

FALLING WALLS ENGAGE HUB SWEDEN

DIGEST

WHICH ARE
THE NEXT
WALLS
TO FALL?

Event Partners

FALLING
WALLS
ENGAGE



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wissenschaft : im dialog

FALLING WALLS ENGAGE HUB SWEDEN

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About the event

25 science engagers from around the world came together for a one-week virtual exchange to discuss where the next walls between science and society will fall.

Initially, we had planned to meet in person in Gothenburg, Sweden during the Science Communication Forum. Together with our Swedish partners, we transformed our real-world gathering into our first virtual Engage Hub event addressing a challenge which became prevalent for many of us: **How can we engage the public with science when we cannot meet in person?**

The week concluded with a **public session** featuring a virtual fishbowl discussion where the 25 science engagers shared and discussed their findings with 90+ participants from around the world.

The **Falling Walls Engage Hub Sweden Digest** is a summary of both the community and public event. We hope you enjoy the read!

The Falling Walls Engage Hub Sweden is part of a series of Engage Hubs to be launched in 2020. Our next stops include Argentina, Australia, and Canada. [Find out more about the Engage Hubs](#)

OUR ZOOM JOURNEY

WHICH ARE
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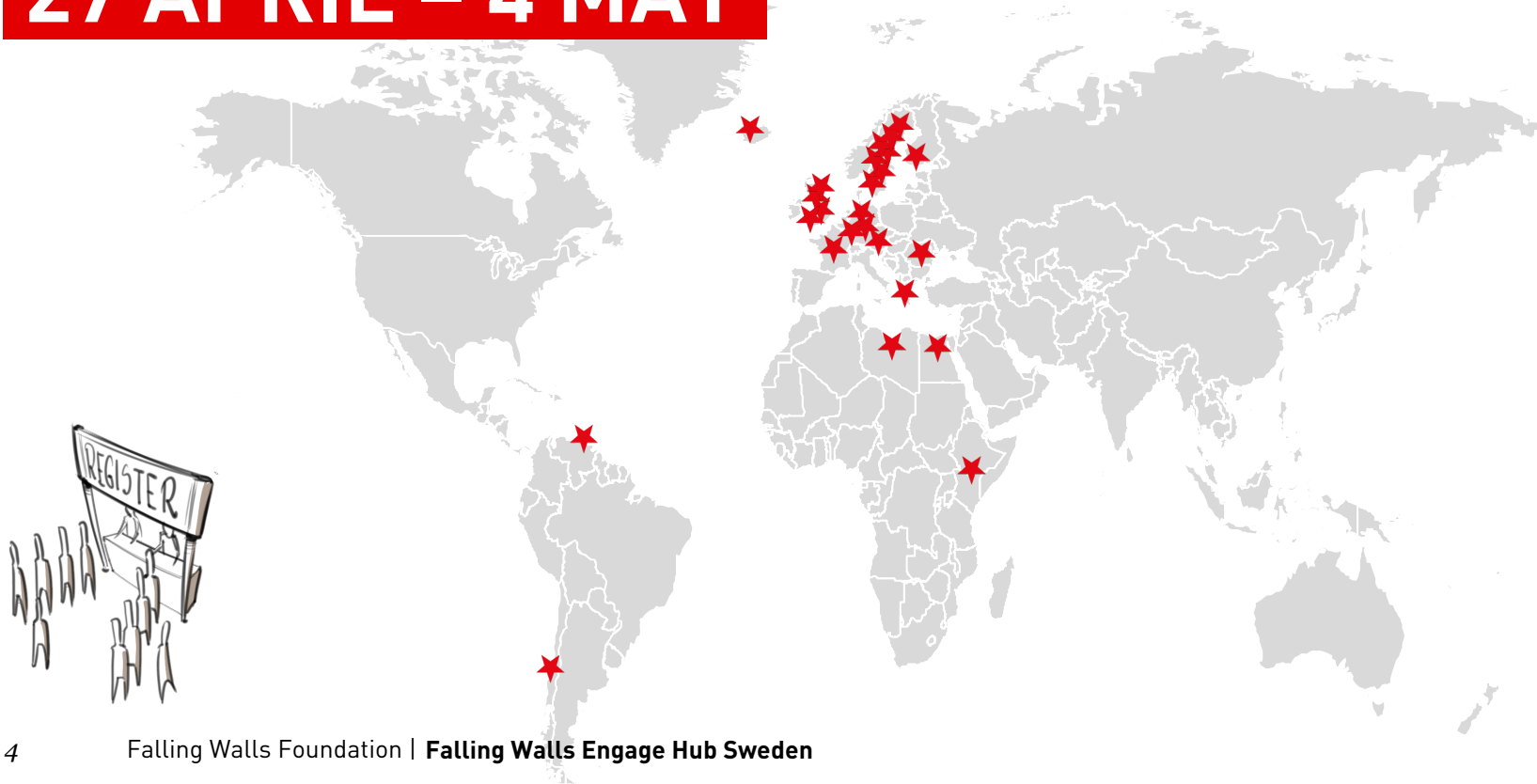
How can we engage the public with science when we cannot meet in person?



