

COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

**ENGAGEMENT,
EDUCATION & OUTREACH
HANDBOOK FOR
COMMONWEALTH
PARLIAMENTS**

*CREATING OPEN, ACCOUNTABLE AND
TRANSPARENT INSTITUTIONS*

About the CPA

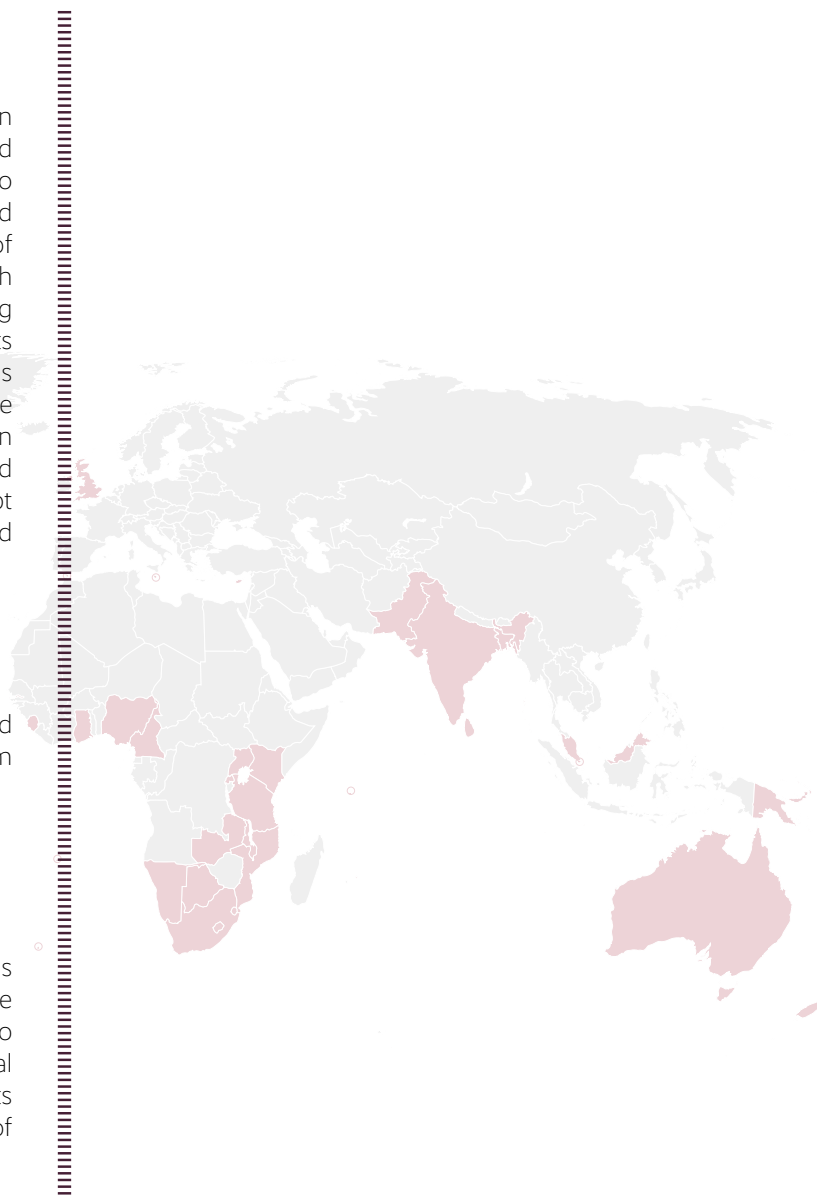
The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) connects, develops, promotes and supports parliamentarians and their staff to identify benchmarks of good governance and the implementation of the enduring values of the Commonwealth. The CPA collaborates with parliaments and other organisations, including the intergovernmental community, to achieve its statement of purpose. It brings parliamentarians and parliamentary staff together to exchange ideas among themselves and with experts in various fields, to identify benchmarks of good practices and new policy options they can adopt or adapt in the governance of their societies. Find out more via our website at www.cpahq.org

About the authors

This Handbook was written by Holly Greenland and Annie McCall with editorial support from Matthew Salik and James Pinnell.

Acknowledgements

The CPA Headquarters Secretariat extends its thanks to the CPA Branches across the Commonwealth who took the time to respond to the survey which fed into this Handbook. A special thanks goes to the UK Parliament for allowing its resources to be reproduced for the purposes of the Handbook.



© Commonwealth Parliamentary Association 2021

All rights reserved. This publication may be reproduced, stored, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photography, recording or otherwise provided it is used only for educational purposes and is not for resale, and provided full acknowledgement is given to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association as the original publisher. Rights are not extended for the reproduction of any photography or design not owned by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association as contained in this publication.

Views and opinions expressed in this publication are the responsibility of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Headquarters Secretariat and should not be attributed to any Parliament or Member of the Association.

Cover design and illustrations by Matthew Salik with elements from Shutterstock, freepik.com and various Commonwealth legislatures.

Have you used this publication?

If you have, let us know as we are always keen to hear how our products are being used. Our details are on the back.



CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION: PARLIAMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY	3
2. WHY SHOULD PARLIAMENTS ENGAGE THE PUBLIC?	6
3. WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHALLENGES FACING PARLIAMENTARY PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TODAY?	8
4. PRACTICAL GUIDANCE: UNDERSTANDING YOUR AUDIENCE	12
5. PRACTICAL GUIDANCE: DIGITAL CHANNELS FOR ENGAGEMENT	15
6. PRACTICAL GUIDANCE: FORMAL DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT	27
7. PRACTICAL GUIDANCE: INFORMAL PARTICIPATION	38
8. PRACTICAL GUIDANCE: EDUCATION AND ACADEMIA	45
9. EVALUATION: MEASURING SUCCESS AND LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE	56
10. ENGAGING KEY STAKEHOLDERS	58
11. SEEKING FUNDING AND SUPPORT	62
<i>APPENDICES</i>	66
<i>REFERENCES</i>	79



Foreword by the CPA Secretary-General

In line with SDG 16 – “**Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**” the CPA has a mandate to support our member branches in strengthening their engagement, education and outreach work. Our leadership in the development and dissemination of the updated CPA Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures in 2018, has resulted in nearly twenty legislatures conducting self-assessments against the benchmarks. Many have identified a need to significantly strengthen their public outreach work. This Handbook has been commissioned to support those legislatures and others that wish to enhance their institutional capacity to engage with their citizenry and to strengthen democracy.

It is widely documented that there remains a lack of trust in politicians¹. Parliamentarians arguably struggle to meet public expectations, and political participation by the public remains low, with voter turnout decreasing across the Commonwealth. The issue is further compounded by a lack of transparency and weak accountability mechanisms in many Parliaments which hampers good governance in many Commonwealth jurisdictions.

The rise of 24-hour news and social media has challenged Parliaments’ position as the national forum of debate and news. Now Parliaments are at times perceived as slow and reactive to current affairs. Parliaments as traditional and precedent-based institutions struggle to keep up and often have limited resources and specialist knowledge to overcome such challenges.

The Handbook seeks to explain the rationale for why Parliaments across the Commonwealth should engage, educate and communicate with the public on the role, work and importance of Parliaments as relevant and sovereign institutions. The Handbook examines the need for formal democratic engagement; public consultation and buy-in to legislation, committee scrutiny, petitioning, and lobbying for change. The Handbook also covers informal engagement around participatory democracy centred on education, outreach, and information sharing to ensure Parliaments are seen as representative institutions.

The commissioning of this valuable resource also reinforces our Association’s ongoing commitment to ‘Open Parliaments’. Next year will see the 10th anniversary of the CPA’s endorsement of the **Declaration on Parliamentary Openness** which was officially launched at the World e-Parliament Conference in 2012. The Declaration, alongside the CPA Benchmarks, are an important set of principles and values that seek to encourage Parliaments to engage the public in an open and transparent fashion.

This work will sit alongside the CPA’s ongoing advocacy for increasing women’s representation, a core principle behind the work of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians network (CWP). The Handbook will seek to support the network’s agenda to promote women’s full and equal participation in all political and parliamentary leadership at all levels.

For over thirty years, youth engagement has been central to the values of the CPA. This Handbook will sit alongside existing educational resources and



Stephen Twigg,
CPA Secretary-General

1. World Bank’s Global Competitiveness Index, 2017 dataset.

outreach programmes, including the Teachers' Resource Pack on the Commonwealth, Parliament and Democracy published in 2017. This Handbook will enable Parliaments and Parliamentarians to better connect with young people to inspire the next generation of leaders.

Whereas other organisations have undertaken and continued to develop comparative analysis on public engagement and Parliaments, this Handbook provides a more practical approach for Parliaments to consider and resources to utilise, as well as providing relevant case studies and techniques Parliaments can employ for specific engagement activities. These could range from the accessibility of parliamentary websites, to offering mass lobbies, open days, social media campaign strategies and youth parliaments.

Although aimed at a parliamentary audience, the Handbook also incorporates views from civil society, academia, and the media in offering a variety of perspectives to ensure approaches highlighted in the Handbook are targeted, practical and effective.

In the current climate, it is also essential to consider the impact of COVID-19 on Parliaments' public engagement as well as the digital divide evident in many jurisdictions. Advice, tips, examples and approaches put forward in this Handbook are applicable to large well-resourced jurisdictions as well as small Parliaments which might be hindered by remotely located populations and limited capacity. The content of the Handbook emanates from the CPA Member Survey which was conducted in 2021, providing valuable and up-to-date examples from across the Commonwealth.

2021 sees the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association celebrating its 110th Anniversary. The resolution that established the Association provided for: "[the creation] of a permanent machinery to provide ready exchange of information and to facilitate closer understanding between those engaged in parliamentary governance...". As the CPA Secretary-General, and on behalf of the Association, I think it highly appropriate that we are able to publish and present this worthwhile Handbook and thereby continue the tradition of providing such information to our Members.

On behalf of the CPA, I am delighted to present this latest publication and we hope that you will find the information contained within both useful and informative.

CPA Deputy Secretary-General meeting with school children as part of a CPA Roadshow in Gibraltar in 2020.





1. Introduction: Parliament in the 21st Century

Democracy Today

All of us working within Parliaments across the Commonwealth face the challenge of how to engage our citizens in the decisions that affect them and their lives.

Perhaps more than ever, we see a range of reports identifying high levels of citizen disenchantment with democratic institutions. Many factors impact different nations to different extents. These include a lack of political literacy, low satisfaction or trust in politicians and governments, and the increase in complex governance arrangements that can risk a lack of transparency.²

The word ‘*democracy*’ itself derives from the Greek words *dēmokratia*, from *dēmos* ‘the people’ and *kratia* meaning ‘power or rule’.³ At its heart, democracy is about giving people a say in the decisions that affect them.

By developing outreach, engagement and education activities that sit at the heart of our strategic planning, Parliaments can find inclusive ways to open up our processes,

engage citizens in decision making, and educate young people who will become the future of our democracies.

2030 Agenda and SDGs

Globally, a core element of the 2030 Agenda commitment to end poverty and set the world on a sustainable path to inclusive development is that people must be included at every stage of decision-making, from initial policy design to implementation and monitoring.

Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) has two targets that refer to the role of Parliaments:

- Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
- Target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.⁴



2. S. A. Ercan and J.-P. Gagnon, ‘The Crisis of Democracy: Which Crisis? Which Democracy?’ (2014) 1 Democratic Theory 1 at 1.

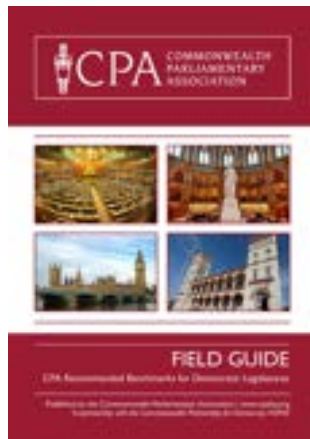
3. J. Cresswell, *The Oxford Dictionary of Word Origins* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

4. C. Rodriguez, Inter-parliamentary Union, and United Nations Development Programme, *Parliaments and the Sustainable Development Goals: a self-assessment toolkit* (2016) p. 2.

CPA Benchmarks

Benchmark 10.1 of the *CPA's Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures*⁵ concerns accessibility, openness and engagement for citizens and the media, including recommendations that the Legislature:

- be accessible and open to the press and citizens (including persons with disabilities)
- ensure that the media are given appropriate access to the Legislature's proceedings
- promote the public's understanding of the Legislature's work
- make efforts to identify and increase the participation of demographic groups whose perspectives are not well represented in parliamentary decision-making
- have a regularly updated and accessible website.



Of the 17 legislatures that conducted a CPA Benchmark self-assessment between 2018-2020, most have highlighted the need to improve their public engagement performance. Those same Parliaments have expressed a political will to strengthen and expand such work.

21st Century Parliaments

Engaging citizens is a core business of 21st Century Parliaments and Parliamentarians. Moves towards e-parliaments, increasing citizen participation, and Parliaments' responses to the COVID-19 environment have changed how Parliaments do business.

A recent OECD report coined the phrase 'deliberative wave' to describe various innovations in citizens' participation that enable decision-makers (including Parliamentarians) to make hard choices about public policy problems and to enhance trust between citizens on the one hand, and legislatures and governments on the other.⁶

Examples include Citizens' Assemblies, juries, and panels that convene groups of people representing a broad cross-section of society for numerous days to learn, deliberate and develop collective recommendations. As deliberative democracy grows, it is:

- increasing electoral turnout
- informing decision-makers of citizens' views
- giving citizens significant influence or final decision-making power
- using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to engage citizens in the decision-making process.⁷

Regarding the move towards e-parliaments, key trends include:

- Digital technologies now firmly embedded with clearly identified governance and technology practices in most Parliaments.
- Digital broadcasting and video streaming often overtaking traditional broadcasting.
- Barriers to greater use of ICT include training and skill deficits among staff and Members and growing concerns over security and reliability.
- Knowledge of how Parliaments work is seen as the biggest barrier to greater citizen engagement.
- Inter-parliamentary support is needed and in strong demand in many areas of ICT, ranging from new media and social tools to traditional ICT functions.⁸

5. Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), *Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures* (2018) pp. 16–17.

6. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave*.

7. G. Smith, *Beyond the ballot: 57 democratic innovations from around the world*; a report for the Power Inquiry (The Power Inquiry, 2005) p. 15.

8. Inter-Parliamentary Union, *World e-Parliament Report 2018* (2018) p. 6.



In response to COVID-19, Parliaments have changed practices and procedures.⁹ From the CPA's Guidance Survey on Public Engagement, Outreach and Education (hereafter '*the survey*'), Parliaments' responses to COVID-19 have included:

- Encouraging the use of their existing online resources and developing new online content
- Implementing social distancing, capacity restrictions, more outreach, and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Conducting virtual proceedings of the Legislature
- Launching websites, newsletters and social media accounts
- Conducting a virtual Youth Parliament
- Conducting most educational and public engagement and outreach activities virtually
- Using more targeted marketing of programmes
- Launching a Digital Legislature Project that included hybrid and virtual platforms to engage the public and conduct all activities of the Legislature¹⁰
- Conducting virtual tours of the Parliament precincts by the creation of a 360-degree interactive tour
- Using Zoom and Teams platforms to arrange online guided tours
- Putting all activities involving public engagement (committee consultations, educational activities, exhibits, awards, etc.) temporarily online to allow citizens to participate despite the health restrictions
- Reducing numbers and making changes to the way the programme is offered (i.e. no communal morning tea)
- Moving to virtual platforms, including liaison with non-urban municipalities to cooperate in terms of use of venues and technology where required
- Pre-recording public education initiatives digitally, which are then shared with audiences across the jurisdiction.

One of the COVID-19 mottos — *keep your distance* — paradoxically sits within the global realisation that we are all even more connected than we were before the pandemic.



9. For more information see Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), COVID-19 Delivering Parliamentary Democracy: CPA Toolkit for Commonwealth Parliaments (2020).

10. See [Gauteng Provincial Legislature](#)

2. Why should Parliaments engage the public?

Open, transparent and accessible Parliaments are the keystone of a healthy democracy. Parliaments oversee government activity, scrutinise legislation and represent citizens' concerns to those in power.

Parliamentarians themselves are accountable to their constituents. Therefore, effective relationships with their constituency are crucial for proper representation.

Parliaments **have** to engage, Parliaments **want** to engage, and ultimately **better decisions** will be made.

Parliaments have to engage

Across the Commonwealth, some constitutions, legislation, standing orders and resolutions of Parliament require citizen participation. The notion of representative government itself infers citizen involvement.

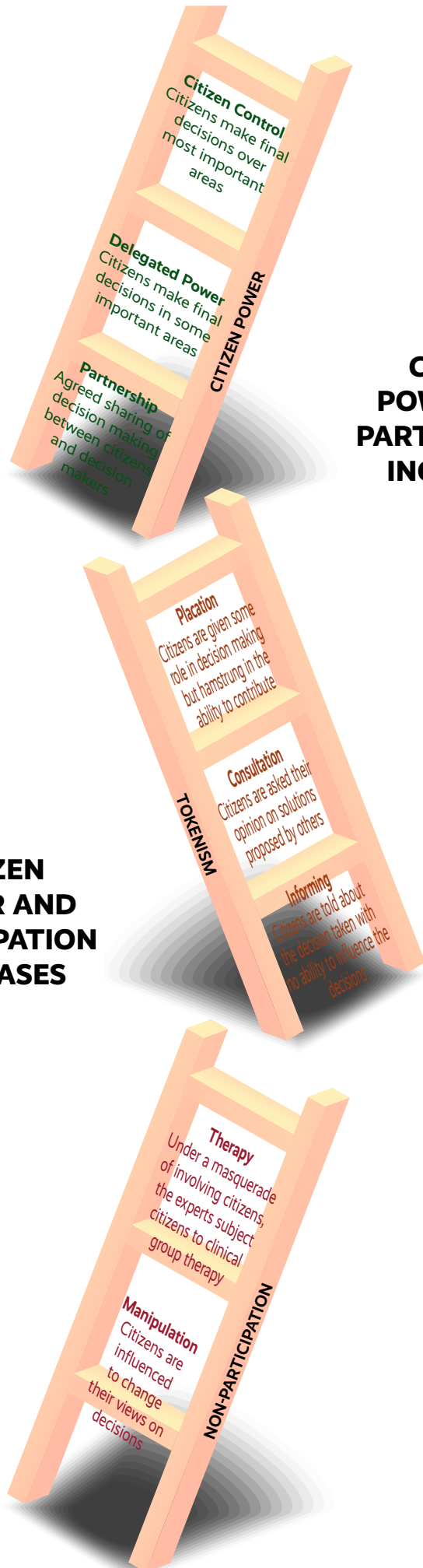
Citizen participation is intrinsic in democracy and essential to political trust.

Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation¹¹ (see opposite) is often cited to illustrate the range of citizen participation in decision making and is a useful reference for reviewing the work being done across and within Parliaments. As you move from the bottom rung of the ladder up, citizen participation and power increases.

The expectation of the degree and type of involvement that citizens desire and expect from their government continues to rise. Citizens look to Parliaments to step beyond tokenism and reach Citizen Power.¹²



**CITIZEN
POWER AND
PARTICIPATION
INCREASES**



**CITIZEN
POWER AND
PARTICIPATION
INCREASES**



11. S. R. Arnstein, 'A Ladder Of Citizen Participation' (1969) 35 Journal of the American Institute of Planners 216 at 217.
12. R. Weymouth, J. Hartz-Karp, and D. Marinova, 'Repairing Political Trust for Practical Sustainability' (2020) 12 Sustainability 7055 at 3.



Parliaments want to engage

We are seeing Parliaments across the globe putting in place new and innovative solutions aimed at increasing citizen engagement.

More open and transparent legislatures can result from internal strategic transformations or pledges made by Parliament as a whole or be stimulated by election promises or inquiry outcomes of new or existing governments.

CASE STUDY: NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA - OPENING PARLIAMENT TO THE PEOPLE¹³

In the Northern Territory of Australia, a new government was elected in 2016 on a platform of openness and transparency. After the election, the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory's Inquiry into Opening Parliament to the People included reforms, existent in other Parliaments, with the referral of Bills to committees for inquiry and report before their second reading, which increased public participation through submissions and hearings.

Their full report is available online [here](#).

13. Select Committee on Opening Parliament to the People, Report on Opening Parliament to the People (2017). The Bill scrutiny process was abolished by the Government at commencement of its second term.

Better decisions will be made

In 2020, the OECD collated evidence and data supporting the idea that citizen participation in public decision-making can deliver better policies, strengthen democracy and build trust.¹⁴

The OECD concluded that there are **seven key reasons** why representative deliberative processes can help lead to better public decisions and enhance trust. Specifically, representative deliberative processes:

1. Can lead to better **policy outcomes** because deliberation results in considered public judgements rather than public opinions, resulting in informed recommendations about issues.
2. Give decision-makers **greater legitimacy** to make hard choices.
3. **Enhance public trust** in government and democratic institutions by giving citizens an effective role in public decision-making.
4. Signal **civic respect and empower citizens**.
5. Open the door to a much more diverse group of people, making **governance more inclusive**.
6. **Strengthen integrity and prevent corruption** by ensuring that groups and individuals with money and power cannot have undue influence on a public decision.
7. **Help counteract polarisation and disinformation**.¹⁵

14. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave p. 2.

15. Ibid pp. 28–29.

3. What are the main challenges facing parliamentary public engagement today?

The CPA engagement survey said...

From the perspective of the Parliaments that answered the survey, the main challenges facing public engagement have been grouped into five areas.

1. Parliament resourcing and culture

Challenges include:

- a lack of:
 - skills, materials, funding, resources, staff and capacity to deliver on public participation programmes
 - staffing in communications and public relations; and
 - staff capacity due to the time involved
- institutional conservatism
- difficulties in arranging activities around busy parliamentary schedules
- a highly pressured legislative programme
- hesitation as some activities do not relate strictly to the role of Parliament

2. The Parliamentarians

Challenges include:

- exclusion of Parliaments from communications between Parliamentarians and citizens
- opinions from Parliamentarians that restrict the approach and style of engagement activities
- a lack of interest generally by some Parliamentarians

3. The Public

Challenges include:

- inadequate profiling of the public participation programmes of the legislature
- work, household or personal obligations deter people from public engagement in parliamentary processes
- Parliament meeting locations and times are not always accessible enough for some communities to engage

- the public's misunderstanding of the role of Parliament
- low constituent engagement levels.
- the public is in some instances disillusioned and/or not interested.

