



SECTION 3.

A TOOL AND MODEL FOR FUNDERS



THE TAPESTRY OF PARTICIPATION

TAPESTRIES OF THREAD AND FABRIC, WOVEN TOGETHER WITH INTENTION, IN A PROCESS TO CREATE VISUAL STORIES.

The Tapestry of Participation offers a collective process to weave a shared story together, co-creating something beautiful that will last for generations. Each tapestry is unique depending on who comes together to create it.

The research and desk review surfaced a 4-step process for designing a participatory approach:

1. **Grounding principles** as the foundation for participatory practice.
2. **Four levels of participation** with an organization (organizational/operational, programmatic/grant-making, influencing, monitoring, evaluating, and learning), with associated **entry points and participatory mechanisms**.
3. **Deciding which children and young people to work with** based on who is in your network.
4. **Four depths of participation** (consulting, decision-making, co-designing, and resourcing child- and youth-led organizing).

The model layers one on top of the other, tailored to the institution and how they currently are or wish to work with children and young people. This section delves into the four steps and includes some practical foundation guidance on budgeting, compensation and safeguarding, care and wellbeing. It also includes two examples of participatory approaches.

The following section gets even more practical, with activities and reflection questions for funders to work through.

GROUNDING PRINCIPLES



elevate children
FUNDERS GROUP

A PROCESS,
NOT A PROJECT

COMPENSATED &
NON-EXTRACTIVE

HOLDING POWER
ACCOUNTABLE

SAFE &
CONSISTENT

CO-OWNERSHIP

BRAVE & OPEN

INTENTIONALITY
& PATIENCE

INTERSECTIONAL

INCLUSIVE

EXPERIMENTAL
& ITERATIVE

TAPESTRY OF PARTICIPATION

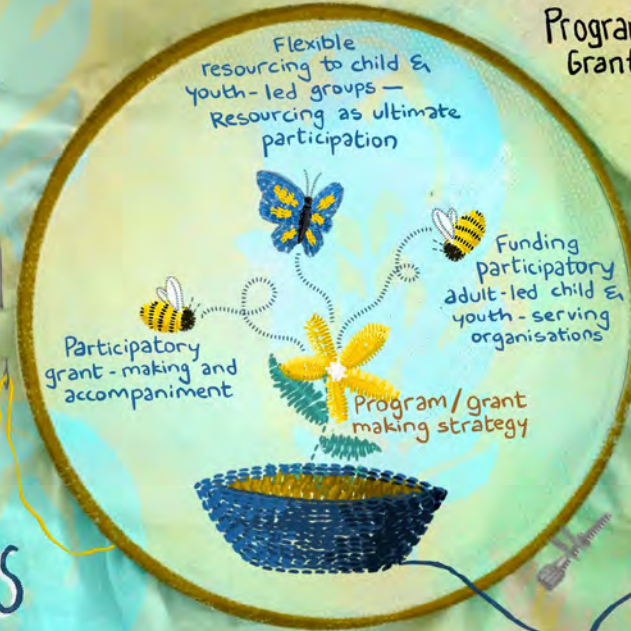
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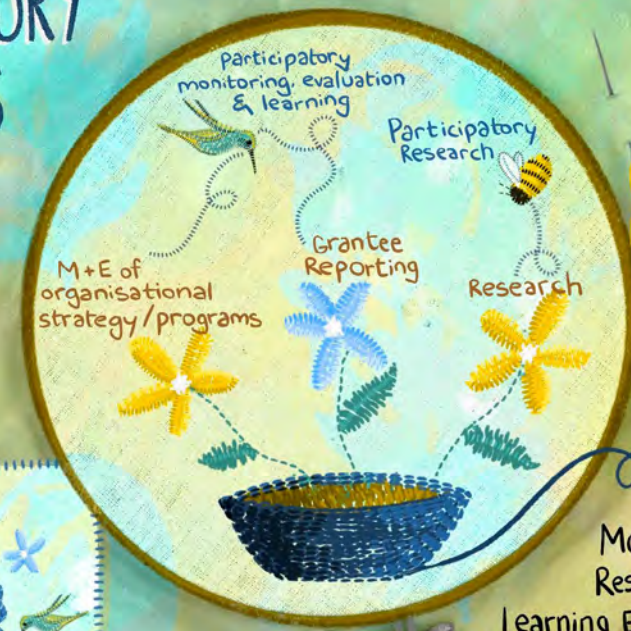
Organisational & Operational Strategy



Programmatic / Grant-making



ENTRY POINTS & PARTICIPATORY MECHANISMS



Influencing

Monitoring, Research & Learning Evaluation

LEGEND

OPPORTUNITY FOR ENGAGEMENT :

PARTICIPATORY MECHANISM :



1. GROUNDING PRINCIPLES

The research brought to light 10 key principles that are interlinked. If a participatory process is safe but not inclusive, it won't be meaningful. If it is political but does not leave room for experimentation and iteration, it won't be meaningful. Likewise, designing a participatory process that intentionally applies each principle and recognizes their connectivity will ensure one that is meaningful and much more likely to be successful.

PRINCIPLE

1. A process, not a project - Even if you start small, ensure you have the resources, time, and commitment for it to be meaningful

2. Co-ownership - Provide opportunities for real influence over part or all of the process.

3. Safe and consistent - Do no harm and mitigate any potential risks to children and young people.

4. Inclusive - Center inclusion from the beginning and work to create the conditions for diverse children and young people to participate and lead.

5. Intersectional - Recognize the diverse and intersecting identities and realities of children and young people.

6. Non-extractive and Compensated - Value people's time, expertise and contribution, be clear about your intentions, and build in feedback and recognition throughout.

WHAT DOES MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION LOOK LIKE WITH AND WITHOUT THIS PRINCIPLE?