COMMUNITY EVENT

27 APRIL – 4 MAY

WHICH ARE
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QUESTIONS & EXPECTATIONS BEFORE THE EVENT

WHICH ARE
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How can we create an inclusive and diverse space?

What are the experiences of fellow scientists with live videos and podcasts ?

How did other scientists engage people from a distance in creative ways?



We did virtual lab/research center visits.

How do we reach to audiences that do not have the means to work online?

How can science help work through the social impacts of the pandemic, including economic divides, racist attitudes, etc.?

We reached out to more scientists to participate in vlogs!

How can we work online with difficult to reach target groups?

What are the challenges and lessons learnt during this period?

How have other scientists readjusted their activities during this pandemic?

We did simple short weekly videos on COVID-19 and

VIRTUAL WORLD CAFÉ

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Show that we still care about activities and participants
- Talk to (excluded) groups, not about them
- Make participation less complicated
- People are open to new things + have more time
- Too much pressure to be active during lockdown
- We're all still learning!



1. How do we adapt to new online audiences and still reach out to the communities we engaged offline?

2. How can we stay connected and together cultivate an online space that is relevant to our audiences?

3. Which opportunities does the current situation offer and what can we learn from it for future science engagement?

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- New opportunities for interactivity and collaboration online
- Be specific about your target group
- Listen to voices from your community – where are they now?
- Make people 'feel' the science

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Choosing between online and offline conferences
- Rethink the way we organise events and areas to engage
- Value of informal networking
- Include local organisations and different media
- Include mindfulness and wellbeing in your content (mental health)
- Not everything can be transferred online

WHICH ARE THE NEXT WALLS TO FALL?

QUESTION 1

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How do we adapt to new online audiences and still reach out to the communities we engaged offline?

- It's harder to reach people without technology = digital gap
- You can't rely on people to start activities/conversations online, there is a need to activate them
- People are open to online activities and not expecting everything to be perfect, it's a great time to try something new
- Online content is more flexible, accessible and less expensive, so overall less exclusive than before
- Contact 'group leaders' to discuss how to include their groups, use text messages as a tool in local communities
- Use 'old' media and partner up with TV channels, radio, newspaper and podcasts
- School visits instead of activities at the museum
- Work with organisations connected to underrepresented communities
- Need to learn how to moderate online meetings well



QUESTION 2

WHICH ARE
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How can we stay connected and together cultivate an online space that is relevant to our audiences?

- You should still have a specific target group
- Make the workshops hands-on and interactive = engagement as a two-way street
- Do not simply imitate the offline event in the online space
- Collaboration between initiatives for example regarding contacts and outreach
- Listen to as many voices from the community as possible
- Less travel costs, more international conferences are accessible
- Digital Fikas, after-work meetups and other get-togethers as a way to connect science engagers
- Help audiences find reliable sources and create virus-related content and activities



QUESTION 3

WHICH ARE
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Which opportunities does the current situation offer and what can we learn from it for future science engagement?

