



A Learning Guide to Public Involvement in Canada

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Preface

This document provides the reader with a self-managed learning guide to public involvement in Canada. An earlier version of the document was prepared for two researchers from the National People's Congress of China who completed a three month study attachment to learn about public involvement practice and theory in Canada. Funding for this project was provided by the Parliamentary Centre, which was chosen by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to implement a four-year legislative capacity-building project with the National People's Congress of China.

Canadian Policy Research Networks and the Parliamentary Centre hope this tool will support those in Canada and elsewhere, who are interested in learning more about public involvement. This learning guide will be updated periodically, as new resources become available. Comments and suggestions from users are most welcome. Please direct your input to website@cprn.org

Overview

The learning guide is an easy to use reference tool, with Web links to many of the sources cited. It offers a comprehensive overview of the theoretical underpinnings of public involvement and practical examples and tools to help readers plan and implement their own public involvement program or project.

First, we provide a glossary of terms relating to the broad field of public involvement. The second section draws on resources from Canada and around the world to provide a solid overview of the theory behind public involvement and background on deliberative democracy theory which has influenced the field. Section 3 offers insight into the latest trends in public involvement. Section 4 provides information on public involvement within the regulatory process (reflecting the trend towards increased regulatory requirements).

Sections 5 through 7 focus on the practical application of public involvement methods, providing guidance on how to match purpose and method; the latest in tools for on-line public involvement; and several practical "how-to" guides for public involvement. Section 8 offers examples of public involvement frameworks being used by organizations at different levels of government. Section 9 provides lessons learned from public involvement initiatives undertaken at home and abroad. Section 10 gives the user some examples of different elements of public involvement projects, from issue framing and preparing the participants, to analysis and reporting on the outcomes, with links to materials from CPRN's citizen dialogues and examples from the U.S. based National Issues Forum work. The last section provides links from CPRN's Web site to additional Canadian and international research resources and organizations involved in public involvement.

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Resources and References¹

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¹ References are provided with title first, for ease of use. Where appropriate, references are presented in suggested order of review. CPRN does not necessarily share the views presented in this material.

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<http://www.cprn.org/en/doc.cfm?doc=508>

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Parliamentary Committees and Public Hearings
http://www.parl.gc.ca/compendium/web-content/c_g_committees-e.htm#10

Public Participation, Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
http://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca/011/index_e.htm

Regulatory Process Guide, Government of Canada, Privy Council Office (includes writer's guide for the Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement (RIAS) and requirements for public consultation) http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca/raoics-srdc/default.asp?Language=E&Page=Publications&doc=regguide/regguide_e.htm#C1

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Bowling Together: Online Public Engagement in Policy Deliberation. Coleman, Stephen and John Gøtze, Hansard Society <http://www.bowlingtogether.net/references.html>

Best Practices for e-Citizen Engagement (Ontario Ministry of Government Services) http://www.gov.on.ca/MGS/en/IAandIT/STEL01_045575.html

DialogueCircles (Ascentum) <http://www.dialoguecircles.com/>

Government of Canada Online Consultation Centre of Expertise <http://www.pwgsc.gc.ca/onlineconsultation/text/aboutus-e.html>

Royal Roads University e-dialogues for Sustainable Development <http://e-dialogues.royalroads.ca/>

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8. Examples of Public Involvement Frameworks / Policies

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http://www.rural.gc.ca/dialogue_e.phtml

Health Canada Policy Toolkit for Public Involvement in Decision Making
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<http://www.patillo.co.nz/home.php>
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Results from the On-line workbook <http://www.cprn.org/en/doc.cfm?doc=43>

Indicators of Quality of Life in Canada: A Citizen's Prototype. 2001, CPRN

<http://www.cprn.org/en/doc.cfm?doc=91>

National Issue Forums Discussion Guides – there are workbooks on many subjects available, as well as teachers' guides for discussion in the classroom, reports, video clips of discussions, etc.

<http://www.nifi.org/>

- *Americans' Role in the World* (issue book)
- *The New Science of Food: Facing up to our Biotechnology Choices* (issue book)
- *Racial and Ethnic Tensions: What Should We Do?* (issue book)

10. Additional Resources of Public Involvement

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