

POOL YOUR IDEAS

FACILITATION

THIS TOOL WILL HELP YOU TO:

- ★ pool your group's ideas
 - ★ build consensus and ownership around a common understanding
 - ★ unite everyone's input into a coherent whole.
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HOW TO:

- 1 Set the stage:**

Highlight the topic or the question for the group (why or how it is relevant) and clarify the intent or the hoped-for outcome - you are in charge of the process.
Outline the process and how long it will take.
- 2 Brainstorm:**

Ask each member to brainstorm individually using small cards (A6 coloured paper). Ask them to think of many different ideas, and write each individual idea on a card. It is important that they use a thick marker, writing 3-5 words in large letters on each card so that people can read them from the back of the room. Use A5 or A4 cards for larger groups.
Reiterate this through the brainstorming session - one idea per card, 3-5 words.
Ask everyone to choose their best three ideas; all different cards will be integrated at the end. Collect them one by one from group members, ask them to read their ideas out as you collect them and stick them onto a wall or whiteboard. It's usually helpful to put cards on the left side of the wall and once grouping starts then group them towards the right.
Ask people to clarify what they mean if their wording is unclear.
- 3 Organise** - this step is about discovering relationships:

Ask the group to pair cards with similar ideas to start the grouping process.
Develop clusters of ideas by adding cards to pairs.
Give each cluster a preliminary working title and write it above the cluster.
Read the cluster column aloud and clarify everyone agrees the cards belong where they are placed. Allow for last minute changes if the group calls for it. Check that all angles are covered and encourage additions if the group thinks that something important has been left out.
- 4 Name** - this step is where the group figures out the meaning of each cluster or key insight and develops consensus about that meaning. Can be done in small groups as long as consensus is assured at the end.

Talk the group through each cluster: What are we saying here? or What is our insight?
Give the cluster a name of 3-5 words that captures the essence of all the cards.
Repeat for the remaining clusters, and check for improvement and consensus along the way.



- 5 Reflect:**
Confirm the resolve of the group by describing the components & how they relate to each other, possibly expressed as an image or a diagram - even a song!
Discuss the significance of the results with the group.
Ask the group about next steps: What if? What now? What next?

BRING IT TO A MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN MEETING

Report back

Describe the process of using this tool on your project. What insights did you gain? What changes will you make to your project as a result? Did you have any difficulties your Make Change Happen group could advise on? What tips on the tool do you have for your Make Change Happen group?

Practice run

Choose a topic to Pool Your Ideas around. It's best to use an action from your project. However, your Make Change Happen group needs to know your enough about your project so they can contribute meaningful insights. An alternative topic could be as simple as 'What are the best ingredients for a birthday party?' or 'How can we grow Make Change Happen?'. You'll need a whiteboard or large piece of butchers paper. Follow the steps and capture any insights generated.

POOL YOUR IDEAS

ASK THE GROUP TO PAIR CARDS WITH SIMILAR IDEAS TO START THE GROUPING PROCESS.

COMBINE THIS TOOL WITH:

Decide with Dotmocracy
Get Group Clarity with O.R.I.D.
Decide with Plus Minus Interesting

NOTES

This process is called 'Consensus workshop' in the Technology of Participation (ToP) of the Institute of Cultural Affairs and documented in several books. Adapted from Unfolding Futures (www.unfoldingfutures.net). For more information or support please contact Richard and Maria Maguire from Unfolding Futures on +61 2 9896 3839.