- Use tested processes in a new environment, just modify the tools and methods
- Focus on people who are not connected through the digital infrastructure yet
- It doesn't have to be digital, think innovative! – new areas of engagement can appear
- Build on existing online groups and involve influencers
- Merge digital and meeting in person to hybrid events
- We need more collaboration across disciplines
- Use gaming tools
- We see a positive environmental impact due to online solutions
- It is easier to have more international speakers at conferences



VIRTUAL EVENTS DURING THE WEEK

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Three events were held throughout the week to stay in touch and engaged with the event topics. Participation in the events was optional.



VA hosted a Swedish Fika (coffee break) with guest speaker Keivan Javanshiri, winner of the competition Researchers' Grand Prix in Sweden 2019.



VA hosted a relaxed coffee break with an introduction to the tradition of Walpurgis Night and a quiz on Swedish culture.



Falling Walls Engage hosted a live written discussion on Facebook to allow participants to exchange ideas on the event topics in a fast-paced format.

SELECTED CHALLENGES FROM PARTICIPANTS

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Challenge 1

"I would like to discuss that I am working with unprivileged communities and it is a big challenge nowadays to reach them out as they don't have the luxury of internet or even a computer/phone."

Challenge 2

"I would like to discuss how to make sure that the outstanding human factors of our project can be 'translated' into an online event."

Challenge 3

"I would like to discuss how to transform my conference to a digital one - which seems what we will have to do end of this year. How can we make good digital events? How can we get the target groups to attend and engage? And how can we measure participants and engagement in a good way?"

Challenge 4

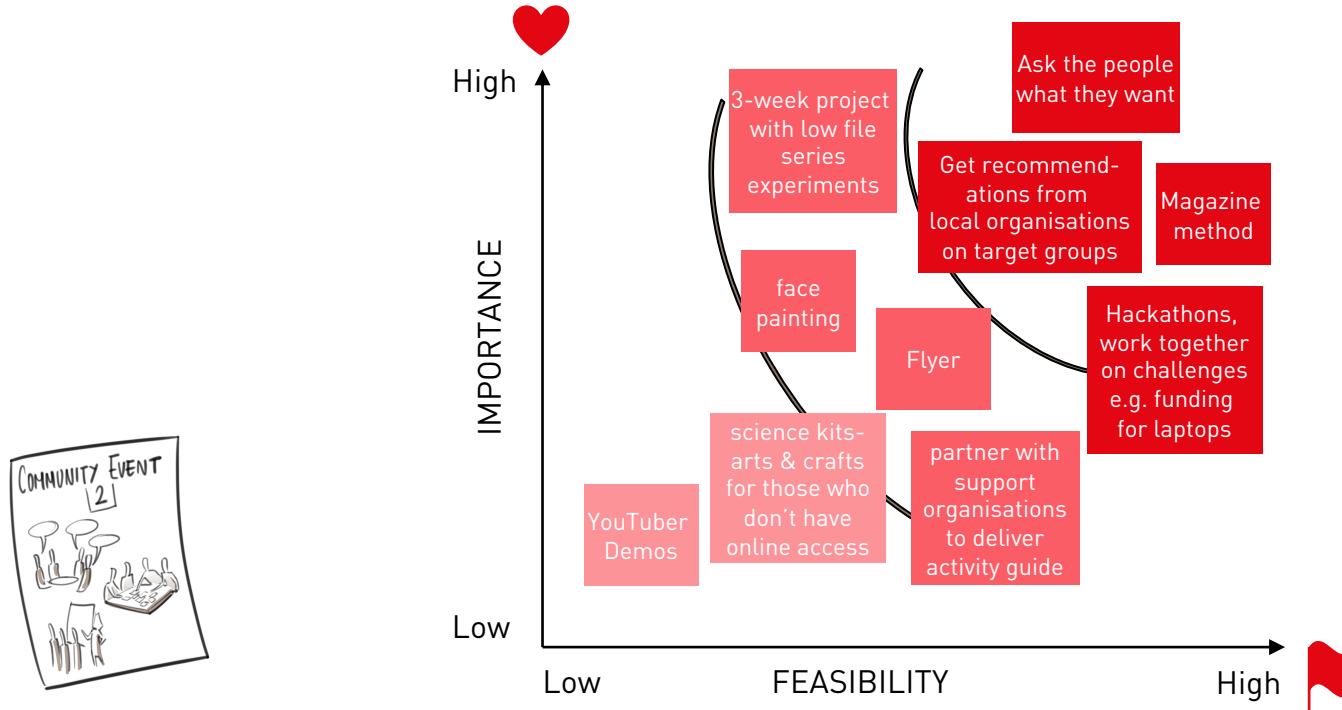
"I would like to discuss how to create an online space for meaningful community engagement, and specifically how an arts-based approach can be used to give voice to audiences that are underserved and under-heard by science and science communication."



