



Imagining 2050

DELIBERATIVE
FUTURES
TOOLKIT

Toward 'future-oriented' communities and decision-making

INTRODUCTION

TOWARD 'FUTURE-ORIENTED' COMMUNITIES AND DECISION-MAKING

 Alexandra Revez, Gerard Mullally and Brian Ó Gallachóir

Growing levels of uncertainty and concern arising from climate change disruption raise important questions, not least of all, about sustaining democratic decision-making structures, in the face of increasingly fragile, incomplete and unpredictable projections for the future of our society and environment.

In response to this growing uncertainty, we have seen a substantial growth in scenario analyses using a range of pathways, predictive, contingency and foresight modeling tools. The need to further advance and promote future thinking tools is critical for academics, educators, decision makers, community practitioners and activists. Recognising that the positive visions required to move to a low carbon and climate-resilient society must involve the inclusion of many actors, communities and stakeholders, if we are to succeed in 'future-oriented' communities and decision-making. To encourage this multi-stakeholder approach a clearer link to democratic processes is required.



This toolkit offers guidance on futures-thinking tied to more inclusive, equal and reason-based participation processes. The potential of this approach hinges on the importance of considering various and ever evolving preferred future alternatives emerging from politically connected, socially inclusive and self-reflective practices.

BENEFITS OF ADOPTING A FUTURES-THINKING APPROACH

Futures-thinking is a growing field which enhances trust and collective visioning.

There are numerous ways in which futures-thinking can add to our planning and decision-making, these include:



TOOLKIT BACKGROUND AND STRUCTURE

This toolkit includes a series of guiding pieces which offer advice on good practice around engagement and provides guidance for those interested in incorporating different futures-thinking tools into their practice, either individually or as part of their wider process. To support the application of these tools we showcase the work carried out through the Imagining2050 project, including clear examples of how each tool was employed, visual examples and some video links that offer an overview of the process and people involved. We rate the ease of implementation of each tool (as easy, medium or difficult) to indicate relative levels of simplicity/complexity and resource use in employing each tool.

About Imagining2050

Imagining2050 is a research project hosted by the Environmental Research Institute in University College Cork. The research team is diverse and can be characterised as a transdisciplinary consortium, composed of researchers from University College Cork and Queen's University Belfast. The team has collaborated with other projects and partners, including visual engagement consultants from Think Visual and video production consultants from Brianoval. This collaborative effort feeds into the core aim of the project, which is to develop innovative approaches for climate dialogues, using deliberative dialogue to co-construct visions and pathways for a low-carbon and climate resilient society in Ireland for 2050.

The Imagining2050 team adapted and developed several visual and interactive methods to help foster deliberative dialogue processes with a view toward futures visioning and pathways development. The way we employed these tools was designed to enhance the level of reflexivity, depth of enquiry and wealth of observations in order to enable co-creative knowledge to emerge.

Have a look at our Imagining2050 video
www.ucc.ie/en/imagining2050



PROCESS

DELIBERATIVE AND PARTICIPATORY ENGAGEMENT

 Clodagh Harris, John Barry and Alexandra Revez

Brief description

This toolkit draws on participatory and deliberative approaches to engagement.

Participatory democrats emphasise the multiple benefits of wide participation, through inclusion, direct engagement and empowerment. Deliberative democrats, on the other hand, place greater weight on informed, respectful and reason-based discussions.

Both argue for citizens and communities having a more central role in developing responses to real world problems.

Reflecting the need to both widen and deepen participation on climate action, the toolkit's guiding principles include inclusion, equality of voice and considered judgement.



Guiding principles

Inclusion

- Inclusion involves the representation of diverse groups, for example a mix of gender, ages, ethnicity, etc. It also ensures diverse views and perspectives are present.

Equality

- This is concerned with equal voice within the discussions. It is not enough to offer someone a 'place at the table', they need to be guaranteed a voice, respect and consideration once there.

Considered Judgment

- Deliberative processes involve informed, reasoned and respectful discussions that focus on facts, the future and the consideration of the needs of others.
- Participants are invited to explain and justify their preferences on a matter. They are also asked to respectfully consider the differing opinions of others, and to be open to changing their position on an issue if, in the light of new information, they can no longer justify it.
- Participants may also be invited to or wish to share their lived experiences of an issue, or voice their anger at injustice, bringing other perspectives and reactions to bear. All participants should have opportunities to speak and to be listened to with respect.

5 points to consider

To achieve the guiding principles the following issues need to be considered:

1. Participant recruitment choices:

- Random sampling (participants chosen by lot).
- Stratified random sampling (to ensure the gender, age, etc. mix is broadly reflective of wider society). This and random sampling may require a polling company which is costly.
- Open public invitations to all in a community.
- Targeted recruitment to ensure marginalized or underrepresented groups are included.
- A mixture of the above.
- Working with community leaders, civil society groups and so forth if targeting particular groups for inclusion.

