SPRINGBOARD
for the arts

A HANDBOOK FOR

ARTISTS
WORKING IN
COMMUNITY

Springboard for the Arts is an economic and community development organization for artists and by artists. From our offices in Fergus Falls and Saint Paul, MN, Springboard provides programs that help artists make a living and a life, and programs that help communities connect to the creative power of artists. Our work is about creating communities and artists that have a reciprocal relationship, where artists are key contributors to community issues and are visible and valued for the impact they create. We do this work by creating simple, practical solutions and systems to support artists. We share this work nationally via our Creative Exchange platform (www.springboardexchange.org) and by freely sharing our work and creating connections among artists and communities, we work to make substantial, system-wide change. Learn more about our work at: www.springboardforthearts.org.

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TO OUR FELLOW COMMUNITY-MINDED ARTISTS,

Everyone who works at Springboard for the Arts is an artist. Like you, we make meaning from materials, interactions, words, movement, and conversation. We aim to make the world better by inspiring others to think, express, dream, love, laugh, weep, and wonder. And like you, we see value in practicing our creativity in and with community.

In this day and age of continued disparities, injustices, pandemics and systemic racism, artists are critical agents of change in our communities. More than ever, we need artists to be catalysts and glue – to bring people together, to grapple with conflict, to weave paths for a new future.

We developed this handbook for artists anywhere on the journey – whether you are just beginning to think about extending your artistic practice to working with community, or whether you've been immersed in community and want to deepen your practice. You might be an artist who draws inspiration from a group of people and transforms that inspiration into a performance, a mural, or a meal. You might be an artist who co-creates and co-organizes with your community to address an injustice or an opportunity. Your work may look like what most people think of as "art" or your work may look very different. Your work may look like conversations, food, or taking a hike. You might work within your "own" communities, or you might be a guest in another community. Or you might just be starting to think about how your creative practice could impact the people and places you love.

Whatever form your creativity takes, whatever communities you find yourself working with and in, there are practices that can make your work more successful and satisfying – for you and the people you work with. This handbook is a compilation of insights, practices, and tools from our collective experiences as artists, as an organization* working with hundreds of artists in communities, and from a few of the artist practitioners whom we admire.

We hope you find something that resonates with you and is useful in your work. Thank you for doing what you do.

THE STAFF OF SPRINGBOARD FOR THE ARTS

* Check out our guiding principles, page 100

INTRODUCTION
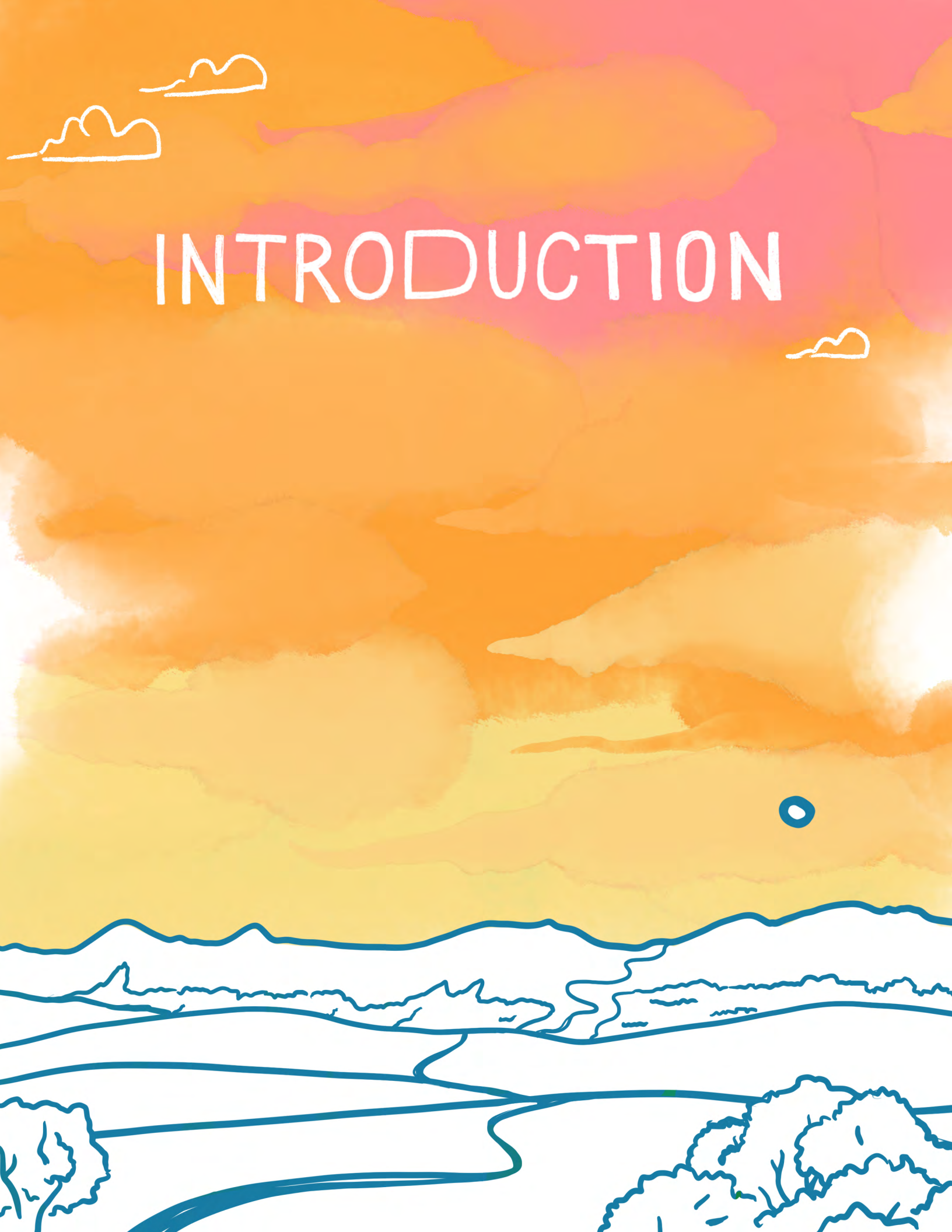
On the Navajo Nation in Arizona, physician and photographer **CHIP THOMAS** (aka **JETSONORAMA**) wheat-pasted scores of larger-than-life portraits on abandoned buildings and other roadside structures, a project he calls "Big." Thomas also facilitated "The Painted Desert Project," which brought street artists from around the world to the area to paint a spectacular variety of murals. These projects resulted in a rich landscape of public art across the Navajo Nation that increased tourism, boosted the local economy, and called positive attention to a people and a place.

A few hundred miles to the west, in Fresno, California, farmer and writer **NIKIKO MASUMOTO** and collaborator Brynn Saito lead the Yonsei Memory Project, an arts-based intergenerational inquiry into Japanese American history. They also collaborated with the Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno to facilitate cross-cultural understanding between the local Japanese American and Muslim communities using creative writing and visual arts exercises centered on the theme of "myths, heroes, and folktales of the future."

In Philadelphia, artists organized by **MIKE O'BRYAN** at the Village of Arts and Humanities collaborated with community members to revitalize a neighborhood basketball court, a beloved cultural hub. In communities around the world, choreographer **LIZ LERMAN** has used movement to explore histories, deepen understandings, and build connections.

In towns across rural Minnesota, local artists invigorated their Main Streets, while In the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul hundreds of artists collaborated with businesses and organizations to activate public spaces along future light rail lines All across the country, artists are using their talents to connect communities in new ways, engage people in shared endeavors, build stronger networks and generate alternative approaches to long-standing issues.

Artists are also on the forefront of community revitalization and health, working to prevent displacement, activate and beautify vacant lots, streets, storefronts, and commercial corridors. Artist-led projects are amplifying pride and narratives about places and the people that live there, improving the visibility of local businesses and districts, and drawing new customers and new investments. This work generates a sense of identity and place, promotes stewardship, fosters neighborhood vibrancy, and improves public safety by creating relationship of mutual care.

All across the country, artists are using their talents to do community-based projects that engage new voices and audiences, facilitate cross-cultural dialog, and create authentic narratives of community identity. Artist-led projects are connecting community members in new ways and engaging people in shared endeavors, building stronger networks and generating alternative approaches to long-standing issues.

Artists are also on the forefront of community revitalization, working to activate and beautify vacant lots, streets, storefronts, and commercial corridors. Artist-led projects are attracting positive media attention, changing narratives about places and the people that live there, improving the visibility of local businesses and districts, and drawing new customers and new investments. This work generates a sense of identity and place, promotes stewardship, fosters neighborhood vibrancy, and improves public safety

STRUCTURE OF THE HANDBOOK

This handbook is a practical manual for individual artists who would like to begin or deepen this kind of artistic practice – work in and work with community. The stories, tools, and wisdom shared here were gathered from creative practitioners who regularly do this work: the artists introduced above, Springboard staff **JUN–LI, MICHELE,** and **PETER**, and other creative practitioners deeply rooted in community.

The handbook is organized into five sections: Artist Groundwork, Community Groundwork, Project Formation, Project Implementation and Group Participation Tools. Project Formation and Implementation are indeed about creating and completing a project, but they're not meant to be comprehensive (that would be a whole book itself!), but rather places to start and elements to include. The first four sections include worksheets and exercises to use, followed by a fifth section of practitioners' favorite exercises to help groups be and work together.

> Though we have structured this handbook as if community-based work happens in an orderly, predictable, sequential manner, this is rarely, if ever, the case. Community-based work is often messy and complex – and the many aspects of community-based work that we touch on here can take place in different orders, concurrently and overlapping.

The material in this handbook is presented as if you, the artist, are the leader (or one of the leaders) of a community-based project, and as if you are involved from the get-go. In reality, you might find yourself joining a community-based project mid-stream, after many decisions have already been made and the work is underway. Our hope is that at least some elements of this handbook will still be useful to you in such situations.

We intend this handbook to be a flexible, easy-to-use resource. You can read it front to back, or you can pull out specific material that fits you, your work, your community, and your current situation.

SOME DEFINITIONS

In this handbook, we use the following definitions:

ART. We borrow this definition of art from *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life* by Allan Kaprow: "Art is a weaving of meaning-making activity with any or all parts of our lives." We also like this definition from *Proposals for the Feminine Economy* by Jennifer Armbrust: "Art is the unique expression of an emotion or an idea, wherein something is at stake."

COMMUNITY. A group of people who share some identification such as geography, culture, language, nationality, political affiliation, issue, gender, ability, etc. NOTE: We believe that it is important to recognize that there is diversity within any community. People who share one identification do not necessarily share others.

ARTIST. Anyone who has a creative practice, of any discipline or form, of any experience level or background, who considers themselves an artist. This includes someone who sings for church choir, whittles spoons, styles hair or makes meals, to someone who wins huge public art commissions or is collected by museums.

LOCAL. This is defined within the context of a place, people, or community. For a project in a small town, local may be an entire county, while local in an urban neighborhood might be the neighborhood boundaries. For an issue-based or culturally defined community, local might be anyone within a region or state.

COMMUNITY ARTIST & COMMUNITY ART:
A NOTE ON THESE TERMS

Artists who regularly work with community use a number of terms to describe themselves, including: artist organizer, community artist, cultural worker, culture bearer, social practice artist, civic practice artist, participatory artist, socially engaged artist, and so on. Or, often, just "artist." These labels all have somewhat different meanings. In this handbook, for the sake of simplicity, we just use "artist" or "artist who works in community" and we believe that the handbook has utility no matter how you define yourself and this work.

Likewise, there are various terms used to label community-based art and creative practices including: community art, public art, creative placemaking, community cultural development, tactical urbanism, cultural sustainability, participatory art, site-specific performance, and social practice art. Again, these labels all have somewhat different meanings. In this handbook, again for simplicity's sake, we generally avoid these terms.

ARTIST GROUNDWORK

In this section, we invite you to do some personal groundwork that will help you achieve better results when you start working with a community – for yourself and for the people your project involves. When you're working in and with community, you're responsible for and accountable to more people than just yourself. Read through this section and do the worksheets to gain a better understanding of:

- ✖ **Your Values**
- ✖ **Personal and Professional Goals**
- ✖ **Strengths and Skills**
- ✖ **Relationship to the Community**
- ✖ **Decision-Making When Working in Community**
- ✖ **Key Practices for Success**

YOUR VALUES

Why does working in community matter to you?

Do you know why you want to, or already are, working in community? Ground yourself in understanding what matters to you – as an artist, as a fellow human. This is the foundation for what you do, how you make decisions, and what you decide.

DO: VALUES REFLECTION WORKSHEET, PAGE 14

YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GOALS

What do you gain?

Artists who work in and with community often have a variety of goals for their community-based practice, including to:

- ✖ Diversify sources of income.
- ✖ Build experience.
- ✖ Develop their portfolio.
- ✖ Learn new skills (e.g. project management, budgeting, etc.}
- ✖ Form new connections and develop new relationships.
- ✖ Cultivate new audiences and patrons.
- ✖ Share their creative practice with a wider audience.
- ✖ Expand the idea of what art is, who can do art, how and where art can happen.
- ✖ Engage people in addressing a community issue.
- ✖ Make a positive contribution.
- ✖ Change the status quo, disrupt systems.
- ✖ Envision & build new futures.

What are your goals?

Complete the Personal and Professional Goals worksheet to clarify your goals. Having goals related to a community-based practice – and keeping them in mind as you develop that practice – will help you stay connected to and invested in the work.

DO: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GOALS WORKSHEET, PAGE 15

YOUR STRENGTHS AND SKILLS

What do you bring to work in community?

It's equally important to understand what you have to offer a community as it is to understand what you hope to gain. Your offering could be energy and deep care, to time and skills, to networks and resources. Being able to articulate what you have to share helps you attract collaborators and participants – because they are drawn to you and your ideas – and also because they see where their own strengths and skills can complement the work.

DO: WHAT I BRING WORKSHEET, PAGE 16

YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNITY

Who are you in this community?

As an artist, you might work in a community that you know well or have some history with, a community where you have deep relationships and connections. Other times, you may be invited or choose to work in a community that is less familiar, where you have to build new relationships and develop connections. Either way, clarifying your relationship to the community – and understanding the advantages and challenges of your position – will help you be more effective. To get started, complete the Community Connections Worksheet, then return to this section.

> **DO: COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS WORKSHEET, PAGE 17**

"I love working as an outsider. Outsiders can see things that insiders cannot see."

