2006

Public Deliberation:
A Manager's Guide to Citizen Engagement

Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer
President
America*Speaks*

Lars Hasselblad Torres
Researcher
America*Speaks*

IBM Center for
The Business of Government

Collaboration Series

COLLABORATION SERIES

Public Deliberation:
A Manager's Guide to Citizen Engagement

Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer
President
America*Speaks*

Lars Hasselblad Torres
Researcher
America*Speaks*

IBM Center for
The Business of Government

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

February 2006

On behalf of the IBM Center for The Business of Government, we are pleased to present this report, "Public Deliberation: A Manager's Guide to Citizen Engagement" by Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer and Lars Hasselblad Torres.

Individuals, groups, and non-governmental institutions have a growing need for information that allows them to make more informed choices in their personal lives as citizens, such as retirement planning options. There is also a need for them to engage in solving major public challenges, such as dealing with the community impacts of the Base Realignment Commission. In addition, citizens need to have opportunities to monitor governmental performance, such as the British approach to reporting the performance and progress of their society.

Traditional approaches to citizen engagement have been one-way, for example, citizen testimony at hearings. But in recent years, other approaches have evolved that foster an active, two-way dialogue between citizens and government. One early approach, in the 1990s, was Oregon Governor Barbara Roberts' town hall meetings across the state to craft a statewide plan for the future. This type of dialogue has been extended to many other forums: citizens in New York deciding the fate of the site of the 9/11 terrorist attack, citizens in the District of Columbia involved in setting priorities for their community, and citizens in Florida engaged in the restoration of the Everglades, among many other examples. When implemented effectively, the use of meaningful dialogue has led to greater community consensus around results, oftentimes speeding actions because there are fewer efforts to use legal proceedings to stymie initiatives.

There are new and exciting opportunities to engage citizens by informing, consulting, involving, and collaborating with them through a number of techniques; for example, the use of online surveys and peer-to-peer communication tools such as blogs and wikis. Many of these are now being piloted and used by states, localities, and nonprofits. There is also an increased interest by federal agencies. But the challenge of reaching those who don't already participate as activists or interest group members remains.

This report documents a spectrum of tools and techniques developed largely in the nonprofit world in recent years to increase citizens' involvement in their communities and government. It also highlights ways in which public managers can develop an active approach to increasing citizens' involvement in government at all levels. We trust that this report will be useful and informative to managers across the nation seeking new, innovative ways to engage citizens.

Albert Morales
Managing Partner
IBM Center for The Business of Government
albert.morales@us.ibm.com

Jonathan D. Breul
Senior Fellow
IBM Center for The Business of Government
jonathan.d.breul@us.ibm.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the United States, municipalities, states, and regions are coming to recognize that democratic governance can be revitalized through new opportunities and spaces for citizen participation. Governments are responding to rising pressure for democratic reform through a range of innovations that create new channels of engagement with the public and share decision making with citizens. In Washington, D.C., the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Action has instituted a biannual strategic planning process that ties citizen input to budget decisions. Six municipal governments in Connecticut use handheld devices to engage youth in the monitoring and evaluation of city services. Widespread cities like Los Angeles are experimenting with Neighborhood Councils to reduce political apathy, give citizens a larger say in the development of the city budget, and foster a culture of participatory and responsive local government. In major cities like Baltimore and Chicago, community involvement in neighborhood policing has helped to reduce crime while lowering costs.

These and many other innovations in participatory decision making together point the way toward innovative governance mechanisms that nurture the democratic impulse and achieve results.

The purpose of this guide to citizen engagement is to strengthen the foundation for participatory governance within the federal government, in particular in agency decision making. The guide provides examples of experimentation with new techniques to engage citizens at all levels of governance, thereby encouraging federal managers to see themselves as potential agents within this movement to reinvigorate democratic governance.

In this guide we hope to make the case for two key shifts in public administration. First is a shift from information *exchange* models to information *processing* models of citizen engagement. Second is a shift from citizens as *consumers* to active *shapers* of government policies and programs (Cornwall and Gaventa, 2001). We believe that these two basic adjustments toward viewing citizen engagement as fundamentally knowledge building and necessarily influential within the administrative process can have profoundly positive benefits to the substance, transparency, legitimacy, and fairness of policy development as well as the general view of government held by citizens. We hope this guide will shed some light on exactly how this can be achieved.

This guide is composed of four main sections: In the first we'll conduct a quick inventory of existing policy frameworks for citizen participation and summarize the shortcomings of current practice as it is shaped by these policy guidelines. The guide will then introduce an emerging field of practice known as "deliberative democracy" and provide some examples of where citizens engage face-to-face in addressing community issues. We'll then move into the online world, which has demonstrated a remarkable capacity to spark innovation and experimentation and has yielded several interesting techniques of which agency managers should be aware. Fourth, we'll provide a very concise summary of key features and techniques for deliberation within a framework for understanding how they can complement policy and program development. In the same section we'll provide an inventory of some of the most promising techniques as a starting point for agency managers to "pick and choose" among methods. Finally, we'll conclude the guide with a set of recommendations

that we expect can encourage public deliberation in the activities of federal agencies and support the development of an "infrastructure of engagement" throughout government.

To develop the observations and recommendations discussed in this report, we have relied on a substantial literature review (including an in-depth review of existing public involvement guides), interviews with over two dozen managers in public agencies, and our own experience over the last 10 years working with government authorities at all levels to bring citizens into policy-making processes. We have sought to make our recommendations as relevant and as practical as possible by relying upon practice-based evidence of what works, and the knowledge of agency executives who have been engaging citizens in policy development for years.

Introduction

In this guide we hope to make the case for two key shifts in public administration. First is a shift from information *exchange* models to information *processing* models of citizen engagement. Second is a shift from citizens as *consumers* to active *shapers* of government policies and programs (Cornwall and Gaventa, 2001). We believe that these two basic adjustments toward viewing citizen engagement as fundamentally knowledge building and necessarily influential within the administrative process can have profoundly positive benefits to the substance, transparency, legitimacy, and fairness of policy development as well as the general view of government held by citizens. We hope this guide will shed some light on exactly how this can be achieved.

We distinguish "citizen engagement" here from the more general term "citizen participation," what one senior federal manager interviewed for this report called a "spectrum" composed of four goals: to inform, consult, engage, and collaborate with citizens. What we want to emphasize here is an active, intentional partnership between the general public and decision makers. This core value fits well toward the "engage-collaborate-empower" end of five goals set forth in the public involvement spectrum developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), a leading national association of participation practitioners (see Table 1).

Our conclusion is that to simply inform and to consult are "thin," frequently *pro forma* techniques of participation that often fail to meet the public's expectations for involvement and typically yield little in the way of new knowledge. While both may be essential elements to bookend good public participation, left on their own they are insufficient techniques to clarify citizen values and priorities and give citizens a share in decision making. Certainly these information exchange models are unable to maximize a key feature of good policy design—the uncovering and weighing of a range of policy alternatives—as they are frequently dominated by the usual voices. Further, basic communication and consultation mechanisms are unlikely to achieve shared policy preferences across groups, what one recent report termed "rational balance points" (RAND, 2005). Finally, these approaches do little to raise trust

Table 1: Public Involvement Spectrum

	Inform	Consult	Engage	Collaborate	Empower
Goal:	Provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions	Obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions	Work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	Partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution	Place final decision-making authority in the hands of citizens

Source: *Adapted from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).*

between citizens and government, and in some cases can do more harm than good when the process fails to meet public expectations (Booher et al., 2004). Similarly, collaboration is an essential but often too narrow, time-consuming, and expert-driven mode of participation to achieve the level of inclusiveness and awareness necessary for reform of some of our most urgent issues, for example, healthcare, climate change, and energy policy.

By contrast, we view citizen engagement as a commitment from government to cultivate deeper levels of knowledge among citizens generally about the issue at hand and potential solutions, and to provide opportunities for citizens to exercise that knowledge in service of policy and program development in a regular and ongoing basis. Citizen engagement emphasizes the quality and depth of *learning* and *involvement* over the breadth and frequency of *exchange* (though each is ultimately important to the overall process). What we hope to provoke is the beginning of a discussion about the "infrastructure of engagement," the policy framework and institutional mechanisms necessary to support citizen engagement in policy and program development.

Therefore, our modest effort is to shift the needle of democratic reform discourse from "participation" and "involvement" in government decision making to "engagement" and "empowerment"—a shift from *information exchange* models of involving citizens to *information processing* models that help citizens make meaning of policy alternatives and share with them a real stake in the decision-making process. Our guide to engagement techniques will emphasize two promising and emergent fields of activity: *deliberative* approaches for face-to-face citizen participation and evolving spaces for *online* engagement. What distinguishes our task from other major governance reform projects is simple: We are looking at new ways to engage ordinary citizens who, while they do not have deep policy expertise on all matters, do have experience and knowledge from the neighborhood and community level that is vital to the policy-making process. More importantly, these citizens have a claim to the process because the quality of their lives is shaped by administrative decisions and policy outcomes.

What Is Citizen Engagement?

Citizen engagement is part of a family of democratic reform ideas that includes public participation, public involvement, participatory democracy, deliberative democracy, and collaborative governance. When used in relation to the online environment, a new vocabulary is evoked, which includes e-democracy, digital democracy, e-government, and electronic governance. What is important to know about these terms is that, while they all make distinctions around the purpose, breadth, and techniques of participation, at base they recognize and build upon a fundamental right of all citizens to have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. Citizen participation policies and programs reflect a basic adoption of this principle and extend a "standing invitation" to citizens to engage in policy development and decision-making activities.

In general, citizen participation activities revolve around six aims:

1. Inform and educate the public about important policy issues.
2. Improve government decisions by supplying better information upward from citizens to decision makers.
3. Create opportunities for citizens to shape and, in some cases, determine public policy.
4. Legitimate government decisions by ensuring that the voices of those impacted by government policy have been heard, considered, and addressed.
5. Involve citizens in monitoring the outcomes of policy for evaluation.
6. Improve the quality of public life by restoring the trust and engagement of citizens.

While citizen participation can and does take many forms—including public hearings, citizen advisory councils, public comment periods, and community boards—in this report we will focus on particular forms of citizen engagement that emphasize information *processing* over information *exchange,* and *empowerment* over *communication* (see Table 2 on page 10).

When we speak of citizen engagement, we will be referring to forums that bring the general, impacted public into partnership with decision makers through dialogue-based processes at points along the policy-development continuum, which is to say agenda setting, policy design, and implementation. In general, these kinds of forums are considered "deliberative spaces," characterized by face-to-face and online forms of discussion. In some cases, there will even be a role for the public in "social monitoring": engaging citizens in measuring the impacts of policy for evaluation.

In our work at America*Speaks* (see box on page 11), we have adopted a set of seven principles for any deliberative engagement process that we run:

1. **Educate participants.** Provide accessible information to citizens about the issues and choices involved, so that they can articulate informed opinions.
2. **Frame issues neutrally.** Offer an unbiased framing of the policy issue in a way that allows the public to struggle with the most difficult choices facing decision makers.
3. **Achieve diversity.** Involve a demographically balanced group of citizens reflective of the impacted community.

Table 2: Characteristics of Information Exchange vs. Information Processing Models of Public Communication

Information Exchange Models (i.e., public hearings)	**Information Processing Models** (i.e., deliberative forums)
Speaker-focused	Participant-focused
Experts deliver information	Experts respond to participant questions
Citizens air individual ideas and concerns	Citizens identify shared ideas and concerns and assign them relative priority
Participants share anecdotal evidence	Participants use detailed, balanced background materials
Often engages the "usual suspects": stakeholders and citizens already active on specific issues	Reaches into diverse populations, including citizens not usually active, with efforts to reach under-represented
No group discussion of questions	Facilitator-led small group discussion

Source: *America*Speaks, *2003.*

4. **Get buy-in from policy makers.** Achieve commitment from decision makers to engage in the process and use the results in policy making.
5. **Support quality deliberation.** Facilitate high-quality discussion that ensures all voices are heard.
6. **Demonstrate public consensus.** Produce information that clearly highlights the public's shared priorities.
7. **Sustain involvement.** Support ongoing involvement by the public on the issue, including feedback, monitoring, and evaluation (America*Speaks,* 2004).

In the most "empowered" cases, deliberative approaches to citizen participation engage the public in making collectively binding decisions.[1] Although rare, recent experiences of empowered citizen deliberation in Canada (notably the British Columbia Citizens Assembly) have sparked a firestorm of experimentation, across Canada and in Europe. In Brazil, for over a decade residents of the southern city of Porto Alegre have determined a portion of the city's annual budget through a "participatory budget" cycle.

What we are seeking to describe here is a middle ground between participation as "consultation"—feedback mechanisms between government and citizens—and these latter examples of delegated authority. We are describing a space in which citizens and public officials meet in an open process to clarify values, determine priorities, and then shape public policy.

Citizen Engagement as a Global Movement

Advances in citizen engagement practice are taking place around the world, and are not limited to local, state, or national governments: they are being carried out through international bodies like the United Nations and led by multinational institutions like the World Bank. "Engaging citizens in policy making," the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has recently reported, "is a sound investment and a core element of good governance. It allows governments to tap wider sources of information, perspectives, and potential solutions, and improves the quality of the decisions reached. Equally important, it contributes to building public trust in government, raising the quality of democracy and strengthening civic capacity" (OECD, 2001, p. 11). As one senior Canadian official from their Office of Citizens and Civics put it, "[Citizen participation] is a worldwide movement, and it is a community-driven demand" (Broderick interview, 2005).

The most dynamic states are responding to this demand by opening new spaces and mechanisms for participation within government, at all levels. So far, three general kinds of efforts are taking place.

What Is America*Speaks*?

America*Speaks* is a nonprofit organization committed to reinvigorating American democratic practice at the national level by developing new institutions that link citizens across the country to policy making in Washington. To meet this commitment, it has developed new approaches for engaging the public that take democracy to a larger scale, so thousands, even millions, can take part in nationwide deliberations.

Since 1995, America*Speaks* has sought to transform democracy as we know it by engaging citizens in the most important public decisions that impact their lives. More than 65,000 Americans have participated in America*Speaks*' forums, called 21st Century Town Meetings, linking the public to decision makers. Each forum integrates intimate, face-to-face discussion with state-of-the-art technology to provide a new kind of venue for the public to be heard.

America*Speaks'* most ambitious initiative at the national level to date was a two-year national dialogue on Social Security reform, funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, called Americans Discuss Social Security (ADSS). Between 1997 and 1999, Dr. Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer—founder and president of AmericaSpeaks—directed this two-year nationwide dialogue about the future of Social Security. The goal of ADSS was to take the best of the New England town hall meeting—citizens talking with citizens to solve problems—and utilize technology to efficiently and effectively involve hundreds, even thousands, of citizens at the same time. Through these efforts, combined with television coverage of ADSS interactive video teleconferences and large city forums, literally millions of Americans had the opportunity to be touched by ADSS in a 15-month period.

For more information, visit www.americaspeaks.org.

1. Governments are making more information available publicly through new channels: "empowering" individual citizens and groups to make more informed choices and in general advance the goal of a transparent state.
2. Governments are creating new spaces and institutional arrangements for participation, online, and face-to-face. These governments are creating opportunities for participation in policy development and undertaking crucial institutional reforms that ensure the results of public participation are fed into decision-making processes.
3. Decision makers are being held to higher levels of accountability through the use of democratic audits, scorecards, and other third-party participatory performance measurement tools (also known as "social monitoring"). These techniques range from simple service delivery "scorecards" to wireless and handheld participatory monitoring systems.

In countries like the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada—and even at the transnational level in the case of the European Union—new policy frameworks and guidelines are emerging that place information, consultation, and participation at the center of emerging administrative practice. A recent study in Canada—part of a seven-year research process that at one point engaged 20 government departments—demonstrated that citizens desire greater access to government and increased involvement in decision making (EKOS, 2002). One survey carried out in 2002 found that while Canada and the United States share equally low levels of public trust in Ottawa and Washington "to do what is right" always or most of the time (about 25 percent), 84 percent of respondents indicated that they "would feel better about government decision making if [they] knew that government regularly sought informed input from average citizens" (EKOS, 2002, p. 8).

As a result of the combination of research and proactive leadership in Ottawa, the Canadian government has, over the last decade, built up a policy "scaffolding" that now "requires departments to have a policy consultation process as part of any major public policy initiative, and to document any kind of consultation process they were planning. Consultation was formally integrated in writing into [the] policy development process" (Cook interview, 2005).

The kind of documentation of citizen views about participation and government-wide planning for participation evident in Canada and other democracies is missing from the public administration discourse

in the United States. Instead, we must rely on data that describes increased interest-group formation, dwindling political participation, declining levels of social capital, and scattered evidence from experiences at the local, state, and federal levels on which to build our case for reform. A comprehensive view of the drivers of participatory policy making and administrative reform in the United States has not yet been developed. However, from our work bringing citizens and decision makers together in large-scale public deliberations across the country, America*Speaks* has found that citizens' appetite for partnership in decision making is no less strong in the United States than elsewhere: Our town meeting forums of 1,500 to 3,000 citizens are regularly filled to capacity. In follow-up surveys to our large-scale meetings, participants indicate in clear majorities that they feel these kinds of forums "are good for democracy."

Americans, like a growing number of citizens around the world, desire real influence in the decisions that impact their lives. As one public policy textbook puts it, an "attitudinal characteristic that influences public policy in the United States is the citizen's desire to participate in government" (Peters, 1999, p. 15). "The public wants to be involved," a senior official from the Bureau of Land Management concurred. "We see that in the proliferation of watershed conservation groups, of which there are 3,000 today, compared to 500 a decade ago, and in the proliferation of volunteers who volunteer to work on land—nearly 240,000 volunteers per year" (Emmerson interview, 2005).

