



## Why participation = power

A lot of participation forms are tokenism

Instead, Participation should include:

1. Agenda setting (defining issues and stake holders)
2. Strategy making ( heart of planning)
3. Participatory design – how to make these most effective – being user-oriented is implicit part of Arnstein's argument. Participatory design can limit impasse – structure can improve the caliber and product of conversations.

### ***A brief review of US federalism in relation to Arnstein:***

3 levels:

Federal

State

Local

A. Arnstein calls improvements at the local level - "something closer to the people than city hall"

1. Organized at sub-local level (not everyone is able to do that)  
But cannot influence a pre-conceived plan
2. Tyranny from below: having organizations physically and socially closely linked has positive impacts
3. A legitimate popular mandate can lead to bad ideas, with no promise of successful outcome. What assures the quality of ideas?

Arnstein's ladder depends on the decision making power and the ability to borrow from city government. Arnstein didn't write with the idea in mind that federal planning funding would evaporate.

- Channeling money into receivership – gain independence from larger decision makers
- Advising is not the same as deciding
- Broader range of ideas- wish lists versus analysis
- Balancing community input with different types of knowledge

## **II. Who knows (expertise: metis and formal codified knowledge)**

Consider: Pressure politics

Sources of accountability

Why participate in the public" – advising versus deciding – rational for participating in the public – planning together

(Psychological) Consultation is appreciated (procedural justice)

(Political) taking public action imbued with a genuine public mandate

(Practical) two heads can be better than one (contradiction – group think)

Class participation in group exercise:

How do you set an agenda? How can you be mindful of priorities, brokering resources (but assuming that taking advantage of investments would hinge on utilizing particular funding streams)

Where does the mandate for the public good come from? Short-term versus long term. How do you instill a value that you need a process? What is the organizing ethos within planning? How does it pay off? Building capacity and momentum. Does it all begin on day 1?

What makes knowledge more useful? Don't discriminate. What do we know about everyday needs? Intelligence gathering, open ended questions are very generative (of responses, informative), weekday, weekend, etc. What institutions are important to you.

Stories of why you are in this condition? Several versions – how and why? Don't have one type of conversations

Civil society helping community movements move forward, government accomplishing projects (with community partnerships)

Participation Assumptions and Realities

Last assumption: Consider the known, the known unknowns, and unknown, unknowns.