



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

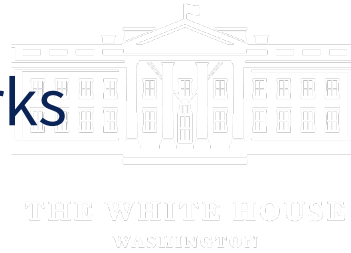
Listening Session:

**Broadening Public Participation and
Community Engagement with the Federal
Government**

Tuesday, Nov 26, 2024

Agenda

- Welcome and opening remarks
- Background
- Questions and comments on draft materials
 - Guidance from OMB to Federal agencies
 - Outline of toolkit for Federal agencies
- Closing



[performance.gov/participation/](https://www.performance.gov/participation/)



What did OMB release for public review?

1. [Draft policy document](#) for Federal agencies on how to improve their public participation and community engagement efforts.
2. [An outline for a proposed toolkit](#) to support agencies in doing just that!

We need **YOUR** input by **November 29** on: clarity of content, suggestions for improvement.

What are some “participation and engagement” activities?

- *Regulatory notice and comment processes*
- *Requests for Information*
- *Listening sessions*
- *Focus groups*
- *Customer feedback surveys*
- *User research*
- *Crowdsourcing*

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How did OMB develop these draft materials?

Methods and Leading Practices for Advancing Public Participation and Community Engagement with the Federal Government

Summary of Responses to the OMB Request for Information

Background Who responded? Areas addressed What did we hear? What comes next?

Federal agencies are committed to making it easier for the American people to share their knowledge, needs, and lived experiences to improve how their government works for them and with them. In line with this goal, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a Request for Information (RFI) on [Methods and Leading Practices for Advancing Public Participation and Community Engagement With the Federal Government](#). OMB collected written responses and live feedback from the public and Federal agencies to develop a government-wide framework for agencies to improve their public participation and community engagement (participation and engagement) with all members of the public, including underserved communities.

OMB asked for feedback on:

1. The **EXPERIENCES** of individuals and organizations with participation in engagement activities (e.g., notice and comment processes, RFIs, listening sessions, surveys, user research) conducted by Federal agencies to inform government decision-making.
2. The kind of **CONTENT** to include in a Federal framework to help agencies broaden their participation and engagement activities.
3. How OMB might continue a collaborative **PROCESS** to develop this framework with the public.

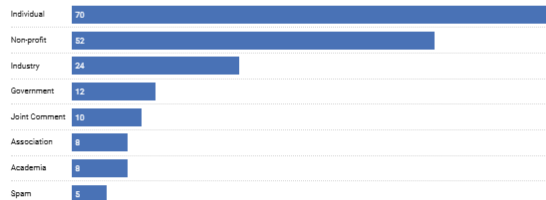
Who responded to this call for feedback?

During March, April, and May 2024, OMB [requested public input](#) through Regulations.gov, a simple online form (asking the same questions as the RFI), and listening sessions.

OMB received **189 unique written responses** to the RFI from individuals and organizations across sectors. This included **108 responses through the online form**, **74 through Regulations.gov**, and **7 via email**. Most respondents, including nearly 70% of individuals, used the online form to provide feedback. Fewer than 30% of individuals chose to submit responses through Regulations.gov.

OMB also held **7 virtual listening sessions**, attended by hundreds of participants, including staff from Federal, State, and local government agencies. These sessions previewed OMB's efforts to strengthen agency engagement and gathered live feedback on the RFI questions.

The information included on this page summarizes the feedback provided to OMB through the written comments and listening sessions. All written responses and supporting documents submitted via Regulations.gov are [available here](#), those shared via the online form are [available here](#), and those shared via email are [available here](#).



Non-profit includes local, state, national, and international non-profits. Industry includes businesses and other for-profit organizations. Government includes Federal, state, and local government entities. Joint Comment includes submissions representing collaboration across multiple organizations or multiple individuals in an unaffiliated capacity. Association includes professional membership associations (e.g., Association of American Medical Colleges).



- OMB asked the public about **barriers to greater participation in Federal engagement activities** and **potential content for a Federal participation and engagement framework**.
- Hundreds of members of the public provided written feedback and joined listening sessions.
- Visit www.performance.gov to see what we asked and what the public shared with us!