Citizen Engagement in the Activities of Federal Agencies

The modern era of citizen participation in federal policy decision making was entered with the passage of the Equal Opportunity Act of 1964. It was this act, specifically its Title II provision mandating the "maximum feasible participation" of residents in the development of neighborhood revitalization programs, that modernized policy making by creating room for impacted persons in the decision-making process. Since then, issues of transparency, accountability, and citizen influence have grown in significance, for at least four reasons. First, the media and new information and communication technologies have brightened the light on government action. Second, the steep rise of interest group politics has raised the specter of "the end of government": The failure of pluralist bargaining to solve persistent public policy dilemmas has broadened both the appetite and space for alternative policy-making processes. Third, new management practices stress the importance of improving policies and practices by learning from the outcomes of operational programs on an ongoing basis, implying a closer relationship with the public (Modernizing NEPA, 2003, p. 8). Fourth, in the face of downward trends in civic engagement, government is being asked to play a more active role to involve citizens in decision making.

As a result, citizen participation is being recast as an instrument to improve both the quality and legitimacy of government action. We interpret these trends as an emerging new role for government: the role of *convener* of the public. To sustain this role effectively, agencies will need to adapt existing policy and administrative processes and new mechanisms developed at the national level to share knowledge, promote practice, and evaluate results.

Two Barriers to Effective Agency Engagement Practice

American government needs a strengthened and comprehensive framework for thinking about public participation, and citizen engagement specifically, in the activities of federal agencies. From what we have learned, federal guidelines for participation are fragmented and, in many cases, either outdated (not reflective of the best thinking around participatory processes and techniques) or insufficient (lacking enough procedural clarity to actually shape agency practice).

At the same time, the knowledge of how to "do" citizen engagement better is too thinly distributed among departments across agencies: There is no central coordinating mechanism for the collection and dissemination of best practices and emerging techniques for deepening citizen engagement in the activities of federal agencies.

These principal barriers are confounded by institutional obstacles such as administrators' common misperception that the public cannot contribute meaningfully to policy and program development, and a lack of incentive structures to improve engagement from within agencies (Yang, 2005).

Fragmentation of Policy about Citizen Engagement

One senior agency official with more than 30 years of experience managing participation programs for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers observed during an interview that "a lot of the reason behind ignoring or downplaying public involvement has to do with fragmentation of federal policies. There are no coordination mechanisms" (Delli Priscoli interview, 2005). The legal frameworks for participation in the United States constitute both an *enabling environment,* which is to say that they require certain forms of citizen participation, and a *barrier* to participation, in that they prohibit or unnecessarily limit the range of participatory techniques available to federal managers. Several key pieces of legislation provide insufficient guidance and incentives to deepen citizen participation practices or present obstacles to reform for their narrow focus. These include the Administrative Procedures Act of 1946 (APA), the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), and the Government Paperwork Elimination Act of 1998 (GPEA).

The Administrative Procedures Act (APA) was created out of congressional concern for the lack of uniform policies guiding regulatory rule making. The basic framework for the commonly used procedure in rule making as laid out in the APA prescribes a process of informal rule making, which includes the opportunity for the public to comment on the proposed rule. "While the APA does not require all agencies to follow one single model for rule making," the oversight group OMB Watch reports, "it does impose minimum procedural conditions that all agencies are expected to follow...to ensure that the public has the opportunity to participate in the formulation and revision of government regulations."[2] Under President Clinton, the rule-making process was updated in 1990 with the passage of the Negotiated Rulemaking Act, which specified ground rules enabling agencies to bargain with stakeholders in the development of regulatory rules (Williams and Fung, p. 20).[3]

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) was passed during a watershed period for public participation in the United States, a time when groups seeking to influence government were proliferating. In an effort to make the process of advising executive branch agencies more uniform, objective, and open to the public, FACA defined somewhat costly and time-consuming administrative processes for the establishment, procedures, and termination of federal advisory committees. The procedural limits and requirement for judicial review seriously limit an agency's opportunity to contact the public. In doing so, FACA may exercise a "chilling effect" on public participation, fostering an environment more conducive to elite input than the involvement of ordinary citizens (Long and Beierle, 1999, p. 9).[4] For example, under existing guidelines, it would be difficult for an agency to sanction a large-scale policy-level public meeting over the course of two or three days to develop consensus among participants around shared values and priorities in response to a flu pandemic.

The Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) was amended during the Clinton administration at a time when improving the efficiency and effectiveness of government was a high priority. The overarching purpose of this act is to reduce the paperwork "burden" of information collection and dissemination through alternative means of communication. At the same time, PRA includes important public participation provisions, such as the requirement to seek public comment on proposed information collection processes through 60-day notice and comment periods. At the same time, PRA may proscribe the use of potential innovations in agency information collection, such as Deliberative Polls, if they are found to create too many "burden hours" on the public.

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) includes among its aims the goals of increasing public confidence in activities of the federal government, increasing government accountability to the public, augmenting the resources agency personnel have to work with, and improving the quality of objective information that decision makers have to work with. Since its enactment in 1993, GPRA has stimulated the growth of new forms of performance management across agencies, most notably citizen-driven performance measurement.

When the Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA) was passed in 1998, it gave federal agencies five years to put their paper-based transactions online. The law was driven by a recognition that emerging information communication technologies (ICTs) were reconfiguring government's relations

with citizens and that dramatic changes were necessary for agencies to keep pace with larger societal trends or, as the bill states, "to preclude agencies or courts from systematically treating electronic documents and signatures less favorably than their paper counterparts."[5] The primary emphasis of the bill centers on business-related transactions and security concerns, giving little guidance for federal agencies on improving public consultation and participation online, in particular where such activity can improve failing practices like the public hearing.

In addition to a broad, government-wide legislative framework, most federal agencies have developed more specific internal implementation guidelines. For example, in 2003 the National Park Service issued a "Director's Order" (DO-75A) entitled "Civic Engagement and Public Involvement," which moves the agency much further toward cultivating partnerships between citizens and government. Among other purposes, the DO seeks to "renew" its commitment to citizens by embracing "civic engagement as the essential foundation and framework for creating plans and developing programs" (NPS, 2003). At the same time, the directive cites more than 40 federal laws and internal directives to which it must comply when carrying out its citizen engagement activities, though none were crafted with consideration of the range of techniques available today.

Poor Coordination and Knowledge Sharing about Civic Engagement

A second barrier to effective citizen participation in the activities of federal agencies is the absence of inter-agency collaboration, knowledge building, and knowledge sharing across agencies around citizen engagement. Despite the fact that some agencies carry out activities like the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) annual "Community Involvement Conference," there remains, as one agency official observed, "huge gaps in knowledge and there is a need to get information out on how to involve the public" (Emmerson interview, 2005).

To date, no such coordinating mechanism exists across government in the United States. While numerous private and nonprofit consulting firms such as the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), Creighton and Creighton, and even America*Speaks* have for years offered high-quality training and engagement consultation in the field of public participation to agency staff, a tremendous amount of experience and knowledge now within agencies remains untapped, unstructured, and unavailable. Too often the expertise and knowledge remains in the hands of external consultants.

Citizen Engagement Today: The State of Practice

The most common techniques for citizen engagement, most of which have been mandated by law at many levels of government, are public hearings, citizen advisory councils, and public comment periods. While these are important and necessary tools for information exchange at points along the policy development continuum, they are unsatisfactory approaches to promote information processing and citizen empowerment, the hallmarks of good engagement practice. "One of the powerful things about citizen engagement," one senior executive told us, "is that it takes government out of the middle role—as a broker for all information in techniques where people don't get to hear each other's point of view" (Broderick interview, 2005). As a result, agencies can become conveners and managers of knowledge, facilitating greater levels of understanding, collaboration, and empowerment within the public.

Many within and outside of government also point out that common approaches to public participation in decision processes reflect a mechanistic, "top-down" orientation that does not maximize the benefits of inter-agency collaboration and meaningful public participation. One manager at EPA remarked that her agency's reform efforts were based on the recognition that "we needed to do a top-to-bottom realignment of the agency to reposition community work away from issuing edicts and saying, 'We're the government, we're here to help you' " (Nurse interview, 2005). As a result, the agency has adopted a new public involvement policy, to which the public contributed substantially, that advances the ideas of engagement and collaboration with the public.

Some critics also argue that traditional approaches to participation simply do not work and are, in fact, counterproductive: They breed citizen anger and mistrust toward government (Innes and Booher, 2004, p. 425). Problem solving at the federal level is increasingly perceived as a complex process requiring cooperation among a range of interdepen-

dent actors. In addition to ensuring that federal managers have the best available information to work with as they make their decisions, which existing mandated techniques accomplish only to a limited extent, "engagement" seeks to improve the capacities of citizens as well. Among these is the capacity of citizens to make informed choices in their own lives, solve problems independent of government, and, when necessary, to work in closer partnership with agencies at the local level.

The most successful citizen participation efforts today are those that understand engagement as a series of interrelated, developmental choices that have more to do with "what level of involvement" along the policy development-implementation continuum than any single technique for "one-off" events that fulfill statutory requirements. As one Bureau of Land Management official observed, administrators need to "think about the role they want the public to play: Do you want to inform them, consult with them, collaborate with them, or empower them to make a decision? There is nothing wrong with making the decision that you are just going to inform the public. Encourage managers to think long and hard about whether that is the appropriate choice" (Emmerson interview, 2005).

Many agency personnel have their own hurdles to overcome as well: latent mistrust of citizens and a need to demonstrate efficiency and cost savings, among them. Historically, public administrators' attitudes about citizen participation have been identified as a barrier to citizen participation (Yang, 2005, p. 274). The little research available suggests that citizens can learn to navigate the complexities of integrating expertise and experience and come to sound public judgment. At the same time, we are seeing evidence that, when applied correctly to the right situation, deliberative citizen engagement can save time and money when it comes time for implementation.

One of the important lessons of the last 40 years of public administration is that the quality of public input is often shaped by the processes through which it is collected. The corollary is that even the best processes fail if they are not attached to clear guidelines for implementation. "The main roadblock," a senior manager at the Department of the Interior observed, "is failure to think through first what role you want the public to play on an issue. The worst thing a manager can do is go forward in a process, raising public expectations, and then have to scale back and not deliver. If you are sending out a message to the public that you want to collaborate with them, but all you can do legally is inform them, then the public is going to get the idea that they have more authority than they really do and they may resent having been involved in the whole process" (Emmerson interview, 2005).

Putting Citizen Engagement into Practice

The broad overview of citizen engagement in the previous section establishes the why and the what of incorporating citizen engagement into government practice. This section lays out a framework for how it can be done. This framework has been developed in consultation with federal managers, and is also based on a review of several existing frameworks, toolkits, and guides to citizen participation that have been created within and outside government, in the U.S. and around the world. The framework prescribed here draws heavily from the OECD guide prepared in 2003.

The framework is composed of four interconnected levels of citizen participation activities: communication, consultation, engagement, and collaboration—which, taken together, capture the full range of opportunities. Later, "engagement" will serve as the central focus for our recommendations to advance practice within federal agencies.

- **Communication.** This level of involvement informs the public of pending policy matters through the use of one- and two-way techniques. Techniques such as public hearings and public notification strategies via the Internet and mainstream media can and should be used at the appropriate stages of policy design and program development to communicate from agency staff outward to the public. While such techniques typically lack mechanisms for information processing and citizen empowerment, they are basic tools for conducting outreach and laying the groundwork for informed, successful engagement and collaboration that come later.
- **Consultation.** This level of involvement seeks input from groups to inform policy development and facilitate reporting back to the public. "The main purpose [of consultation]," described by the UK Code of Written Practice on Consultation, "is to improve decision making, by ensuring that they take account of the views and experiences of those affected by them."[6] Consultation begins to move toward a conception of "citizens as partners" in the policy development process and typically occurs in stages throughout policy development, allowing for "call and response": the opportunity for the public to provide input, and agency staff to summarize, respond to, and describe how the new policy or program reflects public input.
- **Engagement.** This level of involvement creates space for the general-interest public to meaningfully influence the policy and program development activities of government. Through the tools of deliberation, engagement strategies seek to build public understanding of the values driving decision making, the basic facts informing policy analysis and program design, the interests at play, and the trade-offs implicit with any decision. Public engagement strategies provide decision makers with opportunities to improve the substance of public input, cultivate trust through the process, raise the legitimacy of decisions in the public eye, and lay the groundwork for lasting implementation. Engagement recognizes that the public has a right to influence policy and program development, and creates opportunities for exchange between experts and the public in ways that yield balanced recommendations that influence policy.
- **Collaboration.** At this level of involvement, agency staff open policy and program development to stakeholders and the public. Collaboration explicitly recognizes that successful policy will result

when impacted groups, experts, policy makers, and the public share power in policy development and implementation. Collaboration reflects an ongoing relationship between agency staff and groups, working to mitigate the differences between policy and program preferences expressed by the public and those delivered by government, and to build capacity for ongoing implementation activity and cooperation among stakeholders.

Each component of an effective public involvement strategy implies several sets of goals, strategies, and tools, which are summarized in Table 3.

Within the "consultation" and "engagement" levels of participation, there is an important distinction between activities that focus on information processing (knowledge sharing and meaning-making) as opposed to information exchange (one-way communication techniques that, at best, yield individual feedback in the form of comments and written submission).

Table 3: Four Levels of Public Involvement

Level	Description	Goals	Strategies	Tools
Information	Information exchange that ensures preconditions for participation	• Raise public awareness • Collect public opinion • Generate policy momentum	• Written communication • Electronic communication • Verbal communication • Visual communication	• Opinion poll/ survey • Public comment periods • Public hearing • Poster and media campaign
Consultation	Information-processing tools and clear agency input process	• Educate the public • Stimulate public debate • Clarify values • Broaden information base • Improve decisions	• Meet with the public face-to-face • Meet with the public online	• Public meeting • E-consultation
Engagement	Information-processing tools and in some cases shared decision making	• Involve citizens in problem solving • Involve citizens in decision making • Build capacity for implementation • Improve outcomes	• Meet with the public face-to-face • Meet with the public online • Delegate authority	• Public deliberation • Online deliberation
Collaboration	Processes to build capacity for lasting cooperation among groups and policy implementation	• Represent stakeholders • Involve experts • Reduce conflict among interests • Improve policy • Build capacity for implementation	• Establish a federal advisory committee • Design developmental processes • Share decision making	• Multi-stakeholder negotiation • Policy consensus process

Source: *Adapted from OECD, 2003.*

A Focus on Engagement

There are degrees to which a manager may be able to apply any of these four "levels" of involvement (communication, consultation, engagement, and collaboration). Choices will be determined by conditions such as policy and issue context, incentive structures, a manager's level of experience, resource constraints, political will, and internal agency policy. While each level of participation can play a key role in the policy development process, it is the actual "engagement" of citizens that offers one of the greatest opportunities for improved policy outcomes. As a result, the focus here will be to illustrate a framework through which the general public can influence policy and program development via deliberative forms of citizen engagement, face-to-face and online.

A key consideration for adopting citizen participation is identifying where the issue lies in the policy design process: Is it an issue competing for space on the public agenda? Alternatively, the issue may be at a point where existing policy must be updated or a new policy designed. Finally, it might be the case that the issue has already been addressed through policy, and new programs are being developed to implement solutions that require monitoring and evaluation.

This framework describes five stages of the policy cycle: agenda setting, analysis, design, implementation, and evaluation. At the same time, we have tried to think through some of the key concerns of agency managers as they consider the various opportunities for engaging the public. These considerations include:

- Objectives of each stage of the policy development process
- The rationales for engaging the public at each stage in policy development
- Key challenges to engaging the public at that stage
- The key strengths needed from a public engagement strategy at each stage of the policy development process
- A summary of the kinds of techniques that may be best suited to deliver desirable outcomes at each stage of policy development

Tools and techniques for successful public engagement can and should be used throughout the policy life cycle. For example, while a deliberative forum can be used for agenda setting (to determine what issues are most important to the public and require government leadership), it can also be used for policy evaluation (to determine to what extent the policy yielded the intended outcomes or benefits). In essence, constructive engagement with the public is not a "one-off" event; rather, good public engagement practice describes a cycle of policy development that involves the impacted public from the beginning, right through implementation and evaluation.

At each stage in the policy development process, different considerations will apply to the choices and selection of appropriate tools and techniques. These considerations can include available resources, policy guidelines, timing, visibility, and the appropriate level of authority that will be delegated to the public. Careful internal analysis of these considerations, along with conversations with public engagement practitioners, will ultimately suggest which public engagement tools will be the most effective.

Table 4 on page 19 lays out the five stages in the policy development cycle, cross-referenced with the relevant analytic questions and sample responses. The framework also incorporates specific engagement techniques that are further described in Table 5 (see pages 31–32) and Table 7 (see pages 41–42). We encourage managers to become familiar with the various engagement techniques and to consider developing partnerships with these deliberative practitioners to improve the substance of policy, strengthen prospects for successful implementation, cultivate deliberative capacities within agencies and the public, and deepen trust between citizens and the government.

