

Think *PROJECT*: Points and Opportunities for Engagement

Arts programmers naturally think about linking dialogue or engagement activities to the actual art presentation—the main event, the big performance, the installed exhibition. But there are many points in the art’s planning, creation, program development, and after-life that offer opportunities for civic dialogue and engagement activities. Think whole project to identify viable “moments” where engagement can be intentionally fostered.

	Points in the Development of an Artistic Work/Project	Activities and Forums for Civic Dialogue/Engagement
Planning	During the design and planning stage, the artist, curator, presenter, or community organization seeks input and participation from advisors, partners, and constituents that includes dialogue about issues and engaging people actively in planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory groups • Interviews • Focus groups • Public forums • Partner meetings
Research	During the research stage, artists, curators, arts organization leaders, and community partners seek contextual information and perspectives that stimulates dialogue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Story circles • Oral histories • Meetings with community agencies
Artistic Creation or Program Development	During the creative process, artists and/or arts programmers involve the public or targeted segments of the public in making the art or designing the event/exhibit; or the public is able to interact with the artist as the work is in progress. In some cases, feedback offered by the public may alter the artwork or creation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studio workshops • Residency activities • Lecture/demonstrations • Sharing of in-progress artistic work (e.g., design review, workshoping a script) • Engaging audience in creating interpretive materials

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Pre-presentation	Before experiencing the actual performance, viewing a film, or exhibition, the audience is engaged in dialogue about issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related programs offered in advance • Facilitated conversations that encourage reflection about the issue in personal terms • Readings or thought questions offered in advance of the art experience • Online materials, dialogue, podcasts serve to educate and inform as well as stimulate thinking for subsequent engagement • Teacher guides and activities help prepare students for engagement during school visits • Collaboration with the media to provide editorial, features, or substantive coverage about issues that promote thought and dialogue
Presentation	The actual presentation offers an opportunity for public engagement in issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The art is interactive, (e.g., requires engagement with others present, integrates dialogue) • Interactive elements of exhibition or presentations promote dialogue or engagement
Post-presentation	After experiencing a performance or viewing a film or exhibition, audiences are engaged in dialogue or opportunities to get further involved in issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated dialogue • Panels structured to promote active participation and dialogue • Call-in shows • Online dialogue or interactive follow-up • Promotion of community resources to get involved, take action, volunteer, continue the dialogue
Distribution	The work is distributed with means to further opportunity for dialogue and engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touring of shows, exhibitions with guides or tools for facilitating dialogue and fostering engagement • Media adaptation or broadcast showings • Online posting of the creative work with interactive activities