

AI Public Participation & Engagement Guidance

1.0 Overview

Artificial intelligence (AI), while a newly trending topic in the public discourse, has been at work helping New York City provide public services for many years. AI technologies offer a wide range of opportunities to make government run better for New Yorkers. Prudent use of AI can improve operational efficiency, social equity, environmental sustainability, and more. At the same time, use of AI tools can pose a range of risks for individuals and communities, whether due to lack of appropriate governance, misuse, flawed design, or other factors. Use of AI without appropriate oversight and governance poses a range of potential risks, from benign inaccuracies or the misallocation of government resources, to cybersecurity risks such as new avenues for cyber-attacks or data spills. On a broader environmental and social scale, AI usage can consume large amounts of energy, generate excess carbon emissions, create electronic waste, and perpetuate discriminatory biases and social inequality. Furthermore, the complexity and indiscernible mechanics of many AI applications pose unique transparency and accountability challenges, which are particularly pronounced for governments working in service to the public. Further discussion of these issues can be found in “New York City AI Principles and Definitions Guidelines.”¹

As AI tools are increasingly used and incorporated into agencies’ existing software and systems, a careful consideration of varied real or potential public impacts will be critical. Agencies should seek to integrate meaningful public participation and engagement, where appropriate, to understand these impacts, mitigate risk, support trust and transparency, and facilitate successful development and roll-out that serves the needs and interests of New Yorkers.

This document provides agency stakeholders with guidance on what “public participation and engagement” means, why it can be important in AI-related efforts, when and how to best integrate it, and what resources are available within the city to support these efforts.

To provide feedback on this guidance to inform future updates, please contact ai@oti.nyc.gov.

2.0 Purpose

The Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI) is issuing this preliminary guidance to support city agencies in integrating public participation and engagement in their AI efforts. An “At-a-Glance,” summary version of this guidance is provided in Appendix A.

3.0 Authority

OTI is committed to supporting agencies in their integration of public participation and engagement on AI-related efforts. The guidance below lays out key considerations for agencies and their personnel. OTI will update this guidance as needed on an ongoing basis, as the technology, considerations for its use, and best practices in AI public participation and engagement evolve.

¹ New York City Office of Technology and Innovation, “New York City AI Principles and Definitions Guidelines,” inaugural version, March 4, 2024, available at: <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/oti/downloads/pdf/about/artificial-intelligence-principles-definitions.pdf>.

4.0 Terms and Definitions²

- 4.1 Artificial Intelligence** - A machine-based system that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations, or decisions influencing real or virtual environments. Artificial intelligence systems use machine- and human-based inputs to perceive real and virtual environments; abstract such perceptions into models through analysis in an automated manner; and use model inference to formulate options for information or action.
- 4.2 Generative Artificial Intelligence** (“Generative AI”) - Any AI system whose primary function is to generate content, which can take the form of code, text, images, and more.
- 4.3 Generative AI Tools** - The integration of Generative AI models into a variety of software or browser applications, including word processors, email, calendars, and chatbots, which may be run locally or accessed via an application programming interface (“API”).³
- 4.4 Materially Impact** - To have, through a system’s outputs or outcomes, a discrete, discernible, or otherwise identifiable effect that:
- Limits or suspends rights or liberties; OR
 - Determines the eligibility for, the type of, or quantity or magnitude of benefits, city services, and/or resources; OR
 - Changes the risk of harm to a person or group of people; OR
 - Produces or edits information provided to the public.⁴

5.0 Roles & Responsibilities

As with all technology initiatives, individuals should engage the public under approval by responsible agency personnel, and as authorized by agency-specific and citywide requirements. The relevant personnel and requirements may vary across AI projects and engagement plans, but will frequently include the following agency personnel:

- 5.1 Agency Communications and External or Community Affairs Executives
- 5.2 Agency Chief Contracting Officer (ACCO)
- 5.3 Agency General Counsel
- 5.4 Agency Chief Information Officer (CIO) or Agency Chief Technology Officer (CTO)
- 5.5 Agency Chief Information Security Officer (CISO)
- 5.6 Agency Privacy Officer (APO)

² Unless noted otherwise, these definitions are found in “New York City AI Principles and Definitions Guidelines,” cited above.

