

Engaging our community



Suggested time:
45 minutes

Session objectives:

- Students identify ways they can engage the local community.
- Students know their role in the community consultation.

Time	Activity description
5 mins	<p>Re-cap on who the stakeholders are, and why it's important to consult them.</p> <p>Discussion: How can we involve our stakeholders?</p> <p>Invite students to share possible answers. Answers may depend on the issues the group is considering; however, suggestions might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Carrying out surveys or speaking to members of the local community ➤ Speaking to/ interviewing relevant local organisations ➤ Talking to our friends and family who are part of the community ➤ Where possible, speaking to people directly affected by the issue(s) we're exploring in the community
20 mins	<p>Activity: Planning community consultation</p> <p>Resources: Pens and paper</p> <p>Invite the group to develop a plan of how they'd like to consult the community stakeholders in the project.</p> <p><i>You may want to invite students to consider different options, or you may want to decide an approach to community consultation in advance.</i></p> <p>Options for community consultation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A focus group – a group interview of approx. 20 people who are stakeholders on the issue(s) you're considering. ➤ Questionnaires – Written questions with a choice of answers for a statistical study. ➤ Interviews – Open-ended questions to gather data.

	<p>Examples of the information students may wish to collect include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Name of interviewee ➤ What age group are you in? (Under 18, 18-24, 25-39, 35-44, 40-59, 60+). ➤ How long have you lived or worked in this community? ➤ What do you like most about your community? Why? ➤ If you could improve or change one thing about your community what would it be and why? ➤ Do you think enough is done on [insert group's chosen topic(s)]? ➤ What do you think the community needs to help address [insert group's chosen topic(s)]? ➤ Do you know of any organisations, businesses or community members that could help with this issue? ➤ [Any further questions the group would like to ask]. <p>Emphasise the importance of collecting responses which don't have a yes/no answer if carrying out interviews, to really get an understanding of what someone thinks.</p> <p>Encourage students to develop a plan of how they'd like to approach this stage of the project, whether they're carrying out questionnaires, interviews or focus groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What questions should we ask? ➤ How many people would we like to speak to? ➤ How will we divide up the task? ➤ When will we start and complete our data analysis? (Refer back to the project timeline). ➤ Who should we speak to? Encourage students to consider relevant people from their stakeholder lists, as well as parents or guardians, teachers, students in other year groups and owners of local businesses. Where possible, groups should ask members of the community who are directly affected by the issues they're discussing. (Teachers to advise where teams may not be able to ask the groups affected directly. In some cases, teams may be advised to contact relevant community groups or charities that have expertise on the topic). ➤ How can we divide up the research, for instance by each researching different topics, or different organisations linked to the chosen problem? ➤ [If applicable] If organising a focus group, how will you recruit participants and promote the session? ➤ [If applicable] If carrying out questionnaires, will translation need to be organised for any community members you would like to reach?
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Time	Activity description
10 mins	<p>Activity: Preparing for community consultation</p> <p>It may be helpful for the groups to practice before speaking to community members. Adapt this section according to the type of community consultation the group will be carrying out. For example, if they'll be carrying out interviews ask the group to consider effective interview technique:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introducing yourself and the purpose of the interview ➤ Making eye contact ➤ Listening to answers, asking clarifying questions when you're unsure. Students could demonstrate active listening by asking 'can you tell me more about x', or 'it sounds like you're saying y, have I understood that correctly?' ➤ Paying attention to the speaker ➤ Having a pen and paper ready to write down answers

	<p>Ask for or select two volunteers to be the interviewer and interviewee. The interviewer can select 2-3 questions for the interviewee to respond to. Discuss as a group what worked well, and anything they need to change.</p> <p>Divide the group into pairs to each practice being the interviewer or interviewee for 1-2 minutes each. Encourage pairs to give each other feedback.</p> <p>Review the questions: How did everyone feel being the interviewer/interviewee? Did you get the answers you needed? Is there anything we need to change to improve the questions?</p> <p>If the group has decided on a focus group, discuss the possible structure and agenda for the focus group. Instead of practicing the role of interviewer, a volunteer can practice being the group facilitator. How can the group create a good atmosphere to encourage participation? How will they make sure everyone can participate? How can we guide the discussion and keep it on track? What should the time and the location be, and are there any incentives to encourage someone to participate?</p>
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Time	Activity description
10 mins	<p>Roles and responsibilities</p> <p>As a group, compile a list of the tasks that need to be carried out. This might include carrying out questionnaires/interviews or researching organisations to approach.</p> <p>Encourage the group to sign themselves up for 1-2 roles they're happy to take on before the next session. (It may be helpful to discuss how they'd like to approach the tasks. For instance, if carrying out interviews would they like to do this in pairs, with one acting as the interviewer and another taking notes?)</p> <p>Ensure everyone knows what they need to do, and when the deadline is. Check if anyone has over-committed, and if there are any final questions.</p> <p><i>When deciding roles and responsibilities, it may be helpful to return to the original flipchart you created with the group mapping out skills, strengths, and interests.</i></p>

The Edge Foundation, 44 Whitfield Street, London, W1T 2RH

T +44 (0)20 7960 1540
E enquiry@edge.co.uk