– LIZ LERMAN

If it was difficult for you to complete the **COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS WORKSHEET**, you need to deeply examine whether it's right for you to work in this community. If you weren't invited (and sometimes, even if you were) – why are you the right person, right now? If you are an outsider, be prepared to explain why you are there because you will be asked. If you need to do work forming connections to the community you intend to work with, pay particular attention to the next section, **COMMUNITY GROUNDWORK.**

Note, however, that there are often some real advantages to coming to a new community as an outsider. As an outsider, you can see things in new ways and bring a fresh perspective. You have a certain objectivity and can see what's going on without being emotionally involved. Without previously established loyalties, people might be more honest with you. And, as an outsider, you can ask funny questions; your newness may grant you goodwill and patience!

"As an outsider, I'm able to get away with some things that members of the community could not. As an outsider, I don't know that I shouldn't do some of the stuff that I do and I'm probably granted a bit more grace."

– CHIP THOMAS

If it was easy for you to complete the **COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS WORKSHEET** – if you already know key people in the community, understand entry points, are familiar with the power structures and how things get done, etc. – then you are well on your way with regard to the community groundwork that we discuss in the next section. Knowing the community has obvious advantages, but it can also have some downsides. Familiarity can sometimes lead to oversights. You might make certain assumptions about the community or rely too heavily on relationships you already have, to the detriment of building other relationships. Even though you have a head start on the community groundwork, don't overlook the important work of community mapping and relationship building.

"When I work in community as an artist, I have to be clear to myself and everyone else – am I the architect, or am I the facilitator? Or something in-between?"

– JUN–LI WANG

DECISION-MAKING WHEN WORKING IN COMMUNITY

Who's in charge?

If you have a solo artistic practice, you are likely used to having control over every stage of the creative process – ideation, design, and implementation/creation. You call the shots. You make the decisions.

When you start working with a community, that changes. One of the key challenges in working in community is figuring out who should be involved in making which decisions – and the process to make those decisions. Who dreams, brainstorms, comes up with the ideas? Who plans the project? Who decides the design of any artistic product? Who makes the artistic product? As an artist, how much control over decision-making are you willing to share with a community – and how much control do you need or want? To start exploring these issues, complete the Spectrum of Collaboration worksheet, whether you have a project in mind or are exploring working in community.

> **DO: SPECTRUM OF COLLABORATION WORKSHEET, PAGE 18**

"Artists have a point of view that is important, but when working in community artists need to be open to influence. Artists do not need to abandon their insights or ideas, but they need to be open to the insights and ideas that others have to share."

– LIZ LERMAN

SPRINGBOARD'S KEY PRACTICES FOR ARTISTS WORKING IN COMMUNITY

These Key Practices are based on Springboard's organizational values and long experience working with artists and communities:

- ✖ **Be humble.**

- ✖ **Work in collaboration.**

- ✖ **Stay in listening and learning mode.**

- ✖ **Be responsible and responsive to the community.**

- ✖ **Be transparent and communicate**

- ✖ **Be ready to work through tension and conflict.**

- ✖ **See assets and opportunities where others may not see them.**

- ✖ **Work from existing assets – people, places, cultures, connections, resources.**

- ✖ **Recognize who holds power and influence, and seek out those who are less represented or heard.**

- ✖ **Know what you bring – skills, passions, resources – and know what you are missing**

ARTIST GROUNDWORK MATERIALS

VALUES REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Why does working in community matter to you? Ground yourself in understanding what matters to you as an artist and a fellow human. Use this to reflect on your values, especially those related to when you're working in community.

1. What are your values related to working in and with community? Complete the following statement: "When working with/in community it is important to me that..."

2. Think about a time when you felt really good about the work you were doing. Why was that the case? How was that work connected to your values?

3. Think about a time when you were living or working outside of your values. Did that situation lead to conflicts – internal or external? What did you learn from that experience? What could you have done differently?

PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL GOALS WORKSHEET

When working in community, what do you gain, what are your goals? Use this worksheet for either your work in community in general OR for a specific project.

1. Are you thinking about your work generally, or a specific project _____?
If it is a specific project, what is it? _____

2. Look over this list of common goals. Check any that resonate with you.

☐ Diversify my sources of income
☐ Build experience
☐ Develop my portfolio
☐ Learn new skills
☐ Form new connections and develop new relationships
☐ Cultivate new audiences for my work
☐ Share my creative practice with a wider audience
☐ Expand the idea of what art is, who can do art, how and where art can happen

☐ Engage people in addressing a community issue
☐ Make a positive contribution
☐ Change the status quo, disrupt systems
☐ Envision & build new futures
☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____

3. Detail what you checked above. If it's building experience – what experiences exactly? If it's new audiences – who are they? If you want to disrupt systems – which ones?

4. If you have a specific project in mind - how do your personal and professional goals relate to goals of your community project?

WHAT I BRING WORKSHEET

    What do you bring to work in community? Use this worksheet to outline that knowledge, skills, passions, connections, and resources that you bring to your community-based work. Think about what you have to offer that is unique.

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS:

PASSIONS:

CONNNECTIONS:

RESOURCES:

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS WORKSHEET

Who are you in this community? To assess your position in relation to the community you want to work with, answer these questions:

1. Describe the community you are working with; include details.

2. How are you connected to this community? Are you a member of the community? Were you invited? If so, who invited you?

3. Why do you want to work in/with this particular community? What are your motivations?

4. Who do you know in the community – and who in the community knows you? What is your position or role? What do people think about you? How are you perceived?

5. What are entry points into the community? If you don't know the community well (and even if you do) – who and where can you get to know people?

6. Who holds power in the community? How are decisions made? How do things get done?

SPECTRUM OF COLLABORATION WORKSHEET

Who is in charge? Who makes decisions? Use this worksheet to clarify your thinking about a specific project OR your community-based work in general. Also use this tool to talk with collaborators, stakeholders, and other members of the community about project decision-making.

For each aspect of a project, mark on the spectrum where the **IDEAL BALANCE** between you (the artist) and the community falls. Answer the reflection questions afterwards.

IDEATION. Who dreams, brainstorms, creates the vision, comes up with the ideas?

Artist <··> **Community**

PROJECT PLAN. Who makes the decisions about project activities, timeline, budget, project evaluation, etc.?

Artist <··> **Community**

ARTISTIC DESIGN. Who makes decisions about the design of the artistic product?

Artist <··> **Community**

IMPLIMENTATION/CREATION. Who makes decisions related to creation and implementation? Who is involved in creation of the final product?

Artist <··> **Community**

Reflection Questions:
- ✖ Are you comfortable with your role? Is it a stretch for you, or the community you're working with?
- ✖ Is there conflict between what you are comfortable with and what the project needs?
- ✖ Will you need to bring others on board to help with aspects of project collaboration where you are less comfortable?
- ✖ If your team or community has a greater decision-making role, how do you support them to take that role?
- ✖ How do you move from one point on the spectrum to another?

COMMUNITY GROUNDWORK

If you are going to work effectively, authentically, and responsibly in community, it is best to formulate your project with a solid understanding of – and participation from – the community. In this section we discuss some of the community-based groundwork that will help you achieve success in your work, including:

✖ **Building Relationships**
✖ **Community Asset Mapping**
✖ **Stakeholder Identification**
✖ **Collaborator Identification**
✖ **Role(s) of the Community**

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Ask any artist who has worked successfully in community and they will tell you that there is one primary key to their success: relationships. When people know each other and trust each other, they can dream, plan, create, and get things done together, even if they do not agree about every detail or share all of the same priorities.

Ask a successful community-based artist how to build and maintain good relationships with community members and they will tell you: listen, listen, listen. When you genuinely listen to other people and learn who they are – what moves them, what troubles them, what motivates them – you can build a foundation for future work together.

This kind of relationship building is a long-term endeavor, and it happens before, during, and even after a project. But where do you start? Certainly, one of the best ways to start building relationships is to participate in activities that are happening in the community. This is a great way to meet people, learn about, and begin to build relationships with community members. One-to-one visits are another excellent way to introduce yourself to and learn about the community, including potential stakeholders and potential collaborators.

"If I had attempted to do my public art without the relationships that I have built over time, I don't think it would have evolved as it has"

– CHIP THOMAS

COMMUNITY ASSET MAPPING

Every community and every place has a unique combination of assets to appreciate, amplify, and connect to one another. While some assets are obvious to everyone, it can take a little work to expand people's perspectives so that they see assets in place of things they usually overlook or wish would disappear. Even difficult histories are authentic to a community or place, and are part of the longer story of a place, or a lesson learned (or still learning).

"Relationship building is critical. Taking the time to get to know each other is so important because its takes a while to know if a collaboration between a community and a particular artist is workable, if it's a good fit"

– LIZ LERMAN

It is useful to do a foundational activity to put you and people you're working with in a different mindset in advance of community mapping and brainstorming. You can do this on your own but even better with your immediate collaborators.

DO: OBSERVATION TOUR, PAGE 87

"Artists are particularly good at seeing the overlooked and everyday that most other people often miss or don't appreciate – as opportunities for artistic exploration and illumination."

– PETER HAAKON THOMPSON

As you begin to develop a project, it is important to have a solid understanding of the community you intend to work with, especially the key individuals, groups, institutions, places, and other assets in the community. Community asset mapping is both an exercise to unearth the unique features of a community or place, and also a way for a group of people to see all the possibilities that exist already.

We strongly recommend doing the Community Asset Mapping exercise, even if you know the community well. Initially, you might do this exercise by yourself or with your collaborators or a small group of community members. Once your network has grown, it might be worthwhile to do the exercise with a larger group, to fill in gaps, develop a shared understanding, and begin to create broader and deeper connections. This Mapping exercise is also useful for stakeholder identification, which is addressed after this.

"If you are new to a community, you need to identify the points of entry into that community. And to do that, you really need to turn up the volume on listening, to understand how the community is structured."

– NIKIKO MASUMOTO

STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

A stakeholder is any individual, group, or organization that will potentially be impacted by your project. Identifying and engaging stakeholders early in your project process will help to build support and prevent potential problems down the road. Some of the key individuals, groups, and organizations that you identify in your community mapping will be stakeholders, but there may be other stakeholders as well.

To identify stakeholders, ask yourself and others who know the community:

- **Who would potentially benefit from the project?**
- **Who would potentially object to or be negatively impacted by the project?**
- **Who has the power and authority to make decisions regarding aspects of your project?**
- **Who has to grant their permission?**
- **Who is doing similar work?**

For example, if you wanted to paint a community mural on the side of a building, the stakeholders would include the owner of the building, the occupants of the building, local residents, local businesses, and the local government.

Once you have identified stakeholders, decide who to engage, ideally through a one-to-one conversation. You might choose not to engage every stakeholder, particularly for smaller or "test" projects – that's something you can be intentional about. For stakeholder groups that are too large or too ambiguous to engage with directly, you can identify key individuals, groups or

organizations who potentially represent those stakeholders. For instance, if you wanted to understand more about local residents, you could reach out to neighborhood and cultural groups or other local organizations.

COLLABORATOR IDENTIFICATION

Collaborators are those individuals, groups, and organizations that help make the project a success by contributing ideas, time, money, materials, connections, and so forth. Collaborators can span the spectrum from a volunteer who helps organize an event, to a local business that supports your work, to a nonprofit organization or government agency that serves as a formal project partner.

"Pick collaborators strategically and realistically. Sometimes you need to start with people you know you can work with easily and quickly. Other times you have the capacity to reach out farther and work with the less-usual suspects or those less familiar."

– MICHELE ANDERSON

To identify potential project collaborators, begin by asking these questions about the individuals, groups, and organizations that you identified in your community mapping:

- ✖ **Who do you need on board to make the project a success?**
- ✖ **Who has access to resources that are important for the project?**
- ✖ **Who has skills and connections?**
- ✖ **Who has complementary or overlapping mission and programs?**

As with stakeholders, use one-to-one visits for initial engagement with potential collaborators.

ROLE(S) OF THE COMMUNITY

Separate from individuals who might be collaborators or team members on your project, members of a community can play various roles in a project. Community members can serve as a source of inspiration, be a sounding board, or work as co-designers or co-implementers. It is important to be clear – with yourself, stakeholders and collaborators – about what role(s) you want the community-at-large to play in the project, as this may influence aspects of project formation and implementation.

Let's take a look at some of the roles the community can play, what it means for you as the artist, and the particular challenges associated with each role:

COMMUNITY AS INSPIRATION. You derive inspiration for a project based on your knowledge or observations of the community. Your goal might be to tell a story about a community, create a new narrative, or make a work that generates conversation. *Your challenge is to represent the community responsibly.*

COMMUNITY AS SOUNDING BOARD. You want to have the final say about the nature of the project, but you want input from the community – perhaps at the outset during a community visioning session or perhaps during a review of design options. *Your challenge is to effectively gather and use community input responsibly.*

COMMUNITY AS CO-PLANNER/DESIGNER. You and the community work as partners in the planning and design of the project. *Your challenge is to facilitate the process, help community participants get out of their comfort zone, look at things in a new way, and generate a shared project plan and design.*

COMMUNITY AS CO-IMPLEMENTER. You and the community work together to implement the project work. *Your challenge is to guide and support the community to complete the project effectively*

Note that the roles of the community are not mutually exclusive. For example, a playwright might observe and listen for themes in a community about a particular issue, then craft a play about the issue that community members then perform. In this instance, the community is both the source of inspiration and co-implementer, but the artist has creative control over design.

"One of the strengths of the artist is the capacity to reframe – to help people look at their issues and stories from a new perspective and ask 'what is the bigger story'? But artists need to be very thoughtful about how they reframe. As artists, we need to ask ourselves: Do I have the right to reframe this story? Do I need to ask permission? Do I need to check back?"

— LIZ LERMAN

COMMUNITY GROUNDWORK MATERIALS

TIPS FOR ONE TO ONE CONVERSATIONS

The primary purpose of a one-to-one conversation is to learn and develop a relationship – not to promote yourself or your project. To have a good one-to-one:

PREPARE. Before you go, do some homework. Read up on the individual, group, or organization you are planning to meet with. Ask others about them. Maybe attend an event that they are hosting.

BE CURIOUS. Let your curiosity drive the conversation, but start with easier questions and move to more challenging questions (see below).

LISTEN. LISTEN. LISTEN. Of course you will share a bit about yourself, but spend most of the time listening. Listen for what excites them, their interests and passions. Listen for different perspectives and experiences from yours. Listen for overlapping or complementary goals. People are more likely to engage with you or in a project if they feel invested and their interests are also met.