With: Commit to more than a one-off engagement. This could be several months, a year-long, or ongoing with dedicated staff and a clear plan from start to finish.

Without: A one-off consultation engaging young people who have no prior relationship with the organization.

With: Clarity of where and how children and young people will have a decision-making role in a process, clear roles outlined in a Terms of Reference.

Without: Children and young people are consulted but are not sure how their contributions will be included, with minimal control and active ownership.

With: A clear reporting process and focal point for a participatory process, all children and young people understand their responsibilities and those of staff.

Without: No plan in place if a safeguarding incident happens or is reported. No safeguarding expertise within the team.

With: Process is responsive and accessible to the needs of children and young people from diverse identities and backgrounds. You are flexible and provide additional support and resources, such as language and disability justice.

Without: Working with a homogenous group, not budgeting for access needs or language inclusivity.

With: Make space to understand and respond to the complexity of children and youth with multiple, intersecting social and political identities, and how this results in varying discrimination and or privilege. Work to break down silos across issue areas in your funding.

Without: You approach young people with a single issue lens, glossing over the complexities they face.

With: Having a fair and clear compensation policy (financial and non-financial) which might include a stipend, training opportunities, and a reference letter. Children and young people feel valued and recognized. Provide information upfront on how contributions will be used and where you can seek ways to model reciprocity.

Without: No tangible recognition or feedback is shared for the time and expertise is given to children and young people after their contributions are made and their perspectives are co-opted.

PRINCIPLE

7. Experimental and iterative - Build in enough time and flexibility for ongoing learning and adaptation.

8. Brave and open - Be ready to have uncomfortable conversations, take calculated risk, and be open to vulnerability.

9. Holding power to account - Recognize children and young people as political actors. Embrace the systemic change work you have to do also.

10. Intentional and patient - Have a clear plan and build in enough time to do it right.

WHAT DOES MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION LOOK LIKE WITH AND WITHOUT THIS PRINCIPLE?

With: Enough time built into the planning process to test ideas and adapt. Creation of learning dialogue spaces to foster honest reflection.

Without: Limited time frame with no room for changing course if needed or for testing out ideas put forward by young people.

With: Spaces within teams and with young people for honest dialogue and feedback. Being ready to receive criticism, to feel silly, and to learn.

Without: No openness to feedback, avoiding participatory processes for fear of getting it wrong.

With: Call out neo-colonialism and patriarchy within the philanthropic space, use your power to advocate for others to shift their power.

Without: Continued language to describe children and young people as beneficiaries, resistance to talking about or funding movements and activism.

With: Develop a long-term participatory process with room to maneuver and adapt. Take time to provide training for staff.

Without: Rushing to meet an internal deadline, trying to start a participatory process without the basic foundations in place.

2. ENTRY POINTS AND PARTICIPATORY MECHANISMS

The research showed four entry point levels within an institution where participation is possible and can be meaningful:

1. Organizational / Operational
2. Programmatic / Grant-making
3. Influencing
4. Monitoring, Evaluating, Learning, and Researching

For each of these, we have identified the opportunities for engagement and the specific participatory mechanisms. Funders can choose to use one or multiple entry points and associated mechanisms. There is some natural connectivity between them.

LEVEL

Organizational & operational strategy

OPPORTUNITY

- Organizational strategy design
- Staffing
- Governance

PARTICIPATORY MECHANISM

- Participatory strategy development
- Hiring young people and creating supportive policies and culture
- Youth board members

LEVEL	OPPORTUNITY	PARTICIPATORY MECHANISM
Programmatic / grant-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program / grant-making strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Participatory grant-making and accompaniment → Flexible resourcing to child- and youth-led groups - resourcing as the ultimate participation in itself! → Funding participatory adult-led child- and youth-focused organizations
Influencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy, strategic partnerships, and communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Child and youth participation in advocacy, strategic partnerships, and communications
Monitoring, Research, and Learning evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • M&E of organizational strategy or programs • Grantee reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Participatory research → Participatory monitoring, evaluation, and learning →

3. YOUNG PEOPLE IN YOUR NETWORK

There are different groups and networks from which you can invite children and young people to take part in a participatory process. The reflection questions and activities in [Section 5](#) will help you to reflect on how your organization is already working with children and young people, support you to decide on which children or young people to engage with, and show you how to apply an inclusive and intersectional approach. Example groups are:

- Younger staff or youth consultants
- Child- and youth-led grantee partners
- Children and young people connected to or working with your adult-led, child- and youth-serving grantee partners
- Youth board members
- Youth members (for membership organizations)
- Broader child and youth movements
- Partners' grantees and networks

A common approach is to create diverse advisory groups or councils from the list above.



4. FOUR DEPTHS OF PARTICIPATION

Users of this model should understand the non-meaningful forms of participation put forward by existing models including tokenism, decoration, and manipulation. They are not included here as they do not constitute meaningful participation and should not be considered as viable options. Instead, this model puts forward 4 depths of participation:

RESOURCING CHILD- AND YOUTH-LED ORGANIZING:

By providing truly flexible resources, directly or through a participatory grant-maker who directly supports child- or youth-led groups, a funder can achieve its programmatic and organizational aims through this most trusting participatory approach.