4. COVID-19

Challenges include:

- COVID-19 restrictions on the gatherings of people
- no Parliament Sitting during MCO (Movement Control Order)

5. Technology

Challenges include:

- the urban/rural digital divide
- the existing communication infrastructure does not support broad digital engagement
- that technology itself has become paramount in a COVID-19 context
- there are geographical obstacles to engagement

What can we do?

From the survey, the responses were clear that there is:

- **a need to change old rules,**
- **a need to think outside the box,**
- **a need to involve citizens, and**
- **a need to avoid prohibitive costs.**

In practical terms, four first steps could be to:



1. PUT PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AT THE HEART OF YOUR STRATEGY

Referencing public engagement within your corporate strategy will highlight to all those working within Parliament, as well as your stakeholders, the public, how important it is to the wider work and goals of Parliament.

Some Parliaments produce a public engagement strategy, shared across the relevant parliamentary teams, to agree what this means in reality and to set measurable objectives to monitor success. An example framework is provided in **Appendix A** of this guide.

To bring your strategy to life, consider:

- Providing **strong leadership and guidance on the big things** – vision, objectives, outcomes – but...
- **Leave the detail to staff close to the services and audience.** A rigid process will often not be as effective. Different things will work better in different sectors/regions/contexts and those close to the work and audience will often know best.
- Encourage a sense of **experimentation and innovation.** Pilot/test ideas, iterate, “fail fast”, adapt.
- **Collaborate internally and externally.** Internally, involve Parliamentarians and staff – public engagement is part of everyone’s job. Externally, go to where people are, build partnerships and use trusted intermediaries.
- **Let good practice shine through and celebrate successes.** Be bold drawing attention to effective practice. Learn from what doesn’t work and build a “no blame” culture.

CASE STUDY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF QUEBEC (NAQ) STRATEGIC PLAN

Openness is a priority

In its 2019-2023 Strategic Plan¹⁶, the NAQ’s main strategic direction is to have an open Parliament that is welcoming, communicates, and encourages participation.

Citizen-driven activities

The NAQ has a program of activities that citizens have proposed for the new reception pavilion at Parliament. Activities include an educational website on democracy, a public vegetable garden in front of the Parliament, several exhibits, and workshops for the general public and government departments to explain how the NAQ works.

Parliamentary reform informed by Citizens

At the National Assembly of Quebec, the Citizen Round Table¹⁷ is part of a parliamentary reform process to bring Parliament closer to citizens.

The Citizen Round Table is a consultation on how to facilitate the participation of citizens (aged 18 and older) in parliamentary work and activities. In June 2021, virtual focus groups of participants had the opportunity to express themselves on the difficulties that hinder their participation at the NAQ and propose concrete ways to improve existing consultation mechanisms or implement new ones.

The Citizen Round Table report of the consultation will then be submitted to the Members of the National Assembly to inform the reform. The highlights will be made public in the autumn of 2021.

16. National Assembly of Quebec, ‘2019_2023 Strategic Plan: National Assembly Administration’ (2019).

17. National Assembly of Quebec, ‘Citizen Round Table - The Call for Applications.’

2. JOIN FORCES AND LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER

Between Parliaments and within jurisdictions

Across the Commonwealth, many Parliaments have made innovations with their public engagement, outreach and education and are sharing these ideas and working together.

Examples of conduits for connection between Parliaments include the Australia and New Zealand Clerks-at-the-Table (ANZACATT) List Server (e-CATT Info-share). The List Server provides ANZACATT members with the ability to 'Post a question', which will send the query to all registered ANZACATT members.



The CPA can provide a conduit for Parliaments to connect and share best practise, ideas and support. You can reach out to the CPA by emailing your request to hq.sec@cpahq.org.

Other agencies in your jurisdiction may have also made innovations with their public engagement, outreach and education or may be responsible for activities that are integral to your own work.

For example, if you were looking to create a **Youth Citizen's Passport** for people reaching voting age, you would require the support and collaboration with a range of agencies responsible for different items. These could include:

- A birth certificate (births registry)
- Voting registration (electoral management body)
- Knowledge about how to vote (electoral management body)
- Knowledge about how laws are made (Parliament, education department, schools and universities)
- Knowledge about how to engage in the law-making process (Parliament, education department, schools and universities).

In the example, the births registry, electoral management body, Parliament, education department, schools and universities could come together and share resources in a legal and data responsible manner.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Communications Network

With the assistance of the CPA, a network was established to support those involved in communications and engagement within Commonwealth Parliaments. The Network, formed in 2021, and overseen by the UK House of Commons is for people to exchange ideas, knowledge and best practice. This covers everything from how Legislatures can best use social media, to the facilities provided to the media. If you are interested in learning more, or wish to seek support. Contact cpcn@parliament.uk.



CPA's Technical Assistance Programme

For those CPA legislatures that have undertaken a self-assessment against the CPA Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures and have identified areas of improvement in public openness and engagement, there is the option to take up a CPA Technical Assistance Programme. These funded programmes are designed to strengthen parliamentary institutions in administrative or procedural areas. Contact the team for more information: hq.sec@cpahq.org.

3. PROMOTE OPENNESS, TRANSPARENCY, ACCESSIBILITY AND TECHNOLOGY

At all times, engagement work can be used to identify ways to increase openness, transparency and accessibility for all our citizens. In the 21st century, this will often include employing new technologies, and this may require a period of change and transformation for your teams, Parliamentarians and citizens.



This approach is supported by the *Declaration on Parliamentary Openness* which was officially launched at the 2012 World e-Parliament Conference in Rome, Italy. An extract of the Declaration is in **Appendix B** and provides a useful checklist for Parliaments with 44 principles of parliamentary openness to ensure that they are:

- **Promoting a culture of openness;**
- **Making parliamentary information transparent;**
- **Easing access to parliamentary information; and**
- **Enabling electronic communication of parliamentary information.**

4. CAREFULLY MANAGE PARTICIPANT'S EXPECTATIONS

The positive actions we take to engage more people with the work of Parliament, can also come with unintended challenges.

Individuals or organisations engaging with Parliament may expect an immediate response or change to result from their participation. Managing this expectation can be difficult, but ignoring it can risk disenchantment with the process or Parliament altogether.

This risk should not be used as a reason to halt engagement, but acknowledged and explained from the outset:

- **Be realistic about the potential results.** What can they reasonably expect to happen (and when) after engaging with you?
- **Be honest about the complexity of the parliamentary process.** The time it takes to appropriately scrutinise a new idea or change from all angles and views can be frustrating, but it ultimately ensures Parliament makes the right decisions.
- **Be open about how change via democracy is often incremental.** Their action may be the first step in a range of events, discussions and ideas that eventually lead to a major change. It can take time, but it has to start somewhere.
- **Be clear about Parliament's role,** and that it is ultimately up to the government of the day to make the call on any changes to laws or policy. By engaging with Parliament, citizens views can be heard and raised.
- **Be a storyteller.** Sharing real examples of how a piece of committee evidence, a petition, campaign or letter has been a catalyst for change throughout your history can ensure people see that their input can make a real difference.



4. Practical Guidance: Understanding your Audience

Why start with the audience?

It can be easy to fall into the trap of beginning an engagement project with a great idea; it could be an event, a campaign, a programme or a video. This content-first approach risks producing something that may be right for you, but not for your audience.

By starting with understanding your audience, you will greatly increase the chances of delivering an activity or product that will lead to positive engagement with the right audience and a good investment of your time and public money.

What are the potential barriers to engagement?

The CPA Survey identified a range of challenges with engaging the public, including: work and household obligations, locations and accessibility of the parliamentary activity, a public misunderstanding of the role of Parliament and low engagement or interest levels.

In these examples, putting the audience barrier at the heart of planning, for example changing the times of your activity, putting an event online or running information sharing sessions, could overcome all of these barriers. But you need to know which ones are relevant to your target audience first.

Gathering up-to-date audience information, even on a small scale, will help you correctly identify which barrier/s impact your target audiences, identify positive opportunities, ensure you do not make assumptions about different groups and ultimately help you plan engagement activities that will suit your audience's needs.

Who are you trying to engage?

First go back to basics and ask some key questions:

- **Who am I trying to engage and why?**
- **What do I want them to know, feel or do?**
- **What will the benefit be to Parliament / the democratic process?**

Audience insight: framework

Undertaking audience research to uncover insights about your target group will now help you shape the best approach for engaging them. Only once your insight is gathered and understood should you then develop your plan. See illustration on the following page.

REMEMBER:

At the outset of any engagement activity, consider your evaluation methods. This will ensure you can measure whether you reached your intended audience and what they did as a result. You can find out more about evaluation methods later in this guide.



PROFILE

AUDIENCE OPPORTUNITY?
How many people are in this group/s?

WHO ARE THEY?
What are their shared characteristics, such as age range or a predominant gender?

WHERE ARE THEY?
Are they mainly in one or more geographic locations?

INTERESTS

WHAT DO THEY DO?
What is their lifestyle? What do they enjoy doing?

WHAT MOTIVATES THEM?
Do they have practical or emotional drivers or priorities for their actions? And are there barriers too?

WHAT ARE THEIR VALUES?
This could include their belief systems, community values or individual values.

CHANNELS

WHO DO THEY LISTEN TO? This could be trusted people, channels or organisations.

WHERE DO THEY FIND INFORMATION?
Look across all channels – print, TV, social media etc.

WHAT IS THE BEST TIME?
Do they have restrictions on when they can listen or engage?

PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONSHIPS

HAVE THEY VOTED BEFORE?
This is a good indication of formal engagement and is usually publicly available online and disaggregated by demographic.

DO THEY TRADITIONALLY PARTICIPATE?
If so, how? If not, why? You can learn from past data here.

WHAT IS THEIR VIEW OF PARLIAMENT?
Do they hold a positive, neutral or negative view of Parliament, Parliamentarians and/or politics?

Finding audience insight: five options

PUBLIC DATA: can be sourced from a national statistics provider to gain information, such as national demographic breakdown by age/gender/ethnicity, or to access specialist reports on specific groups or issues.

SPECIALIST PARTNER DATA: gaining insight from a charity, body or organisation already working with your target audience can be invaluable. They can share information such as key issues, motivators, ideal channels or barriers to engagement.

EXISTING INTERNAL DATA: don't forget your own data, such as previously completed feedback forms. Your website analytics may also show who visits your online information (and importantly, who is not yet engaged).

PRODUCING NEW DATA IN HOUSE: for example, you could produce a feedback form for a specific event or run an online survey with a community you would like to reach by working with a partner.

COMMISSIONED INSIGHT: specialist audience insight providers can design a research programme to gather information on a specific audience or topic. This is most applicable to large-scale programmes of work or to reach new groups.

Equality and inclusivity analysis: template

By running an analysis on your plans, you can see whether a project may risk having a negative impact on a particular group, decide if you need to make changes and what these changes might be. You may also identify positive opportunities to engage specific groups.

If you have an equality team in your parliamentary community, you can involve them in this process or use an internal analysis system.

Some key questions to ask may include:

Who is the intended target audience/s?		
What activity (in brief) is being undertaken?		
Has a consultation process taken place to consider equality, if so, with whom?	(If a consultation hasn't taken place, consider undertaking one before continuing this form, or outline how else you have made your decisions)	
Have you considered the impact of your activity in relation to the following characteristics? (include evidence of any potential impact identified and actions to take to mitigate impact in the comments box, as well as positive opportunities to engage)		
	YES/NO	Comments
Age		
Disability		
Gender reassignment		
Marriage and civil partnership		
Pregnancy and maternity		
Race		
Religion or belief		
Sex		
Sexual Orientation		
People with or without dependants		
People who use different languages to the default language used		
Other groups (i.e. geographic, local community, economic)		
Is there a system in place to monitor the impact or response of your activity on different groups?		(If not, use this column to describe why not, or consider what you could do)
Have opportunities been identified to engage a specific group or encourage positive relations between groups?		(If not, use this column to describe why not, or consider if there are unidentified opportunities)

If your analysis identifies a negative impact on one or more groups, consider if the effect is unlawful in your nation and whether mitigations should be put in place immediately. If you have 'protected characteristics' under your legal system, ensure they are all included in your analysis.

It may be that a negative impact is justifiable or unavoidable, but steps can be taken to reduce this impact or increase inclusivity for this group/s. A plan of next steps with owners from your project team will help increase equality for your project.



If you are looking specifically at your inclusivity actions for groups and individuals with disabilities, the **CPA Disability Inclusive Communications Guidelines 2020** includes a lot of useful information which is available [here](#).



5. Practical Guidance: Digital Channels for Engagement

What are the most commonly used Parliamentary channels?

Across the CPA, Members who responded to the survey informing this Handbook said that public broadcasting, websites, media releases, interviews and Facebook were the most used engagement channels. Other channels included:

- Twitter;
- Instagram;
- LinkedIn;
- Dedicated YouTube (or other video sharing) channel;
- Email, including e-marketing service (e.g. Mailchimp or other);
- Information phone line;
- Advertisements online;
- Posted hardcopy material (e.g. letters or newsletters);
- Advertisements in hardcopy publications; and
- Snapchat.

How can your website engage the public?

More often than not, people will search online first to find out how to engage with you. Engaging web pages can also be shared easily as links across social media by Parliament, Parliamentarians, the public and other stakeholders.

Several Parliaments have a 'get involved' page on their website on how the public can get involved with Parliament with links to the relevant sections on their website.

For all your pages, consider SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) to ensure they can be found if someone searches online. At its simplest, this means thinking about what words and phrases a user will type into a search engine to find your content and ensuring they are used in the titles and main paragraphs of the page, as well as in any metadata. If you have a digital team, they will be able to advise further.

It is also important to consider where the information on the website is located. Try to

ensure that it is positioned on a parliamentary site as opposed to a governmental portal. Otherwise there is a risk of public confusion between the role of the legislature and executive. It is also important to consider the user experience (UX) when determining the navigation structure.

An example of a Parliament's website sitemap can be found in **Appendix C**.

Should Parliaments develop smart phone Apps for public access?

When considering what platform and channel to use to engage with a wide audience it is important to factor in what is the most popular tool being used by the public. In many jurisdictions across the Commonwealth, smart phones are used more actively than computers of tablets. There is then an argument to consider developing an application for downloading instead of, or as well as, a website. Apps can be more user-friendly and interactive.

However, it is important to consider the need to update Apps more frequently than websites, they also have to be suitable for various software types. Android and IOS being the most used. For the most part, Apps duplicate the content of the Parliament's website, but may have additional elements such as petitioning or submitting evidence. In 2019, the Sierra Leone Parliament developed such an App. See p.17 for more information.

How can traditional media engage the public?

Traditional media (radio, television, press) still plays a role in parliamentary communications and engagement.

It is a method for reaching high numbers of people with, most often, one-way information sharing. Traditional media activity is often used in conjunction with a two-way engagement activity to spread the word about an opportunity to get involved, share related reports and data or to celebrate the success of a project.

Importantly, getting your message out requires an electronic media distribution list, which can be drawn together from research or purchased from specialist media distribution companies, and the ability to construct a compelling and accurate press release. However, it is important to stress that in some jurisdictions there is a cost implication in paying the media to attend key activities that the Parliament is hosting.

Press Release: template¹⁸

Think carefully about the timing of any press release. Journalists and media outlets will need time to consider the story and how it can work for their publication and to hit their deadlines, particularly for print opportunities. To increase the likelihood of coverage, follow up with your main target media contacts by email or phone to ensure the information has been received and spotted, and to answer any questions. Some Parliaments and Parliamentarians have a media space on their website to host all their press releases, images and video clips, as well as links to useful reports and information that the media regularly needs or refers to.

Press Release From:	<i>Name and Logo of organisation.</i>
Subject Line:	**PRESS RELEASE**
Headline in subject:	
Top Line (<i>who, what, where, when, why and how</i>):	
Tell the story: 300-400 words. <i>One idea per paragraph. Keep short.</i>	<i>A short introduction should summarise your news in one paragraph – editors are busy, so make this catchy and newsworthy, whilst ensuring impartiality and integrity. Include: who (is involved), what (is happening/ has happened), where, why, when and what’s next.</i>
Para 1. Para 2. Para 3.	<i>Detailed information</i> <i>Give more details of your news in around four or five paragraphs. If you are releasing details of a new report or survey, consider what facts and stats are going to really grab a journalist and make sure they are easy to spot.</i> <i>Journalists, particularly those focused online, may need to lift text directly from your release, so try to write in a style that would fit in a newspaper or on a website. Use short sentences and paragraphs, plain English and avoid jargon or acronyms.</i>
Put in a quote: (<i>in italics</i>) <i>A quote should be one or two sentences long.</i>	<i>[Name] [Role/Job] said: “Include a quote from a team member, partner or Parliamentarian to share the news in their own words and give it a ‘face’.</i> <i>Think about the one or two messages you really want to land and include them here – journalists can’t change a quote!”</i>
Notes to editor: <i>This might also include who is available to interview and when they are free.</i>	
Press contacts: (<i>Name, mobile, email, etc.</i>).	
Press kit: <i>where to get it online.</i>	
Photos or videos: <i>what the press can use and any permissions required.</i>	
Time available:	

18. Extract from the CPA UK and BeSpoke Skills [Communications Handbook for Women Parliamentarians, 2018.](#)



CASE STUDY: PARLIAMENT OF CANADA GET INVOLVED WEBSITE

The Canadian House of Commons has an area of their website called “Participate”, and its overall website is a good example of how to signpost and draw together engagement opportunities in a clear, simple way for your users. Go to: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/en>



CASE STUDY: PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE APP¹⁹

In 2019, the Parliament of Sierra Leone’s Information Communication and Technology and Library Research and Documentation Departments collaborated with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy to develop an App. The free mobile app sought to strengthen the Parliament’s engagement with citizens on what the Parliament was doing and how they could get involved.

The App includes information on Members of Parliament, legislation, the Budget, Standing Orders and Online Forum and much more.

To find out more about the App, watch the following video: <https://vimeo.com/364245335>

Or to watch a tutorial on the App, visit here: <https://vimeo.com/364246562>



19. <https://www.wfd.org/2019/10/04/the-sierra-leone-parliament-theres-an-app-for-that/>

WEBSITE CHECKLIST FOR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES²⁰

THE BASICS



A BIOGRAPHY

You may want to provide this in different languages depending on the diversity of your constituency.



OFFICE LOCATION(S)

You can save constituents a step by embedding a map.



EMAIL

A 'contact us' form or listing your office's email shows you are available.



HOURS OF OPERATION

Citizens expect this information to be as easily accessible as a business's hours. If your hours change a lot, consider mentioning the core service hours. After all, there's nothing more disengaging than showing up to a closed office.

Where resources are available
Parliamentarians should have their own independent websites to share information with their constituents. Where such sites exist, its important to include, as a miniumum, some of the following elements.

Alternatively, Parliamentarians could have just a Facebook site, which can be more affordable to host and manage.

YOUR JOB



WHAT I DO IN PARLIAMENT

Constituents are most interested in hearing about what their elected Member does in Parliament and how they serve their constituents. Avoid using just party press releases. Keep content up-to-date.



WHAT I DO IN THE CONSTITUENCY

You can provide information on local issues through a focus on national issues. You can also report on local meetings.



WHICH COMMUNITY EVENTS I'VE ATTENDED

Telling constituents where you've been, and informing them about upcoming events you'll attend signals how accessible you are and accounts for your time.



WHAT SERVICES MY OFFICE CAN PROVIDE

Help constituents understand what services and assistance an elected representatives can provide. You can also provide links to government and local government websites.

20. The Samara Centre for Democracy, 'Tips for Elected Leaders' websites'.

The above illustration lists some of the things to consider when developing and populating content for a parliamentarian's own websites.





Social media platforms explained by channel²¹



This section covers the most common social media platforms. Their value and user demographics are always changing, which is why it's important to do your research before investing in – or dismissing – a particular channel.



Facebook

Facebook is by far the most popular social media platform. Its 1.88 billion daily active users are relatively well split in terms of gender and tend to be more balanced than other platforms in terms of age, although younger users (under age 30) are over-represented and older users (over age 65) are under-represented. Demographics will differ globally. Facebook is a commercial platform and targeted reach can be bought, but organic reach and growth can be limited. Facebook's reputation with some for inadequate policing of so-called "fake news" also makes it a potentially unreliable source of information which can impact its effectiveness for parliaments and parliamentarians.



Twitter

Short messages in real time is Twitter's business model. The downside is its off-putting reputation for being like the Wild West, with conversations potentially quickly spiralling into abuse. Twitter is a good platform to connect with people, but you'll need to manage it in real time and be on the lookout for abuse and misrepresentation. When used well, Twitter can be a valuable indicator of trends, sentiment and views, as it is a platform where users talk openly and regularly. However, as with all digital platforms, information found here must be viewed in the context of other channels, as Twitter will reach a specific demographic in your area.²²



Instagram

Instagram is less about conversation and engagement and more about images in the here-and-now. It can be a good choice for parliamentarians but is more challenging for parliaments. It needs a personal touch and a personality to drive it. Strong brands on Instagram have used eye-catching content and hashtags, and encouraged user-generated content to engage.



WhatsApp and Viber

Internet-based messaging apps like WhatsApp and Viber allow you to communicate with individuals and groups. The upside of these platforms is that they can be a good way to connect a group of people. They're also cheaper than conventional text messages because they use Wi-Fi or the data included in your mobile plan. The downside is that people can add you randomly to groups and the volume of messages can be overwhelming.

Telegram and Signal

Telegram and Signal are alternative instant-messaging services. Telegram's unique selling point is that it's built for security and speed. Signal, meanwhile, is both secure and open-source. Although they have much smaller user bases than WhatsApp, Telegram and Signal can be useful for parliamentarians who want to create small groups for sharing ideas and information. They can also be used for internal communications.

YouTube

YouTube is the most popular online video-sharing platform. It's a place for parliaments and parliamentarians to share short clips and longer pieces that can be linked up and connected to key audiences through other social channels. With your own well-branded YouTube page and a rich mix of video content, it's possible to create a strong following. Video is also a good way to add depth to the light touch of most social networks. Alternatives include Vimeo and DailyMotion.

Snapchat

More in the moment than Twitter and more about images than Instagram, Snapchat really only works if you can create strong, visually compelling stories that keep users following you and coming back to see what's going on.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn isn't a social network, but a network for business and professionals. It can be a good place for institutions and individuals to connect through blogs and posts about shared areas of interest. Although the platform is primarily geared towards recruitment, parliaments can use LinkedIn to build networks of professionals and keep them up to date on parliamentary business.