QUESTIONS to consider asking during a one-to-one (pick a few; don't ask all of them!):

Opening Questions

What do you enjoy doing?

What do you do that you're proud of?

How do you do your work? Who do you work with?

What is your history here in this community/place?

What do you like about this community/place? How has it changed? What's new, what are challenges?

What groups, activities, associations are you connected to?

Next Level Questions

What is important to you? What are you passionate about? What are your dreams?

What is wonderful, and what is hard about working in this community?

What tensions exist in this community? What are the controversial issues?

What's your vision for this community/place/issue?

What are you curious about and hope to experience or learn someday?

What would you love to share with or teach others?

Concluding Questions

Who else should I talk to? Who else is doing meaningful, interesting, weird, relevant things?

Who are other connectors and leaders (informal and formal) in this community/place?

How can I support what you do?

What could we do together?

COMMUNITY ASSET MAPPING EXERCISE

THE BASICS

The goal of this exercise is to identify the significant assets in a community in five areas: Key Individuals, Organizations and Institutions, Groups and Associations, Physical Environment, and Methods of Exchange. This exercise is a good way to brainstorm with a large group of people without the process becoming too chaotic. If appropriate for your situation, you can also use the initial exercise as the basis for the Stakeholder Identification exercise and/or the Collaborator Identification exercise.

GROUP SIZE: 10 to 25, ideally. This exercise can also be done solo, or with smaller groups, but might not be as instructive – or as much fun! – and should be modified accordingly. It can also be done with larger groups, but might get a bit unwieldly.

LOCATION: A meeting space large enough to accommodate the expected number of participants – and with enough spots to set up 5 chart paper easels (or with ample empty wall/table space for the chart paper).

TIME: 45 – 60 minutes

MATERIALS: Chart paper, Markers (at least 2 per station)

SET UP:

Before participants arrive:

✖ Label each piece of chart paper with one of the categories from the chart.

✖ Place 5 pieces of chart paper (and markers) at different locations in the meeting space, either on easels or taped to a wall. Use locations where a small group of people can easily see and write on the chart paper.

FACILITATION STEPS

Have participants **count off** from 1 to 5 so they can split into 5 groups.

Explain the goal of the exercise (see above)

Define each category and what to include.

Instruct each group to go to one of the five recording charts ("all number ones go to Key Individuals, all twos go to Organizations & Institutions, etc.). Prompt them to be specific, and not to worry if something ends up in multiple categories. Give groups 5-7 minutes to write down as many assets in that category as they can.

Rotate groups after 5-7 minutes, directing them to the category to their right (or clockwise). Give 5 minutes for groups to write ideas down.

Repeat rotations until each group has spent time at each category. After the first two rotations, you can shorten the time allowed as it might be harder to think of additional assets (but it will take the groups some time to look at what is already written). If it looks like groups are having a hard time coming up with new ideas, you can stop, but we recommend that each group do at least three categories.

Gather all of the charts in one central location for discussion.

Ask the group: Take a look. How does this feel? What do you see, and does anything in particular stand out? Did you learn anything new?

Depending on what you want to achieve, you may end here but keep the charts as reference/ inspiration. Options:

- ✖ Save the charts - often someone will want to type up the lists but you can also take photos.
- ✖ Brainstorming - connect dots between different assets.
- ✖ Use for stakeholder and collaborator identification (see other exercises).

CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Key Individuals	People who have particular skills, connections, or characteristics that are valued in the community, including: • Leaders of organizations and institutions • People who have specific networks and connections • People who do things (organize, lead groups, garden, etc.) • Elected officials
Organizations & Institutions	Organizations and institutions that have a significant presence in the community including: • Cultural and issue-based organizations • Social service and community development organizations • Geographically-focused organizations such as neighborhood associations, watershed districts, or park groups • Educational institutions • Businesses and business associations • Government offices, departments, and initiatives
Organized Groups and Associations	Affinity groups that meet/communicate on a regular basis such as a PTA, a scouting troop, block club, activity clubs, etc.
Physical Environment	Natural and human-made aspects of the physical environment such as parks and other public spaces, views, places to gather, notable buildings, etc. This may include things typically considered negative or plain – vacant lots, "ugly" fences, etc.
Methods of Exchange	The formal and informal ways in which people exchange goods and services such as banks, businesses, cooperatives, barter groups, etc.

STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION EXERCISE

THE BASICS

The goal of this exercise is to identify potential stakeholders in a community project – you do need to have some idea of what the project is. If you did Community Asset Mapping, you may refer back to those lists.

GROUP SIZE: 5 to 10, ideally. This exercise can also be done solo.

LOCATION: A good meeting space, ideally with a whiteboard. If no whiteboard is available, bring chart paper and easel.

TIME: 15 – 30 minutes

MATERIALS: Whiteboard or chart paper/easel/wall, Markers

FACILITATION STEPS

Describe what the project goals and ideas are.

Define the term "stakeholder" and provide an example or two. Stakeholders are those individuals, groups, or organizations that:

- Might potentially benefit from the project
- Might potentially object to or be negatively impacted by the project
- Have authority to make decisions regarding the project
- Are doing similar work

Ask the group(s) to brainstorm stakeholders. Encourage everyone to think broadly, about the less obvious people, and if you have them, use your community asset lists to prompt ideas.

Discuss who to contact. Consider: who must be contacted early on? Who would be good to contact early on? Who are we curious about? Who often gets overlooked that we want to reach out to?

COLLABORATOR IDENTIFICATION EXERCISE

THE BASICS

The goal of this exercise is to identify potential collaborators for a community project. If you did Community Asset Mapping, you may refer back to those lists.

GROUP SIZE: 5 to 8, ideally. This exercise can also be done solo.

LOCATION: A good meeting space, ideally with a whiteboard. If no whiteboard is available, bring chart paper and easel.

TIME: 15 – 30 minutes

MATERIALS: Whiteboard or chart paper/easel/wall, Markers

FACILITATION STEPS

Define the term "collaborator" (those individuals, groups, and organizations that help make the project a success by contributing ideas, time, money, materials, connections, etc.) and provide an example or two. You can use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- Who do we need on board to make the project a success?

- Who has access to resources that are important for the project?

- Who has important skills and connections?

- Who has complementary or overlapping mission and programs?

Ask the group(s) to brainstorm potential collaborators. Encourage everyone to think broadly, about the less obvious people, and if you have them, use your community asset lists to prompt ideas.

Discuss who to contact. Consider: who can we work with easily/quickly? Who is less known by the group but is worth reaching out to or would be really great to work with? Finally, discuss next steps and assign tasks (e.g. who will make initial contact with potential collaborators).

PROJECT FORMATION

In this section we discuss key aspects of project formation:

- ✖ **Scoping**
- ✖ **Planning**
- ✖ **Evaluation**
- ✖ **Budget**
- ✖ **Funding**

"It is probably easier for an outsider to bring a new art form to a traditional space than it would be for an insider."

– CHIP THOMAS

SCOPING

Project scoping involves identifying the basic parameters of your project and addressing the fundamental questions related to the project, including:

✖   What is the opportunity, challenge, issue, need, or problem that you see and want to address through the project? In other words, why this project? Why here? Why now?

✖   What are the project goals? What do you hope to achieve?

✖   Who in the community do you want to work with?

✖   What is the context of your project? Does your project relate to a larger project, program, or plan?

Are there any limitations on your project?

Project stakeholders and collaborators can provide valuable input that will help you develop full answers to these questions.

DO: PROJECT SCOPE WORKSHEET, PAGE 43

"Relationship building is important for its own sake; it is just as important as the product. Sometime relationship building IS the project."

– LIZ LERMAN

PLANNING

Project planning is the process of determining the basic who, what, where, when and how of a project – and how all of that connects to the why. This is when you figure out actions and activities, roles and responsibilities, locations, timelines, documentation and evaluation…all the elements of the project – and how everything links back to project goals.

The first question you need to address is: Who will be or should be involved in the project planning process? Will you, the artist, do the project planning by yourself? Or will this work be done by a team of people? If the project plan will be done by a team, who will be on that team? Will you engage stakeholders, collaborators, and/or the community-at-large in the project planning process? If so, how so?

Once you have determined who will be involved in the project design process, use these questions to guide the formation of your project plan:

ACTIVITIES AND TASKS. What are the specific project activities? What are the tasks that need to be taken to achieve those activities? How do the activities address your project goals?

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. Who is doing what? Who is responsible for particular actions and activities? What are your roles? What roles do collaborators have? What role(s) will the community-at-large play in the project?

TIMELINES AND LOCATIONS. When and where are activities happening? What are the key deadlines? Do you need to reserve any spaces or prepare any tech? Do you need permits or permissions to use any locations?

DO: PROJECT PLAN FORM, PAGE 44

EVALUATION

It's easy to forget evaluation until a project has started – or even completed! Evaluation IS important – it tells you what is working, what can be adjusted or grown, and whether you're achieving what you want. Keep in mind the goals you identified during project scoping and use the following to guide the design of your evaluation.

Why are you evaluating?

- ✖ Who is it for? Yourself, collaborators, community, the funders?
- ✖ What is it for? To learn and improve, to prove a pilot is worth expanding, to find more collaborators or funders?

Who is deciding what success is?

You and your collaborators may have different ideas of what success is, and how to measure it. That's fine! Just have conversations about it before you get too far into your work together. A business might want an interesting storefront display, and you might want a way for young people to feel connected to their community. The business would see success to be the display, and you and the youth would see success in making new friends and feeling like they made a difference.

What are your goals, and the results you seek?

You may be able to translate your goals into concrete terms and numbers, such as:

- ✖ Create art with community: # of pieces, # of participants, etc.
- ✖ Build new connections: # of people who met someone new
- ✖ Cross-cultural learning: # of participants of different cultures working together
- ✖ Community interest in ___: # of people who volunteered to be in video
- ✖ Helping local businesses: # of new customers or # of businesses who later invited you to come with your project
- ✖ Raising awareness of ___: # of people who said they learned something new

What should you collect?

Collect only the information you need. You don't need to collect data on everything. Be realistic about your capacity and prioritize what you need based on why you're evaluating.

Use simple methods that suit your project. Data collection doesn't need to be complicated. Once you know what you want to learn, think about easy and unobtrusive (and even fun) ways to get information. Sometimes the activities you have planned as part of a project can also give you good information.

Common methods include:

- ✖ Observation – by you, other collaborators, volunteers
- ✖ Surveys/questionnaires – on paper, online, someone asking
- ✖ From registration/sign-in information
- ✖ Voting – marbles into jars, sticky dots on a chart, etc.
- ✖ Reflection – asking people to reflect on an experience and say or write it
- ✖ Conversation – especially you and your collaborators together

Collect stories. When it comes to the impact of a community project, numbers usually can't tell the whole story, so collect some narrative as well. Indeed, there is an adage in project evaluation: "No numbers without a story, and no story without numbers."

BUDGET

A project budget is a device to identify the expenses and income for a project, a guideline to help you manage the finances of a project, and a tool to help you raise money. A well-crafted project budget should give you, collaborators, and funders a solid understanding of all of the potential costs and potential sources of income for a project. Here are our tips for creating a good project budget:

SEEK ASSISTANCE. If you don't have much experience creating budgets or your project is more complex, see if any of your project collaborators can help. Nonprofit organizations are especially likely to

have expertise in creating project budgets. Another good resource is Creative Capital (creative-capital.org).

FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES. Doing a budget can feel overwhelming at first, especially for a more complex project. To break your budget down into manageable pieces, focus on specific activities one at a time.

INCLUDE ALL POTENTIAL EXPENSES. Include all potential labor costs, including costs for your time, other contractors, and anyone else who will be paid to work on the project. Remember to budget for project formation activities as well as documentation and evaluation. In addition to materials and supplies, remember to include any equipment that you need to purchase or rent, food for events, space rentals, and insurance.

INCLUDE ALL POTENTIAL INCOME. Include all potential sources of income, including grants, cash contributions, in-kind contributions, and any other revenue collected as part of the project (i.e. ticket income). Make sure that your expected revenue is equal to (or greater than) your expenses!

INCLUDE IN–KIND CONTRIBUTIONS. In-kind contributions are goods or services donated without cost, such as supplies or someone's time. Include all anticipated in-kind contributions as revenue. Many funders require matching funds – and in-kind contributions can often be included as a match. All in-kind donations should be included at their fair market value. For example, if you are donating your time, or a portion of your time, list the donated time as in-kind revenue.

LET YOUR BUDGET EVOLVE. Don't just do a budget and then forget about it. A budget should be a living document, something that you revisit periodically as the project evolves.

"If you are new to budgeting your time for a community-based project, you might want to double the amount of time you think it's going to take. When you're working as a solo artist, you just get to make the decisions. But when you're working in community, you're accountable to other people. That takes lots of communication, lots of checking in, lots of time. "

– NIKIKO MASUMOTO

FUNDING

When it is time to start raising funds for your project:

TALK TO PROJECT COLLABORATORS. Make funding a shared endeavor; engage your collaborators in the question of how to fund the project and give them some tasks to do. Some of your project collaborators may be able to provide direct financial support or in-kind contributions of labor, materials, space, etc. Also, some partners might be willing to devote funds to the project that they normally would spend on marketing, outreach, community engagement, public education, and so forth. Collaborators may also have good ideas of where to apply for funding – and may be able to apply for funds that you cannot as an individual. In many cases a collaborating organization will be the applicant – and will contract with you to carry out the project.

CONSIDER A VARIETY OF FUNDING SOURCES. Keep in mind that your project may fit into multiple priorities for potential funders, including the arts, public safety, community engagement, or community development. Depending on the challenge you are addressing, there

may be support available from government or business programs. Your project collaborators may also have access to or be eligible for unique sources of funding that you may not as an individual artist. Also, if appropriate, think about crowd funding. Know what part of your project will appeal to whom - a community mural project might be interesting to a business association because it beautifies a space, but for a historical society, it could be the story it tells, or for a youth program funder, it could be for the leadership opportunities for youth as they create the mural with you. Consider a variety of sources, but remember that most funding is local - in other words, the people and organizations most likely to support your project are those who will be able to see the outcomes directly.

CONSIDER STARTING SMALL. If fundraising is a hurdle, especially if you are new to community-based work, consider doing a smaller scale project before you pursue a larger project that requires significant funding. A smaller or "pilot" project can be an effective strategy to show the value of the project, develop new relationships, demonstrate demand and gather support that will help you fundraise for a larger proposal.

