



CREATE

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Community Relationships Project Checklist

This checklist is intended for internal use. An arts organization staff member (or members) should complete it. The checklist can be used to assess the depth and quality of community engagement projects based on four criteria: longevity and depth of the relationship, mutuality of benefit, degree of community input, and the relationship maintenance plan. The results should be considered in efforts to improve the effectiveness of this project (as well as in the design of new ones) in the future.

PROJECT

Organization _____

Project Name _____

Project Description (including URL if applicable):

With what community or communities (see definition below) is the organization working on this project?

Definitions-Background

Community: A group of people with something in common. [Definition applies *only* to community engagement projects]

Community Engagement: Activities undertaken by an arts organization as part of a mission strategy designed to build deep relationships between the organization and the communities in which it operates for the purpose of achieving mutual benefit. It is accomplished by developing trust and understanding through which reach can be expanded. This results, over the long term in increased ticket sales and financial support as well as more arts-friendly public policy. **Principal beneficiary of direct, intended outcomes: community and arts organization.**

Criteria for Effective Engagement Projects

Pre-Existing Relationship: Existing relationships built on mutual respect are essential. Beginning a project without a relationship can suggest the community is being “used” to benefit the arts organization.

Mutual Benefit: If the arts organization and the community do not *both* benefit, the project will not be sustainable.

Collaborative Design/Implementation: The arts organization understands the art. The community understands the community. Both areas of expertise are vital.

Relationship Maintenance Plan: If the arts organization “disappears” after the project, there is no relationship and the lesson the community learns that is that it was merely a means to the arts organization’s ends.

Pre-Existing Relationship

How clearly is/are the participating communit(y)(ies) defined?

[0-4] _____

- Unknown: 0
- Not defined: 0
- Generally understood: 2
- With some specificity: 3
- Very well defined: 4

How long-standing is/are the relationship(s) with the participating communit(y)(ies)?

[0-8] _____

- Unknown: 0
- None before project planning: 0
- 1-2 months before project planning: 2
- 2-4 months before project planning: 4
- 6 months to one year before project planning: 6
- 1 or more years before project planning: 8
-

Consider the depth of the relationship with the participating communit(y)(ies):

#/% involved

[0-8] _____

- Unknown: 0
- None: 0
- Small group: 2
- Several groups: 4
- Several groups: 5
- Significant %: 6
- Nearly all: 8

**Enthusiasm for relationship on part of participating communit(y)(ies)/
on the part of your organization?**

[0-4] _____

- Unknown: 0
- None observed: 0
- Little: 2
- Moderate: 3
- High enthusiasm: 4

Organization's depth of understanding of community assets-interests-issues

[0-10] _____

- Unknown: 0
- None: 0
- Little: 2
- Moderate on the part of some: 4
- Moderate on the part of many: 6
- Considerable: 8
- Extremely deep: 10

Communit(y)(ies')'s depth of understanding of organization's assets-interests-issues

[0-4] _____

- Unknown: 0
- None: 0
- Little: 1
- Moderate: 2
- Significant: 4

Mutual Benefit

(Note: If there is no community-recognized benefit, this is not a community engagement project)

Is the only benefit to the community financial? [Yes: 1/No: 4] [1/4] _____

Answer the following only if you answered NO above

How well articulated/understood are community-selected goals for the project? [0-8] _____

- Unknown: 0
- Not at all/No project goals: 0
- Minimally: 2
- Moderately: 4
- Very well: 6
- Clearly, with measurable outcomes: 8

To what extent does the project meet community goals? [0-8] _____

- Unknown: 0
- Not at all/No project goals: 0
- Minimally: 2
- Moderately: 4
- Very well: 6
- Thoroughly: 8

How well articulated/understood are the organizational goals for the project? [0-8] _____

- Unknown: 0
- Not at all/No project goals: 0
- Minimally: 2
- Moderately: 4
- Very well: 6
- Clearly, with measurable outcomes: 8

To what extent does the project further organizational mission and meet project goals? [0-8] _____

- Unknown: 0
- Not at all/No project goals: 0
- Minimally: 2
- Moderately: 4
- Very well: 6
- Thoroughly: 8

To what extent does project fulfill stated organizational mission and goals re: community engagement? [0-8] _____

- Unknown: 0
- Not at all/No relevant organizational goals: 0
- A little: 2
- Somewhat: 3
- Greatly: 4

Collaborative Design-Implementation

At what point in the planning/development did the participating communit(y)(ies) begin to contribute to project design? [0-8] _____

- Unknown: 0
- Never: 0
- Near the end of project development: 1
- Half-way through project development: 3
- Shortly after beginning of project development: 4
- Upon deciding to do project: 5
- From the beginning (including developing idea to do a project): 8

Was/Were the communit(y)(ies) involved in:

Selecting Programming [No: 0/Yes: 4] [0/4] _____

Marketing Efforts [No: 0/Yes: 2] [0/2] _____

Production/Participation Details [No: 0/Yes: 6] [0/6] _____

Developing Post-Event Relationship Maintenance Plans [No: 0/Yes: 6] [0/6] _____

Relationship Maintenance Plan

How clearly detailed are the organization's post-project plans for maintaining the relationships with the participating communit(y)(ies)? [0-8] _____

- Unknown: 0
- Not at all: 0
- Preliminary ideas have been discussed: 2
- Some plans have been made: 4
- Explicit steps and responsibilities are established: 8

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOTAL _____



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