

# TEN PRINCIPLES FOR INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

KNOWLE WEST MEDIA CENTRE (2023)

Here we have collated our learnings to improve diversity and inclusion in science participation and communication.

We propose the [A-Z of Care cards here](#) as a practical tool to use alongside these inclusion principles as you move through the Bristol Approach framework. These are examples of cards which could be used; other cards can be equally useful.

## CLARIFY YOUR MOTIVATION

What is your 'north star', your true motivation?

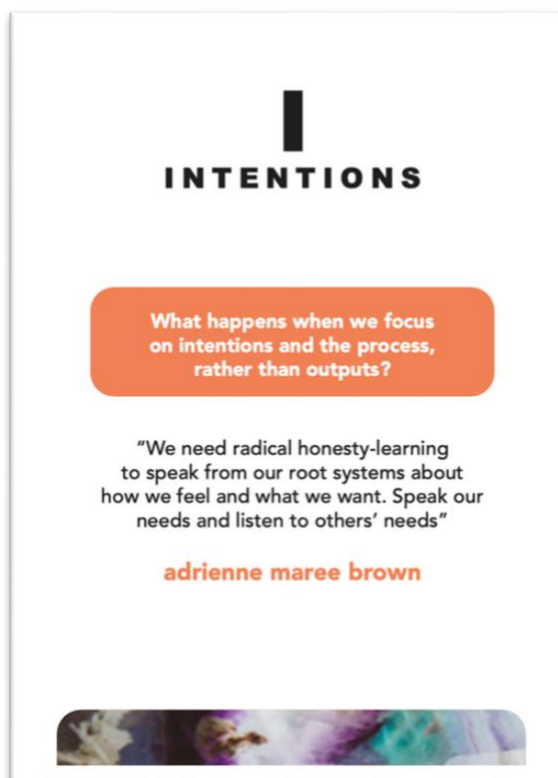
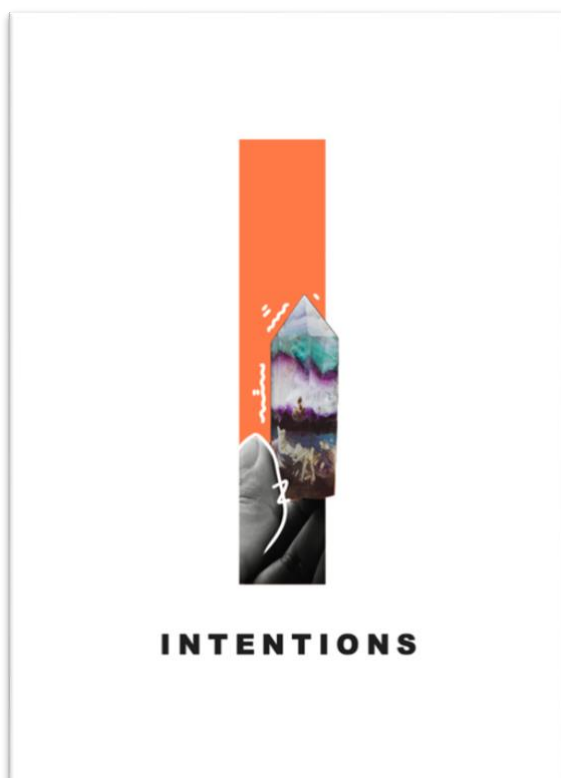
**Why** do you want to lead your science activity or participatory engagement?

**Who** is it for and who will *really* benefit?

**What** do you want your activity to achieve?

Without honest authentic intentions and motivations from the start, it is difficult to support a truly inclusive process of participation. You may need **coaching support** to help you truly unpack and articulate your intentions before beginning.

Once you have clarified your intentions, it is important to question who is best positioned to lead or facilitate your activities. Sometimes you may need to employ others who are more representative of the groups you are working with. Consider **who is the best role model** for this set of people?



## START WITH PEOPLE

To really meet people where they are at, it is essential to begin with deep **active listening**. What does this group of people care about? What are they motivated by?

