

Activity 2.7: Working with communities 1 – developing a project

Duration: 60 minutes

Aims:

- To get participants thinking about how they do/might engage with communities in the initial stages of developing a project
- To evaluate existing knowledge and understanding

Requirements:

Chairs and tables for small group work, printouts or electronic access to scenarios (see resources)

Activities:

1. Brainstorm (a): What are the ways in which communities and academics (and other stakeholders) come together on projects?
2. Brainstorm (b): What factors do we need to consider in fostering an ethical space of engagement/collaboration?
3. Divide participants into groups of 3-5 people. Share one of the three provided scenarios for establishing a project with each group.
4. In these groups, supported by a mentor from the facilitation team where possible, ask participants to address the following three questions:
 - a. What planning and preparation would you do in advance of approaching community members?
 - b. How would you set up the initial encounter?
 - c. What would you want to establish with the community members (and potentially funders and stakeholders) in advance of proceeding with the project?
5. Invite each group to feedback key reflections to the larger group to support wider discussion

Resources:

- Scenarios for establishing a project (PDF)

Additional resources:

- This blog reports on findings from a UKRI-funded project exploring the learning and development needs for those involved in community research partnerships: [Capacity building for community research partnerships | NCCPE](#)
- There are a range of useful guides and toolkits for Community Based Participatory Research and Participatory Action Research produced by Durham University's Centre for Social Justice and Community Action and available here: [Toolkits, Guides and Case Studies - Durham University](#).

Facilitation notes:

As facilitators and mentors your role is primarily to support your team to respond to the questions. We want to give them the opportunity to explore their own ideas, but it is also important to offer questions and prompts to help them critically reflect and identify alternative strategies where appropriate. Feel free to offer examples from your own experience but try not to intervene directly



into the team's decision making. In addition, if the team need more information to flesh out the scenario (e.g., budget, timeline, etc.) feel free to make it up!!!