

Attachment B

MRSG CO-DESIGN ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Background

In the recent **NSW Water Management Regulation** (yet to be proclaimed), which is aimed at “a scheme to facilitate consultation and negotiations with owners and occupiers of land” sits 3 key pillars

1. No flooding without landowners’ consent
2. No compulsory land acquisitions, flood easements or works
3. Co-design of third-party impact mitigation

This need for co-design has again been reiterated and strengthened by the NSW Water Minister Melinda Pavey clearly articulating through media the need for working with local stakeholders to produce social-ecological acceptable outcomes.

Definition of Co-design

Co-design is a design-led process that uses participatory methods to actively involve and empower all stakeholders in the design process of projects to help ensure the result meets their needs and is usable.

Underlying the principles of co-design is the idea that a collaborative, cooperative and community-centred approach leads to more efficient and effective outcomes.

Localism is a key aspect of co-design where strengthening the capacity for joint action requires power and resources to be delegated and devolved to the lowest capable level.

Principles and our commitment to Co-design

Co-design means decision-making with, not on or for, local people. MRSG invite and will work with governments and other groups to embrace the leadership and contributions of people who are most impacted by their decisions; locals.

These four principles help to shape how people can see themselves and others differently and to make co-design a reality:

Principle 1 Prioritising Relationships - *Co-design is founded on relationships, social connection, respect and trust*

Principle 2. Sharing Power - *Co-design requires power and resources to be redistributed to local on-ground sources*

Principle 3. Localism - *Co-design promotes local history, culture, identity, capacity, and jobs*

Principle 4. Participatory Action - *Co-design requires local people to be accepted as partners in everything.*

Engagement Levels and Co-design

Appropriate engagement levels within a co-design process are essential. The IAP2 Public Participation model is a universally accepted and published engagement power level model (Figure 1). Co-design moves directly beyond low levels of engagement such Inform, Consult and Involve levels, to Collaborate and Empower Levels.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate (Co-design)	Empower (Co-design)
Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Techniques	Fact sheets Web sites Open houses	Public comment Focus groups Surveys Public meetings	Workshops Deliberate polling	Citizen Advisory Committees Consensus building Participatory decision-making	Citizen juries Ballots Delegated decisions

Conditions for Co-design

A number of conditions are needed for Co-design to occur. They include:

1. Support and Sponsorship
2. Time and Money
3. Culture and Climate
4. Commitments

1. Support and Sponsorship	3. Culture and Climate
<p>We need people to endorse and reinforce the approach we're taking and the outcomes we want to achieve. Funders and supporters help to build commitment, remove obstacles and overcome resistance as and when it arises.</p>	<p>Supportive culture and climate includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorising environments from formal and informal leaders • A focus on learning not control • Connective tissue to share learning, failure, success • Support to adopt the mindsets, especially when we regress to old ways of being • Support to develop the skillsets for co-design • Accountability to the people we engage through co-design (they can call us out)
2. Time and Money	4. Commitments
<p>To do co-design we need time and money for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation and convening (co-design is not free) • Paying people with lived experience for their time and for any expenses • Investing in approaches (after they have been co-designed) • Supporting lived experience capability and leadership • Prototyping, testing and learning (prior to implementation) • Communicating the work throughout to build commitment 	<p>Commitment to co-design looks like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on outcomes (value) over outputs (busyness) • Following through into implementation • Staying committed to elevating the voice and contribution of lived experience • Practising cultural intelligence and widening inclusion • Partnering, not parenting • Sharing decision making, power and attribution • Value and reciprocity with co-designers

Co-design Project Process

Co-design follows a series of defined steps for partners to follow which involve:

1. Defining the **Problem**
2. Understanding the **Context**
3. Expressing the **Needs**
4. Proposing the **Options**
5. Agreeing on the **Solution-s**

Co-design Success for MRSG and Partners

These are the standards by which we will judge value and reciprocity:

Aspects of decision-making	Co-design Success	No co-design process
Defining the PROBLEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> problems are social and political constructions problems can be re-framed through collaboration professional and lived experience are equally considered power is named, challenged and negotiated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> problems are environmental constructions problems are fixed or too narrowly defined insensitivity to local peoples' problem perceptions and experiences power and resources are tightly held
Understanding the CONTEXT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> honesty in answering "Why is this situation a mess?" all values, attitudes, beliefs and views are respected and considered a range of scales is considered, and a balance is accepted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> past failings and learnings are ignored key assumptions remain untested national interest is not tempered by equity and fairness at a local level
Expressing the NEEDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> slowing down to listen, connect and learn from local people needs are representative of the whole of the affected community people most impacted are placed at the heart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> local people not heard directly or without interpretation from consultants or staff powerful lobby groups and highly articulate people get what they want seeing marginalised people as a burden
Proposing OPTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus placed on answering "Are there any potentially bridgeable gaps?" ideas are created from nothing within a safe, inclusive and independently facilitated space information from diverse sources is accessible and is used to create new public knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pre-determined options that lack transparency, inclusivity and fairness having workshops to ask people's opinions but exclude them from critical decision making having different meetings with various groups of people and making decisions across them
Agreeing the SOLUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the agreed solution is the product of deliberative engagement and has super majority (80%) support the decision maker clearly communicates which recommendations they will and won't adopt, and why prototyping, testing and learning prior to full scale implementation decisions that significantly increase trust and build long term commitment to collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rushing to a one-sided, pre-defined or a one size fit's all solution impacted people are unable to see how they influenced the final decision, or the agreed solution is not implemented destructive focus on control and completion decisions that further erode trust and lead to activism or apathy

References

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