MAKING DECISIONS

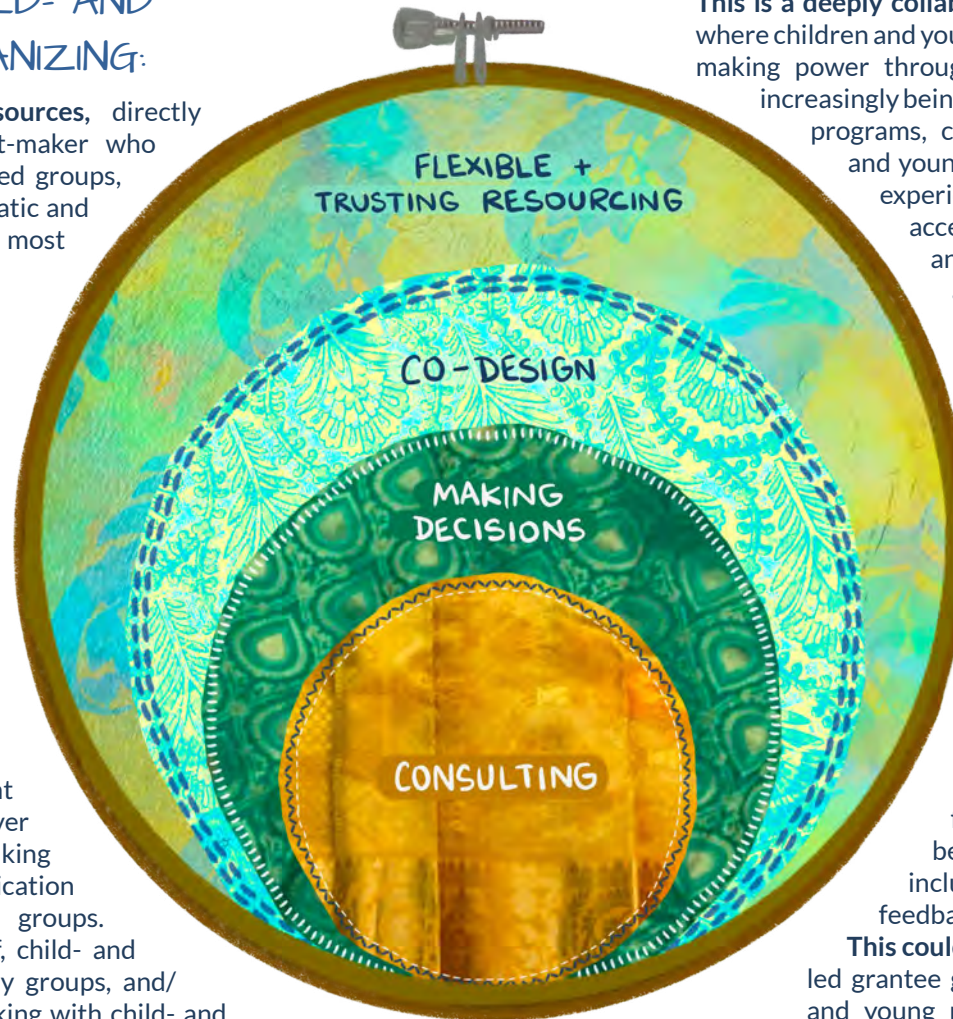
Children and young people have clear decision-making power in the process. This is pre-agreed and expectations are managed if there is a possibility their recommendation will not be used. They might have shared decision-making power with staff, intergenerational decision-making with other adults outside of the organization, or they might have sole decision-making power over certain elements, e.g., in a grant-making process they might design the application process or set the criteria for groups. **This could be with:** younger staff, child- and youth-led grantee groups, advisory groups, and/or children and young people working with child- and youth-serving grantee groups.

CO-DESIGN

This is a deeply collaborative and resource-intensive process where children and young people are involved and hold decision-making power throughout the entire process. Co-design is increasingly being employed as a methodology to co-create programs, campaigns, and strategies with children and young people. It requires time, dedicated and experienced staff, financial resources (to ensure accessibility as well as recognition for the time and expertise of those involved), openness, and vulnerability. **Ordinarily, this will be with an advisory group** which could be made up of a) children and young people external to the organization but with relevant experience or identities, b) children or young people connected to adult-led grantee partners, or c) representatives from child- and youth-led grantee partners.

CONSULTING

Asking for advice and contributions which you may or may not take on board. This should still form part of a process, e.g., seeking advice from a long-term Advisory Group or input from a youth membership, and should be grounded in the key principles, e.g., be inclusive, provide compensation, and give feedback where the consultations have landed. **This could be with:** younger staff, child- and youth-led grantee groups, advisory groups, and/or children and young people working with child- and youth-serving grantee groups.



DEPTHS OF PARTICIPATION

TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

Here we share general recommendations and considerations for any funders wishing to support child and youth participation. It might be helpful to read through these as a precursor to the practical, more detailed activities in [Section 5](#).

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- **Assess where you are in your journey and what is possible.** If needed, start small and make sure the conditions are in place for meaningful participation and influence.
- **Ensure senior leadership buy-in.** You might need to pull together relevant case studies and examples. The '[Why Child and Youth Participation](#)' Section in this Toolkit may also be helpful.
- **Move from one-off to process.** Developing a child and youth participation strategy can be a good starting point.
- **Dedicate specific budget** for accessibility, interpretation, inclusion measures, staff/training, data packages, and compensation.
- **If you are working with under 18s, think about what consent you will need** to obtain from parents or guardians. Think about the different ways you can obtain consent that take into account limited digital access, e.g., over a call, via Whatsapp. Ensure that any consent forms are simple accessible and translated into the local language.
- **Provide training for adults within the organization** - not just on meaningful participation but on intersectionality, anti-racism, anti-colonialism, safeguarding, and inclusion. You might consider partnering with organizations, including youth-led organizations to deliver this. If you plan to work with under 18s, these organizations should have practical experience working with children. **Resources for personal and team learning include:**
 - [Me and White Supremacy](#) by Layla F. Saad
 - [A guide to ally-ship](#) from Black Lives Matter
 - [Anti-racism resources](#) for white people (including books, podcasts, articles, film and TV series, organizations to follow on social media and more)
 - For UK-based organizations: [The EW Group training](#)
 - CIVICUS' [Diversity Tool](#)
- **Develop policies on safeguarding, risk management, and compensation.** Consider developing these with children and young people. Ensure a safeguarding policy that balances safety and agency. If needed, seek training from a digital safety organization to provide

training for staff, children, and young people.