Before engaging in any activity, **gather people's access needs**. Some people may have access documents - keep checking back in on these, as needs are never static. Others may not know what they need yet. Create an open space to think about this. You could:

- ♥ Create a document to gather this information (for example, our [Manual of Me](#))
- ♥ Create **multiple ways** for people to share their needs throughout the process (written / verbal / via someone else / in private / with the group)
- ♥ **Normalise** talking about access needs, giving examples of the kinds of things this could look like. For example: I need to have a quiet space to go during events / I have to move around a lot.
- ♥ Model giving access introductions when introducing yourself. Share pronouns, visual description and needs, then give others the opportunity to share theirs.

This all helps to build individuals confidence, create resilient teams and develop projects and products that will be more sustainable, relevant and owned by those involved.

**H**  
**HONOURING**

How can we honour who is in this space?  
**READ THE QUOTE**  
*How do you honour the things Wendell talks about in your process?*

"Good work involves much giving of honour. It honours the source of its materials; it honours the place where it is done; it honours the art by which it is done; it honours the thing that it makes and the user of the made thing"

**Wendell Berry**

**HONOURING**

## DEVELOP SHARED VALUES AND GOALS

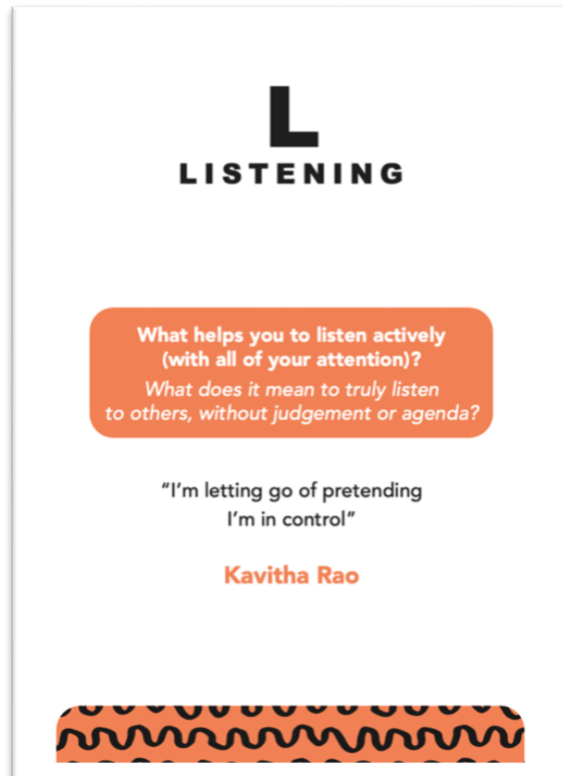
At the start of every project, it is essential to give time to defining and co-creating a shared mission, ensuring that everyone will benefit from the project.

**Allow space for difference**, freedom and even conflict - **do not assume** consensus on everything. We often do this shared goal-setting through workshops, where we bring together different stakeholders, united by a common interest.

For example, in any citizen sensing project, we begin by mapping, understanding and framing issues before we bring in any technology. Avoiding what we call a tech 'push', but instead applying the idea of a tech 'pull', drawing in the tools we need when we know more about the issues we are trying to tackle.

Once a shared goal is clear, participants can then contribute as little or as much as they like, knowing that their participation is still moving towards the over-all mission.

**Check back on the shared mission** together throughout the project and refresh it as needed. This keeps the group grounded in the final goal.