21. Information in this section except TikTok is copied from or informed by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Social Media Guidelines (2021) pp. 39–40.

22. See also Twitter, 'Campaigning on Twitter - The Handbook for NGOs, Politics & Public Service'.

Reddit

Reddit hosts many thousands of articles and links added by members. The power of Reddit lies in participation and conversation: you get little traction by posting content alone. To make it work, people must engage with your content and you with them. This makes it challenging for organisations. At the time of writing, the European Parliament remains one of only a handful of parliaments that has a strong Reddit presence.

Pinterest

Pinterest is a visual social network for people to share ideas and find inspiration. Users “pin” images to “boards”. It’s not an easy platform for organisations – especially parliaments – to work with. Using Pinterest successfully takes time and effort. It could be a useful place for sharing visually rich content such as infographics, and for resharing similar things that others have created about you (the resharing function is one of Pinterest’s key features).

TikTok

TikTok is an app for short-form mobile videos created by its users. There are 680 million users including a growing number of presidents, prime ministers, ministers, and official government accounts.²³ Like Instagram and Snapchat, people under 30 stand out as the primary users of TikTok.²⁴

Make sure you check local rules on which channels are considered secure to use in your area. Your digital or cyber security teams will be able to advise.

**Using social media: legal requirements, top tips and actions**

In 2021, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) published their Social Media Guide for Parliaments and Parliamentarians (the Guide), which is available [here](#).

The Guide has two parts; the first part develops your social media skills and encourages you to think about how things can be done. The second part highlights case studies of Parliaments using social media to extend their connection with the public.

Regarding legal requirements, the Guide states:

While legal requirements and limitations on the use of social media will vary, there will typically be rules governing language and hate speak. There may also be a ban on posting during election periods, as well as a requirement to disclose who is authorising content at this time. It’s important for parliamentary staff and parliamentarians to be aware of the current legal requirements and to ensure that these are adhered to.

In addition to legal requirements, there might also be guidelines that apply to the public sector or to members of a particular political party.²⁵

Particularly useful social media checklists have been reproduced as tables in this Handbook:

- Social media planning: the key steps for establishing and growing a social media presence.
- Responding on social media: including types of social media posts and suggested responses and actions to take when receiving positive or negative feedback.
- Measuring success of social media: outlining suggested engagement metrics.

Importantly, ensure that monitoring and moderation of social media channels can occur outside of business hours to avoid any potential public relations disasters.

23. A. Sandre, ‘Do world leaders and governments use TikTok?’ (March 2021).

24. B. Auxier and M. Anderson, Social Media Use in 2021 (2021).

25. Inter-Parliamentary Union, [Social media guide for parliaments and parliamentarians, p. 11](#).



Social media planning: checklist²⁶

Before you start	Objectives	What do you hope to use social media for and what is its value to Parliament?
	Integration	How will social media integrate with your other activities and communication?
	Value proposition	What can you offer in terms of resources and incentives to encourage the public to connect and participate?
	Calls to action	What do you want people to do when they connect with you through social media?
	Networks	What are the most relevant and popular platforms?
	Select the tools	Select online and offline tools that will best support your objectives, stakeholders and time frame.
	Budget and resources	Ensure that you have allocated the necessary budget and resources (technical and human).
Become familiar	Who else is there?	How are government departments, other public sector agencies, civil society organisations and even political parties using social media? How do they promote themselves? What do they do online?
	Identify influencers	Who are the popular users on social media in related fields? Can you connect with them so that they promote your new presence?
	Find out how things work	Pay attention to how different networks operate; the protocols and expectations (such as formality, interaction, participation).
Start small and grow carefully	Set up accounts and pages	Make them look professional and have enough seed content to be able to create some sense of momentum.
	Look and feel	What branding, text and images do you want to use? Consider photographs of people, buildings, videos, logos and links to existing digital content.
	Accessibility	Does your content have to be bi- or multilingual and, if so, is it best to duplicate pages or integrate content? Have you checked that what you are doing is inclusive in terms of gender, religion, culture and nationality? Has accessibility for people with disabilities been tested?
	Share content	Make it easy for people to connect with you. Set up integration between social networks, such as between Facebook and Twitter, and look to connect social media to your other digital resources.
	Promote and recruit	Use your existing networks and communication channels to promote a new social media presence. Ask those in your network to promote the new presence too.

26. Social media planning: Reproduced from the Inter-Parliamentary Union, [Social media guide for parliaments and parliamentarians](#) pp. 32–33.

Be active	Content is perishable	Have a plan for keeping your content fresh, relevant and up-to-date. Strive for continuous improvement and innovation.
	Plan ahead	Look at opportunities in the parliamentary calendar for which you can plan in advance.
	Listen	Be receptive to feedback and listen to people in your network. Use feedback to help improve and select new features or content based on what your network would like to see.
	Networks are viral	Share other people's content (where appropriate and relevant) and they will share yours.
	Encourage participation	Encourage people to comment by actively managing your presence and responding and acknowledging contributions from those in your network.
	Keep talking	Use the tools within the social network to keep people who have connected with you up-to-date and informed about what you are doing.
	Follow up	Once the engagement or event is complete, provide a response to let those who took part or are interested to know what happened. It's particularly important to show how their contribution helped to shape the outcome.
Constant improvement	Measure	Use analytical tools to measure activity on your social networks and to help you understand who your communicators are and whether you are meeting your (and their) objectives.
	Refine	Social networks are fast-paced and change quickly, keep looking around for new ideas and ways to improve. Don't be afraid to try new and innovative ideas if they align well with your objectives.



Responding on social media: checklist²⁷

Post type	Question(s) to ask	Action to take
Positive feedback	Is the comment useful to others? If yes:	Forward/retweet and consider responding.
Disagreement	Is the comment useful to others? If yes:	Forward/retweet.
	If no:	Ignore.
Question	Do you have the answer? If yes:	Respond with details.
	Can you find the answer? If yes:	Source answer and respond with details (if this will take some time, respond to say you're looking into it).
	If no:	Respond to say you don't know (you could ask if others have an answer).
Humorous	Is the comment positive and potentially fun/ interesting/ clever? If yes:	Forward/retweet.
Negative comments		Ignore.
Misguided or incorrect	Do you have the correct information or links to resources? If yes:	Respond with details.
	If no:	Ignore.
Intentionally misleading		Ignore.
Inflammatory or rude	Is it a one-off post? If yes:	Ignore.
	Is the poster persistently negative or rude? If yes:	Ignore.
	Does it breach the moderation or fair use guidelines? If yes:	Advise the user that the post breaches your guidelines. Consider reporting and blocking (particularly for repeat offenders).
	Have others complained about the post or user? If yes:	Consider reporting and blocking.
Abusive		Report and block
Spam		Report and block

27. Ibid pp. 34.

Measuring the success of social media: checklist²⁸

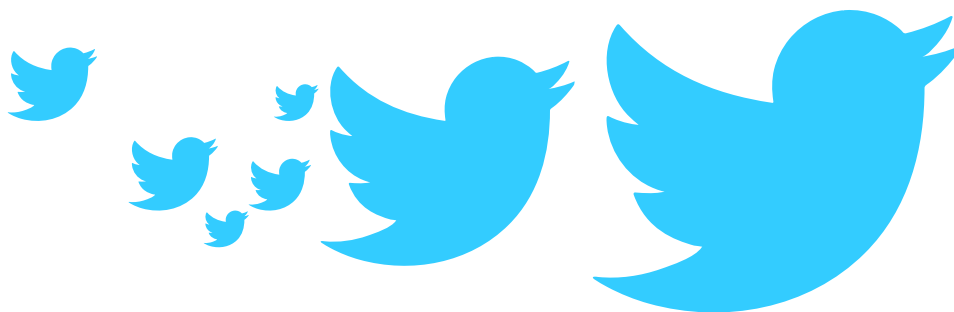
Goal	Metrics	Source
Awareness	Number of online mentions across all your channels	Social monitoring tool
	Number of impressions generated by your posts	Platform's native analytics tool
	Reach of a hashtag	Social monitoring or hashtag tracking tool
Engagement	Likes and comments	Platform's native analytics tool
	Shares and forwards	Platform's native analytics tool
	Video views	Platform's native analytics tool
	Subscribers (to blogs or mailing lists)	Blog or mailing list's native tool
	Number of people reusing a campaign hashtag	Analytics tool
Action	Click-throughs to deeper content	Google Analytics
	Document downloads	Google Analytics
	Your content embedded elsewhere	Social monitoring tool
Advocacy	Sentiment	Social monitoring tool

28. Ibid pp. 38.



Campaigning on Twitter: six top tips²⁹

Twitter's *Campaigning on Twitter, The Handbook for NGOs, Politics & Public Service* is a comprehensive and relevant resource about the platform and states the following six top tips:



TIMING MATTERS

Twitter is what's happening. If something happens in the world, you'll see it on Twitter. This makes timing one of the most important elements when using the platform. Engage in real time, don't wait until the moment has passed.



BE AUTHENTIC

Be you. Tell us what's happening and show us what you see through your eyes. Twitter gives you the platform to show who you are, as well as what you think.



ENGAGE

Twitter is a digital public square. It can be a great place to speak to your audience, to learn from them, and to gain insights from them. Engaging with your followers in conversation is one of the most rewarding aspects of Twitter.



SCHEDULE TWEETS

Some of your content can be pre-prepared and set to publish at a specific time. You can schedule Tweets in advance using TweetDeck or Media Studio, freeing you up to engage in real time.



TAP INTO THE CONVERSATION

It's often easier to join a conversation than it is to create one. Take a look at trending topics and what your community is talking about. Is there a new TV show or movie making a splash? Is there a holiday or event ongoing? Joining the conversation is better than interrupting it.



GET CREATIVE

Twitter has a variety of options for you to engage with your followers. Get creative and use a mix of media — text, photo, video, live, polls, emoji, and Twitter Cards — to find novel ways of getting your message across and being part of the conversation. Using rich media content is proven to drive higher engagement.

29. Twitter's Six Top Tips reproduced from *Campaigning on Twitter - The Handbook for NGOs, Politics & Public Service*, p.4.

Social media and young people³⁰

Social media is a fundamental part of life for most young people and it is a good place to try to connect with young people. However, this is not always straightforward. It is important to ensure you strike the right balance between reaching young people via the platforms they like to use, but doing so in a way that is authentic to you and them.

Use the right platforms

Young people don't like the social media spaces they use to connect with friends invaded by unwanted external attention. A platform like Instagram is a good middle ground, as it is used by variety of demographic groups for a range of different reasons and is very popular among young people.

Be personal

Young people take an interest in personal stories and find them more relatable. Instagram is a great place to share pictures of your everyday life and your parliamentary activity, e.g. opening a local event, hosting a debate with a partner group or visiting a project. Or you could link to short, digestible videos of what you are doing both in and outside of Parliament or even pose a question on a topic of interest to this audience to gather views. These will add a personal touch and make you more memorable.

Be persistent

Young people may not engage on social media immediately as this may not be a place where they expect to engage with people in authority. However, committing to continued content on social media platforms will increase the likelihood of future engagement. You can use data from your channel or feed, such as likes, views and comments to monitor what's working and what isn't.



30. Information in this section was inspired by and modified from HM Government, Suffrage Centenary - Youth engagement toolkit (2018) p. 10.





6. Practical Guidance: Formal Democratic Engagement

Opportunities to engage - Legislative Process

In the legislative process, the opportunities to engage citizens differ across the Commonwealth.

From the survey, Parliaments enable the public to engage in formal parliamentary practices through:

- **Attendance**, mainly **in-person** and more recently **virtually**;
- **Submissions**, primarily **written**, and then **orally** and via **video**;
- **Petitions**, both **physical** and **electronic**; and to a lesser extent through
- **Committees' public consultations, online consultations and comments.**

The illustration on the following page is a simplified representation of the key potential points of citizen engagement during the law-making process.

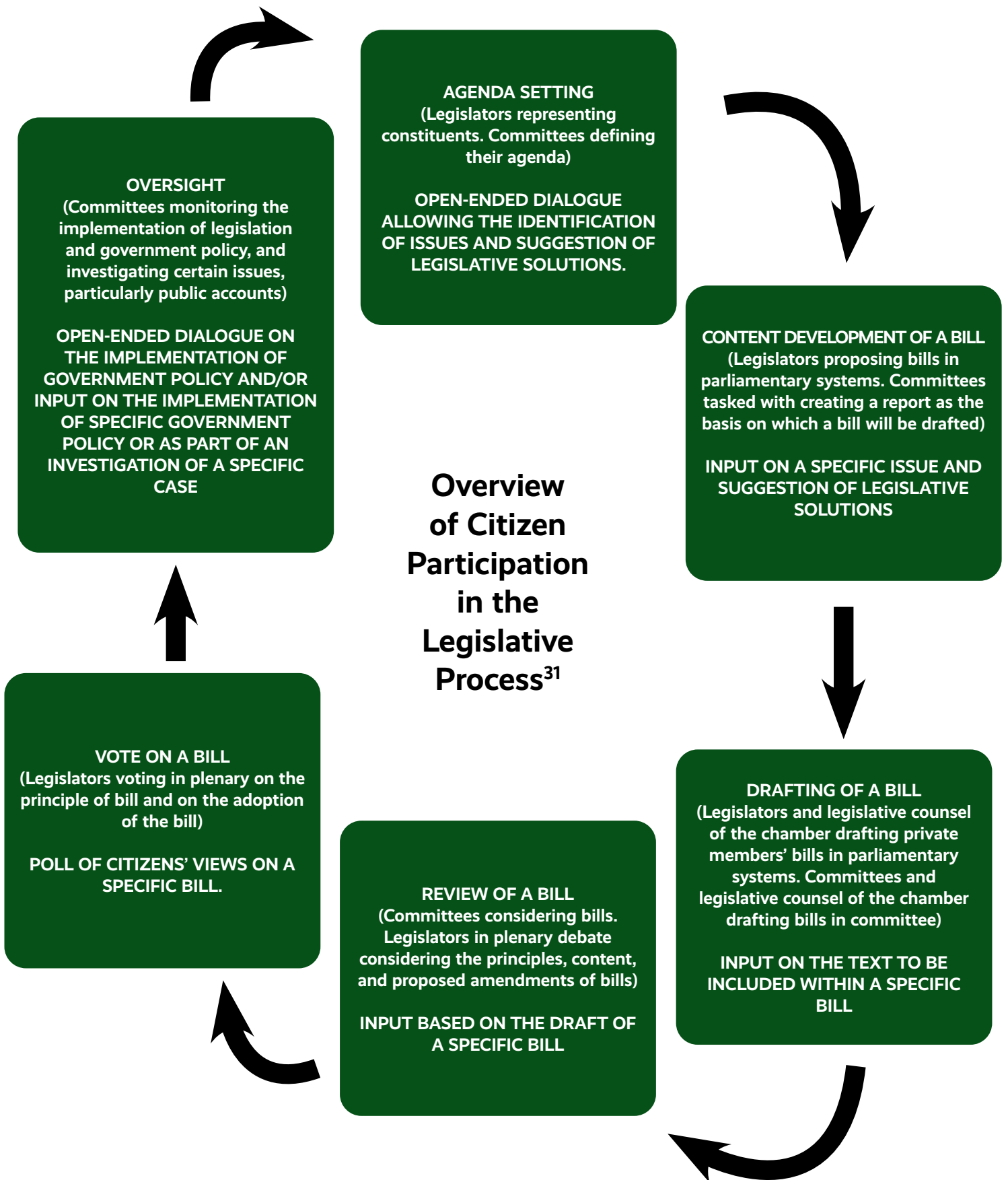
In terms of legislation, the public should be able to engage at various entry-points throughout

CASE STUDY: ANGUILLA - PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON DRAFT LEGISLATION

In smaller jurisdictions, it is possible for legislatures to have greater direct engagement and input from the citizenry on legislative matters. In Anguilla, there are frequent town-hall meetings with the public to discuss legislation before it is formally debated in the House of Assembly. This gives an opportunity for the public to hear from Ministers and legislators on the particulars of the law and how it might impact on the community.

The adjacent image is of Hon. Kyle Hodge MHA, Minister of Economic Development and the Permanent Secretary consulting with the public on the Bill on the Annual Levy Act 2021 in the House of Assembly. The public consultation was also live-streamed on Facebook for the wider public to hear and comment.





31. Source: modified from the ParlAmericas 'Toolkit: Citizen Participation in the Legislative Process' pp. 12-13)



the legislative process. This might be at the legislative drafting stage as part of an open public consultation phase. Civil society and other stakeholders can provide input. Although this might be undertaken primarily by governmental stakeholders, should Parliaments have draft legislative committees, these could engage with the public to source evidence.

When a Bill reaches the committee stage, Parliaments might take formal evidence again when determining potential amendments. Public engagement should always be systematically embedded in committee procedure as standard.

Some governments have a tendency to try to push through legislation at great speed, which not only hinders parliamentary scrutiny, it also denies the public the opportunity to have their views heard and listened to. Parliaments and business managers must bear this in mind when timetabling legislative stages.

For Parliamentarians in particular, prior to Report or Third Reading stages, Members might speak to their constituents in an informal sense to consider views before deciding on how to vote.

In the Post-Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) stage, once legislation has been passed and is being implemented by the government or wider stakeholders, public views should also be considered. If the PLS is being conducted by committees, then again time should be given to identify and seek stakeholder views.³²

Opportunities to engage - Budgeting Process

Opportunities to engage citizens are also possible throughout the budgeting process. As with the legislative process above, there are potentially many entry points. But again, at the initial stage, engagement will be conducted by the government as opposed to the Parliament. Nevertheless some Parliaments make an effort to educate and inform the public and civil society on the Budget, which is a complex area of policy to understand. Research teams, Libraries and Parliamentary Budget Offices provide briefings specifically tailored to external stakeholders as well as for parliamentary consumption.

Of course, at the PLS stage, or in this case scrutiny of public financial management, Parliaments, specifically Public Accounts Committees and Supreme Audit Institutions will engage external stakeholders for views on government spending to ensure it is being directed at the right people and for the public good.

The Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT) publishes the Participation Principles Guide, which provides a comprehensive overview of the strategies available to integrate public participation at every stage. The guide is available [here](#).

CASE STUDY: VANUATU AND UNDP PACIFIC - CITIZEN BUDGET AND BRIEFING

In 2021, the Parliament of Vanuatu hosted a briefing for CSOs on the 2020 Budget. The briefing highlighted the vital role of civil society in the process of public finance oversight.

Alongside the Briefing, a Guide was also produced by the Vanuatu Association of NGOs (VANGO) with the support of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organisations (PIANGO) with funding by the European Union. The Guide was created to increase the level of transparency in the use of public funds, facilitate citizen participation in budgeting processes, and simplify budget information for Vanuatu citizens as much as possible. The guide can be viewed [here](#).

Opportunities to engage - Committee System

The primary mechanism for parliamentary committees to formally engage with the public is through the requesting of written or oral evidence from committee 'witnesses'. Such mechanisms are frequently set out in committee terms of reference and/or Standing Orders. Witnesses can provide members of the committee with a diverse set of view-points. Normally such evidence is submitted via written briefings in advance of a committee hearing, but can also be supplemented by oral evidence sessions or hearings.

32. WFD's Post-Legislative Scrutiny: Guide for Parliaments pp26

33. [Civil Society a key stakeholder in National Budget Process UNDP article](#)

Committees can and do sometimes travel outside of the parliamentary precinct to hear evidence, hold consultations or visit locations in connection with their inquiry. This can be important to ensure a wider and more diverse group of people can be engaged and heard.

Committee engagement - not the usual suspects

To increase citizen engagement, Parliaments must look at diversifying both how citizens can engage and the pool of citizens that they engage with.

Many parliamentary committees accept emailed submissions or pre-prepared submissions uploaded via their website. Online form submissions to parliamentary committees also greatly encourage and simplify engagement and an example is included on the following page.

Research completed in 2014 examined 167 parliamentary committee sessions of the UK that featured 583 witnesses. The analysis assessed which people were invited to appear before committees as witnesses, explored how representative the group was, and what types of organisations had access to Parliament in this way.³⁴

Unsurprisingly, the public sector was the biggest source across committees as a whole, providing 41% of witnesses, compared to 18% and 20% for the private and non-profit sectors, respectively.³⁵ Starkly, the gender balance among the 583 committee witnesses was 439 men or 75% of the total.³⁶

The authors recognised that committees do not have a completely free hand when choosing witnesses. There is little the committee can do to ensure the representativeness of witnesses from government departments or chief executives of organisations. However, the authors did find gender disparities among witnesses that committees have much more control over, such as the independent experts (academics and other researchers), suggesting that committees contribute to excluding unrepresentative groups participation in parliamentary scrutiny.³⁷

Indeed more comprehensive research on witness diversity completed in 2018 found a clear preference for academic witnesses from universities with close proximity to London. In terms of the geographic location of witnesses generally, the author concluded that the evidence indicated that UK Parliament is not listening to the public from across the country.

“If Parliament seems to be listening only from small sections of society, then this raises the question as to whether select committees are engaging with the problems that ordinary members of the public face in their day-to-day lives.”³⁸

Ultimately the question is:

How can the committee increase participation of unrepresentative witnesses?

To better engage people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, Parliaments can:

- provide training for committee staff and Members on how to engage CALD communities;
- advertise inquiries through CALD community associations, foreign language newspapers and foreign language radio;
- create an outreach position within Parliaments for a Diversity Officer or CALD Liaison Officer who could work with parliamentary committees, the community engagement team and other parliamentary business units at engaging CALD communities and creating culturally appropriate and accessible information;
- provide media releases and terms of reference in different languages;
- utilise social media to reach younger CALD groups;
- develop best practice guidelines for committees;
- increase the use of visual information to explain instructions;
- use more plain English;
- create videos to convey information verbally and explain the inquiry process with subtitles;
- use interpreters at public hearings;

34. R. Berry and S. Kippin, *Parliamentary Select Committees: Who Gives Evidence?* (2014).

35. *Ibid* p. 5.

36. *Ibid* p.10.

37. *Ibid* p.14.

38. M. Geddes, ‘Committee Hearings of the UK Parliament: Who gives Evidence and does this Matter?’ (2018) 71 *Parliamentary Affairs*, pp. 283–304.