- **Use the network building activities** in [Section 5](#) to agree which children and young people you will engage, and learn how to ensure the group is diverse and inclusive including thinking through language inclusivity, school/work hours, and other access needs.

GETTING STARTED:

- **Work with children and young people to create a shared vision** for change and a shared ideal funding relationship. Ensure there is common understanding on the terms of engagement.
- **Start at the design phase as this is where trust is built.** Co-creation takes time and resources. Build it into your work plan and budget.
- **Center disability rights from the beginning.** Consider paying for expert advice from disability rights organizations. Budget properly for any accessibility needs that children and young people might have.
 - The Disability Rights Fund has developed '[A Donor's Guide to Inclusion](#)' with practical recommendations for planning, working with and funding persons with disabilities.
 - CIVICUS has developed a [Diversity Tool](#) to assist civil society organizations and movements in their journey to become more inclusive, diverse, and sensitive to the needs, identities, and backgrounds of their people.
- **Don't be afraid of working with under 18s!** Take time to understand children and young people's developmental stages. Hire staff who have experience working with children and young people of different ages.
- **Provide access to healing and spaces for joy and care,** recognizing that many children and young people have experienced trauma and have not had access to support mechanisms.
- **Develop a referral process** for what your organization cannot offer.
- **Be accountable to children and young people.** Develop child- and youth-centered accountability mechanisms. Identify your lines of accountability. Feedback, share back where their contributions have ended up.



RECOGNIZING AND USING YOUR POWER:

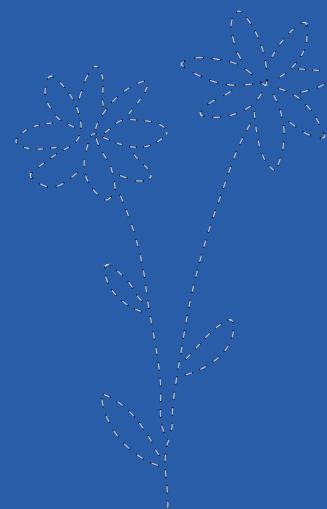
- **Reflect on the potential power dynamics** of asking children and young people who may be receiving funding from you or working with organizations that are to engage in a participatory process. Might you want to hire external consultants to facilitate any sensitive conversations or create ways to share feedback anonymously?
- **Practice what you preach.** If funding political work, funders should be political themselves, in their policies and practices.
- **Distinguish and breakdown silos.** Participation initiatives provide an opportunity to build connections, supporting more coalition building and cross-movement collective action.
- **Call for more meaningful participation from other funders.** Use your power and connections with other funders and with other decision-makers, including governments.

GETTING STARTED: BUDGETING FOR MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

Rather than provide detailed budget considerations for each mechanism, there are general recommendations and considerations that can be tailored depending on your approach. The budget lines will depend on the entry point, participatory mechanism(s) you have chosen, and which children and young people you are engaging. There may also be additional costs to consider if you are engaging under 18s.

GENERAL BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS:

- Staff costs - hiring experts and / or outsourcing to experienced consultants, including youth consultants.
 - If you are working with under 18s, the consultants should have experience working with adolescents, not just young people broadly.
 - You may also need to cover additional safeguarding support such as a dedicated safeguarding focal point.
- Direct grantmaking (includes grants awarded through participatory grant-making).
- Convening or collective action grants.
- Budget to cover out-of-pocket expenses such as the cost of data, travel, and childcare.
- Stipends for Advisory Groups, co-design panels, and review panels for participatory grant-making.
- Budget to cover the cost of non-financial compensation such as training sessions.
- External participatory evaluation consultants.
- Advocacy campaigning activities and preparation.
- Collective care and healing, e.g., psychosocial support, wellbeing sessions with consultants, etc.
- Translation and interpretation, including the translation of consent forms if you are working with under 18s.
- Disability access costs, e.g., audio-visual aids, sign language interpretation.
- Data packages for virtual convenings.
- Collaboration budgets to allow for and encourage activities that bring groups together and are self-organized.



EXAMPLE COSTS FOR AN ADVISORY GROUP TO PARTICIPATE IN A STRATEGY DESIGN PROCESS:

- At least one dedicated staff member to coordinate the group and hold the relationships. This could be a full time staff member or at least 50% of someone's role.
- Budget for interpretation, translation, and other access needs.
- Data packages and potentially devices if members do not own a phone/laptop and will need one to participate in meetings.
- Budget for in-person travel if you plan to bring the group together in person (see budget example below).
- Budget for wellbeing, care, and joy activities, e.g., healing sessions with a wellbeing practitioner, small grants for child- or youth-led wellbeing activities.



EXAMPLE COSTS FOR SETTING UP A PARTICIPATORY GRANT-MAKING PROCESS:

- 1-2 dedicated staff members to coordinate the process and, if relevant, manage the panel, e.g., program manager and program officer.
- A percentage of staff time from grants and finance, administration, and safeguarding.
- Budget for interpretation, translation, and to support other access needs.
- Data packages and potentially devices if members do not own a phone/laptop and will need one to participate in meetings.
- Budget for in-person travel if you plan to bring the group together in person (see below).
- Budget for wellbeing, care and joy activities, e.g., healing sessions with a wellbeing practitioner, small grants for child- or youth-led wellbeing activities.
- Budget for financial and/or non-financial compensation (see the next section for more information).