Table 4: Framework for Selection of Engagement Techniques

	Agenda Setting	Analysis	Design	Implementation	Evaluation
What is the agency trying to accomplish at this stage?	• Establish the need for a policy or reform • Define the problem to be addressed	• Define the key challenges and opportunities associated with an issue • Align qualitative and quantitative evidence with appropriate policy alternatives • Produce a draft policy document	• Evaluate alternative policy proposals • Develop workable policy document	• Establish programs, guidelines, and effective processes to deliver public benefits	• Monitor policy outcomes to determine whether the goals of the policy are being met during implementation
What are the rationales for doing public involvement?	• Establish values • Identify priorities • Generate outcome statements	• Involve the public in identifying and stating in their terms the problems a policy will address	• Engage the non-expert public in understanding how policy prescriptions will address values, priorities, and outcomes	• Ensure broad public awareness and support of policy	• Ensure policy outcomes meet public goals
What are the key challenges?	• Risk of raising expectations that input will become policy • Ensuring that key views are represented	• Incorporate expert and experience-based knowledge cooperatively • Develop background materials that ensure balance and neutrality	• Ensure that ordinary people who will be impacted by policy are involved • Ensure clarity around how input will influence policy and program design	• Communicate process and outcomes broadly • Ensure community capacity has been developed over the policy development process	• Develop appropriate accountability mechanisms • Create information-collection mechanisms • Connect information collection to policy feedback cycle
Which engagement techniques might work best?	• Deliberative Poll • ChoiceWork Dialogue • 21st Century Town Meeting	• Citizens Jury • Consensus Conference	• 21st Century Town Meeting • Consensus Conference • ChoiceWork Dialogue • Study circles	• Public hearing • Mainstream media	• Social monitoring • Scorecards
What are the strengths of this technique?	• Uses a random scientific sample • Clarifies values • Quantifies opinion shifts • Generates media attention	• Is cost-effective • Uses a random scientific sample • Allows for in-depth, technical issue exploration • Incorporates expert views • Avoids media spotlight	• Engages large segments of the public • Cultivates shared agreement • Uncovers public priorities • Generates media visibility	• Is cost-effective • Reaches large numbers of citizens • Reinforces leadership role of public officials and experts	• Engages the public in follow-up • Builds new skills • Engages citizens in their community • Distributes information collection widely

Source: *Adapted from OECD, 2003.*

Using Deliberative Democracy as a Tool for Citizen Engagement

Deliberation deepens a basic tenet of American democracy: that placing citizens closer to the affairs of government strengthens representation, transparency, and accountability, and can improve results. The most critical distinction between deliberative forms of public participation and traditional techniques of public engagement is that deliberation emphasizes information *processing* (meaning-making) as much as information *exchange* (upstream and downstream communication). Deliberative democracy advances richer forms of public participation that engage citizens in structured dialogue around focused policy issues, yielding benefits to participants and sponsors that extend well beyond the collection of useful information. Democratic deliberation augments participants' levels of knowledge about issues, cultivates trust, builds civic capacity, and, over the long term, may increase general levels of civic engagement and political participation.

Deliberation enables groups of citizens to come together in a non-coercive environment to learn about, discuss, and ultimately render their recommendations for action to public officials. During deliberation, participants "consider relevant facts from multiple points of view, converse with one another to think critically about options before them and enlarge their perspectives, opinions, and understandings."[7] In the very best cases, these kinds of thoughtful policy forums directly influence agency policies and programs. Democratic deliberation has been experimented with in a range of settings within and outside of government, both online and face-to-face. While there are very few examples around the world where citizen deliberation has taken root within government as an "institutionalized practice" (for example, participatory budgeting in Brazil and consensus conferences in Denmark), a growing number of experiences at all levels of government indicate that deliberation is increasingly seen as a legitimate and effective technique for governments to partner with citizens in policy development and decision-making processes.

Deliberation is an important improvement to traditional *information exchange* models of public involvement—surveys, public hearings, public comment periods, and so on—through which individuals or organizations state their viewpoints, and the role of government is to collect these views and serve as an arbiter of public opinion. Through deliberative *information processing* models of citizen engagement, participants come to a *shared understanding* of underlying issues and trade-offs and, as a result, are collectively prepared to make substantively better policy recommendations (Jones 1994, p. 21). Such processes can reduce friction and competition between interests, and citizens experience greater satisfaction with the process when agencies ensure that public input is accounted for and reflected in the final decisions.

One of the greatest challenges in making use of deliberative forums lies in translating the shared understanding and resulting views of deliberators into public will. As many commentators have noted, deliberation yields insight into what the general public *would think* if they had sufficient opportunity for deliberation or through other means had become fully informed about the issues at stake. However, once a group of citizens has participated in deliberation, their views no longer represent a "snapshot" of the views currently held by the general public: After deliberation, participants represent a unique group within the population whose views may differ dramatically from the snap judgments of the public

captured by traditional survey methods. Therefore, two critical efforts must be made when using deliberative forums. First is to ensure that the deliberative forum carries with it legitimacy in the public eye, that the forum is visible, inclusive, and transparent. The second critical factor is that the results of the deliberation must be broadly distributed to the general public and accompanied by opportunities for feedback.

Characteristics of Face-to-Face Deliberation

Deliberation can be distinguished from other forms of public involvement in its emphasis on individuals being willing to examine solutions in terms of a common best interest, i.e., the interest of one's neighborhood, community, or program *as a whole*. Deliberation also presupposes that no individual holds the best answer to a public problem; rather, the process of structured conversation will yield optimal solutions for impacted parties and the public at large. Finally, deliberation differs from, for example, negotiation in that participants are usually not coming to the table with strong ideas about where they will or will not compromise on alternatives to accommodate the needs of others. Instead, participants come prepared to engage in the free and equal sharing of information that will assist everyone to arrive at reasonable, if not ultimately more just and practicable, outcomes.

Several guiding principles of public deliberation distinguish it as an approach to citizen participation from more commonly used techniques.[8] These are:

- **Clarify values.** Values-clarification exercises make clear the basis from which decisions among policy alternatives are made. Values clarification can provide useful guidance to policy makers when trade-offs are concerned—for example, when the potential long-term effects of a decision are measured against short-term gains or losses. Values-clarification exercises are seldom included in information-exchange processes that tend to stress preference aggregation and maximization based on a quantitative analysis.
- **Focus on action.** In the best of circumstances, the "focus on action" is in the form of a commitment by decision makers to incorporate the results of deliberation into policy. In some situations—for example, study circles processes—deliberation efforts result in actions that citizens and their organizations can take themselves.
- **Avoid predetermined outcomes.** Sponsors and participants in an authentic deliberation do not come with a pre-existing commitment to a particular outcome or course of action. A deliberative dialogue is not a *pro forma* exercise to convince the public of a course of action, nor is it a forum for one participant or group to persuade others to agree to a pre-defined proposal.
- **Maximize information sharing.** Recognizing that the likelihood and quality of mutually satisfactory outcomes will increase with the free exchange of knowledge and experiences, information in a deliberative forum should be complete, balanced, and free-flowing.
- **Facilitate small group discussion.** Enabling people to engage with each other in groups of nine to 15 optimizes the opportunity for each participant to meaningfully contribute to the conversation and to feel heard. As groups increase in size, intimacy, trust, and individual voice are lost as each participant has less opportunity to speak.
- **Engage relevant authorities.** To ensure an impact on policy making and program development, decision makers and other authorities relevant to the issue under discussion should be a part of the process. Decision makers, like citizens, are disinclined to support policy proposals over which they have little influence or responsibility.

Five Rationales for Deliberation

There are essentially five rationales for citizen deliberation in democratic governance.[9] Each implies a set of outcomes that offer compelling reasons for a manager to choose what can be a time-consuming and arduous organizational effort. While no single rationale should be taken as a central or primary justification for deliberative approaches to governance, together they offer a complete picture of successful public engagement.[10] The five common rationales for public deliberation are:

1. **Citizen participation in policy formulation and decision making can reduce conflict.** This *instrumental rationale* argues that, by involving all the perspectives of community members who will be impacted by the policy outcome—and the competing interests—in governance pro-

cesses, consensus develops around politically reasonable outcomes and lays the groundwork for successful implementation. Several senior managers interviewed for this report noted the connection between reducing conflict and reducing costs that came as a result of good citizen engagement practice. In the case of a major, multi-year highway project in Australia, an excellent citizen engagement process costing upwards of $500,000 yielded $2.5 million in overall project savings that came from the elimination of costs associated with delays and litigation (Broderick interview, 2005).

A critical factor in reducing conflict is *raising trust* among the parties involved; without trust it can be extremely difficult and costly to get work done. In the case of government-funded clinical research, for example, one health sciences specialist at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) observed, "Our role is to build and retain trust so that people can understand and enroll in clinical trials, and involving the community in the research process helps build that trust (Siskind interview, 2005). Another official interviewed, a senior scientist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, reflected, "In the case of a highly polarized conflict over a government science policy, I knew that doing more research was not going to solve the problem. I saw that this was a relationship issue, a trust problem, and not a missing data problem. We in government needed to do work together with citizens and stakeholders that would be trust building. I picked the subset of science policy, which involves values, as the place to engage the public and do work together, because citizens are the experts on our values and they should be at the table when both science and values are under consideration" (Bernier interview, 2005).

2. **Deliberative citizen participation can lead to better, longer lasting, and wiser policy choices.** The *substantive rationale* holds that, given the multiple dimensions of policy outcomes, relying solely upon expert and/or elite perspectives is limiting. Citizens have a good sense of their own needs, and uncovering their knowledge through deliberation can contribute valuable policy information that would otherwise be overlooked. To illustrate the point, one Federal Highway Administration planner noted how, in the case of a light-rail project in San Francisco, a community engagement process uncovered a disconnect between agency assumptions and the actual priorities of impacted communities. The agency had prioritized commuter time saving (speed) while the community had greater concerns for pedestrian traffic and children at play (safety). As a result of a carefully planned community engagement process, the "solution" was designed as a slower-speed light rail that was better integrated with street life (Kuehn interview, 2005).

3. **Citizen involvement in decision making is something governments should do.** This is the *normative rationale,* and is grounded in something of a republican reading of liberal democratic theory. Such a view holds that citizens, as members of a political community, have certain rights to self-government, among them the right to a say in the decisions that impact their lives. "It's the right thing to do," one official responded, "to involve the community that you are doing research on and for" (Siskind interview, 2005).

4. **Deliberation builds citizen competence.** The *civic rationale* makes the case that, in addition to contributing to greater citizen awareness of issues and the competing points of view that surround those issues, citizen involvement through policy deliberation helps to cultivate the skills of rational dialogue, active listening, and problem solving. A director at the Department of Justice noted how, through promotion and training of youth in community mapping—a process in which young people go out into the community and identify what they consider to be resources or assets in their neighborhood—scores of young people have been trained to be data collectors and conduct data analysis (Delany-Shabazz interview, 2005). Thus, a young generation of community residents has developed a new set of skills that can be tapped as a future community resource while contributing to their individual lifelong prospects.

   An important variation of the civic rationale, particularly for residents of poor communities, is the *empowerment rationale,* which advocates citizen participation to share authority, as well as the opportunity to problem solve and improve their circumstances by impacting policies that

affect them. Deliberation thus builds capacity for solving public problems *within* communities over time, reducing the community's dependence on outside resources.

5. **Citizen participation cultivates mutual understanding; builds bonds of trust among citizens, decision makers, and governing institutions; and can effect changes in political attitudes and behavior.** This *social capital rationale* suggests that deliberation can re-engage citizens in the political life of the nation by giving them a real stake in outcomes and, as a result, reverse long-term declines in political and civic engagement.[11] Such effects are not trivial, as they lie at the heart of a thriving nation.

Deliberative Democracy: Face-to-Face

Models of Face-to-Face Deliberation

Face-to-face deliberative forums are being carried out today in numerous settings, from civil society to government agencies. Among the most promising techniques to integrate public deliberation into agency decisions are:

- **ChoiceWork Dialogue,** developed by Viewpoint Learning, is a public opinion research method that brings together a representative sample of around 40 citizens to work through the choices and trade-offs that public decision making must address. ChoiceWork Dialogues incorporate the use of scenarios and emphasize values-oriented discussion as opposed to information-seeking conversations, as participants develop solutions with which everyone can live. Recommendations from the group are supplied to sponsoring agencies. ChoiceWork Dialogues have been used to address a range of issues in the U.S. and Canada, including land-use planning, state and local governance, healthcare, aging, and housing.
- **Citizens Jury,** developed by the Jefferson Center, brings together a scientific, random sample of 18 citizens representing the target population for up to three days of in-depth examination of a critical public issue. Participants are supplied with background materials, hear testimony from experts in related fields, are asked to weigh different points of view, and through deliberation render a final decision about the best course of action. Citizens Juries have been used in communities across the country to address numerous state and national issues, including solid waste management, healthcare, climate change, and the federal budget.
- **Consensus Conference,** developed by the Danish Board of Technology and now being studied by the National Academy of Sciences, brings together a representative sample of 14 citizens in a "panel" that meets over the course of several weekends to explore complex technical issues, usually those that relate to technology assessment and science policy and their broad impacts throughout society. Citizen panelists and experts engage in question-and-answer sessions that are open to the public; panelists then discuss the information before them, weigh policy options, and present their recommendations to key decision makers in a final report. Consensus conferences have been used to engage the public around telecommunications policy, bioengineering, and, most recently, nanotechnology.
- **Deliberative Polling,** developed by the Center for Deliberative Polling at the University of Texas–Austin, brings together a random, scientific sample of 200 to 500 citizens to discuss issues in depth over the course of two days. Polled on their views before coming together, citizens are provided with carefully framed discussion guides and participate in a series of structured small group conversations and question-and-answer sessions with experts. Participants are polled at the end of deliberations, and the results are compared to calculate opinion change. Results provide decision makers with a snapshot of how citizens would be likely to respond to an issue if they had the opportunity to become fully informed. Deliberative Polls have been conducted around energy policy, U.S. foreign policy, healthcare, and municipal planning.
- **Issue Forums,** developed by the National Issues Forums Institute and the Kettering Foundation, involve variously sized groups of citizens who come together to explore public matters. Carefully framed background materials and skilled facilita-

tors guide discussion. Group members are polled at the end of the forum, and results of the poll are made available to decision makers. Local Issue Forums have been used to discuss a range of issues including gun violence, healthcare, genetically modified foods, and immigration.

- **Study Circles,** developed and promoted by the Study Circles Resource Center and often employed as part of democratic organizing efforts, involve large numbers of people in discussion among diverse groups of eight to 12 participants. These groups come together during the same period of time (a weekend to several weeks) to develop solutions to a common concern. Community-wide study circles culminate in an "action forum" where all participants from study circle groups throughout the community come together to develop an action strategy to solve a common problem. Study circles have been used in communities across the country to tackle a range of issues including education, racism, and police relations.

- **21st Century Town Meeting,** developed by America*Speaks,* brings together diverse, demographically representative groups as large as 5,000 citizens to discuss an issue and work through options in small groups, usually over the course of a day. Neutral and balanced background materials on issues are used to inform discussion, and experts and policy makers are present to participate in table discussions. Through the integration of networked laptop computers at each table and wireless keypad polling, results from small group conversations are shared with the entire group, prioritized, and reported to decision makers at the end of the day. The 21st Century Town Meeting process has been used in numerous public deliberations including a nationwide discussion on Social Security reform, planning the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site in New York City, and as a biennial citywide process for strategic planning in Washington, D.C.

- **Citizens Assemblies,** developed by the Liberal Party in British Columbia to address electoral reform, bring together a random selection of citizens composed of one male and one female from each electoral district within the province. In the case of the recent British Columbia Citizens Assembly on Electoral Reform, this number was 161, including two aboriginal members and the chair of the Assembly. The Citizens Assembly process is composed of three distinct phases:

  1. Learning, during which Assembly members interact with subject-matter experts
  2. Public hearings, during which Assembly members have the opportunity to learn about local dimensions of the issue and hear public concerns
  3. Deliberation, during which Assembly members come together to synthesize their learning and make a final recommendation to the public for a vote

  Further experiences with the Citizens Assembly process are beginning to surface in Canada and around the world, including Toronto and the Netherlands.

The methods outlined above have at least five features in common:

1. They use "balanced" or "neutral" background materials.
2. They are structured around small group dialogue.
3. Emphasis is on learning through exploration of competing perspectives on an issue.
4. New knowledge is expected to inform individual and group recommendations on the issue or problem at hand.
5. "Findings" from discussion are made available to community members and leaders in a final report.

While most of these forums have a more than 10-year history of use in the U.S. and abroad, few of the experiences have taken place under the auspices of the federal government, with an eye toward impacting federal policy and decision making. In the case of the Citizens Assemblies, the exercise was carried out under the auspices of a Provincial Authority. The critical next step in the evolution of deliberative democracy in administrative decision making will be to experiment with, adapt, and institutionalize these techniques to ensure they align with administrative goals of quality, efficiency, validity, and reliability. To date, only the

Danish Consensus Conference, as it is applied in Denmark today, has been institutionalized into government decision making, in this case the Danish Parliament. One-time experiments like the closely watched British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform[12] are providing new momentum for the movement; long-standing initiatives like Participatory Budgeting in Brazil are being studied to understand their reproducibility in other governance contexts.

Because much of the practice-based expertise in deliberative democracy resides outside of government, organizers and proponents of each deliberative event must, on a case-by-case basis, forge their own relations with government, usually—but not always—the sponsoring agency, to achieve any impact on policy and outcomes. In the case of a few recent (and landmark) pieces of legislation, such as the Health Care That Works for All Americans Act (S.581, 2003) and the 21st Century Nanotechnology Research and Development Act (S.189, 2003), specific provisions for deliberative activities have been made, with resources earmarked to ensure that they take place.

Deliberation in Practice

The following pages explore examples of efforts to inform government decision making. The specific policy domains selected for focus include land-use planning, budgeting and finance, the environment and natural resource management, and science and technology. We selected these four domains in part for the practical reason that good examples of practice exist, and for the immediacy with which these domains can be experienced by citizens. Land-use planning, budgeting, environmental regulation, and science have deep impacts on the quality of life for citizens, and policy design is often guided by values that are difficult to uncover through traditional means of public involvement.

Land-Use Planning

Community design (also known as "participatory planning") emerged from "a growing realization that mismanagement of the physical environment is a major contributing factor to the social and economic ills of the world and that there are better ways of going about design and planning" (Sanoff, 2000, p. ix). While most local and state governments, and federal agencies like the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Federal Highway Administration, have guidelines that mandate public input on design and planning proposals, these processes are rarely deliberative and too often fail to engage large portions of the public. In typical planning forums—such as public hearings, community meetings, and focus groups—the general public, if involved at all, is provided a set of proposals and asked for feedback, most often in the form of individual testimony. These forums do not encourage genuine public discussion of the proposals and their underlying assumptions, nor do they seek new solutions. Rather, these forums frequently privilege narrow voices with a vested interest in the outcomes. As a result, such forums can feel manipulative, designed to justify a particular course of action before the public. "Hearings," one scholar has recently written, "allow officials to deflect criticism and proceed with decisions that have already been made" (Adams, 2004, p. 44). Ironically, while formal public hearings are commonly used, studies have found that they generate less public participation and less satisfaction among participants than other formats (Adams, 2004; Innes and Booher, 2004). The planner John Forester has written,

> Even sophisticated accounts in political science often ignore the real probing and *transformation of interests* that occur in political processes. In the design and planning professions, too, we may lapse into truisms of "compromise," "fundamental" differences, and "trade-offs" as we fail to realize how parties can learn how their wants, interests, preferences, and priorities can shift and evolve in planning and design deliberations (Forester, 1999, p. 62).