³ This definition supersedes that in New York City Office of Technology and Innovation, “Preliminary Use Guidance: Generative Artificial Intelligence,” inaugural version, March 4, 2024, available at: <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/oti/downloads/pdf/about/preliminary-use-guidance-general-artificial-intelligence.pdf> with the correction “accessed via an API” instead of “by an API”.

⁴ This definition supersedes that in New York City Office of Technology and Innovation, “New York City AI Principles and Definitions Guidelines,” inaugural version, March 5, 2024, available at <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/oti/downloads/pdf/about/artificial-intelligence-principles-definitions.pdf> with the addition of the fourth clause.

- 5.7 Agency Algorithmic Tools Liaison
- 5.8 Various business or operational owners
- 5.9 City agency teams with expertise in domains or populations that are relevant for an individual engagement effort.

6.0 Guidance for City Agencies on Integrating Public Participation and Engagement in AI Efforts

This guidance builds upon New York City’s AI Principles and Definitions, providing detailed guidelines on public engagement as one important tool that agencies should consider using to help integrate those Principles into their AI efforts.

It is important to note that best practices and standards for public engagement in AI are being actively researched and debated across sectors. This guidance is intended to help orient agencies around key issues and considerations; it will be updated over time to reflect current social, technical, and organizational contexts, research, and resources.

6.1 What are public participation and engagement?

Public engagement is a broad term that describes the opportunity for dialogue with residents about a specific project or policy. It can take many forms, spanning shorter- and longer-term efforts, and those that are more and less intensive. A range of specific formats and the relative strengths of each is outlined below in Section 6.6.

Public engagement methods that create opportunities for public input into project design are often called “participatory” or “public participation” when they seek opportunities to share decision-making with residents – particularly in the early stages of a given project.⁵

6.2 Why public participation and engagement are important to AI efforts

The importance of integrating public input in AI efforts, particularly those undertaken within a government context, has been highlighted in a number of recent policy documents.⁶ There can be a variety of reasons to incorporate public participation and engagement – and multiple reasons may apply for any one AI project.⁷ Many of these reasons align to broader principles of open, accountable, evidence-based, and equitable practice in government – and will be familiar and prioritized across a wide range of existing agency initiatives. It is important to carefully consider their application to AI efforts, based both on the significant impacts city uses of AI may have on the

⁵ Definition drafted with input from Dr. Meg Young, Data & Society Research Institute.

⁶ See, e.g., White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), “Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights: Making Automated Systems Work for the American People, 2022,” available at: <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/ostp/ai-bill-of-rights/>, archived at https://archive.org/details/ERIC_ED625670

⁷ See, e.g., Data & Society Research Institute, “Democratizing AI Participation,” 2023, available at: https://datasociety.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/DS_Democratizing-AI-Public-Participation-Brief_9.2023.pdf

public, and the ways in which those impacts, or the detailed ways in which AI systems produce them, are often both complex and opaque to the public.

Some possible reasons to integrate public participation and engagement in an agency AI project include:

- Obtaining a robust understanding of the problem to be solved “on the ground”;
- Supporting awareness, buy-in, and trust;
- Identifying blind spots, and avoiding or reducing risk of harm;
- Improving a tool’s performance or efficacy in meeting agency goals and public needs;
- Supporting democratic participation and accountability; and
- Saving time and resources that may otherwise be spent mitigating issues that arise from suboptimal design and implementation.

6.3 When to integrate public participation or engagement

While critical for many projects or project components, public engagement and participation are not necessary or feasible in every case. In considering when and where to integrate these measures, a careful look at real or potential impact is key.