EXAMPLE COSTS FOR IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS:

For in-person international travel, including for convenings and workshops, budget for approximately \$3,000 per person traveling, which is a very generous estimate for:

- Transport (not just for transport to the workshop but also travel to visa appointments and to the capital city before and after the international flights).
- Visa costs.
- Insurance.
- Accommodation (at the capital if the children and young people are not based there and need to stay over before international travel, and at the convening/workshop/event itself).
- New clothes / luggage if the child or young person has not traveled before.
- A phone / call card.
- Per diems / expenses.
- Toiletries, menstrual hygiene products.
- Spending money for souvenirs and gifts.
- A free day for sightseeing / tours.
- For under 18s, you will also need to budget for a chaperone who should speak both the local language and convening workshop language. They should be experienced in this area of work and receive training if not.



OTHER BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS FOR IN-PERSON CONVENINGS ARE:

- Interpretation and translation.
- Venue hire.
- Additional staff to support general needs, safeguarding, and logistics.
- Wellbeing staff / practitioners / counselors.
- Costs to cover child care or lost earnings if the young person coming has care responsibilities or works.
- Drivers / transport.



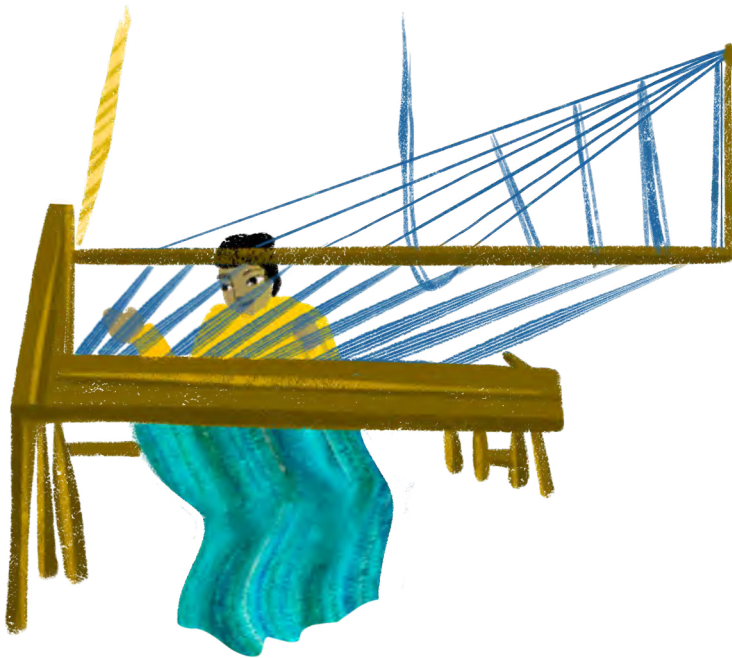
TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- University of Northern Colorado, [*Budgeting for Access*](#) - recommendations for budget implications for an accessible event.
- Disability Rights Fund, [*A Donor's Guide to Inclusion*](#) includes tips on inclusive budgeting.



GETTING STARTED: COMPENSATION

Funders approach compensation for participatory grant-making in different ways. This includes non-financial compensation such as training and networking opportunities, access to power-holders (other funders, advocacy targets, etc), certificates, and recommendation letters. An upcoming discussion paper, shared in the tools section below, encourages organizations to develop a compensation and volunteering policy, distinguishing between participants, volunteers, and paid employees. It includes: principles, considerations, and a decision-making approach that organizations can use to develop their own internal policy.



The paper suggests the following process as a way to begin to build a compensation policy:

- Organizations need to determine the role and tasks the young person is undertaking when setting a volunteering and compensation policy: Participant, Volunteer, or Worker.
 - Who does the work benefit?
 - Who has control over the tasks, hours, and time commitment?
 - Would the activities otherwise be completed by an employee?
- Organizations can then apply a consistent and fair compensation policy to each one. It is also important to see if and how someone's role changes over time, e.g., starting as a project participant and gradually taking on more responsibility. The paper includes a decision-making tree to help organizations decide.
- Organizations then need to decide on the type of compensation:
 - a) financial or in-kind appreciation/incentivisation such as t-shirts, paid online classes, or gift cards.
 - b) reimbursement to compensate for out-of-pocket expenses such as stipends to reflect estimated expenses including travel, childcare, wear and tear of equipment, etc.
 - c) payment such as a wage or lump sum. This should be in line with the organization's employment policy.

The paper does not set out guidance for honorariums or stipends for a more long-term initiative such as a co-design process, where the benefit is mutual, the hours and commitment are flexible, but it still requires a significant amount of time and effort. For this, a good first step is to discuss this with children and young people if you are working with any already in your network. An honorarium, for a role that might otherwise be a worker role, should not be a way to avoid paying a decent salary or to avoid labor laws. Seek advice from your HR teams and peers in the sector.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT IF YOU ARE SETTING UP A COMPENSATION POLICY:



- **Do not forget the value and importance of non-financial compensation!** This is not only about financial payments and reimbursement. When developing your compensation approach, spend time to understand what would be of value to children and young people in terms of training, access to networks, or other contacts.
- **For a global or regional panel** bringing together young people from different parts of the world, evidence shows that **a set, equal stipend works best**. Note the consideration below on market values. For groups coming together in one country or context, compensation could be aligned to the local cost of living.
- In terms of **practically paying financial compensation**, methods can include: bank transfers, wire transfer, payment to a parent or guardian, PayPal, payment to a local partner organization, or payment in cash.
- If making payments to children and young people is new for your organization, **speak with your finance team early** on so they can give the process plenty of time. They might also need information such as IBAN/ SWIFT codes that can be tricky to find.
- **Speak with children and young people at the beginning** of a process to understand how payments might be made. You might need a tailored approach for each. **Manage expectations** if the process is likely to take time.
- Some funders that run Advisory Groups or Panels are engaging the same adolescent girls or young people who are receiving hundreds or thousands of dollars from various organizations without adequate management of associated risks such as community backlash or jealousy from peers. When creating a new group, **ask about other commitments and explore potential risks and ways to mitigate them**.
- If reimbursing expenses, try to **organize a per diem with your finance team** rather than asking for receipts which can be cumbersome and not always possible in every context.
- The paper notes that whether you are making payments to children or young people, **rates should not be so high that they are excessively above market value**. This runs the risk of backlash from families, communities, and friends.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18:

- **Ensure you have parental or guardian consent** to transfer financial compensation. There are safeguarding risks that come with having access to money, and parents or guardians should be aware so they can offer whatever support is necessary to manage that money safely.
- **Check the local laws** within that country to ensure you are not at risk of infringing them by transferring money to a minor.
- **Where it is not possible to move money to a minor, explore non-financial compensation** such as gift cards, training opportunities, and gift vouchers for sites like Spotify. If possible, talk with the children about the different types of non-financial compensation to understand what would be most useful and interesting to them.

EXAMPLE: COMPENSATION FOR A PARTICIPATORY GRANT-MAKING PROCESS⁶⁹

An intermediary public funder is designing a participatory grant-making process. The process will last for 12 months and the organization is recruiting a group of 12 children and young people aged 15 - 20 to act as the advisory panelists. In terms of benefit, the programs team believes it will benefit both the organization and the advisory panelists. The organization will benefit as this will help it achieve its mission to be more youth-centered. It may also unlock new funding opportunities from source funders that only resource participatory organizations. The young people will also benefit. They will have access to training opportunities; they will build new skills in project management, grant-making, and financial management; and they will create new connections with other youth groups.

In terms of who has control over the time frame and tasks to be completed, this is mixed. The grants need to be released by the end of the financial year, which is 12 months away. Recruiting the group takes three months, so there are nine months left to run the process. There is some flexibility with the actual design and decision-making process. The program team and panelists decide together how and when they will meet. They will meet in person for an initial 3-day design session and the rest of the meetings will be virtual. The time commitment will be 2 - 4 hours a month. The panelists understand that they can be less involved when they are busy, e.g., with exams. If needed, the programs team will work weekends and evenings to fit around the panelists' work and study schedule and take the time back in lieu. In terms of whether the tasks would otherwise be completed by a staff member, the activities of the panel would not ordinarily be done by a staff member, because it would no-longer be a participatory process. The team decides the panelist role is a volunteer position and they need to develop a compensation approach that incorporates financial and non-financial compensation.

The panelists are all from Latin America, which is the focus of the program. For those under 18, the team obtains parental consent via Whatsapp calls with the parents during which the team reads through the consent form and answers any questions they have. The parents are also sent the form and send an email or Whatsapp confirming consent. The funder has not given compensation before so the team asks their peers and decides on a set rate of \$1000 plus per diems for the travel days. The \$1000 stipend is paid 50% at the beginning and 50% at the end. All out-of-pocket expenses will be covered including data packages, child care during travel for one panelist who is a mother, and the purchasing of a phone for a 15 year old panelist who does not own his own device. For those under 18, the money is paid to their parents or to a partner, adult-led NGO in their community. Non-financial compensation is decided with the panelists and includes training on project management and budgeting, a certificate, and a letter of recommendation from the CEO.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- CIVICUS, & Restless Development [*Maximising Benefits: A Recommended Framework for Volunteerism and Compensation for Young People*](#)
- Research study: [*Volunteer Engagement, Indirect Compensation and Youth Experience*](#)
- Young Feminist Europe [*GEF Young Feminist Manifesto: A bold and transformative vision for change*](#)

GETTING STARTED: SAFEGUARDING, CARE, AND WELLBEING

A grounding principle for this tool is that any child and youth participation process is safe. Based on insights from the research (on the importance of care and the reality that children and young people are political actors), we are offering a broader understanding of safeguarding: safeguarding should be grounded in a commitment to do no harm, encompass care and wellbeing strategies as political strategies, balance the agency of children and young people, and include an understanding of civic space as the basis for a safeguarding approach.

The Funders Safeguarding Collective has identified the following requirements for building and implementing a responsible safeguarding approach:⁷⁰

- A culture of safeguarding.
- Policies and procedures (board approved policy, named lead/focal point with the right oversight).
- Training, guidance, and support - not just to staff that are directly working with children and young people.
- Modeling and reinforcing expectations.
- Reporting, reflecting, and learning (open way for people to speak up, active response to incidents, action with those affected).
- Building into recruitment processes.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- **Set up a clear Safeguarding Policy** in place before setting up any child or youth participation initiative. Even if young people are over 18, there are safeguarding challenges at play and you do have a duty to do no harm. They might have other vulnerabilities or face risks as a result of identities they hold or experiences they have.
- **Agree on a reporting process for incidents** and identify a designated safeguarding focal point. Any staff working with children directly should hold an advanced security check.
- **Explore different ways to obtain consent**, e.g., voice-note on Whatsapp or conversation via phone to explain the process fully before seeking written consent over email, Whatsapp, or SMS. Alternative ways can be particularly helpful if parents speak a local dialect and also to build trust with parents and guardians.
- **If you have consent** to use someone's image, name, or quote, **consider checking consent every month or so** even if you have consent to use it for 6-12 months (or indefinitely, which is sometimes the case). With political work, the risks can change rapidly within a political context. While it might have been safe 2 months ago, it may no longer be.
- **Have a clear policy for obtaining consent.** You might decide to obtain parental consent at all times or you might choose to discuss with children and young people when and why to obtain parental consent. For example, parents might not be supportive of political work and so, for closed, private organizing spaces (as opposed to public fora), you might decide not to obtain parental consent.
- **Provide safeguarding training to all staff** on power, privilege, and bias rooted in an understanding of colonialism, the patriarchy, and anti-racism.
- **If the children and young people you are working with are engaging in political activism or advocacy, consider developing a risk assessment** with them, grounded in an understanding of civic space. This can be a simple discussion to brainstorm risks and the associated actions to mitigate those risks. If appropriate, trusted adults from the context or region should also be involved in helping think through possible risks.
 - **A risk assessment should be a live document** that you revisit over time with relevant colleagues, children, and young people.
- **If you are providing financial compensation to children and young people**, think through and **mitigate any potential associated risks** (e.g., backlash from family or community, jealousy from peers, local laws that restrict money being transferred to children or to informal groups).
- **Don't just think about harm from adults to children but also between children and young people.** For mixed age and identity groups, be aware of power dynamics within the group; develop a shared agreement for how to behave and treat each other. If there are under 18s, or those with other vulnerabilities that might put them at risk in the group, think about whether additional measures are required, such as having a staff member in breakout groups or agree on rules about 1:1 communication.
- **For virtual events, workshops, and sessions, consider new or heightened risks related to digital safety and data protection.** Platforms like Zoom have measures that can be put in place, such as no 1:1 chat or limited access to screen-share.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR CERTAIN TYPES OF ENGAGEMENT:

- **For Advisory Groups, consider developing a collective care plan** with the members to help avoid burnout and to foster a space of joy and collective care.
- **For participatory research, if you are working on sensitive issues, you may risk triggering or re-traumatising children** and young people with lived experience. **Plan to provide additional support** and seek advice from experienced researchers on how to manage the process ethically and without harm.
- **For participatory grant-making, making funding decisions that have implications for people in your community is a burden** and one that can cause stress and anxiety. **Create space to reflect** on this challenge throughout and ensure you have budget and staff resourcing to provide additional wellbeing, care, and mental health support.
- **For participatory grant-making, make sure to remove any sensitive or personal data from applications** before they are shared for review. Anonymising not only leads to a fairer decision-making process, but it also ensures data protection and limits the risk of a data breach.
- **For grantee partners that need additional support with safeguarding, consider providing safeguarding training for grantees**, one-to-one support for grantees, help writing safeguarding policies for a project, and learning spaces between grantees.

SPOTLIGHT:

FRIDA's Feminist Safeguarding Policy

In 2020, FRIDA published their feminist safeguarding policy⁷¹ which intentionally balances children and young people's safety and agency. According to FRIDA, a feminist approach "incorporates children and young people's agency and accounts for their activism in assessing and managing the risks they are facing."⁷² It also involves an explicit analysis of the patriarchy to understand the heightened risks that girls and young women face when engaging in political activism and organizing, such as backlash at the community level or from families. A feminist approach explores the impact of toxic masculinity on safeguarding. Put into practice, it involves including children and young people in the risk analysis process, holding conversations with them about the risks they face in their context, and also discussing consent with children and young people including whether and how the consent of parents should be sought or not.⁷³

TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- [Adolescent Girls Investment Plan Safeguarding Kit, Consent Form and Event Risk Assessment Tool](#) - lots of useful tips for virtual meetings and planning sessions with girls and young people.
- Amnesty, [Staying Resilient While Trying to Save the World \(Volume 2\): A Well-Being Workbook for Youth Activists](#) -also available in French and Spanish.
- FRIDA's [Safeguarding Policy](#) and [related article](#).
- [Funders Safeguarding Collaborative website](#) is a wealth of resources and tools.
- FRIDA's [Happiness Manifesto](#).
- United Edge [Transformative Safeguarding Course](#).
- [Risk management template](#).
- [Safeguarding Resources](#) | [Global Fund for Children](#) | [Recursos de salvaguarda](#) | [Global Fund for Children](#).

DEEP DIVE: CO-DESIGN FOR PROGRAM STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Entry point: Organizational strategy development

Mechanism: Participatory accompaniment and grant-making for adult-led child- and youth-serving grantees

Level: Making decisions

“Co-design is a highly collaborative practice where people bring together their skills, expertise, cultural context, and lived experiences to produce solutions to pressing challenges. This methodology centers the lived experiences of those who experience the realities of the challenges in question.”⁷⁴

Co-design involves engaging children and young people from the inception of a process and co-designing all aspects, or those they find most interesting. For a funder, designing a grant-making process might include defining priorities for the fund, setting the eligible criteria, coming up with application questions, and planning outreach strategies. The process builds trusting and equitable relationships and can spark other types of engagement and partnership, e.g., participatory grant-making or participatory monitoring and evaluation. It builds skills in fundraising, collaboration, and strategic planning.

GOOD FOR...

Funders of all sizes, particularly where there might be more opportunity at the programmatic level than at the organizational level for influence. Co-designing one program, campaign, or initiative allows for investment in a resourced, dedicated process without an organization-wide commitment.

MUST HAVES:

- **Enough time!** 6 - 12 months depending on the type of program they are co-designing and if the model will be iterated based on learnings throughout.
- **Clear roles** for the co-design team and the staff members involved.
- At least one staff member with experience in co-design and participatory methodologies, ideally with lived experience as a youth activist.
- **Budget for interpretation and translation** (if you are working with more than one language) and support for other access needs (e.g., if you work with young people with disabilities).
- **Data packages and potentially devices** if children and young people do not own a phone/laptop and will need one to participate in meetings.
- **Clear compensation** for the time and expertise you are asking from the young people.
- **Budget for in-person travel** if you plan to bring the group together in person, and travel insurance where relevant.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- **Given the importance of relationship building to co-design, workshops are recommended, ideally in-person.** For any in-person workshops where you will bring together young people from different countries, allow 2-3 months minimum for visa and travel logistics.
- **If facilitating a virtual co-design process, plan out the sessions over several months with no longer than four hours for each session** (with movement, energisers, and breaks built in). Setting up small group tasks between sessions is a good hybrid model and encourages deeper relationships between group members
- **If working with adolescents or facilitating mixed age groups, the staff member(s) should have experience** working with adolescents and developing child-friendly methodologies.
- **There might be a need for training within the group on power privilege and bias**, or reflection on what power-sharing looks like within a group.
- **For children and young people who have less experience engaging in such processes, consider setting up briefing and preparation calls** in small groups or on a 1:1 basis. Check in with them after design sessions and, when facilitating, be conscious about how much or little they are participating.
- **Create channels for ongoing communication.**⁷⁵ This should be decided with the group and recognize varying degrees of digital literacy and access.