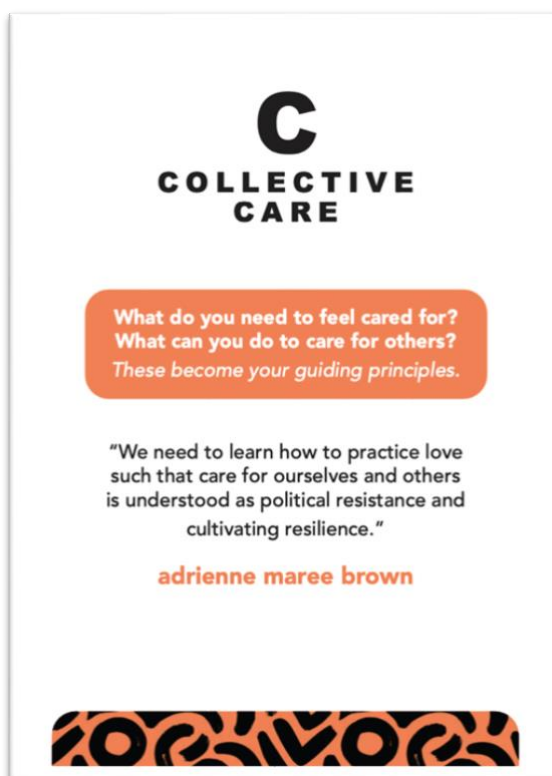
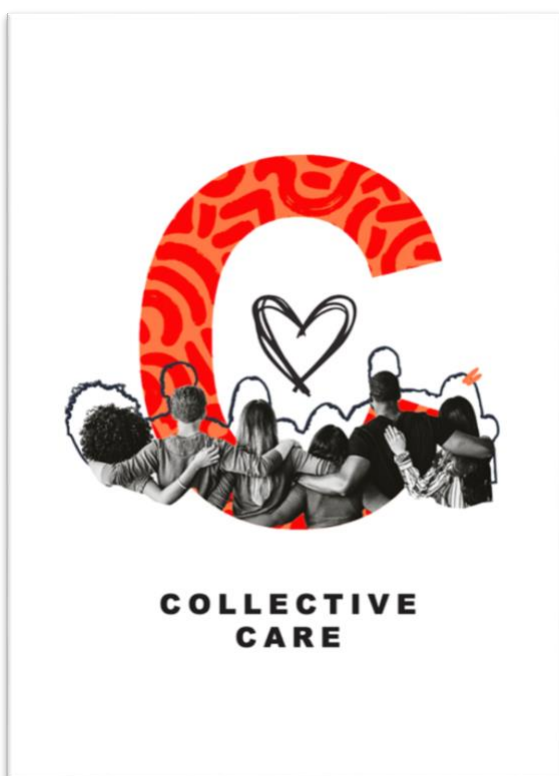


## SET THE TONE

Setting the tone at the start of any activity is key to helping people **feel valued and confident** to take risks.

A simple way to set the tone is by co-creating a 'Contract of Care'. This involves asking, "how do we want to be together - what qualities do we want and need to be in this space?". People might respond with words like, 'respect', 'humour', 'play', 'openness', 'regular breaks' etc. This is a quick way to create shared values and set the tone. After co-creating a shared 'Contract of Care' it is good practice to:

- ♥ Make time for **check-ins**. Help everyone to feel seen and heard by welcoming all feelings into the space. You could do this through questions like "what colour/weather are you feeling today?"
- ♥ Set the context. Be transparent about expectations, time-frames, ways to exit and unacceptable behaviours. Find or create a 'safer space' policy and read this out.
- ♥ Be **non-judgmental**. If someone is accidentally un-inclusive, challenge the behaviour appropriately without attacking the person. Hold space for learning.
- ♥ Setting the tone is not a one off - this needs to be re-established at the start of every meet-up and shared values need to be maintained and re-visited.