One recent study found that the participation requirements in most state growth management laws were general, providing little direction or guidance around improved techniques for public engagement (Brody et al., 2003). As a result, planning proposals lack a critical element of the public response: a considered, shared assessment of the benefits and/or costs of specific proposals to the community at large, and suggestions for compromise or new solutions. Planning initiatives that encourage the active involvement of citizens and make use of a variety of techniques are the ones that generate the greatest levels of citizen participation and public support.

The Future of San Diego's Airport

Like many municipalities across the U.S., San Diego County has experienced dramatic growth in the last decade, which requires the city and county to deal with a complex range of issues. One of those is ensuring easy air travel for city residents and visitors while mitigating the impact of a busy airport in a city whose residents enjoy a remarkable quality of life. To address this tension, the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority conducted a series of six citizen dialogues in partnership with Viewpoint Learning, developers of the ChoiceWork Dialogue approach to public deliberation. The dialogues were designed to uncover residents' views about the existing airport and "how their views evolved as they came to terms with the pros and cons of four possible ways of addressing the airport issue" (Viewpoint Learning, 2004).

The six ChoiceWork Dialogues, which each engaged a total of 224 participants randomly selected to be representative of the general county population, took place in March and April of 2004. The dialogues focused on the kind of airport citizens desire and their top priorities for air travel and the future of the region. The results of the discussions will inform the design of an airport solution and site selection that will be voted on by county residents. Each of the daylong discussions was guided by a workbook that helped to frame the values-driven conversation around four possible scenarios for resolving the county's airport needs:

- Improve the existing airport as much as possible
- Supplement the existing airport with a second facility
- Close the existing airport and replace it with a single new facility
- Build a multi-use "aeroplex"

Overall, once the critical issues were clarified and aligned with participants' values, the public attachment to the existing airport fell, while support for a new facility rose. At the same time, the scenario involving a multi-purpose "aeroplex" to accommodate business, housing, and regional transportation as well as an airport, proved to be a divisive alternative: While some participants were enthusiastic about the high-tech facility, an equal number were deeply opposed to the congestion and development patterns associated with the proposal. According to a report of the proceedings of the discussions, the Airport Authority must now make careful choices as it moves forward with a ballot initiative to take to the public. The critical tension, the report indicates, will be whether "people feel a decision is being rammed down their throats at the behest of business or governmental interests" (Viewpoint Learning, 2005, p. 23). If so, the report warns, "they will opt for a known quantity, however inadequate.… It is especially vital that the public's input be seriously considered *and that the public feel that this is the case"* (Viewpoint Learning, 2005, p. 24). As a result, a broad effort to raise awareness of the findings among San Diegans has been initiated by the Airport Authority and will continue up to the 2006 vote.

Resource Allocation and Spending Prioritization

Decision making around resource allocation and spending prioritization has a very direct impact on citizens; as a result, their participation in these decisions should be authentic and consequential. Unfortunately, many cities and states rely on the referendum process to involve citizens in budgetary matters. These processes are often highly politicized, overly influenced by moneyed special interests, and aimed simply at defusing contentious issues as opposed to actually resolving them. Alternatively, the participatory budgeting process (PB), developed in Brazil during the 1980s, offers a deliberative, publicly spirited approach to engaging citizens in the allocation of scarce financial resources.

Participatory budgeting, defined broadly, is a movement to make transparent and subject to public influence the expenditures of government. Specifically, participatory budgeting commonly refers to discussion-driven processes through which citizens debate, analyze, prioritize, and propose public expenditures and investments to government. To date, most experiments in participatory budgeting have been conducted at the city level, with a few successes being "scaled up," as in the case of Brazil, where initial success in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul has shaped budget processes in several Brazilian states. In some cases, the participatory budgeting process can also include public monitoring and evaluation of budget implementation, as has been tested at the local level in parts of Africa and Asia. Stakeholders in a participatory budget process usually include the general public, particularly poor and vulnerable

populations, and organized civil society groups such as labor unions and community-based organizations.

Citizen Summits in Local Government

While the participatory budgeting movement itself has not made significant inroads within the U.S., experimentation with participatory fiscal processes can be found in several U.S. cities. One instructive example of a process with similarities to PB has been taking place in Washington, D.C. since 1999: Mayor Anthony Williams' "Citizen Summit."

Moved by a profound sense of distrust between citizens in the District of Columbia and their government, and fueled by a citywide appetite to release the District from the authority of a federal Financial Control Board, Mayor Williams embarked on an ambitious plan to transform governance in the District of Columbia (Potapchuk, 2002). In partnership with America*Speaks*, over the course of six years the mayor's office has held three District-wide "21st Century Town Meetings," through which more than 10,000 residents have deliberated about the city's spending priorities and made recommendations for change.

What is unique about this combination of deliberation and city administration is the attention given to ensuring that there is an ongoing—as opposed to a "one-off"—mechanism for citizen engagement in the budget process. Residents have attended Citizen Summits with concerns about safety, education, youth outcomes, housing, and government responsiveness, among other issues. Citizens have accomplished some significant changes as a result of their influence and involvement with summits:

- In 2001, they helped secure an additional $710 million for education, $10 million for senior services, and 1,000 new drug treatment slots.
- In 2003, they were instrumental in obtaining an additional $25 million for a housing trust fund and $2 million for citizen involvement.
- In 2004, citizen input, in part, resulted in over $300 million more for education and nearly $20 million for more police and juvenile-related initiatives.
- Cross-agency teams were created to improve service delivery.
- A Youth Council, created by law, now reviews each city budget before it goes to the City Council.

The summits, and their resulting impact on the city's strategic plan, address six crosscutting governance areas, or "themes," of the Williams administration developed in 1999: Building and Sustaining Healthy Neighborhoods, Investing in Children and Youth, Strengthening Families, Making Government Work, Economic Development, and Unity of Purpose and Democracy (Potapchuk, 2002). In conjunction with the popularly developed strategic plan, the mayor has also created "scorecards" that track the achievement of commitments and deadlines set by citizens for District government departments and agencies during the summits and follow-up processes.[13] A fourth Citizen Summit was held in November 2005.

Environment and Natural Resource Management

Many federal agencies have used multi-stakeholder and consensus processes to successfully involve sectors of the public in natural resource management and regulatory decisions. These efforts can be traced at least as far back as the Bureau of Land Management's call for public input in an article that appeared in a May 1974 issue of the *Journal of Range Management,* in which the authors identify a growing demand for participation in government decision making "throughout society" (Irland and Vincent, 1974). Subsequent work in this field has resulted in the creation of numerous "public participation" offices in a range of state and federal agencies involved in natural resource management. However, the definition and quality of citizen involvement has not been subject to a common test, and there remains little institutional capacity to make good use of the substantial information received from the public.

Rule making is one example of a regulatory process for environmental stewardship. Rule making is a procedure through which federal agencies translate broad congressional legislation into specific regulations. Rule making generally takes place under requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), which states that "the agency shall give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making through submission of written data, views, or arguments, with or without opportunity for oral presentation" (APA, Title 5). Rules cover a wide swath of activity, and may govern the release of envi-

ronmental toxins or access to public lands. According to APA requirements, an agency must respond to any substantive input received during public comment period. These requirements make rule making an attractive prospect for deliberative democrats, in particular following efforts to bring rule-making dockets online throughout the Federal Document Management System (FDMS).

At present, the government portal *Regulations.gov* has taken rule making online, and civil society groups like Information Renaissance[14] are making significant efforts to expand the scope of public involvement in rule making and augment its deliberative potential.

Citizens Jury on Global Climate Change

In May 2002, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Global Programs Division partnered with the Jefferson Center to conduct a Citizens Jury on Climate Change. The Global Programs Division is tasked with providing information to the public on environmental issues of global climate change and stratospheric ozone depletion. By observing how informed citizens absorbed information and developed recommendations for the report, the Citizens Jury was intended to demonstrate how governmental agencies, business interests, and environmental groups invested in the topic of climate change could improve their science and communication materials through citizen engagement (Jefferson Center, 2002).

In this deliberation, 18 citizens representative of the population within a 35-mile radius of Baltimore, Maryland (which includes five states and the District of Columbia) were selected from a pool of 496 potential jurors to participate in a five-day process that included expert witness testimony, citizen deliberation, and the production of a final report to the EPA. The project was overseen by an advisory panel composed of 13 individuals highly knowledgeable about the issues surrounding global climate change who guided the jury organizers through the identification of key topics related to climate change, development of the agenda, and witness selection.

In addition to carefully prepared background materials, jurors were aided in their deliberations by "hearings" over three days that covered topics such as scientific, technology, and economic issues; potential impacts; uncertainty; mitigation and adoption strategies; and advocate visions. Functioning much like the familiar juries of the court system, participants learned the facts and science behind global climate change and had the opportunity to come to a shared agreement on the most important dimensions of the issue and recommend the best course of action for government to raise awareness of climate change. The jury's findings were clarified by hand vote and in individual written surveys and compiled into a final report to the Global Programs Division.

Science and Technology

Citizen participation in the assessment of new technologies is a crucial, emerging area for work in the 21st century. The rate of change in this field is breathtaking as new technologies are rapidly introduced into almost every facet of daily life. Yet the field also is increasingly controlled by private interests. With little room for public debate—and even less oversight or autonomy—myriad technologies are working their way into Americans' lives. For example, genetically modified organisms are increasingly a part of our food, cosmetics, and medical supply. Pathogens introduced through chemical and biological innovation in numerous sectors make their way into our water, air, and soil systems. Proposals for alternative energies come and go. And computer automation continues to transform the way producers, retailers, and customers interact, with little public deliberation around the social trade-offs.

Many argue that questions of technological innovation and its impact on society, the economy, and the environment are too complex to put before average citizens. But advocates draw attention to growing examples of successful citizen involvement in technology policy that are taking place in Europe, developing nations, and the U.S. A good example is the recent national "debate" in the United Kingdom on the use of genetically modified foods, which is expected to inform a report to various government agencies, among them Britain's Food Standards Agency; the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA); and the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology.[15] Furthermore, because in many cases experts cannot reliably predict the impact and associated risks of many emerging technologies, questions of technology policy often

come down to questions of values and choices, risks and thresholds. In such areas, the public is quite prepared to understand the issues and make sound judgment, and indeed must be involved.

Citizens' Forum on Genetically Modified Foods

In 2001, the National Science Foundation and the Kenan Institute for Engineering, Technology, and Science at North Carolina State University convened a Citizens' Technology Forum on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). The purpose of the study was as much to learn about how citizens deliberate complex scientific issues as to inform interested federal agencies of public views toward GMOs. Like the Citizens Jury on Climate Change, the 2001 Citizens' Technology Forum was advised by an "oversight committee" responsible for the preparation of background materials and the selection of panelists. The committee was composed of interested professionals in the field, including a geneticist, a chemist, two science historians, and a sociologist (Hamlett et al., 2001, p. 3). The 15 participants for the citizen panel were chosen through a random scientific sample and selected to represent regional demographic characteristics.

Prior to staging the forum, organizers recruited a panel of experts that included geneticists, agronomists, biologists, a patent attorney, and a representative of an activist group. Organizers also developed background materials drawn from government, university research, corporations, and public interest groups. The oversight committee reviewed the background materials to ensure that they were accurate and free from bias.

The Citizens' Technology Forum took place over a total of seven days, spread between weekends in July, August, and September. Participants spent the first two weekends in "prep school," becoming acquainted with one another, the conference process, and the issues. By the end of their first two encounters, participants had drawn up a list of five issues important to them and a list of five specific questions for the expert panel. These issues were explored in great detail through a series of question-and-answer sessions with experts across sectors. Participants came to shared agreements on their recommendations through a period of discussion, and their findings were summarized in a final report that went to the conference conveners.

Table 5: Face-to-Face Deliberation Techniques

Organization	Approach	Distinguishing Characteristics	Notable Examples
America*Speaks*	21st Century Town Meeting	• Large-scale forums (100–5,000) engage citizens in public decision-making processes at the local, regional, and national levels of governance. • Participants deliberate at tables of 10, facilitated by trained facilitators. • Dialogue is supported by keypad polling, networked laptop computers, and (at times) interactive television. • Demographically representative groups of citizens are recruited through a variety of means, including grassroots organizing and the media. • Major stakeholders are engaged in the process and a clear link to decision making is established from the start.	• Listening to the City: Rebuilding Lower Manhattan, 2002 • Neighborhood Action: Washington, D.C. Strategic Plan and Budget, 1999–2003 • Americans Discuss Social Security, 1997–1999 For more information, visit: http://www.americaspeaks.org
Center for Deliberative Polling	Deliberative Poll	• Dialogues (2–3 days) between a random sample of citizens who are paid to participate, issue experts, and public officials. • Deliberations are televised to reframe an issue in terms that reflect the views of a representative, informed public. • Surveys before and after the dialogue measure the change in opinion that results from the deliberation. • Changes in opinion represent the conclusions the public would reach if people had a good opportunity to become more informed and more engaged by the issues.	• By the People: America's Place in the World, 2003 • Australian Deliberative Poll on Aboriginal Reconciliation, 2001 • U.S. National Issues Convention, 1996 For more information, visit: http://cdp.stanford.edu
Jefferson Center	Citizens Jury	• Randomly selected panel of about 18 citizens meets for 4–5 days to examine an issue of public significance. • Deliberators serve as a microcosm of the public. Paid jurors hear from a variety of expert witnesses and deliberate together on the issue. • On the final day of their moderated hearings, jurors present their recommendations to the public.	• Citizens Jury on Global Climate Change, 2002 • Pennsylvania U.S. Senate Election, 1992 • Presidential Election Issues, 1976 For more information, visit: http://www.jefferson-center.org
National Charrette Institute	Dynamic Planning Charrette	• A multi-day process consisting of a series of feedback loops between public workshops and a design studio. • Multi-disciplinary design team develops alternative plans based on public feedback and presents those plans back to the public at workshops. • Over the course of at least four consecutive days, the plans are refined. • Used for urban and regional planning processes.	• Dynamic Planning Trainings for the New York Department of Transportation, Arizona Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Navy, in addition to hundreds of individuals in public trainings For more information, visit: http://www.charretteinstitute.org

Organization	Approach	Distinguishing Characteristics	Notable Examples
National Issues Forums Institute	National Issues Forum	• Structured, local dialogues that occur across the country around a critical national policy issue. • Dialogues are moderated by trained NIF facilitators. • Nonpartisan "issue books" provide background information and frame the discussion in terms of three policy options. • Forum results are presented to national and local leaders.	• Terrorism: What Should We Do Now?, 2002 • Money and Politics, 2001 • Mission Uncertain: Reassessing America's Global Role, 1996 For more information, visit: http://www.nifi.org
Public Conversations Project	Constructive Conversations	• Customized, structured dialogues to foster new relationships among polarized groups. • Both single session "citizen dialogues" and multi-session projects. • Often small groups (6–8) but sometimes larger with breakout. • Special attention given to pre-meeting preparation, collaborative and appreciative stance of facilitators, clarity of purpose, and careful crafting of questions.	• Ongoing Dialogues with Pro-Choice and Pro-Life Leaders (1995–2001) • Sexual Orientation and the Church (1998–2003) • Maine Forest Biodiversity Project (1994–1999) For more information, visit: http://www.publicconversations.org
Study Circles Resource Center	Community-wide Study Circles	• Multiple groups of 8–15 people within a community or region meet regularly over a period of months to discuss a designated issue. • At the end of the process, all participants take part in a community meeting, called an Action Forum, to create strategies for the future. • The objective is often to help people become more active in their neighborhoods and communities by engaging them in informed discussions.	• How Should We Move Forward After 9/11, 2002 • Balancing Justice in New York, 1998 • Race Relations, Lima, Ohio, 1993 For more information, visit: http://www.studycircles.org
Viewpoint Learning	ChoiceWork Dialogue	• Daylong (8-hour) structured dialogues in which up to 40 randomly selected participants learn to see an issue from viewpoints other than their own. • Deliberators identify what choices they are willing to support and grapple with the trade-offs they are willing to accept. • Materials present values-based scenario in citizen language to discuss shared values, not policy choices.	• Citizen Dialogues on Canada's Health Care System • Citizen Dialogues on the Housing Crisis in San Mateo County, California • Citizen Dialogues on the Canadian Social Contract For more information, visit: http://www.viewpointlearning.org

Deliberative Democracy: Online

A spectacular array of tools are emerging that give ordinary citizens a greater "voice" in nearly every aspect of society today. Called by some "extreme democracy," by others "personal democracy," and still others "we media," these tools enable individuals with like interests to find one another; build and manage constituencies; spark meaningful conversations among diverse groups; publish text, audio, and video to the web to growing audiences; and collaboratively manage content using blogs, wikis, and other tools of the networked environment. "On a typical day," a recent Pew Internet Project reports, "5 million people post or share some kind of material on the web through their own blogs" (Pew, 2005, p. 58). Wikis, collaborative content creation and document management systems accessible through a web browser, have demonstrated that groups of people with no pre-existing ties to one another can build and manage high-quality and valued content online. Sophisticated social networking technologies are being used to create overlapping online communities that have the power to influence political campaigns, break big news stories before mainstream media, and help individuals and groups gain access to resources. Neighborhood residents are being invited to use their handheld devices to identify community needs and monitor municipal service delivery through emerging participatory audit techniques. Together, these technologies constitute new possibilities to strengthen participatory governance.