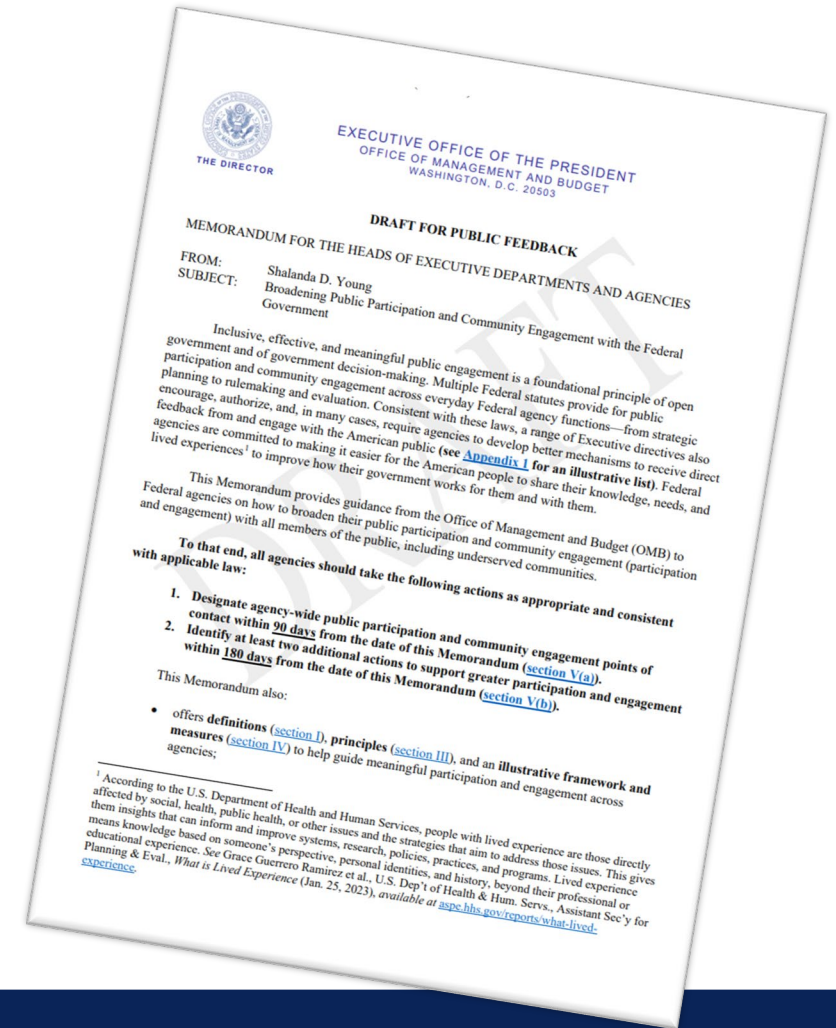
Source: www.performance.gov/participation/rfi-summary



Draft guidance for Federal agencies



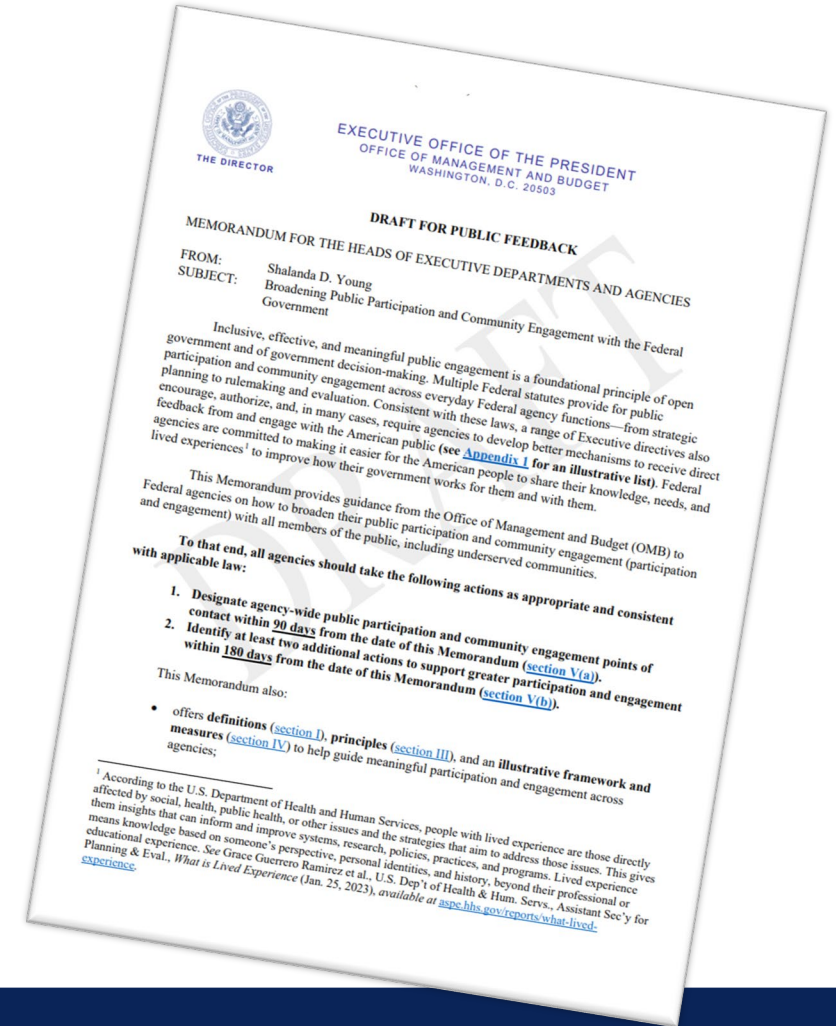
- I. Definitions
- II. Benefits of meaningful public engagement for Federal agencies and the public
- III. Guiding principles
- IV. Sample framework and measures
- V. Actions for agencies
- VI. Actions for the Federal Executive Councils
- VII. Important considerations for agencies when planning and conducting engagement activities
- VIII. Engagement and the Paperwork Reduction Act