## PROVIDE MULTIPLE WAYS IN

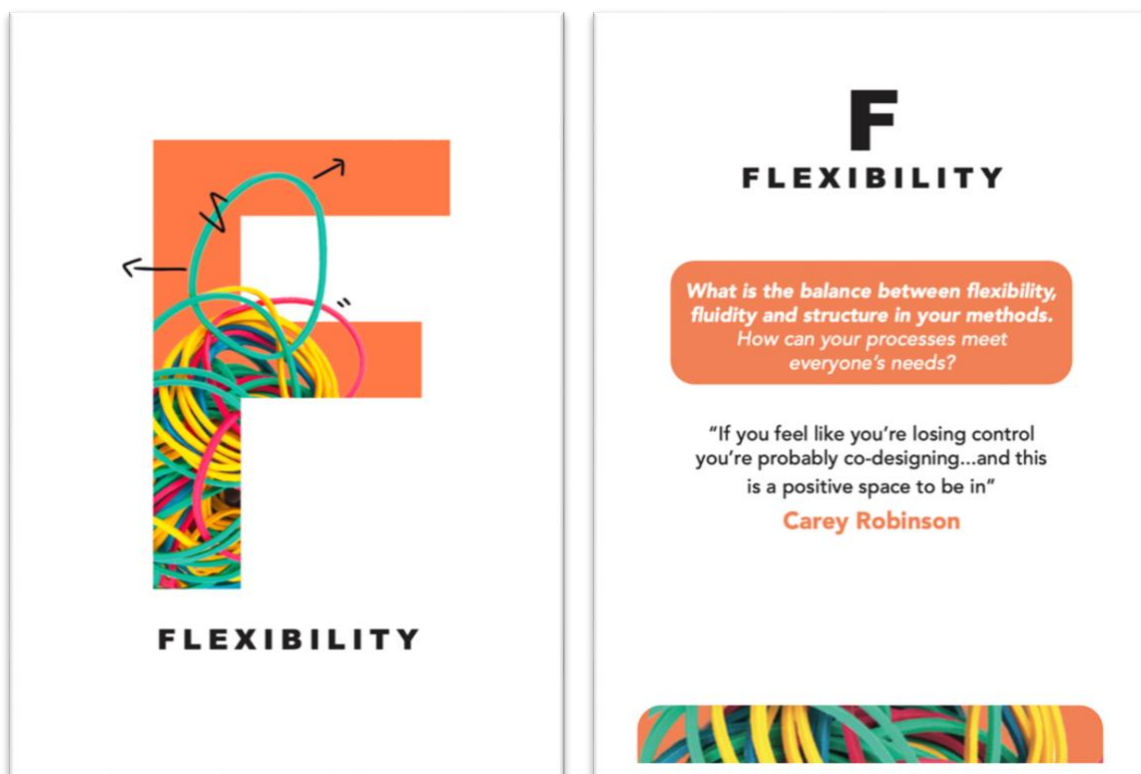
Consider how different people will need to participate in your activity. Some people may need to access your activity from home, some may not be able to attend at certain times of the day, others may need audio descriptions or BSL or captions.

Access needs can be multiple and conflicting. Support these differences by being flexible and providing **multiple access points**, like allowing responses via speaking, writing, dancing, making, etc... The more ways in to the experience, the more creatively rich and broadly accessible to everyone it will be.

A common barrier is being unable to travel to an event, so **meet people where they're at**: in streets, community spaces or even in their homes.

Provide **online ways in** too, reducing the barriers of travelling to physical locations. Digital spaces often have integrated access features such as alt-text and automatic captioning. During [Come Together](#) (2020) we explored creative ways of connecting between online and in-person spaces. Our favourite 'hybrid' activities included taking video-callers on a walk via a DIY harness and using open-source software to create immersive soundscapes to be listened to from home.

**Access should be seen as creative inspiration** rather than an add-on at the end. We have integrated access throughout these principles and our practice.

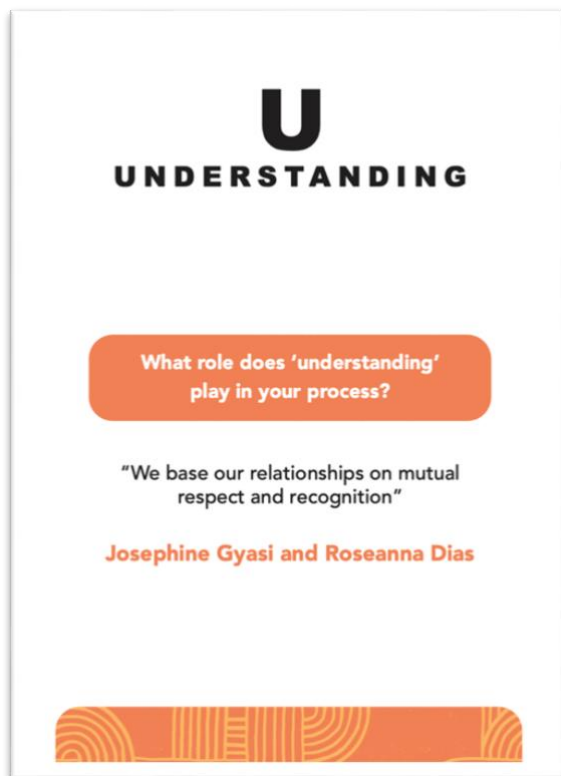
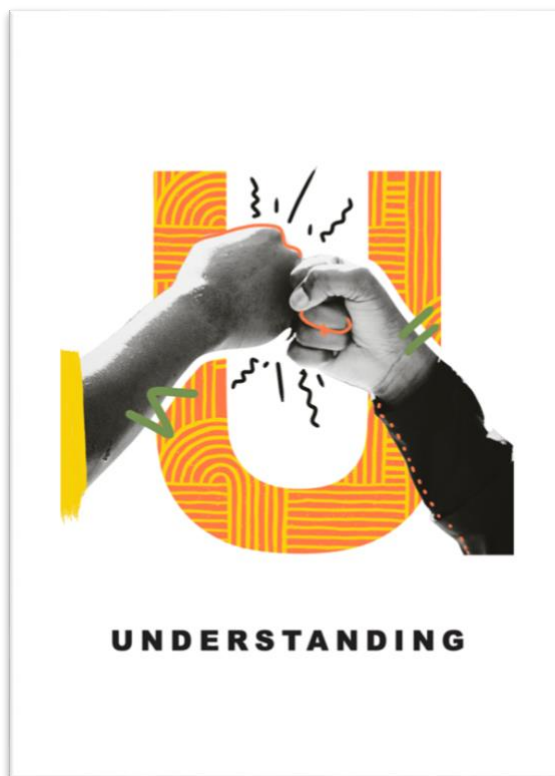


