

NATIONAL DIALOGUE

ARE WE FACING
A P2 CRISIS OR
OPPORTUNITY?



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What Are We Talking About?



Is our country truly divided?

Can we still make good decisions together?

What is my role in this context?

In these tough questions, there is a rare and crucial opportunity for you and IAP2 USA to showcase public participation's role in working across divides at just the right moment in time. Join IAP2 Board members, local experts, IAP2 members and participants as we work together via a World Café to test public participation's ability to unite us against what potentially divides us in a time of high conflict and uncertainty.

The conversation kicked off in San Diego this February 2017 and we know others across the country want to continue it. We're interested to learn how the local dynamic can change the conversation. So, thanks for joining us! We expect the conversation to continue in many locations including San Francisco, Portland, Chicago, Denver, Salt Lake City, Wyoming and more. Ideas will be shared across IAP2 USA's network of over 2,000 members and friends, as well as at the North American Conference this September.

This guide is intended to help you replicate the conversation in your community. Please utilize the questions as they are written so that we can aggregate the data from conversations across the country. We know it might be hard because this is such an engaging topic, but as with any facilitation process, please ask facilitators/group leaders to try to keep their personal perspectives aside.

For more information, contact IAP2 Executive Manager, Amelia Shaw at: amelia@iap2usa.org

Inviting Participants



This is a great chapter event, but we recommend also including other members of the community to participate. The following list of “Recommended Invitees” provides some ideas about how to build a diverse mix of participant and draw P2 practitioners as well as program/project owners who all have a stake in functional P2 processes. See the templates section for event invitation (page 11) and sign-in sheet (page 13) templates that can be easily modified to fit your event.

RECOMMENDED INVITEES

Shown below is a matrix of potential participant types to consider inviting to the forum. The list suggests a diverse mix of participant types that draw P2 practitioner, as well as owners of programs/projects together, as all have a stake in functional public participation.

	PARTICIPANT TYPE	NAME OF LOCAL RESOURCES	ACTUAL NAMES
1	Practitioner		
2	City or County Community Director		
3	Departmental Community Director		
4	Transportation Department Leader		
5	Economic Development Department Leader		
6	Planning Department Leader		
7	Special Events Department Leader		
8	Park & Recreation Department Leader		
9	Business Improvement District(s)		
10	Economic Development Corporation		
11	City/County Community Planner		
12	YMCA/YWCA		
13	Boys and Girls Club		
14	Rotary Club		
15	Local Press Club		
16	Local Community Service Organization - Elderly		
17	Local Community Service Organization – Homeless/Food/Shelter		
18	Local Environmental Groups – Parks/Open Space		
19	Local Environmental Groups – Preservation/ Restoration		
20	Local Environmental Groups – Beaches/Bays/ Rivers		
21	Local Attorneys		
22	Local PTAs		
23	Local Neighborhood Watch Organizations		
24	Local Community Policing		
25	Large Employer – External Affairs		

Inviting Participants



	PARTICIPANT TYPE	NAME OF LOCAL RESOURCES	ACTUAL NAMES
26	Large Employer – HR Manager		
27	Chamber(s) of Commerce		
28	Local Grant Making Foundation		
26	Public Health Organization/Hospital: Public Affairs		
30	University: Journalism/Media Studies		
31	University: Political Science		
32	University: Law School		
33	University: Communications Department		
34	University: Science Departments		
35	Multi-Cultural Organization(s)		
36	LGBT Organization(s)		
37	Climate Change Organization(s)		
38	School District/Local School(s)		
39	Military Organizations		

**Note: We purposefully stayed away from inviting representatives of local political parties to the first dialogue and focused on people in leadership roles that weren't affiliated with a political party*

Event Schedule



EVENT SET UP

You will need at least one sticky wall, three colors of 6” by 8” post-its, and markers.

There should be two facilitators working together to facilitate the conversation and organize the results.