2. Identifying the topic for discussion

- The organisers may chose a specific topic.
- The organisers may select a general theme and invite participants to decide on issues within it for further discussion.
- The topic may be selected by the community itself, for example through surveys, focus groups, etc.



3. Framing the discussions

- Recruiting 'expert witness' to present brief accessible information to the participants.
- Recruiting moderators to facilitate roundtable discussions in small groups.
- Deciding on the oversight process, for example a steering group of participants.
- Communicating the engagement's objectives to the participants. What will happen to their proposals, visions, etc?

4. Facilitation Tips

- Organisers may choose to set up an independent advisory group to help advise on the process.
- Resources permitting, the recruitment of professional facilitators to ensure all participants are allowed the opportunity to participate and to be listened to with respect.
- A role for the participants in the programme design, the choice of experts, the decision making rules.
- Traditionally, it was felt that participatory and deliberative processes should strive for consensus decisions. However this can place undue pressure on a group, prevent the inclusion of minority opinions and restrict discussions. Other decision-making options include voting (see pages 44-47 for details).

5. Ease of implementation:

- Difficult



DESIGNING PARTICIPATORY AND DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENTS – OPTIONS

 Clodagh Harris, Alexandra Revez, Niall Dunphy and Geraint Ellis

Brief description

The design and delivery of deliberative democratic innovations have important elements, which need to be considered to ensure inclusive, equal and considered deliberation. To achieve these ideals in practice can be challenging and time-consuming. Different models and designs exist, and the innovation selected depends on needs and context. These choices should be carefully considered, preferably through discussion with an advisory panel of people who have previous experience of developing deliberative engagement strategies.

Some are highlighted below.

	Citizens' Juries	Citizens' Assemblies	Future Workshop	Deliberative Futures workshop
Participants	12-26	100-160	12-25	12-25
No of meetings	4-5 days	20-30 days	1 day	3 days
Selection method	Random selection	Random selection	Open to all + targeting	Open to all + targeting
Activities	Expert presentations + small group deliberation	Expert presentations + small group deliberation	Critique Visioning Implementation	Information Critique Visioning Implementation
Result	Collective position report	Detailed recommendations	Action Plan	Community report + detailed proposals.

Informed by Elstub, S. (2014) and www.involve.co.uk.

'Very informative and thought provoking. I was really pleased to be involved in this process. I see it as good exercise [...], where my input was valued and I would highly recommend this bottom-up approach where citizens are given the opportunity to express their opinions and make suggestions.' Patricia, Athlone.

Highlight of Imagining2050 engagement strategy

Imagining2050 proposes the 'Deliberative Futures Workshop' as an interactive and future focused model for local community engagement (infographic page 14). We propose a three stage process to support communities in developing alternative ways to look and plan for the future.

Stage 1 involves recruiting an inclusive mix of participants and identifying core issues through preliminary engagements, surveys and networking.

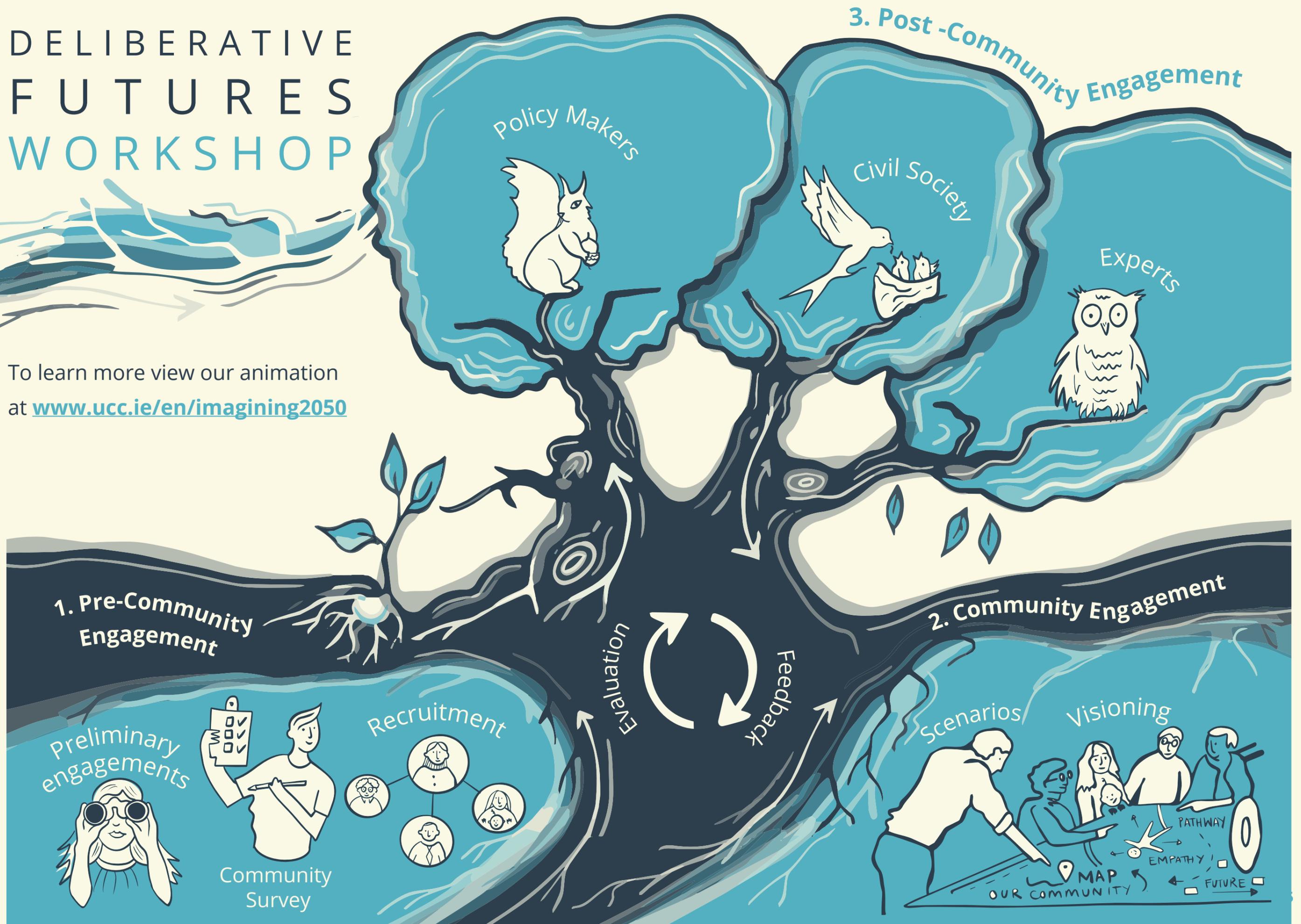
Stage 2 focuses on delivering a series of visioning and scenario building workshops, that include accessible expert presentations in the first part of the process to feed into the critical analysis sessions in which participants reflect on what climate change means to them and for their communities using several visual based techniques.