- hold community forums, co-sponsored by CALD community representative groups;
- run workshops for CALD communities on the inquiry process, how to make a submission and how to give evidence at public hearings;
- hold public hearings in areas with high populations of CALD communities;
- conduct site visits where CALD communities are located;
- translate foreign language submissions into English;
- obtain evidence through surveys and questionnaires; and
- have a 'champion' in CALD communities that can 'encourage people to participate and explain the inquiry process.'³⁹

A further study in the UK, led by Involve for the Outreach and Engagement Service at the Houses of Parliament produced a valuable resource guide on how committees should undertake engagement. The 2017 Report '*Innovations in Select Committee Engagement*'⁴¹ highlights the right engagement method to deliver the impact and information a committee needs; makes the method a success from the perspective of everyone involved, including both the committee and participants and offers a method library of nine engagement techniques committees could use to involve the public and stakeholders in their work. The report is available to download [here](#).

Committee evidence online submission form: example⁴⁰

Or complete the online submission form below

Use the editable form below to send a written submission. Attach supporting documents/files by using the UPLOAD A SUBMISSION option above.

Submission on Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Legislation Bill

Committee: Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee

I/We wish to make the following comments

[+ View keyboard shortcuts](#)

Paragraph B *I* U ☰ ☰ 🔗

I/We wish to make the following recommendations

[+ View keyboard shortcuts](#)

Paragraph B *I* U ☰ ☰ 🔗

39. P. Fung and R. Macreadie, *Engaging Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities in Parliamentary Inquiries* (2018) pp. 12–13.

40. New Zealand Parliament - [make a submission page](#)

Petitions: what to consider for public engagement?

Petitions call for a Parliament to act and are another form of direct public participation in democracy. Each jurisdiction has its own procedural rules governing either paper petitions or (if they have them) e-petitions.

The term ‘e-petitions’ can include emailed petitions, petitions produced from external web-platforms and petitions produced by or uploaded to internal parliamentary web-platforms.

Some of the issues regarding petitions for consideration by legislatures and their relationship to public engagement are identified below:

Other questions relating to the petition process include:

- Are there any **personal/legal conditions** that the petitioner must meet to submit a signature or petition? (e.g., citizenship or residency);
- What **form** should the petition take? (electronic or paper);

- Are there any **content restrictions?** (e.g., does not violate the law, nor offensive wording or advertising);
- In terms of processing, is there any formal **pre-screening** of the petition? Is it instantly published?;
- What are the **requirements for supporters of petitions?** (e.g., What equates to a ‘signature’? E.g., disclosure of full name, address, age and email and acceptance of data protection conditions); and
- Is there any **ability to amend** the contents once submitted? (e.g., are minor changes of title or changes in the main text possible?);
- Should the details of the petition, those supporting it be retained, and if so, how and for how long? What **archiving or data retention policy** needs to be in place?

Examples of best practice:

- [Germany’s Bundestag](#)
- [House of Commons Canada](#)
- [New Zealand Parliament](#)
- [The Scottish Parliament](#)
- [UK Parliament](#)

The opportunities of virtual Parliaments⁴²

The report *Virtual Parliaments: Principles and Practices* discusses Parliaments that since COVID-19 have chosen to continue their important work by establishing a ‘virtual’ or semi-virtual (hybrid) presence.

On the one hand, virtual parliamentary sittings offer greater **public engagement opportunities** and transparency for citizens online and using social media; however, it can also reinforce **inequality of access** where some sections of the community (i.e. rural and elderly) have disproportionately less access.

One concluding question the Virtual Parliaments Report poses is:

What aspects of virtual parliamentary procedure have increased public engagement with Parliament? How can they be preserved?⁴³

Issues for consideration by Legislatures	Relationship to public engagement
Thresholds for debating the petition – how many signatures are required before the petition is debated in the chamber?	Level of public engagement – directly related to numbers of signatures.
Process for a paper or e-petition? Is there a specific committee that deals with petitions? How can the public view the progress of each petition?	Trust and level of transparency – for accountability to be achieved, there must be transparency in the process.
Non-conforming petitions – What happens if the petition does not conform to procedural rules?	Level of public awareness and education – is the public aware of the rules for petitions. Where can they find them?
Responses to petitions – How is the petition finalised? What is the legislature’s response to a petition? Does it fall to the responsible Minister, the Government, or the Parliament as a whole to respond? Is the petition archived or retained?	Trust and level of accountability – remembering that transparency enables accountability.

41. [S. Allan, Innovations for Select Committee Engagement Report \(2017\)](#)

42. Information in this section comes from The Asia Foundation and Global Partners Governance, *Virtual Parliaments: Principles and Practices* (2020).

43. The Asia Foundation and Global Partners Governance, *Virtual Parliaments*, p. 16.



Notably, the Virtual Parliaments Report says that in practice doing things virtually may have advantages; it will not substitute for face-to-face meetings, due primarily to human and cultural reasons rather than the technology itself. The report suggests that virtual parliaments need to be different, and procedures and practices must be adapted.

“There may be an argument to slow down proceedings where possible, introduce clear ordering of processes, and limit simultaneous activities to a minimum, either for an initial period or in the longer term.”⁴⁴

The key principles for virtual Parliaments and parliamentary procedure from the Virtual Parliaments Report are below:

Key Principles for Virtual Parliaments

- **Accountability:** Identifying and instituting effective means to hold the Executive and other public bodies to account.
- **Relevance:** Enabling Parliament to continue to play a central role in public discourse.
- **Fairness:** Ensuring balanced representation in virtual arrangements for smaller parties, and those disproportionately affected by digital poverty, such as women, elderly or rural MPs. Indeed, digital poverty is a key issue in parliamentary and civic engagement broadly. A citizen’s ability to access digital platforms available depends on their personal, financial, geographic,

educational and social situation.

- **Transparency:** Allowing citizens meaningful engagement with their representatives and the institution as a whole, both individually and collectively.
- **Efficiency:** Devising procedures and practices which offer the maximum output for the effort expended.⁴⁵

Key Principles for Virtual Parliamentary Procedure

- **Identify critical functions:** It will be impossible to immediately replicate all the functions of a physical parliament virtually. A decision needs to be taken on how to deliver the most important functions, which can later be extended.
- **Build on existing resources:** An audit of existing capacities will provide a good foundation to begin adapting services and will highlight any shortcomings that may cause problems.
- **Provide support and advice:** Not all staff and parliamentarians will be ready to use new technology, so training and support will be critical. Clear new protocols for online debates and meetings will need to be identified, shared and continuously embedded into habits and behaviours.
- **Anticipate problems:** New processes always present challenges, and any problems during virtual sittings could be very visible. Be prepared with contingency plans and back-up options.⁴⁶

CASE STUDY: CHILE’S VIRTUAL CONGRESS INNOVATION

The National Congress of Chile and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) developed Virtual Congress <https://congresovirtual.cl/>, a web platform for digital citizen participation.

The Virtual Congress platform functionalities allow users to: (i) inform themselves about the bills in clear language; (ii) enter indications and vote for the indications of other participants; and (iii) participate in consultations made by the National Congress. For administrators, the platform can generate reports through integrated tools (data mining, automatic summaries, main subject cluster, etc.) that facilitate the visualization of citizen participation.

The Virtual Congress was developed in open-source to make it adaptable to any Parliament, be it unicameral or bicameral. The National Congress of Chile and the IADB is available to support the implementation of the Virtual Congress in other countries. It is expected to be able to collaborate and improve the platform among all. (Source including the open-source code: <https://code.iadb.org/en/tools/virtual-congress>)

44. Ibid, p. 4.

45. Ibid, p. 2.

46. The Asia Foundation and Global Partners Governance, Virtual Parliaments, p. 4.

SET UP VIRTUAL COMMITTEES

Parliaments should consider creating special Committees or holding special inquiries to look at the COVID-19 pandemic and how their government is tackling the issue. This can be done via remote meetings using easily accessible software and equipment.



PUBLISH REPORTS ONLINE

Parliaments should maximise the use of their websites by publishing Hansard, committee reports and legislation online in a timely fashion.



STANDING ORDERS

To accommodate new ways of working online, it may be necessary to update or suspend the Parliament's rules of procedure or Standing Orders. Or the Speaker may need to make special rulings to enable the Parliament to meet virtually.



IT SYSTEMS & CYBERSECURITY

Some short-term investment may need to be made to provide suitable equipment and software as well as ensuring IT staffing support is on-hand. Remember to also put in place adequate security and guidance as well to keep systems safe.



GOING VIRTUAL



Going Virtual⁴⁷

e-ETIQUETTE

Parliamentarians should remember to be patient with new systems and approaches. There will be the need for trial and error. However video-conferencing modalities will sometimes require speaking one at a time, muting when not speaking, not always having the benefit of seeing body-language, giving shorter speeches, setting up your meeting much earlier and waiting for sessions to start.

e-VOTING


Parliaments should look at ways for legislators to vote electronically. This can be done verbally via video-conference or via special e-voting software. With testing new systems it is important that Members have a chance to approve the process or not.



Typography of digital democracy⁴⁸


Key:  Those in power  Citizens
 Communication flows:  One-way  Two-ways

Informing citizens



Notifying citizens about and/or increasing access to upcoming debates, votes and consultations.

Examples: Live-streaming/broadcasts, Websites and apps, Transcripts and voting records.



Issue framing



Enabling citizens to raise awareness of particular issues and set the agenda for public debate.

Examples: Petitions sites.



Citizens providing technical expertise




Platforms and tools to tap into people's distributed expertise. Typically requires a higher level of domain specific knowledge.

Examples: Targeted calls for evidence and expertise.




Deliberation




Platforms and tools which enable citizens to deliberate.

Examples: Online forums and debating platforms.

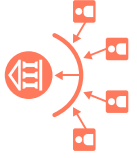


Citizens providing ideas




Enabling citizens to provide ideas for new, improved or future solutions. Typically builds on contextual knowledge and experiential knowledge.

Examples: Ideas banks and competitions.




Citizens developing proposals



Enabling citizens to generate, develop and amend specific proposals individually, collectively or collaboratively, and/or with state officials.

Examples: Collaborative documents.



Citizens monitoring and assessing public actions and services



Providing information about policy and legislation implementation, decision making processes, policy outcomes and the records of elected officials, to enable citizen monitoring and evaluation.

Examples: Open data, Open budgets, Transparency data.



Citizens providing information




Providing citizens with opportunities to share information about specific problems, or to understand individual needs or larger patterns and trends.

Examples: Citizen generated data.




Citizens scrutinising proposals




Enabling citizens to scrutinise specific options.

Examples: Open meetings, Real-time commenting.




Citizens making decisions



Enabling citizens to make decisions e.g. through referendums, voting on specific proposals or participatory budgeting.

Examples: Binding referenda, Participatory budgeting.



The infographic on the page 34 is from the CPA's *Toolkit COVID-19 Delivering Parliamentary Democracy* and summarises the key practical aspects of moving towards a virtual Parliament, which are:

- Set up virtual committees,
- Publish reports online,
- Review and change Standing Orders,
- Assess IT systems and cybersecurity,
- Foster e-Etiquette, and
- Establish e-Voting.

What do we mean by 'Digital Democracy'?

Digital democracy is the practice of democracy using digital tools and technologies.⁴⁹ A typology for identifying different aspects of digital democracy has been developed, see page 35. The typology is based on the different types of activity and takes power (i.e. decision-making authority) into account and communication flows.

Planning a successful digital democracy initiative

According to the research, a successful digital democracy initiative is not about simply taking an off-the-shelf tool and deploying tried and trusted communication methods.⁵⁰ The following is a summary of the extensive planning guidance provided in the paper *Digital Democracy: The Tools Transforming Political Engagement*:

Develop a clear plan and process

1. **Think twice:** don't engage for engagement's sake.
2. **Be honest:** what's involved and what are you going to do with the input?
3. **Digital isn't the only answer:** traditional outreach and engagement still matter.

Get the necessary support in place

4. **Don't waste time:** get support from decision-makers before you invest too much.
5. **Don't cut corners:** digital democracy is not a quick or cheap fix.

Choose the right tools

6. **It's not about you:** choose tools designed for the users you want, and try to design out destructive participation (for example, any potential for participants to be identified and bullied).

Online communications and Parliamentary privilege⁵¹

There is uncertainty surrounding applying Parliamentary Privilege to online communication. There is a need to protect vulnerable participants from possible negative consequences of being involved in a committee inquiry. Parliaments are also constrained by ensuring that their reputations are not damaged by using such methods.

In a parliamentary inquiry into the bullying of children and young people, an online survey (advertised on Facebook) was conducted to encourage children and young people to participate and make submissions to the Committee. In planning, one of the procedural issues raised was whether Parliamentary Privilege would cover the online survey responses.

The online survey was externally managed by a consultant who informed the survey respondents that there would be no identifying material provided to the Committee and that their de-identified quotes would be published in the Committee's report. In addition, the consultant removed potentially defamatory remarks, and the report was then used as a tabled document and published by the Committee. Furthermore, the contract with the survey consultant reserved the right to access raw survey responses to remove any doubt that the survey responses be considered a proceeding of Parliament.

In this case, because the information was not published in real-time, the privilege issues were minimal.

The privilege issues are more challenging and uncertain if the material is published in real-time. The requirements for committees to follow parliamentary procedures when collecting formal evidence, and the difficulty of applying these rules to online consultations, cannot be dismissed, for example, verification of locality and identity of persons contributing. If the information provided online is to be protected by Parliamentary Privilege, a controlled environment is essential.⁵²

49. J. Simon, T. Bass, and V. Boelman, *Digital Democracy: The Tools Transforming Political Engagement* (2017) p. 11.

50. *Ibid* p. 65.

51. Information in this section, unless otherwise indicated, is mainly informed by B. Duffy and M. Foley, 'Social media, community engagement and perceptions of parliament: a case study from the NSW Legislative Council' (2011) 26(1) *Australasian Parliamentary Review* 198.

52. J. Baczynski, 'Opportunities for greater consultation? House Committee use of Information Communication Technology: A Discussion Paper' 19 at 144.



Opportunities to engage - Lay Members

Another way in which Parliaments are embedding open participation and engagement with the public is through the employment of Lay Members. But what is meant by the term Lay Member?

“A lay member in the parliamentary context can be described as a member of the public (not considered a Member of Parliament), invited to sit on a committee, board, commission or other unit within the parliamentary system in order to bring an independent and external perspective to deliberations.”⁵³

The concept and history of having Lay Members or ex-officio members within parliaments date back to the 19th century. There are many arguments for having such

CASE STUDY: FALKLAND ISLANDS

In the Falkland Islands, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is established under the Constitution and stipulates that three out of five of the members of the PAC are lay members. The motivation behind this arrangement seeks to encourage scrutiny of the government’s financial decision-making through the aid of external members who are neutral actors and are neither politically motivated nor under the heel of the executive.⁵⁴

individuals serving in Parliaments, including augmenting the size of the membership of the legislature or having independent (non-party political) perspectives in committees or even the Chamber. But the best and most valuable reason is to ensure there is an element of public engagement, accountability and expertise within the institution or Parliament. Which in turn can help enrich debate and broaden contributions to deliberations.

Lay Members often serve on Public Accounts Committees, Parliamentary Service Commissions and can sit in the Chamber as independent or nominated Members.

Dependent on the jurisdiction’s Standing Orders and Constitutional provisions, such members might have privileges extended to them, although this is rarely the case.⁵⁵ To learn more about Lay Members and how they can be embedded into a Parliament, read the CPA’s Toolkit on Lay Members of Parliament. It is available to download [here](#).

Opportunities to engage - Citizen Assemblies

Although it can be argued that such Assemblies are outside of a formal democratic setting, Citizen Assemblies are included in this section because they can and are mandated and established by Parliaments and Governments alike to deliberate on contentious matters of national or local importance.

Citizen Assemblies, as their name might suggest are temporary panels, juries, conventions or conferences comprised of randomly selected citizens who meet to consider a matter of importance. Examples of the types of matters under discussion can range from electoral reform and reproductive rights to climate change.

The benefits of these Assemblies is that they are representative and inclusive and can empower the public to feel as though they have a say in democratic governance. However, the disadvantages is that they can fail if not given the right support and expertise and their findings and recommendations may not be binding on decision-makers.

CASE STUDY: JERSEY CITIZEN ASSEMBLY

In early 2020, the Jersey States Assembly (Parliament of Jersey) established a Citizens’ Assembly on Climate Change which was made up of 45 randomly selected Islanders. They took part in 15 virtual meetings between March and May. They considered the question ‘how we should work together to become carbon neutral’. Following their deliberations the Assembly published a report (with a summary published in four languages) which was then laid in the States Assembly. To find out more about the process and the report, head [here](#).⁵⁶

53. [CPA Small Branches Handbook on Lay Members of Parliament, pp. 3](#)

54. Ibid, pp. 7.

55. Ibid

56. [Report of Jersey’s Citizens’ Assembly on climate change](#)



7. Practical Guidance: Informal Participation

Informal participation refers to engaging public-facing activities delivered outside of a structured environment or process. It may aim to reach a broad public audience or a specific targeted community and could share information, gather views, inspire conversations or make other positive connection between Parliament and the public.

It differs from traditional communication-only activity as it should be an active rather than passive experience for the audience with a two-way element.

Examples of informal participation activity include running a **campaign** to help the public celebrate Parliament and democracy or to mark a key anniversary, delivering targeted **community engagement activities** such as a programme of local workshops or hosting **events or exhibitions**. These activities can be run at a range of scales and led either centrally by parliamentary engagement teams, or locally by Parliamentarians.

Why do we do informal participation activities?

Informal participation often facilitates an inspiring first step for participants to connect with their Parliament. It can also lead on to

the next step on their engagement with you... and the next.

For example, as a result of attending a heritage exhibition a participant may then visit your website for the first time, or while participating in a campaign they may meet their local representative, or following a conversation at a community workshop they may consider starting their own petition.

Each informal connection could be a small but significant step on a journey to deeper formal democratic engagement.

What is an engagement campaign?

A campaign is an organised set of activities (such as events, social media posts or workshops) across one or more channels with an end date and specific and measurable goal(s).

This goal could be to increase understanding or awareness, an uplift in a specific activity, or a behaviour change. For example, you may run a campaign to gain an increase in the number of hits on your petitions pages, to diversify the demographics of people submitting evidence to your committees, or to see an increase in people who understand the difference between Parliament and Government.



The GCS OASIS campaign planning framework

One model for planning a campaign is the OASIS framework, first developed by the GCS (Government Communication Service) in the UK.

A modified summary of this approach is included below and can be used in conjunction with the suggested metrics in the evaluation chapter in this Handbook. More information on the original GCS framework is available online [here](#).

Other things to consider when running a campaign:

- **Campaign lead:** assign a campaign lead to develop, manage and coordinate activity, make decisions and keep everyone on track.
- **Collaboration:** involve everyone who will need to participate from the start to gain buy-in and make sure everyone knows what they need to do and when (i.e. your campaign may need the support of colleagues in digital, communications, diversity & inclusion and Parliamentarians etc.).
- **Partnerships:** consider if a partnership could help you achieve your goal. If you are targeting a specific group, a partner may be the ideal way to reach that community. You may also want to co-create assets or co-run events. Or you may want to provide partners with the resources to run their own events as part of the wider campaign.
- **Alignment:** ensure your objective aligns with your departmental and/or top-level Parliament objectives. If it doesn't, think again about whether the campaign is needed or whether it should be adapted to align with those objectives.

Maintaining a campaign plan: example planning grid



CASE STUDY: TONGA - SHE LEADS FALE ALEA 'O TONGA

Since 2018, and as part of the Take The Lead initiative, the Legislative Assembly of Tonga hosted the She leads Fale Alea 'o Tonga gender youth outreach programme. The programme has sought to empower and expand young females' knowledge on the functions, rules, and protocols of Parliament. The annual programmes gives the opportunity for up to 30 young Tongan women and girls, between the ages of 16-34 to voice their perspectives on matters of national, and regional interest in a Parliament setting. To find out more about the programme and the Take the Lead initiative, follow the link [here](#).

If your campaign relies on different activities, channels or teams, a plan in the form of a planning grid managed by your campaign lead will be needed.

This will highlight the activity being run across channels, who is responsible and key milestones. The document can be saved in a shared location for all those involved to refer to. You could direct all changes through your lead (as below) or allow everyone to update their section, flagging changes. This document can also form the primary focus of a regular team check-in meeting.

Campaign	Example CPA Campaign #CPACampaign				
Shared objective	To engage the public with the CPA so that they do X by Y resulting in Z.				
Campaign lead	Contact xxx@xxx for any questions or changes to the grid				
Activity	Workshop series	Web content	Social media	Partners activity	Press
Activity lead	Priya	Michael	Angela	Winston	Ahmed
Timings					
Day/week/ Month 1	Planning for workshops 1, 2 and 3 completed. Confirm all bookings.	Campaign web pages go live.	Twitter & Facebook posts directing to new pages.	Partners A/B/C to Tweet about launch. Partner A to book for workshop 1.	Campaign launch press release sent with follow up calls (see media list).
Day/week/ Month 2	Workshops one and two held. Note: ensure evaluation sheets sent in advance.	Feedback from workshops one and two added to workshop section.	Tweet live from workshops one and two.	Event held at partner A community centre.	Place interview with J. Campaign MP in X newspaper.
Day/week/ Month 3	Workshop three held.	Add X resource to partner section.	Promote launch of X resource across all channels.	Send email to all partners with link to resource.	Focus on workshop three region for local coverage.
Day/week/ Month 4	N/A – workshops complete.	Change homepage to announce end of campaign on Friday.	Use images from workshops to celebrate close of campaign.	Send thank you email to all partners and request evaluation data.	N/A Note: once evaluation complete a press release can be shared.



Why do we run community engagement activity?

Community engagement is about going where different communities are and speaking directly with them to share information or gather their views. Today it can also mean engaging virtually in the right digital space for your audience, for example through a webinar, online forum discussion or social media Q&A.

Targeted community activity can be particularly effective when engaging with a group for the first time, for example with a community which hasn't historically participated with your Parliament.