We suggest using tables of 4 for this activity. This has proven to engage the most participants and does not require table hosts. If you cannot accommodate a 4-top setup, you will need to recruit and train table hosts to facilitate the process.

The “Instructions for Table Hosts” is included on page 7. Table hosts will need to arrive 15 minutes early (before the social time begins to be trained and lead discussions in a consistent manner.

All who facilitate should make every effort to not bias the conversations, but rather allow people to share whatever thoughts they think are relevant in response to the questions. This will be especially important as we aggregate the results from conversations in different locations over the next few months.

EVENT DESIGN

Free-structured social networking up front with snacks and drinks	20-30 min
Introduce staff and event purpose and context	5 min
<p>World Café (see <i>Technique in a Nutshell</i> section)</p> <p><i>Question 1 - We hear a constant message that we are a divided country. What are the challenges to our work now?</i></p> <p><i>Question 2 - How are those challenges affecting public participation?</i></p> <p><i>Question 3 - What might we do as individuals and organizations to support quality P2 in our communities and nation?</i></p>	Allow 30 min per question
<p>Card Storm (see <i>Technique in a Nutshell</i> section)</p> <p><i>Each table will write their top 3-5 answers to each of the questions. The event facilitators will group like topics and report out after all three questions have been discussed.</i></p> <p><i>Use the same color sticky note per question.</i></p>	As part of each 30-minute segment for responding to questions
Report out to group and allow discussion of the results based on the card storming exercise.	20-30 min

Event Schedule

PROPOSED DETAILED AGENDA

1	5:30 - 5:50 pm	Social time (snacks and beverages)
2	5:50 - 5:55 pm	Welcome and introductions by host
3	5:55 - 6:00 pm	Orientation to World Café by facilitator(s)
4	6:00 - 6:25 pm	Question One posed by facilitator
5	6:25 - 6:30 pm	Each group record 3-5 top responses, then move to new tables; facilitator collects responses
6	6:30 - 6:55 pm	Question Two posed by facilitator; while groups discuss facilitator organizes responses to Question One
7	6:55 - 7:00 pm	Each group record 3-5 top responses, then move to new tables; facilitator collects responses
8	7:00 - 7:25 pm	Question Three posed by facilitator; while groups discuss facilitator organizes responses to Question Two
9	7:25 - 7:30 pm	Each group record 3-5 top responses, facilitator collects responses
10	7:30 - 7:40 pm	One facilitator shares results of organized card storming for the first two questions while 2nd facilitator works to organize responses to Question Three
11	7:40 - 7:45 pm	2nd facilitator reports results of third question
12	7:45 - 7:55 pm	General discussion
13	7:55 - 8:00 pm	Host thanks all for participating and reports next steps going forward

Event Schedule



DETAILED FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS

The event combines a world café conversation with three questions and card storming as a mechanism for organizing the results of the conversations. The “Techniques in a Nutshell” section provides a more detailed explanation of the two techniques.

5:30 - 5:50 pm

- The facilitator(s) should circulate, introduce themselves, and welcome all in attendance during the social time.

5:50 - 5:55 pm

- Start on time and introduce the host to offer welcoming remarks. See script on page 12.

5:55 - 6:00 pm

- Explain and describe the World Café technique. See description on page 8)

6:00 - 6:25 pm

- Then, pose the first question. “We hear a constant message that we are a divided country. What are the challenges to our work now?”
- Make note of the time.
- Pass out five pink sticky 6” by 8” post-it notes to each table.

6:25 - 6:30 pm

- As time runs out for the first question, ask every table to summarize the top 3-5 responses on the pink sticky notes, using a marker and writing big enough to be read from a distance.
- At the end of the time, ask all but one person from each table to move to a new table. People should be asked not to stay together in a “herd.”
- While people are moving around, collect the pink sticky notes.

