



Public engagement principles

Public engagement is an important part of an effective, open, and transparent government. Engagement takes many forms—from ongoing collaboration to broad public consultation on complex issues.

We commit to demonstrating the following principles when engaging with the public:

Transparent

We communicate with Canadians about engagement opportunities. We let Canadians know the purpose of engagement and how their input will be used.

What might this look like?

- We co-create engagement processes with stakeholders.
- We provide information that is accurate and timely.
- We ensure that people have sufficient time to prepare and participate.
- We publish summary reports online, and, when possible, input as open data.

Relevant

We listen and talk to interested and affected Canadians about issues that matter to them. When we convene participants, we are clear about what is up for discussion and the scope of change possible.

What might this look like?

- We explain how this issue affects Canadians.
- We engage when there is an opportunity for the public to influence decisions.
- We connect people who have a stake in the issue with opportunities to participate.
- We promote a shared sense of purpose towards a better outcome.

Inclusive

We engage with people who have a range of views and perspectives that reflect the diversity within Canada. We reduce barriers to participation, whether physical, cultural, geographical, linguistic, digital, or other. We offer a variety of channels and methods through which to engage.

What might this look like?

- We engage in a variety of locations.
- We provide information that is clearly written in both official languages.
- We provide information in alternative formats and additional languages.
- We design processes with the target audiences in mind.
- We adapt to the needs and preferences of the people participating.
- We go where the conversations are happening.
- We listen without judgement.
- We build and sustain relationships.

Accountable

We commit to sharing what we hear from participants. We explain our decisions including how input was used.

What might this look like?

- We report back to participants soon after our conversations.
- We communicate and listen throughout the process.
- We commit resources to do what we say we are going to do.
- We demonstrate the value of participants' time by showing what has changed because they contributed.

Adaptable

We commit to learning and adapting our approaches. We promote a culture of engagement, consultation, and collaboration across the public service. We build on our successes, learn from our failures, and share our experiences.

What might this look like?

- We define success at the outset, measure and adjust.
- We try new methods and tools, to determine the right fit for the context.
- We work with experts in other sectors to learn from them and build capacity.