There are a range of frameworks available to support community engagement planning. One example, 'The Five Rights', was originally developed from the Community Governance Training Programme in Maningrida, Australia in 2004. It had a particular focus on engagement with Aboriginal people. We have drawn out the transferable guidance here, as a useful starting point for making community engagement plans. You can find the full original workframe in **Appendix D**:



The Five Rights – an example framework for community engagement

1. Right **People** - Finding the right people to assist with your community work is the most important of the five rights. People from the community or who work with them regularly will help you develop a picture of their needs and culture.
2. Right **Time** - Your activity must align with community priorities. For example, ceremonies, employment, religious events or community business can often take priority.
3. Right **Place** - Consider – is the location suitable for the attendees? How will people get there? Do you need to facilitate transport? Are there toilets and tea/coffee facilities? Is it fully accessible? How will you get there, and do you need a back-up travel plan? Will the host partner or agency require a payment?
4. Right **Language** - Consider - what is the main language of the group you are meeting with? Do you need a translator? Would visual or graphic based content be best? Is your information written in plain language? Have you considered those with visual or hearing requirements? Have you made time in your event for the group to discuss or re-tell what you have said to ensure everyone has understood?
5. Right **Way** - Let the community you are working with inform all aspects of 'how' your activity should happen. When all this comes together – that is the RIGHT way. If you are not sure of the right way, go back to number one – find the right people and ask them.

Why do we host events and exhibitions?

An event or exhibition can be an impactful way to engage new or existing audiences. It could mark an important national parliamentary moment, such as a specific group gaining the right to vote, or celebrate a local event or change-maker, such as the anniversary of an important protest or speech.

Events and exhibitions also offer the chance to work with partners in the democratic, heritage or wider circles, as well as local groups.

They can provide great opportunities to work with the media to produce content reaching a much wider audience to share the message of your event in press, online or on TV. For example, powerful photography of local people engaging at the event can be collected and distributed with a press release.

Event & exhibition: checklist

Whether it's a national or local event, you will need to plan ahead, ideally six to twelve months depending on the size and scale. The below example checklist gives a sense of the areas to consider when planning.

Theme:	What is your theme? It may be an anniversary, showcasing a new service or celebrating an achievement.
Objectives / KPIs:	What do you want to achieve and what will success look like? Establishing this upfront will help you plan.
Target audience:	Who do you want to reach? You can complete an equality assessment to ensure you've considered all opportunities.
Audience input:	Can your audience input in some way before or on the day? For example, sharing their experience or reactions?
Dates/times:	When will you host it, have you considered how the dates will fit with other internal or external events?
Event Team:	Who will be responsible for developing and running the event both in advance and on the day?
Budget:	How will it be funded and what is the budget? Remember to plan at a scale that fits your funding.
Project Board:	Will your Project Board include internal and/or external stakeholders? What will their terms of reference be?
Venue:	Where will you host the event? At Parliament, at a local venue or at a partner venue?
Suppliers:	What items do you need, and how can you procure them? Think in detail, from lighting, to stands to designers and more.
Refreshments and facilities:	Are there free or paid for refreshments available and appropriate facilities?
Inclusivity:	Is the event inclusive? This may include considering subtitles, braille, languages, as well as venue accessibility.
Capacity:	How many people can your event hold and have you got all the appropriate facilities for the numbers expected?
Ticketing:	Will you need to book tickets in advance and if so, how will they be booked? Consider queuing options too.
Security/staffing needs:	Will your usual security and site staffing be enough, or do you need to bring in additional? Who will brief them?
First aid, Health and Safety and emergencies?	Do you need additional first aid or safety support? Does everyone know what to do in an emergency such as a fire?



Insurance:	Do you have the correct insurance in place for your event in terms of staffing, participants, equipment or display items?
Partnerships:	Might partners have items to display or share at your event? Could they offer a venue to use?
Marketing:	How will you market the event? Are your own channels enough or do you need to buy space online or in print?
Press / media opportunities	Could you gain coverage to increase the reach of the event itself? Do you need a media or launch event?
Democratic engagement opportunities:	Even if your activity is about an historic event or person, could you support your audience to take a formal democratic action too, such as providing tablets on site to register to vote?
Social media engagement:	Does your event have a hashtag? Could you have a frame set up for people to take a selfie?
Legacy opportunities:	What can you use or share beyond the event itself – can you make a film to live on your website for example?
Evaluation and feedback:	How can participants provide feedback? Can you have an electronic stand to gather data, or do you need a print form?
Post event thanks:	Who do you need to thank? This could be your own team, partners, supportive press contacts and suppliers.

Designing and branding campaign materials

When producing a campaign it is important to consider not only how the campaign will be communicated (see OASIS section p.39), but also in what shape, format and design any campaign materials might take. If producing materials, such as posters, leaflets, animated videos, infographics and letters for printing or publishing online, it is important to consider how they should look and feel.

Products will need to be suitable for a particular audience, so consideration to the age, language, learning abilities, visual capabilities, attention levels of the audience and the means of sharing the product. Producing a 20 page word document might not capture the attention of young children. Therefore time and effort should go into ensuring the product is right for the audience. Otherwise considerable money and effort might be wasted if nobody watches or reads what has been produced.

What is of course important is to plan and draft concepts and ideas first and to consult to ensure the best approach is taken. Establish a brief to identify the aims of the product. This will be essential if an external producer is going to develop the product on your behalf. A procurement/tendering exercise might also be required.

When designing and developing your product it is also important to consider some of the following:

- Content structure (is it easy to follow? Is it neat or chaotic?)
- Length (is it short, on one page or multiple pages?)
- Typeface and Font size (some are more easier to read than others)
- Colour (light text on dark backgrounds might be difficult to read)
- Images (do they communicate a message clearly?)
- Language (is the language simple or complex, does it have to be in multiple languages? If a video, will captions and titles need to be included?)
- Tone (is it serious, humorous, informal, etc.?) - think about making it engaging and inviting to read or watch.
- Logos and branding
- Size and format of product (is it A4 or portrait or landscape? If a video what size screen is it for?)
- Resolution (pixels per inch (ppi.) Or high definition (HD)?)
- Time (if a video, how long will it be? Different social media platforms have limits on video length).⁵⁷

Consideration should be given to how the products will be produced if done so internally. If there is no specialised design

57. Oxfam Australia, [What makes a successful campaign poster?](#)

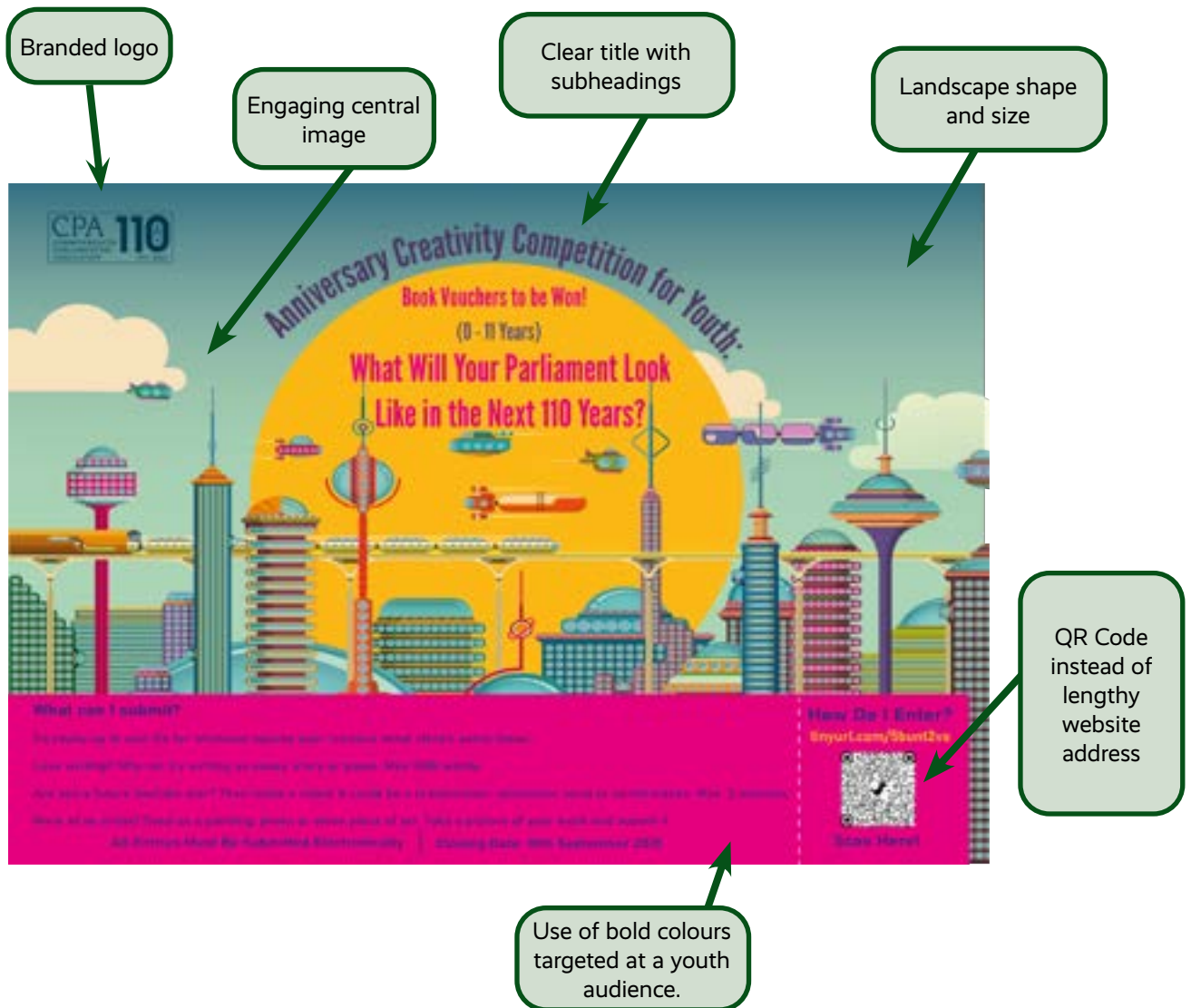
team within the Parliament, can others undertake the work. Software may have to be sourced and training provided. Helpfully there are a number of free resources which can be sourced online such as vector designs, animations, b-roll video. Although there will be a requirement to credit the designer, and for such materials to not be used for commercial purposes.

Some good sites to use are:

- [Freepik](#)
- [unDraw](#)
- [Pixabay](#)
- [The Noun Project](#)
- [Coverr](#)
- [Canva](#)

The Parliament might also have strict visual branding guidelines to incorporate and uphold as might partners supporting the campaign. If so, they should be added into any final outputs.

Below is a CPA poster for a youth competition. Elements were produced using Adobe InDesign software and central image taken from [Shutterstock](#).





8. Practical Guidance: Education and Academia

Why engage schools with Parliament and democracy?

Schools offer a unique opportunity to speak directly to young people *on masse* to increase their parliamentary awareness and knowledge, as well as their sense of empowerment as active citizens and future voters.

Many national curriculums will include an element of learning about Parliament and democracy delivered by teachers. But Parliament and Parliamentarians can play a role in bringing what is on the page to life through engaging events, projects and resources.

Beyond these practical reasons, the Commonwealth Charter, which expresses the values and aspirations that unite the Commonwealth, formally acknowledges the importance of young people as our ambassadors. Parliaments' engagement with schools and young people can play a key role in supporting value 16 'Importance of Young People in the Commonwealth':

“We recognise the positive and active role and contributions of young people in promoting development, peace, democracy and in protecting and promoting other Commonwealth values, such as tolerance and understanding, including respect for other cultures.”⁵⁸

Similarly, engagement with both academia and young people are part of the core questions for parliamentary self-assessment to monitor delivery of SDG 16 regarding the accountability and inclusivity of Parliament's work. Your engagement with both groups can help to answer these questions:

- To what extent does parliament meet with citizens, civil society organisations and **academia** to discuss the SDGs or development issues?
- Are specific efforts made to **reach out to younger generations**?⁵⁹

More widely, UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development programme sets out the ambitions for educational support underpinning the SDGs. This guidance has relevance for the role Parliaments can play in empowering our young people:

58. Commonwealth Charter: See point 13 'Importance of Young People in the Commonwealth': <https://thecommonwealth.org/about-us/charter>

59. Inter-Parliamentary Union [Sustainable Development Goals Self Assessment Toolkit](#)

“Learning must prepare students and learners of all ages to find solutions for the challenges of today and the future. Education should be transformative and allow us to make informed decisions and take individual and collective action to change our societies and care for the planet.”⁶⁰

Who can deliver school engagement activities?

The CPA Survey highlighted that an education programme can be run by a central education or learning department, or by individuals within Parliamentary teams. Alternatively Parliamentarians and their support teams can run activities through their own schools’ network on a local level. This has the advantage of utilising local knowledge and contacts to engage with the schools.

If resources are limited, consider prioritising areas or communities with traditionally lower parliamentary engagement to increase future take-up.

Planning a schools programme: top ten activities by scale

Depending on the size and funding of your Parliament, a schools programme can be established at a range of scales and costs. The below activities are taken from different Commonwealth Parliament programmes and are ordered in terms of scale of time and energy needed from the smallest to largest activity.

1. **Produce resources for schools:** resources can range from simple assembly or lesson plans and worksheets to short videos and animations that can be played in class to share a lot of information in a short space of time. Hot topics include elections and voting, debating skills, the history of Parliament, law-making, campaigning and change-makers.
2. **Launch a teacher newsletter:** a monthly or termly printed or e-newsletter that teachers can sign up to for information about new resources, links to bills or committee reports that may be of interest to their pupils and reminding them they can book a visit.
3. **Run a schools’ competition:** a competition, for example painting a portrait of an important political figure from history, can be a creative way to engage pupils. Schools can coordinate the competition as a classroom activity, with entries being sent to you for judging and winners being invited to a celebration event. This can also provide a good opportunity for wider press activity to cascade your message, and annual competitions will grow over time.
4. **Visit a school:** visiting a lesson or assembly in school, either as a Parliamentarian or a staff member, will put a face to Parliament. Around 30 minutes can be enough to leave a lasting impression: a 10-minute presentation introducing Parliament and your role, a 10-minute activity to bring Parliament’s work to life and 10-minutes for questions and answers. This can also be run via a video call if your schools have the technology.
5. **Host a Parliament Open Day for schools:** An annual Open Day can bring in many school pupils in one focused day, creating a memorable experience for a large number of pupils. The Open Day, run by the Republic of Kiribati House of Assembly, includes talks on the parliamentary system, procedures and rules and a tour of the key areas.
6. **Host a schools Parliament visit programme:** If you have capacity, bringing in classes to tour Parliament on a regular basis can include meeting their local Parliamentarian, taking part in an activity and a tour. A dedicated space for activities and breaks will be particularly beneficial.
7. **Run teacher training:** Some teachers tasked with covering Parliament and politics in the classroom, particularly those who are not subject specialists, may lack the confidence or training to tackle the subject. By providing webinars or events to share resources, answer questions and give tips, you can support them further. You could also connect teachers, for example, by setting up a closed social network group, possibly through Facebook. Here they can share ideas and ask questions or request support from Parliament.

60. [UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development](#)



8. **Support school councils:** like mini-versions of a Youth Parliament, school councils give young people a space to discuss school issues together and a voice to speak up to senior staff. They offer pupils a hands-on insight into Parliament and often involve all-school elections, and regular debating, voting and campaign activities. You could encourage schools to set up their own or, where they already exist, Parliamentarians can visit school council representatives to share their experience and tips.
9. **Establish a Youth Parliament:** A Youth Parliament is a great way to engage young people from an early age regularly and to gain the views of young people to input into the work of Parliament. You'll find some key considerations for setting up a Youth Parliament in this guide.
10. **Establish a Youth Committee:** Working with a group from your Youth Parliament, if you have one, or with nominated young people from local schools, you could run a committee to explore an issue of interest to young people. The process can mirror the steps taken in Parliament itself. For example, you could assign a junior clerk to help the committee set the terms of reference for their investigation, undertake research and invite witnesses. A report could be produced to showcase their findings, with recommendations being shared with the most relevant parliamentary committee and wider schools to discuss themselves.

CASE STUDY: LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO EDUCATION KIT FOR TEACHERS

This PDF guide ensures teachers can clearly see the relevant curriculum links to each topic, so they can confidently embed the information within their required teaching subjects. The pack contains information written in the right tone and language for young people to introduce students to parliament and government in Ontario. Information includes facts on the structure of government and parliament, the legislative process, key parliamentary players, voting, and active citizenship. It also includes a useful glossary of terms and links to wider schools resources, including lesson plans.

The resource can be downloaded [here](#).



Ten-minute classroom activities: four examples

Included here are a few ideas for quick activities that can be run in the classroom by a teacher from a set of notes, by parliamentary staff or Parliamentarians.

In particular, if you are sharing a presentation or running a Q&A at a school, adding a fun activity at the beginning or end will keep the pupils engaged and alert.

Activities are designed to introduce a key parliamentary concept in a fun and easy way. Before or after running the activity, be sure to draw out the concept with the participants to explain how it showcases the work of Parliament and its importance.⁶¹

1. Topic: **Voting** - This activity introduces the idea of voting in a simple way for younger pupils.
 - Call out quick ideas for new laws – some serious, some lighter. For example: ‘Cut school to two days a week’, ‘Ban petrol cars now’, or ‘Cats are better than dogs’.
 - On a video call, ask the group to vote by putting a thumb up for ‘aye’, or a thumb down for ‘no’ (use the language that is appropriate for your voting system). You can also use emoticons or icons from the chat feature.
 - In person, you can get people moving by allocating spaces in the room as the ‘aye’ and ‘no’ lobbies, with people staying in the middle if they abstain.
 - Add up the votes, see which side wins and briefly discuss the outcome as a group before moving on to a new statement.

2. Topic: **Campaigning** - Campaigns need to gain lots of support to be successful. This game involves running, stopping, and changing directions – great as a warmup.
 - Choose two people to be campaign leaders – each person is starting a campaign for a cause they feel strongly about (older groups may want to choose a real campaign theme).

3. Topic: **Making informed decisions** - This activity highlights that some issues can be very complicated, and there is not always a clear answer. Listening to people’s views can help you decide what you think. Parliamentarians need to do this every day.
 - Explain that spreading the word makes a campaign more likely to succeed. Their goal is to get as many people to join their campaign as possible (they are “it”).
 - When the campaign leader tags someone, they must hold hands and run to catch someone else. The line will get longer as more people are tagged.
 - The campaign group that moves successfully together and listens to one another will tag and collect more people for their campaign.
 - The game ends when everyone has joined. The biggest campaign group wins.

61. These activities have been adapted from the UK Parliament Week 2021 partner resources.



4. Topic: **Making change happen** - This activity will create an eye-catching poster for a new law or campaign that will change the world. After all, that is what the work of Parliaments can ultimately do!
- Choose an issue you feel passionate about. It could be a new law, such as 'Ban single use plastics' or a campaign, such as 'Rock the Vote'.
 - Use craft supplies to produce a powerful poster to spread the word about your idea. Make sure you include what you want to change and why it is so important.
 - You could create a gallery display of all your posters or even hold a vote for the winning idea.

TAKE IT FURTHER

Here are three more activities you could support teachers to run or include in your visit if you have a longer period of time to fill:

1. **Run a class or whole-school mock election** – a team can be assigned to run the election, including setting up polling booths, producing ballot papers and counting the votes, while others can run campaigns for nominated pupils.
2. **Produce a class or school manifesto** – writing a manifesto is a great way for young people to consider what is really important to them, what they want to champion and what they would want to change.
3. **Host a debate** – this is particularly effective if you use the same steps taken in a real parliamentary debate. For example, you may want to assign a Speaker and put in place any voting procedures used in your chamber. Select an issue of interest to the class and frame it as a statement – i.e. 'Train travel should be free for all young people'. Divide the group into two sides, 'for' and 'against' the statement. Give them some time to prepare their arguments, then let the debate unfold. At the end, pupils must vote. Discuss the outcome as a class.

CASE STUDY: WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT BOARD GAME

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament produced their own board game to use during public education workshops for participants in high school and young adults. The boardgame is called 'ORDER!' and can be run with a maximum of 5 groups of 10. Participants must 'quick explain', 'quick draw' or 'quick list' ideas on a range of parliamentary topics. Different game props are included, such as clue cards, score counters, writing and drawing pads. The team running the workshops has found it has highly engaged this age group and is a great way to bring to life ideas usually shared in a presentation style in a fun-filled, fast-paced manner.

Setting up a Youth Parliament: five actions

Setting up a Youth Parliament is a big undertaking, but it is also a great way to engage young people and demonstrate commitment to the future of democracy.

Some Parliaments run an ongoing programme with members elected every two or four years who take part in a range of activities. Others host a one-off event with nominated or elected young people, where they can come into Parliament to take part in a debate.

Five actions to consider for establishing a Youth Parliament are:

- 1. Coordinating:** ensuring the resources to coordinate a Youth Parliament are in place at the outset should be your first step. You may need an individual or team to lead, or you could work with an external partner which is already active in youth democratic engagement. Their role will include marketing to schools, coordinating elections (if necessary), organising events and ensuring views collected are shared with the right people.
- 2. Electing:** just as with a real Parliament, you may want to elect your Youth Parliamentarians. Decide your criteria, including what age they must be, and consider how often they will be elected depending on whether this is an ongoing or one-off event. Most Parliaments run youth elections through the school system with or without partner support. This introduces voting to a wider youth audience.
- 3. Engaging:** once elected (or nominated), you will need to plan rich engagement with your Youth Parliamentarians. If this is a one-off event, you can move straight to 'Hosting', but for a wider programme, an activity should take place at least once a school term and could include:
 - creating an annual 'manifesto' with issues chosen by the members
 - running in-person or digital member forums to share ideas and views
 - organising regional meetings with MPs and/or local representatives
 - selecting and running campaigns on youth issues
 - running annual national event/s where all members meet together
 - organising regular ways to share views back with Parliament.

- 4. Hosting:** taking part in an event in Parliament creates experiences participants will never forget. Your event should ideally take place in the debating space itself, with junior Clerks in attendance, official proceedings recorded and a Speaker participating. If possible, stream the event into schools for others to see how young people speak up on their behalf. They could debate one big issue, or give speeches on a range of youth issues, followed by a vote.
- 5. Listening:** if you have engaged young people in a Youth Parliament, they must be listened to. Ensure your Youth Parliamentarians have a means of sharing the views of young people with Parliament and Parliamentarians and that they receive a response and/or their input is shared via the correct formal route.

If you are considering setting up a Youth Parliament for the first time, speaking with an existing Youth Parliament would help you develop a more detailed plan.



You can contact the CPA to be matched with a Branch with an existing Youth Parliament who can advise further by emailing hq.sec@cpahq.org.

Working with young people: checklist⁶²

Whether you are working with young people (considered here to be aged around 13-16) in school or in a less formal setting, there are some transferable insights about engaging this group that can help you plan a successful activity with them.