6:30 - 6:55 pm

- As people get settled, pose the second question. “How are those challenges affecting public participation?”
- Again, make note of the time.
- While people discuss the 2nd question, organize the pink sticky notes on a sticky wall (or a blank wall).

6:55 - 7:00 pm

- Pass out five orange sticky 6” by 8” post-it notes to each table.
- As time runs out for the first question, ask every table to summarize the top 3-5 responses on the orange sticky notes, using a marker and writing big enough to be read from a distance.
- At the end of the time, ask all but one person from each table to move to a new table. People should be asked not to stay together in a “herd.”

7:00 - 7:25 pm

- As people get settled, pose the third question. “What might we do as individuals and organizations to support quality P2 in our communities and nation?”
- Again, make note of the time.
- While people discuss the 3rd question, organize the orange sticky notes on a sticky wall (or a blank wall).

7:25 - 7:30 pm

- Pass out five green sticky 6” by 8” post-it notes to each table.
- As time runs out for the first question, ask every table to summarize the top 3-5 responses on the green sticky notes, using a marker and writing big enough to be read from a distance.
- Collect the green sticky notes.

7:30 - 7:40 pm

- While one facilitator reports on the results of the card-storming exercise, the other facilitator will be organizing the green sticky notes.

7:40 - 7:45 pm

- Once the results of the pink and orange sticky notes have been presented and discussed, then the second facilitator can report on the green sticky notes.

7:45 - 8:00 pm

- Close by having the host thank everyone who attended and let people know that a “Group Memory” will be distributed later to share the results of the conversation.

Techniques in a Nutshell

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TABLE HOSTS

OVERVIEW:

You will be the “host” for three rounds of discussions. Each round will feature a different “prompting” question AND different participants. You will be the only one that stays at your table through all three rounds. Help make sure everyone participates and try to help the group find what they have in common.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The facilitators will explain the World Café process and announce Question 1 for discussion.
2. Introduce yourself as the Table Host. Tell people you are there to make sure everyone is comfortable and have a good time (as any good host would!). Ask everyone to QUICKLY introduce themselves. There will be only 25 minutes for each question. If needed, help keep focus on the 1st question: “We hear a constant message that we are a divided country. What are the challenges to our work now?”
3. As the first question wraps up, facilitate discussion to reach agreement on the 3-5 responses to the first question that are shared by the table as whole. Capture with big printing using a marker on no more than five 6” by 8” pink sticky notes. Thanks for writing legibly.
4. The facilitator(s) will announce when it is time to change tables. During the transition time, the facilitator(s) will collect the pink sticky notes.
5. Wait for the new people to fill your table. Welcome your new participants. Again, ask them to quickly introduce themselves.
6. The facilitator(s) will announce Question 2 for discussion. They may want to refer back to the prior conversations, but help them move on to focus on the new question: “How are those challenges affecting public participation?”
7. As the second question wraps up, facilitate discussion to reach agreement on the 3-5 responses to the second question that are shared by the table as whole and capture them on no more than five orange sticky notes.
8. The facilitator(s) will announce the 2nd transition time. During the transition time, the facilitator will collect the orange sticky notes.
9. The third round of discussion will proceed exactly the same as the first two, with the third and final question. By now you should have the hang of it!
10. The facilitator(s) will announce Question 3 for discussion. Help keep your participants focused on: “What might we do as individuals and an organization to support quality public participation in our communities and nation?”
11. As the third question wraps up, facilitate discussion to reach agreement on 3-5 shared responses to the third question and capture them on no more than five green sticky notes.
12. As the discussions wrap up, the facilitator(s) will collect the green sticky notes.
13. Help your group focus on the facilitator(s), who will share the results of the three discussions.