Additional resource:
Funding, Springboard Work Of Art: Business Tools for Artists
www.springboardexchange.org/workofart

PROJECT FORMATION MATERIALS

PROJECT SCOPING WORKSHEET

The questions here are intended to guide you as you first start thinking about a project – and you do not need to have complete answers (particularly if you aren't collaborating yet). This is a working document, so answer what you can, then revisit and revise these answers as you have more conversations and the project develops. The answers to these questions can become the foundation for an informal project pitch, for a more formal project proposal, or for a funding application. You may do this worksheet on your own, or use it to have a discussion with your collaborators.

1. **Opportunity.** What is the opportunity, challenge, issue, need, or problem that you want to address?

2. **Goals.** What are the goals for the project? What do you hope to achieve? Your project goals could be very specific and focused (e.g. install a sculpture on Main Street) to more general (e.g. beautify Main Street, engage local businesses in beautification of Main Street). Goals can also be about tangible results like a performance, or intangible like new relationships between youth and elders.

3. **Community.** Who in the community will you work with? Who are the participants or audience? How do they benefit?

4. **Context.** What is the overall context of the project? How does it relate to other projects, programs, and plans in the community? Does it fill any gaps or create new connections?

PROJECT PLAN FORM

WHAT? What is the action or activity?	WHO? Who is responsible? Who is lead? Who is participating?	WHEN? What is the timeframe? What is the deadline?	WHERE? Where will it take place?	WHY? What is the purpose? How does it address project goals?

ACTION STEPS FORM

ACTIVITY, ACTIONS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	BY WHEN?
Activity: Task - Task - Task -		
Activity: Task - Task - Task -		
Activity: Task - Task - Task -		
Activity: Task - Task - Task -		
Activity: Task - Task - Task -		
Activity: Task - Task - Task -		

PROJECT BUDGET FORM

Use this worksheet to start figuring out project expenses and project income. Refer to the Sample Budget for further guidance. As you develop your budget, make sure that expenses and income match.

EXPENSES	COST PER UNIT	UNIT NUMBER	SUBTOTAL
LABOR *(artist fees, contractor fees, stipends, etc.)*			
MATERIALS, SUPPLIES *(including meeting materials, equipment – purchased or rented, food)*			
OTHER EXPENSES *(space rental, mileage reimbursement, accommodation, etc.)*			
		TOTAL:	

INCOME	AMOUNT/VALUE
GRANT *(foundations, government)*	
DONATIONS *(individuals, businesses)*	
EARNED INCOME *(ticket sales, merchandise, etc.)*	
IN-KIND *(donated labor and supplies - also list in expenses; make sure same value in both locations)*	
TOTAL:	

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

So your project is happening! You have collaborators, resources, and now it is time to do it! In this section, we discuss the nitty-gritty of implementing a community-based project, including:

✖ **Outreach & Publicity**

✖ **Group Facilitation**

✖ **Documentation**

✖ **Insurance and Legal Issues**

✖ **Project Completion**

OUTREACH & PUBLICITY

OUTREACH refers to a set of communication strategies and practices that aim to attract participation in your project. **PUBLICITY** refers to communication strategies and practices for telling the world about your project. There is often significant overlap between outreach and publicity, which is why we address them together. To do effective outreach and publicity:

FOCUS ON AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE.

Who are you trying to reach – and why? How does your audience get their information? What channels do they use? What do you want your audience to do? As you develop communications, lead with information and language that will speak most to your audience.

TALK TO YOUR COLLABORATORS.

Your community collaborators – particularly organizations, but individuals as well – will have contacts, networks, and channels for outreach and publicity. Build your outreach and publicity strategy around existing resources.

CONNECT WITH LOCAL MEDIA.

Local media – including community radio stations, local television stations, and local newspapers – are always looking for a good story to share with their audiences. Cultivate relationships with local journalists and learn where their interests and your project might align. The hook might be the project itself, or the participants, or you as the artist. Don't overlook student media at local colleges or high schools!

THINK AHEAD.

Plan your outreach and publicity well in advance of any upcoming event or activity that you are trying to promote. Given their production cycles, local media may need information several days or even weeks in advance of an event or activity date.

"When you are designing a participatory arts project, understand that many people, perhaps most, doubt their own creativity. So rather than just jumping into design or creation work, think about making entry points to creativity, activities that are welcoming, accessible, approachable, and comfortable, activities that allow people to get comfortable with their creativity."

– NIKIKO MASUMOTO

We've selected over a dozen favorite tools that Springboard staff and other artists practitioners love to use to encourage creativity, build teams, and help vision. Check out the **GROUP PARTICIPATION TOOLS, PAGE 65**

GROUP FACILITATION

During the course of a community-based project, you may need to bring groups of people together. You may need to run a community input meeting, guide a project team that meets on a regular basis, or facilitate a community-based design process. Here are some general tips:

UNDERSTAND GROUP WORKING STYLES. By group working style, we mean the way that people tend to act and the kinds of things they tend to focus on when working in a group of people. You can improve your group facilitation by understanding your own working style and understanding the working styles of others.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE: Leadership Dimensions Activity, *Irrigate: Toolkit for Mobilizing Local Artists.* www.springboardexchange.org/irrigate

DO: GROUP WORKING STYLE EXERCISE, PAGE 59
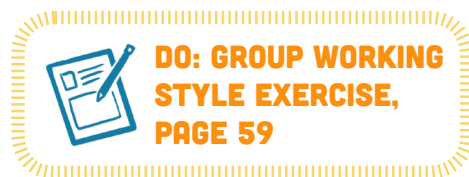
UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS OF GROUP FORMATION. Teams and temporary groups of people working together well don't magically happen – good ones take work. Most groups go through a predictable set of stages as they develop, and there are different strategies you can use to help them work well at each stage. There are 5 commonly recognized stages – forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. Notice there are 3 stages before you get to the doing! Consider looking up Tuckmans Stages of Group Development online, and get a little familiar with the stages and what you can do in each stage to help things move along.
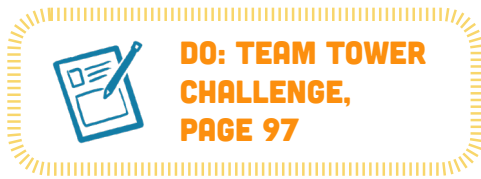
DO: TEAM TOWER CHALLENGE, PAGE 97

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE: Team Building Activity, *Irrigate: Toolkit for Mobilizing Local Artists.* www.springboardexchange.org/irrigate

Good practices for group development

- ✖ Recognize group dynamics AND project goals are equally important

- ✖ Set Group Norms/community groundrules (See Group Norms Setting, page 75)

- ✖ Help people share hopes and fears as a group (See Hopes and Fears, page 77)

- ✖ Help people get to know each other individually

- ✖ Be transparent about goals of each meeting/gathering

- ✖ Have an agenda but be able to adjust it as needed

- ✖ Use different formats (writing, reflection, pair/small group, whole group)

- ✖ Call on the group or specific people to share facilitation; you don't have to do it alone

- ✖ Even if the goals are serious, having fun and laughter are good

BE PREPARED TO ADDRESS "DISRUPTIVE" BEHAVIORS. Often, disruptive behaviors happen because someone's needs are not being met, so understanding the underlying cause driving a behavior will help you manage it in a way that continues to include everyone.

SEE: MANAGING DISRUPTIONS AND CONFLICT, PAGE 61

EMBRACE CONFLICT. Conflict can arise because people have different expectations, interests, and communication styles. The best part about conflict is it means people are invested and that they care – and as an artist, you understand conflict or tension is where interesting ideas come up if you let them. Understanding all three elements above will help you understand how to manage conflict, particularly if you can name what's happening – people need reminders that it is okay. Name conflict when it is happening, and if you're not particularly comfortable navigating it, ask others to help.

DO: QUESTION CIRCLE ACTIVITY, PAGE 89

SEE: MANAGING DISRUPTIONS AND CONFLICT, PAGE 61

DOCUMENTATION

Consider if and how you and your collaborators want to share the story. Documentation is powerful and the ethics of using photos and videos of community work are important to consider. Who owns the images? Who gets credit in the byline? How might images be perceived when they are unlinked from the context of the project? Make sure to ask yourself these and other questions. Yet, images and video can tell the story as well as

"The mood changes when a camera shows up – people get a little self-conscious and perform for the lens. The magic of the moment can get lost. Even though it's tempting to record everything, I also try hard to limit how often I have my camera out."

– JUN–LI WANG

numbers and words. Good documentation allows the work to live beyond the immediate life of the project and can be shared over and over – including by the community involved. You may want to include a photographer or videographer to help document your project – if you're running the show, it can be hard to step away.

Tips for taking images (so you don't just get beautiful headshots of people). Consider getting these shots:

- ✖ **Before and after.**
- ✖ **Wide angles that show the whole setting.**
- ✖ **Audience participation.**
- ✖ **Artist in action.**
- ✖ **Collaborators in action.**

INSURANCE AND LEGAL ISSUES

Insurance and legal issues may be some of the last things you want to think about, but better safe than sorry. The scope and size of your project, and who your collaborators or partners are will impact whether you need to consider the following factors.

INSURANCE. As a working artist, there are a few types of insurance that you might want to consider, particularly with regards to a community-based project. **General liability insurance** protects you from a wide range of risks and liabilities and can be tailored to your specific circumstance. If you are planning an event, you might want to consider **event insurance**, which can cover the costs of event-related injuries and accidents, damage to leased or rented property, weather-related issues, event cancellation, and more. As an artist with a business, you might also want to consider some form of **small business insurance**, which can include coverage for business property, general liability, and business income.

CONSENT. In the course of your project you might film, photograph, or otherwise record people. Generally speaking, it is legal to film or photograph people in public without obtaining their consent. For example, if you are filming or taking photos of an event in a public space that is part of your project, you do not need to get the consent of audience members or event participants. However, if you are recording people in a private space or you are specifically recording individuals (e.g. interviewing community members on camera or taking portraits of community members), you should obtain consent. There are a number of good sample release forms available on the internet. If you have questions about issues around consent, you should consult a lawyer or work with an organization or artist that has experience with such matters.

CONTRACTS. In the course of your project you may need to contract with other professionals to do aspects of the work. Independent contractors often have template contracts that they use on a regular basis – and you may have some yourself – but to make sure you understand the elements of a good contract see the Independent Contractor Sample Contract in the appendix.

PROJECT COMPLETION

As you wrap up your project, there are a few things you should do to ensure that things end on a good note:

DEBRIEF. Meet with stakeholders and collaborators to review what went well and what could be improved. A debriefing session can be linked to project evaluation.

ADDRESS THE FUTURE. If your project is a success, those involved may want it to continue or may ask "what's next?" Anticipate this and be ready to address questions about your role, next steps and project sustainability. If the project was centered on a particular issue in the community, it is likely that the issue remains, but ideally the project will have provided new insights, new perspectives, new tools and resources, and perhaps changes in the social fabric that allow the community to move forward.

CELEBRATE. Have a party! Celebrate what you have accomplished, including the new relationships formed. Plan and budget for this.

"We tend to have romanticized ideas about project sustainability, but everyone involved in a project needs to be realistic about what they can and cannot do moving forward once the project is done."

– MIKE O'BRYAN

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION MATERIALS

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD ANNOUNCEMENT OR FLYER

Help people participate in your work. Whether you want them to come to an event live or online, pass by and see something at some point, or participate in another way, you have to give them enough information to make them pay attention. The moment they aren't sure of when it is, where it is, if they are truly welcomed – you have potentially lost them.

Consider your audience. Who you are trying to attract, and what matters to them? What words and language are inviting and intriguing? Put yourself in their shoes and think about what would move them to participate.

Visual appeal. What images, photos, colors can make your announcement stand out and convey the right message? What will grab people's attention?

A hook. Especially if the title of your project or activity is not self-explanatory, what question or command will attract attention? (Free and family-friendly! Have you ever wanted to paint a mural? Join your neighbors to make art!)

Content. It's easy to leave something out, so make sure you include (and have someone else double-check):

Basic

- ✖ Title, description
- ✖ Date, time (start and end!)
- ✖ Location with full address and any extra entry instructions
- ✖ Cost, registration (if any) info, deadline
- ✖ Contact info for more information

Additional

- ✖ If it's only for certain communities or groups (event for Black community, for youth only, for people who like to sing, etc.)
- ✖ Accessibility information (close captioned, ASL translator, ADA accessibility or accommodations)
- ✖ Transit, parking information
- ✖ Special requests (Bring a family photo, wear clothes that can get messy, try to carpool, etc.)

HOW TO WRITE A PRESS RELEASE

A press release is one good way to start spreading the word about projects or events, and also can be the base for other communications.

TECHNICAL TIPS

- ✖ **Keep it simple.** Press releases don't have to be fancy; they just have to convey the basic information. Make it easy for someone to use the release and not have to do extra work.

- ✖ **Double check** that you have the "what, who, when, where, how much" clearly listed. This is the critical information to get on arts and events calendars.

- ✖ **Spellcheck and proofread!** Your errors are likely to be repeated by others. If possible, have someone else read over your press release.

- ✖ **Put your press release in the body of an email.** If someone has to take the extra time to open an attached document, they might not bother. Also, if a press release is in the body of an e-mail, it's easier for someone to cut and paste it.

- ✖ **Don't attach large files** when e-mailing press releases. Large files clog up inboxes and some people have filters that automatically reject e-mails with large attachments.

- ✖ **Review your photographs.** If you have photos to share, make sure they are at the correct resolutions. Photos for the web only need to be 72dpi. This makes a smaller file that is more easily uploaded. For print, photos should be 300dpi for better print resolution and quality. Photos should be JPEG format.

- ✖ **Include a line in your press release about photos** being available on request. If they want them, reporters will ask for your photos. Consider including a small picture (72dpi).

- ✖ **Follow up.** If there is a particular reporter who would be especially suited to covering your project, follow up with them – by phone or email – regarding your press release. Note, however, that reporters are busy people. They often have many requests sent to them and may not be able to cover your event. If you want to build a relationship with a reporter, more than one follow up probably won't endear you to them.

- ✖ **Distribution.** Share the press release with your local news outlets – print, radio, tv, online. Also share it with your collaborators, local organizations and neighborhood groups so they can share it with their networks.

TECHNICAL TIPS

- ✖ **Your contact information** – name, phone number, e-mail address.