Stage 3 focuses on sharing the findings from the community workshops with the local community, policy makers, experts and wider civil society.

'Amazed at the amount of high-quality presentations, commitment, level of organisation and attention to detail. The huge effort of the team to make sure it was inclusive and energy and encouragement to make a contribution- It was democratic :) [...] A real feel good and respectful atmosphere and a space to share concerns and make a constructive contribution.' Simon, Ballincollig

DELIBERATIVE FUTURES WORKSHOP

To learn more view our animation
at www.ucc.ie/en/imagining2050



MOVING DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES ONLINE

 Alexandra Revez, Clodagh Harris, Paul Bolger and Evan Boyle

Brief description

E-democracy and e-participation have reshaped and introduced new forms of citizen engagement, opinion forming and policy formation. Some of the most cited positive aspects of these innovations include:

- quicker and enhanced access to information;
- improved interaction with dispersed groups;
- improved interaction with vulnerable and/or marginalised people and communities (for example, people with disabilities).

Yet, evidence of the impact of these innovations in supporting democratic processes is very mixed. Concerns have been raised about the quality of online deliberative instruments, the lack of adequate moderation and the dearth of accountability procedures to help structure online political discussion. It is also the case that the explosion of new media technologies and platforms has added layers of complexity. Emerging evidence from social media communications highlight worrying trends such as:

- misinformation and manipulation;
- cyber-bullying;
- filtered 'echo-chamber' dynamics, among other issues, many of which reinforce existing systemic discrimination (for example, racism, gender discrimination).

These have had wider repercussions for the potential and quality of online deliberative engagements and their content. Finally, online environments can demand extra attention and resources in the development of usable, clear, interactive content, which is moderated so that online participants feel engaged, connected and supported.



Preparing online participatory and deliberative events involves:

1. Setting the Stage (Pre-event preparation)



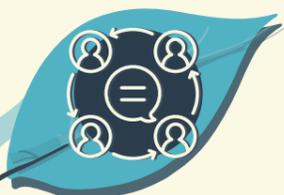
- Give clear instructions to participants on what is required from them at the event.
- Invite participants to set aside time for the event, to participate in a quiet space and to refrain from engaging in other activities.
- Choose experienced facilitators.
- Develop a shorter more spread out programme.
- Allow more time for the process. Group formation and cohesion takes longer in an online environment.
- Online work is tiring for participants so build plenty of breaks into the programme.

2. Information Giving



- Use ice breakers to build rapport.
- Take time at the beginning to develop and agree the 'rules of engagement' / 'netiquette'.
- Use visually rich, appealing and interactive materials.
- Offer a mix of synchronous and asynchronous communication (e.g. live chat, email).

3. Deliberative Elements



- Develop activities based on formal and informal interactions.
- Encourage voice exchange as well as messages
- Offer instruction, guidance and feedback through multiple means.
- Develop a facilitation strategy which considers the following points: facilitation of inclusive dynamics, enforcement and establishment of netiquette, stimulation of discussion, conflict resolution, and moderation of chat comments.



