

The Co-creation Approach

The methodology was developed by MCRIT in the ESPON Program (2017). It involves the collaboration among a suite of stakeholders, including policy-makers, managers, planners, and citizens to understand the problems, explore future alternatives, create visions by consensus and develop robust strategies in ways that are feasible. To enable this interaction and facilitate knowledge production we propose a stepwise framework.

Currently, policy-support and collective decision-making requires new ways of knowledge production and decision-making processes. Beyond gathering collective intelligence, there is a need to reconcile values and preferences, as well as create common understanding of problems and opportunities, and finally a sense of ownership for policy options.

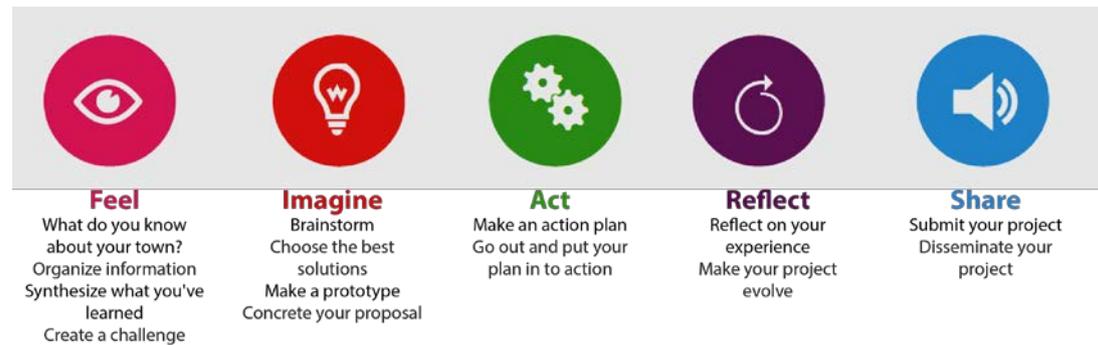
The role of citizens in public service innovation or in co-creating public policy does not have the same history as that one of the private sector, where across different industries, customers have played a crucial role in suggesting improvements, new features, new options for existing services or products. However, if one looks back into history, citizen participation goes back to ancient Greece and Colonial New England. Before the 1960s, governmental processes and procedures were designed to facilitate "external" participation.

Today's plea about citizen engagement in policy making departs from the very essence that citizens are the key "experts" and not the public servants sitting in their offices. This takes us to two different approaches widely debated today and mainly:

- The democratic decision-making approach based on the assumption that all who are affected by a given decision have the right to participate in the making of that decision. Thus, for example, citizens know best how a particular service or another works, they know what does not work and they have tried to fix them.
- The technocratic decision-making approach which implies that trained staff "experts" are best suited to make complex technical decisions. However, scientific and technocratic approaches "not only failed to solve social problems but often contributed to them" (Nelkin, 1981. p. 274). The notion that the "cure is often worse than the disease" becomes increasingly important as the technology provides alternative solutions to public policy issues.

Community-based, interactive participatory approaches are nowadays useful means to meet the requirements posed by real-world problems.

Needless to say, expert analysis are still indispensable to assess the feasibility of policy options from financial, legal or institutional point of view, as well as to inform on the most likely impacts of a given policy, as well as to support the policy design process.



An Stepwise Co-creative Process of Deliberation

The steps identified as critical are defined in the next table. While they are listed in a chronological order, feed-backs among them have to be also considered.

DELIBERATION STEPS		COMPETENCES
1	Framework Questions: Boundary Conditions	Reflexivity
2	Open Consultation: Gathering all Views	System's Thinking
3	Understanding the Situation: Diagnosis	
4	Expert's discussion on Scenarios	Anticipatory Thinking
5	Scenario Building: Prospective	
6	Stakeholder's Deliberation	Normative
7	Assessing the Vision: Regulative	Strategic
8	Designing Pathways: Executive	
9	People Envisioning: Communicating the Vision	Interpersonal
10	Empowering Institutions: Learning from the process	

While 2,5,6,9 and 10 steps are focused on different forms of participation (consultation, deliberation, envisioning...), the other proposed steps are mostly to be carried out in parallel by consultants as inputs to feed the participatory process as well as to refine and further develop outputs from the participatory processes. The sequence indicated is just illustrative. More feed-backs between the different steps are highly recommended.

In the next sections the steps are further explained. Far from being a precise mechanistic procedure, the 10-stepwise process we suggest has to be understood as an overall conceptual framework to be adapted and customised to each case.

Co-creative approach to open deliberation (MCRIT, ESPON Program 2017)



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FORESIGHT PROCESS TO POLICY MAKING

STEP 1.

You face a design, policy making strategy or innovation challenge



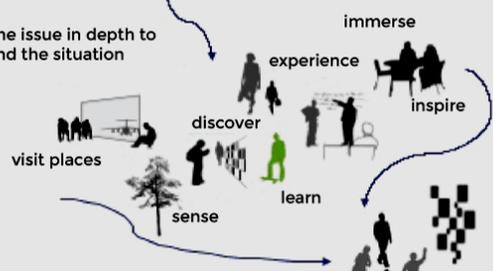
STEP 2.

You convene a microcosm of the whole system and gather all views



STEP 3.

Explore the issue in depth to understand the situation



STEP 4.

Synthesize insights and discover deeper patterns to imagine alternative futures



STEP 5.

Find deeper meaning and envision alternative scenarios



STEP 6.

Build a shared scenario, stakeholders deliberation



STEP 7.

Assessing the vision



STEP 8.

Designing the pathways



STEP 9.

Communicating the vision



STEP 10.

Empowering institutions and learn from the process



Diagramme inspired on Theory U in Practice by Natural Innovation, collaborative innovation to growing resilient futures