

# foundations of public participation



**The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) is the preeminent international organisation advancing the practice of public participation (P2).**

**IAP2 supports people who implement or participate in public decision-making processes. IAP2's focus on practical tools and best practices has made it the primary resource for developing public participation processes.**

IAP2's Core Values, Code of Ethics, and Public Participation Spectrum are foundational elements of effective public participation processes. IAP2 encourages individuals and organisations to adopt and incorporate these principles into their processes.

IAP2 carries out its mission to advance and extend the practice of public participation by organising and conducting professional development activities to serve the learning needs of members.



## IAP2 Australasia Certificate in Engagement

The IAP2 Australasia Certificate in Engagement is a three module (5-day) program intended to provide a broad-based learning experience covering all of the foundations of public participation. Developed in response to member, practitioner and client demand, it offers the essential training for community and stakeholder engagement practitioners across Australia and New Zealand.

# core values

IAP2 developed the Core Values for the practice of public participation for use in developing and implementing public participation processes to help inform better decisions that reflect the interests and concerns of potentially affected people and entities. The Core Values were developed with broad international input to identify those aspects of public participation that cross national, cultural and religious boundaries.

- 1 Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
- 2 Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
- 3 Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
- 4 Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
- 5 Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
- 6 Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- 7 Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

***The Core Values define the expectations and aspirations of the public participation process. Processes based on the Core Values have been shown to be the most successful and respected.***

# code of ethics

The Code of Ethics is a set of principles which guide us in our practice of enhancing the integrity of the public participation process. As P2 practitioners, we hold ourselves accountable to these principles and strive to hold all participants to the same standards.

- 1 Purpose:** we support public participation as a process to make better decisions that incorporate the interests and concerns of all affected stakeholders and meet the needs of the decision-making body.
- 2 Role of Practitioner:** we will enhance the public's participation in the decision-making process and assist decision-makers in being responsive to the public's concerns and suggestions.
- 3 Trust:** we will undertake and encourage actions that build trust and credibility for the process and among all the participants.
- 4 Defining the Public's Role:** we will carefully consider and accurately portray the public's role in the decision-making process.
- 5 Openness:** we will encourage the disclosure of all information relevant to the public's understanding and evaluation of a decision.
- 6 Access to the Process:** we will ensure that stakeholders have fair and equal access to the public participation process and the opportunity to influence decisions.
- 7 Respect for Communities:** we will avoid strategies that risk polarising community interest or that appear to "divide and conquer."
- 8 Advocacy:** we will advocate for the public participation process and will not advocate for a particular interest, party or project outcome.
- 9 Commitments:** we will ensure that all commitments made to the public, including those by the decision-maker, are made in good faith.
- 10 Support of the Practice:** we will mentor new practitioners in the field and educate decision-makers and the public about the value and use of public participation.

## *Definition of terms used in the Code of Ethics:*

**Stakeholders:** any individual, group of individuals, organisation or political entity with an interest or stake in the outcome of a decision

**Public:** those stakeholders who are not typically part of the decision-making entity or entities

**Public Participation:** any process that involves the public in problem-solving or decision-making and that uses public input to make better decisions



# iap2 public participation spectrum

The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process.

The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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## become a member

IAP2 Australasia is a member-driven organisation that can help you to grow professionally, provide you with training opportunities and increase networking with other public participation practitioners locally, nationally, and internationally. If you would like to learn more about IAP2 Australasia's activities in your area or the benefits of becoming a member, please contact us.

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