CHALLENGE 1

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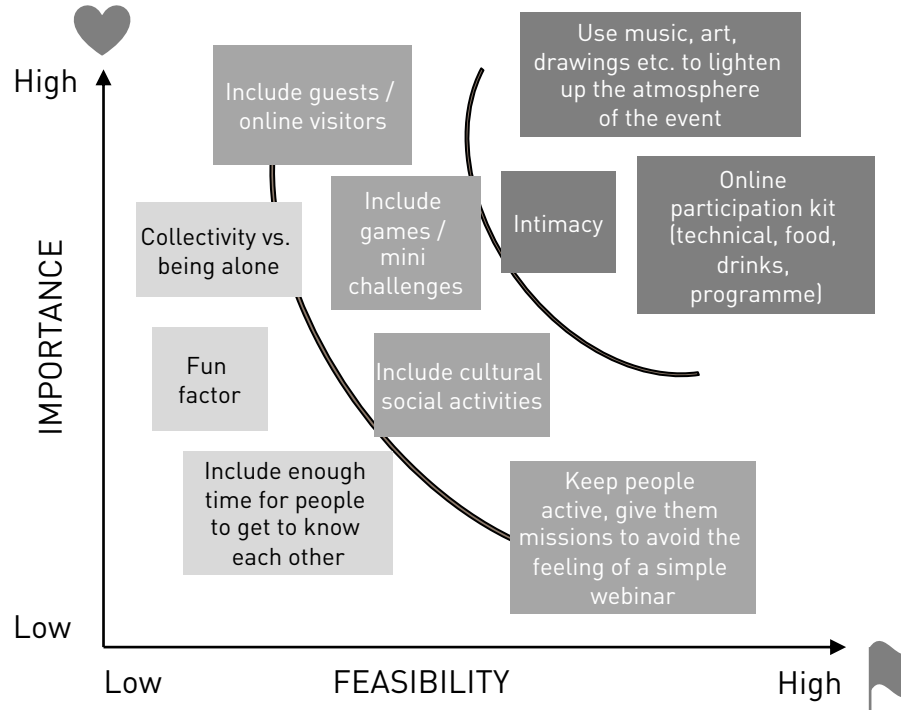
How to reach out to “hard-to-engage” target groups, if they are not connected to the internet?