Techniques in a Nutshell

WORLD CAFÉ

A world café is a technique developed by Juanita Brown (get more information about this technique [here](#)). The features of the world café that we are using for this event include:

- The most important attribute of a world café is the creation of a space where conversations that matter occur.
- Inviting people to talk about questions that they are interested in talking about.
- Seating people at small tables. Tables of four are ideal as all four people will participate in the conversations. Groups of more than four often allow some people to opt out of the conversation and groups of less than four have trouble sustaining the conversation.
- After each question, have people rotate to new tables. Typically, it is best to ask one person to stay behind at each table, but then everyone else moves to a new table. Groups who have sat together for one question should split up and go in different directions.
- Designing questions that build on each other – which means that everyone will want to spend a minute or two reviewing what they discussed in the prior round.
- The result is that ideas move around the room and the process naturally synthesizes the conversations.
- Ideally, the final question is designed as a call to action – encouraging people to do something with what they have discussed.
- If more than four people will be at each table, you may want to ask one person at each table to serve as a “table host.” The table hosts will stay behind as people rotate tables. A suggested handout for the table hosts is attached.
- To learn more about the world café, read the book and/or visit the world café [website](#).

CARD STORMING

Card storming is similar to a brainstorming exercise, but groups of people work together to decide what ideas to contribute. The ideas are recorded on cards and then organized on a sticky wall. Ideas that are similar are grouped together and the group as a whole has the opportunity to discuss the results.

For the purposes of the National Dialogue, we asked the groups to conclude their conversations by agreeing to the three to five responses to the question. It is important to give each group fewer post-it notes than people so they have to work together to decide what to post. The responses are recorded on 6” by 8” sticky notes, using a different color of sticky note for each question. Organize the responses on a wall/sticky wall plainly visible to dialogue participants. If using the suggested agenda and timeframes proposed in this Grab & Go kit, facilitators will need to organize the responses as the event is occurring. If more time is allowed, the group may be engaged in organizing the ideas on the wall.

Templates

Templates

EVENT REPORTING

IAP2 USA would like to share this process at the IAP2 North American Conference in Denver this September. We are excited to learn how your event went so that we can determine the best process to manage the output. Stay tuned as we aggregate your results.

Please create a brief group memory document for distribution to participants and IAP2 USA (see pages 14-20). This document should include the following:

Brief synopsis of the event including:

- Date, location, number of attendees
- Facilitators
- Meeting set-up (specifically 4-tops or other table configurations)

Photos of the event

Photos of the card-storming wall and final results

Responses to each question

- List the topics/categories you refined from the card-storming
- List the specific content under each

Please include the following in your report to IAP2 USA.

Send these to your participants at your discretion.

- Copy of Sign-in Sheets
- Copy of invitation, social media posts, other publicity related materials

RESOURCES

Click here in order to access:

- [IAP2 Core Values](#)
- [IAP2 Code of Ethics](#)
- [IAP2 Spectrum of Participation](#)

REGISTRATION SUPPORT

IAP2 USA will provide online registration to support local hosts. Simply send the following information to info@iap2usa.org:

- Date
- Time
- Location
- Promotional language and materials
- Fee for event

We Need Your Voice!

Are we facing a P2 crisis or opportunity?

Television news, social media feeds, and chatter at the office all tell us that the level of national divide has reached record-breaking levels. IAP2 USA believes that we all have a stake in our ability to make good decisions together, so the questions become:

- **Is our country truly divided?**
- **Can we still make good decisions together?**
- **What is my role in this context?**

Join **IAP2 [insert Chapter Name or USA]** in a World Café dialogue to test public participation’s ability to unite us against what potentially divides us in a time of high conflict and uncertainty.

[Insert any information about local event, i.e. host, speakers, etc.]

This event is open to IAP2 members and friends. Ideas will be shared across IAP2

SAVE THE DATE!

Date:
Time:
Location:
Fee: [Insert cost or no cost]

Seating is limited, reserve your place at the table now!

USA’s network of over 2,000 members and friends, through its outreach to chapters, international network and at the 2017 IAP2 North American conference in Denver September 6-8, 2017. Events like this are being replicated in locations across the country and a special session will be held at the conference to discuss the outputs and determine courses of action for us as an organization and as practitioners to move forward.

