PRINCIPLE 2:
Inclusive

The engagement is respectful, inclusive and accessible. In practice this looks like:

→ The engagement design is human-centred and enables the full participation of all who wish to be involved.

→ Asking the individual or group how they would like to participate and designing the process accordingly.

→ Offering a number of ways that the public can engage.

→ The public has opportunities to influence the problem definition.

PRINCIPLE 3:
Transparent

The engagement is clear and open about what the public can and cannot influence. In practice this looks like:

→ Sharing background information about the project and the process for the engagement.

→ Explaining why some decisions can be influenced by the engagement, while others cannot.

→ Communicating the level of influence the public has in the decision-making process.

→ Seeking diverse opinions to build a greater understanding of the broad range of community views and values.

PRINCIPLE 4:
Informed

The engagement provides relevant and timely information to the public. In practice this looks like:

→ Promoting the opportunity to take part in the engagement.

→ Communicating accessible, relevant, tailored and timely information.

→ Giving the public the knowledge and time to provide informed contributions.

→ Providing clarity about the role of the engagement in the broader project. This includes how contributions will be considered and any relevant legislation and standards.
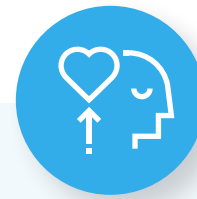

PRINCIPLE 5:
Accountable

The engagement is high quality and responsive to the public. In practice this looks like:

→ Planning must ensure that the purpose, scope and objectives are clear. Engagement risks must be understood and mitigated.

→ Communications provide pathways for questions and feedback from the public.

→ Safety plans, privacy, security and data storage/management protections are in place and communicated.

→ The VPS Values underpin the actions and behaviours of public engagement staff.

→ Concerns or requests from the public are addressed.

→ Participants are advised how their input affected/or did not affect, the decision at the end of an engagement.

→ Public engagement is measured and reported on to support continuous improvement.

PRINCIPLE 6:
Valuable

The engagement creates value for the community and government. This can include social, economic and environmental value. In practice this looks like:

→ Drawing on local knowledge and experience. Creating improved outcomes for community and government.

→ Valuing participants and their time. In some instances, community members may be reimbursed for their time or supported to enable full participation. This may include transport, accommodation, child-minding and/or catering.

→ Supporting government to understand and represent their community and inform decision-making.

→ Building value for participants in the process. This may occur through the social impact of informing, empowering and enabling people to be part of changes that benefit their communities.

02

How-to guide for public engagement

Why do we need a how-to guide?

WE ENGAGED WITH THE PUBLIC ABOUT THIS FRAMEWORK. WE LEARNED THAT THERE ARE AREAS WHERE THE PUBLIC WOULD LIKE US TO IMPROVE, INCLUDING:

→ reporting back to the community on the feedback and outcomes
→ clarity of what the public could influence
→ understanding how feedback was used
→ clarity of purpose for the engagement.

The how-to guide provides steps to help engagement staff meet the needs of the public.

There are eight key steps to design, deliver and complete public engagement:

1   **DEFINE** the purpose of the engagement.

2   **UNDERSTAND** stakeholder and community interests, values and opportunities for engagement.

3   **DESIGN** an appropriate engagement process.

4   **DELIVER** genuine, inclusive and respectful engagement.

5   **REVIEW** and interpret the engagement information and data.

6   **APPLY** the outcomes of the engagement to inform the decision-making process.

7   **REPORT** feedback and 'close the loop' on the public engagement.

8   **EVALUATE** the success of the engagement and share lessons learnt.

This section details the eight steps. There are also recommended points for review during the process. At these points, managers are prompted to review and authorise progress to the next stage of engagement. Resources to support the eight steps are linked within the online version.

Define the purpose of the engagement
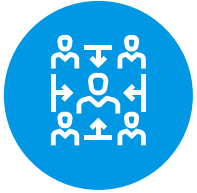
Key activities and considerations:

→ Document the project scope, timelines, budget, risks, decisions to be made and engagement objectives.

→ Where relevant, work with technical or content experts. Get clear about the value the engagement will bring to the decision-making process.

→ Identify the negotiables and non-negotiables and the level of community and stakeholder influence.

→ Consider if a representative view is helpful.

→ Consider the legal and/or policy context.

→ Consider if a joined-up government approach could support the engagement.

→ Determine an evaluation process to measure the effectiveness of the engagement.

→ If the aim is long-term community outcomes, consider a place-based engagement.

→ If the engagement is responding to a community crisis, emergency, recovery or disaster prevention, consider a community-led process.

