



CANADIANS OF SOUTH ASIAN HERITAGES MUSEUM

Community-Led Conversations

Facilitator Toolkit



Ministry of
Tourism, Arts,
Culture and Sport



**BC MUSEUMS
ASSOCIATION**

Introduction

This toolkit has been developed as a resource to support facilitators in hosting and leading community-led engagement sessions.

Engagement Roles

For this engagement, the role of the facilitator is to share and guide the conversation while engaging all participants in meaningful dialogue.

Facilitator

- Clearly communicates the purpose of the engagement
- Keeps discussion on track, ensuring each question is discussed and answered
- Follows this guide and offers prompts to provide input
- Ensures everyone has an opportunity to participate
- Encourages everyone to provide their thoughts
- Ensures everyone is respectful of one another's opinions
- Avoids personal perspectives and temptation to influence discussion

Scribe

- Transparently records significant discussion during engagement
- Avoids personal influence while documenting conversation
- Generally, remains quiet, however can assist facilitator if needed
- Often is called upon for generating key outputs (report back template)

Participant

- Share ideas and perspectives on questions asked
- Are respectful of one another's opinions
- Waits their turn to provide their inputs

Engagement Purpose and Guiding Principles

Presenting the broader engagement purpose and guiding principles at the outset of the session will set the stage for a focused discussion. It lets the participants know what the session is aiming to achieve.

The community-hosted conversations are part of a public engagement to inform the vision for a new museum/cultural centre that will highlight the histories, cultures, and contributions of Canadians of South Asian heritages in B.C.

The focus of the engagement is to welcome ideas and input from communities who share in these histories and cultures, and whose stories and contributions will be reflected in this initiative.

Engagement questions will focus on the following key themes:

- The **purpose** of this space and how it should be used.
- **Who** it will serve.
- What its **impact** might be for B.C.
- Considerations for **where** the space might be located.

The guiding principles of the engagement are:

- ✓ *Inclusion & equity*
- ✓ *Anti-racism & anti-casteism*
- ✓ *Accessibility*
- ✓ *Respect for different kinds of knowledge*
- ✓ *Relationship-based*
- ✓ *Trauma-informed*
- ✓ *Transparency*
- ✓ *Alignment with UNDRIP, DRIPA*
- ✓ *Community-driven*

Note on the guiding principles:

The terms used in the guiding principles may be new or unfamiliar to some facilitators or participants. If you would like more information, see page 9 of this toolkit for definitions, resources and how to apply guiding principles in practice.



Designing the Engagement

Engagement sessions can be hosted in a variety of ways, here are some common examples.

<i>Format</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Method</i>
In-Person Sharing Circle	Encourage open dialogue and sharing of personal experiences, and perspectives, fostering empathy and connection.	Gather participants and allowing each person to share their perspective on each question. This could also run like a group interview where each question is posed, and participants provide their perspective.
Online or In-Person Facilitated Discussion	Provide structure while allowing for organic conversation flow, encouraging diverse viewpoints.	A facilitator guides a group conversation, ensuring everyone has a chance to contribute and creating opportunities for in-depth dialogue between participants.
Break-out Groups & Report Outs	Foster deeper exploration of complex issues while maintaining inclusivity and participation.	Divide participants into smaller groups to discuss engagement questions, then reconvene for group representatives to share key points.
Social Media Live Q&A	Increase accessibility and reach, facilitating real-time interaction with online audiences.	Host a live question and answer session on social media platforms, engaging with community members in real-time.
Online Webinar	Inform community members about the initiative while providing opportunities for engagement and dialogue	Organize a structured online presentation followed by interactive Q&A sessions, utilizing webinar platforms.
Dedicated Input Spaces	Allow people already attending your organization, event(s) or location to learn about the project and provide input.	Build off your existing environment to create a welcoming and intriguing space for visitors to share their perspectives, such as a submission box, or interactive in-person station.

Introducing the Engagement

Before diving into discussion topics, it is important for the facilitator to set the stage for a successful session. Facilitators can do this effectively by:

1

CLEARLY STATE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

- In order for people to listen and engage, it is important that they understand up front why they are meeting and what is expected of them.
- This is also a good opportunity to let participants know what how the session will flow, how they will be asked to participate, and some of the key discussion topics.

2

STICK TO THE TIMELINE

- At the outset, let your group know that there is a limited amount of time and several activities to go through.

3

SETTING GROUND RULES FOR DISCUSSION

- This is a good time to set ground rules for the session. Lively discussion is what any facilitator strives for; however, it's important to make sure everyone is heard and has a chance to participate in that discussion.

Some ground rules you may want to cover include:

- Raise your hand if you want to contribute to the conversation.
- Listen respectfully when others are speaking.
- Avoid side conversations; it is important that we have one conversation at a time.
- Let know participants know that as a facilitator, your role is to keep the conversation on track. That means you may suggest that the group move on from a conversation in the interest of time.



Engagement Questions

Engaging in meaningful conversations within communities' fosters understanding, collaboration, and growth. Community conversation hosts are encouraged to frame questions and design conversations in a way that makes sense for the community they are engaging.