More information about our organization is available at www.iap2usa.org

Opening Remarks



INTRODUCE YOURSELF, EVENT ORGANIZERS, FACILITATOR(S), AND CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

ABOUT THE SPECIAL FORUM- CRISIS OR OPPORTUNITY?

We're here to discuss whether the current refrain that we're a divided country constitutes a P2 Crisis or Opportunity? Water cooler banter, online rants, and national news pundits cross-talking in our homes around-the-clock, tell us the level of national divide has reached record-breaking levels.

But is our country truly divided?

Can we still make good decisions together?

And what is our role – yours and mine – in this context?

We all have a stake in our ability to make good decisions together. I think Americans of all stripes endeavor to do so. This is part of our national heritage.

IAP2 USA want to lead the way in working across real and perceived “divides.” As an organization, we believe in **the value** of input from diverse perspectives and we want to demonstrate that value tonight.

Tonight, we provide a forum to discuss this situation and work towards a larger dialogue at the 2017 IAP2 North American conference to be held in Denver this September 6-8. Events like this are being replicated in locations across the country and a special session will be held at the conference to discuss the outputs and determine courses of action for us as an organization and as practitioners to move forward.

(WELCOME TO OTHERS)

So, let's talk about who is here. We have a really incredible mix of people from our area [insert location]. We want to know a little more about who is in the room. With a show of hands, how many of you are... *[these are suggestions and can be refined to suit your specific location and event]*

- Public participation practitioners, engagement officers, consensus builders, mediators?
- How many of you work in some sort of government role?
- How many are IAP2 USA members?
- How many of you didn't know about IAP2 until we contacted you to participate in this dialogue?

We are excited to have a conversation tonight with such a diverse group of people. So, thanks for giving us your time and ideas tonight.

IAP2'S THREE PILLARS

As we engage tonight, we will model IAP2's three pillars of the practice:

- The **Spectrum of Involvement**
- Our **Core Values**
- Our **Code of Ethics**

There are [brochures or posters] around the room that detail these pillars, which are the foundation of our practice and stand for an ethic I'm really proud of.

Together, they set this organization apart from the rest and we hope that you directly experience them in action as we move through this conversation. If you are unfamiliar with the IAP2 Three Pillars, we hope you will take a look at these now or in more detail once the session is over.

FINAL BUSINESS

Lastly, we will be sending a report following the event, so please make sure you signed in when you arrived. This report will also be sent to the US affiliate so that the findings from this and other dialogues around the country can be compared and engaged with at the 2017 North American conference. More info about the conference is available on the [IAP2 USA website](#). So, without further ado, I will pass this to our lead facilitator, [XXXX], for the night.

END OF EVENT CLOSING COMMENTS

Thank you all for attending and sharing in this important dialogue. I think we've discovered some interesting commonalities and a great set of concepts to move forward to the larger conference session in Denver. If you've enjoyed this activity, I'll encourage you to look into becoming a member of IAP2 USA and joining us September 6-8 at the 2017 North American Conference in Denver. More information is available at the check-in table. Thanks again for coming.

Are We Facing a P2 Crisis or Opportunity?

Group Memory of Dialogue (date) in (location)

OVERVIEW

On (date) IAP2 USA hosted a World Café conversation focused a dialogue on a national problem. This problem is being faced by public participation sponsors and practitioners alike. Are we are a divided country and if so, what is the impact on public participation and what options do we have for bridging these divides. The problem was framed as “Are we facing a P2 crisis or an opportunity?” within the context of increasingly rancorous and uncivil discourse that has dominated the US political and civic landscape the past several years.

PARTICIPANTS:

Participation was open to all IAP2 members and (describe who was invited). A list of participants is attached.

SPONSORS:

The session was hosted by: (list sponsors).