Recommended points for review:

→ Is there documented authorisation, budget, the right team and a clear purpose?

→ Is the team ready for the engagement? Consider cultural competency and engagement skills.

→ Is there an understanding of the engagement within the broader project management cycle?

→ Have the potential access and inclusion issues been discussed and overcome?

→ Is the engagement planned for a time when the public may not be available? This includes public holidays, religious days of significance, cultural events, school holidays, emergencies and caretaker periods.

→ Are there other engagements occurring, or recently occurred in the area? Or engagements with the same stakeholders? Could the approach to consider partnering or changing the timing of the engagement?

What does this mean for Victorians?

Victorians have a clear understanding of the purpose of public engagement.

Understand stakeholder and community interests, values and opportunities for engagement

Key activities and considerations:

→ Build an understanding of the community including demographics, history, trends and local issues.

→ Identify stakeholders. Those with an interest, those who may be affected, those who could influence the decision and those who may support the local implementation of a future change.

→ Engage across departments to understand engagements already completed. Learn what has been asked in the past and build on existing relationships.

→ Consult local government, community leaders, advocacy groups, not for profit representatives. Consider group memberships and representation to ensure a diversity of community perspectives.

→ Identify if there are other projects engaging with similar communities at similar times. Consider opportunities to collaborate.

→ Gauge community preferences for engagement. Understand their willingness and capacity to participate. Consider what the public need to know for informed participation.

→ When appropriate, identify opportunities for partnerships or long-term relationships within the community. Where this exists, consider if you can align the engagement with community priorities. This may involve collaboration and coordination across government agencies.

→ Staff that are undertaking public engagement should be trained and/or experienced. Training should include:
  • Engagement practices
  • Cultural safety
  • Accessibility and inclusion
  • Engaging with priority communities
  • Conflict and relationship management skills.

→ Consider historical context of the community. This may include racism and discrimination, conflict or divisions within the community. Also consider any current community issues.

→ Respond to the potential accessibility needs of participants for engagement. Create flexible and targeted approaches for inclusion. Identify any support people who may need to take part in the engagement. Consider the needs of our diverse and priority communities when you plan all elements of the engagement. For example, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people with disability etc. This includes the location and venue, the facilitator, the written materials, the timing etc.

→ Place-based engagements – collaborate across government to identify local priorities, connections, opportunities and constraints.

→ Community-led engagements – collaborate across government. Consider the time, relationship-building, resilience and community strengthening techniques required.

What does this mean for Victorians?

Victorians have access to public engagement opportunities that are relevant, inclusive and accessible.
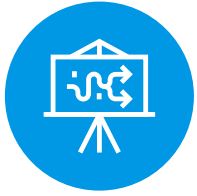
Design an appropriate engagement process

Key activities and considerations:

→ Identify the people, resources, systems and time required to deliver the engagement.

→ Consider working with local government, community members, priority communities or advocate groups on the engagement.

→ Design inclusive and accessible promotions to support the engagement. Allow reasonable lead-times. Consider using multiple tactics like media and social media advertising. Advertise through local government, community and advocacy group channels etc.

→ Develop the communications and information for the engagement process. What does the public need to know to help them have an informed view?

→ Where the project timeframes are likely to be long-term, design strategies to build trust. Support long-term relationships between the organisation and community members.

→ Identify opportunities to stage the engagement. Align the stages to fit in with project objectives, timeframes and milestones. Consider the different questions, stakeholders and methods for each stage.

→ Use the engagement objectives, negotiables and non-negotiables to inform engagement questions.

→ Select engagement methods and tools and collect relevant and measurable information.

→ Use more than one engagement method to provide people with options for participation.

→ Consider the collection of both quantitative and qualitative information. Agree on an approach to information management and data analysis. Ensure your systems and processes will support the approach. Consider the longevity of the data and any other projects that have an interest in the outcomes. Consider cultural safety and provide the opportunity for free, prior and informed consent. Ensure that personal information collected from participants complies with the Information Privacy Principles (IPP). Personal information is any information or opinion that could reasonably identify an individual. Special restrictions apply to the collection of health and sensitive information.

→ Consider and document potential risks and mitigation plans for the engagement. Prepare an issues management process and ensure the team is aware of the processes.

→ Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and regulations.

→ Determine an approach to manage out of scope queries or issues. Consider referral pathways.

→ Ensure there is a safety plan in place. It should consider the specific engagement activities and the occupational health and safety of staff and the public. It should also include emotional and physical wellbeing. Safety plans should provide clear mechanisms for staff to seek support during or after an engagement process.

Recommended points for review:

→ Do you have documented authorisation for the engagement approach? Does it include project negotiables and non-negotiables?