Draft guidance for Federal agencies



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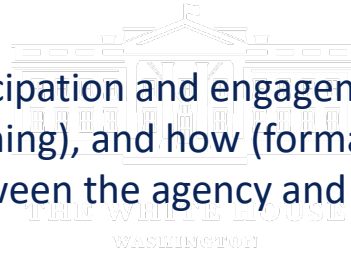
I. Definitions

Public participation in government is any process that creates opportunities to involve members of the public in government decision-making. It seeks and facilitates the involvement of those affected by, or interested in, a government decision, including individuals; state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments; non-profit organizations; educational institutions; businesses; and other entities.

Community engagement in government is a more specific concept within public participation that involves agency actions to build trust-based, long-term, and two-way relationships with all communities, including underserved communities that have been historically left out of government decision-making (e.g., people with disabilities, rural communities, individuals with limited English proficiency).



III. Guiding principles



- 1. Purposeful:** Plan for and prepare timely participation and engagement activities by defining the why (purpose), who (audience), what (type of outcome), when (timing), and how (format). Prioritize early planning, which includes understanding the history of engagement between the agency and communities, and potential obstacles to participation.
- 2. Inclusive, Welcoming, and Accessible:** Encourage and support engagement from all individuals, communities, and organizations interested in or affected by proposed agency actions. Facilitate participation by removing or reducing barriers (e.g., physical, cultural, linguistic, technological, financial, informational, psychological, time).
- 3. Transparent and Accountable:** Set clear expectations with participants about the purpose and scope of the engagement, how and to what extent input may be used and addressed, the decision-making timeline, and how the agency will share the results or outcomes of the engagement.
- 4. Respectful and Mutually Beneficial:** Recognize, respect, and value the knowledge and insights of participants. Address participation burdens on the public and communities to reduce “engagement fatigue.”
- 5. Evidence-Based and Iterative:** Engage the public in establishing outcomes and metrics to regularly track progress, and adjust strategies as needed for continuous improvement. When possible, use a formal evaluation process to assess participation and engagement activities.