- ✖ **Date of press release**

- ✖ **Title.** Make it catchy! Make it short! This is how people will refer to your project, so think about that when creating a title.

- ✖ **List.** List what, who, when, where, any cost or other participation details, how to rsvp.

- ✖ **Intro paragraph.** Open with: [Title of Project] by [name of artist/s and collaborators] is supported by [program name and/or partner names and/or funder names]. Provide a brief description of the project. What is it? Who is presenting it? Who is this for? Include if there are any costs or special requirements to participate.

- ✖ **Second paragraph.** Expand on the concept. Describe the history or inspiration for the piece, why it is important or different. Consider including a quote from a key person involved in the project (this could be you).

- ✖ **Final paragraph.** Include any additional program information that you think is important.

- ✖ **Acknowledgements.** Acknowledge any collaborators, supporters and funders.

GROUP WORKING STYLE EXERCISE

Use this tool to help identify your own working style and understand what orientation is helpful for which goals. If you can recognize the different styles, you can also understand how other people approach working together.

Identify Your Group Working Style. Look over the four styles in the chart opposite, and ask yourself:

> - Which one or ones best represents you when you are working with others?
> - What do you focus on or naturally pay attention to?
> - What is easy, and what is harder?
> - What do you do when you are in a leading role or a participation role?

Use your understanding of group working styles to improve your project management and group facilitation skills.

✖ Team Building. A team will be stronger if it includes people with complementary group working styles – or recognize where the team is stronger and weaker. If, for example, you have a strong orientation towards analysis and accomplishment, but not so much on interaction, make sure someone is paying attention to facilitating interaction.

✖ Project Stages. Different stages of a project require different approaches to working together. A focus on analysis is key during the initial stages of a project. Interaction is essential as you build a team. Accomplishment orientation is important when you need or have a clear "to do" list for implementing a project.

✖ Meeting or Gathering Facilitation. A good meeting will satisfy the needs of people with various group working styles. Consider including:

- Agenda in advance (analysis, accomplishment).
- Intentional welcome – greetings, nametags, refreshments (interaction).
- The specific purpose of the meeting (analysis, accomplishment) and how it fits into the big picture (character, analysis).
- Time for individual introductions and check-ins (interaction).
- Different formats to share/discuss – individual reflection, pairs/small groups, whole group, etc. (character, accomplishment, interaction, analysis)
- Action items on the agenda, such as decisions that need to be made or a problem that needs to be solved (accomplishment).

CHARACTER ORIENTED

- Have strong values and beliefs, communicates them openly.
- Consider themself as honest, trustworthy, and conscience-driven.
- Value personal responsibility.
- Are committed to actions based on shared values.
- Pursue objectives with passion and optimism.
- Strive for self-renewal, learning, and personal growth.

ANALYSIS ORIENTED

- See the big picture, alternative possibilities, risks, and opportunities.
- Have reliable intuition and good judgement.
- Have creative ideas and a well-defined vision.
- Anticipate consequences of making changes.
- Act with courage and confidence in the face of challenges.

ACCOMPLISHMENT ORIENTED

- Respond to external concerns and like to solve problems.
- Like to get things done and are attentive to the end goals.
- Achieve results by overcoming barriers and getting others to work together.
- Will follow through to completion
- Take an uncompromising approach.
- Are good at identifying who is best at what and delegating tasks.

INTERACTION ORIENTED

- Are motivated by relationships (with self and amongst others).
- Closely monitor how others feel and will act on their behalf.
- Attend to the needs and wants of others.
- Inspire others to act and encourages others to excel.
- Collaborate well and like to share responsibilities and rewards.

MANAGING DISRUPTIONS AND CONFLICT

We've all been there, when someone behaves in a way that we're not sure how to respond. Sometimes it's behavior that seems to detract from what you're doing, other times it feels like direct disagreement (with you or others). There many useful explanations of how to understand "conflict," understand your individual response to it, and how to manage it. You can do a little research online and go down a long and interesting path.

The reality is, if you're in a lead role, when there is conflict or disruptive behavior - people may look to you to set the tone and respond.

We've found these to be helpful:

* The good news: the person is engaged and cares enough to be present.

* Conflict IS where interesting ideas and things happen – as an artist, you need that.

* Developing shared group norms established early on gives you (and everyone) something to point to. See Group Norm Setting, page 75.

* You can always ask for help, say you're stumped, or ask other people what they think.

* Recognize you're trying to balance the needs (and time) of the group versus one person.

* How conflict is defined is cultural and individual – what one person thinks is combative or disrespectful may be what another person thinks is being engaged and passionate.

* Different communication styles can clash, particularly when people don't realize there are different styles.

* People place different values on relationships versus ideas.

* What stage of group formation are you in, or did you skip any? If you don't design for storming, it often will still happen when you're not expecting it.

* Often people exhibit behaviors that detract from the group because their individual need or interest is not being met. Are they someone who wants to socialize and meet new neighbors and haven't gotten a chance to speak? Or are they an idea person and the group is not talking about ideas? What concrete actions could meet their needs?

* Know yourself and what behaviors or topics are harder for you. Have a back-up plan in case they come up – but even being able to recognize them will help you respond in the spur of the moment.

Strategies to manage disruptive behaviors

There are steps you can take with an individual who is disruptive – if it's clear that there are other things the whole group wants or needs to do. (Sometimes, disruptions are necessary and good, even if we didn't expect them.)

A few tips:

- ✖ Acknowledge you see/hear them and what they're bringing up.
- ✖ Point to group norms if you have them, and any that are relevant ("share air time").
- ✖ Add their issue to the end of the agenda (or the next one).
- ✖ Ask other people to weigh in.
- ✖ Call on other people first, saying "I'd like to hear some other voices."
- ✖ Ask if you or someone else can talk to them more
  during break/separate from the group.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR SAMPLE CONTRACT

This agreement is entered into as of [Date of Contract] between [Name of Contractor] ("Contractor") located at [Contractor's Address] and [Name of Contracting Agency or Individual] located at [Address of Contracting Agency or Individual].

Contractor and [Name of Contracting Agency or Individual] agree to the following:

1. Services & Schedule

Contractor agrees to perform the following services for [Name of Contracting Agency or Individual]

Service:	To Be Completed On/No Later Than:

If there are any diagrams, plans, or other documents related to the services, reference them here using this language: "The attached [name documents] are made part of this Agreement."

2. Payment

Include all payment specifics including total amount to be paid, rate of pay if contractor is to be paid by time increment (e.g. $xx.xx per day, $xx.xx per hour), when and how payment(s) will be made (e.g. at the end of each day, on completion of the project, within thirty (30) days of receipt of contractor's invoice, etc.).

3. Reimbursement for Expenses <REMOVE IF NOT APPLICABLE>

[Name of Contracting Agency or Individual] shall reimburse Contractor only for the expenses listed here:

List eligible and anticipated expenses.

Expenses shall not exceed $_____. Contractor shall provide full documentation for any expenses to be reimbursed, including receipts and invoices. Reimbursement for expenses shall be paid no later than [enter date].

5. Cancellation

Specify what will happen if the project is cancelled.

6. Warranties

Contractor warrants that:

(A) Contractor is fully able to enter into and perform the obligations named in this agreement.

(B) All services shall be performed in a professional manner.

(C) If employees or subcontractors are to be hired by Contractor they shall be competent professionals.

(D) Contractor shall pay all necessary local, state, or federal taxes, including but not limited to withholding taxes, workers' compensation, F.I.C.A., and unemployment taxes for Contractor and their employees.

(E) List any other criteria for performance:

7. Insurance

Contractor shall maintain in force the following insurance: List any insurance that the contractor is required to carry.

8. Relationship of Parties

Both parties agree that Contractor is an independent contractor. This Agreement is not an employment agreement, nor does it constitute a joint venture or partnership.

9. Assignment

This Agreement may not be assigned by either party without the written consent of the other party hereto.

10. Arbitration

All disputes shall be submitted to binding arbitration before [Name of Arbitrator] and settled in accordance with the rules of the American Arbitration Association. Judgment upon the arbitration award may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

11. Miscellany

This agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties. Its terms can be modified only by an instrument in writing signed by both parties, except that oral authorizations of additional fees and expenses shall be permitted if necessary to speed the progress of work.

This Agreement is binding on the parties, their heirs, successors, assigns, and personal representatives. A waiver of a breach of any of the provisions of this Agreement shall not be construed as a continuing waiver of other breaches of the same or other provisions hereof.

This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of [Name of State].

12. Signatures

_____

[Name of Contractor]   Date Signed

_____

[Name of Contracting Agency or Individual]   Date Signed

GROUP PARTICIPATION TOOLS

In this section, we've included a number of participation tools that we and our artist practitioner friends love to use to when we're working with groups of people, whether they are a team or some people gathered for a short time. You may use them as they are, but more likely you'll adjust them to your needs. Many help people get to know each other ("ice breakers" if you must – but most of us seem to cringe at that word), and get them a little more in the mood and comfortable to be creative together. Several can be used specifically to create collective work and visions. Many can be lighthearted and fun, or you can go deeper and get more serious. All are relatively quick, from 10 minutes to an hour.

Pro-tip!

If your group is dragging a bit, or you just know everyone needs a stretch – ask participants if they have a favorite energizing movement activity and someone will step up!

Tools for Creativity: Tools that help people get out of their comfort zone, look at things in a new way, generate ideas, and get comfortable being creative.

Tools for Working Together: Tools for getting to know each other, team building, and group decision-making.

Tools for Exploring: Tools for exploring issues, brainstorming, visioning and troubleshooting.

	For creativity	For working together	For exploring	Additiona features
1-2-3	*	*		Active
Community Asset Mapping (in Ch. 2, page 29)	*		*	Some moving
Descriptive Review	*		*	
Getting to Know You		*		Some moving
Group Norms Setting		*		
Hopes and Fears	*	*	*	Writing
I Am From	*	*		Writing
Living Timeline		*		Some moving
Music Circle	*			Musical
Observation Tour	*		*	Walking
Question Circle		*	*	
Short & Sweet		*	*	Writing
Six Word Story	*			Writing
Slow Motion Race	*	*		Movement
Stand By Me/Come My Neighbor		*		Some moving
Team Tower Challenge		*		Active

Hey! If you have a tool you think is THE BEST and want to share it, please let us know so we can consider adding it in an update.

1–2–3

The Basics

This game is an excellent activity to get a group comfortable with being silly and understanding that it is OK to fail – and often fun! It is also a great team-building exercise.

Group Size: 16 to 20 people, ideally. A few more or less is okay, but the game is played in pairs, so even numbers are important. If you have an odd-number of participants, have a facilitator play.

Location: An open space where everyone can easily be heard.

Time: 10 to 20 minutes

Materials: None needed

Set-up: Nothing special

Facilitation Instructions

Part 1 (Note: Don't let on that there are multiple parts!)

1. **Ask** everyone to find a partner, then ask for a volunteer team to demonstrate.

2. **Coach** the volunteer team through a demonstration:
   The first person says: "1"
   The second person says: "2"
   First person says: "3"
   Second person says "1"
   First person says: "2"
   And so on….

3. **Instruct** everyone to face their partner, hands at sides, and look their partner in the eyes, and tell the teams: "Go until you mess up. But when you mess up, turn to an imaginary audience and say together: 'We're Sorry!' and then start again."

4. **Say:** "Ready? Go!"

5. **Watch** until most groups seem to be mastering the challenge.

Part 2

1. **Inform** the group: "We are now going to move on to the next challenge. Things are getting a little harder. In this round, you will CLAP instead of saying the number 1."

2. **Ask** for a team to demonstrate:
   First person: CLAP!
   Second person: "2"
   First person: "3"
   Second person: CLAP!
   First person: "2"
   And so on….

3. **Ask** everyone to turn and face their partner, hands at sides, and look their partner in the eyes. **Remind** teams to go until they mess up, but when they mess up, to turn to the imaginary audience and say together: "We're Sorry!" and then start again.

4. **Say**: "Ready? Go!"

5. **Watch** until most groups have mastered the challenge

Part 3

1. **Inform** the group: "We are now going to move on to the next challenge. This will be the same as what we just did, except now we will replace the '2' with a duck quack. And when you quack, you will also bend down and flap your wings (hands tucked in armpits)."

2. **Ask** the group to practice this together, so the whole group can look foolish together.
   CLAP! Quack! '3'
   CLAP! Quack! '3'

3. **Ask** everyone to turn and face their partner, hands at sides, and look their partner in the eyes. **Remind** teams to go until they mess up, but that when they mess up they must turn to an imaginary audience and say together: "We're Sorry!" and then start again.

4. **Say**: "Ready? Go!"

5. **Watch** until most groups have mastered the challenge – or given up! Let the whole group go for a bit and enjoy the variety of quacks and laughter.

Part 4 (OPTIONAL)

As above, but replace the '3' with another gesture or movement.

Discussion
Potential questions for discussion:

- What did you think about the game?
- When was it difficult? When was it easy?
- When was it funny and fun? When was it boring?
- How did it feel when you failed?
- What did you think about saying "We're Sorry" as a team?
- Did anything surprise you?

Discussion points:

- Once you have mastered a task and it becomes easy, it also often becomes tedious or boring.
- Failure is a part of learning – and failure can be fun and funny and interesting, if we let it be.
- Learning (and failure) are easier – and more fun – done together.
- We can easily fall into 1-2-3 patterns in everyday life. We can look for places to replace a number in our everyday routines to spice things up and have a little fun.

Source: Exercises like this one have a long history in the performing arts. This one is by Ben Domask, who learned it from one of his teachers, who learned it from one of his teachers, who learned it from one of his teachers, and so on….

DESCRIPTIVE REVIEW

The Basics

Use this exercise for community feedback on a work of art, whether it is a work of art in progress, or completed art. You can use this as the basis to later discuss a shared vision for new art.

Group Size: Any number

Location: Space needs will depend on the work that is being reviewed and number of participants.

Time: 15 to 30 minutes

Materials:

- ☐ Note paper
- ☐ Pens or pencils

Set Up: Make sure the art piece is appropriately set up so participants can adequately observe the work (e.g. if music is being played, make sure the sound is good; if an art piece is being projected, make sure that the lights can be dimmed to see the color and textures of the piece, etc.).

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Explain** that the group is going to observe the work, and that you will have three questions for them to respond to.