CONSIDERATIONS, CONTINUED:

- **Provide feedback! Validate!** It is vital that you share back what the co-design sessions have led to with those who fed in. This builds trust, ensures the process is not extractive and allows for better alignment.
- **If working with adolescents or mixed age groups, consider what is appropriate for smaller groups** (e.g., not pairing a 15 year-old girl with two 24 year-old young men). There are gendered power dynamics at play and safeguarding risks. Consider including a staff member for such groups.
- **Similarly, think about how to support collaborative work between individuals with different levels of experience** while being conscious of how this may play out in a small group setting; e.g., more experienced young people taking up space.

INSPIRATION FROM OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:

- Global Resilience Fund co-designed the participatory grant-making process with young people: [Weathering the Storm](#).
- [Adolescent Girls Investment Plan Girl and Youth Engagement Strategy](#) - co-designed with girls and young people.
- [CIVICUS Youth Action Lab](#) - co-designed and implemented with youth movement actors.

DEEP DIVE: ADVISORY GROUP TO ADVISE ON STRATEGY DESIGN AND PARTICIPATORY GRANT-MAKING

Entry point: Programmatic/grant-making

Mechanism: Participatory strategy development

Level: Co-design

"It's not enough to give them a seat at the table; we need to make sure they are involved in setting up the table and are taking part in the journey from the very start."⁷⁶

Child and youth advisory groups or councils are usually made up of 10-15 people who advise on strategy development, program design, campaigning, and participatory grant-making. The groups usually have a term of 1-3 years and their role, which is voluntary, is outlined in a clear Terms of Reference or agreement, written in accessible language, ideally with the children or young people involved. A good idea is to stagger turnover (e.g., members leave when they have aged out or when their term is up). This allows for peer learning and orientation. Several funds, as well as NGOs, create advisory groups for one purpose, e.g., program design, and they continue on to advise on other processes, e.g., grant-making. When setting up a group, it is really important that there is enough time for meaningful engagement and that the conditions are in place for the group to have influence, as unlike participatory grant-making or monitoring and evaluation, the mechanism itself does not have decision-making and influence built in. It requires those conditions to be put in place by experienced, dedicated staff members.

GOOD FOR...

Funders of all sizes to advise on program or organizational strategy or to advise on a variety of initiatives.

MUST HAVES:

- **At least one full-time staff member** with experience in coordinating groups and facilitating participatory methodologies.

MUST HAVES, CONTINUED:

- **Clarity over roles** so that the demand does not become too much. This should include how their insights will be used and the extent of their decision-making power in that role.
- **Budget for interpretation, translation, and to support other access needs.**
- **Data packages and potentially devices** if members do not own a phone/ laptop and will need one to participate in meetings.
- **Clear compensation** for the time and expertise you are asking from the young people.
- **Budget for in-person travel** if you plan to bring the group together in person.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- **Consider the criteria** for such a group to ensure it is as diverse and representative as possible, e.g., levels of experience needed and diverse and intersectional identities to be represented.
- **Think about recruitment** and whether you will have an open call, leveraging your networks, or whether you will build a group from grantee partners.
- **Take time to understand whether the applicants are also members of other advisory panels/councils.** If so, there is a risk of burnout and of reinforcing exclusive spaces rather than sharing such opportunities with children or young people who are new to the experience.

- **If working with adolescents or facilitating mixed age groups, the staff member(s) should have experience** working with adolescents and developing child-friendly methodologies.
- **There might be a need for training within the group of power privilege and bias** or reflection on what power-sharing looks like within a group
- **For children and young people who have less experience engaging in such groups, consider setting up briefing and preparation calls** in small groups or on a 1:1 basis.
- **Create channels for ongoing communication.**⁷⁷ This should be decided with the group and recognize varying degrees of digital literacy and access.
- **Coordinating such a group takes time and requires trust and relationship building.** Ensure you have dedicated staff in-house who can manage the group and hold these relationships.

INSPIRATION FROM OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:

- CRIF's [Learning brief on the decolonize! Fund and associated youth collective](#).
- Global Fund for Women's [Adolescent Girls Advisory Council](#), which advised on strategy development.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- FRIDA's [Call for Applications: Girls Advisory Committee](#) - a great example of a TOR and application form.

SPOTLIGHT:

Global Fund for Women's Adolescent Girls Advisory Council

Global Fund for Women's Adolescent Girls Advisory Council (AGAC) is made up of 12 girls from different countries who inform the organization's program strategy; they make decisions related to funding and have a 3-year term. The members of the council receive financial and non-financial compensation. The stipend was paid upfront for the year to ease logistical burdens and to demonstrate the trust that they have with the group. To set up the council, Global Fund for Women made an open call. The information was shared with grantee partners but was not limited to them. The open call was made in multiple languages to ensure representation across different regions. Global Fund for Women have invested in a care and wellbeing strategy to support the advisory group members. This involves working with wellbeing practitioners who bring deep experience in this area of work.