A study by the Council for Excellence in Government (CEG) recently concluded that e-government holds the greatest potential to shift citizens' thinking away from *the* government to *our* government. In their own words, "Americans see the benefits of e-government as more than simply better or more cost-efficient services; they see it as a means of empowering citizens" (CEG, 2001, p. 8). E-government, according to the World Bank, is the use of information technologies to "transform relationships with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government." This includes improved service delivery, citizen empowerment, and more efficient management.[16]

On any given day, no less than 72 million adult Americans go online, and fully half access content through high-speed, "always on" connections such as DSL and cable (Pew, 2005, 58–60). In just over a decade, Internet use in the United States has reached over 60 percent of the population. As a result, the Pew Internet Project recently reported those who are not online represent a shrinking minority. While the Internet has made its presence felt in politics and society, broad adoption trends have enormous implications for government administration: Americans' changing habits online yield changing expectations and possibilities for participation. In its most recent report, "The Mainstreaming of Online Life," the Pew Internet Project identifies two ways adoption trends are significant:

1. People are using the Internet to create meaningful connections with others and to strengthen their ties to friends and family.
2. People are becoming more serious about their work online: The stakes are raised, for example, when people move from live chats to financial transactions online.

Of course, these trends are not unique to the United States. In fact, the changes are taking place more rapidly in other countries than they are here at home, such that Internet-enabled devices—from web-enabled cell phones and handheld devices to laptop computers—are increasingly commonplace

Innovations in Online Participation: *Neighborhood America*

One of the most significant innovators in the field of online public participation and consultation is *Neighborhood America*. Since 1999, *Neighborhood America* has designed structured public comment solutions that enhance government capacity to collect substantive feedback from the public via the web. *Neighborhood America's* consultation tool, known as "Public Comment," has been used to tackle numerous public policy issues, including planning, transportation, environmental stewardship, and homeland security.

Neighborhood America's Public Comment Service is one part of what it calls its "Public Communications Management" solution, a comprehensive hosted service for project management and public involvement. This unique combination of team support services and public input has made *Neighborhood America* an attractive solution for many agencies that do not have the capacity to quickly design and deploy their own online public engagement systems. Through techniques like comment moderation, the Public Comment system, integrated into a web-based collaboration platform, reduces administrative lag during the feedback cycle and enables public involvement managers to address public concerns with greater substantive and strategic clarity.

Neighborhood America's service provides several elements that also make its services user-friendly for the public, including:

- Image galleries to which the public can contribute, often used for disaster relief and planning consultations
- A searchable public comment database, increasing the opportunity for participants to understand the views of others and respond
- Consultation and project timelines, creating baselines for both agency responsiveness and public expectations
- A consistent standard of usability and design excellence

Among some of its notable accomplishments, *Neighborhood America* has provided public engagement services for Imagine New York (www.imaginenewyork.org), provided the basis for an online memorial design selection process in Pennsylvania (www.flight93memorialproject.org), and supported multi-jurisdictional collaboration and public involvement in one of the largest environmental restoration efforts of its kind (xlr8.sfwmd.gov).

For more information, visit www.neighborhoodamerica.com.

tools to access Internet content. As a result, governments are being called to create greater opportunity for online access to information, services, and interaction with policy makers. Nations at the forefront of the e-government revolution, such as Canada, South Korea, and the UK, have taken giant steps toward modernizing citizen participation by creating policy frameworks and departments with mandates to coordinate citizen engagement online, including departments responsible for managing online consultation at the federal level.[17] Increasing Internet adoption in the U.S. constitutes no less of an opportunity than a challenge for policy makers. More than ever, public officials can create new and significant channels for public interaction; at the same time, agencies and administrators must retool their processes to ensure the opportunities deepen trust and legitimacy, not weaken them.

Neighborhood America, one of the most recent and exciting innovators in the field of online engagement, suggests that new opportunities for public engagement in the e-government era can be designed to encourage citizens "to take ownership of a project, issue, rule, legislation, or event" (Neighborhood America, 2005, p. 9). Neighborhood America's "Public Communications Management" platform, which it makes available to public agencies, provides a spectrum of online management services that enable information communication, public input, and back-end support for administrative processes.

Online (or web-enabled) democracy opens a variety of opportunities for democratic participation: e-voting, access to information, e-petitioning, and so on. This guide, however, focuses on forms of citizen engagement that involve deliberation online: processes that are complementary and analogous to face-to-face participation, but that deliver unique benefits when carried out online.

Online Engagement in Federal Agencies

In 2001, an e-government report presented by Senators Fred Thompson and Joe Lieberman, early visionaries of e-government's potential, indicated that less than 1 percent of government-citizen interactions took place online, a rate lagging far behind commercial interactions. In response, the passage of the E-Government Act of 2002 has meant that government agencies have been running a full court press to meet a mandate of bringing all services online. However, few of these "services" include the use of interactive tools to deepen democracy through citizen engagement. Rather, administrative reform online revolves around improvements in service delivery (for example, applying for government benefits online) and communication techniques such as e-mail and web-based feedback forms. Rarely do these forms of communication facilitate lateral (citizen-to-citizen) exchanges of knowledge and learning, and even more seldom do they fulfill the potential of "government as convener" or steward of an infrastructure of engagement.

That said, even government adoption of modest online communication tools has had a positive impact: More than a third of respondents in a recent Pew Internet Life study reported that the Internet has "improved their dealings with government" (Pew, 2005, p. 62). The same report documents that 38 million Americans have sent e-mail to public officials and another 29 million have used government websites to research or apply for benefits. These interactions, the report concludes, have improved many Americans' perceptions of government. In fact, 36 percent of Internet users expressed "high trust" in government compared to 22 percent of non-Internet users (Council for Excellence in Government, in Clift, 2004, p. 9). The more responsive government agencies are to the growing public appetite for online engagement, the more likely these positive perceptions are to increase.

Challenges to Online Engagement in Federal Agencies

Many of the barriers to government-wide adoption of online citizen participation activities are similar to those that hinder the uptake of citizen engagement activities generally: fragmented policy frameworks, poorly coordinated knowledge sharing, and a lack of incentive structures. But there are four additional obstacles that uniquely affect the uptake of citizen participation online:

- Overriding concerns about customer service delivery and quality
- Fears about information quantity over quality
- Challenges of achieving representation and equality
- Inconsistency of website design and user experience

Customers and Citizens Online

The President's Management Agenda provided early policy direction for what has become the federal e-government initiative, which has established, as a central priority, improving the timeliness, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of citizen-government interactions by bringing them online. Unfortunately, this means the principal framework for federal online activity does little to promote meaningful citizen engagement in democratic governance. The framework does not acknowledge experimentation with participatory decision making taking place in civil society and the private sector, and provides little incentive for agency managers to experiment with new techniques for citizen engagement.

While information communication and service delivery are necessary features of any government improvement strategy, without the third leg of citizen engagement the present e-government policy framework fails to set a government standard for online engagement and does not provide instruction to agencies about how they should think about evolving channels for citizen engagement online. Existing policies, in their emphasis on service delivery and performance, do not keep pace with evolving ideas about the Internet as vital space for democratic participation that can improve governance. Vendors like Neighborhood America, which provide solutions designed to both improve service delivery and increase citizen engagement, point the way toward more balanced e-government strategies.

Information Quantity and Quality

Bringing citizen consultation and deliberation processes online can increase the amount of information

governments receive, and improve the quality of that information. However, the quantity of public input *and* its quality are functions of the thoughtfulness and diligence of the process through which engagement is sought. If the method for seeking input is not well crafted, disaster may result. As one expert in online rule making recently observed, in the e-government era, "Information overload strains agency personnel responsible for responding to input as well as the public's ability to sort through the enormous dockets that are increasingly available online" (Shulman, 2001, p. 2).

The point is borne out in a recent comment period opened by EPA on a proposed rule on mercury emissions, during which the agency received approximately 540,000 comments. As one article reported, a staff of 15 was tasked with sorting through the substance of the more than half a million comments, one third of which were form letters generated by the online activist network Moveon.org (GCN, 2005). Few of the e-mails sampled in one study (about one in 17) contributed unique or new information to the process. Thus, concerns about the usefulness of electronic contributions to the policy-making process are valid.

Contrast that experience, however, with the EPA's 2001 online dialogue on Public Involvement in EPA decisions. During this remarkable process, nearly 1,200 citizens from around the country registered to participate in online discussions intended to inform EPA's effort to modernize its public involvement policy. Over two weeks in July, citizens took part in a series of staged conversations, posting hundreds of messages in threaded discussions that moved participants through a series of topics. The responses informed the agency's draft policy. Analysis of the online dialogues suggests that, on average, 40 to 60 participants were posting an average of 90 to 130 messages each day, with participants each reading about 70 responses to each message posted (Beierle, 2002, p. 8). These and other experiences with online deliberation demonstrate that through better-structured agency processes, online tools can be used to gather meaningful and useful input from the public without overloading the administrative process.

Access and Representation

One of the most frequently raised concerns about the use of online spaces for citizen participation is the concern that many will be left out of the discussion because they lack either the access, skills, or motivation necessary to enter these forums. The digital divide—the gap between technological "haves" and "have-nots" commonly described across income, race, gender, and age—exists, although it is closing.

The demographic characteristic that most accurately predicts whether an individual is more or less likely to be online is age: Only 25 percent of Americans 65 or older use the Internet. The second most pronounced characteristic is educational attainment: Only 32 percent of Americans with less than a high school diploma are likely to be online. The third is race: 43 percent of African Americans are online, compared with 59 percent of Hispanics and 67 percent of white and non-Hispanic Americans (Pew 2005, p. 63). The factors that contribute to the digital divide in America are real, and government has a clear set of challenges around regulating the broadband market in ways that ensure equitable access to the Internet for all Americans. The question of who is online will impact the depth and legitimacy of e-democracy initiatives at all levels of government.

In addition to differences in who is going online, there are differences across demographics around what people are doing online. For example, young Internet users (those 18 to 29) are more likely than others to use instant messaging. Women are much more likely than men to make use of support groups online (63 percent for women, 46 percent for men) (Pew, 2005, p. 61). Young Americans aged 18 to 24 constitute 25 percent of adult bloggers, although they account for only 9 percent of Internet users (EchoDitto, 2004, p. 10). However, it is the knowledge, skills, and comfort levels associated with these and other online activities and the way these may account for participation in online consultation and deliberation forums that is important.

All of these factors must be taken into account when public managers plan a public involvement strategy. Until these gaps are closed, and even after that, online consultation and deliberation strategies must be complemented by other techniques to engage the public. When coordinating online consultation and deliberation, it is essential that federal managers pay careful attention to their target population and understand the range of recruitment and engagement strategies needed to bring these groups into policy

consultation and deliberation. As more and more Americans gain routine access to the Internet, the difficulties associated with reaching out to and engaging Americans of all backgrounds will be reduced.

Variation of Government Websites

In addition to slow government momentum for online citizen participation in federal agencies, our review finds a lack of consistency across websites in three areas: interface, tools, and process.

- **Interface.** There is great variation across federal agencies in the interface design and structure of information on government websites. As a result, citizens must orient themselves to a unique browsing experience at each agency they visit. The current range is demonstrated well by a visit to the websites of the National Park Service[18] and the Environmental Protection Agency.[19] Such variation inevitably creates confusion and difficulty in accessing government services across agency portals.
- **Tools.** Different agencies rely upon different vendors to provide them with tools for public interaction, from the management of information online to interactive features such as e-mail comment forms, "chats," online comment, and consultation. In the fragmented environment of the federal government online, citizens' expectations are not portable from one agency to the next. Thus, for example, the experience of online consultation at the award-winning National Cancer Institute site[20] is not a "standard" for public engagement. One cannot expect to find such design excellence at, for example, the Department of Housing and Urban Development online. One reason for these variations arises from vendor relationships across agencies. Therefore, while vendors like Information Renaissance offer process excellence, design differs dramatically from products that vendors like Neighborhood America deliver.[21]
- **Process.** Each agency has its own guidelines for receiving and responding to public input. Nonetheless, it does not seem unreasonable to expect a common statement across federal agencies to both encourage and define the role for public participation in any agency's decision-making process. However, there is little to connect a site user's engagement to a transparent and accountable online response process. In the case of *Regulations.gov,*[22] for example, while the beginning and end of the comment period are clear, there is no indication of when the agency is expected to report back to the public, either in summary form or in terms of how the information informed the agency's final decision. Contrast this with the clear timeline and feedback process outlined at *NCIListens.cancer.gov,* part of the National Cancer Institute's website.

Challenges to Online Deliberation

We have described in some detail the shortcomings to current citizen involvement practices online. Addressing these deficits alone does not get us to the finish line. Once online engagement capacity is developed, additional obstacles present themselves. Specific challenges to structuring effective online deliberation include:

- **Information overload.** When consultation and deliberation are moved online, the availability of information that citizens have at their disposal increases exponentially. Deliberation forum designers can add libraries, search engines, and other information-gathering tools and thus, paradoxically, improve and confound the deliberative process by introducing both verified and unverified information.
- **Asynchronous dialogue.** Because most online deliberations occur asynchronously (conversations can be accessed anytime over an extended period, perhaps weeks), conversation tends to be asymmetric: driven by a few participants. Furthermore, individual posts often create subconversations, which in turn can yield less consideration of a single issue than occurs in structured face-to-face conversation.
- **Institutional skepticism.** The link between public input and decision makers has been weak in most online engagement exercises. While this is not a feature of the technology per se, it is a trade-off that comes with the territory: Government agencies and decision-making bodies haven't done the work to build online tools for deliberation in administrative process. At the same time, administrative wariness and skepticism toward online participation and the capacity of the public to contribute meaningfully remains high, framed as it is by experiences when poor process around a contentious issue has produced a deluge of useless electronic comments.

- **Representativeness.** The guarantee of representative samples online, and with them achievement of authentic deliberation, is one that has not been pushed far enough among online practitioners. At present, most online practitioners are content to view the recommendations of their constituent groups as legitimate. Yet in fact, they may better reflect simply those with a greater interest in the issue at hand and/or those with the technological sophistication to participate comfortably.

Unique Features of Online Deliberation

Table 6 is a list of key features of online deliberation that clarifies differences between face-to-face and online deliberation. Because many of these features depend upon designer and user choice (many environments are customizable), this list assumes "ideal" circumstances in which the designer/user would maximize the application of available features that distinguish online deliberation from face-to-face.

Online Deliberation: Examples from Practice

Online deliberations, largely in the form of "consultations" (i.e., input-seeking activities with low influence on actual policy development) are occurring with increasing frequency on a range of issues, using a variety of online tools, around the world (see Table 7 on pages 41–42). These government-sponsored activities are

Table 6: Characteristics of Deliberation Online

Feature	Face-to-Face	Online
Identity	In addition to physiological factors, participants are generally asked to introduce themselves as part of trust building.	Users provide as much information as user/designer wishes shared with the group.
Conversation balance	While similar discussion patterns can and do emerge, the role of the facilitator has greater force in bringing everyone into the discussion.	Conversation is driven by relatively few posters.[23] While there is always a "main stage" for group discussion, numerous sub-conversations arise.
Timing	Participants talk to each other "live," or in real time.	Most online deliberations are asynchronous, which means participants can drop in and out of discussion at will, regardless of time.
Observation	It is difficult, although not impossible, for researchers and observers to remain unobtrusive.	Guests and researchers can observe the proceedings of online deliberation unnoticed and in very large numbers.
Attention	A high value is placed on active listening by all participants.	Reading comprehension replaces listening skills. Users must possess basic functional literacy to acquire knowledge.
Research	It is extremely difficult and cost-intensive to capture data. Substantial interpretation is often required to condense documentation.	Computer mediation renders discussion recordable, quantifiable, and interpretable.
Timeline	While many methods are extended over time, most rely upon a fixed, much shorter time frame for discussion.	Often takes place over several weeks.
Resources	A weakness is the lack of information resources to address concerns as they arise.	Users can access unique information at any time to enhance quality and content of discourse. Information can be verified in real time.
Environment	In general, participants have little influence over the shape of the physical environment. It certainly cannot be customized for individual participants.	Users can often influence the look, feel, and content of the online environments, while joining from a physically comfortable location.
Location	Participants must travel to a central, physical locale. This naturally excludes some citizens.	Ability of users to communicate is not limited to geographic constraints.

expanding opportunities for citizens to impact policy design and program development and, in a few circumstances, influence a decision or outcome.

Online Deliberative Poll, America's Role in the World

The Deliberative Poll, developed by Dr. James Fishkin at the Center for Deliberative Democracy at Stanford University, is one of the most important innovations in public opinion polling today. Yet its formal application as an alternative tool for policy advice and decision making remains under-explored in the United States. Dr. Fishkin and his key collaborator, Dr. Robert Luskin, also at Stanford, have conducted more than 20 Deliberative Polls around the world, including in Australia, the UK, Bulgaria, Denmark, and the U.S. The central idea of the Deliberative Poll is that polling today is flawed, lacking the benefit of the "informed" views of citizens: Traditional polling catches citizens "on the spot" and provides respondents little opportunity for reflection upon the questions polled. The Deliberative Poll is intended to show how the people *would think* about issues if they had sufficient opportunity to become fully informed about the issues and interests at play.

Between December and January 2002–2003, a Deliberative Poll was conducted for the first time online, using a unique voice-over-Internet Protocol (VOIP) design. The first Online Deliberative Poll, part of "By the People," a project of MacNeil/Lehrer Productions, brought together a randomly selected, representative sample of 283 Americans to discuss America's role in the world. Participants were asked to read background materials developed by the National Issues Forum that covered four dimensions of U.S. foreign policy. As a result of the poll, the website for the "By the People" project concludes, participants increased their willingness to take responsibility as Americans for problems around the world. Coordinators of the poll also recorded statistically significant differences between participant views and those of a control group.

The Online Deliberative Poll differed from most online consultation and deliberation efforts in several important ways:

- **Used a scientific sample.** Most online dialogues rely upon groups of self-selecting participants, which can lead to non-quantifiable and non-reproducible results that should not be viewed as a representation of the public's view about an issue.
- **Created access.** Many Americans lack access to the Internet from home. To compensate for this gap in potential participation, organizers of the Online Deliberative Poll provided a desktop computer, limited Internet access, and training and technical support to roughly one-third of the participants.
- **Conducted using voice.** The vast majority of online deliberations use text as the mode of conversation. The organizers of the Online Deliberative Poll chose to use a Lotus product that allowed participants to communicate using voice over the internet. The decision to use voice technology helped mediate against variances in literacy levels and comfort with technology.