2. **Ask** the group to observe the art work. Allow enough time. For visual art work allow at least a couple of minutes

3. **Ask** the group to write their responses to the following prompts:
   - What did you notice?
   - How does it make you feel and/or what does it make you think about?
   - What do you think the artist was intending to convey?

   Allow plenty of time for participants to record their thoughts.

4. If appropriate to your situation, **ask** participants to share their responses to the prompts. It might be helpful to discuss one prompt at a time.

5. If appropriate to your situation, **set up** a place to display responses to the prompts so that everyone can see the collective feedback.

6. If appropriate to your situation, **collect** the responses to provide to the appropriate audience (e.g. the artist or a decision-making group).

Source: There are many variations on this activity. The basis for this comes from Heidi Jeub.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

The Basics

This activity allows people to get to know each other in a fun and casual way, in a format that's similar to speed dating. People interact one-on-one, using cards with fun and interesting questions to guide their interaction.

Group Size: 6 or more. The more, the merrier – although large groups could get a bit unwieldly. Participants interact in pairs, so an even number is important. If there is an odd number of participants, a facilitator can participate.

Location: A space large enough to accommodate the expected number of participants.

Time: About 30 to 45 minutes. Time will depend on the number of rounds (each is about 5 minutes); 4 to 6 rounds are good.

Materials:

- ☐ A chair for each participant
- ☐ A set of Question Cards – index cards with questions – prepared in advance (see below). Make sure to prepare plenty of Question Cards!
- ☐ A table or two to scatter Question Cards on

Set-Up

- Place pairs of chairs facing each other, enough to accommodate the expected number of participants. Each facing pair of chairs should be at least 3 feet away from the next pair. With larger groups, you can set up an inner and outer circle of chairs facing each other, or two lines of chairs.
- Set up a table or two with the Question Cards face down. If you have a large group, you may want to put a few cards face down next to or on each chair.

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Invite** participants to take a seat.

2. **Explain**: "We're going to do an activity to get to know one another a little better. In a minute I'll invite you to have a short conversation with the person across from you, starting by introducing yourselves. State your name, where you live, and (one other thing - pick something that pertains to the group; could be what brought you to this

event, where you live in the area, etc.). Then, you'll have a card with a question for you to talk about with each other. Please respond to the question according to your own comfort level in sharing and make sure you each have time to talk. I'll give you 3 minutes and then will ask you to rotate."

3. After about 3 minutes, **stop the conversations** and ask one member of each pair to get up and move to a new partner. On their way they should drop off the Question Card they just used and pick up a new one. If chairs are in a row or in a circle, you can just ask one row to get up and move one spot down. *Note: It is OK to end a round faster than participants might want it to end. This keeps the momentum going, rather than waiting until people have stopped talking and are waiting around for others to finish. This activity should be an energizer that helps people make quick connections that can lead to deeper conversations at a later time.*

4. As people settle into their seats, **remind** participants to share their name, where they are from, and the answer to the additional prompt, and then respond to the question on the card.

5. **Repeat** this process for and play for as long as people seem to be having fun, or until you have reached the time allotted for the activity.

6. You can wrap up by asking the group what they thought about the experience. Remind participants that if they enjoyed getting to know someone, to make time to have a longer conversation at some point in the future.

Questions for Question Cards

Use the questions below to create question cards or create your own questions! When developing your own questions, use "Who, What, When, Where, How, or Why" questions to create more interesting discussions. Include a mix of silly and serious questions to create different ways to connect.

Basic Questions
Name a recent success you've had.
Who is a role model for you? Why?
What do you love doing?
What makes you laugh?
What is your life mantra?
What is a failure you've learned from?
Who has influenced you?
What's one thing you'll never do again?
Who are your historical heroes?

Basic Questions cont.
If you could change history, what would you do?
What is the farthest you've been from home?
What is one project you're currently excited about?
Describe yourself in 10 years.
What's your dream job?
What headline describes your life?
What is one thing people don't know about you?
What should everyone do at least once in their life?
What are your hobbies?
What brings you hope?
What gets you up in the morning?
What book would you recommend and why?
What is a hidden talent you have?
What is one kind thing you have done, and that someone has done for you?
How would you describe yourself in 3 words?
What's on your bucket list?
What's important to you in your life right now?
What is the best thing that's happened to you this week?

Place-Based Questions:
What makes [place] great?
What do you think [place] will be like in 2075?
Describe [place] as if you were a tour guide.
What is one famous (or infamous) story about [place]?
What's the history of [place]?
Where is the best place to eat in [place]?
Why do you live where you do?
What's important to your community?
Where is one of your favorite places to spend time?

Silly Questions:
What job would you be terrible at?
What fad/trend do you hope comes back – or never comes back?
What is one thing you want but can't afford?
What is your favorite item of clothing you own?
When was the last time you sang in public?
What music do you like – or not like?
What's the worst advice you've ever received?
What languages can you speak? Share some words.
Are you a night owl or early bird? What's your ideal amount of sleep?
What is one bizarre encounter you've had?
What superpower would you like to have?

Questions for Artists:
What motivates you to create?
Describe your work in 4 words.
Why is art important to you?
Which artists inspire you?
What impact do you wish to have as an artist?
Who has been an artistic mentor in your life?
What's an important lesson you've learned as an artist?
How do you like to create?

Source: This activity is shared by Jamie Horter.

GROUP NORMS SETTING

The Basics

This activity sets the tone for a group of people to share accountability for how they interact together. It's best to do any time you have the same people who will be meeting together multiple times, or even a one-time gathering if you are expecting hard conversations or controversial topics. You can call it group norms, community groundrules, or even "how do we want to be in community."

Group Size: Any. If larger than 8-10, break into smaller group discussions first and regroup to make list.

Location: Any place you can display and write on chart paper. Chart paper is better than whiteboard so you can keep the list and display it every time you meet.

Time: 15-45 minutes

Materials:

- ☐ Chart paper
- ☐ Markers

Set-Up : Everyone needs to be able to see the chart paper.

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Explain** why you are creating shared rules, and that they are for everyone to share – the facilitator is not the only one responsible for them.

2. **Optional:** If it is a larger group, or you want people to get to know each other, break them into pairs or trios to **discuss**: Think of a time that a collaboration went really well. Talk about why it went well. Give them 5-10 minutes.

3. **Ask** the whole group: when you work with others, what is important? What behaviors do you hope people will have?

4. **List** what people say, making sure you give everyone a chance to contribute. **Ask** for clarification if needed (for yourself or for the group).
   Common responses include:

   - Respect each other
   - Speak for yourself, not others
   - Share "air time"
   - It is okay to disagree
   - If you have a concern, speak it
   - Listen to understand
   - Have fun

You may have your own to add or round out what others have shared.

5. Ask if everyone understands & agrees with the list - give time for some discussion and adjusting (merging ideas, clarifying, adding) but it does not have to be perfect. The goal is to have a reference point that anyone can refer to.

6. Share that you will bring the list to each meeting, and you may also type it up.

HOPES AND FEARS

The Basics

This is a good grounding and affirming activity for a group of people that will be addressing change or controversy and might be nervous sharing their hesitations out loud – plus part of it is fun. It can be used with "strangers" or with people who know each other. It is best used early on in any longer gathering to quickly develop a shared understanding in the group. This process can also be modified for all kinds of uses to quickly gather a lot of ideas.

Group Size: Minimum 4 people, best with 10 or more.

Location: Writing surface for each person and a wall or window to tape paper.

Time: 20-45 minutes

Materials:

- ☐ Blank half sheets of paper in two different colors, 1 color each per person (try not to use pink and light blue – people associate too many things with that color pair).
- ☐ Pens for each person
- ☐ Masking tape

Set-Up

- Write HOPES on one color paper, FEARS on the other.
- Be ready to distribute paper/pens or have it on tables.

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Explain** we all come to the room with different hopes and fears, and it can be hard to express them whether we are strangers or know each other well. We are going to do an anonymous activity to help us see how we are feeling.
2. Holding up HOPE paper, **say:** use the <color> sheet to write one hope you have for today. Tape it up where everyone can see it.
3. Holding up FEAR paper, **say:** use the other sheet to write one fear you have for today. Tape it up next to HOPE.
4. **Remind:** you are not putting your name on the paper, it is anonymous but someone else will be reading it, so write legibly! It can be as short as a word or two, or a sentence.
5. **Give** people a few minutes to think and write responses.
6. When most people are done, **say:** Now take your paper, and crumple it up!
7. **Also say:** if you haven't thought of something, that's okay, still crumple up a piece of paper. Everyone should have a <color> and a <color> crumpled up.
8. **Command:** Throw the paper around! Try to aim it at someone! **Encourage** the throwing - pick a few up yourself and throw them around, keep it going. Let it get a little chaotic and silly.

9. Stop the fun and **ask** everyone to get one ball of each color. **Ask** them uncrumple their pieces and **say** it is okay if you ended up with your own – just don't tell!
10. Have people take turns **reading aloud** <u>all</u> the FEARS first. Then all the HOPES. Make sure everyone can hear. **Say** you will collect both and tape them up on the wall at a break.
11. **Discuss:** Anyone have a reflection on how that felt, or what the experience was like?
    People will likely talk about:

    - Process – writing words anonymously, crumpling & throwing paper
    - Emotion – the meaning of sharing words, hearing own words read
    - Learning/affirmation – understanding how others feel, hearing other ideas same as own, seeing group shares many common hopes and fears

Variations: you can also use this "snowball" process with any questions where you to collect a lot of information quickly. You could ask for ideas about a topic, what lingering questions people have, etc. You can also have people write as many ideas as they have on separate pieces of paper, aim for a basket in the center of the room, and pass the basket around to people to read in turn.

Source: Springboard staff Jun-Li Wang learned this from a neighborhood leadership skills program at Wilder Foundation and loves to use it because the snowball toss is always a surprise.

I AM FROM

The Basics

This exercise gives people time to reflect on who they are, share with each other, and also can help participants feel comfortable being creative. If it's important for people to get a sense of who you are, do the activity as well so people can learn about you.

Group Size: Any size, really, although 10 to 20 is probably ideal. Any larger, you adjust the final step.

Location: A room large enough to accommodate the expected number of participants, with comfortable spaces for people to write.

Time: 30 – 60 minutes

Materials:

- ☐ Pens and/or pencils – one per participant
- ☐ Copies of the "I Am From" poem worksheet – one per participant
- ☐ Additional blank paper

Set-Up: Arrange the meeting space so that each participant has a good place to write.

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Explain** to the group that they are going to do a fun poem-writing exercise. You might introduce the exercise by saying something like this: "Over the next 10 minutes or so, each of us is going to write a poem that will be beautiful, entertaining, revealing, provocative, and profound. But don't worry, we have a tool that will guarantee success."

2. **Hand out** the "I Am From" poem worksheet.

3. **Ask** participants to take about 5 minutes to fill in the blanks. Tell them not to think too hard about it, and if they can't think of anything, just write down the first word that comes to mind. If they look nervous, you can also reassure them that they won't be forced to share their poem.

4. After 5 minutes or so, **check in** with the group and see if people need a couple more minutes to finish.

5. When it looks like most people are done, **ask** participants to take another 5 minutes to read over their poem-in-the-making and make any changes they want to make. They can change the words they filled in, re-write a sentence or two, add new lines, or make any other tweaks.

6. After 5 minutes or so, or when it looks like most people are done, **ask** if anyone is willing to read <u>a few</u> of their favorite lines from any part of their new poem.

7. Continue asking for volunteers to share parts of their poem until everyone who wants to share has had an opportunity. You can also ask everyone to post their poem to share on a wall – anonymously or not.

Source: This exercise is from D.A. Bullock.

I AM FROM POEM

I am from _____
(specific ordinary item)

From _____ and _____
(product name)   (product name)

I am from the _____
(home description)

_____ , _____ , _____
(adjective)   (adjective)   (sensory detail)

I am from _____ ,
(plant, flower, natural item)

_____
(description of above item)

I'm from _____ and _____
(family tradition)   (family trait)

From _____ and _____
(name of family member)   (another family name)

I'm from the _____ and _____
(description of family tendency)   (another one)

From _____ and _____
(something you were told as a child)   (another)

I'm from _____ , _____
(representation of religion or lack of)   (further description)

I'm from _____
(place of birth and family ancestry)

_____ , _____
(a food that represents your family)   (another one)

From the _____ .
(specific family story about a specific person and detail)

Original Poem:	Model Poem:
Where I'm From, by George Ella Lyon	**Where I'm From, by Ms. Vaca**
I am from clothespins,	I am from bookshelves,
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.	from vinegar and green detergent.
I am from the dirt under the back porch.	I am from the dog hair in every corner
(Black, glistening,	(Yellow, abundant,
it tasted like beets.)	the vacuum could never get it all.)
I am from the forsythia bush	I am from azaleas
the Dutch elm	the magnolia tree
whose long-gone limbs I remember	whose leaves crunched under my feet like
as if they were my own.	snow
I'm from fudge and eyeglasses,	every fall.
from Imogene and Alafair.	I'm from puzzles and sunburns,
I'm from the know-it-alls	from Dorothy Ann and Mary Christine
and the pass-it-ons,	Catherine
from Perk up! and Pipe down!	I'm from reading and road trips
I'm from He restoreth my soul	From "Please watch your brother" and "Don't
with a cottonball lamb	let your brother hit you!"
and ten verses I can say myself.	I'm from Easter sunrises and Iowa churches at
I'm from Artemus and Billie's Branch,	Christmas
fried corn and strong coffee.	I'm from Alexandria and the Rileys,
From the finger my grandfather lost	Sterzing's potato chips and sponge candy.
to the auger,	From my Air Force dad's refusal to go to
the eye my father shut to keep his sight.	Vietnam,
Under my bed was a dress box	from my mom's leaving home at 17.
spilling old pictures,	On a low shelf in my new house is a stack of
a sift of lost faces	photo albums,
to drift beneath my dreams.	carefully curated by my faraway father,
I am from those moments --	chronicling my childhood.
snapped before I budded --	I am from these pages,
leaf-fall from the family tree.	yellowed but firm,
	holding on to me across the country.

LIVING TIMELINE

The Basics

This tool fosters connections between participants by creating a timeline of personally meaningful events.

Group Size: Ideally 5 to 30, but could be modified for more

Location: Enough space for people to line up (standing or seated). If your group is large, you need enough space for a line of some people while others observe.

Time: 30-45 minutes

Materials:

- ☐ Paper or note cards
- ☐ Pens

Set-Up: Each participant needs a place to write.