PROCESS:

Opening Remarks: (Host) initiated the session by sharing a few thoughts on the context and impetus to host this event and thanking participants for attending.

Facilitators: (Name(s) and organizational affiliations) facilitated the session. (First names) posed the questions for discussion, served as time-keepers, and organized the results into categories. This document presents the results.

World Cafe: A world café is a conversation involving a series of questions that build on each previous one, and where people move between different small group discussions every time a new question is posed so that participants have the opportunity to meet and converse with a wide variety of attendees. The room was set with round tables that could accommodate up to eight people each. One person served as a table host at each table, serving to ensure that everyone had the opportunity to participate in the discussions and to help the group document the three-to-five themes that arose as a result of each conversation. The world café was supplemented by a card storming exercise where responses to the questions were organized into categories.

PARTICIPANTS WERE INVITED TO CONSIDER THESE THREE QUESTIONS:

1. We hear a constant message that we are a divided country. What are the challenges to our public participation work now?
2. How are those challenges affecting the spirit of public participation?
3. What might we do as individuals and an organization to support quality P2 in our communities and nation?

INPUT:

What follows is a summary of the ideas generated in response to these questions.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A participant list
- Pictures of the session

Are We Facing a P2 Crisis or Opportunity?

Group Memory of Dialogue (date) in (location)

Question 1.

We hear a constant message that we are a divided country. What are the challenges to our work now?

Common themes provided by the participants in response to the first question included:

Are We Facing a P2 Crisis or Opportunity?

Group Memory of Dialogue (date) in (location)

Question 2.

How are those challenges affecting the spirit of public participation?

Responses to the second question comprised the following:

Are We Facing a P2 Crisis or Opportunity?

Group Memory of Dialogue (date) in (location)

Question 3.

What might we do as individuals and an organization to support quality P2 in our communities and nation?

Responses to the third question comprised the following:

Are We Facing a P2 Crisis or Opportunity?

Group Memory of Dialogue (date) in (location)

CLOSING

In closing, (host) thanked everyone who participated. She shared plans to continue the conversation in the months leading up to the 2017 North American Conference (to be held in Denver, CO September 6-8, 2017), for further information see <http://iap2usa.org/nac>.

Are We Facing a P2 Crisis or Opportunity?

Group Memory of Dialogue (date) in (location)

PARTICIPANT LIST

(list alphabetically, including organizational affiliation, in two columns if necessary to fit on one page)

Are We Facing a P2 Crisis or Opportunity?

Group Memory of Dialogue (date) in (location)

PICTURES

(Include pictures on the final page or two as appropriate.)

Example
Skills Symposium San Diego

Are We Facing a P2 Crisis or Opportunity?

Group Memory of Dialogue 2/27/17 in San Diego, CA

Overview: On Monday, February 27, 2017, IAP2 USA hosted a World Café conversation focused a dialogue on a national problem - referred to as the “big, hairy problem” session, which is hosted annually at the symposium. This year the problem focused on one faced by public participation sponsors and practitioners alike about whether we are a divided country and if so, the impact on public participation and options for P2 to form the platform to bridge these divides. The problem was framed as “Are we facing a P2 crisis or an opportunity?” within the context of increasingly rancorous and uncivil discourse that has dominated the US political and civic landscape the past several years.

Participants: Participation was open to all IAP2 members and trainers in attendance at the 2017 Skills Symposium, as well as local sponsors of projects, programs, policies and organizations that support, depend on and sponsor public participation. A list of participants is attached.

Sponsors: The session was hosted by: IAP2 USA, City Works, Kit Cole Consulting, Katz & Associates, Somers-Jaramillo and Associates, and the Davenport Institute, Pepperdine School of Public Policy.

Process:

Opening Remarks: IAP2 President Leah Jaramillo initiated the session by sharing a few thoughts on the context and impetus to host this event. She reiterated the IAP2 Three Pillars of the practice and thanked participants for attending.

