

# EQUITABLE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EQUITABLE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1. **Value lived experience as a form of expertise.** The community are experts of their own lives, center their voices.
2. **Ask ourselves...do we REALLY need community feedback?** Evaluate what you *actually* need to act.
3. **Compensate people for their time.** Time is valuable and costly; appreciate people for showing up and the multiple points of contact they have with you.
4. **Go beyond feedback.** Mitigate engagement fatigue; focus on strengths, not deficits; move from input to ownership.
5. **Give room to heal.** Recognize and make space for community trauma.
6. **Build in accountability measures.** Keep your promises, follow up with communities, and develop ways to hold yourself and your organization accountable to the community.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLANNING: QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How can you design your activities in a way that **gives people agency over the stories and information they share**?
- How do your questions create opportunities for community members to **share their strengths, passions, and assets**?
- How can your activities help you **understand root causes**?

# GIFT EXPLOSION

Gift Explosion is a quick tool to uncover community members' inner and outer strengths, talents, and resources.



**Gifts of the Heart**  
(Passion/Listening):

Things that you care deeply about (e.g. protection of the environment, civic life, children, etc.)



**Gifts of the Head**  
(Knowledge/Information):

Things that you know something about, you would enjoy talking about it, and potentially teaching others about it (e.g. birds, art history, movies, finances, etc.)



**Gifts of Connectivity**  
(Relationships/Social Networks):

People/families/communities that you are connected to and have valuable relationships with.



**Gifts of the Hand**  
(Practical Skills):

Things you know how to do, and enjoy doing (e.g. carpentry, sports, gardening, cooking, etc.)