CHALLENGE 2

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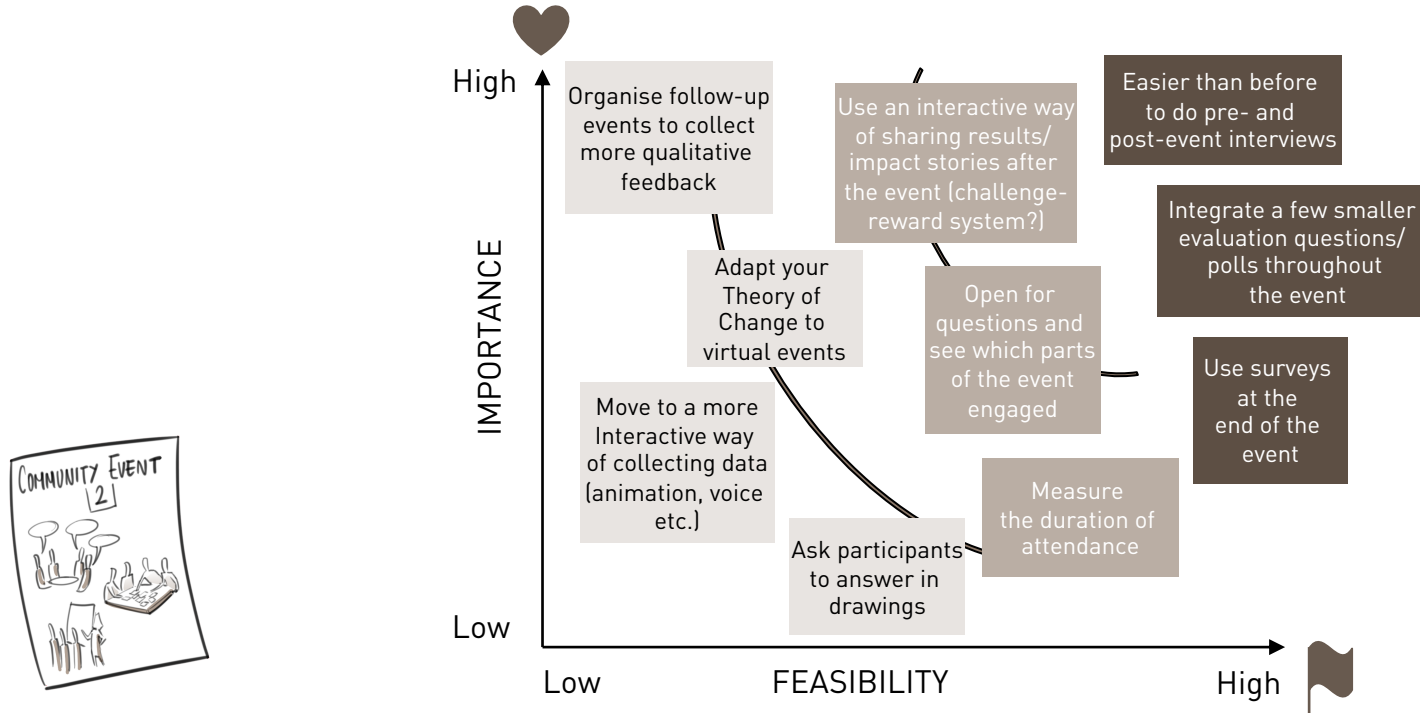
How can we make sure that the outstanding human factors of our project can be 'translated' into an online event?



CHALLENGE 3

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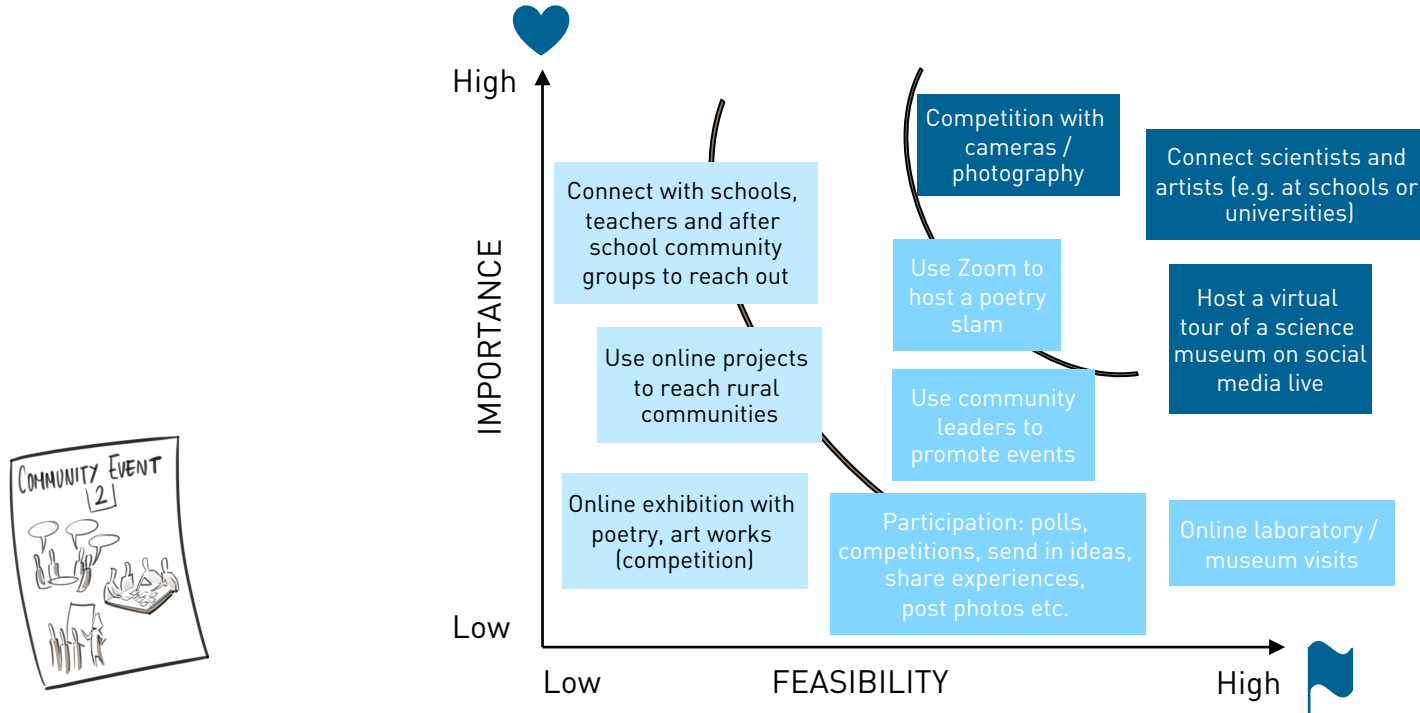
How can we measure participants engagement in a good way way (in virtual science engagement)?