→ If you have project partners, have they endorsed the engagement approach?

Do you have a privacy plan?

→ Are you collecting personal, health or sensitive information? Have you checked with your privacy officer whether this complies with the IPPs? Do you require a privacy collection notice? Check this across all channels, IT systems and email used as part of the engagement.

What does this mean for Victorians?

Victorians have access to a range of fit-for-purpose engagement activities.
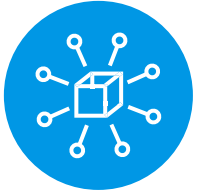
Deliver genuine, inclusive and respectful engagement

Key activities and considerations:

→ Consider the barriers to engagement and ensure all activities are inclusive and accessible, particularly for priority communities. Examples include:

- ensuring there is adequate time to provide accessibility options for participants
- ensuring venues and locations are accessible and welcoming
- catering for all dietary requirements, allergies and personal/cultural preferences
- providing information in alternative formats including languages other than English
- ensuring the format and materials are culturally safe. Consider an experienced and culturally sensitive facilitator
- providing interpreters, captioning, hearing loops, spaces for support animals and carers, a prayer room etc.
- extra support for participation may be necessary. This could include travel expenses, child-care, accommodation or catering.

→ Do not make assumptions. Always ask what people need. They are the most reliable source of information about their own needs.

→ Provide communications and information in advance of engagement activities to support informed participation. Provide written information in a format that is easy to read, accessible and in plain English. Use graphics and imagery and make documents fewer than 10 pages or provide a summary.

→ Go to where the people are to undertake face-to-face engagement. Where possible coordinate with existing community groups and events. For example, local events, activity centres, existing reference or community groups.

→ For face to face events, prepare an Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners or organise a Welcome to Country.

→ Prepare to be flexible and adapt the process as necessary.

→ Deliver engagement activities at days, times and locations that are accessible to the public.

→ At the outset of the engagement, describe to the public how their involvement will influence decision-making.

→ Provide the public with enough time to take part in engagement processes and give feedback. Usually, engagement processes should run for at least 30 days. Also time for planning and promoting the engagement. Avoid holiday periods and cultural or religious celebrations.

→ Use structured agendas or plan for an open agenda approach.

→ Create opportunities for content experts and decision-makers to take part in the engagement.

→ Ensure staff attending face-to-face events understand:

- the scope of their role
- the service they can provide to the public
- the intention of the engagement.

→ Provide opportunities for participants to give feedback about the engagement process.

→ Provide a timeframe of when participants can expect feedback. Describe how feedback from the engagement will be shared.

→ Communicate to the public how their data will be used for a specific outcome i.e. for a report, and in the future.

Recommended points for review:

→ Were the objectives met for the delivery of the engagement?

→ Is more engagement required to meet the objectives?

What does this mean for Victorians?

Victorians can safely participate and provide informed contributions to the engagement.

5 REVIEW

Review and interpret the engagement information and data

Key activities and considerations:

→ Where possible, review information and data with participants to ensure correct interpretation.

→ Identify any gaps in participation and whether priority communities' views have been represented. Consider information needs that are still to be addressed.

→ Collate the information collected during each engagement activity in a standardised format. This applies even if the inputs come from multiple channels (face-to-face, online, social media etc.).

→ Identify data and information that is out of scope of the engagement.

→ Identify any engagement bias or limitations which may have affected the process. If any are found, consider rectifying actions.

→ Consider the appropriate balance of quantifiable and qualifiable reporting.

→ Analyse the data and information to identify themes, priorities and preferences.

What does this mean for Victorians?

Victorians' contributions to the engagement are treated with respect.
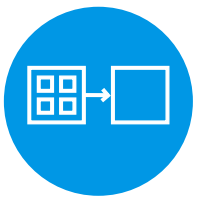
6 APPLY

Apply the outcomes of the engagement to inform the decision-making process

Key activities and considerations:

→ Confirm how the engagement contributed to the decision. If possible, provide opportunities for the public, including priority communities, to work with decision-makers to make decisions together.

→ Provide data and information to project team and decision-makers for their consideration.

→ Prepare the internal report in a clear and succinct format for decision-makers.

→ Share the engagement outcomes with the other relevant projects identified in the design phase.

Recommended points for review:

→ Do you have the authorisation to share the project outcomes publicly?

→ Have you considered the most appropriate format/s and communication method/s for sharing the outcomes?

What does this mean for Victorians?

Victorians understand how their contributions informed the decision-making process.