4. Deliberative Interface

- Develop simple, user-friendly tools.
- If possible, provide interface training and guidance.
- Ensure participants have adequate access to chosen interface.
- Consider accessibility, usability and safety.
- Study safety protocols and ensure adequate data management practices.
- Break-out rooms, quiet rooms and private chats should be built into the interface and used frequently.

5. Facilitation Tips



- Start with a smaller set of activities and gradually build on to something bigger.
- Additional resources may be required to ensure participants have access to the necessary devices and infrastructure.
- Organise pre-event sessions to train participants. Training should include an overview of interactive functions, basic problem solving and contact details for technical support.
- The co-development of a 'netiquette' strategy with participants which pre-establishes mechanisms to sustain and reinforce respectful participation within group deliberations and interactions.
- The management of the meeting and the break-out rooms should be done by someone other than the facilitator.

6. Ease of implementation:

- Difficult



VISIONING AND SCENARIO TOOLS



SENSE-MAKING

 Connor McGookin, Evan Boyle and Alexandra Revez

Brief description

Sense-making techniques can be used to explore how people come to make sense of complex and unfamiliar issues such as climate change. It is a means to grasp group reasoning around a particular topic, formed in support of new, future-oriented and less familiar issues. In this context the identification of anchors whereby meaning is attached to more concrete and tangible objects or experiences is useful to consider in more detail, suggesting prevailing ideas, and established associations on a given issue.

Overall, the benefits of this technique include:

- Exploring public perceptions, opinions and representations of unfamiliar issues;
- Finding prevailing anchors that sustain meaning, to examine their role as empowering or disempowering anchors for action;
- Anticipating emerging controversies or tensions from a local, social or ethical standpoint;
- Considering knowledge gaps as well as trust in, and depth of interaction with existing information sources;
- Scrutinising changes of meaning overtime and scanning the horizon for short and long-term trends.
- Identifying issues that reinforce existing systemic discrimination (for example, racism, gender discrimination and so forth).



Method

This is a technique that can be employed to complement larger deliberative forums both face-to-face and using online platforms. The exercise takes 30 to 45 minutes. The core idea is to elicit people to brainstorm and comment about the meanings of a particular issue in an interactive manner, both words and images can be used to convey meaning. The process includes:

1. On a table, prepare a range of images such as cut-outs from magazines postcards, or photos. These should cover a wide variety of cultures, landscapes and human emotions. Participants can also be invited to bring images along;
2. Ask the participants to choose a picture that depicts their priorities or concerns.
3. In groups, discuss the choice of picture and reasoning behind it.
4. Remaining in the same groups put the pictures aside and discuss the meaning of climate change. This can be framed around personal, community or wider impacts. During the discussion, notetakers should gather meanings on a large sheet, clustering similar meanings together.
5. Tying the two pieces together, discuss in the groups how the impacts suggested will affect the priorities and concerns previously outlined.
6. Discuss and deliberate what insights emerged during the activity.

Materials needed:

- Markers, pens, large sheets of paper and stickynotes. For the online live cloud application (see alternative process), a large screen projector and use of individual smart phones is suggested, at least one device per small group but if technology is not readily available more time can be allocated to the exercise to allow everyone to share the devices available. A facilitator in this instance can be used to input individual contributions.

Facilitation Tips:

- This is a simple yet effective exercise which requires minimal support and facilitation. The idea of this process is to encourage free brainstorming. Minor support tasks may entail helping with any technical or other difficulties that arise. Notetaking of discussions and interactions in the room while doing the exercise is useful as it offers the opportunity to record more detailed information which will support further analysis of the exercise.

Ease of implementation:

- Easy

Imagining2050 examples of use

- As part of the Imagining2050 project sense-making techniques were used to help frame the discussion around the meaning of climate change and possible drivers for change. Also to identify anchors and common representations around impacts, scale and possible associations with other more familiar issues.

Alternative process

- A live wordcloud application, such as Mentimeter, offers a great sense-making process for both off and online environments. This technique requires asking people to collectively brainstorm and input their words about meanings associated with a given issue into the word cloud app. As people input their words the live app generates an infographic, aggregating and enlarging the more popular words in real time. This allows the group to see the richness of ideas, detect patterns, see contrasting viewpoints and identify potential controversial insights. Some time should be dedicated to discuss highlights and key learnings from the exercise.

