



# Getting the Public into Public Policy

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# Outline

- CPRN and citizen engagement
- Citizen engagement: what is it?
- Why citizen engagement is needed
- Requirements for success
- Challenges
- Engaging Young Canadians
- Deliberative methodologies and tools



# CPRN and Public Involvement

- CPRN not-for-profit independent think tank
  - Mission: create knowledge and lead dialogue and debate on social and economic issues important to Canadians
- Public Involvement Network:
  - Undertake citizen dialogues to inform public policy
  - Research to strengthen the theory and practice of public involvement
  - Build capacity for PI within governments and communities



# What is citizen engagement?

- OECD definition

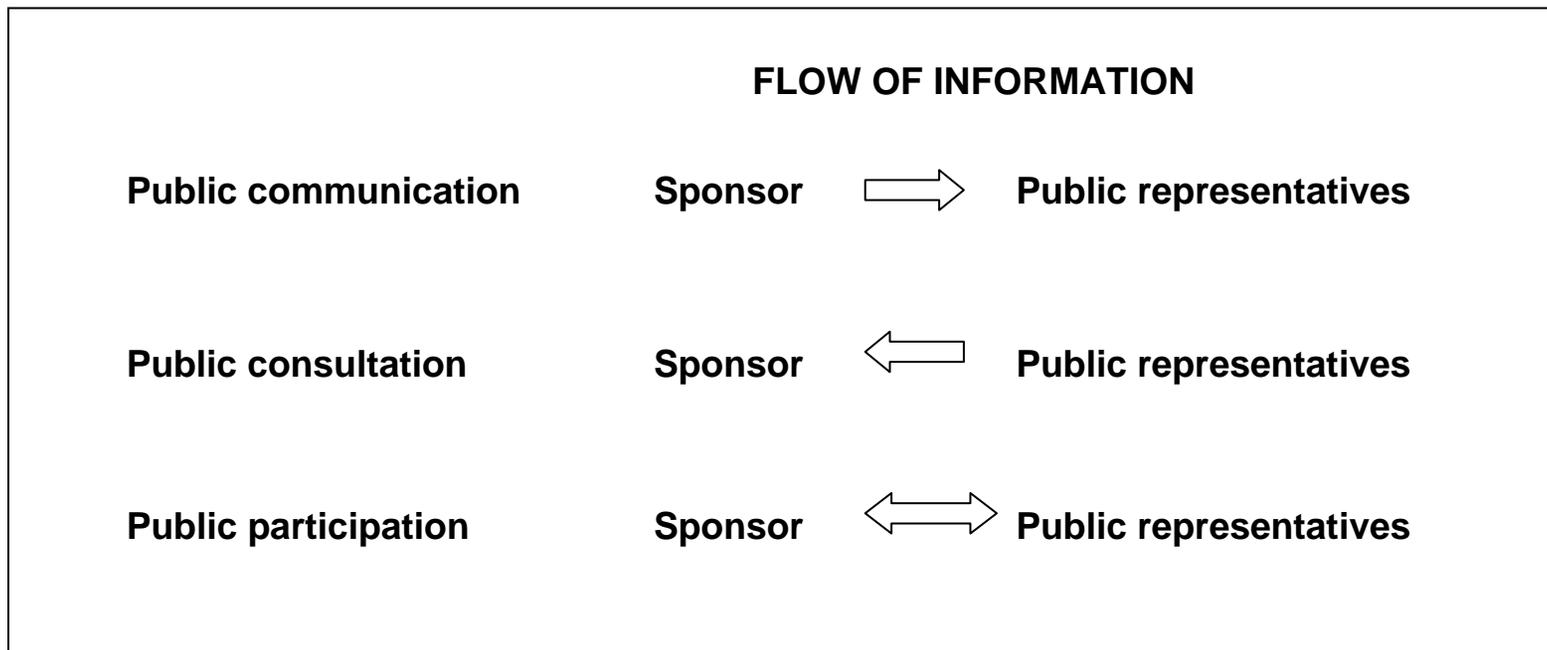
“Active participation recognizes the capacity of citizens to discuss and generate policy options independently. It requires governments to share in agenda-setting and to ensure that policy proposals generated jointly will be taken into account in reaching a final decision”. (2001)

- Phillips and Orsini

“interactive and iterative processes of deliberation among citizens (and sometimes organizations) and between citizens and government officials with the purpose of contributing meaningfully to specific policy decisions in a transparent and accountable way” (2002)



# Three Levels of Public Involvement



Source: Rowe G and Frewer LJ. "A Typology of Public Engagement Mechanisms". Science, Technology, and Human Values 2005, 30(2): 255.