7 REPORT

Report feedback and 'close the loop' on the public engagement

Key activities and considerations:

→ Provide feedback to participants before decisions are being made.

→ Report back to participants their feedback. Confirm they have been heard correctly.

→ Acknowledge participants' contributions to the engagement process.

→ Communicate the next steps of the engagement process with participants and stakeholders. This includes findings, outcomes and timing for next steps.

→ Publish updates and final outcomes of engagement on key engagement forums and channels.

→ Where relevant, continue to work with local community members to support delivery of project outcomes.

What does this mean for Victorians?

Victorians are provided with timely reporting on the engagement process and outcomes.

8 EVALUATE

Evaluate the success of the engagement and share lessons learned

Key activities and considerations:

→ Review engagement at the end of each stage to identify opportunities to improve practice.

→ Undertake a reflective 'lessons learned' discussion with colleagues and share outcomes. Consider if you can include the community in this discussion.

→ Understand the impact the engagement has had on community and the relationships with key stakeholders.

→ Evaluate the engagement process.

What does this mean for Victorians?

Victorians experience continuous improvement in engagement delivery.

"Working together to make better decisions and improve the lives of Victorians."

03

Evaluation Approach

A whole-of-government approach to outcomes

The evaluation approach aligns with the Victorian Government's outcomes reform. The outcomes reform focuses on identifying and quantifying public value created by departments and agencies. By doing so, it supports Government to focus on what really matters. It contributes to making genuine and lasting change in the prosperity and wellbeing of Victorians.

Tracking progress on outcomes helps Government to:

- provide evidence of what works
- support more rigorous testing of public agency strategies
- encourage a culture of continuous learning.

The evaluation approach will be incrementally rolled out across the whole of Victorian government. This will begin with those measures that are more readily available and where data can be simply gathered and stored. Advanced measures will be rolled out in future years. Departments and agencies will have notice, so there is time to prepare. The purpose of gathering this evaluation data is to have a shared set of consistent metrics. These measures will support continuous improvement in engagement practice.

The implementation of the evaluation approach will be supported by an outcomes and monitoring plan. The outcomes and monitoring plan provides:

- Guidance and tools for how evaluation data will be collected and reported
- Roles and responsibilities for the collection
- Reporting requirements for each outcome
- Timing for annual reporting.

This section of the Framework defines the outcomes, indicators and measures for the Framework. Each outcome can have multiple indicators, which can in turn have multiple measures. They are numbered to indicate their relationship.

Build stronger relationships and engaged communities

Outcomes	Indicators	Measures
Outcome 1: **People are involved. People engage and know their views have been listened to and used by Government.**	1. Increase participation in public engagement.	Proportion of projects that involve the public in decision-making. Proportion of people who have participated in public engagement more than once. Proportion of people who participated in public engagement for the first time.
	2. Increase transparency in how public engagement informs decision making.	Proportion of people who report that they were informed about how their views informed decision-making.
Outcome 2: **People have choice and flexibility. People can choose how they would like to be involved.**	1. Increase participation in the design and delivery of engagement processes.	Proportion of public engagement projects that involve people in the design and delivery. Proportion of people who report that they know how to engage in government decision-making.
	2. Increase accessibility of public engagement projects.	Proportion of public engagement projects that offer a variety of engagement options/methods. Proportion of people who report that participation in public engagement was accessible. Proportion of public engagement activities delivered through digital solutions.
Outcome 3: **Communities are represented. We collect representative views and build strong relationships with communities.**	1. Increase involvement and engagement with communities to better understand their needs.	Proportion of public engagement projects designed and delivered in partnership with communities.
	2. Increase diversity in public engagement.	Proportion of public engagement participants from diverse backgrounds/cohort groups, by cohort groups.
	3. Represent diverse communities.	Proportion of people from priority communities who are represented.

A public sector that engages effectively with Victorians

Outcomes	Indicators	Measures
Outcome 4: **Our workforce values engagement and uses it to inform decisions. Our workforce has the skills, resources and competencies to engage with Victorians effectively.**	1. Increase skills and capabilities in public engagement.	Proportion of staff who have completed engagement training and/or skills development. Proportion of staff who have undertaken diversity training or have demonstrated understanding and experience working with diverse communities. Proportion of staff who report that they used their training/ skills to design and deliver engagement activities.
	2. Increase leadership and support to enable quality public engagement	Proportion of public engagement activities/projects allocated suitable time and resources. Proportion of leaders who report that they use public engagement feedback to support decision making (by the focus areas of service, policy, regulation, disaster preparedness and recovery, legislation and infrastructure).
Outcome 5: **Our systems enable engagement. We will make better use of data and information, and insights from public engagement to inform government decision making.**	1. Increase coordination and collaboration across the VPS.	Proportion of public engagement activities delivered in partnership, by partnership type i.e. community, cross-government etc. Increase use of data and evidence to inform decision-making. Proportion of public engagement activities informed by data and evidence from previous engagements.
	2. Increase evaluation and reporting of public engagement activities/ processes.	Proportion of public engagement projects evaluated and findings reported. Proportion of public engagement activities where findings and decisions made were reported (by reporting type i.e. internally across government, externally to community/participants.