6.3.1 What kinds of projects

A number of recent publications have made recommendations as to the domains of AI use for which public engagement should be integrated.⁸ While a variety of approaches have been proposed, there is widespread agreement that orienting around real or potential impacts is important – and that, in particular, AI uses that could impact an individual or community’s human or civil rights in some form should incorporate public input at one or more stages of the project lifecycle. Toward integrating such an impact-oriented approach, agencies should consider the definition of “materially impact” above in (4.4) when prioritizing areas for public engagement.

6.3.2 Where in the AI lifecycle

Public engagement may be important at a variety of different stages in AI project lifecycles, including at more than one stage of a given implementation.

Public engagement may be incorporated, for example, at the stage of defining a problem or deciding whether using an AI tool is a valid, socially responsible, or otherwise viable solution to a problem. Here, engagement may:

- Help agencies understand the individual or community context to ensure a prospective tool can effectively meet public needs and interests;

⁸ *Ibid.*

- Help agencies better understand the range of potential risks or harms an implementation could present for different populations or communities; or
- Help establish community sentiments about a potential implementation, and where steps might be taken to provide more information, mitigate concerns, or strengthen residents' voice in decision-making.

During the procurement or development stage of an AI project, public engagement may be used to:

- Support awareness of a plan to develop or procure AI tools;
- Provide input on procurement solicitation content, or, in particular, criteria outlined for vendor evaluation and selection;
- Provide input on vendor contract requirements or terms;
- Provide feedback on the extent to which models are performing as expected;
- Aid the testing process to help an agency better assess impacts and risks; or
- Provide input during internal risk review procedures.

During the stage of ongoing monitoring, public engagement may be used to:

- Participate in decision-making about the metrics or policies an agency should use for monitoring performance;
- Flag issues such as inappropriate decision outcomes that require appeal, redress or escalation for recourse;
- Support awareness of the results of monitoring efforts; or
- Provide input into changes that may be needed, based on the results of monitoring.

6.4 Participants

A range of populations and stakeholder groups may be important to engage for a given project, and agencies should think expansively about what these might be – including practitioners and professional experts across varied sectors and areas of focus, and residents and visitors across a wide range of identities and communities. Here, the specifics of the problem, tool, and populations that stand to be impacted by an implementation should guide decision-making. A critical factor to consider is how different populations may be impacted differently by a tool's use, and where it will be important to include voices that represent those diverse perspectives, in order to fully understand public needs and appropriately mitigate risks of harm or disparate impact.

Where reaching the full range of relevant populations presents a challenge for individual agencies, partnering with other agencies or community organizations focused on supporting those groups can be helpful. Section 6.7 below outlines resources available to support agencies in this regard. In some cases, staff from such organizations may also provide useful perspective, where direct engagement of the populations they serve proves difficult.

Importantly, some of those impacted by a tool’s use may be city employees or city contractors, whether they are using a tool directly, or their work is in some way impacted by its use by the city – such as via procedural changes, updates to roles or tasks, or even job displacement. While agencies may not consider such stakeholders to be members of the “public” per se, their perspectives can be critically important to a successful and responsible implementation, and agencies should carefully consider whether similar methods should be used to integrate them.

6.5 Education and Accessibility

Because AI technologies are complex, and many members of the public are unfamiliar with the range of tools and how they work, incorporating an educational element (e.g., a short explainer at the beginning of a public engagement session) is typically important to meaningful engagement. This can take a range of forms, but efforts should be made to create plain-language materials that will be readily accessible to the range of populations being engaged.⁹

Moreover, a key component to any public engagement effort is ensuring that procedures and materials are developed to support inclusion of stakeholders with diverse backgrounds, language skills, and abilities. Provisions for language or disability access, childcare, transportation, or direct compensation can be a critical factor to ensuring equitable participation. Indeed, in some cases, such measures will be required by law or policy, and agencies should consult with internal legal and EEO teams to ensure compliance. Section 6.7 also outlines certain resources available to city stakeholders in this regard.

