What it Takes to Do an Equitable Futures Process

The following are three areas to consider when replicating an equitable futures process. A comprehensive version of this can be found in Appendix C. Lighter shaded boxes signify futures specific considerations.

Design, Approach, and Process

Core Values

- Identifying explicit core values

Ability to Learn and Adapt

- Making space for learning and imperfection
- Comfort with uncertainty
- Sharing power and letting go of control of the process
- Scanning through lens of imagination not prediction
- Balance between current and future challenges
- Look to the future broadly

Relationships and Collaboration

- Co-creating shared norms
- Cultivating and building trust with partners
- Remaining accountable

Working Equitably with Community

Relationships

- Build relationships with intent to continue to invest
- Consider all touchpoints a potential relationship

Mindsets

- Listening intently before speaking
- Being brave, vulnerable, generative, open
- Present in every conversation
- Interacting with humility and empathy
- Willingness to REALLY listen
- Commitment to share power
- Valuing all types of experience
- Respect for the culture and cultural perspectives
- Recognizing that emotional labor will be involved

Approach and Design

- Including the broadest set of voices
- Respectful process just as important as outcomes
- Embed feedback loops and reporting back
- Taking the time to understand
- Build grounding in perspectives
- Involving people who are closest to the issues
- Using language that is understandable
- Balancing the facilitation of the academic futuring and integrating community needs
- Broad diversity to help interpret information and impact

Resources and Skills

Expertise and Capacity

- Diversity of expertise and perspectives on team
- Dedicated staff and capacity
- Facilitators who reflect the people engaged
- Skilled facilitators with ability to synthesize and distill
- Enthusiastic partners and champions
- Make complex problems understandable and compelling
- Cross-sector and cross-issue thinkers
- Iterate considerations for “why” and “what if”

Relationships and Network

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

Resources

- Money: equitable work requires additional financial resources and capacity
- Time: allow time for flexibility and relationship building
- Compensation: acknowledge individuals’ contribution