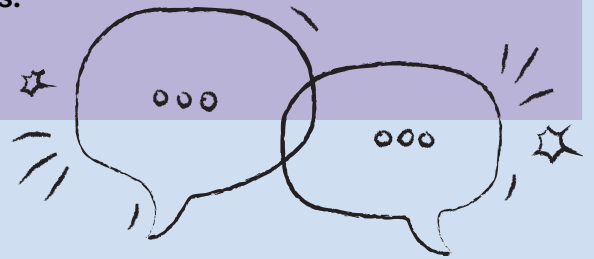


MANAGING EXPECTATIONS AROUND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

This tool is designed to help your team set realistic goals by focusing on small, tangible wins rather than large-scale policy changes. Managing expectations encourages young people to stay motivated because they can see the incremental value of their contributions. It also helps them to feel appreciated throughout the engagement process.



INSTRUCTIONS

Use the following steps and prompts to guide conversations with young people and stakeholders. This will help align expectations, foster collaboration, and highlight the significance of micro-achievements. For instance, a micro-achievement may look like the addition of a requirement in a Request for Quote/Tender that directly reflects young people's perspectives or contributions.

1. SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS AT THE START

- **Discuss the scope of the project with young people:** What is achievable within the time and resources available? What is yet to be decided and what has already been decided? .
- **Clarify decision-making processes:** How will young people's input be used? What are the limitations?
- **Identify priorities:** Ask young people, "What would success look like to you?" Officials may consider, "What specific youth insights or outcomes will be most valuable in advancing our goals?"
- **Highlight the value of small contributions:** Emphasise that change often happens incrementally, and even small actions or ideas can have lasting impact.

2. COMMUNICATE THE IMPORTANCE OF EVERY CONTRIBUTION

- **Reinforce impact:** Recognise the value of minor changes by sharing examples of how similar small actions have led to positive change over time.
- **Explain how youth involvement fits into the bigger picture:** Where does this piece of the puzzle fit? Even if a policy doesn't change immediately, raising awareness or building networks is an essential part of the process.

3. BREAK DOWN LARGE GOALS INTO MICRO-ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Identify small wins:** Instead of setting a goal to change a national policy, identify smaller aims like contributing ideas to a public consultation or co-designing a youth-friendly version of a policy document. Consider what is in the public's sphere of influence.
- **Celebrate each milestone as a meaningful achievement:** Track and acknowledge contributions and wins such as:
 - Completing focus groups or workshops.
 - Developing communication materials (e.g. social media posts, flyers).
 - Presenting youth perspectives at a conference or public event, or in an internal meeting with other government stakeholders.

4. USE REFLECTIVE PRACTICE TO TRACK PROGRESS AND ADJUST EXPECTATIONS

- **Incorporate regular reflection:** Hold check-ins to review what has been achieved and what still needs to be done.
- **Ask reflective questions (see the 'Reflective Impact Log' in 'Guide 8' for a more detailed approach):**
 - What has been accomplished so far?
 - Are we on track to meet the original goals?
 - Have any unexpected challenges or opportunities arisen?
- **Adapt expectations as needed:** Be flexible and adjust goals (for both young people and your own team) based on ongoing reflection and learning.

5. RECOGNISE AND CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENTS REGULARLY

- **Acknowledge milestones:** Use meetings, newsletters, or other public forums as opportunities to acknowledge and celebrate progress, however small.
- **Offer certificates or letters of impact:** Document specific contributions (e.g. participating in consultations, designing campaign materials etc.) to motivate progress.
- **Share progress with young people:** Let them know how their work has contributed to the overall project. Express gratitude for their time and explain the outcomes their contributions are supporting.