## REMOVE HIERARCHY AND VALUE ALL KNOWLEDGE

To make a space where everyone feels able to participate, it is important to dismantle hierarchy and **make people feel valued** and seen.

By working with artists and creative facilitators, you can enable wide participation and ensure a process of 'non-hierarchical' co-creation. Using tactics of 'play' and sensory engagement can cross boundaries, remove fear and create spaces where change on both a community and individual level can happen.

We often talk about making experiences that have both 'low floor and high ceiling' entry points - enabling engagement at **different levels of experience**.



## MAKE THINGS TANGIBLE

It is really important to **get hands-on** and create tangible material things so people can be part of making change and see/feel things really happening.

We believe **everyone is creative**, but also that not everyone feels confident in this. We acknowledge that not everyone has had the same opportunities and marginalised communities face particular challenges and barriers.

To encourage creativity, create a space where **failure is understood as learning** and processes of iteration and 'test and learn' are adopted by everyone. Give freedom to experiment, play and reflect.

People learn, understand and experience in many different ways. If you want to communicate or create learning experiences you need to **work across different mediums**. This might be hands-on making, moving the body, creating music... Work with artists to connect sciences to the emotional, physical, sonic, visual and tactile.

For example, through the citizen science air quality project *Slow the Smoke* we commissioned artist Miriam Quick to turn data into sound.

**P**  
**PLAY**

When was the last time you spent time playing?  
How did it feel?  
How might you create more space and time for play and exploration?

"Pleasure activists believe that by tapping into the potential goodness in each of us we can generate justice and liberation, growing a healing abundance where we have been socialized to believe only scarcity exists."