Keep things personal

This age group is engaged by personal stories and content which relates to that individual. Young people have told us that this can make the work of elected, non-elected officials and Parliament more relatable and can build up trust with your young audience. You may wish to discuss your background and interests with young audiences, e.g. what inspired you to become an MP or the journey that led to you becoming one.

Focus on local issues

Research with young people suggests they are more interested in local issues that directly affect them rather than in broader national issues. You could focus on work you

62. Information in this section is inspired by and modified from HM Government, Suffrage Centenary - Youth engagement toolkit, pp. 8-9.



have done for the community and any plans you have for the future and use these as a springboard to discuss broader democratic and political issues. It is also a good idea to focus on what you can do for individuals, especially those in your audience. You could focus on a local suffrage hero – male or female – tell their story and what they did for their communities.

Focus on single issues

Young people want recognition of the issues they consider important. Tackle one issue at a time with a clear theme that the audience considers relevant. Talking about subjects the audience feels are significant or interesting will encourage connection. You can then use this example to explain decision-making structures in a way that is both pertinent and easy to understand.

Incentivise

To gain interest, a clear purpose, outcome or benefit should be explained at the outset of a session i.e. what will the young person gain from attending a session to speak with you? This might include opportunities such as a trip to the legislature chamber, but may equally be something more immediate that they can expect to gain from the session, e.g. a commitment to follow up any concerns that arose in the session, or an explanation of how they can help the community.

Show the impact

Young people like to know that their participation makes a difference, e.g. some Parliamentarians had raised youth issues through questions that they had asked in Parliament and other committee work and were able to demonstrate this to the young people in their constituency.

Use prompts

As some people can find it difficult to think of topics of interest on the spot, providing prompting stimuli or allowing time for people to discuss their ideas in groups is a good way to overcome shyness or potential mental blocks.

Make it part of a series

Young people may be more likely to engage once they have met you several times and become more comfortable with MPs, peers and local councillors and the work that they do. It can take several sessions to break down communication barriers. Where possible arrange follow-up meetings with schools or youth groups to emphasise a sustained commitment to youth engagement.

Follow up

Once you have completed a session, follow this up with a message on social media or a written letter. People appreciate a written recognition that you have taken their views on board.

Make it fun

Humour is a great way to break down barriers and create a more open space for discussion with young people. Don't be afraid to inject humour and informality into sessions outlined in this Handbook.

Make it fast paced and interactive

You could start sessions with quick-fire questions to get people engaged early. You should emphasise to the audience that they can ask you anything and questions do not have to be of a political nature.

What about younger pupils?

If you are working with children aged 12 and below, remember to go back to basics. Think about the key learning points you'd like them to take away, around three or so is enough at this age, and focus your presentation or activities on these. Posing questions is also a great way to get younger pupils talking and thinking.

They could be:

- **Membership:** i.e. Many Parliamentarians represent the people in their local area. They investigate and debate the big issues of the day and shape laws, as well as working in their community to support local people. Do you know who your local Parliamentarian is? You can contact your local Member with an issue that's important to you – what would you write to them about?
- **Voting and Elections:** Voting is an important way for all adults to have a say in how the country is run and by who. They take place in 'elections' around every four years and the party with the most votes becomes the Government. Why do you think it's important that everyone gets a vote?
- **Law-making:** laws are rules that everyone in the country has to follow. If you break a law there may be a penalty, including prison. It's in Parliament that laws are made. What laws do you know? What one new law would you make?

Welfare and Safeguarding

What is **ESSENTIAL** to consider when working with young people or even vulnerable adults is to have clear policies in place that protect such groups from the risks of neglect, harm or abuse, but also potential abuse of your own staff and team members. Such abuse can be physical, verbal or psychological in type. Whereas policies should be in place, it may also be necessary to offer training as well. Parliaments must also ensure that such policies apply to any agency or partner that they might work with when delivering an activity. For more information, head to **Appendix F** for a sample Safeguarding Policy.

Engaging academia with Parliament and democracy

Two-way academic engagement: check list

ENGAGEMENT IN

A placement programme for researchers to gain insight and share their knowledge within the parliamentary setting as part of their studies.

A facility or contact for academics to send data direct to Parliament to support briefings, committees and legislation. This could simply be a monitored email address or a dedicated role or team

A network of university external engagement teams – you may find your universities have an engagement or information sharing network you can tap into to connect to researchers and share opportunities.

Academic Fellowships: applications for projects can work both ways, with researchers approaching Parliament with their idea, or Parliament requesting support on specific projects.

ENGAGEMENT OUT

A dedicated newsletter or social media channel can alert researchers to opportunities and information, such as fellowships, key research, library briefing papers and calls for expert advice and data.

An online hub for sharing your own research including briefing papers produced for internal use is beneficial for any member of the public but most relevant to academics. The hub could also host pre-recorded talks from your own specialists.

A facility to request keynote speakers and presenters to speak directly to students of politics and wider subject areas. This could be a simple 'contact us' or booking form.

A training scheme for researchers to support engagement with live or pre-recorded seminars about why and how to engage with Parliament and the dos and don'ts for sharing information.



Engaging with academia is most successful when it is a two-way process. Academics will be able to offer as much to Parliament as Parliament can offer to them.

Who can deliver academic engagement activity?

For some, an academic liaison role or team sits within the library or information services. For others it is an ad hoc activity delivered within teams as needed.

The risk of local teams managing the exchange of knowledge with researchers is defaulting to contacting known researchers or institutions. This risks a lack of diversity of thought and expert perspective. An individual or team developing a wide range of networks can build a wider pool of expertise for Parliament to draw upon.

What are the barriers to engaging with the academic community?

One key barrier to engagement for academics is a lack of understanding of how to engage with Parliament and who to contact. At a minimum, a clear single point of contact and a web page with important information is needed.

Another barrier can be funding. Parliament may want to offer funding themselves, but often a researcher will be able to access separate funding from their sector. Providing evidence of how their work will have an impact will be important here.

CASE STUDY: UK PARLIAMENT 'KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE' AND THE DELHI LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RESEARCH CENTRE

The UK Parliament's 'Knowledge Exchange Unit' is a dedicated team supporting the exchange of information and expertise between researchers and the UK Parliament. You can find information about their work, a report on their first two years and links to researcher training and support online. They are always happy to share their learnings with other parliamentary teams. More information can be found [here](#).

The Delhi Legislative Assembly Research Centre (DARC) is also producing great work in this area, including a regular Researcher Fellowship programme which matches academics with Parliamentarians to conduct original research and data collection. More details, including the programme aims, expectations of fellows and criteria can be found online [here](#).



Participants attending the CPA Commonwealth Youth Parliament, held in Delhi, India in 2019

Offering internship and volunteer opportunities

Offering internships and volunteering roles is a great way to get extra support and offer a unique experience to the successful applicant.

Remember, an intern or volunteer is not a full member of staff, nor someone who can be asked to pick up just the jobs no one else in the office is keen to do. They fall somewhere in between and are with you on a two-way agreement. They will be supporting you with a range of tasks, but they will also expect to be gaining interesting and useful experiences and learning on the job too.

A good rule of thumb is that if you are anticipating setting out days and hours of work for your role, **this should be a paid opportunity**, not an unpaid volunteer role. If you have local rules on minimum wages or similar, ensure these are considered.

To make this a positive experience for both of you, a smooth-running recruitment process and a good plan of action as to what they will do when they arrive will be needed. You may even want to tailor the tasks given to suit your successful applicant's skills, experience and interests, such as involving a social media fan with producing your Twitter content.

Internship and volunteer recruitment process: ten steps

1. **Identify the role you need:** consider how it will support the function of your office, how long it will last and how it will be funded (an internship should ideally be funded, a volunteer role may be based on expenses only but should offer more flexibility and have less responsibility). Remember that unfunded roles can be an unsurmountable barrier for many great applicants.
2. **Write a 'job specification':** this should include clear tasks to undertake, and the skills and experience required, this will make up your criteria for selection too.
3. **Decide what sort of application you want:** this would usually consist of a CV and covering letter, but you may have an online form you want applicants to complete.
4. **Advertise your role:** just as with public engagement, advertising roles should consider equality and diversity to make sure that you receive a wide range of applications and create equal opportunities. You may want to consider local papers, websites and your own channels.
5. **Shortlist applicants:** ensure you review applications by referring back to the criteria set out in the advert and only moving forward those who best suit your needs.
6. **Interview applicants:** meet with your top applicants, making sure they know in advance what to expect so they can prepare. Ask around five or six questions based on exploring how they have behaved in real situations, such as 'Can you describe a time you have had to manage conflicting deadlines, what did you do?'
7. **Make the job offer:** have a contract or a letter of agreement written up to ensure both sides understand the requirements and payments associated with the role. You may also need to carry out security vetting or clearances (start these as soon as possible) and employment references for your records.
8. **Respond to all applicants:** applying for roles can be a time consuming and stressful activity. Make sure you send a polite email to all those who applied. People you met with would also appreciate feedback for future interviews.
9. **Plan their first day:** think about where they will sit (or if they will work remotely), give them a tour of the building and ensure they are introduced to the team. Share key information and get them started on some small tasks right away.
10. **Looking ahead:** Continue to support your intern with regular meetings and monitoring of their tasks and workload. Offer positive and constructive feedback regularly and remember to ensure they can do the fun things too, like watch a debate or take part in an internal event.



CASE STUDY: CANADA - PARLIAMENTARY INTERNSHIP SCHEME

Every year since 1970, the Parliamentary Internship Programme has welcomed 10 young professionals to Parliament Hill from September through June. The paid, non-partisan interns are selected through a national competition. Each intern works full-time for both an opposition and government Member of Parliament. During their internship, parliamentary interns meet with senior policymakers, diplomats, journalists, scholars, politicians, and leaders in civil society. The interns take part in academic seminars, write an innovative academic research paper, share their knowledge of Parliament with young Canadians, and take part in legislative study tours to Québec, Brussels, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Nunavut.

Find out more [here](#).

Parliamentarian internship tasks and skills: example list

Interns may undertake tasks such as:

- Responding to general constituency enquiries by phone or email (supported by example templates and responses as needed)
- Undertaking research on local or national policy issues
- Attending meetings with or on behalf of the Parliamentarian or the team
- Supporting with general office administration tasks
- Supporting with event administration tasks, such as travel bookings
- Supporting with simple digital tasks, such as updating web pages

Intern skills and experience could include:

- Ability to prioritise and time manage workload
- A sensitive and professional communications manner
- Strong research skills and attention to detail
- Proficient in basic IT packages
- Ability to work as part of a team
- An interest in politics, current affairs and helping local residents



9. Evaluation: measuring success and learning for the future

Evaluation should be planned from the start of any engagement activity and used throughout. Assigning a person or putting aside specific time for evaluation ensures it doesn't drop off the list.

For ongoing activities, such as launching a new system for receiving committee evidence or providing a new public information section on your website, data should be collected and analysed on an ongoing basis. This way, you can learn as you go and adapt your approach based on evidence.

For a one-off project, such as a public event or campaign, you may only be able to assess your data at the end. This is still valuable for both reporting on the project to your stakeholders and learning for the future.

Evaluation categories and example metrics

There are a range of evaluation models you can use. The one on the opposite page is based on four evaluation categories: Outputs, Reach, Engagement, Impact. It includes a selection of key metrics to consider recording and analysing for each category.

Alongside recording the facts and figures in a detailed slide deck or report, you may also want to produce a written narrative of the project to showcase what you did (and how) through a simple story supported by the key data. Keep a narrative short to make sure people read or view it in full. A document including images of around one to three pages works well, or a short film of up to three minutes.

You may also want to look at the 'return on your investment': what was achieved for the money spent. This could be estimated by dividing the budget spent on the activity by the amount of people reached and/or engaged overall. This will give you an indication of the 'cost per head' value of your activity. This can be a useful way to compare different activities, but be clear in your data that reaching some groups may be harder and more costly than others. Cost must be balanced with the importance placed on the engagement achieved or audience reached.



Category	OUTPUTS	REACH	ENGAGEMENT	IMPACT
Key question	What did you do?	Who did you reach? (passive)	How did the audience engage? (active)	What impact did you have? (linked to your objectives)
Example metrics	Recorded in figures and with a narrative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event/s held Content produced Information sent Social media posts Media coverage achieved Number of Parliamentarians involved. 	General reach figures measured via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Impressions Email open rates Event attendance Online participation (i.e. forum Q&A) Followers Evidence/information received Media / partner reach. 	Digital metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dwell time Downloads Completions (interactives / surveys) Click throughs. 	Consider here the outcome you wanted to achieve and build metrics to suit. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviour change Attitude change Increased understanding Increased uptake by a new / under-represented group Quality input into a parliamentary debate or activity. Process changed Partnerships built.
			Consider here whether you delivered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was planned. To time. To budget. 	
				Event metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of activity Outputs received (i.e. comments, evidence)
			Scrutiny metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number, quality and range of evidence / information received. 	

CASE STUDY: UK PARLIAMENT WEEK 2020 EVALUATION PRESENTATION

UK Parliament Week is an annual campaign which is described as ‘celebration of people power’. Kits are provided to schools, partner groups and Parliamentarians to run activities. The team running the campaign produce a detailed deck of results each year. An example can be seen below.

This year’s objectives included increasing: geographic spread, increasing Parliamentarian engagement, reaching diverse communities, and increasing marketing activity. The team used a participant survey to monitor change in perception and knowledge. The evaluation data was shared with internal teams and the key partners and influenced plans for 2021.





10. Engaging Key Stakeholders

Who are your key stakeholders?

Stakeholders can either be internal to Parliament or external.

Internal stakeholders may include:

- Clerks
- Committee or other Parliament Staff
- Committee Members
- Other Members, including Speaker or other officials
- Members' staff
- Hansard
- Catering
- Parliament Facilities and Grounds Management
- IT Management
- Cleaning staff (or contractor)

External stakeholders may include:

- Public service
- Public generally
- Youth
- Teachers and schools
- Civil Society
- Business community
- Media
- Academia
- Diversity and minority groups
- Special interest witnesses
- Social media followers
- Email subscribers
- Other Parliaments

Stakeholder mapping: example exercise

Analysing stakeholders can assist in prioritising resources.

Bring together all those working on the project or activity to identify potential stakeholders and write or stick them up onto a 'map' with four segments. The resulting table will paint a picture of who you need to engage with and how.

To illustrate, opposite is an example of stakeholder mapping or prioritisation for a parliamentary inquiry into public education infrastructure.

Keep satisfied

These are the stakeholders that need to be satisfied that the inquiry meets the Standing Orders and policies and procedures of the Parliament.

Monitor

In the example, staff in committees are to monitor similar inquiries in other Parliaments.

Manage closely

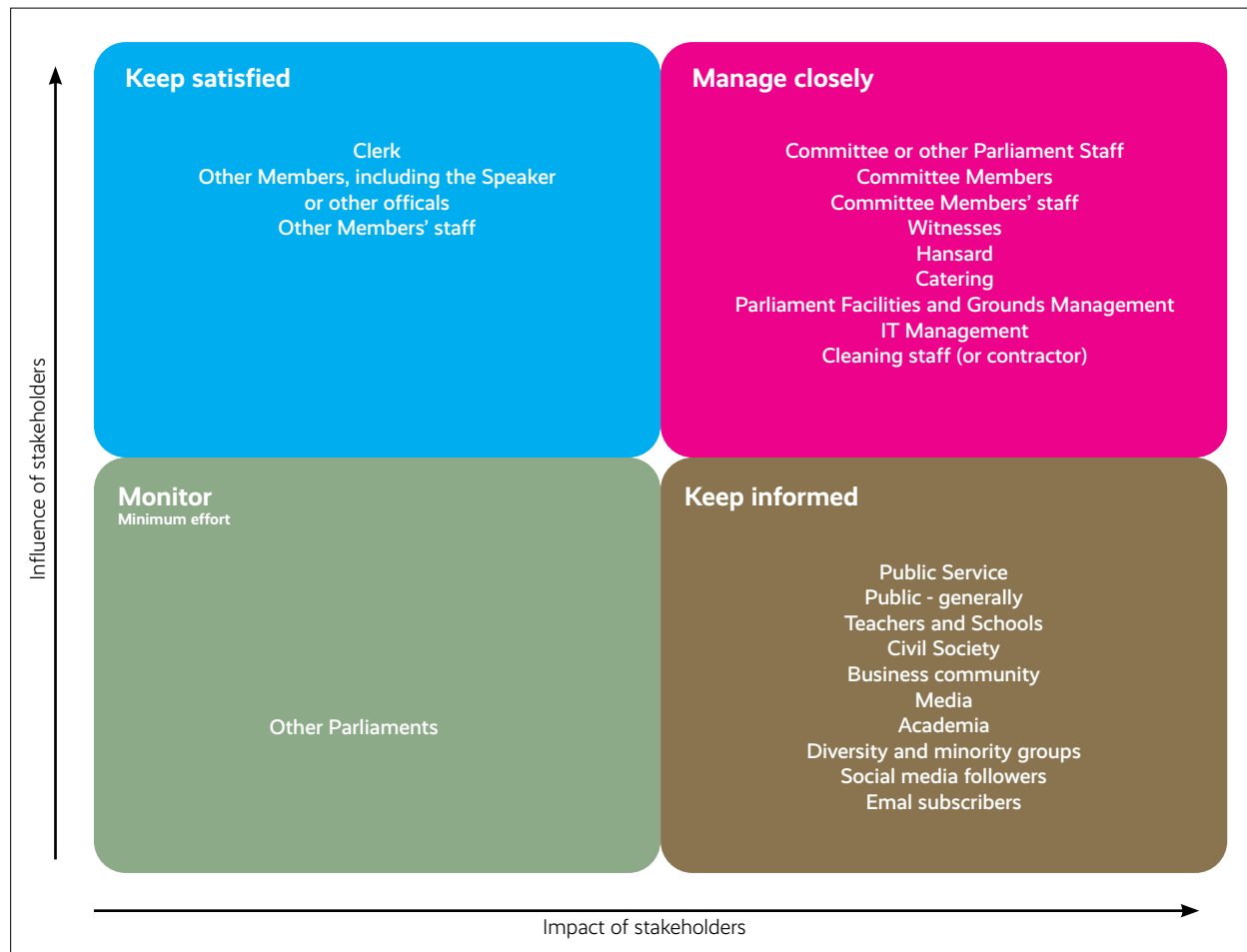
The stakeholders to manage closely are directly involved in the inquiry itself, either externally or internally to parliamentary



operations. The staging of the inquiry will impact these stakeholders, and they can also have a high influence on its progress.

Keep informed

The stakeholders to keep informed are those not directly involved in the staging of the inquiry itself; however, the inquiry will impact them. Broadly speaking, this is citizens generally. It is essential to ensure all lines of communications are open and that stakeholders are being updated as needed.



Improving Stakeholder engagement: three key questions

Building improvement strategies into daily tasks does not always require a meeting, an official review, or an external consultant.

A simple three-question reflection on how your stakeholders are being managed at any given time can reap a myriad of improvements in real-time. The three questions are:

- **What is working?** Simply do more of this;
- **What is not working?** Simply do less of this; and
- **What are the strategies going forward?** Brainstorm ideas here to maximise greater stakeholder engagement.

The reflection could be a few minutes of thinking at your desk, a lunchroom chat, or gathering views quickly at a team meeting. The results may make significant changes to the strategies already in place or to usual practice and may require managerial or committee sign off. Employing a regular reflective approach is the best practice.

Parliamentary Friendship Groups

Some Parliaments have Parliamentary Friendship Groups that are open to all Members. Parliamentary Friendship Groups intend to provide a non-partisan forum for Members to meet and interact with groups of stakeholders on matters relating to a particular interest.⁶³

Sector Parliaments

Legislatures such as the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and the Gauteng Provincial Legislature have Sectoral Parliaments for special interest groups such as youth, children, women, interfaith and people with disabilities that are convened as an opportunity for these sectors to engage with the Legislatures and Provincial Governments formally.⁶⁴

Working with Civil Society Organisations

Representatives from Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) can be paid employees or unpaid volunteers. The smaller CSOs are often not well resourced and are dealing with frontline issues such as keeping the vulnerable housed, fed, and safe. These organisations do have real-life stories that can bring a parliamentary inquiry to life and make the tapestry of the inquiry report richer. The real-life stories enable parliamentarians and the public to understand lived experience of the issue at hand.

Some tips for working with CSOs are:

- **Ask yourself how can we make it easier for CSOs to engage?** For example, can I send them a summary of the Bill or Inquiry Terms of Reference, so the CSOs are not using their resources to get their head around the issues.
- **Be honest about the impact of their input from the start.** For example, a CSO inputting into an inquiry may presume that the law or policy will change if they tell their story. This can include vulnerable people who are inquiry witnesses or a team from a small CSO that is not politically experienced. Parliamentary communications about the process must reflect the reality that, yes, their views will be taken into account by the committee; however, it is up to the government of the day to decide how this is taken forward. Their input is an important step.
- **Acknowledge the CSO** whenever you can. For example, thank them in your correspondence or conversations and ensure that committee hearing scripts also include an acknowledgement.
- **Increase your footprint organically.** Many CSOs are member organisations, and it may be beneficial to suggest that they may like to share the information with their members.
- **Offer available timeslots to events such as hearings firstly to CSOs.** Many CSOs have multiple responsibilities to some of the most vulnerable in our society and are often expending energy chasing grants for their survival. Parliamentary business may therefore be far down their list of priorities.

Parliamentary Monitoring Organisations

Although they are typically CSO's their work aligns very closely with Parliaments. PMO's usually exist as websites or Apps which seek to increase public awareness of what Parliaments and Parliamentarians are doing with the ultimate objective of enhancing transparency and citizen engagement. In jurisdictions where they exist, most Parliaments will support their endeavours by sharing information in a clear and timely manner, although this might not be universal. MySociety (a UK based charity) and the Indigo Trust has helped establish such PMO's in Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria and the UK.⁶⁵

63. For an example see: Commonwealth Parliament of Australia, 'Parliamentary Friendship Groups (non-country)'.

64. For an example see Gauteng Provincial Legislature, 'Sector Parliaments'.

65. mySociety, [Monitoring parliaments](#)



Stakeholder databases: example format

Ensuring that you manage your stakeholders administratively is important. Some Parliaments and Parliamentarians use a stakeholder register or database. This can be a simple spreadsheet, such as the example below, that captures the data required to correspond formally with the individual or organisation:

- **Contact name:** the formal salutation for the person
- **Position:** the position title of the person
- **Organisation name:** (if relevant)
- **Street address:** for location purposes
- **Postal address:** for correspondence purposes
- **Email:** email address
- **Phone:** Telephone number
- **Contact history:** record who from Parliament has contacted them, why, when and what the response was.