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Select** one or more broad themes for the timeline (e.g. transitions, failures, firsts, pride, love, etc.)

2. **Ask** the participants to choose an important moment in their lives related to the theme that they are willing to share, and give them a few minutes to write down on a note card:
   - The year the event happened
   - A brief (1 to 2 sentence) description of the event
   - How the event impacted their life

3. **Provide** an example: "2008. I moved to Mexico. Because of this, I became an educator."

4. **Instruct** the group to form a line in order of the date of their event. If your group is larger, ask for volunteers and have them line up to present to everyone else.

5. **Ask** the group to read their events in chronological order. With a larger group, you may ask a new set of volunteers to come up, arrange themselves, and read to the whole group.

6. **Repeat** the exercise with a new theme if desired.

7. Have a **discussion**:
   - What were some commonalities of the personal histories shared?
   - What kinds of histories were represented in the room? What histories were not present?
   - How did you pick the moment you chose to share with the group?
   - Whose story would you like to know more about and why?

Source: This tool is from Haley Honeman who was influenced by Ping Chong and Company.

MUSIC CIRCLE

The Basics

Use this exercise to build group cohesiveness and/or as a fun, energizing activity.

Group Size: Ideal size is 5 to 15

Location: A space large enough for everyone to sit in a circle together.

Time: 15 to 20 minutes

Materials:

- ☐ Enough chairs for all participants
- ☐ OPTIONAL: A few percussive instruments (which can be simple household objects)

Set Up: Arrange chairs in a circle. If you are using percussive instruments, put them on a table in center of the circle.

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Invite** participants to take a seat around the circle.

2. Once everyone is situated, **explain** how the music circle will work: "One person will initiate a beat using their body (or an instrument) to make a sound such as clapping, snapping, humming, or some other vocalization) and will continue their beat as more people join in. One-by-one, I will prompt people to join in. If you're not ready, just shake your head. The person who started the music circle will decide when to end it. When they stop, everyone stops."

3. **Ask** for a volunteer to start creating a beat of their choice, or you can start the beat.

4. **Prompt** the next person to join the music circle, and so on until everyone in the circle is contributing a sound. Keep going until the first person stops.

5. **Repeat** the exercise with a new person providing the starting beat. With each round, you can modify the tempo, count, etc.). Go where the group takes it.

Additional Notes:

- Repeat for as many rounds as you have time for.
- Let the energy of the group guide you.
- No two music circle sessions are the same, which is part of the fun. Sometimes one person follows a rhythmic beat with song lyrics, and other people join in with harmonies. Other times people might make up new instruments using the environment

around them (chairs, floor, etc.) or their voice. Celebrate the creativity created through these impromptu sessions.

- If using percussive instruments that produce notes (such as plastic tubes or bottles), consider how certain notes, when played together, will create harmonious or dissonant sounds. This could help a group express the collective mood and/or alter the mood of the group. For these reasons, you may want to choose a selection of notes in advance or decide collectively with the group.

Source: This tool was provided by Jamie Horter.

OBSERVATION TOUR

The Basics

This guided activity helps people look closely at an every day place with new eyes and helps expand mindsets to see the mundane or invisible as assets. It can be used before starting a project to open people to possibilities, but it is not intended to directly lead to brainstorming or proposing changes.

Group Size: 4 or more - each "tour group" is ideally 6-8 people. If you have multiple groups, you will need a volunteer guide for each group.

Location: A short length not far from where you are convening – ideally outdoors, 300-400 feet of a block or alley. It can even be inside in a pinch. The more boring or even a bit worn, the better.

Time: 30-45 minutes

Materials:

- ☐ Printed Observation Piece, one per person
- ☐ If multiple groups, create volunteer guide instructions and use tape/signage to demarcate their tour routes

Set-Up:

- Print Observation Piece
- Pre-select the route(s) - about a one-block/one alley length, something that normally would take a couple minutes to walk. Find a distinct end point (an intersection, curb cut, light pole) so people can see they are not walking far. The more every day and mundane, the better. Inside a boring building can work in a pinch too.
- If you have multiple groups, prepare routes and instructions for volunteer guides. Volunteer guides usher their group to the route and help them follow the instructions.

Observation Piece, 2020

First, grab some people. Everyone take 10 minutes to wander alone, without talking, around a small, pre-defined area. Observe and notice your surroundings: surfaces, negative and positive spaces, lines, patterns, detritus. Follow your curiosity. Search for everyday beauty and the overlooked, go forth with a sense of affection for the place.

Second, regroup and tour the same area for 15 minutes, sharing things that you noticed during your observation and why they stood out to you. Beware the urge to be critical and prescribe fixes. Stay in the present and focus on everyday beauty you observed.

Facilitation Instructions

1. Have everyone prepare to go outside before you begin explaining the activity.
2. If you will have more than one group, **ask** people to count off (so they are in groups of 6-8) and remind them to remember their number but stay where they are.
3. **Hand out** the Observation Piece as you introduce the activity.
4. **Introduce** the activity:
   - Inspired by Allan Kaprow, artist who invented happenings
   - Think about a tour as an artistic practice.
   - Exploration of everyday beauty out in the world.
   - Artists are good at noticing and bringing to light often overlooked things.
   - Go forth with sense of affection and curiosity – you're a happy-go-lucky martian and just landed here - everything is fascinating and lovely.
   - What could you put a title card on-found paintings/ accidental installation art
5. **Read** aloud the Observation Piece instructions.
6. **Have** people get into their groups with their volunteer guide, and head to the route start points.
7. At the start point, **show** everyone where the end point is and say you will meet them there in 10 minutes. You can also start observing – go slowly so people model your pace. You may need to remind people to observe in silence.
8. At the end point, **re-read** the second section of Observation Piece, and **ask** for observations as you slowly return.
9. Steer observations towards the hidden, un-noticed beauty and away from criticism or fixes.
10. **Regroup** with everyone for discussion:
    Thinking less about specific things you observed, and more about the overall experience (taking a step back from the details of what you saw):
    - What surprised you about this activity?
    - How long did it take you to "see" the first thing
    - How did you find your perception changing as you observed?
    - What things did you notice that were not visual?
    - How could you imagine using this activity?

Source: This activity was created by Springboard staff Peter Haakon Thompson who was inspired by Allan Kaprow and Happenings, an art form that originated in the 60's that often was centered on audience/participants following a set of instructions created by the artist.

QUESTION CIRCLE

The Basics

Use this exercise to:

- Open up communication and dialogue about an issue
- Identify questions, confusions, and assumptions around an issue
- Get participants "on the same page" and move past roadblocks
- Inspire and inform collective action

Group Size: Any size is possible, but with groups over 20 we recommend diving the group into two circles (or more) to allow for fuller participation.

Location: A meeting space large enough to accommodate the expected number of participants, and space to write on that everyone can see.

Time: 60 – 90 minutes

Materials:

- ☐ Writing surface that all participants can see.
- ☐ Chart paper (ideally), white or chalk board okay
- ☐ Markers or chalk
- ☐ Small circle "dot" stickers (3-5 per participant)

Note: This exercise works best with 2 notetakers per circle, in addition to a facilitator.

Set Up: Before participants arrive set up chairs in a circle (or multiple circles for larger groups).

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Introduce** the issue that is the focus of the question circle, providing any necessary background information.

2. **Instruct**: "What we're going to do now is go around the circle and take turns asking questions about [the topic]. When it is your turn, please introduce yourself and pose one question. Please do not make any statements. We will go around the circle a few times, so if you have more than one question, you will have an opportunity to pose it the next time around." Give people a minute or so to think in silence, and then ask for a volunteer to begin.

3. **Record** the questions as they are posed. As needed, prompt participants to keep going. If people don't have additional questions, they can skip their turn. Allow participants 5 to 10 minutes to generate questions (ideally everyone gets opportunity to pose 3 to 5 questions).

4. Once the questions have been generated, **ask** participants to take a few minutes to look over all of the questions.

5. Then, **provide** each participant with 3 or 5 dot stickers and **ask** them to place their stickers next to the question or questions they would most like to explore. Participants may put all of their stickers next to one question or spread them out.

6. Based on the number of votes, **identify** 2 to 4 questions to explore.

7. **Ask** participants to move form small groups to discuss one of the questions. It is fine to have unequal sized groups, but each group should have at least 2 participants.

8. **Ask** the smaller groups to spend some time discussing their chosen question and be ready to report back to the large group.

9. After discussion, **reconvene** the large group. **Ask** small groups to report back on their discussion.

10. As appropriate, discuss any follow-up actions.

Source: This tool is shared by Mark Valdez who learned it at Detroit Summer.

SHORT & SWEET

The Basics

This exercise challenges participants to communicate ideas with brevity and can be used as a fast get-to-know you.

Group Size: Any

Location: Any space that has places for people to write

Time: 20 - 60 minutes

Materials:

- ☐ Paper or notebooks – enough for all participants
- ☐ Pens or pencils – enough for all participants
- ☐ Writing prompts

Set Up: Arrange the room to provide places for people to site and write comfortably.

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Introduce** the exercise: "When it comes to communicating ideas, often less is more. Today we're going to do some writing exercises that challenge us to express our ideas with brevity, and hopefully some levity as well."

2. **Provide** a writing prompt, such as:

   - Tell us about your best year (or the past year) as a tweet (140 characters or less).
   - Rewrite your favorite movie as a tweet (140 characters or less).
   - Describe your profession or passion in 4 words.
   - Tell a funny story using exactly 10 words.
   - Describe your family in 6 words or less.
   - Tell us about your hopes and dreams as a haiku (5-7-5 syllables).

   Give participants 5 minutes or so to write.

3. **Ask** for volunteers to share their writing.

4. **Repeat** with a new prompt. Provide new prompts as long as the group is having fun and as long as time allows.

5. **Wrap up** by asking the group if any prompt was particularly interesting or challenging.

Source: The exercise provided by Jodi Larson.

SIX WORD STORY

The Basics

This activity invites participants to write and share a powerful story with only six words. Inviting individuals to write a six-word story is a beautiful way to give them a moment of personal reflection in a group setting, and then to bear witness to a wider array of perspectives and emotions about a certain topic or place. Depending on how it's used, it can also help people express something complex or vulnerable and feel heard, without having to share or discuss in extreme detail. Often, these brief acts of sharing can help open up deeper conversations later on in a group gathering space.

Group Size: 20 people or less is ideal, because this works best if there is time for everyone to go around the room to share their story. However, you can easily modify it by having a larger group post their six-word stories on a wall, or by having them share in small groups.

Location: Any place where people can write comfortably

Time: 3 minutes to write, 10-15 minutes for share-out, 5 minutes for debriefing

Materials:

- ☐ Index cards or scratch paper (a variety of colors makes it more fun)
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Masking tape if you want to post the stories on a wall

Set-Up

- Decide what your prompt will be for the six-word story. For example, if you are gathering neighbors together to plan a festival celebrating a river, the prompt can be to write a six-word story about that river. Or, if you are facilitating a conversation about inclusion in your community, the prompt can be to write a story about a time when someone felt that they did or didn't belong somewhere.
- Make sure to either write or find an example of a six-word story to share when you're explaining the activity. It's best if the example isn't about the prompt you're using, so that participants don't feel pressured or tempted to write something similar. Find a lot of examples here: www.sixwordstories.net
- Lay out paper and pen on tables before people arrive. Doing this can make a room feel welcoming, and adds a fun element of mystery about how the materials will be used (especially if people weren't planning to do anything creative).

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Tell** people know they're going to write a story about _____ (*your prompt),* but that they will have a limit: their story can only be six words long!
2. **Share** 1-2 examples of a six-word story. This helps demonstrate that a six-word story doesn't have to make a complete sentence, which people can sometimes feel very pressured by.
3. **Acknowledge** that only using six words is challenging, but that limitations are powerful, and they can generate rich creativity while distilling complex ideas down to their essence.
4. **Set** a timer for 3 minutes and ask people to write in silence (turn some soft music on if you'd like). Let them know you'll tell them when they have 30 seconds left.
5. When the time is up, **share.** There are a few options for sharing, depending on the size of your group:
    a. If your group is small enough and you have time, simply go around the room and invite each person who is comfortable to share their story. Make sure to let people know this is a time to just soak in and enjoy hearing the stories - not to discuss, ask questions, or critique.
    b. If your group is larger, invite a few volunteers to share their story, then have people tape their stories to a blank wall and then spend time in silence reading what other people wrote.
    c. You can also use the resulting stories in a variety of ways following the actual event, including making a window display, sharing with community leaders to help them understand an issue, etc. If you do share in a public way, make sure to either ask people permission and give them credit for their stories, or let them know the stories will remain anonymous.
6. Following the sharing portion, take a few minutes to debrief the activity by **asking** a few questions:
    a. How did it feel to tell your story with so few words? Was it hard or easy? Did anything surprise you?
    b. What did you notice as you listened to the stories of other participants?
    c. Why are these stories important right now? What did we learn from what we heard about this issue/topic/place? How might they change how we address this issue or move ahead on this topic?

Source: Springboard staff Michele Anderson first learned the six-word story concept from Ashley Hanson during a PlaceBase Productions workshop, and it has since become a favorite activity of hers to use and adapt in a variety of settings.

SLOW–MOTION RACE

The Basics

This exercise is a fun warm-up for the mind and body. Participants "race" to see who can move the slowest without stopping. The last one to finish "wins." This exercise activates many muscles, is a balance challenge, and requires mental focus!

Group Size: Can be done with any size group. The size and configuration of your space might limit the number of people who can effectively participate.

Location: A large open space, large enough to accommodate all participants

Time: 15 to 20 Minutes

Materials: None required

Set Up: If necessary, move items to create open space. Mark a "finish line" for the race using tape or some other marker.

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Ask** participants to line up on one side of the meeting space, opposite the finish line.

2. Explain: "We are going to have a slow-motion race. There are two rules. First, once the race has started, you must always be in motion. You cannot stop moving. Second, both feet cannot be on the ground at the same time. The winner will be the last person to arrive."

3. **Start** the race and watch the fun! End the race when it makes sense.

4. You can **wrap-up** by declaring a winner or multiple winners. You can also ask the group: What was most challenging about the race?

Source: Provided by Haley Honeman, who adapted it from an exercise in the book Games for Actors and Non-Actors *by Augusto Boal.*

STAND BY ME/COME MY NEIGHBOR

The Basics

This exercise establishes commonalities between participants in a group. It's a good way to warm up and build teams.

