

Engagement plan template guide

This document contains guidance for each section on the engagement plan template with one sample column completed.

Engagement plan guidance

To apply for the Equitable Engagement Fund, neighborhood organizations must submit an engagement plan, which will plot out your organization's engagement work for the next year or several years by identifying goals, strategies and resources needed to reach all demographic groups present in your neighborhood.

A neighborhood organization's engagement plan is intended to be a living document on which an organization can continually apply lessons learned to improve the equity and effectiveness of your organization's community engagement.

Defining equitable engagement

Equitable engagement uses multiple strategies to promote the participation of all Minneapolis residents in neighborhood activities and decision-making processes. Equitable engagement should ensure that historically underrepresented and under-engaged community members have a fair role in decision-making.

Stakeholder involvement

In completing your Engagement plan, consider the various stakeholders that are impacted by and support your organization. The purpose of the Engagement plan is to ensure:

- The organization meaningfully engages all residents regarding major activities.
- The organization meaningfully engages under-engaged residents, such as renters, communities of color, low-income residents, immigrant and refugees, people with disabilities, expanding participation in the organization.
- Diverse communities are included in the organization's decision-making processes.

Sections of the engagement plan

Below you can find explanations for each question on the Engagement plan template.

Neighborhoods covered

Along the top of your neighborhood organization's Engagement plan, please list the neighborhood(s) where you will complete your activities.

Time frame

You may choose to submit a three-year timeline here or a one-year timeline to be updated annually. Use whatever format makes the most sense for your organization, e.g. monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly.

Work summary

Work summary should include a narrative of the work you intend to do over the elected time frame. This may include general outreach for information sharing, public hearings, general membership meetings and more specific initiatives that may include events, door knocking, outreach to schools, etc. This does not need to list everything your organization plans to do, but a summary of what is included in the plan.

Scope of work, outcome and goals

The scope of work outcome and goals should include your overall goals of your Engagement plan for the time period you elect. In what ways do you hope your organization changes to include the voices of historically underrepresented and under-engaged community members? What overall goals does your organization have when it comes to how decision-making happens in your community? This is the place to list your organization's big picture goals.

Plan detail

Demographic groups

Use the top rows to identify the demographic groups in your neighborhood. Add more columns as needed or make a new table for each group. For each group, list information that corresponds to the headings in the first row on the left.

If your Engagement plan includes many different initiatives, programs, projects or activities, you can either list out the engagement strategies, outcomes, goals, etc. for each demographic group and its individual initiative or use one column for each demographic group and note which strategies, goals or outcomes are specific to each initiative. For instance, under "outreach and engagement strategies," if you have multiple programs with different strategies for the same demographic group, you could specify "Connect with property owners (Tenant Engagement Program)" (as an example).

Each of the headings in the first column will ask for specific information that corresponds to the demographic group listed along the top row of the plan. Below are more details about the other headings from the first column.

Numbers or percentage

In this row, please indicate how many people of the demographic group live in your neighborhood or what percentage of your neighborhood's population they make up. Demographic information for your neighborhood can be found here:

- [Minneapolis-Saint Paul Neighborhoods | MN Compass](#)
- [Census data explorer](#)
- [American Community Survey \(ACS\) \(census.gov\)](#)

Initiative, activity, project or program

List the name(s) of the programs, projects, initiatives or activities you will carry out.

Barriers to engagement

Here is where you may need to dig deep; what have you learned about barriers that exist for different demographic groups? If you are hearing that “that meeting is boring” or “I just don’t care”, explore why that meeting is “boring” or why folks “don’t care”. Does it mean that what is being presented isn’t relevant to that individual’s life? Does it mean that the individual feels powerless to enact change? Does it mean that they aren’t interested in hearing about everything going on but may be interested in one specific aspect?

You may not have all the answers as you fill out your plan but keep asking the tough questions about your work and how it may or may not resonate with different individuals.

Outreach and engagement strategies

Here is where you list your strategies to connect with the different demographic groups present in your neighborhood. You may need to connect with outreach/engagement experts to understand the best ways to engage with these community members. Another way to understand how each community wants to be engaged with is to ask them. Incorporate asking community members how they want to be engaged, what platforms they use the most and how information is transferred in their communities.

Resources needed

What are the resources you need to do the work? You may need to reallocate funds in your budget to ensure that your organization will be able to do this work. You may need to translate more material, or you may need to hire organizers with language abilities. Make sure you have the resources to complete the work.

Partners

What existing partners does your organization have, and what are other organizations, people or programs that you may want to partner with in the future? How will you start to build relationships with new partners and nurture existing partnerships?

Person(s) responsible

List individual staff or contract employees that will be responsible for that work. This could include volunteers as well. If you anticipate needing volunteers for something, make sure to include volunteer recruitment in your plan.

Timeline

Plan out the activities, strategies, events, etc. on a timeline within your plan's time frame. For example, if you plan to do a large door-knocking campaign culminating in a community-wide event, you may want to start your outreach a few months before the event. If the event is planned for June, then for your door-knocking campaign (which may be focused on a particular community) you would list something like, "April-May: Door-knock identified buildings/area/streets, June: Event."

Quantitative goals

What are the measurable goals for your work? It may be the number of houses or apartments door-knocked, contact information collected, an attendance increases at meetings, etc. These goals are measurable with numbers, percentages, etc.

Qualitative goals

These goals are harder to measure but provide valuable information about relationship building and issue identification. Qualitative goals could be that you learn about a concern in the neighborhood that is disproportionately impacting certain community members. It could also be identifying partners in your work.

Outcomes of engagement

What do you hope will change because of meeting your goals? Perhaps it is that your organization's decision-making process will incorporate different feedback from community members, or that your board becomes more representative of the community. How would you want the community's interaction with your organization to change?

Submitting your engagement plan

As you work on your engagement plan reach out to your neighborhood support specialist if you need some feedback or have any questions. We see this as being an iterative process that might change as we work together. We also anticipate that some strategies and goals may change or not be met. These will be learning opportunities to reassess and explore ways to be more successful in the future.

Once your plan is submitted, it may be reviewed by a multi-department panel for suggestions, advice or guidance. Our neighborhood support specialists are committed to working together with neighborhoods to create a plan that makes sense for your neighborhood.

Remember that building relationships and establishing trust takes time. Don't be discouraged if movement doesn't happen as fast as you would like it to. We will be learning together and welcome your feedback.