6.6 Forms of Engagement

As noted above, public engagement can take many forms, including both brief and long-term efforts, as well as those that are more lightweight and those that are more intensive. The form of an individual engagement effort will be broadly dictated by its purpose, the populations it seeks to reach, and the resources available to the agency or team tasked with implementation. Being clear and intentional about the specific purpose of a given engagement effort is critical to ensuring it is well designed to successfully meet those goals.

Some methods (e.g., public comment solicitations) are more likely to garner interest and input from professional experts or advocates than members of the general public. Others (e.g., public meetings) are more apt for sharing information out than for gathering feedback. Additionally, some methods (e.g., public surveys) can more feasibly reach a large population, while others (e.g., focus groups or participatory workshops, interviews, or resident panels) are more suited to small, representative groups. Each engagement effort should be designed with a careful consideration of needs and goals, and the suitability of different methods to achieve them.

⁹ See, e.g., Federal Plain Language Guidelines, Rev. 1, May 2011, available at: <https://www.plainlanguage.gov/guidelines/>

Clearly articulating an engagement’s purpose to *participants* is also important to ensuring meaningful, well-targeted feedback, and trust – ensuring participants have accurate expectations for how their input will be used, and what might fall outside the scope of time and resources available.

It may also be important to include a range of internal stakeholders in both planning and implementing a public engagement process, to ensure feedback gathered is well-directed and actionable for the relevant phase or component of a project. Direct participation by relevant staff can also be helpful to supporting robust understanding of public perspectives and impact across internal teams.

Many forms of engagement that can be used in AI efforts align to widely-used public engagement methods used across other domains, such as:

- Public comment solicitations;
- Public surveys;
- Public meetings or listening sessions;
- Community-based focus groups or participatory workshops;
- Group or individual interviews;
- User testing; or
- Resident panels, juries, or other consultative bodies.

Additionally, a few methods that are more specific to AI or other domains particularly concerned with public risk or harms, include:

- Impact assessment efforts that integrate members of the public;¹⁰
- AI “red teaming” efforts that invite public participation;¹¹

6.7 Existing City Resources

Recognizing that agencies across the city have varying capacity and resources in place for public engagement work, it will be important in many cases to leverage expertise and support in place in other agencies.

Some agencies have robust internal public engagement resources and practices in place to support non-AI efforts that can be leveraged to advise or support these efforts. For those that do not, existing city offices focused broadly on public engagement, such as the Public Engagement Unit, Community Affairs Unit, and Civic Engagement Commission may be helpful to agency stakeholders

¹⁰ See, e.g., Bernd Carsten Stahl *et al.*, “A systematic review of artificial intelligence impact assessments,” Springer: Artificial Intelligence Reviews 56, pp. 12799-12831, 24 March 2023, available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10462-023-10420-8>

¹¹ See, e.g., White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), “Red-Teaming Large Language Models to Identify Novel AI Risks,” August 29, 2023, available at: <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/ostp/news-updates/2023/08/29/red-teaming-large-language-models-to-identify-novel-ai-risks/>

in an advisory capacity.¹² A number of city agencies have additionally already conducted robust engagement work as part of AI implementations in particular. These agencies may be consulted directly, or convened by OTI, to share best practices and lessons learned. Finally, OTI's Research and Collaboration team is working to build capacity to support public engagement needs across a range of emerging technology areas, and offer technical assistance, resources, tools, and referrals to agencies on this subject.