EMPATHY MAPPING

 Becky Hatchett, Naomi Fein and Alexandra Revez

Brief description

An Empathy Map is a great human centred tool for moving us beyond our own world view. Empathy mapping is a tool with multiple functions and can be used to develop a targeted marketing and communication campaign, product development, service design, counselling and teaching. Possible benefits of using this tool include:

- Drawing out unexpected insights about your audience, community or users;
- Conflict/crisis resolution and development of shared visions; by creating empathy towards others we can broaden our individual perspective, as well as shape and transform societies;
- Synthesise, categorise and make sense of existing knowledge or qualitative research (research notes, survey answers, user-interview transcripts);
- Discovering gaps in your current knowledge and identifying the types of research needed to address it. For example, a sparse empathy map can indicate a need for more research.;
- Understand and empathize with others in your ecosystem, helping you improve your overall relationships and your results.



Method

1. Identify different 'citizens' (gender, age, job, location, disability, economic status, etc).
2. Discuss who might be most affected by climate change. Making doodles of different 'citizens' at this stage can be useful.
3. Ask each group to draw an outline of a citizen (best at larger scale).
4. Ask each group to choose a citizen to map. Each group creates a character including their hopes, fears, priorities, behaviours, influences, agency and ability to influence, interests, climate concerns, etc.
5. Ask each group to present their citizens, inviting others to review and add.
6. Discuss and deliberate what insights became present during this activity.

Materials needed:

- Markers, pens, large sheets of paper and sticky notes.

Facilitation Tips:

- This process includes the use of doodling and it starts with individual sketches of different citizens. Some people may be reluctant to doodle at first and facilitators should feel free to support people by drawing for them if required. Other alternatives include having a template made available or relying on text and description if needed. A review and discussion usually follow initial identification of target groups or individuals. To expand on the exercise a larger doodle of each target group or individual is desirable, so as to consider a wider range of elements in more detail and promote synergy of conversation, shared learning and insights at group level.

Ease of implementation:

- Medium

Imagining2050 examples of use

- As part of the Imagining2050 project empathy mapping was used to help breakdown key issues and future challenges associated with climate change from the perspective of different demographics within the community.



STORY BOARDING

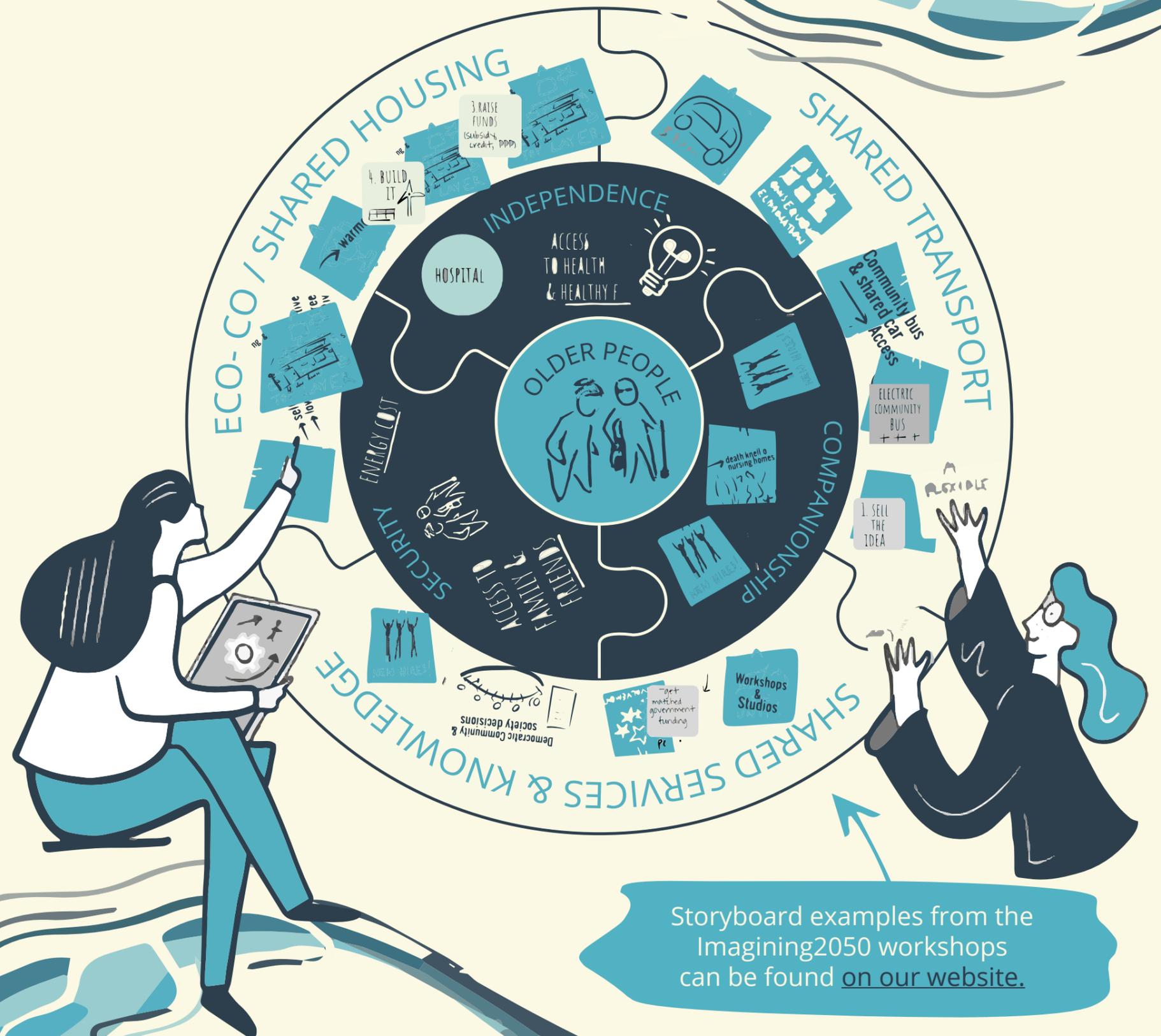
 Alexandra Revez, Becky Hatchett and Fionn Rogan