adrienne maree brown

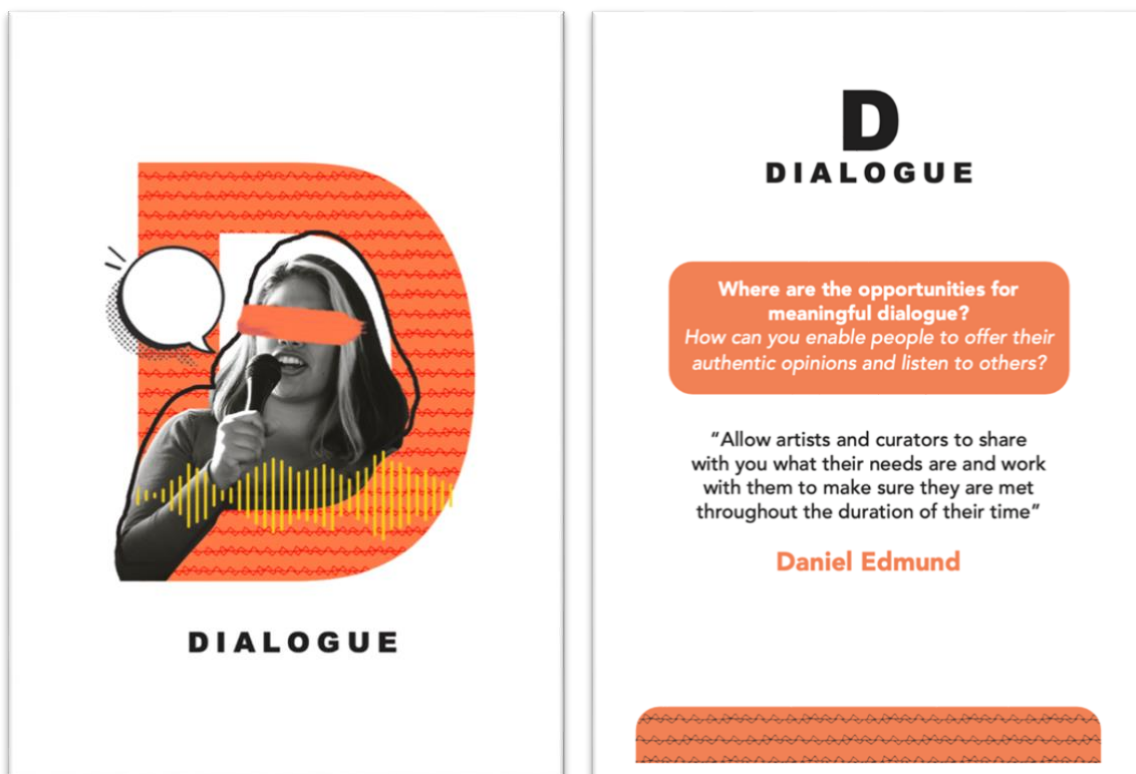
## DEMYSTIFY AND USE ACCESSIBLE LANGUAGE

By **taking away the mystery** behind science and technologies plus **skilling people up**, they can become more empowered to make informed choices and build the tools/spaces we need to live better together.

Do this by taking away jargon, making things relatable, and explain in ways that are relevant and interesting to people.

A fun way to avoid jargon is by using a 'jargon alarm': simply a bell which anyone can ring if an acronym or word comes up that they don't understand. This playful tool removes any fear or embarrassment, empowering participants to call out jargon.

Developing a **shared language** is also part of this process. Useful frameworks can be introduced, for example we often share at the start of engagement the idea of 'comfort, stretch and panic' zones - therefore enabling people to understand and communicate if they are feeling in panic zone.



## TAKE TIME

You **cannot rush genuine participation or co-creation**, or expect to get everything right first time.

Work in ways that are embedded and long-term, with space to develop creative skills and confidence over time through developing trust and the creation of equitable opportunities.

Integrate **time for people to ask questions** at any point without feeling like they're causing a delay. Consider '[crip time](#)' too - some people may need longer to carry out a task.

Build in time at the end of the project to reflect and **integrate** the experience, ideally creating **long-term** resources and/or networks. Participants may feel abandoned if this **closure** is rushed and lose trust in your organisation.

Be honest about this required time in the funding bids you write, in the way you structure your projects and in your consideration of legacy and pipe-line.

**R**  
**REFLECTION**

Where are the spaces for reflection  
in your work, both as an individual  
and with others?  
*Can you be reflecting more?*

"We build in reflection time"

Josephine Gyasi and Roseanna Dias

**REFLECTION**

## GAIN CONSENT

Consent and transparency are essential at every step. Does everyone know why they are there, how their information is being gathered and how it could be used in the future? This should always be done **using plain language** and must not be glossed over.

Be thoughtful about **who is involved** in compiling the information at the end of a study and who gets to check / edit / package the findings and documentation. Taking an inclusive process right through to the end is important.

People want to write their own stories and be involved in what gets shared – don't ever assume they wouldn't want to be asked. Always ask and find ways to offer the necessary support.

**O**  
**OPENNESS**

What does transparency mean to you?  
What opportunities are there to break down existing barriers between you and others in the process?

"Paying attention is a form of reciprocity with the living world, receiving the gifts with open eyes and open heart."  
**Robin Wall Kimmerer**

**OPENNESS**



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