



International Association
for Public Participation

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IAP2 Code of Ethics for Public Participation Practitioners

The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Code of Ethics for Public Participation Practitioners supports and reflects IAP2's Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation. The Core Values define the expectations and aspirations of the public participation process. The Code of Ethics speaks to the actions of practitioners.

Preamble

As members of IAP2, we recognize the importance of a Code of Ethics, which guide the actions of those who advocate including all affected parties in public decision-making process. In order to fully discharge our duties as public participation practitioners, we define terms used explicitly throughout our Code of Ethics. We define stakeholders as any individual, group of individuals, organizations, or political entity with a stake in the outcome of a decision. We define the public as those stakeholders who are not part of the decision-making entity or entities. We define public participation as any process that involves the public in problem-solving or decision-making and that uses public input to make better decision.

This Code of Ethics is a set of principles, which guide us in our practice of enhancing the integrity of the public participation process. As practitioners, we hold ourselves accountable for these principles and strive to hold all participants to the same standards.

1. **PURPOSE.** We support public participation as a process to make better decisions that incorporate the interests and concerns of all affected stakeholders and meet the needs of the decisions-making body.
2. **ROLE OF PRACTITIONER.** We will enhance the public's participation in the decision-making process and assist decision-makers in being responsive to the public's concerns and suggestions.
3. **TRUST.** We will undertake and encourage actions that build trust and credibility for the process among all the participants.
4. **DEFINING THE PUBLIC'S ROLE.** We will carefully consider and accurately portray the public's role in the decision-making process.
5. **OPENNESS.** We will encourage the disclosure of all information relevant to the public's understanding and evaluation of a decision.
6. **ACCESS TO THE PROCESS.** We will ensure that stakeholders have fair and equal access to the public participation process and the opportunity to influence decisions.
7. **RESPECT FOR COMMUNITIES.** We will avoid strategies that risk polarizing community interests or that appear to "divide and conquer."
8. **ADVOCACY.** We will advocate for the public participation process and will not advocate for interest, party, or project outcome.
9. **COMMITMENTS.** We ensure that all commitments made to the public, including those by the decision-maker, are made in good faith.
10. **SUPPORT OF THE PRACTICE.** We will mentor new practitioners in the field and education decision-makers and the public about the value and use of public participation.