Brief description

Storyboarding has a long history, with professionals producing comics and films. It was originally developed as an early-stage low fidelity prototyping technique which was used to refine and develop ideas. It is an interactive process comprising a series of drawings or sketches and text that tell a story. The joint use of images and text is mutually supportive in sharing ideas and communicating meaning. The presence of a simple visual language allows for greater understanding which transcends common cultural and language barriers. Some common elements present in the use of storyboarding involve: a sequence of panels, a representation of the passage of time, inclusion of people and inclusion of text. It is seen as a useful technique to explore user system interactions and development of new technologies and practices in a manner which considers setting, points of view, processes of change and impacts toward the development of future-oriented scenarios.

Different uses include:

- Breakdown a vision into smaller and more detailed elements;
- Explore user system interactions;
- Develop new technologies and practices;
- Develop context rich future-oriented scenarios.



Storyboard examples from the Imagining2050 workshops can be found [on our website](#).

Method

The methodology for storyboarding is flexible and can be adapted to fit into specific needs and objectives. When working with a group new to storyboarding, it is useful to develop a template, considering for example the number of panels needed and their sequencing. The most common template would be a horizontal comic-strip. A simple variation could include a sequence of three strips looking at past-present-future.

The exercise takes approximately 60 minutes to complete, including:

- Introducing the activity, providing a few basic drawing exercises as necessary. We recommend [Visual Thinking basics by Dave Grey](#).
- Working with the group to develop character/s, a setting, and scenario.
- Asking participants to develop a sequence of scenes that show the scenario or pathway developing from start to finish. (Combining text with quick sketches brings the story to life).
- Sharing the stories created with the wider group, reminding everyone that the goal is not to judge drawing ability, but to communicate an idea, concern or scenario in step by step detail.

Materials needed:

- Pre-printed storyboard template (larger A1 or A0 size is ideal to enable group collaboration).
- Paper of other sizes A4-A2 for notes and activities.
- Range of multicoloured pens, biro, pencils, sharpies.
- Post-its (different colours and sizes).
- Image cards, magazines and newspapers (for inspiration and cutouts).
- Scissors.
- Sello-tape.

Facilitation Tips:

- If working with a larger group it is a good idea to divide into smaller groups of up to three or four participants, giving each group a blank template.
- All drawing materials should be set beside each template on a spacious table.
- To offer timely and supportive guidance in the development of this exercise, it is beneficial to have an experienced facilitator leading the exercise and a support facilitator per group.
- Facilitators should note that the exercise does not require high level skills in drawing, however to make the exercise easier for everyone the lead facilitator should offer some [basic drawing exercises](#) to ease participants into the drawing process.
- Different materials, including image cards and post-it notes can help the collaborative development of ideas and the moving/removing of different elements within the template.
- When working with someone who has difficulties with this form of interaction (due to either a disability or lack of confidence) alternatives should be provided, for example text or discussion only formats or use of image cards.

Ease of implementation:

- Medium

Imagining2050 examples of use

- The Imagining2050 template incorporated three layers, an inner circle identified a chosen citizen, the second circle drew out key concerns for this citizen in relation to climate change. The outer circle storyboarded possible actions that could address the concerns and pathways to achieve these actions.