CHALLENGE 4

WHICH ARE
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How can an arts-based approach be used to give voice to audiences that are underserved?



PUBLIC EVENT | 4 MAY

90+ PARTICIPANTS

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VOICES FROM OUR PUBLIC EVENT

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How do you evaluate the effectiveness of online engagements?

The synergy between artists and scientists is a great idea to communicate.

Speaking of „the“ virtual room: I'm wondering why are there only so few examples of successful science memes?

Online engagement requires a combination of creative skills and the employability of the cutting-edge digital solutions that make learning attractive, interactive, social and funny.

I think its key to know how to use science to relate to day to day problems, challenges. That's the beautiful of science it affects our lives on every level so you will never miss an avenue to effectively communicate

It's great to recognise humility and practice that, but I wonder HOW do we listen? We're quite bad at listening as a species; I think we take for granted that it happens.

We do need to be aware that research shows "high" arts (versus community arts") also have a massive barriers to access and disproportionately benefit the most privileged already. Important that science-art does compound these issues to make it even more exclusive.

I'm wondering if we need to change our funding structures and reduce bureaucracy?

Frankly, let's not assume that 'engagement in science' is anywhere near the top of communities priorities. We need to be humble, and be emotionally available yes, listening always but not push our agenda during a crisis!

Maybe we even need to rethink our engagement agenda? Moving away from the STEM focus of many events, entering a more challenge-driven, contextualized approach leading to social Innovation?

The fact that most science engagement funding can „only“ go the researchers/large institutions, says a lot about the power dynamic expected with communities.

PUBLIC EVENT



Partnership with third sector and intermediaries are key - they have already built relationships with communities offline, and can better articulate which needs communities may have.

Voluntary sector are experts at this, and incredibly flexible and resilient and we need to learn from this if we want to support these communities.

Some families have time to engage in fun time-filling activities and some people are very much in survival mode.

What about hybrid formats? Could we combine online and real-life engagement experiences? E.g. by visiting underserved neighborhoods in their courtyards (people joining in from balconies), inviting families to excursions and asking them to submit their experiences online?

True equitable partnership working with communities require flexible funding which allows for the communities to take the lead, and decide for example, what counts as success in the problem, and how to evaluate for this themselves.

**NEXT STOPS FOR FALLING WALLS ENGAGE IN 2020:
AUSTRALIA ARGENTINA BERLIN CANADA**

www.falling-walls.com/engage



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