# Why engage citizens?

- Disconnect between citizens and governments
    - Declining trust, voting decline
    - Pressure for more accountable and transparent public institutions
    - Public less deferential, more educated, demand a say
  - Legitimacy and sustainability
    - Of policy and programs depend on fit with citizens' values
  - More effective policies and programs
    - Citizens' input needed along with experts and stakeholders
- 



# Requirements for Successful Citizen Engagement

- Clarity of purpose and objectives
- Adequate resources and realistic timeframe
- Commitment to respectful listening
- Transparency and feedback
- Opportunities for learning and contribution



# Challenges to Citizen Engagement

- Scepticism
  - **Decision makers / experts – why don't they trust us?**
  - **Citizens – will their voices be heard?**
- Resources, skills and time requirements
- Institutions and political culture need to catch up
- Research and evaluation gaps



# Deliberative Dialogue

- Provides a neutral space for citizens to have a voice
- Supports people working through difficult issues & choices
- Experiential learning from each other / diverse views
- Focus on finding common ground while acknowledging differences
- Offers profound insight into what matters most to people and why
  - What values underlie their choices
  - What tradeoffs they will or will not accept
  - What conditions they impose



# Recent Citizens' Dialogues

- **Sharing Public Funds for a Better Canada**
- **National Dialogue and Summit with Young Canadians**
- **Public Health Goals in Canada**
- **Privacy and the Use of Personal Information for Health Research**
- **Citizens' Dialogue on the Long-term Management of Nuclear Waste (2004)**
- **Citizens' Dialogue on the Ontario Budget Strategy (2004)**
- **Citizens' Dialogue on Canada's Future (2002-03)**
- **Citizens' Dialogue on the Future of Health Care in Canada (Romanow Commission 2002)**



# National Dialogue and Summit with Young Canadians

- Objectives
  - Create a space for young people to have a voice
  - What kind of Canada do they want?
  - What do they and others need to do to achieve it?
- Approach
  - Youth driven event
  - 150 randomly recruited 18-25 year olds
  - 40 decision makers



# Key Findings

- Committed to democracy
  - Less adversarial
  - More participatory
- Desire to be more engaged
- Common standards across the country
- Holistic, long-term planning



# Many Types of Deliberative Engagement

- **Citizens' Dialogue** – collective learning, series of groups of 20-40; looking for societal values / tradeoffs to guide decisions
- **Citizens' Jury** – small group (10-18); question expert witnesses; issue judgement / advice for decision makers
- **Citizens' Assembly** - BC model; random recruitment; meet over many months; question experts; public hearings; report with recommendation
- **Danish Consensus Conference** – small group meets over several weekends to prepare, conference to question multidisciplinary experts; citizens panel prepares report; results shared broadly with Parliament, media, public.
- **Deliberative Polling®** - pre / post questionnaire; televised; large groups; citizens question experts; looking for right answer; measures change in opinion through learning
- **21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Hall (America Speaks)** – collective learning; identify values; electronic voting on what is most important
- **Study Circles** – collective learning; problem identification leading to community action



# References

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- **Danish Board of Technology**  
<http://www.tekno.dk/subpage.php3?page=forside.php3&language=uk>
- **Deliberative Democracy Consortium** [www.deliberative-democracy.net/](http://www.deliberative-democracy.net/)
- **Government of Western Australia, Planning and Infrastructure**  
<http://www.ministers.wa.gov.au/mactiernan/index.cfm?fuseaction=consult.main>
- **International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)** [www.iap2.org/](http://www.iap2.org/)
- **Jefferson Centre** [www.jefferson-center.org/](http://www.jefferson-center.org/)
- **Kettering Foundation** [www.kettering.org/](http://www.kettering.org/)
- **National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation,** [www.thataway.org](http://www.thataway.org)
- **National Issues Forum** [www.nifi.org/](http://www.nifi.org/)
- **OECD *Citizens as Partners Handbook***  
<http://213.253.134.29/oecd/pdfs/browseit/4201141E.PDF>
- **One World Inc.** <http://www.owi.ca/>
- **Study Circles** [www.studycircles.org/pages/what.html](http://www.studycircles.org/pages/what.html)
- **ViewPoint Learning Inc.** [www.viewpointlearning.com/](http://www.viewpointlearning.com/)





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