

# Modules for training Science Shops' staff



Stakeholder Engagement

ENHANCING THE RESPONSIBLE AND  
SUSTAINABLE EXPANSION OF THE  
SCIENCE SHOP ECOSYSTEM IN EUROPE



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# Structure of the presentation

1. What is a stakeholder?
2. What is public engagement?
3. Why engage with stakeholders and citizens?
4. Challenges for stakeholder engagement
5. Science Shop's work with stakeholders
6. Advisory board
7. Stakeholder involvement in project implementation
8. Stakeholder involvement in project results dissemination and evaluation
9. Organising engagement activities
10. Engagement methods/techniques

# 1. What is a stakeholder? (1)

**“Stakeholder is an individual, group, or organisation, who may affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision, activity, or outcome of a project” (Project Management Institute, 2013).**

## **Some distinctions:**

- Stakeholders vs. public
- Internal vs. external stakeholders

# 1. What is a stakeholder? (2)

## External stakeholders



Source: The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) website

# 1. What is a stakeholder? (3)

**The main stakeholders for Science Shops are civil society organisations (CSOs) who provide research requests**

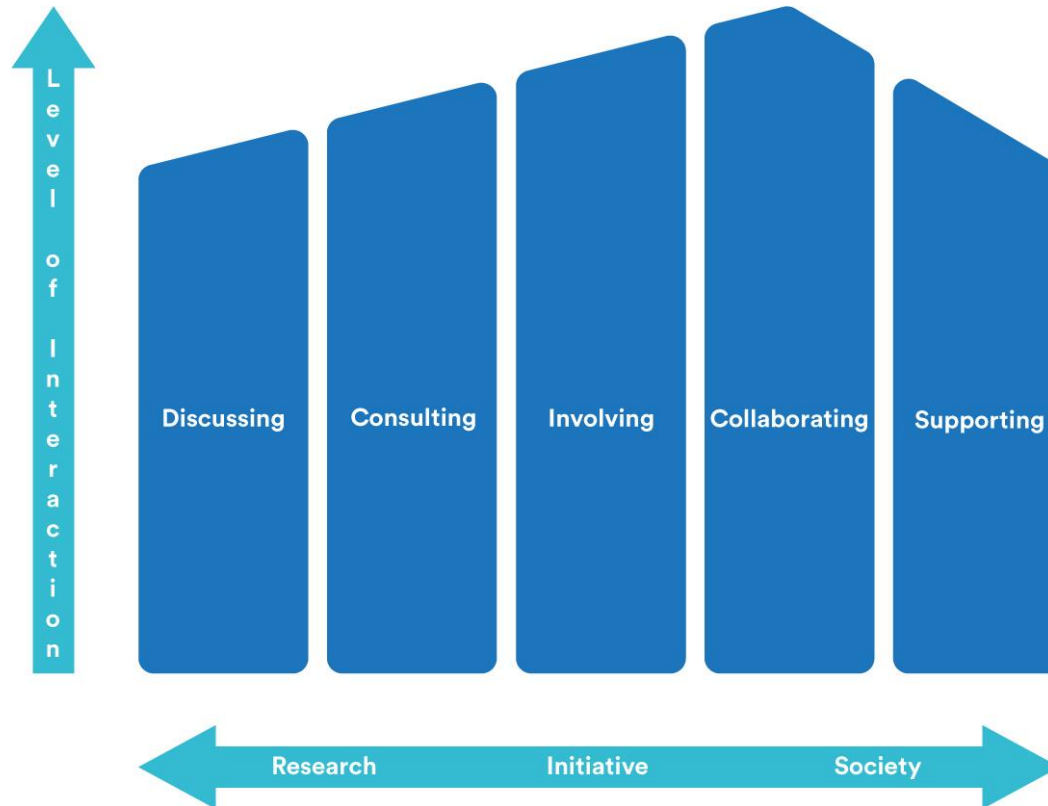
## 2. What is public engagement? (1)

**Engagement – involvement of stakeholders or the public in project activities**

**Classification by intensity of participation – case 1 (Ribeiro and Miller, 2015):**

- Education
- Dialogue
- Co-production of knowledge

## 2. What is public engagement? (2)



Source: Jellema, J. and A. J. Mulder (2016) *Public Engagement in Energy Research*.

## 2. What is public engagement? (3)

**Engagement is not linear: one project can include different levels of engagement**

### **Obstacles to engagement:**

- Internal – related to competencies of Science Shop's staff
- External – culture of participation in the country

### **Other considerations:**

- Who participates, when the engagement takes place, what issues are considered or excluded, and power dynamics between participants.



### 3. Why engage with stakeholders and citizens? (1)

#### **Normative view:**

- Engagement as 'a right thing to do' in its own right, based on democratic values

#### **Pragmatic perspective:**

- Engagement as a better way for researchers to achieve objectives: provides new insights, encourages support to the project among the involved groups

### 3. Why engage with stakeholders and citizens? (2)

#### **For the Science Shop's institution in general:**

- Accountability, increase of trust in science

#### **From society's perspective:**

- Engagement allows diverse groups to raise concerns of relevance to them, which might otherwise be overlooked

#### **For individual citizens:**

- Ability to contribute to shaping one's environment; education

## 4. Challenges for stakeholder engagement (1)

### Challenges for stakeholder involvement:

- Engagement is not always high on stakeholders' lists of priorities
- Lack of trust and respect
- Additional administrative burden
- Inequitable distribution of power and control
- Conflicts associated with differences in perspective, priorities, assumptions, values, beliefs, and language
- Engagement is a time-consuming process
- Obstacles for broader involvement

## 4. Challenges for stakeholder engagement (2)

### Possible recommendations to overcome the challenges:

- Show benefits and ensure effectiveness
- Jointly developed operating norms and procedures
- Identification of common goals and objectives
- Democratic leadership
- Presence of community organiser and support staff
- Researcher role, skills, and competencies
- Support for researcher in implementing stakeholders' involvement
- Prior history of positive working relationships

## 5. Science Shop's work with stakeholders

### Tasks of working with CSOs as potential clients:

- Perform stakeholder analysis
- Develop ways to collect research requests
- Collect and evaluate research requests
- Develop long-term relationships with stakeholders

## 6. Advisory board

**Advisory board is a way to maintain permanent relationships with stakeholders:**

- Participation in important decisions
- Benefits from board members' networks

# 7. Stakeholder involvement in project implementation

## **CSO's involvement:**

- In all steps of the project

## **Involvement of other external stakeholders:**

- Depending on the project, e.g. professional organisations in the field, local authorities, etc.

## **Involvement of internal stakeholders (supervisors, researchers, students):**

- Depending on the topic

## **Advisory committee:**

- Includes main stakeholders and supplements supervisory role

## 8. Stakeholder involvement in dissemination and evaluation

### Considerations:

- Dissemination may depend on “client” organisation’s preferences
- It is important that the results are disseminated to the relevant stakeholders
- New stakeholders can be involved in project dissemination and evaluation



## 9. Organizing engagement activities

### Considerations:

- Aims of involvement: participation is not a goal in itself!
- Finding relevant external stakeholders
- Decision on engagement form
- Importance of planning

## 10. Engagement methods/techniques

**Structured engagement helps to ensure that all participants are equally involved and heard**

**Some forms of engagement activities:**

- Focus/working groups
- Citizens' juries
- Town meetings
- Co-creation workshops
- Nominal group technique
- Delphi technique

# Thanks For Your Attention!

# SciShops



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