Additionally, there are individual programs in place across the city that may be able to offer support to agency public engagement and participation initiatives, including:

- The NYC Service Design Studio, managed by the Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity (NYC Opportunity), is "an on-call resource for any City agency looking to make services or programs more accessible to the people they serve" with an emphasis on "understanding the needs of people who use and directly administer public services, and designing service to meet those needs."¹³ The Studio offers consultative office hours, training and guidance resources, as well as dedicated project support. Agencies can find more information, including links to request these supports at <https://www.nyc.gov/site/opportunity/portfolio/service-design-studio.page>. Notably, for project support services, the Studio focuses on efforts related to "decreasing poverty or increasing equity," so not all agency projects will be eligible.
- The New York City Behavioral Design Team (NYC BDT), a joint offering by NYC Opportunity and non-profit behavioral design lab ideas42, is a "free resource for any NYC government agency...interested in applying behavioral insights to new and existing processes and programs."¹⁴ The BDT offers a range of guidance resources, office hours, and more intensive project-based support. Agencies can find more information about these services at <https://www.nyc.gov/site/opportunity/portfolio/behavioral-design-team.page>. The NYC BDT can also be contacted directly at nycbdt@ideas42.org
- The Community Compensation Fund, a pilot program operated by NYC Opportunity, offers NYC employees access to cash gift cards they can use to compensate residents for participating in design research activities that help improve city services.¹⁵ Agencies can find more information about this program at <https://civicservicedesign.com/engage-nyc-residents-meaningfully-with-the-community-compensation-fund-7a1a58726bbc>

¹² For more on these offices, see: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/mayorspeu/> ; <https://www.nyc.gov/site/cau/> ; and <https://www.nyc.gov/site/civicengagement/>

¹³ For more on this program, see: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/opportunity/portfolio/service-design-studio.page>

¹⁴ For more on this program, see: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/opportunity/portfolio/behavioral-design-team.page>

¹⁵ For more on this program, see: <https://civicservicedesign.com/engage-nyc-residents-meaningfully-with-the-community-compensation-fund-7a1a58726bbc>

- The city’s Civic Engagement Commission (CEC) supports a range of efforts that may be helpful to agency stakeholders interested in engaging the public in conversations regarding AI.

The CEC partners with hundreds of community organizations every year to facilitate idea generation sessions, collect participatory budgeting votes, and in-language voter education workshops. In doing this work, the CEC partners with organizations based on geography (prioritizing the Taskforce for Racial Inclusion & Equity Neighborhoods),¹⁶ but also based on the targeted populations, for example, ESL learners, people with disabilities, older adults, among others.

Agencies considering doing at scale civic engagement can reach out to the CEC to learn more about how the city already works with nonprofits, and community leaders. The CEC can share best practices, grant management strategies, thoughts on how much it cost to run different types of engagements, and may even have organizations in their network that could be relevant to agency work. Depending on the time of the year and staff capacity, there may be opportunities to collaborate, and leverage existing CEC programming to support agency engagement efforts.

Agencies can find more information on the CEC’s efforts at <https://www.nyc.gov/civicengagement> or reach out directly at info@civicengagement.nyc.gov

- As noted above, agencies that serve particular populations that are of interest for a given engagement effort can be also helpful to consult in terms of how best to reach or engage such populations, or where the city has existing relationships with community organizations that may be helpful this work. Such agencies include, for example, NYC Aging, the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, the Department of Education or Department of Youth and Community Development, the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), and the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD).
- Similarly, MOIA and MOPD, as well as internal agency Language Access Coordinators and EEO officers, may be important to consult on ensuring engagement activities themselves appropriately account for language and disability access needs.

6.8 Integrating input received

How to best make use of input received in participatory or engagement efforts will depend largely on the specifics of an individual effort, and the input received. However, certain best practices are likely to apply in most cases. These include:

¹⁶ For more on the Taskforce for Racial Inclusion & Equity Neighborhood initiative, see: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/civicengagement/our-programs/trie-initiative.page>

- As noted above, being transparent about the goals of a given engagement, how input will be used, and what may fall outside the scope of time and resources available.
- Being transparent about what measures will be used to evaluate feedback received and balance diverse perspectives.
- Establishing and using measures to evaluate the success of engagement efforts, including provisions to change approach if initial efforts are unsuccessful in meeting agency engagement goals. These may include, for example, metrics for the level of participation or populations included, or direct participant assessments of how transparent or inclusive engagement efforts were.
- At the conclusion of an engagement effort, sharing back findings with participants and communities involved.