Online Deliberation on California's Master Plan for Education

In June 2002, Information Renaissance (Info-Ren), a not-for-profit organization based in Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C., produced an online public dialogue on the California Master Plan for Education (CAMP) in partnership with the state legislature's Joint Committee to Develop a Master Plan. The goal of the dialogue was to increase the opportunity for public comments as well as the quality of contributions to the development of the master plan, which had not been substantively revised since the 1960s. According to the organizers, the CAMP dialogues represented "the first time state legislators had been involved in an online event of this size" (Information Renaissance, 2003, p. 11). One participant in the process, State Senator Dede Alpert, chair of the Joint Committee, remarked that she "had never seen such an overwhelming interest in shaping public policy" (Information Renaissance, 2003, p. 9).

Over the course of 10 days of asynchronous dialogue, nearly 1,000 people took part in the online discussion. Participants were able to learn about the draft plan, converse with education planners and legislators involved in its design and implementation, and come to a better understanding of the views within the group. Broad, but not necessarily diverse, participation was a key goal of the CAMP dialogues, and as a result involved a large, unusually motivated and self-selected group with an interest in the topic

and a willingness to take part in an extended conversation. While participants in the CAMP dialogues came from 47 of California's 58 counties, cities and suburbs were home to about 77 percent of participants and 20 percent described their location as a small town or rural area. A substantial majority of participants (65 percent) worked in the education sector. More than a third of all respondents, and 50 percent of those who had been less active in politics, reported that their interest in government and politics had been increased by the dialogue.

Like many online methods for structured dialogue, the Info-Ren model is a variation of a threaded discussion list that incorporates the following central features:

- **Broad outreach.** In an effort to engage a diverse group of participants, including the relevant stakeholders, in dialogue, Info-Ren conducts a substantial public outreach effort that includes heavy Internet outreach, press coverage, and the placement of information in newsletters of relevant organizations.
- **Background materials and website.** Often referred to as a "briefing book," Info-Ren develops or links to extensive background materials that are made available electronically, and cross-referenced in the discussion questions. A website is developed for each dialogue; both the briefing book and message archive are searchable.
- **Agenda and discussion questions.** Info-Ren worked closely with the staff of the Joint Committee to develop a structure that would move participants through many of the critical areas for reform covered by the master plan.
- **Expert panels.** One of the unique and more substantive aspects of the CAMP dialogues was the ongoing participation of "panelists": policy makers from the Joint Committee and its working groups. While it is not uncommon to involve "experts" in online deliberation, it is unusual for policy makers to spend such an extended period of time in a single online forum (10 legislators agreed to act as panelists, several on multiple days). Joint Committee staff were also active in the discussions. A final technique developed by Info-Ren is the online "roundtable," during which panelists are asked to discuss a particular topic in greater detail.

While the structure of the online deliberation was not different from past conversations hosted by the organizers, what made this effort noteworthy was the demonstration that the "interested" public can tackle a complex policy issue and provide substantive and useful input to education decision makers. Most of the Joint Committee staff reported positive views about online dialogue as a tool for public involvement in policy formulation (Information Renaissance, 2003, p. 4).

Listening to the City Online Deliberation

In the spring of 2002, America*Speaks* partnered with the online dialogue group Web Lab[24] to create a forum for structured public deliberation around the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site in the wake of the September 11 tragedy. The partnership resulted, in part, from America*Speaks*' desire to re-create online the structure of dialogue that takes place during its 21st Century Town Meeting. Designed to accommodate up to 2,500 participants in small group discussions, the "Listening to the City (LTC) Online Dialogues" represented one of the largest efforts in the U.S. to engage a sizable sample of the public in serious conversations around the topics of architecture, land-use planning, and economic development.

The online dialogues occurred July 30–August 12 and involved 586 participants working in a total of 26 small discussion groups (Civic Alliance, 2002, p. 18). While groups were designed to accommodate as many as 30 participants, average group size was 25 members (with a low of 19 and a high of 32). Group assignments were made randomly by computer from a pool of 818 potential participants; of those assigned to a group, 76 percent (623) contributed at least one post to the conversation. While participants were assigned to groups with the goal of maximizing diversity, it was difficult to discern from available data the demographic composition of groups. A cursory, unscientific analysis of participants' personal introductions suggests that participants came from a range of professional backgrounds, including the displaced and unemployed, and a range of life experiences, including time spent in New York City (from three years to a lifetime). Participants ranged in age from 20 to 74, and included a good mix of married and single individuals. A significant majority of participants were drawn to the online dialogues as a result of a personal connection to the September 11 attacks

Table 7: Online Deliberation Techniques

Organization	Approach	Distinguishing Characteristics	Notable Examples
Ascentum	Dialogue Circles	• Provides consultation and dialogue tools to government, business, and not-for-profit organizations. • Can accommodate large and small groups, organized into "tables" of up to 14 participants. • Can support synchronous and asynchronous dialogues. • Offers a range of customizable participant and administrator tools, including background materials (video, text, images, etc.), surveys, scenarios, workbooks, and calendars.	• Listening to Canadians: eConsultation on Pension Disability Plan, 2002–2003 • Public Input on the Future of Health Care, 2002 For more information, visit: http://www.dialoguecircles.com
CitizenScape	Link to Government Consultation Spaces	• Provides concentrated list of government actions available for consultation and the links to get there. • Offers online dialogue to affect how government actions proceed from planning to completion.	• Western Australia Citizenship Strategy, 2004 • Consulting Citizens: Engaging with Aboriginal Western Australians, 2004 For more information, visit: http://www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au
DELIB	CitizenSpace	• Enables participants to search for, participate in, see results of, and propose new consultations. • "Consultation" limited to reading background materials, responding to poll questions, and adding comments. • Clean interface includes a progress tracker and "Fact Bank."	• Consultation on Prostitution Law Reform, 2004 For more information, visit: http://www.citizenspace.co.uk
Denmark National IT and Telecom Agency	Danmarks Debatten	• Free eDialogue tool developed by the Danish National IT and Telecom Agency to encourage public debate of issues. • Tool for public officials to use to "qualify" their decisions. • Emphasizes well-defined topics, clear purposes, and (pro)active and dedicated debate management/moderation. • Seeks to promote public debate at the national, county, and municipal levels.	• County of Funen, Public Debate on the Regional Plan, 2004 • City of Aarhus, Public Debate on Traffic Planning and Expenditures, 2003 For more information, visit: http://www.danmarksdebatten.dk
Dialogue by Design	Small to Large Group Dialogue	• Provides a range of engagement services, including consultation, online stakeholder engagement, and public debate. • Developed proprietary DialogueDX platform to collect, collate, and report information easily and rapidly. • Breaks consultations into "sessions," to first collect individual responses to consultation questions, then share and invite response to results. • Participants interact via facilitator proxy using e-mail.	• Surrey County Council Waste Plan, 2004 • Taking It On, DEFRA Sustainable Development Strategy, 2004 • International Finance Corporation Consultation on Disclosure Policy, 2004 For more information, visit: http://www.dialoguebydesign.net

Organization	Approach	Distinguishing Characteristics	Notable Examples
Fraunhofer Institut Autonome Intelligente Systeme	Dito2.0	• Platform for goal-oriented, moderated online discussion. • Seeks to apply tools for e-participation in municipal decision making, especially consensus, stakeholder, and planning processes. • Tool set includes brainstorming, mind mapping, and content mining.	• City of Cologne, "Cologne Rings" Discussions, 2004 • Esslingen City Dialogue on Budget, 2003 • "Growing City," Hamburg, 2002 For more information visit: http://zeno8.ais.fraunhofer.de/zeno/
Information Renaissance	Large-Scale Online Dialogue	• Asynchronous online dialogues, several weeks long, engage large groups in discussions of public issues. • Dialogues include panelists—public officials, issue experts, and advocacy groups—and extensive background materials. • Regular summaries encapsulate daily discussion and enable participants to remain current without reading all comments. • Often sponsored by public agencies as part of their policy-making processes.	• California Master Plan for Education, 2002 • Public Involvement in EPA Decisions, 2001 • Americans Discuss Social Security, 1999 For more information, visit: http://www.info-ren.org
Web Lab	Small Group Dialogue	• Asynchronous online dialogues that distribute participants among facilitated and unfacilitated groups of 10–15 discussants. • Takes place over multiple weeks to encourage greater interaction, investment, and accountability among participants. • Dialogue monitors track group activity and intervene as needed. • Document libraries provide background material, and polls take the pulse of participants.	• Listening to the City: Rebuilding Lower Manhattan, 2002 • Project 540, High School Civic Engagement, 2002 • What Now: Politics, the Economy, Your Life, 2001 For more information, visit: http://www.weblab.org

(generally, they either worked nearby or knew someone who perished in or survived the attacks).

The agenda for the online dialogues approximated the conversation that took place at a larger face-to-face forum on July 20, 2002, at the Jacob Javits Center, with two notable exceptions. First, conversations were focused on "elements of rebuilding" rather than the proposals for redevelopment originally prepared by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation for the July 20 event. These proposals had been widely criticized at the meeting, and online dialogue designers felt it would be more constructive to emphasize the "component features of the various proposals" that were designed into the original concept plans.[25] The second change to the agenda was the presentation of "rebuilding and revitalization" topics concurrently rather than sequentially, as was the case during the face-to-face meeting. The flexibility of the technology allowed for several "parallel conversations" to take place at the same time, which facilitated cross-fertilization of knowledge across discussion themes as well as served to engage participants around key areas of interest and knowledge.

Several key features of the Listening to the City online dialogues are worth highlighting:

- **Use of small groups.** Most online deliberation involves threaded discussion among very large groups, while conversation tends to be driven by relatively few posters. While small group dialogue doesn't necessarily overcome the problem of asymmetry, it does heighten group members' sense of "belonging" as well as their opportunity to be "heard."
- **"Rounds" of conversation.** The LTC online dialogues consisted of several phases, or rounds,

of small group discussion that began at the announcement of a new discussion topic, which included rebuilding, revitalization, and memorializing. Topics generally included at least three subtopics and a wrap-up session that served to "sum up" conversation points. In addition, participants could add their own topics for discussion. Thus, the range of topics discussed in any group ranged from 13 to 56.

- **Facilitation split.** In an effort to collect information about the quality of online deliberation among "formally" facilitated groups (those with a pre-designated professional facilitator) and "informally" facilitated groups (or "self-regulated"), the dialogue coordinators assigned facilitators to all of the even-numbered groups and left the odd-numbered groups to themselves. There were, however, "roaming facilitators" on hand to "lean into" the conversation if intervention seemed necessary.
- **Theming.** Similar to America*Speaks*' "theme team" that identifies major themes within a group during conversations, the LTC online dialogues were "themed" in two ways: The roughly 10,000 posts were scanned and sifted through for important ideas, and each group was asked to file weekly "discussion summaries" that were also sifted for areas of agreement, major ideas, and unique but seemingly important contributions. The results of each round of "theming" were used to develop polls and to inform the final recommendations to decision makers.
- **Polling.** Voting was conducted at the close of each "round" of conversation. Results were used to measure the accuracy of the theming process and for participants to prioritize their recommendations to decision makers.

The Listening to the City online dialogues were an exceptional exercise in online citizen engagement for many reasons, including the resulting substance. In addition, it was inspiring to see how many groups that met online formed high levels of trust and support for one another, and their relationships carried forward after the official term of the online dialogues. Groups continued to meet face-to-face as well as online in public forums.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Rethinking public engagement is a critical challenge for federal agencies in the 21st century. In an era of declining trust in public institutions, public flight from politics, and urgent issues that require collaborative solutions, we encourage federal managers to rethink the way government engages with the public. We want to stress in particular the emerging role of government as convener, and to think about ways agencies can contribute to the growth of an infrastructure for engagement. This means, first and foremost, expanding agency participation techniques to include information-processing methods—specifically, deliberative techniques that support the general-interest public in sharing their experiences and perspectives, building knowledge, thinking critically about the issues and trade-offs, and then building workable solutions. We have described how a growing number of techniques enable this kind of meaningful citizen engagement, online and face-to-face, and require some level of commitment from agency sponsors to make good use of the input.

There are several rationales for engaging the public more meaningfully in policy and program development, among them to improve the substance of policy, reduce conflict while raising trust, cultivate civic capacity, and enhance the capacity for successful implementation. The guiding principles for these kinds of deliberative engagement forums can be summarized as:

- Provide accessible information to citizens about the issues and choices involved, so that they can articulate informed opinions.
- Offer an unbiased framing of the policy issue in a way that allows the public to struggle with the same difficult choices facing decision makers.
- Involve a demographically representative group of citizens reflective of the affected community.
- Facilitate high-quality discussion that ensures all voices are heard.
- Produce information that clearly highlights the public's shared priorities.
- Achieve commitment from decision makers to engage in the process and use the results in the policy process.
- Support ongoing involvement by the public on the issue, including feedback, monitoring, and evaluation.

Such a shift in the way agencies carry out their public involvement mandates will, in some instances, require dramatic changes. Several institutional barriers to an effective transition toward a more participatory policy design culture within agencies exist. These can be summarized as three principal deficits:

1. Low levels of administrator trust in the quality of what the public can contribute to the policy-making process. This mistrust is often accompanied by fears of information overload.
2. Uncoordinated, often inconsistent policy guidelines that do not provide sufficient direction on the effective use of deliberative engagement techniques and, in some cases, actually impose constraints on the options available to administrators.
3. A lack of intentional citizen engagement knowledge-building activities and coordinated information sharing to promote and improve practice within and across agencies.

In our survey of online practices, we found two important challenges that limit the success and uptake of online engagement activities. These are:

1. E-government initiatives' emphasis on serving the "citizen as customer" and on achieving improved service delivery both contribute to an unbalanced e-government strategy that sidelines meaningful citizen engagement.
2. A lack of common standards for agency web presence and online engagement techniques creates inconsistent and often incoherent online engagement experiences for citizens, and makes it difficult for agencies to share learning across experiences.

Our recommendations to federal managers relate to these gaps and challenges that we have observed within current administrative practice. They are derived from a review of existing practice as well as recommendations from managers interviewed for this report. We have made two kinds of recommendations in this report: internal reforms that agencies can begin to implement on their own, and external reforms that will require substantial, nearly government-wide reforms.

The internal reforms that we recommend to agency managers are:

1. **Carry out top-to-bottom review of policy and practice.** An assessment of existing involvement policy and practice will be central to the development of sustained and successful new techniques. A focused review and integration of participative frameworks that affect central, regional, and state agencies will ensure proliferation of key values, principles, and successful practice techniques.
2. **Create management-level staff positions focused on improving agency participation.** One of the shortcomings in practice right now is that public involvement often falls within "communication" and "public affairs" activities. Citizen engagement requires its own department, resources, and activities separate from the information communication, education, and image-building activities of government.
3. **Invest sufficient funding for participation efforts in program and project budgets.** Building out successful involvement practice requires anticipation and sufficient resources. Conflict and friction in policy and program development should not be an unanticipated barrier to successful policy development, and ensuring that the resources are on hand will enable managers to effectively engage with the public.
4. **Promote experimentation.** Agency managers need to equip themselves with new tools and approaches to citizen engagement. The very best predictor of innovation within departments and agencies is the level of experience held by managers and staff. It goes without saying that the more experience agencies have with new approaches to citizen engagement, the better prepared managers will be to match the appropriate engagement methods to policy and program development.
5. **Measure benefits beyond cost.** Agency managers need to think differently about how to evaluate successful citizen engagement beyond the layout of public involvement expenditures. While successful public involvement can reduce costly litigation and project delays, other benefits, such as increased trust in the agency and agency personnel, public education, and increased civic capacity should be accounted for as well.
6. **Incorporate citizen engagement practices into performance management review.** Performance management reviews for programs and personnel should incorporate standards for successful citizen engagement practice. Furthermore, once citizen participation standards are in place, it may be appropriate in some instances to develop, along with them, participatory performance appraisal techniques that engage the public in the performance feedback cycle.

External strategies to create the "infrastructure for engagement" across federal agencies include:

1. **Establish an interagency task force to review existing policy guidelines.** Serious work needs to be done to identify and resolve inconsistencies

and obstacles to good citizen engagement practice that reside in existing policy frameworks. Either Congress or the president should establish a neutral, credible body to review the primary legal frameworks impacting public participation today and recommend ways those policies can be updated and improved to account for evolving practice and new opportunities.

2. **Adopt consistent federal guidelines for public involvement.** Most, if not all, federal agencies will benefit from a consolidated framework for effective citizen participation. To ensure the proliferation of a culture and practice of participation in government, oversight agencies like the Office of Management and Budget and the Government Accountability Office must provide more explicit guidelines for deliberative forms of citizen engagement while ensuring that existing policies do not unnecessarily constrain agency practice.

3. **Adapt administrative process.** Ensure that the procedures, budgets, and time cycles for policy and program development create sufficient opportunities to include citizen engagement, achieve an appropriate balance of expert and public input, and are tied to a transparent and accountable decision-making structure.

4. **Develop assessment frameworks.** To improve the practice of engaging the public in policy and program development, government-wide standards of good practice must be in place, and oversight agencies must have the capacity to measure and evaluate the outcomes of various techniques across context and purpose. Until the federal government is able to facilitate good practice across agencies, departments and administrators must build learning internally and create their own mechanisms to share that knowledge broadly.

5. **Encourage exchange across agencies.** To facilitate the exchange of learning across federal agencies, managers will need to proactively create and seek out networks for the exchange of best practice information. Agencies like the EPA, which have taken the lead on rewriting internal policy and coordinating initiatives like E-Rulemaking, represent natural hubs for this activity. Federally established bodies like the National Academy of Public Administration could also serve as focal points of this activity.