Other data that may be useful includes:

- **Type:** Whether the stakeholder is an individual or an organisation – e.g. a drop-down menu to select individual or organisation
- **Industry:** What industry they are in – e.g. a drop-down menu that captures the industry of the individual or organisation, e.g. private citizen, youth, Civil Society Organisation, media, academia, diversity and minority groups etc.
- **Notes:** Any notes that may assist future contact, e.g. “requires interpreter”

Across time your stakeholder database ensures that all your contacts remain in one place, are easily accessible and do not need to be re-entered for every activity. The spreadsheet can also be sorted, which can be very useful if you conduct a specific activity for a particular group.

If you are managing a large data set, you may need to invest in a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) System. This is an online database which can include many more fields and even attach documents, images and email responses to keep track of your contacts.

Ensure any personal or organisational data you capture and keep is aligned with your legal storage and usage requirements.

Stakeholder Register example

Contact Name	Position	Organisation name	Street Address	Postal Address	Email	Telephone Number	Type	Industry	Notes
Mr Joe Bloggs	Barrister	Chambers 1	1 Down St., London UK	PO Box 32, London, UK	joblo@js.com	0798111111	individual	justice	
Ms Laura Brown			2 Apple St., Edinburgh, UK	PO Box 69, Edinburgh, UK	Bravehurt@gmail.com	01201654321	individual	private citizen	requires interpreter
Ms Mini Mouse	CEO	Dishney Land PLC	1 Fairy Castle, Neverland, CA	PO Box 99, CA, USA	Minimo@dishney.org	01521231231	organisation	hospitality	
Dr No	Treasurer	SPECTRE	5 Bond St., Kingston, JAM	PO Box 007, JAM	Evilvillan@yahoo.co.uk	55378008	organisation	engineering	



11. Seeking funding and support

Whether it is for a large or small legislature, funding may be limited to conduct outreach or engagement activities, as these areas of work are still perceived as secondary to the primary function of legislatures. As such there could be the need to source external financial support for an engagement activity. This could be for a single event, an entire project, or a staffing resource to lead a programme or work stream. Before beginning to go down the route of identifying potential funding sources, it is important to identify and abide by any existing rules or policies in place by the legislature or public service sector. This is particularly important to ensure any process is conducted in a fair, open, robust and accountable manner. Remember Parliaments and Parliamentarians can be sensitive when exploring private sector funding.

What is a business case?

Producing a business case allows you to 'bid' for funding for an activity, but you may be competing with other priorities and engagement isn't always at the top of the list. A robust and clear business case that showcases the benefits your engagement activity will bring to Parliament can put you in the best position to gain the funding or resource needed.

Use evidence, such as research data on your audience or the impact of similar activities elsewhere to build your case and help prepare your submission for funding.

Keep information concise and clear whilst avoiding unnecessary acronyms or language: your approver may not have expertise in outreach and engagement.

Be persuasive, you might be competing with other organisations or entities for funding so ensure your proposal aligns with the priorities of the funder. Do your research on the funder, engage with a specific individual to get a clearer sense of what they might be looking for. Remember they will have their own interests and expectations to be met.

It is also important to bear in mind that the submission of a business case might be just one of a number of documents that will need to be submitted, such as what policies your organisation has in place - an environmental impact assessment, or risk and safeguarding policy. So keep in mind all the preparation which is needed in advance.



Writing a business case: template

This example can be used as the basis for an application. However, find out if your legislature or department has their own template that must be completed first.

<u>BUSINESS CASE PROPOSAL</u>	
Project name:	
Case prepared by:	
Project team (if known):	
Project sponsor:	<i>This is the agreed senior representative with overall project responsibility. They are also your advocate.</i>
Background:	<i>Include why your engagement activity is needed and how you identified that need – any evidence you have will help your case.</i>
Activity proposed:	<i>Include a brief overview of the activity, think of it as an ‘elevator’ pitch, with information to sell your idea.</i>
Objective/s:	<i>What do you want the public to learn or do and why it is important? Objectives should be SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely.</i>
Contribution to Parliament/ department strategy:	<i>Show how your objective/s aligns to your overarching strategies, showcasing benefits the project will deliver.</i>
Stakeholders and partners:	<i>Include how your activity will positively engage, involve or impact stakeholders and partners.</i>
Timescales & key milestones:	<i>Include the full timescale of the project, from development to being live through to evaluation.</i>
Funding/resource options considered:	<i>Outline in brief what options you have reviewed beyond this bid and why you have rejected them.</i>
Funding/resource option recommended:	<i>i.e. Include your funding or resource request and be clear what the budget or staffing would cover.</i>
Key performance indicators (KPI):	<i>What will be delivered for the cost invested? See the evaluation information for possible metrics.</i>
Out of scope (OPTIONAL)	<i>Include any areas for clarity that wouldn’t be funded or delivered by this business case.</i>
Dependencies:	<i>This could include whether the project requires support from another team or links to an event.</i>
Risks and mitigations:	<i>This section demonstrates that you have considered the risks from your activity, and also considered how you will remove them or limit the impact.</i>
Sustainability:	<i>Think about the long-term implications of the project. What will be the long-term impact.</i>
Action required:	<i>For example, immediate sign off or confirmation that the business case will be escalated.</i>
Deadline for response:	<i>This is important to ensure you get the go ahead (or know if funding is not available) in good time.</i>
Contact information:	<i>Make sure they can reach out to you for more information or for sign off.</i>

What are the benefits of partnership support?

Funding may also come from a suitable partnership. Although it would be rare for a partner to directly fund an activity run by you, support may come in the form of a partner delivering or providing a particular element (such as sharing a venue with you for a workshop) at no cost. They could also run an entire project on your behalf at low or no cost or provide benefits-in-kind.

There are a range of reasons it may be suitable for a partner to deliver your public engagement activity with you, including:

Benefit	Utilising a different voice	Accessing expertise	Combining effort	Increasing scale	Right place, right time
Details	Engaging your audience through an already trusted partner voice and/or brand may increase their likelihood of taking part or listening.	A partner may offer you specific expertise, information or insight that could benefit your activity planning or delivery.	Working with a partner with a similar goal may allow sharing of resources or combining of activity, offering better value for public money.	If your activity aims to reach a wide range of people, you may want to utilise a wide network of partners to increase reach.	A partner may be able to reach your audience when or where they are most receptive.
Example	If aiming to engage young people aged 18-24, partnering with a network of sports or music-based youth groups working with these age-groups may offer a trusted voice to share that message effectively.	If running a project to understand the needs of young parents in your area, partnering with a local university who have researchers specialising in parenting may offer access data or expertise to gain insight to shape your plans.	If running a project to gain views on healthy eating, working together with a network of local gyms already aiming to increase local health levels to run a series of wellbeing workshops together may benefit both projects and save money.	If running a local school competition, partnering with a large schools' trust that reaches several schools may ensure higher levels of participation.	If aiming to increase representation of women at your local constituency events, sharing information through local online parenting and women's issues forums may inspire them when they are most receptive.

Partners - who, what, when and how?

Before agreeing to a partnership, run an analysis of whether they are an appropriate partner for your project or activity. You could begin by asking these questions:

- Who do they engage with, and does this match your target audience/s?
- What's in it for them? (partnerships should give a two-way benefit)
- When are they available – does that fit your timeline?
- How many people could they help you reach?
- Are there any conflicts of interest between you and the partner's activity or staff?
- Have you ensured they have a strong reputation? (any risks in this area should be captured for your records and, if accepted, a mitigation plan put in place)



The CPA has a due diligence checklist for Parliament's considering sponsorship partnerships which is a great resource for undertaking detailed checks. You can find the resource in **Appendix E** of this Handbook

Also, consider:

- Have you allowed others who may be interested in partnering to show an interest? For example, you could put out a call for interested partners on your website or in a newsletter before selecting someone from a clear set of criteria. (see above)
- Have you considered how to ensure the partnership activity is being conducted fairly and transparently?



- Have you ensured that the partners are not given (or could be perceived as being given) any preferential treatment before, during or after the activity?
- Do you require additional budget to support the partnership? (for example, even if the partner is delivering an event for free on your behalf, do they require some posters to be printed by you to spread the word?)
- Does the partner want to 'co-brand' any activity, and are you/your legislature comfortable with that?
- Do both sides have a clear understanding from the outset of what is expected and when? This will ensure a smooth process. Your MOU (see below) can help here.

Partnership agreements: 'MOU' template

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) may be required between you and a partner, particularly if a partnership includes any financial exchange or co-branding. In this case, legal advice may also be required from the relevant Parliamentary team.

An MOU sets out how both partners will participate in the partnership and lays out expectations at the outset; however, it is not usually legally binding.

The below simple template offers some example headings for an MOU. For a smaller partnership, you may want to produce a letter including just the key information, completed by you and sent to a partner for checking, signing and returning for your records. If there are misunderstandings later down the line, an MOU or signed letter can be a useful reference point for conversations.

MEMORANDUM OR UNDERSTANDING		
between		
and		
Background:		
Project name:		
Activity proposed:		
Parliamentary Objectives:		
Partner Objectives:	<i>(This information helps identify why this partner is best placed to work with you to achieve your objective – it may include a related objective, value or ongoing goal)</i>	
Commitments - Parliament's:	<i>(This should be a list of what is being provided, such as any events, toolkits, social posts, resourcing, data, workshops). It may also include commitments, such as quotes provided by the partner to support the project)</i>	
Partners:		
Main contacts and details:	<i>Parliament team</i>	<i>Partner team</i>
Activity/Responsibility:	<i>Parliament team</i>	<i>Partner team</i>
Key milestones:		
Activity:	<i>Date</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Agreement term:	<i>(This may be the length of the project or could include an additional period before or after to offer flexibility. It may include review points.)</i>	
Funding details:	<i>(Include any funding agreed on either side here – or outline that both sides are committed to funding their own elements of the project for the avoidance of doubt)</i>	
Signed on (date):		
Signature:		



Appendices

Appendix A: public engagement strategy example framework⁶⁶

Overall vision

What is the strategic vision or ambition of the organisation as a whole? How does the parliament wish to be regarded? This needs to be a clear statement, succinctly expressed. It will be aspirational and reflect current priorities. As such, the vision statement may change over time. Think what words and phrases you want to be associated with the parliament. Examples:

- The public recognise the important role that parliament plays representing citizens' priorities and holding the government to account.
- Citizens value the work of the Parliament in developing the national economy, improving living standards, and achieving sustainable development goals.

Specific objectives

Having established a strategic vision, think about ways of getting there. What, specifically, will you do to work towards the vision? What do you want to achieve at this stage? Select a realistic number of key objectives. Examples:

- Make parliament feel more open and

accessible

- Improve online presence
- Establish stronger links with regions/civil society groups
- Produce better information about what parliament is doing
- Conduct more public consultation (doesn't happen as often as it should)
- Make consultations more effective (in terms of quality of output? reach? or impact?)
- Highlight proven impact on government priorities/direction
- Improve relations with media
- Improve political literacy education in schools
- Improve the level of voter registration

Key messages

Create two or three key messages that express the ambition and encapsulate the vision and objectives in short, easy phrases and in plain language. Communicate these key messages among elected representatives and staff. Repeat the messages often and consistently in communications. Examples:

- Parliament works on behalf of all citizens
- Parliament is the heart of our democracy
- Parliament is open to citizens and welcomes your views

66. A. Walker, Parliaments and Public Engagement, Guide to Parliaments, Paper 9. (Global Partners Governance, 2017) p. Appendix.



Audience and stakeholders

“The public” is actually many publics, many different audience groups. Who do you want to reach? Are some audiences more important than others in achieving your objectives? What information/research can help you decide? Decide who your priority audience groups are. Examples:

- young people (school pupils)
- campaigning citizen groups
- international community
- businesses
- families
- older people
- Are there other stakeholders you need to consider and encompass? (e.g. the media, political parties, international community, senior political/administration bodies)

Activities (or Milestones)

Have a longlist of desired activities, with rough costings. All activities should be aligned with your strategic goals, be aimed at your agreed audience groups. If they are not, why do you want to do them? Examples:

- Produce resources for a political literacy programme in schools
- Committees to hold three public consultations each session
- Pilot a new online discussion forum for a key bill
- Establish a (school) visits programme to parliament
- Roll out public awareness campaigns about parliament’s work
- Procure a new website
- Launch a “Democracy Day” (or “Parliament Week”) campaign

Resources and priorities

You will already have a rough idea about what activities you want to undertake. Be clear about how much budget is available, and what staff resource and skills are available. You will no doubt end up with too much to do, so you will have to prioritise. Example questions to help with prioritisation:

- Which audience groups are most important?
- Are there any quick wins that will help create impetus?
- Are there any activities that will play particularly well with budget holders and help secure more funds in future?

Evaluation

Often forgotten, and often the most difficult to get right – think about data analytics and evaluation in advance. Evaluating your activities not only ensures you get value for money, but also helps build the case for maintaining/increasing the budget in the future. Some ideas are below, you will find more information on evaluation metrics in chapter x

- How are you going to judge whether your activities were effective?
- What data are you going to collect about participants?
- Can you get qualitative and quantitative data?
- Consider a before and after survey?
- In-depth follow up interviews with a selection of participants?
- Are there official sources of data/statistics that you can track over time?

Communication channels

The audience you are trying to reach will dictate what communication channels will work best. Plug into existing networks, forums, and discussions. Use the communication channels, terminology and language appropriate to the audience group. Evaluate how successful the channels were. Some examples of communication channels:

- Face to face: open meetings, structured interviews, visits, focus groups, seminars and workshops, deliberative discussions, attending meetings/groups set up by other organisations (e.g. residents associations)
- Print: information leaflets, guides to parliamentary business, surveys, questionnaires, teaching resources for schools, opinion polls, public consultations
- Digital: parliamentary website, broadcasting media, television and radio, videos, community websites and discussion forums, social media

Action plan

The activities and evaluation sections then become your working action plan: more detailed for the first year, higher level for subsequent years. The plan will set out clearly: the activity and the goal it relates to; the audience it is aimed at; the timescale; the person or team responsible; the targets (from the evaluation work); and the desired outcome.

Appendix B: Principles of Parliamentary Openness - Extract from the Declaration on Parliamentary Openness⁶⁷

Promoting a Culture of Openness

1. **Recognizing Public Ownership of Parliamentary Information** - Parliamentary information belongs to the public; citizens should be allowed to reuse and republish parliamentary information, in whole or in part. Any exceptions or restrictions to this principle shall be narrowly defined by law.
2. **Advancing a Culture of Openness through Legislation** - Parliament has a duty to enact legislation, as well as internal rules of procedure and codes of conduct, that foster an enabling environment guaranteeing the public's right to government and parliamentary information, promoting a culture of open government, providing for transparency of political finance, safeguards freedoms of expression and assembly, and ensuring engagement by civil society and citizens in the legislative process.
3. **Protecting a Culture of Openness through Oversight** - In fulfilling its oversight function, parliament shall guarantee that laws ensuring government openness are implemented effectively, that the government acts in a fully transparent manner, and that government also works to promote a culture of openness.
4. **Promoting Civic Education** - Parliament has a responsibility to actively promote civic education of the public, particularly youth, by promoting understanding of parliament's rules and procedures, parliament's work, and the role of parliament and its members.
5. **Engaging Citizens and Civil Society** - Parliament has a duty to actively engage citizens and civil society, without discrimination, in parliamentary processes and decision-making in order to effectively represent citizen interests and to give effect to the right of citizens to petition their government.
6. **Protecting an Independent Civil Society** - Parliament has a duty to support measures to ensure that civil society organizations are able to operate freely and without restriction.

7. **Enabling Effective Parliamentary Monitoring** - Parliament shall recognize the right and duty of civil society, media, and the general public to monitor parliament and parliamentarians. Parliament shall engage in consultations with the general public and civil society organizations that monitor parliament to encourage effective monitoring and reduce barriers in accessing parliamentary information.
8. **Sharing Good Practice** - Parliament shall actively participate in international and regional exchanges of good practice with other parliaments and with civil society organizations to increase the openness and transparency of parliamentary information, improve the use of information and communication technologies, and strengthen adherence to democratic principles.
9. **Ensuring Legal Recourse** - Parliament shall enact legislation to ensure that citizens have effective access to legal or judicial recourse in instances where citizens' access to government or parliamentary information is in dispute.
10. **Disseminating Complete Information** - Parliamentary information available to the public shall be as complete as possible, reflecting the entirety of parliamentary action, subject only to narrowly and precisely defined exceptions.
11. **Providing Timely Information** - Parliamentary information shall be provided to the public in a timely manner. As a general rule, information shall be provided in real time. To the extent that doing so is impossible, parliamentary information shall be released publicly as quickly as it is available internally.
12. **Ensuring Accurate Information** - Parliament shall ensure a process to retain authoritative records and guarantee that the information it releases to the public is accurate.

Making Parliamentary Information Transparent

13. **Adopting Policies on Parliamentary Transparency** - Parliament shall adopt policies that ensure the proactive dissemination of parliamentary information, including policies regarding the formats in which this information will be published. Parliamentary transparency policies shall be publicly available and shall specify terms for their

67. The [Declaration on Parliamentary Openness](#) was officially launched at the World e-Parliament Conference 2012 in Rome, Italy, on the International Day of Democracy, September 15, 2012.



- periodic review to take advantage of technological innovations and evolving good practices. Where parliament may not have the immediate capacity to publish comprehensive parliamentary information, parliament should develop partnerships with civil society to ensure broad public access to parliamentary information.
14. **Providing Information on Parliament's Roles and Functions** - Parliament shall make available information about its constitutional role, structure, functions, internal rules, administrative procedures and workflow, as well as the same information for its committees.
 15. **Providing Information on Members of Parliament** - Parliament shall provide sufficient and regularly updated information for citizens to understand a member's credentials, party affiliation, electoral mandate, roles in parliament, attendance, identities of personal staff, and any other information members wish to divulge about themselves and their credentials. Working contact information for the parliamentary and constituency offices of members shall also be available to the public.
 16. **Providing Information on Parliamentary Staff and Administration** - Parliament shall make available information about its administrative functioning and the structure of parliamentary staff that manage and administer parliamentary processes. Contact information for staff responsible for providing information to the public should be publicly available.
 17. **Informing Citizens regarding the Parliamentary Agenda** - Documentation relating to the scheduling of parliamentary business shall be provided to the public, including the session calendar, information regarding scheduled votes, the order of business and the schedule of committee hearings. Except in rare instances involving urgent legislation, parliament shall provide sufficient advance notice to allow the public and civil society to provide input to members regarding items under consideration.
 18. **Engaging Citizens on Draft Legislation** - Draft legislation shall be made public and published upon its introduction. Recognizing the need for citizens to be fully informed about and provide input into items under consideration, parliament shall seek to provide public access to preparatory analysis and background information to encourage broad understanding of policy discussions about the proposed legislation.
 19. **Publishing Records of Committee Proceedings** - Reports of committee proceedings, including documents created and received, testimony of witnesses at public hearings, transcripts, and records of committee actions, shall promptly be made public.
 20. **Recording Parliamentary Votes** - To ensure members' accountability to their constituents for their voting behavior, parliament shall minimize the use of voice voting in plenary and shall use roll call or electronic voting in most cases, maintaining and making available to the public a record of the voting behavior of individual members in plenary and in committees. Similarly, parliament shall minimize the use of proxy voting and ensure that it does not undermine norms of transparency and democratic accountability.
 21. **Publishing Records of Plenary Proceedings** - Parliament shall create, maintain and publish readily accessible records of its plenary proceedings, preferably in the form of audio or video recordings, hosted online in a permanent location, as well as in the form of a written transcript or Hansard.
 22. **Publishing Reports Created by or Provided to Parliament** - All reports created by parliament or that are requested or required to be submitted to parliament, its offices, or committees, shall be made public in their entirety, except in narrowly defined circumstances identified by law.
 23. **Providing Information on the Budget and Expenditures** - Parliament has a responsibility to make public comprehensive, detailed, and easily understandable information about the national budget and public expenditures, including past, current, and projected revenues and expenditures. Similarly, parliament has a duty to publish information regarding the parliament's own budget, including information about its own budget execution and bids and contracts. This information shall be made public in its entirety, using a consistent taxonomy, along with plain language summaries, explanations or reports that help promote citizen understanding

24. **Disclosing Assets and Ensuring the Integrity of Members** - Parliament shall make available sufficient information to allow citizens to make informed judgments regarding the integrity and probity of individual members, including information on members' asset disclosures, their parliamentary expenses, and their non-parliamentary income, including interest, dividends, lease payments or other in-kind benefits.
25. **Disclosing Information on Unethical Conduct and Potential Conflicts of Interest** - Parliament shall enact clearly defined rules to ensure disclosure of information necessary to protect against actual or perceived conflicts of interest and ethical violations, including relevant information about members' interactions with lobbyists and pressure groups. Parliament shall also make public information on the final results of any judicial or parliamentary investigations into charges of unethical behavior, conflicts of interest or corruption.
26. **Providing Access to Historical Information** - Parliamentary information for prior sessions shall be digitized and made available to citizens in perpetuity for reuse free of legal restrictions or fees. To the extent a parliament cannot digitize and make available its own information, it shall work with outside organizations to facilitate public dissemination of parliamentary information without restriction. Parliament shall provide the public access to a parliamentary library in order to allow members and the public the ability to access historical parliamentary information.
29. **Guaranteeing Access by the Media** - Parliament shall ensure that the media and independent observers are given full access to parliamentary proceedings; the criteria and process for providing media access shall be clearly defined and publicly available.
30. **Providing Live and On-Demand Broadcasts and Streaming** - Efforts shall be made to provide citizens with real-time and on-demand archival access to parliamentary proceedings through radio, television and the Internet.
31. **Facilitating Access throughout the Country** - To the extent possible, access to parliamentary information shall not be restricted by geographic barriers. Although the use of parliamentary websites facilitates access to parliamentary information without geographic restriction, in countries where Internet access and usage is limited, parliament shall seek other means of ensuring public access to parliamentary information throughout the country.
32. **Using Plain Language** - Parliament shall ensure that legal or technical language does not serve as a barrier to citizens seeking to access parliamentary information. While recognizing the necessity of using precise language in writing laws, parliament has a duty to develop plain language summaries and similar tools to make parliamentary information readily available and understandable to members and citizens with diverse backgrounds and expertise
33. **Using Multiple National or Working Languages** - Where the constitution or parliamentary rules provide for the use of multiple national or working languages in parliament, parliament shall make every reasonable effort to provide for the simultaneous interpretation of proceedings and rapid translation of the parliamentary record.
34. **Granting Free Access** - Parliamentary information shall be available to citizens for unrestricted access, reuse and sharing free of charge.