V. Actions for agencies



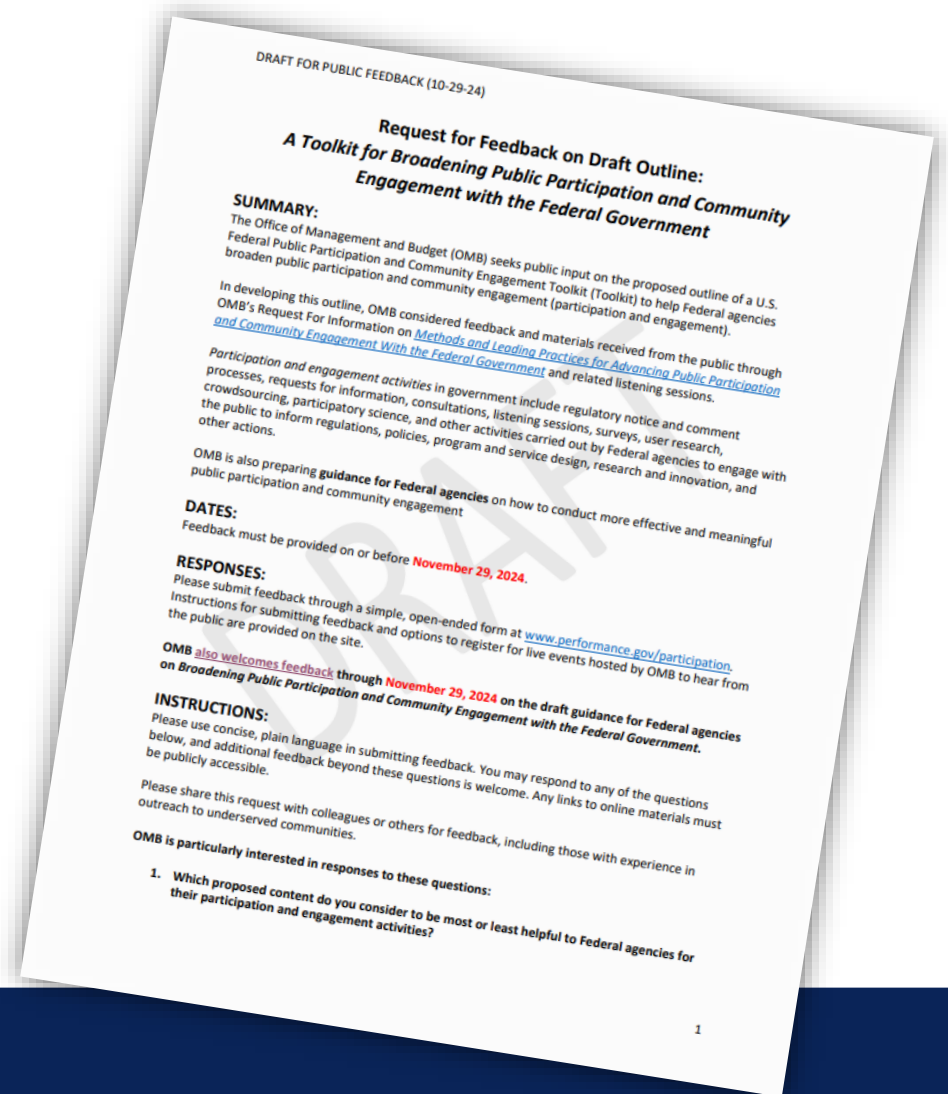
The guidance proposes that all agencies should take the following steps to support greater participation and engagement.

1. Designate agency-wide **public participation and community engagement points of contact** (for staff + members of the public).
2. Select **at least two additional actions** from the following:
 - Conduct a participation and engagement capacity assessment.
 - Take stock of agency engagement resources, experiences, and efforts.
 - Implement at least one new participation and engagement approach or tool.
 - Develop an agency engagement plan.
 - Create and maintain a centralized webpage for agency engagement activities.



Draft outline: A toolkit for agencies

- OMB also wants feedback on the **outline of a proposed toolkit** to help Federal agencies broaden public participation and community engagement.
- **The toolkit would centralize materials to help agencies conduct and assess meaningful participation and engagement.**
- The toolkit could be a **living collection of content** that the public and Federal agencies can contribute to and update.



Outline of proposed toolkit



1. About the Toolkit
2. Guiding Principles for Meaningful Public Participation and Community Engagement
3. Preparing for, Designing, Implementing, and Assessing Participation and Engagement
4. Communicating Effectively with the Public
5. Navigating the Legal and Policy Environment
6. Providing Compensation and Support for Participation
7. Special Considerations for Public Participation and Community Engagement
8. Public Participation and Community Engagement Across Agency Functions and Activities
9. Building the Public's Capacity to Engage
10. Additional Resources for Agencies



Discussion

- What other types of tools could make it **easier or less time-consuming for the public**, especially first time participants, to understand how to engage with agencies?
- What would make it more likely for you to **contribute or use** toolkit resources?



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By NOVEMBER 29!



Calling All Americans!

The Federal Government is committed to making it easier for the public to share their knowledge, needs, and lived experiences to improve how Government works for them and with them.

Share your ideas by **November 29th** to help us build a more responsive, effective, and inclusive Government.

Respond

Background