7.0 Ownership

This guidance is provided by OTI’s Strategic Initiatives Division. For questions related to this document, please reach out to the OTI AI team at ai@oti.nyc.gov.

8.0 Related Laws & Policies, Requirements, and Processes

A wide range of laws, policies, and processes may be relevant to an agency’s AI projects broadly, and to public engagement efforts related to them in particular. This section lists a selection of key measures, for agency reference.

8.1 Laws

- New York State Freedom of Information Law
- New York City Open Data Law
- New York City Identifying Information Law
- New York City Local Law 35 of 2022

8.2 Citywide Policies

- Artificial Intelligence: Principles & Definitions
- Citywide Privacy Protection Policies and Protocols of the Chief Privacy Officer
- Citywide Cybersecurity Policies and Standards

8.3 Processes

- Cloud Review
- Procurement
- Software Security Assurance Process (SSAP)

8.4 Agency-Specific Policies

- Various internal business processes and use policies
- Agency cybersecurity policies
- Agency privacy policies
- Agency Acceptable Use Policies

9.0 References

Bernd Carsten Stahl *et al.*, “A systematic review of artificial intelligence impact assessments,” Springer: Artificial Intelligence Reviews 56, pp. 12799-12831, 24 March 2023, available at:

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Data Justice Lab, “Advancing Civic Participation in Algorithmic Decision-Making: A Guidebook for the Public Sector,” 2023, available at: https://datajusticelab.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PublicSectorToolkit_english.pdf

European Center for Not-for-Profit Law, “Moving from Empty Buzzwords to Real Empowerment: A Framework for Enabling Meaningful Engagement of External Stakeholders in AI,” 2023, available at: <https://ecn.org/news/moving-empty-buzzwords-real-empowerment-framework-enabling-meaningful-engagement-external>

Federal Plain Language Guidelines, Rev. 1, May 2011, available at:

<https://www.plainlanguage.gov/guidelines/>

National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act of 2020, 15 U.S.C. ch. 119 § 9401(3), 2024, available at:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/6216>

National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), “AI Risk Management Framework Playbook,” 2023, available at: https://airc.nist.gov/AI_RM_F_Knowledge_Base/Playbook/

New York City Local Law 35 of 2022, Administrative Code of the City of New York, § 3119.5, available at: <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4265421&GUID=FBA29B34-9266-4B52-B438%20A772D81B1CB5>.

New York City Office of Technology and Innovation, “New York City AI Principles and Definitions Guidelines,” inaugural version, March 4, 2024, available at:

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/oti/downloads/pdf/about/artificial-intelligence-principles-definitions.pdf>

New York City Office of Technology and Innovation, “Preliminary Use Guidance: Generative Artificial Intelligence,” inaugural version, March 4, 2024, available at:

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/oti/downloads/pdf/about/preliminary-use-guidance-general-artificial-intelligence.pdf>

White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), “Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights: Making Automated Systems Work for the American People,” 2022, available at:

<https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/ostp/ai-bill-of-rights/>, archived at: https://archive.org/details/ERIC_ED625670

White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), “Red-Teaming Large Language Models to Identify Novel AI Risks,” August 29, 2023, available at:
<https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/ostp/news-updates/2023/08/29/red-teaming-large-language-models-to-identify-novel-ai-risks/>

10.0 History and Authorship

Version	Change Description	Author(s)	Date
1.0	Inaugural version	A. Kathryn Hohman	12/15/2025

		Strategic Initiatives Division	
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APPENDIX A:

Guidance At-a-Glance

<p>What ...is public engagement for AI?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public engagement is a broad term that describes the opportunity for dialogue with residents about a specific project or policy. It can take many forms, spanning shorter- and longer-term efforts, and those that are more and less intensive. • Public engagement methods are often called “participatory” or “public participation” when they seek opportunities to share decision-making with residents – particularly in the early stages of a given project.
<p>Why ...should my agency do this?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There can be a variety of reasons to incorporate public participation and engagement – and multiple reasons may apply for any one AI project. Some reasons include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Obtaining a robust understanding of the problem to be solved; ○ Supporting awareness, buy-in, and trust; ○ Identifying blind spots, and avoiding or reducing risk of harm; ○ Improving a tool’s performance or efficacy in meeting agency goals and public needs; ○ Supporting democratic participation and accountability; and ○ Saving time and resources that may be spent mitigating issues that arise from suboptimal design and implementation.
<p>Whom ...should we engage?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of populations and stakeholder groups may be important to engage for a given project – including practitioners and professional experts across a variety of domains and sectors, and residents and visitors across a range of identities and communities. • A critical factor to consider is how different populations may be impacted differently by a tool’s use, and where it will be important to include voices that represent those diverse perspectives.
<p>When ...should we do this?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While critical for many projects or project components, public engagement and participation are not necessary or feasible in every case. In considering when and where to integrate public engagement, a careful look at real or potential impact is key. • AI uses that could impact an individual or community’s human or civil rights should incorporate public input. The city’s definition of “material impact” can be useful to agencies in assessing this impact. • Public engagement may be important at a variety of stages in AI project lifecycles, including at more than one stage of a given implementation.
<p>How ...do we do it?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public engagement can take many forms. It can include both brief and long-term efforts, as well as those that are more lightweight or more intensive. The form of an individual engagement effort should be dictated by its purpose, the populations it seeks to reach, and the resources available to those tasked with implementation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many forms of engagement that can be used in AI efforts align to widely-used public engagement methods in other domains, such as: public comment solicitations; public surveys; public meetings; community-based focus groups or participatory workshops; group or individual interviews; user testing; or resident panels, juries, or other consultative bodies. • There are also methods that are more specific to AI or other domains specifically concerned with public risk or harms, including impact assessments and AI “red teaming” efforts that integrate members of the public, and efforts to obtain active data donations from the public to support training or testing. • Because AI technologies are complex, and many members of the public are unfamiliar with the range of tools and how they work, incorporating an educational element (e.g., a short explainer at the beginning of a public engagement session) is typically important to meaningful engagement.
<p>What ...do we do with it when it’s done?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The question of how to best make use of input received in engagement efforts will depend on the specifics of an individual effort, and the input received. Some best practices include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Being transparent about engagement goals and how input will be used. ○ Being transparent about measures to be used to evaluate feedback received and balance diverse perspectives. ○ Taking steps to evaluate an engagement’s success. This may include, for example, metrics for the level of participation or populations included, or direct participant assessments of how transparent or inclusive engagement efforts were. ○ Sharing back findings with participants and communities involved.
<p>Where ...can I get help?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email OTI’s Research & Collaboration team at ai@oti.nyc.gov • NYC Opportunity’s Service Design Studio: https://www.nyc.gov/site/opportunity/portfolio/service-design-studio.page • NYC Behavioral Design Team: https://www.nyc.gov/site/opportunity/portfolio/behavioral-design-team.page or nycbdt@ideas42.org • NYC Community Compensation Fund: https://civicservicedesign.com/engage-nyc-residents-meaningfully-with-the-community-compensation-fund-7a1a58726bbc • NYC Civic Engagement Commission: https://www.nyc.gov/site/civicengagement/ or info@civicengagement.nyc.gov • Agencies that serve populations you are interested in reaching or may provide referrals to relevant community groups. • City offices and agency staff that can assist with engagement accessibility needs.