Our promise to the public

By implementing the Framework we commit to ensuring that people:

Are supported with the knowledge and time to provide informed contributions to the engagement.

Can choose from a range of engagement activities that are safe, accessible and inclusive.

Are provided with timely reporting on the engagement process and outcomes.

OUR PROMISE

Have a clear understanding of the purpose of public engagement. This includes how the public participation will influence the decision making.

Can see that their contributions to the engagement are listened to, put to use and treated with respect.

Understand how decisions have been reached.

WHERE YOU CAN GO TO LEARN MORE

The Framework will be accessed online. The online version will include links to detailed resources and materials. These resources support the implementation of the Framework.

NEXT STEPS

There are several actions that will support implementation in 2022. This is to ensure we can deliver on the commitments of the Framework.

→ 1. Building awareness of the Public Engagement Framework across the Victorian Public Sector.

→ 2. Programs and systems required to support implementation will continue to be improved.

→ 3. Implementing a reporting process to establish a baseline and measure progress over time.

Appendix A

DEFINITIONS

Following are the key definitions for common terms used in the Public Engagement Framework.

Accessibility	Accessibility is the ability to access and benefit from a process, system, service or product. If something is accessible, then anyone can directly access or use it, regardless of their ability, location, language, culture, time and resources, or any other differentiating factor that contributes to the diversity of our communities.
Collaboration	The process of working together to solve a problem.
Communication	Sharing or exchanging information or ideas, using a range of methods.
Community	A group of people who live in the same geographical area or have a shared background, interest, affiliation or membership.
Consultation	Seeking feedback or advice on a select topic or project.
Deliberation	A method of engagement process with a select group of participants. The process focuses on a defined issue. It weighs up options and provides recommendations to decision-makers.
Diverse community	The different types of people which make up a community. Diversity includes race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, disability, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.
Domain	A logical structure for grouping related outcomes, and a line of sight from an outcome to a vision.
Free, prior and informed consent	This term comes from the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It recognises their rights and makes specific mention of Free, Prior and Informed Consent as a prerequisite for any activity that affects their ancestral lands, territories and natural resources. It is linked to the human right of self-determination.
Inclusion	The practices that allow all people to feel valued and respected. This is irrespective of age, disability, gender, religion, sexual preference or nationality. This is evident when anyone who wishes to can fully participate. This means they can access, understand, and contribute their perspectives and talents to the engagement.
Joined-up government	The public understanding that government is one entity. This approach encourages streamlined engagement, systems and processes for the public. It creates efficiency through shared data, effort and impact for the community.
Outcomes	Articulate what success looks like and reflect our ambition for Victoria. They are clear, unambiguous and high-level statements. They are about the things that matter for people and communities.
Outcome indicators	Specify what needs to change to achieve a desired outcome and set the direction of change. Outcome indicators reflect the key drivers and influences on progress towards an outcome.
Outcome measures	Provide specific detail about what will change and how we know if we are making progress. Outcome measures are the specific way we know or count the size, amount or degree of change achieved.
Partnership	Two or more people or organisations working in a formalised relationship with a clear sense of purpose. Accountabilities and responsibilities are shared.
Place-based	Approaches defined by a geographic location. They are collaborative, long-term approaches to build communities.
Priority communities	Reference to priority communities will vary across government to suit department and agency portfolios and areas of responsibilities. It is recommended to use the Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement (www.vic.gov.au/everybody-matters-inclusion-and-equity-statement) as a guiding document to define priority communities at a whole of government level.
Process	A relationship between key steps, activities, tasks, policies and / or resources.
Public	Individuals who live, work, visit or have an interest in a defined place.
Public engagement	Public engagement is a planned process with a specific purpose. It involves working with individuals and groups to encourage active involvement in decisions that affect them or are of interest to them.
Stakeholders	Individuals or organisations, which affect, or can be affected by project decisions. Organisations can include not-for-profit and community-based groups, business and industry, and volunteer networks. They may also include other departments or agencies across federal, state and local government.
Systems	The structure, processes and tools that support the delivery of the Framework.