Facilitators: IAP2 USA Board member Wendy Lowe (The Participation Company and P2 Solutions) and Lewis Michaelson (Katz & Associates) facilitated the session. Wendy and Lewis posed the questions for discussion, served as time-keepers, and organized the results into categories. This document presents the results.

World Cafe: A world café is a conversation involving a series of questions that build on each previous one, and where people move between different

small group discussions every time a new question is posed so that participants have the opportunity to meet and converse with a wide variety of attendees. The room was set with round tables that could accommodate up to eight people each. One person served as a table host at each table, serving to ensure that everyone had the opportunity to participate in the discussions and to help the group document the three-to-five themes that arose as a result of each conversation. The world café was supplemented by a card storming exercise where responses to the questions were organized into categories.

Participants were invited to consider these three questions:

1. We hear a constant message that we are a divided country. What are the challenges to our public participation work now?
2. How are those challenges affecting the spirit of public participation?
3. What role would you like IAP2 to play in this context? What might we do as individuals and an organization to support quality P2 in our communities and nation?

Closing: In closing, Leah Jaramillo thanked everyone who participated. She shared plans to continue the conversation in the months leading up to the 2017 North American Conference (to be held in Denver, CO September 6-8, 2017), for further information see <http://iap2usa.org/nac>.

Input:

What follows is:

- a summary of the ideas generated in response to these questions

Attachments:

- a participant list
- pictures of the session

Are We Facing a P2 Crisis or Opportunity?

Group Memory of Dialogue 2/27/17 in San Diego, CA

Question 1. We hear a constant message that we are a divided country. What are the challenges to our work now?

Common themes provided by the participants in response to the first question included:

Listening challenges

- [Need for] active listening
- Resistance to listening

People are fearful of participating

- Fear for safety is a more visible and/or constant subtext
- Avoiding confrontation [becomes a reason not to participate]
- Anger [is more prevalent]

The techniques we choose limit the patterns of participation:

- People are disengaging
- Participation options limited to 1) disengaging or 2) pick a side
- Limited terminology, i.e., sustainability
- Is/does P2 have more appeal, or it is perceived as being partisan?
- Lack of community and lack of shared experience
- Unwillingness to compromise

People cannot agree on what constitutes “facts”

- Objectivity
- Feelings versus facts
- What is fact? There is a lack of consensus on what is a fact
- Lot of negative information – which is a turn-off
- Media-driven conflicts

The issues addressed at P2 events are complex

- Complexity of issues – but short attention spans
- Climate of uncertainty
- There are no simple solutions – the issues are complex

Reactions to the opportunity to participate

- Public burnout
- Apathy – How to become engaged?
- Spectators versus actors

There is a rise in incivility

- Incivility
- Lack of civility (demonizing)

Are We Facing a P2 Crisis or Opportunity?

Group Memory of Dialogue 2/27/17 in San Diego, CA

Question 1. (Continued)

Technology advancements expand our process options

- Technology has both pluses and minuses
- Social media is not a platform for discussion; it has a false image
- Digital communications is more reactive and harder

People are losing trust in institutions

- Lack of trust (perhaps empathy)
- Distrust
- Harder to build trust
- Distrust of leadership

Are We Facing a P2 Crisis or Opportunity?

Group Memory of Dialogue 2/27/17 in San Diego, CA

Question 2. How are those challenges affecting the spirit of public participation?