COMMUNITY MAPPING

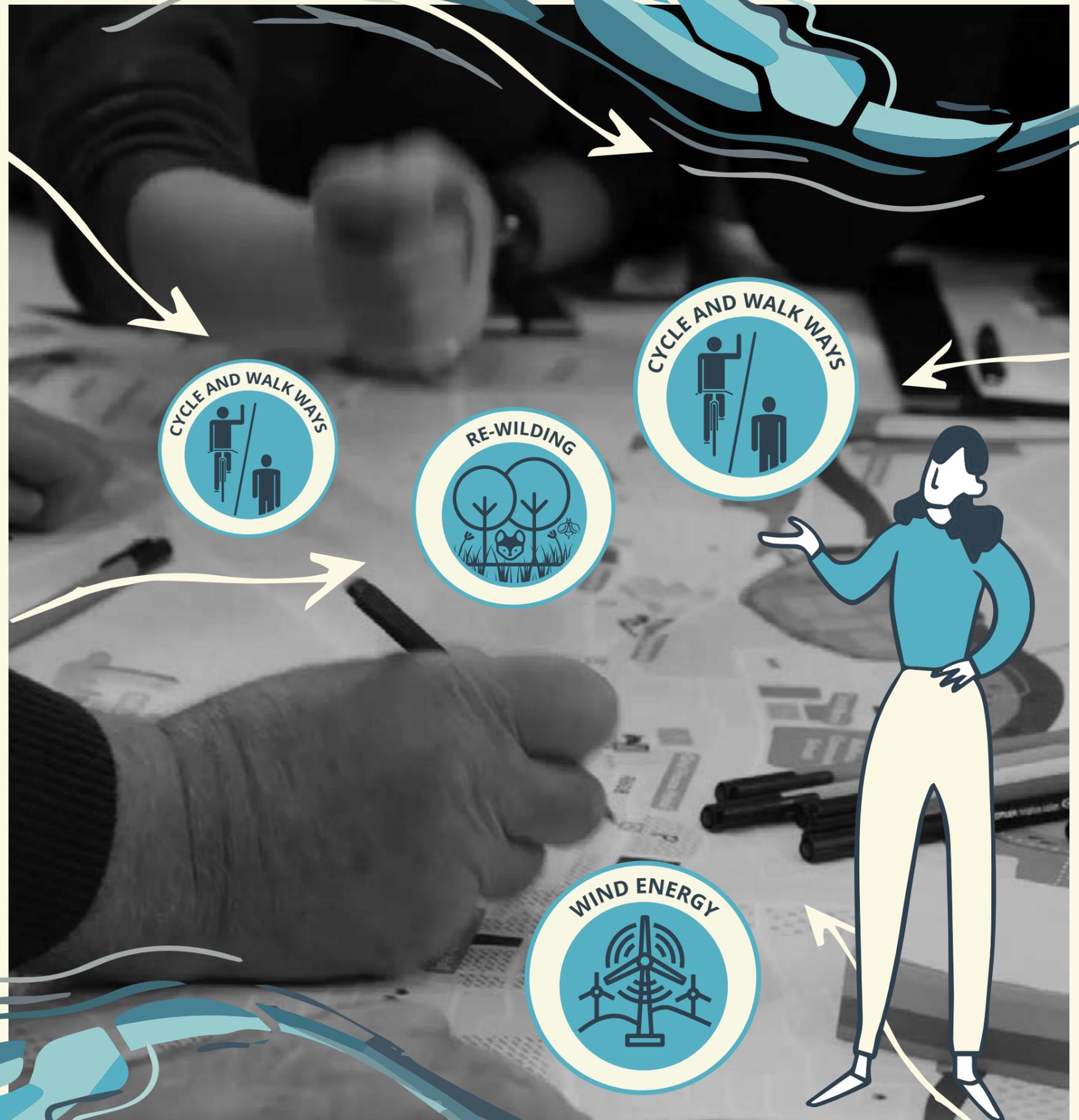
 Barry O'Dwyer, Amy Dozier, Stephen Flood and Gerard Mullally

