



Remote Working and Community and Stakeholder Consultation Toolkit

The impact of Covid-19 with the call for social distancing means traditional methods of community consultation such as face-to-face interviews and focus groups won't be possible for a while. However, there are a range of practical tools that enable heritage organisations to continue communicating, engaging and consulting with audiences, communities and stakeholders.

These include:

1. **Online Questionnaires** – using Survey Monkey or Smart Survey – links to these can be shared via your organisation, partner and community stakeholder websites as well as other platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. In this way you can collect and analyse baseline and formative evaluation data, as well as measure impact if your project has been completed.
2. **Telephone interviews** – these can be used instead of face-to-face meetings for in-depth interviews with community contacts, partner organisations, teachers, and any other stakeholders who need to be consulted.
3. **Online focus groups** – a range of platforms are available including Facebook, Google Hangouts, Skype and Zoom.

Facebook Focus Groups can be set up by logging into the organisations Facebook page, selecting 'create a group' and selecting the 'Private and Hidden' privacy level. The only way to join is by invitation and rather than simply 'liking' or commenting on stories, group members can engage in active discussions just like a regular focus group. It is also possible to set up links to pages or websites.

Skype is available across multiple desktop and mobile platforms. Users need a webcam, broadband internet connection and audio input/output system. As Skype is widely used by many people, it's often easier to convince people from a wide market segment to spare some time for an online focus group discussion. It's also easy to use and doesn't require elaborate settings.

Google Hangouts is a free communication platform similar to Skype in that enables people to participate in text, voice or video chats in either a group or a one-to-one setting using a computer or mobile device. It also has screen-sharing capabilities allowing you to participants materials and gauge their responses. Participants will need a Gmail account though.

Zoom is similar to Skype but also has collaborative features such as co-annotation and whiteboarding to encourage participants to share ideas. It also has wireless sharing so users can access it via desktop or mobile devices meaning you can conduct the focus group around the participants' lives. It also comes with tech support, so if anything goes



wrong at the last minute or if your participants are struggling to use the software, there's someone to help but to conduct longer meetings a subscription is needed.

4. **Facebook and Instagram polls and quizzes** – these can be used to raise awareness of your project, gather more supporters and get views and ideas for your activity, interpretation and design plans. The fun format can result in a greater response rate compared to other forms of consultation and you can also use the quiz as an incentive to collect email addresses by asking users for their contact information so that you can send them the results of the quiz and a summary of what everyone said about the project.

Facebook quizzes are often the most popular posts on the platform, making them an ideal tool for testing audience responses to emerging ideas for your project. As quizzes are highly interactive, the audience actively engages with your content instead of just passively skimming it. You can target the quiz to particular audiences too. The inherent viral quality also means Facebook users are much more likely to share it than other forms of content.

Instagram is the second-largest social network with increasing numbers of people taking part in quizzes and polls via Instagram Stories and Quiz Sticker. To promote the poll or quiz you can put a link in your Instagram bio. The format is ideal for consultation around collections, interpretive themes, visitor routes and exhibition design proposals. The responses can also be monitored via the analytics page.

Remember you can use your other social media such as Twitter and Linked In to share your quiz or poll too.

5. **How do we spread the word about online consultation?** – there are a number of options here, depending on the platforms your organisation already uses. For example, links to Survey Monkey or other online questionnaires can be placed on your website as well as sent out using your Twitter, Instagram or Facebook account. Whilst you may not be able to use your organisational Facebook account to post directly to local community pages, by adding a location, #tags and audience tags, your post will reach more people, and we can provide templates to help you with these posts.

Local council, About My Area, newspaper and community group Facebook pages can also be contacted to share posts, as can members of your Facebook community. On Twitter it's possible to post to local accounts by simply referencing the @handle. To reach other museum or heritage professionals, you can also post on Linked In or the GEM list on Jiscmail.ac.uk if you are a member.

6. **Worried about GDPR compliance?** Any questionnaires must take into account GDPR regulations, and if you need to build a contact list, this should have GDPR compliant contact forms and consent forms too.



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7. **Databases** – it is possible to buy GDPR complaint consumer lists defined according to postcode area, gender, age, interests etc, if you feel a broader pool of remote contacts is required.

8. **Keeping in touch with the project team** - in terms of day-to-day work, project management and client liaison, meetings via Skype, Microsoft Teams or Zoom will all allow remote meetings and screen sharing to consult over documents. An agenda should be issued in advance with notes taken as in a face-to-face meeting. If people can't make a meeting, recorded sessions give people an opportunity to catch up at a later date.