Responses to the second question comprised the following:

Participants are experiencing fear and/or sadness

- Fearful/concerned for safety
- Sadness/grief
- Hopeless/cynical
- Feeling of emotional exhaustion
- Cynicism
- Afraid to have a respectful conversation
- Fear inhibits participation
- Fear to engage because of high-risk
- Overcome fear

Polarized publics

- Polarizing/divided participation
- Working against, not for
- Polarizing – no compromise

Public is selective about the opportunities they will take advantage of participating in

- Public is more resistant to participation, especially with government. Want straight talk
- People selective about where they will engage: high level policy, but not transportation, public works, etc.
- Lack of local interest

Political leadership is not eager to engage

- Leaders trying to retain power; power imbalance
- Decision-makers face lose-lose: engagement may change project but they perceive the changes in the project as a perception of weakness

P2 does not always result in helpful input

- Non-constructive, non-productive
- Where is empathy and understanding?
- P2 work is aspirational in the USA (versus well developed)
- Social media offers less capacity for long-term discussion and nuanced learning, listening, and process (many need training in how to effectively use social media for p2 processes)
- Lack of value in public participation

There is perhaps a bit of hope

- o Trauma creates opportunity for new conversations
- o Tangible results attract participants
- o The engagement that does happen is more spirited; the community is more activated.

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Question 3. What role would you like IAP2 to play in this context? What might we do as individuals and an organization to support quality P2 in our communities and nation?

Responses to the third question comprised the following:

We all need to advocate and educate

- Advocate about P2 – neutral and user friendly
- Promote IAP2 professional certification
- Educate others on best practices through the mentorship program, partnerships, and on-line – reach P2 practitioners where they work
- Increase the understanding of P2 among non-practitioners
- Develop a common language around what is public participation
- Framework for civil discourse
- Shared rules of engagement/civil discourse
- Education

P2 professionals could lend assistance to local engagement efforts

- Educate on differing points of view – walk in my shoes
- Share stories and create connections
- Model a discussion (i.e., facilitate a town hall) to demonstrate how to facilitate and other tools
- P2 professionals leveraged to make debates or forums at the local level non-partisan
- P2 support legislators and their staffs to enable meaningful engagement in the civic sphere (town halls)

P2 Practitioners need to design our processes to engage the targeted audiences

- Targeted, tailored approaches
- Choose techniques to fit different audiences
- Adapt to local conditions
- IAP2 could work with other organizations
- De-silo P2 agencies and collaborate – including IAP2, ACR-EPP, IAF, and empowerment institutions
- Partnerships
- IAP2 needs to take care of itself (the organization)
- Review and update the IAP2 Core Values
- Distribute Emotion and Outrage in Public Participation concepts in sound bites nationwide
- IAP2 needs to look in the mirror (why have we not grown a P2 culture?)
- IAP2 “TED” talk
- IAP2 has to get out of its own echo chamber
- How can we add or invite people into ongoing involvement after they participate (example from Nathan Jones)

Finally, some suggestions we could all take to heart:

- Demonstrate civility
- Be vulnerable
- Demonstrate curiosity
- Ask people what they think
- Work with the middle
- Create safe places on-line

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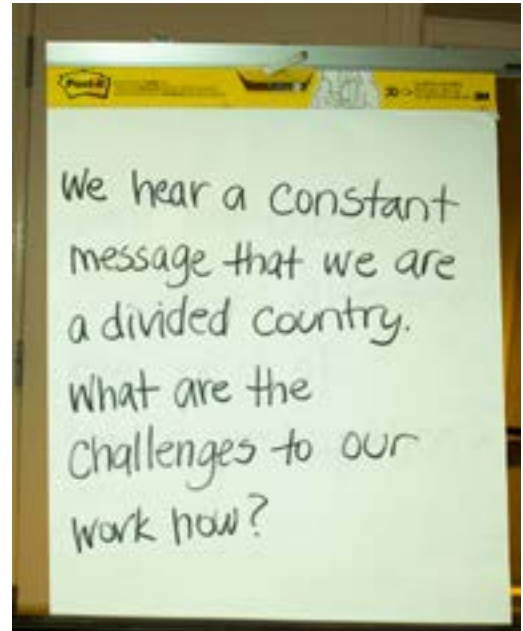
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23. Alfela Hsiao (Michael Baker)
24. Tedi Jackson (San Diego Association of Governments)
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32. Cary Lowe (NCRC)
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