



**WE'VE
GOT A LOT MORE
TO CONTRIBUTE
IF YOU'LL GIVE
US A CHANCE!**

Cultivate your Community Panel

Imagine for the moment that it's Monday morning and in ten minutes you're due to meet with your CEO to talk through the latest findings from your Community Panel.

You download the report from the latest survey which reveals that 51% of the participants support your proposal and 49% are opposed. This is not helpful. You clearly have a divided community.

Of course, you could always fudge the finding and put out a media release stating that the majority of the community support your position, but this won't solve the problem; it won't get it off the front page of the paper; and let's be frank, it's more than a little disingenuous.

Community Panels are a great way to get feedback from you community but sometimes a survey is simply not the best consultation tool. Panels can be even more useful when you add the power of EngagementHQ to provide a well managed discussion space for idea sharing and debate.

EngagementHQ cultivates your community panel by gently prising open public issues and revealing key areas of concern that may have slipped beneath your radar. This can lead to a number of positive outcomes. It can edify your policy making procedures by establishing trust and understanding between council and the community.

Community members will usually approach public issues from a more informed and tolerant standpoint once they understand the complexities of policy decision procedures. Many policies benefit from the community "buy-in" and the sustained community relationship that occurs via online open discussion forums.

EngagementHQ has been used for policy discussions spanning the full remit of local government; from policies that involve public land use, infrastructure and community service planning, to rates levies, off leash dog walking and recreational planning.

Now imagine how your panel members would feel having the chance to talk about the issues that really matter to them and how they'd feel about your Council for being given that chance.

5 Ways to Cultivate your Community Panel with EngagementHQ™

| Forum Type | Who has access | How they work | When to use them | Why use them |
|---------------------|--|--|---|---|
| CLOSED | Closed forums are only accessible to members of your community panel or select group of identified stakeholders. | EngagementHQ™ allows login details to be bulk loaded into the system so Council can issue panel members with user names and passwords. This means panellists can be anonymous to one another within the forum but known to Council which allows you to review panellist comments in light their demographic profiles. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When you want to test policy or pressure test an issue before releasing it to the broader public. As an ongoing communication medium for project Reference Groups. | When you absolutely need to know that you are reaching a broad cross section of the community. For example when you are doing interested in service satisfaction or services planning and need to be sure that you are hearing from more than the usual suspects. |
| TARGETED | Targeted forums are closed to all but a select "niche demographic" from your Community Panel. | By including the age range, gender and geographic location of panel members you can tailor access to a specific demographic such as youth, older people, mid-thirties women, teenage boys etc. | For detailed services planning or policy that affects a very targeted demographic. | To ensure that your policy is targeted towards the affected sector of the community and not ambushed by other groups. |
| TRANSPARENT | Transparent forums are visible to the world but only accessible to your Community Panel. | Your Community Panel members can login and take part in the discussion. The rest of the community can watch the discussion but cannot take part. Transparent forums could also be used for a small subset of the panel or a selected stakeholder group. | When it is important that the consultation process is transparent but it is also important that you have a clear understanding of exactly who is participating. | By limiting access rights to Community Panel members you can provide a strong inducement for others to sign up to join your panel, boosting recruitment. This option also provides transparency to your panel or reference group discussion processes. |
| TRANSITIONAL | Transitional forums allow your Community Panel members to have their say first before you open the discussion to the rest of your community. | Transitional forums can be used at different stages in the consultation process to gather views from a smaller and well understood sample of your community before opening the debate to the wider community. | When the conversation needs to involve the whole community because of broad public interest but the complex nature of the issues requires a very well informed debate with community discussion leaders. | Many complex issues require a stronger commitment from participants to deeper exploration of the issues. Transitional forums provide an opportunity for community members to dialogue with and educate their peers. |
| SHARED | Shared forums are accessible by both your Community Panel members and the broader public. | Shared forums are open to the community but use the new enhancements to the EngagementHQ reporting functions to tag comments from panel members so that these comments can be easily identified in a separate report. | When you need to have a completely open conversation with activated members of the community at the same time as collecting data from a known representative sample. | Shared forums allow you to test whether broader community, or views of a temporary community of interest, mirror your panel member sample. |