

Appendix C: What it takes to Do an Equitable Futures Process

Outlined boxes signify futures specific considerations.

Design, Approach, & Process

Developing Core Values

- Identifying explicit core values, common purpose, and an ability to keep those values and purpose at the center of how the work gets done

Ability to Learn and Adapt

- Making space for learning and allowing imperfections
 - Understanding there will be mistakes and failures
 - Including “heart” in addition to head and hands (e.g., “whole selves,” empathy, and relationships)
- Comfort with uncertainty
 - Attention to moving too fast, when to slow down, and when to pause
 - Sharing power and letting go of control of the process

- Scanning the future from the place of imagination without predicting
- Holding the tension between keeping an eye on today’s challenges and those on the horizon
- Looking to the future broadly, across social, technological, economic, and political issues, and ensuring the scanning aligns with core values

Relationships and Collaboration

- Co-creating shared norms, confirming values alignment, and maintaining a supportive environment — especially with change, uncertainty, and failure
- Continuing to cultivate and build trust with partners to achieve true collaboration
- Remaining accountable to values and commitments, and working with integrity

Working Equitably with Community

Approach and Design

- Including the broadest set of voices possible
- Designing a respectful process that is just as important as effective outcomes
- Embedding feedback loops, reporting back what is learned, and valuing the input and effort that is given
- Taking the time to understand the culture, practices, and accessibility needs for all who are involved
- Build grounding in personal and community perspectives into the process
- Involving people who are closest to the issues to lead the creation of solutions
- Using language that is understandable to all involved

- Including a broad diversity of people to help interpret information and think through possible impact
- Having facilitators who can take the academic nature of a futuring process with the needs of participating community and tap their imagination

Mindsets

- Listening intently before speaking
- Being brave, vulnerable, generative, and open
- Being present in every conversation
- Interacting with humility and empathy
- A willingness to REALLY listen to people and be willing to act on what they tell you
- A commitment to share power
- Valuing all types of experience with equity in mind
- Respect for the culture and cultural practices that might be different than one's own
- Recognition that emotional labor will be involved and ensuring that the responsibility does not fall to already marginalized people

Relationships

- Building relationships with the intention to continue investing in them
- Considering all touchpoints with community a potential relationship and have an intentional process for engagement to avoid being extractive

Resources and Skills

Resources

- Money:
Equitable and inclusive work requires additional financial resources and capacity
- Time:
Allow enough time for flexibility, responsiveness, and relationship building
- Compensation:
Acknowledge individual's time and the perspective they bring. Experience and expertise are both important. Take care in not being extractive

Relationships and Networks

- People who sit at the intersection of broad and diverse networks who can align people with shared processes/values

Expertise and Capacity

- Diversity of expertise and perspectives working on the project (e.g., internal team, consultants, and advisors)
 - Dedicated staff and capacity to do the work
 - Facilitators that reflect the identities, abilities, and understand the perspectives of the people engaged in the project to help build trust in the process
 - Highly skilled and experienced facilitators/process designers with the ability to synthesize and distill
 - Enthusiastic advisors and partners (champions); genuine contributors
- The ability to distill complex problems, take academic topics and make them understandable and compelling
 - Cross-sector and cross-issue thinkers
 - Ability to iterate considerations for “*why*” and “*what if*”