Easing Access to Parliamentary Information

27. **Providing Multiple Channels for Accessing Information** - Parliament shall provide access to information about its work through multiple channels; including first-person observation, print media, radio and television broadcasts, and Internet and mobile device technology.
28. **Ensuring Physical Access** - Parliament and its plenary sessions shall be physically accessible and open to all citizens, subject only to demonstrable public safety and space limitations.



Enabling Electronic Communication of Parliamentary Information

35. **Providing Information in Open and Structured Formats** - Parliamentary information shall be compiled and released in an open and structured format, such as structured XML, that can be read and processed by computers, so that parliamentary information can be easily reused and analyzed by citizens, civil society, the private sector and government.
36. **Ensuring Technological Usability** - Parliament shall ensure technological usability of parliamentary information by providing clear instructions for the use of any online databases or tools that enable citizens to retrieve parliamentary information from the parliamentary website. To the extent parliament provides a user interface, it shall use best practices to improve its usability.
37. **Protecting Citizen Privacy** - Parliamentary websites shall have a clear and concise privacy policy to let citizens know how their personal information is being used. Parliament shall not employ membership or registration requirements that restrict public access to information on parliamentary websites or permit the tracking of personally identifiable information without explicit consent
38. **Using Non-Proprietary Formats and Open-Source Software** - Parliament shall give preference to the release of digital information in non-proprietary and open formats, and the use of free and open-source software applications.
39. **Allowing Downloadability for Reuse** - Parliamentary information shall be easily downloadable, in bulk and in well-documented formats to allow for easy reuse of the information.
40. **Maintaining Parliamentary Websites** - Even in countries with limited Internet usage, the maintenance and regular updating of a comprehensive parliamentary website is a vital aspect of parliamentary openness in the modern, interconnected world. Parliament shall ensure that parliamentary information is available in electronic format and shall regard online dissemination as an essential means of communication.
41. **Using Easy and Stable Search Mechanisms** - Parliament shall make it as easy as possible for citizens to quickly find desired parliamentary information by creating databases enabling both simple and complex searches through the use of appropriate metadata. Information shall be available in a location that remains constant over time, for instance, on a webpage with a persistent URL.
42. **Linking Related Information** - Parliament shall seek to improve the ability of citizens to find relevant parliamentary information by linking parliamentary information to other related information, for example, by linking references in a bill history to earlier versions of the legislation, to relevant committee reports, to expert testimony, to sponsored amendments and to the portions of the Hansard that contain the record of parliamentary debate on the relevant piece of legislation.
43. **Enabling Use of Alert Services** - Where possible, parliament shall provide citizens the ability to subscribe to services to alert them to certain categories of parliamentary actions through the use of email, SMS text messaging, or other technologies.
44. **Facilitating Two-Way Communication** - Parliament shall endeavor to use interactive technology tools to foster the ability of citizens to provide meaningful input on legislation and parliamentary activity and to facilitate communication with members or parliamentary staff.

Appendix C: Parliament example sitemap

This sitemap example is based on the sitemap of the Parliament of Singapore, available at: <https://www.parliament.gov.sg/sitemap>. It has been modified to include public participatory sections.

- Parliament Information
 - Functions
 - Sitting of Parliament
- System of Government
- The Cabinet
- Speaker of Parliament
- Leader of the House
- Government Party Whip
- Members of Parliament
- Select Committees
 - Committee of Selection
 - Committee of Privileges
 - Estimates Committee
 - House Committee
 - Public Accounts Committee
 - Public Petitions Committee
 - Standing Orders Committee
 - Special Select Committee on Nominations for Appointment as Nominated Members of Parliament
- Parliament Secretariat
- Facilities
 - The Chamber
 - Architecture of the House
- MPs
 - Find MP(s) in My Constituency
 - List of Current MPs
 - Constituency Boundaries Map
 - MP Composite Photos
- Parliamentary Business
 - Official Reports (Parl Debates)
 - Bills Introduced
 - Votes and Proceedings
 - Order Paper
 - Papers Presented to Parliament
 - Standing Orders
 - Glossary
- How Do I Get Involved
 - Learn About Parliament
 - How Members of the Public Can Influence Decisions
 - Subscribe
 - What's New
- Have Your Say
 - Making a submission
 - Starting a petition
 - Current petitions
 - General Feedback
- Newsroom
 - Speaker's Blog
 - Events
 - Press Releases
- Visit & Learn
 - Visiting
 - My Parliament Journey
 - Educational Resources
 - ParlConnect
 - Parliament Shop
- History
 - List of Former Speakers
 - List of MPs By Parliament
 - Sessions of Parliament
 - Historical Development
 - History of the Mace
 - Proclamation of Independence
- Contact Us
- Careers
- Privacy Statement
- Terms of Use



Appendix D: The Five Rights in full – A Framework for Community Engagement

This is a modified version of the “Five Rights” originally developed from a community governance training program in the Aboriginal community of Maningrida, Northern Territory, Australia and presented at the Garma Forum in 2004 by the, then, Maningrida Jobs, Education & Training Centre Aboriginal Corporation.

1. RIGHT PEOPLE

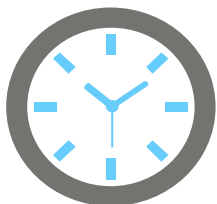


Finding the right people is the most important of the Five Rights. Communities can be socially and culturally complex. Developing a picture of significant community members or organisations related to your specific topic and who should be engaged is an excellent place to start. At a community level, you may need to liaise with local agencies such as the school or other service provider. Be aware that in remote areas often there is a high turnover of non-local staff. In many cases, a local person will have better knowledge to assist you.

Questions to think about

- From a community perspective, who are the right people (or organisations) to communicate to about this topic or issue?
- Who can help you engage with these people? (e.g., community agents or interpreters)
- If the topic is contentious, is an arbitrator or independent facilitator required?

2. RIGHT TIME

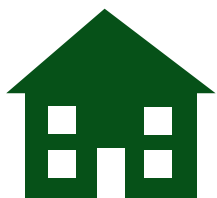


When organising community engagement, or visits, it is crucial to align with broader community priorities. Funerals, ceremonies, employment, and other community business can often take precedence.

Questions to think about

- Will it be better to do the engagement after hours?
- Who on the ground can provide the most up to date intel on community priorities?
- What is your plan B if the time organised needs to change quickly?

3. RIGHT PLACE



There are several considerations to ensuring the right place. Parliament may not be the most appropriate venue for some people, given the formality of the environment. People are more likely to feel safe, comfortable, and able to express themselves in an environment that is not intimidating.

Questions to think about

- Is the location suitable for the attendees?
- Is it accessible?
- Is an outside venue more appropriate?
- Is the relationship between the attendees and the host venue manager OK?
- How will people get there?
- Do you need to facilitate transport?
- Are there toilets and tea/coffee facilities?
- Are you bringing catering or buying local?

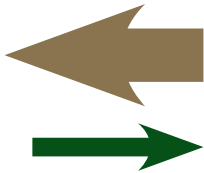
Continue overleaf.

4. RIGHT LANGUAGE

Clear communication is critical to effective community engagement. It is sometimes better with ESL clients to use visual or graphics-based information written in plain language. Be aware that in any group, there is likely to be varying degrees of comprehension. In many low socioeconomic areas, the incidence of hearing loss and visual impairment is more common. Allowing space in our communication for other participants to re-tell or translate our information is an integral part of being understood. Generally, when communicating with ESL clients face-to-face, speak clearly and check whenever possible to understand the message has been understood.

Questions to think about

- What is the primary language of the group that you are meeting with?
- Do you need an interpreter?
- What are the levels of literacy around the issue?
- Is there foundational knowledge required before engagement, and how will that be delivered?

5. RIGHT WAY

When all this comes together — That is Right WAY — When you are not sure about any of the rights, go to number 1 — Find the Right PEOPLE and ask them. The right way may not be the standard way, and that needs to be OK if you want to maximise participation.

Questions to think about

- Is there any gender or cultural relationships that will require modification of your standard engagement process? (e.g., separate events for males and females)
- Are there any cultural protocols that need to be observed?
- How will people know about the engagement? Do they use social media, or the local notice board preferred?
- Will participants need to consult with their families and other community members before giving their views?
- Will the host agency or participants require payment or reimbursement?



Appendix E: Suggested Due Diligence Checklist

Legislatures are encouraged to answer the below questions when conducting due diligence into the potential sponsoring organisation. If it answers yes to any of the below questions, it is recommended that the proposed sponsor should not pass the due diligence test and the Legislature should not enter into a sponsorship agreement with the potential sponsor.

Due Diligence Checklist		
YES	NO	
1. Industry & Location		
		<i>a. Does the transaction involve an industry with a history of anti-bribery violations?</i>
2. Organisational		
		<i>a. Is the potential sponsor new to the Legislature with which it is being engaged?</i>
		<i>b. Does the potential sponsor appear to lack sufficient capability, capacity or qualification to provide the services/goods to satisfy the engagement (to factor in such considerations as years in business types of services provided, staffing levels, etc.)?</i>
		<i>c. Is the potential sponsor reluctant to provide business references/Did the business reference responses provide cause for concern about the potential sponsor?</i>
		<i>d. Has the Legislature been asked/directed to use this specific sponsor? If so, by whom and why? (Details to be provided).</i>
		<i>e. Has the potential sponsor demonstrated a willingness to work without a contract or with a vaguely termed contract?</i>
		<i>f. Is the potential sponsor unwilling/hesitant to agree to anti-corruption/integrity certifications and provisions in an agreement?</i>
3. Transactional		
		<i>a. Do the concessions/requirements of the agreement appear unreasonably high/onerous for a sponsorship of this kind?</i>
		<i>b. Have there been any unusual upfront demands been made prior to any sponsoring taking place?</i>
		<i>c. Has there been unusual or indirect payments offered, such as:</i>
		<i>i. Payments through a bank account other than that in the entity's home country;</i>
		<i>ii. Payments from anonymous (numbered) bank accounts;</i>
		<i>iii. Payments from bank accounts containing corporate funds but held in the names of individuals;</i>
		<i>iv. Payments from shell companies created to receive revenues and facilitate transactions;</i>
		<i>v. Payments in cash rather than by cheque or transfer.</i>

Appendix F: Suggested Safeguarding Policy⁶⁸

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Introduction

Safeguarding is the responsibility that an organisation has to ensure that their employees and volunteers, partners, vendors, operations and programmes do no harm to children, young people or vulnerable adults (together referred to as 'vulnerable people' under this Policy); that they do not expose them to the risk of discrimination, neglect, harm and abuse; and that any concerns the organisation has about the safety of vulnerable people whilst carrying out its work, are dealt with and reported to the appropriate authorities.

It is also the responsibility that the organisation has for protecting its employees and volunteers when they are vulnerable, for example, when ill or at risk of harm or abuse.

Like any other organisation, has a duty to ensure that all its activities and functions, are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

As an organisation, it is important to be mindful of risks and safeguards, whilst ensuring a proportionate response. Everyone who comes into contact with children and vulnerable adults has a role to play in keeping them safe and ensuring that their own actions and those of others are respectful, well-meaning and not open to misinterpretation.

..... recognises it has an obligation to put in place all reasonable safeguarding measures to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults, including those with whom we work when undertaking activities.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide clarity to ALL on how they should engage with children, young people and vulnerable adults when working for, on behalf of, or in partnership with

It is also to help us make sure that employees, volunteers and other representatives are protected.

It is intended to provide us with a common understanding of safeguarding issues, develop good practice across the diverse and complex areas in which we operate and thereby increase accountability in this crucial aspect of our work.

Any breach of this Policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter, which may result in termination of employment or contract, withdrawal of volunteer status, and reporting to the police, relevant regulatory authority or other body.

Scope

This Policy is mandatory for all employees. For the purposes of this Policy, 'employee' is defined as anyone who works for or on behalf of, either in a paid or unpaid capacity. This therefore includes directly employed staff, trustees, contractors, employees and volunteers of sub-contractors, agency workers, consultants, volunteers, interns and all visitors to programmes. It also covers our partners who we expect to work with as a condition of their involvement with

This Policy demonstrates how will meet its legal obligations and reassure volunteers, employees, partners and members of the public:

1. On what they can expect to do to protect and safeguard vulnerable people
2. That they are able to safely voice any concerns through an established procedure
3. That all reports of abuse or potential abuse are dealt with in a serious and effective manner
4. That there is an efficient recording and monitoring system in place



Policy Statement

.... has zero tolerance against abuse and exploitation of vulnerable people. also recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that it has an obligation to put in place reasonable measures to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people.

..... works to the following key principles to protect vulnerable people:

- Everyone has an equal right to protection from abuse and exploitation regardless of age, race, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or having a child, gender reassignment, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- The best interests of the vulnerable person are paramount and shall be the primary consideration in our decision making.
- will take responsibility to meet our obligations regarding our duty of care towards vulnerable people, and take action where we believe that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is at risk or is actually harmed.
- will ensure that employees and volunteers are informed of our Safeguarding Standards.
- will ensure that all partners are informed and committed to work in compliance with our Safeguarding Standards.
- When working with or through partners or sub contracted agencies, will ensure that their safeguarding procedures are consistent and in line with the principles and approaches set out in this Policy.
- recognises that an element of risk exists, and while we may never be able to totally remove this, we need to do all we can to reduce it or limit its impact.
- respects confidentiality and has a responsibility to protect sensitive personal data. Information should only be shared and handled on a need to know basis, that is, access to the information must be necessary for the conduct of one's official duties. Only individuals who have legitimate reasons to access the information are allowed to receive it.
- commits to monitoring the implementation of the safeguarding Policy. This Policy will be reviewed every three years and earlier if necessary.

Cultural Sensitivity

.... seeks always to work in ways which are culturally sensitive and that respect the diverse nature of the people we work with. However, whilst we recognise that there may be a range of views which exist in respect of the best way to take care of vulnerable people and making sure they are protected, the principles and responsibilities outlined in this Policy must always be abided by.

Responsibilities

All employees, volunteers, consultants, agency staff, sub-contractors, partner organisations and visitors are obliged to follow this Policy and maintain an environment that prevents exploitation and abuse, and which encourages reporting of breaches of this Policy using the appropriate procedures.

All people working with will:

- Read, understand and adhere to the Safeguarding Policy
- Strive to promote a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse in all working environments
- Strive to develop relationships with all stakeholders which are based on equality, trust, respect and honesty.
- Place the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable people above all other considerations
- Report any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child or vulnerable person
- Report any concerns they may have about the behaviour of a representative in relation to safeguarding
- In a one-to-one situation with a child or young person, where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure that another adult knows the contact is taking place and why. If possible, ensure another adult is in sight and that the child or young person knows another adult is around.

All people working with will not:

- Sexually harass, assault or abuse another person
- Physically harass, assault or abuse another person
- Emotionally abuse another person, such as engaging in behaviour intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade
- Condone, or participate in behaviour, which is abusive, discriminatory, illegal, or unsafe
- Develop, encourage or fail to take action of relationships with children or other vulnerable people which could in any way be deemed sexual, exploitative or abusive
- Act in ways that may be violent, inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Agree with a child to keep a secret which has implications for their safety or the safety of other young people.

Managers

Managers at all levels are responsible for ensuring employees, volunteers, consultants, visitors and partner organisations are aware of the Policy and are supported to implement and work in accordance with it, as well as creating a management culture that encourages a focus on safeguarding. They must ensure that they are responsive, acting immediately if they become aware of any safeguarding concerns, and supportive towards employees or volunteers who complain about breaches in this Policy.

(It is suggested that a list of definitions are included to provide clarity on the types of abuses and categories of individuals)

68. The Safeguarding Policy is modified from the CPA Headquarters Secretariat's Safeguarding Policy.





References

- Arnstein, S. R., 'A Ladder Of Citizen Participation' (1969) 35 Journal of the American Institute of Planners 216
- Auxier, B. and M. Anderson, Social Media Use in 2021 (Pew Research Centre, 2021)
- Baczynski, J., 'Opportunities for greater consultation? House Committee use of Information Communication Technology: A Discussion Paper'
- Berry, R. and S. Kippin, Parliamentary Select Committees: Who Gives Evidence? (Democratic Audit, LSE Public Policy Group, The London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK., 2014)
- Civil Society a key stakeholder in National Budget Process UNDP article <https://www.pacific.undp.org/content/pacific/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2021/civil-society-a-key-stakeholder-in-national-budget-process.html>, accessed 29 June 2021
- Commonwealth Parliament of Australia, 'Parliamentary Friendship Groups (non-country)' https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Friendship, accessed 14 June 2021
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), CPA Teachers Resource (2017)
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Handbook on Lay Members for Commonwealth Parliaments (2020)
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures (2018)
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), COVID-19 Delivering Parliamentary Democracy: CPA Toolkit for Commonwealth Parliaments (2020)
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK (CPA UK) and BeSpoke Skills, Communications Handbook for Women Parliamentarians, 2018. https://www.uk-cpa.org/media/2454/update_final-handbook-for-women-parliamentarians.pdf, accessed 29 June 2021
- Commonwealth Charter: <https://thecommonwealth.org/about-us/charter>
- Congreso Nacional de Chile, 'Congreso Virtual' <https://congresovirtual.cl/>, accessed 29 June 2021

- Cresswell, J., *The Oxford Dictionary of Word Origins* (Oxford University Press, 2010)
- Duffy, B. and M. Foley, 'Social media, community engagement and perceptions of parliament: a case study from the NSW Legislative Council' (2011) 26(1) *Australasian Parliamentary Review* 198
- Ercan, S. A. and J.-P. Gagnon, 'The Crisis of Democracy: Which Crisis? Which Democracy?' (2014) 1 *Democratic Theory* 1
- Fung, P. and R. Macreadie, 'Engaging Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities in Parliamentary Inquiries' (2018)
- GCS, *The Benefits of Partnership Marketing*: <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/publications/delivering-excellence-in-partnership-marketing/#The-benefits-of-partnership-marketing>
- GCS, *Guide to Campaign Planning*: <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/marketing/delivering-government-campaigns/guide-to-campaign-planning-oasis/>
- Gauteng Provincial Legislature, 'Gauteng Provincial Legislature - YouTube' <https://www.youtube.com/c/GautengProvincialLegislature/videos>, accessed 15 June 2021
- Gauteng Provincial Legislature, 'Sector Parliaments' <http://gpl.gov.za/category/sector-parliaments/>, accessed 14 June 2021
- Geddes, M., 'Committee Hearings of the UK Parliament: Who gives Evidence and does this Matter?' (2018) 71 *Parliamentary Affairs* 283–304
- HM Government, *Suffrage Centenary - Youth engagement toolkit* (2018)
- Inter-American Development Bank, 'Code for Development' <https://code.iadb.org/en/tools>, accessed 29 June 2021
- Inter-Parliamentary Union, *World e-Parliament Report 2018* (2018)
- Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Social Media Guidelines* (2021)
- Inter-Parliamentary Union *Sustainable Development Goals Self-Assessment Toolkit*: <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/toolkits>
- Involve, 'Innovations for Select Committee Engagement' <https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/publications/practical-guidance/innovations-select-committee-engagement>, accessed 29 June 2021
- mySociety, 'Monitoring parliaments' <https://www.mysociety.org/democracy/pombola/>, accessed 29 June 2021
- National Assembly of Quebec, '2019_2023 Strategic Plan: National Assembly Administration' (2019)
- National Assembly of Quebec, 'Citizen Round Table - The Call for Applications' <http://www.assnat.qc.ca/tablecitoyenne/en/index.html>, accessed 10 June 2021
- New Zealand Parliament, 'Make a submission' <https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/make-a-submission/>, accessed 29 June 2021
- 'Opening Parliament', <http://www.openingparliament.org/>, accessed 12 May 2021
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 'Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave' (2020)
- Oxfam, 'Section 1 Part 3: What makes a successful campaign poster?' <https://www.oxfam.org.au/secondary-section-1-part-3-what-makes-a-successful-campaign-poster/>, accessed 29 June 2021
- ParlAmericas, *Toolkit: Citizen Participation in the Legislative Process* (International Secretariat of ParlAmericas, 2017)
- Parliament of Canada, 'Participate' <https://www.ourcommons.ca/en>, accessed 29 June 2021
- Rodriguez, C., Inter-Parliamentary Union, and United Nations Development Programme, *Parliaments and the Sustainable Development Goals: a self-assessment toolkit* (2016)
- Sandre, A., 'Do world leaders and governments use TikTok?' March 2021, <https://medium.com/digital-diplomacy/do-world-leaders-and-governments-use-tiktok-533c1a3bcb58>, accessed 17 May 2021



- Select Committee on Opening Parliament to the People, Report on Opening Parliament to the People (2017)
- Simon, J., T. Bass, and V. Boelman, Digital Democracy: The Tools Transforming Political Engagement (2017)
- Smith, G., Beyond the ballot: 57 democratic innovations from around the world ; a report for the Power Inquiry (The Power Inquiry, 2005)
- The Asia Foundation and Global Partners Governance, Virtual Parliaments: Principles and Practices (2020)
- The Samara Centre for Democracy, 'Tips for Elected Leaders' websites' <https://www.samaracanada.com/research/political-leadership/mp-website-analysis/tips-for-elected-leaders-websites>, accessed 19 May 2021
- Twitter, Campaigning on Twitter - The Handbook for NGOs, Politics & Public Service
- 'Virtual Congress', <https://code.iadb.org/en/tools/virtual-congress>, accessed 15 June 2021
- Walker, A., Parliaments and Public Engagement, Guide to Parliaments, Paper 9. (Global Partners Governance, 2017)
- Westminster Foundation for Democracy - Openness and Participation <https://www.wfd.org/approach/openness-and-participation/>
- Weymouth, R., J. Hartz-Karp, and D. Marinova, 'Repairing Political Trust for Practical Sustainability' (2020) 12 Sustainability 7055
- Work for an MP: <https://w4mp.org>, accessed 23 June 2021
- UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development>



Published by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).
Registered Charity Number 263147.

CPA Headquarters Secretariat
Richmond House, Houses of Parliament
London SW1A 0AA
United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7799 1460
Email: hq.sec@cpahq.org
Website: www.cpahq.org