Regardless of the format chosen for an engagement, the following community engagement questions should guide the conversation:

- 1) What are the core values of your community/organization?
- 2) Are there any principles, values and/or experiences shared with other communities of South Asian heritage in B.C.?
- 3) What aspects of your community's culture do you want to see reflected in the museum/cultural centre?
- 4) What history within your community is important to recognize and/or highlight?
- 5) How do you see your community represented in B.C. today?
- 6) What does the future look like for your community and the younger generations?
- 7) What's important in physically representing your culture/community?
- 8) Where should the museum/cultural centre be located and why?
- 9) What other aspects of location are important for the museum/cultural centre?
- 10) What do you want the broader population of B.C. to know about your community? How should they interact with the museum/cultural centre? (collaborators, supporters, partners, etc.)
- 11) What do you think may be challenging in the creation of the museum/cultural centre as it relates to your community? Do you have suggestions to address this challenge?
- 12) Is there anything being missed through this engagement? (people, groups, information, etc.)

Facilitator Tips

Sometimes, when faced with quieter participants, or participants that are interested in discussions that aren't relevant to the engagement topic, facilitators must pivot the conversation to get back in alignment with the session objectives. Some easy ways to keep your discussions productive are:

1

PARAPHRASE BACK TO THE GROUP

- Repeating back to the group what you heard during discussion will help you confirm what the group wants to say in response to each question. At the end of the discussion for each question, reiterate what the key points are. You are recording the group's collective answer to each question, and it is ok if your group wants to include more than one answer in response to a question.

2

MANAGE YOUR TIME

- To manage the time and get through the material, consider coming back to popular topics near the end of the session. Creating space to explore each question is an important part of ensuring fulsome data collection.

3

CREATE A PARKING LOT

- In support of keeping everyone on track but not discounting important contributions, consider creating a "parking lot". Let them know that their idea has been documented in the parking lot for discussion at a later date.

What this might look like:

If your session is getting off track in discussion, you can gently pivot the conversation by referring back to the ground rules or engagement principles.

Example: *"That's an interesting perspective, however it's not in alignment with our guiding principles, to ensure we get through the content on time, I am going to utilize our parking lot and we'll come back to this conversation if there is time".*



Closing the Session

It is important to officially close the meeting by thanking participants and letting them know what comes next. In this instance, the facilitator will populate the report back template with engagement inputs, those inputs will be provided back to the Ministry of Tourism Arts and Culture and used to inform the direction of the establishment of the Canadians of South Asian Heritages museum.

If participants are interested in hearing more about the museum / cultural centre, they can follow this webpage for updates:

[Home - Canadians of South Asian Heritages B.C. museum \(gov.bc.ca\)](http://gov.bc.ca)

If participants feel they have more to contribute on this initiative, they are encouraged to provide input through the other engagement pathways available:

- Online survey: *[Canadians of South Asian Heritages Museum Questionnaire \(gov.bc.ca\)](http://gov.bc.ca)*
- Online submission form: *[2024 Community Submissions \(museum.bc.ca\)](http://museum.bc.ca)*



Additional Information on Guiding Principles

Some of the terms in the guiding principles may be new or unfamiliar to facilitators or participants. In some cases, the term may be familiar, but it may be unclear why they are important to this initiative. The following definitions and resources are to provide additional context.

Trauma-Informed

Trauma-informed engagement is an approach to engaging people that recognizes the presence of trauma, acknowledges the role trauma plays in peoples' lives, and works to create a space that protects the safety and wellbeing of all people.

- [BCMA Webinar: Trauma-Informed Practice in Leadership](#)
- [Crisis & Trauma Resource Institute - Trauma Informed Leadership Manual](#)

UNDRIP/DRIPA

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (**UNDRIP**) is an international instrument adopted by the United Nations on September 13, 2007, to enshrine (according to Article 43) the rights that “constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world.” The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (**DRIPA**) establishes UNDRIP as the Province’s framework for reconciliation, as called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action.

- [UNDRIP_E_web.pdf](#)
- [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- [Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

Equity

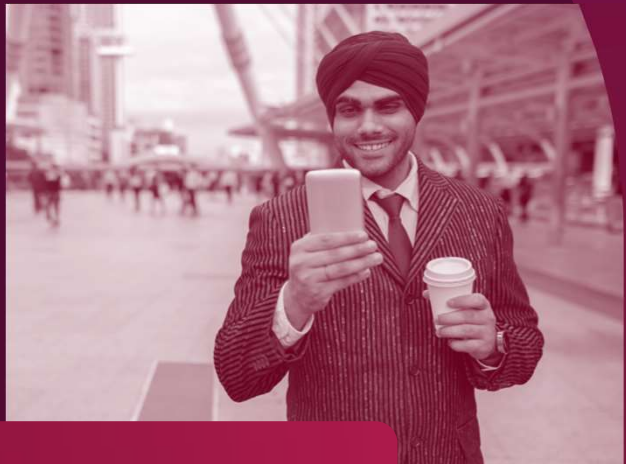
The [Canada Council for the Arts](#) offers a helpful definition: “Equity is a principle and process that promotes fair conditions for all persons to fully participate in society. It recognizes that while all people have the right to be treated equally, not all experience equal access to resources, opportunities or benefits”. While equality means everyone is treated the same way, equity recognizes that we are not starting at the same place and seeks to address these imbalances.

- [Equity | Canada Council for the Arts](#)
- [Anti-racism definitions - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

Anti-Racism & Anti-Casteism

Anti-racism refers to the deliberate act of opposing racism and promoting a society that is thoughtful, inclusive and just. Anti-casteism refers to the deliberate opposition to the oppression, violence, and segregation that is based in the system of hereditary social status hierarchy.

- [Resources - South Asian Canadian Heritage](#)



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