The next decade will continue to witness rapid evolution in the way technology and systems thinking impact society. Government is at the center of these changes in many societies, and the United States is no exception. To ensure that these changes are accompanied by maximum benefits to the public, explicit efforts must be made to support meaningful citizen engagement. Failure to adequately address the growing public appetite for transparency, accountability, and engagement in decision making risks deepening democratic deficits and driving up the costs of getting public business done. Bringing citizens into partnership in policy design and program development through evolving online and face-to-face techniques has the potential to dramatically change the public's perception of government, improve the substance of policy, and improve the prospects for lasting, successful policy implementation.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thank Alexandra Samuel for her invaluable contribution in carrying out background interviews with more than two dozen agency managers and citizen engagement professionals on three continents. The results of these interviews have influenced significantly the framing of this guide.

We would also like to acknowledge Alexandra and Stephen Pyser for their early work in reviewing existing guides to citizen engagement, which had an important influence over the approach we chose to take with ours.

Finally, background for this paper, as well as recommendations of federal managers interviewed, was provided through the authors' involvement in the Deliberative Democracy Consortium (www.deliberative-democracy.net) and its Link to Government Work Group. The Link to Government Work Group is actively working with senior public officials from several agencies to cultivate a knowledge-building network to advance the practice of deliberative democracy within government.

Endnotes

1. The language of "empowered" governance mechanisms is drawn from the work of Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright (2003), who define Empowered Participatory Governance (EPG) in three dimensions: deliberation, civic engagement, and institutional influence. These three dimensions of EPG are drawn together as a way of measuring the authority and legitimacy of various approaches to participatory governance.

2. http://www.ombwatch.org/article/articleview/176/1/67 accessed December 7, 2005.

3. Abigail Williams and Archon Fung. 2005. Mapping Public Deliberation: A Report to the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. np. Cambridge, MA: Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

4. Rebecca Long and Thomas Beierle. 1999. The Federal Advisory Committee Act and Public Participation in Environmental Policy. np. Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future.

5. Office of Management and Budget, http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/gpea2.html accessed December 7, 2005.

6. http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/servicefirst/index/consultation.htm

7. http://www.deliberative-democracy.net/about/FAQ accessed October 11, 2005.

8. The authors found Hitchcock, McBurney, and Parsons. "A Framework for Deliberative Dialogues" (OSSA, 2001) particularly insightful in putting together this list of distinguishing principles of deliberation.

9. The first three rationales are drawn from *Understanding Risk,* by Paul Stern and Harvey Fineberg (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1996). The fourth rationale is concluded from the writing of prominent scholars such as Benjamin Barber, David Matthews, John Gastil, and James Bohman. The fifth is our conclusion drawn from readings in social capital and civic capacity building.

10. The authors recently encountered a nearly identical set of points speaking to the "value and necessity" of civic participation developed by the U.S. Department of Energy's "Smart Communities Network." These justifications for civic participation are: (1) ensure good plans remain intact over time; (2) reduce the likelihood of contentious battles before councils and planning commissions; (3) speed the development process and reduce the cost of good projects; (4) increase the quality of planning; and (5) enhance the general sense of community and trust in government. The report is available at: http://www.sustainable.doe.gov/landuse/civic.html.

11. A good survey of the range of activities such deliberation might inspire is outlined by Peter Levine, in his work *The New Progressive Era* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000).

12. http://wwww.citizensassembly.bc.ca

13. http://dc.gov/mayor/scorecards/index.shtm accessed October 13, 2005.

14. http://www.info-ren.org

15. A resulting decision in favor of GMO introduction has sparked widespread protest among civil society groups in the UK. For more information on these developments, visit: http://www.foodfuture.org.uk/ and http://www.organicconsumers.org/ge/ukuproar030804.cfm.

16. http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/egov/definition.htm

17. For example, visit the UK's Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, which runs 22 E-Participation initiatives: http://www.e-democracy.gov.uk/

18. http://www.nps.gov

19. http://www.epa.gov

20. http://ncilistens.cancer.gov

21. Visit Information Renaissance at: http://www.info-ren.org and Neighborhood America at: http://www.neighborhoodamerica.com.

22. http://www.regulations.gov

23. Note that this conclusion is drawn from studies of online discussion boards, e-mail lists, and chat environments and may be false in the circumstance of actual online

deliberation. In point of fact, it is probably too early to be able to draw such distinct conclusions.

24. http://www.weblab.org/home.html
25. http://dialogues.listeningtothecity.org/WebX?writeDocument@156.37iOaIypceS.10@.ee7d09f!doc=28 accessed September 30, 2005.

Selected Resources

Deliberative Democracy Consortium
The mission of the Deliberative Democracy Consortium (DDC) is to bring together practitioners and researchers to support and foster the nascent, broad-based movement to promote and institutionalize deliberative democracy at all levels of governance in the United States and around the world.
www.deliberative-democracy.net

Democracies Online
Democracies Online (DoWire) is an excellent resource on the convergence of democracy and the Internet around the world. DoWire is a free, low-volume, moderated blog, e-mail announcement list, and wiki of best practices.
www.dowire.org

International Association for Public Participation
The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) helps governments, organizations, and communities improve their decisions by involving the people whose lives are affected by those decisions.
www.iap2.org

National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation
The National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation (NCDD) convenes people and groups who practice, promote, and study inclusive, high-quality conversations. NCDD seeks to nurture justice, innovation, and democracy throughout society through the widespread use of transformational communication methods such as dialogue and deliberation.
www.ncdd.org

OECD Handbook on Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy-making
The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) handbook is a practitioner's guide designed for use by government officials in OECD Member and non-Member countries. It offers a practical road map for building robust frameworks for informing, consulting, and engaging citizens during policy making.
www1.oecd.org/publications/e-book/4201131E.PDF

United States Environmental Protection Agency Public Involvement Policy
The EPA's site for public involvement is designed to help users understand how different types of public involvement relate to EPA programs, how public input can be used in EPA decision making, and how various tools can be used to support effective public involvement.
www.epa.gov/publicinvolvement/

Resource Persons (Interviews)

Catherine Alexander
Communications Director
Office of Nanotechnology

Catherine Auger
Senior Learning Advisor
Health Canada

Roger Bernier
Senior Advisor for Scientific Strategy and Innovation
National Immunization Program
U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Patricia Bonner
Public Involvement Staff
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Cecelia Broderick
Principal Policy Officer
Office of Citizens and Civics (Canada)

John Burklow
Associate Director
National Institutes of Health (U.S.)

Debbie Cook
Senior Advisor, Consultation
Privy Council Office
Office of the Prime Minister (Canada)

Robin Delany-Shabazz
Director, Concentration of Federal Efforts Program
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
U.S. Department of Justice

Jerry Delli Priscoli
Senior Advisor
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

David Emmerson
Senior Program Coordinator
U.S. Department of the Interior

Beverly Godwin
Director
FirstGov.gov

John Gotze
Senior Consultant
Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation
(Denmark)

Mary Davis Hamlin
Senior Associate
Keystone Center

Tine Hansen-Turton
Executive Director
National Nursing Centers Consortium (Canada)

Marcia Keener
Program Analyst
National Park Service (U.S.)

David Kuehn
Community Planner
Federal Highway Administration (U.S.)

Sarah Landry
Associate Director, Communications and Legislation
National Vaccine Advisory Committee

Anita Linde
Special Assistant
National Institutes of Health (U.S.)

Leanne Nurse
Program Analyst
Center for Innovation
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

William Pehlivanian
Deputy Program Manager
United States Army

Susan Saul
Outreach Specialist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Rona Siskind
Health Sciences Specialist
Division of AIDS
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health

Jill Solberg
Public Affairs Specialist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Lorna Tessier
Public Relations Manager
Canadian Blood Services

Stephen Thom
Deputy Director
Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice

Mary Beth Thompson
Public Affairs Specialist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Karen Trebon
Program Manager
Citizen Service Levels Interagency Committee (CSLIC)
General Services Administration

Suzanne Wells
Community Involvement and Communications
SuperFund
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Richard Whitley
Executive Liaison for Citizen Stewardship
Bureau of Land Management

Stuart Willoughby
Director of E-Gov Program Office
General Services Administration

Bibliography

Adams, Brian. 2004. "Public Meetings and the Democratic Process." *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 64, No.1 (43–54).

America*Speaks*. 2004. *Millions of Voices: A Blueprint for National Discussions*. Washington, D.C.: America*Speaks*.

Arnstein, Sherry R. 1969. "A Ladder of Citizen Participation." *Journal of the American Institute of Planning,* 35(4): 216–224.

Badger, Mark. 2004. The Connected Republic: Changing the Way We Govern. London: Premium Publishing.

Balkovich, Ed, and James Morris. 2004. *Project Libra: Optimizing Individual and Public Interests in Information Technology.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Beierle, Thomas. 2002. *Democracy Online: An Evaluation of the National Dialogue on Public Involvement in EPA Decisions*. Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future.

Bertelsmann Stiftung. 2002. *Balanced E-Government: Connecting Efficient Administration and Responsive Democracy*. Gutersloh, Germany: Bertelsman Foundation.

Bishop, Lynn, and Glyn Davis. 2002. "Mapping Public Participation in Policy Choices." *Australian Journal of Public Administration,* 61(1):14–29.

Brody, Samuel, David Godschalk, and Ray Burby. 2003. "Mandating Citizen Participation in Plan Making: Six Strategic Planning Choices." *Journal of the American Planning Association,* 69(3): 245–264.

Civic Alliance. 2002. *Listening to the City: Report of the Proceedings.* New York: Civic Alliance. Retrieved from Listening to the City, http://dialogues.listening-tothecity.org/

Clift, Steven. 2004. *E-Government and Democracy: Representation and Citizen Engagement in the Information Age.* Retrieved July 2005 from Publicus.net.

Cornwall, Andrea, and John Gaventa. 2001. *From Users and Choosers to Makers and Shapers: Repositioning Participation in Social Policy*. Brighton, UK: Institute for Development Studies.

Council for Excellence in Government. 2001. *E-Government: The Next American Revolution.* Washington, D.C.: Council for Excellence in Government. Retrieved August 25, 2005, from the TechRepublic Online library.

EchoDitto. 2004. *The Empowerment Age: Why the Internet Matters.* Washington, D.C.: EchoDitto.

EKOS. 2002. *Private Voices, Public Choices*. Ottawa, Ontario: EKOS.

Forester, John. 1999. *The Deliberative Practitioner.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Frewer, Dr. Lynn. 2001. "Public Participation Methods: Evolving and Operationalizing an Evaluation Framework." Unpublished paper.

Gunn, Rosemary, and Bob Carlitz. 2003. Online Dialogue in a Political Context: The California Master Plan for Education. Pittsburgh, PA: Information Renaissance. Retrieved August 2005 from http://www.network-democracy.org/camp/report.shtml.

Hamlett, Patrick, Carolyn Miller, and Jane Macoubrie. 2001. *A Report on the 2001 North Carolina Citizens' Technology Forum on Genetically Modified Foods.* North Carolina: North Carolina State University.

IAP2. *IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum.* http://www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/spectrum.pdf accessed October 11, 2005.

Innes, Judith E., and David E. Booher. 2004. "Reframing Public Participation: Strategies for the 21st Century." *Planning Theory & Practice,* 5(4):419–436.

Irland, Lloyd C., and J. Ross Vincent. 1974. "Citizen Participation in Decision-Making: A Challenge for Public Land Managers." *Journal of Range Management,* 27(3): 182.

Irvin, Renée, and John Stansbury. "Citizen Participation in Decision-Making: Is It Worth the Effort?" *Public Administration Review,* 64(1): 55–65.

Jefferson Center. 2002. "Citizens Jury: Global Climate Change." np. Minnesota: Jefferson Center.

Jones, Bryan D. 1994. *Reconceiving Decision-Making in Democratic Politics.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McComas, Katherine A. 2003. "Citizen Satisfaction with Public Meetings Used for Risk Communication." *Journal of Applied Communication Research,* 31(2):164–184.

McComas, Katherine A. 2001. "Theory and Practice of Public Meetings." *Communication Theory,* 11(1): 36–55.

National Park Service (NPS), United States Department of the Interior. 2003. "Director's Order 75A: Civic Engagement and Public Involvement." Washington, D.C. http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/75A.htm accessed July 15, 2005.

Neighborhood America. 2005. *Public Communications Management: An Emerging Standard for Managing Public Involvement.* Naples: Neighborhood America.

NEPA Task Force. 2003. *Modernizing NEPA Implementation.* Washington, D.C.: Council on Environmental Quality.

OECD. 2003. *Promise and Problems of E-Democracy.* Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

OECD. 2001. *Citizens as Partners: OECD Handbook on Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policymaking.* Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Peters, B. Guy. 1992. *American Public Policy.* Chappaqua, NY: Seven Bridges.

Pew Internet and American Life Project. 2005. "Internet: The Mainstreaming of Online Life." *Trends 2005.* Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center.

Poland, Pauline. 2001. *Online Consultation in GOL Countries: Initiatives to Foster e-Democracy.* Government Online International Network.

Potapchuk, Bill. 2002. "Neighborhood Action Initiative: Engaging Citizens in Real Change." *The Collaborative Leadership Fieldbook.* Edited by David Chrislip. Indianapolis, IN: Jossey-Bass.

Sanoff, Henry. 2000. *Community Participation Methods in Design and Planning.* New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Shulman, Stuart. "Citizen Agenda-Setting: The Electronic Collection and Synthesis of Public Commentary in the Regulatory Rulemaking Process." Des Moines, IA: Drake University. Retrieved September 17, 2005, from the Digital Government Research Online library.

Stern, Paul, and Harvey V. Fineberg. 1996. *Understanding Risk.* Washington, D.C.: National Research Council.

Viewpoint Learning. 2004. "The Future of San Diego's Airport: A Report on Dialogues with County Residents." La Jolla, CA: ViewPoint Learning.

Yang, Kaifeng. 2005. "Public Administrators' Trust in Citizens: A Missing Link in Citizen Involvement Efforts." *Public Administration Review,* 65(3): 273–285.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer, Founder and President of America*Speaks,* has made her mark as an innovator in deliberative democracy, public administration, and organizational development. Concerns about the deep partisan divide in Washington, D.C., and the growing disconnection between citizens and government across the country led Dr. Lukensmeyer to launch America*Speaks* in 1995. Her goal was to develop new democratic practices that would strengthen the citizen's voice in public decision making.

Under Lukensmeyer's leadership, America*Speaks* has earned a national reputation as a leader in the field of deliberative democracy and democratic renewal. She and America*Speaks* have won a number of awards, including two from the International Association for Public Participation (2001 and 2003), an award for best practices from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, a Distinguished Service Award from the Federal Managers Association for Outstanding Leadership (1994), and a Best Practice Award from the National Training Laboratories Institute in 1993.

Dr. Lukensmeyer earned a Ph.D. in organizational behavior from Case Western Reserve University and completed postgraduate training at the internationally known Gestalt Institute of Cleveland. She is affiliated with the American Management Association, National Training Laboratories, Organization Development Network, and the Organization and Management Division of the American Psychological Association, and serves on the board of the Fielding Institute.

Lars Hasselblad Torres is staff researcher for America*Speaks*, responsible for tracking the field of deliberative democracy, internal evaluation, and online innovation. As part of his efforts to map the field of deliberative democracy at home and abroad, Torres is leading America*Speaks*' development of an interactive online inventory of deliberation experiences and an international research effort to map deliberative and inclusionary processes being carried out with partners in Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia.

Torres also develops research partnerships with universities across the country to design and implement quantitative and qualitative measures of the impact of deliberation, both on policy outcomes and on participants. A significant part of this work is directed at better understanding whether participation in deliberative forums results in lasting changes in participants' political attitudes and behavior.

A final area of focus in Torres' research is ongoing exploration into online innovations in citizen engagement. These innovations include online deliberative forums, social networks and online communities, the revolution in citizen journalism, and the integration of mobile and wireless devices into administrative process.

Torres studied at the University of Southern California and the School for International Training, where he received a bachelor's degree in international studies in 1995.

KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

To contact the authors:

Dr. Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer
President
America*Speaks*
1050 17th Street, NW, Suite 701
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 775-3939
fax: (202) 775-0404

e-mail: cjl@americaspeaks.org

Lars Hasselblad Torres
Researcher
America*Speaks*
1050 17th Street, NW, Suite 701
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 549-8346

e-mail: lhtorres@americaspeaks.org

COLLABORATION: PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

Leveraging Networks to Meet National Goals: FEMA and the Safe Construction Networks (March 2002)
William L. Waugh, Jr.