Group Size: Ideal for 15 to 30 participants. Can be done with smaller groups, but might not work as well. Possible to do with larger groups, but could get a bit unwieldly.

Location: Best in a large, open space

Time: 15-30 Minutes

Materials: None required

Set Up: If necessary, prepare the area to create some open space before participants arrive.

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Ask** the group to stand close together with you.

2. **Explain** how the exercise works: "I am going to step away from the group and make a true statement about myself. If it is true for you as well, then come and stand by me." You may choose to start it with "Come my neighbor if ___."

3. **Demonstrate**: Step away from the group and make a true statement about yourself (e.g. "I was born in Minnesota," "I love coffee," "I write poetry," etc.). Anyone for whom the statement is also true will come and stand in your group.

4. **Ask** for a volunteer to step away from their group to another area of the room and make a true statement about themselves and **prompt** people for whom that statement is true move to the new group.

5. **Ask** for another volunteer to do the same thing.

6. **Prompt** the group to continue until everyone has had a chance to make one statement about themselves.

7. Continue as long as the group is having fun, or until your allotted time runs out.

8. To wrap up, you can ask the group: "Was there anything that you learned about the group – or about yourself – that surprised you?"

Variation: Participants can be directed to make statements specifically related to their community or an issue at hand. This variation can be useful for exploring different perspectives, but should only be done if the group already has established a level of trust. You can also use the basic exercise as a warm-up for a variation where you explore significant issues at a deeper level.

Source: This is a variation of a variation provided by Haley Honeman, who learned it at graduate school.

TEAM TOWER CHALLENGE

The Basics

This is a fun and instructional activity for team building. You can go deeper and introduce the 5 stages of how teams develop.

Group Size: 10 to 25 people

Location: Enough space for groups of 4-6 to stand around their own table.

Time: 45+ minutes

Materials:

- ☐ Index cards or paper, 50+/group
- ☐ Straws or small stir sticks (optional), 3-50/group
- ☐ Masking tape, one roll per group
- ☐ Optional – prizes for winning group (candy, etc.)
- ☐ Optional – handout about Team Development Stages

Set-Up

- Have tables scattered around the space and materials divided up and placed on the tables, or ready to distribute.
- Optional: Prepare to lead discussion around stages of team development by googling "Tuckman Team Development Stages" and find a resource that you like that includes guidance on steps that move a team from through the 5 stages. You may want to make copies for everyone.

Facilitation Instructions

1. **Divide** the group into teams. The number and size of team will depend on the number of participants. The ideal number of teams is 3 to 6; the ideal team size is 4 or 5 people. Do not have more than 6 people per team. Have people in their groups at tables before you start explaining the activity.

2. **Optional:** If you are using this activity to discuss team development stages, you will want to introduce that idea. Explain why you think teams are important – and that good ones don't happen overnight. Teams take work. And to start the discussion, you're first holding a competition!

3. **Explain:** Your mission is to build the tallest freestanding structure possible from the materials provided. Your structure will be judged on those two criteria: height and it must be freestanding. You have 10 minutes to plan and 10 minutes to build. During the planning stage, you may NOT touch the materials or you will be instantly disqualified.

4. **Set timer,** give teams 10 minutes to plan. Make sure they are not touching the materials. Give them a 2 minute warning.

5. At the end of the planning time, **announce** it is time to start building. Give them a 2 minute and 30 second warning. Count down loudly from 10 seconds and yell "Hands off! Time's up! Back away!"

6. During both stages, **observe** how they make decisions, if someone is taking the lead, how they deal with setbacks or differences, and other dynamics. You can bring this into the discussion.

7. **Evaluate** the towers, declare a winner, congratulate them, hand out prizes if you have them.

8. **Discussion:**
    Invite the winning team to respond first, and then open it up to all the groups.

    *   How did that feel?
    *   What was working?
    *   What led to your success/results?
    *   What did not work as well?
    *   How did you make decisions?
    *   Did you have roles?
    *   What behaviors helped in moving everything along?

9. **Explain** what they did was a short version demonstrating some stages of team development. You may choose to briefly present the 5 stages of team development, describing each stage generally. If you have a handout, share it now.

10. **Share** that successful teams know their stage and manage transitions. Teams take time to build, it's normal to go through the stages, and individuals coming and going can disrupt stages. The storming stage is worth pointing out as one that is hard for people who don't like conflict because it can feel like people are disagreeing or upset – but it is actually a necessary part of the journey.

Variation: Go deeper with more discussion. Possible questions: Are you part of a team or group? What stage is it in? How is this information useful to you? Where are WE as a team?

OTHER RESOURCES

SPRINGBOARD FOR THE ARTS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our way of working is equally important as what we do.
There are 9 key principles that drive our work.

Artists are assets

Artists exist in every community, and art is inseparable from the communities in which it is made. Our work helps illuminate the social and economic value of art and creativity.

By artists for artists

Everyone who works at Springboard is an artist. We recognize the expertise and experience of artists and incorporate that into creating effective, relevant programs to meet artists' needs.

The broadest definition of who is an artist

Everyone has creative capacity and there are many different ways to be an artist. We also know that there are many kinds of success for an artist, and we help artists define success for themselves – financial success, recognition, a supportive community, respect, social change, and more.

More is more

We make and share tools designed to benefit as many artists as possible. We believe interconnected communities of artists create an impact in ways that single interventions do not. By freely sharing our work and creating connections among artists and communities, we work to make substantial, system-wide change.

Equity is a precondition for vibrant communities

Beyond accessibility, our programs address systemic and structural inequities and seek to build equity, agency and power in communities, neighborhoods and systems.

Reciprocal relationships

We seek mutual respect, trust, commitment, and reciprocity with all our partners. We don't go it alone. We create and customize programs with partners based on mutual goals, and we invite partners to strengthen and change our work.

Cross-sector collaborations that last

We help artists collaborate with existing resources and systems, both because there is abundant potential in those resources, and because we believe they will be strengthened by artists' contributions. We focus on building bridges and mechanisms that help relationships continue to thrive without us.

Boldness and creativity

Our work is characterized by optimism that change is possible, and belief that the boldness and creativity of artists can address the challenges facing our communities. We also know that in order to engage people, this movement has to be fun.

Hospitality and welcome

We value an attitude of abundance over scarcity. Our goal is always to create an environment, real or virtual, that is welcoming to newcomers and existing partners and friends alike. Hot coffee and tea with all the fixins is something we always have available – a symbol of offering the best of what we have to our guests and our staff.

FURTHER READING

For more ideas, resources and toolkits for artists and communities to catalyze change together, visit Creative Exchange, www.springboardexchange.org

Creative Exchange hosts practical toolkits like this one to catalyze creative, artist-led projects in your community as well as publishes case studies and profiles to share as inspirational stories of artists and their work.

CONSULTING SERVICES

While this handbook is free, Springboard for the Arts is available for consulting services, depending on your interests and needs. Prices are determined based on the scope of work. Please contact us for additional information.

Services we provide include:

- ✖ Developing permanent, local artist resources and services in your community
- ✖ Creating non-traditional community partnerships
- ✖ Workshops, trainings and presentations
- ✖ Project management and advising

Be in touch at:
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ARTIST
CONTRIBUTORS

These are the artists and Springboard staff who contributed their ideas, reflections, and participation tools to this handbook.

MICHELE ANDERSON

Michele is a writer, musician, and community leader who is passionate about keeping life interesting and meaningful in small towns. She is also the Rural Program Director for Springboard for the Arts, where she leads projects like the Rural Arts and Culture Summit and Artists on Main Street. Michele lives in Fergus Falls, Minnesota with her husband, Spencer, and their son, Ash.

DA BULLOCK

D.A. is a filmmaker and social practice artist based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. DA's films have been featured at the Toronto International Film Festival, Chicago International Film Festival, and the Urbanworld Film Festival. D.A. is the founder of Bully Creative Shop, a feature film, documentary, media arts, and digital content enterprise. He is currently co-director of the Making Media, Making Change program at the Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs. **bullycreative.com**

BENJAMIN DOMASK–RUH

Benjamin is a circus and physical theatre director, performer, and clown residing in the Twin Cities, Minnesota. He tours the world performing with companies and individuals such as Tigerlion Arts, MOTH Circus, Thom Wall, and the International Juggler's Association. Benjamin is a Teaching Artist with Minnesota-based COMPAS and travels regularly to rural communities to introduce the ideas of circus and theatre through play and curiosity. He is managed by Afton Benson.
benjamindomask.com

HALEY HONEMAN

Haley is a theatre maker, educator, writer, teaching artist, and community-based arts facilitator who has worked in Minnesota, Arizona, and Mexico. Her community practice has included explorations of mental health and well-being, devising original works with the Rising Youth Theatre (risingyouththeatre.org), an artist residency at Phoenix Children's Hospital, and arts-based second language instruction. She is currently an Arts Education Specialist at the Arizona Department of Education.

JAMIE HORTER

Jamie is a rural advocate and artist working in community development based in Lyons, Nebraska. Jamie uses art to create opportunities for people to become more engaged in the conversations and decisions impacting their communities. Her site-specific projects are interdisciplinary, multigenerational, inclusive, and invite community collaborators. **JamieHorter.xyz**

HEIDI JEUB

Heidi is a multi-disciplinary visual artist living and working in central Minnesota. She has shared her art form with schools and communities as a teaching artist through COMPAS (compas.org), VSA-Minnesota, and Lifetime Arts (lifetimearts.org). Heidi has run juried exhibits, designed new art programs, and facilitated community conversations around the arts. She is currently the creative community coordinator for an Our Town project with Little Falls, and is a Creative Community Fellow with National Arts Strategies. **heidijeub.com**

JODI LARSON

Jodi is an artist, museum consultant, and historian in the Houston area. As a teaching artist and educator, she works with community partners and young audiences to empower creativity, creative problem solving, and critical thinking through art and craft. She works in paper, textiles, and mixed media. Her particular passion is portraiture using the traditional papercutting with a modern twist. She has made it her mission to blur the line between abstract contemporary art and traditional craft as much as possible.

LIZ LERMAN

Liz is a choreographer, performer, writer, educator and speaker. She founded the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange in 1976 and cultivated the company's unique multi-generational ensemble into a leading force in contemporary dance. Liz has spent her career making her artistic inquiry personal, funny, intellectually vivid, and timely. She has opened her process to various publics from shipbuilders to physicists, construction workers to ballerinas, resulting in work that is participatory, relevant, urgent, and usable. **lizlerman.com**

NIKIKO MASUMOTO

Nikiko is a memory keeper, community worker, author, artist, and fourth generation organic farmer in the Central Valley of California. Her work in agriculture is often her springboard to working in place, storytelling, and community. Nikiko is the co-founder and co-director of Yonsei Memory Project (yonseimemoryproject.com), a movement to give power and life to Japanese American memory keeping. Two documentary films highlight her work: Changing Season (2015) and Next Gen Asian American Art in the Central Valley (2018).

MICHAEL O'BRYAN

Michael is an expert practitioner and thought leader in community development, organizational culture, and trauma-informed practices. Since 2015, O'Bryan has served as the Director of Youth and Young Adult Initiatives at the Village of Arts and Humanities in North Philadelphia. Michael is currently a Corzo Fellow at The Corzo Center for The Creative Economy at The University of the Arts and an Innovation Fellow at Drexel University's Lindy Institute for Urban Innovation.

CHIP THOMAS

Chip, aka "jetsonorama," is a photographer, public artist, activist, and physician working in the Navajo Nation in northeast Arizona. He coordinates the Painted Desert Project, a community building initiative that manifests as a constellation of murals across the Navajo Nation, painted by artists from all over the world. His public artwork consists of enlarged black and white photographs pasted on roadside structures. Chip is a member of the Justseeds Artists Cooperative, a group of socially engaged artists in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. **jetsonorama.net**

PETER HAAKON THOMPSON

Peter is an artist based in Minneapolis, Minnesota whose primary mediums are participation, interaction and conversation. At Springboard, Peter is part of the community development team and serves as the Saint Paul site steward. Some of his past and current works include: A participatory, temporary, on-ice community called Art Shanty Projects; the Mobile Sign Shop--a pop-up, mobile, sign-making shop to engage neighbors in making, conversing and connecting; and, The A Project—an ongoing window-sign effort to create artist solidarity. This summer he is making socially-distanced flag kits for citizens of Iowa City to sew flags that share what they love about their place. **www.phtpht.com**

MARK VALDEZ

Mark is an artist, organizer, and consultant based in Los Angeles. For over 20-years, Valdez has produced and created community engaged projects in his home state of California and around the country. His work has been seen at theaters that include the Alliance Theatre, Cornerstone Theater Company, Hip-Hop Theatre Festival, La Peña Cultural Center, Mark Taper Forum, MACLA, Mixed Blood, and Trinity Rep. Presently, Mark is working on Exiled in America, a multi-year, multi-city project that aims to impact housing policy utilizing performance, cultural organizing, and creative community development strategies.

JUN-LI WANG
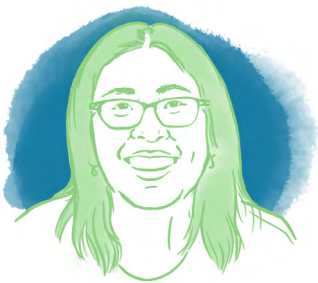
Jun-Li is a connector of people, places and ideas. At Springboard, she is the new Associate Director of Programs, after directing the Community Development Program for nearly a decade. Jun-Li designed and let Irrigate, a nationally-recognized artist-led creative placemaking initiative along the Green Line in Saint Paul during the years of its construction. Her personal projects include Board Repair, a network supporting Black, indigenous and people of color on non-profit boards and Saint Paul Hello, a project welcoming newcomers to cool Minnesota. She has been known to sell her textile craft art but mostly prefers to gift it.

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We are also deeply indebted to the organizations and people across the country that have been doing this work for decades and inspire us daily, including **Racing Magpie, The Village of Arts and Humanities, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, First Peoples Fund, OFBYFORALL, Appalshop, ArtBuilt, The Laundromat Project, Center for Performance and Civic Practice, Big Car, Indigenous Roots, U.S. Department of Arts and Culture, Animating Democracy, Art of the Rural, Gard Foundation, ArtPlace, Alternate Roots, Plains Art Museum, Department of Public Transformation** and many, many others.

To the thousands of individual artists, culture bearers and community organizers who make their communities stronger, healthier and more just: you are the reason for the work. And to the staff of artists at Springboard for the Arts, and all our community partners, thank you.