21st-Century Government and the Challenge of Homeland Defense (June 2002)
Elaine C. Kamarck

Assessing Partnerships: New Forms of Collaboration (March 2003)
Robert Klitgaard and Gregory F. Treverton

Leveraging Networks: A Guide for Public Managers Working across Organizations (March 2003)
Robert Agranoff

Extraordinary Results on National Goals: Networks and Partnerships in the Bureau of Primary Health Care's 100%/0 Campaign (March 2003)
John Scanlon

Public-Private Strategic Partnerships: The U.S. Postal Service-Federal Express Alliance (May 2003)
Oded Shenkar

The Challenge of Coordinating "Big Science" (July 2003)
W. Henry Lambright

Communities of Practice: A New Tool for Government Managers (November 2003)
William M. Snyder and Xavier de Souza Briggs

Collaboration and Performance Management in Network Settings: Lessons from Three Watershed Governance Efforts (April 2004)
Mark T. Imperial

The Quest to Become "One": An Approach to Internal Collaboration (February 2005)
Russ Linden

Cooperation Between Social Security and Tax Agencies in Europe (April 2005)
Bernhard Zaglmayer, Paul Schoukens, and Danny Pieters

Leveraging Collaborative Networks in Infrequent Emergency Situations (June 2005)
Donald P. Moynihan

Public Deliberation: A Manager's Guide to Citizen Engagement (February 2006)
Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer and Lars Hasselblad Torres

E-GOVERNMENT

Supercharging the Employment Agency: An Investigation of the Use of Information and Communication Technology to Improve the Service of State Employment Agencies (December 2000)
Anthony M. Townsend

Assessing a State's Readiness for Global Electronic Commerce: Lessons from the Ohio Experience (January 2001)
J. Pari Sabety and Steven I. Gordon

Privacy Strategies for Electronic Government (January 2001)
Janine S. Hiller and France Bélanger

Commerce Comes to Government on the Desktop: E-Commerce Applications in the Public Sector (February 2001)
Genie N. L. Stowers

The Use of the Internet in Government Service Delivery (February 2001)
Steven Cohen and William Eimicke

State Web Portals: Delivering and Financing E-Service (January 2002)
Diana Burley Gant, Jon P. Gant, and Craig L. Johnson

Internet Voting: Bringing Elections to the Desktop (February 2002)
Robert S. Done

Leveraging Technology in the Service of Diplomacy: Innovation in the Department of State (March 2002)
Barry Fulton

Federal Intranet Work Sites: An Interim Assessment (June 2002)
Julianne G. Mahler and Priscilla M. Regan

The State of Federal Websites: The Pursuit of Excellence (August 2002)
Genie N. L. Stowers

State Government E-Procurement in the Information Age: Issues, Practices, and Trends (September 2002)
M. Jae Moon

Preparing for Wireless and Mobile Technologies in Government (October 2002)
Ai-Mei Chang and P. K. Kannan

Public-Sector Information Security: A Call to Action for Public-Sector CIOs (October 2002, 2nd ed.)
Don Heiman

The Auction Model: How the Public Sector Can Leverage the Power of E-Commerce Through Dynamic Pricing (November 2002, 2nd ed.)
David C. Wyld

The Promise of E-Learning in Africa: The Potential for Public-Private Partnerships (January 2003)
Norman LaRocque and Michael Latham

Digitally Integrating the Government Supply Chain: E-Procurement, E-Finance, and E-Logistics (February 2003)
Jacques S. Gansler, William Lucyshyn, and Kimberly M. Ross

Using Technology to Increase Citizen Participation in Government: The Use of Models and Simulation (April 2003)
John O'Looney

Seaport: Charting a New Course for Professional Services Acquisition for America's Navy (June 2003)
David C. Wyld

E-Reporting: Strengthening Democratic Accountability (February 2004)
Mordecai Lee

Understanding Electronic Signatures: The Key to E-Government (March 2004)
Stephen H. Holden

Measuring the Performance of E-Government (March 2004)
Genie N. L. Stowers

Restoring Trust in Government: The Potential of Digital Citizen Participation (August 2004)
Marc Holzer, James Melitski, Seung-Yong Rho, and Richard Schwester

From E-Government to M-Government? Emerging Practices in the Use of Mobile Technology by State Governments (November 2004)
M. Jae Moon

Government Garage Sales: Online Auctions as Tools for Asset Management (November 2004)
David C. Wyld

Innovation in E-Procurement: The Italian Experience (November 2004)
Mita Marra

Computerisation and E-Government in Social Security: A Comparative International Study (July 2005)
Michael Adler and Paul Henman

The Next Big Election Challenge: Developing Electronic Data Transaction Standards for Election Administration (July 2005)
R. Michael Alvarez and Thad E. Hall

RFID: The Right Frequency for Government (October 2005)
David C. Wyld

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Credit Scoring and Loan Scoring: Tools for Improved Management of Federal Credit Programs (July 1999)
Thomas H. Stanton

Using Activity-Based Costing to Manage More Effectively (January 2000)
Michael H. Granof, David E. Platt, and Igor Vaysman

Audited Financial Statements: Getting and Sustaining "Clean" Opinions (July 2001)
Douglas A. Brook

An Introduction to Financial Risk Management in Government (August 2001)
Richard J. Buttimer, Jr.

Understanding Federal Asset Management: An Agenda for Reform (July 2003)
Thomas H. Stanton

Efficiency Counts: Developing the Capacity to Manage Costs at Air Force Materiel Command (August 2003)
Michael Barzelay and Fred Thompson

Federal Credit Programs: Managing Risk in the Information Age (April 2005)
Thomas H. Stanton

Grants Management in the 21st Century: Three Innovative Policy Responses (October 2005)
Timothy J. Conlan

Performance Budgeting: How NASA and SBA Link Costs and Performance (February 2006)
Lloyd A. Blanchard

HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

Profiles in Excellence: Conversations with the Best of America's Career Executive Service (November 1999)
Mark W. Huddleston

Reflections on Mobility: Case Studies of Six Federal Executives (May 2000)
Michael D. Serlin

Managing Telecommuting in the Federal Government: An Interim Report (June 2000)
Gina Vega and Louis Brennan

Using Virtual Teams to Manage Complex Projects: A Case Study of the Radioactive Waste Management Project (August 2000)
Samuel M. DeMarie

A Learning-Based Approach to Leading Change (December 2000)
Barry Sugarman

Labor-Management Partnerships: A New Approach to Collaborative Management (July 2001)
Barry Rubin and Richard Rubin

Winning the Best and Brightest: Increasing the Attraction of Public Service (July 2001)
Carol Chetkovich

A Weapon in the War for Talent: Using Special Authorities to Recruit Crucial Personnel (December 2001)
Hal G. Rainey

A Changing Workforce: Understanding Diversity Programs in the Federal Government (December 2001)
Katherine C. Naff and J. Edward Kellough

Life after Civil Service Reform: The Texas, Georgia, and Florida Experiences (October 2002)
Jonathan Walters

The Defense Leadership and Management Program: Taking Career Development Seriously (December 2002)
Joseph A. Ferrara and Mark C. Rom

The Influence of Organizational Commitment on Officer Retention: A 12-Year Study of U.S. Army Officers (December 2002)
Stephanie C. Payne, Ann H. Huffman, and Trueman R. Tremble, Jr.

Human Capital Reform: 21st Century Requirements for the United States Agency for International Development (March 2003)
Anthony C. E. Quainton and Amanda M. Fulmer

Modernizing Human Resource Management in the Federal Government: The IRS Model (April 2003)
James R. Thompson and Hal G. Rainey

Mediation at Work: Transforming Workplace Conflict at the United States Postal Service (October 2003)
Lisa B. Bingham

Growing Leaders for Public Service (August 2004, 2nd ed.)
Ray Blunt

Pay for Performance: A Guide for Federal Managers (November 2004)
Howard Risher

The Blended Workforce: Maximizing Agility Through Nonstandard Work Arrangements (April 2005)
James R. Thompson and Sharon H. Mastracci

The Transformation of the Government Accountability Office: Using Human Capital to Drive Change (July 2005)
Jonathan Walters and Charles Thompson

INNOVATION

Managing Workfare: The Case of the Work Experience Program in the New York City Parks Department (June 1999)
Steven Cohen

New Tools for Improving Government Regulation: An Assessment of Emissions Trading and Other Market-Based Regulatory Tools (October 1999)
Gary C. Bryner

Religious Organizations, Anti-Poverty Relief, and Charitable Choice: A Feasibility Study of Faith-Based Welfare Reform in Mississippi (November 1999)
John P. Bartkowski and Helen A. Regis

Business Improvement Districts and Innovative Service Delivery (November 1999)
Jerry Mitchell

An Assessment of Brownfield Redevelopment Policies: The Michigan Experience (November 1999)
Richard C. Hula

San Diego County's Innovation Program: Using Competition and a Whole Lot More to Improve Public Services (January 2000)
William B. Eimicke

Innovation in the Administration of Public Airports (March 2000)
Scott E. Tarry

Entrepreneurial Government: Bureaucrats as Businesspeople (May 2000)
Anne Laurent

Rethinking U.S. Environmental Protection Policy: Management Challenges for a New Administration (November 2000)
Dennis A. Rondinelli

The Challenge of Innovating in Government (February 2001)
Sandford Borins

Understanding Innovation: What Inspires It? What Makes It Successful? (December 2001)
Jonathan Walters

Government Management of Information Mega-Technology: Lessons from the Internal Revenue Service's Tax Systems Modernization (March 2002)
Barry Bozeman

Advancing High End Computing: Linking to National Goals (September 2003)
Juan D. Rogers and Barry Bozeman

MANAGING FOR PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS

Corporate Strategic Planning in Government: Lessons from the United States Air Force (November 2000)
Colin Campbell

Using Evaluation to Support Performance Management: A Guide for Federal Executives (January 2001)
Kathryn Newcomer and Mary Ann Scheirer

Managing for Outcomes: Milestone Contracting in Oklahoma (January 2001)
Peter Frumkin

The Challenge of Developing Cross-Agency Measures: A Case Study of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (August 2001)
Patrick J. Murphy and John Carnevale

The Potential of the Government Performance and Results Act as a Tool to Manage Third-Party Government (August 2001)
David G. Frederickson

Using Performance Data for Accountability: The New York City Police Department's CompStat Model of Police Management (August 2001)
Paul E. O'Connell

Moving Toward More Capable Government: A Guide to Organizational Design (June 2002)
Thomas H. Stanton

The Baltimore CitiStat Program: Performance and Accountability (May 2003)
Lenneal J. Henderson

Strategies for Using State Information: Measuring and Improving Program Performance (December 2003)
Shelley H. Metzenbaum

Linking Performance and Budgeting: Opportunities in the Federal Budget Process (January 2004, 2nd ed.)
Philip G. Joyce

How Federal Programs Use Outcome Information: Opportunities for Federal Managers (February 2004, 2nd ed.)
Harry P. Hatry, Elaine Morley, Shelli B. Rossman, and Joseph S. Wholey

Performance Leadership: 11 Better Practices That Can Ratchet Up Performance (May 2004)
Robert D. Behn

Performance Management for Career Executives: A "Start Where You Are, Use What You Have" Guide (October 2004, 2nd ed.)
Chris Wye

Staying the Course: The Use of Performance Measurement in State Governments (November 2004)
Julia Melkers and Katherine Willoughby

Moving from Outputs to Outcomes: Practical Advice from Governments Around the World (January 2006)
Burt Perrin

MARKET-BASED GOVERNMENT

Determining a Level Playing Field for Public-Private Competition (November 1999)
Lawrence L. Martin

Implementing State Contracts for Social Services: An Assessment of the Kansas Experience (May 2000)
Jocelyn M. Johnston and Barbara S. Romzek

A Vision of the Government as a World-Class Buyer: Major Procurement Issues for the Coming Decade (January 2002)
Jacques S. Gansler

Contracting for the 21st Century: A Partnership Model (January 2002)
Wendell C. Lawther

Franchise Funds in the Federal Government: Ending the Monopoly in Service Provision (February 2002)
John J. Callahan

Making Performance-Based Contracting Perform: What the Federal Government Can Learn from State and Local Governments (November 2002, 2nd ed.)
Lawrence L. Martin

Moving to Public-Private Partnerships: Learning from Experience around the World (February 2003)
Trefor P. Williams

IT Outsourcing: A Primer for Public Managers (February 2003)
Yu-Che Chen and James Perry

The Procurement Partnership Model: Moving to a Team-Based Approach (February 2003)
Kathryn G. Denhardt

Moving Toward Market-Based Government: The Changing Role of Government as the Provider (March 2004, 2nd ed.)
Jacques S. Gansler

Transborder Service Systems: Pathways for Innovation or Threats to Accountability? (March 2004)
Alasdair Roberts

Competitive Sourcing: What Happens to Federal Employees? (October 2004)
Jacques S. Gansler and William Lucyshyn

Implementing Alternative Sourcing Strategies: Four Case Studies (October 2004)
Edited by Jacques S. Gansler and William Lucyshyn

Designing Competitive Bidding for Medicare (November 2004)
John Cawley and Andrew B. Whitford

International Experience Using Outsourcing, Public-Private Partnerships, and Vouchers (October 2005)
Jón R. Blöndal

TRANSFORMATION OF ORGANIZATIONS

The Importance of Leadership: The Role of School Principals (September 1999)
Paul Teske and Mark Schneider

Leadership for Change: Case Studies in American Local Government (September 1999)
Robert B. Denhardt and Janet Vinzant Denhardt

Managing Decentralized Departments: The Case of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (October 1999)
Beryl A. Radin

Transforming Government: The Renewal and Revitalization of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (April 2000)
R. Steven Daniels and Carolyn L. Clark-Daniels

Transforming Government: Creating the New Defense Procurement System (April 2000)
Kimberly A. Harokopus

Trans-Atlantic Experiences in Health Reform: The United Kingdom's National Health Service and the United States Veterans Health Administration (May 2000)
Marilyn A. DeLuca

Transforming Government: The Revitalization of the Veterans Health Administration (June 2000)
Gary J. Young

The Challenge of Managing Across Boundaries: The Case of the Office of the Secretary in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (November 2000)
Beryl A. Radin

Creating a Culture of Innovation: 10 Lessons from America's Best Run City (January 2001)
Janet Vinzant Denhardt and Robert B. Denhardt

Transforming Government: Dan Goldin and the Remaking of NASA (March 2001)
W. Henry Lambright

Managing Across Boundaries: A Case Study of Dr. Helene Gayle and the AIDS Epidemic (January 2002)
Norma M. Riccucci

Managing "Big Science": A Case Study of the Human Genome Project (March 2002)
W. Henry Lambright

The Power of Frontline Workers in Transforming Government: The Upstate New York Veterans Healthcare Network (April 2003)
Timothy J. Hoff

Making Public Sector Mergers Work: Lessons Learned (August 2003)
Peter Frumkin

Efficiency Counts: Developing the Capacity to Manage Costs at Air Force Materiel Command (August 2003)
Michael Barzelay and Fred Thompson

Managing the New Multipurpose, Multidiscipline University Research Centers: Institutional Innovation in the Academic Community (November 2003)
Barry Bozeman and P. Craig Boardman

The Transformation of the Government Accountability Office: Using Human Capital to Drive Change (July 2005)
Jonathan Walters and Charles Thompson

Transforming the Intelligence Community: Improving the Collection and Management of Information (October 2005)
Elaine C. Kamarck

Executive Response to Changing Fortune: Sean O'Keefe as NASA Administrator (October 2005)
W. Henry Lambright

Ramping Up Large, Non-Routine Projects: Lessons for Federal Managers from the Successful 2000 Census (November 2005)
Nancy A. Potok and William G. Barron, Jr.

The *Next* Government of the United States: Challenges for Performance in the 21st Century (December 2005)
Donald F. Kettl

2004 PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION SERIES

Government Reorganization: Strategies and Tools to Get It Done (August 2004)
Hannah Sistare

Performance Management for Political Executives: A "Start Where You Are, Use What You Have" Guide (October 2004)
Chris Wye

Becoming an Effective Political Executive: 7 Lessons from Experienced Appointees (January 2005, 2nd ed.)
Judith E. Michaels

Getting to Know You: Rules of Engagement for Political Appointees and Career Executives (January 2005)
Joseph A. Ferrara and Lynn C. Ross

SPECIAL REPORTS

Enhancing Security Throughout the Supply Chain (April 2004)
David J. Closs and Edmund F. McGarrell

Assessing the Impact of IT-Driven Education in K–12 Schools (May 2005)
Ganesh D. Bhatt

Investing in Supply Chain Security: Collateral Benefits (December 2005, 2nd ed.)
James B. Rice, Jr., and Philip W. Spayd

CENTER FOR HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT REPORTS

The Power of Frontline Workers in Transforming Healthcare Organizations: The Upstate New York Veterans Healthcare Network (December 2003)
Timothy J. Hoff

IT Outsourcing: A Primer for Healthcare Managers (December 2003)
Yu-Che Chen and James Perry

BOOKS*

Collaboration: Using Networks and Partnerships
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004)
John M. Kamensky and Thomas J. Burlin, editors

E-Government 2001
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001)
Mark A. Abramson and Grady E. Means, editors

E-Government 2003
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002)
Mark A. Abramson and Therese L. Morin, editors

Human Capital 2002
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002)
Mark A. Abramson and Nicole Willenz Gardner, editors

Human Capital 2004
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004)
Jonathan D. Breul and Nicole Willenz Gardner, editors

Innovation
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002)
Mark A. Abramson and Ian Littman, editors

Leaders
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002)
Mark A. Abramson and Kevin M. Bacon, editors

Learning the Ropes: Insights for Political Appointees
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005)
Mark A. Abramson and Paul R. Lawrence, editors

Managing for Results 2002
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001)
Mark A. Abramson and John M. Kamensky, editors

Managing for Results 2005
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004)
John M. Kamensky and Albert Morales, editors

Memos to the President: Management Advice from the Nation's Top Public Administrators
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001)
Mark A. Abramson, editor

New Ways of Doing Business
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003)
Mark A. Abramson and Ann M. Kieffaber, editors

The Procurement Revolution
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003)
Mark A. Abramson and Roland S. Harris III, editors

Transforming Government Supply Chain Management
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003)
Jacques S. Gansler and Robert E. Luby, Jr., editors

Transforming Organizations
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001)
Mark A. Abramson and Paul R. Lawrence, editors

* Available at bookstores, online booksellers, and from the publisher (www.rowmanlittlefield.com or 800-462-6420).

About the IBM Center for The Business of Government

Through research stipends and events, the IBM Center for The Business of Government stimulates research and facilitates discussion on new approaches to improving the effectiveness of government at the federal, state, local, and international levels.

The Center is one of the ways that IBM seeks to advance knowledge on how to improve public sector effectiveness. The IBM Center focuses on the future of the operation and management of the public sector.

About IBM Business Consulting Services

With consultants and professional staff in more than 160 countries globally, IBM Business Consulting Services is the world's largest consulting services organization. IBM Business Consulting Services provides clients with business process and industry expertise, a deep understanding of technology solutions that address specific industry issues, and the ability to design, build and run those solutions in a way that delivers bottom-line business value. For more information visit www.ibm.com/bcs.

For additional information, contact:
Mark A. Abramson
Executive Director
IBM Center for The Business of Government
1301 K Street, NW
Fourth Floor, West Tower
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 515-4504, fax: (202) 515-4375

e-mail: businessofgovernment@us.ibm.com
website: www.businessofgovernment.org