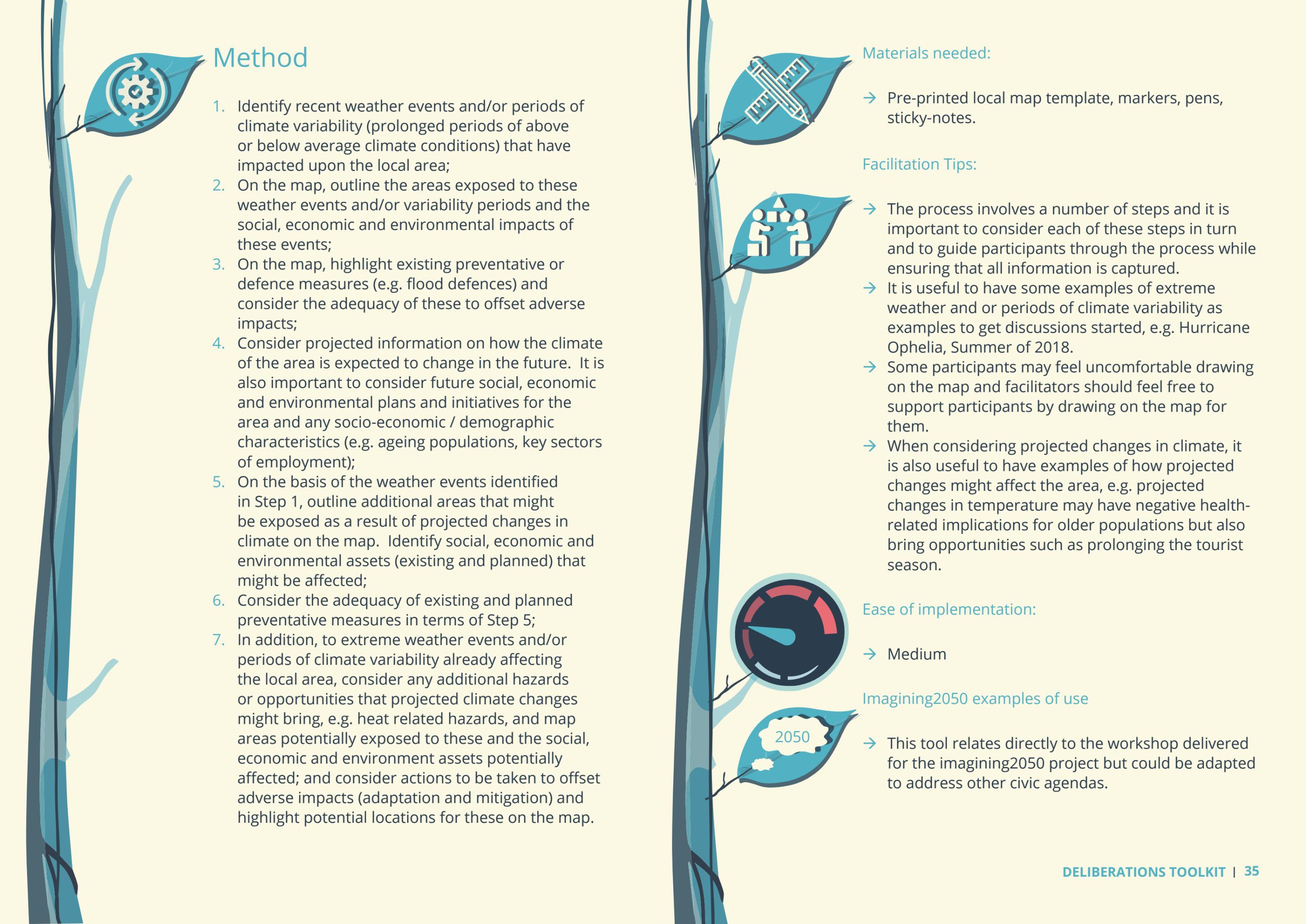
Brief description

Integrating scientific knowledge and community knowledge and preferences is an essential consideration in managing climate challenges. Participatory community mapping is a relatively quick and accessible approach to inform spatially explicit climate change management at the local scale. Participatory community mapping is used as part of participatory research as well as in planning and management initiatives on a local scale. Participatory community maps provide a visual representation of what a community perceives as “its place” and the significant features within it. For the purposes of planning for climate action, participatory community mapping provides a means for communities to share their knowledge about the past, present and future impacts of climate change. This mapping approach bridges the gap between top-down scientific information and community-based understanding of vulnerability and risk, and in doing so identifies a range of potential solutions.

Different uses include:

- Engaging communities in planning for climate action;
- Raising awareness about ongoing and potential future climate change issues;
- Developing a common understanding of climate change risks;
- Providing a platform to explore and deliberate on potential solutions; and
- Empowering local communities.





Method

1. Identify recent weather events and/or periods of climate variability (prolonged periods of above or below average climate conditions) that have impacted upon the local area;
2. On the map, outline the areas exposed to these weather events and/or variability periods and the social, economic and environmental impacts of these events;
3. On the map, highlight existing preventative or defence measures (e.g. flood defences) and consider the adequacy of these to offset adverse impacts;
4. Consider projected information on how the climate of the area is expected to change in the future. It is also important to consider future social, economic and environmental plans and initiatives for the area and any socio-economic / demographic characteristics (e.g. ageing populations, key sectors of employment);
5. On the basis of the weather events identified in Step 1, outline additional areas that might be exposed as a result of projected changes in climate on the map. Identify social, economic and environmental assets (existing and planned) that might be affected;
6. Consider the adequacy of existing and planned preventative measures in terms of Step 5;
7. In addition, to extreme weather events and/or periods of climate variability already affecting the local area, consider any additional hazards or opportunities that projected climate changes might bring, e.g. heat related hazards, and map areas potentially exposed to these and the social, economic and environment assets potentially affected; and consider actions to be taken to offset adverse impacts (adaptation and mitigation) and highlight potential locations for these on the map.

Materials needed:

- Pre-printed local map template, markers, pens, sticky-notes.

Facilitation Tips:

- The process involves a number of steps and it is important to consider each of these steps in turn and to guide participants through the process while ensuring that all information is captured.
- It is useful to have some examples of extreme weather and or periods of climate variability as examples to get discussions started, e.g. Hurricane Ophelia, Summer of 2018.
- Some participants may feel uncomfortable drawing on the map and facilitators should feel free to support participants by drawing on the map for them.
- When considering projected changes in climate, it is also useful to have examples of how projected changes might affect the area, e.g. projected changes in temperature may have negative health-related implications for older populations but also bring opportunities such as prolonging the tourist season.

Ease of implementation:

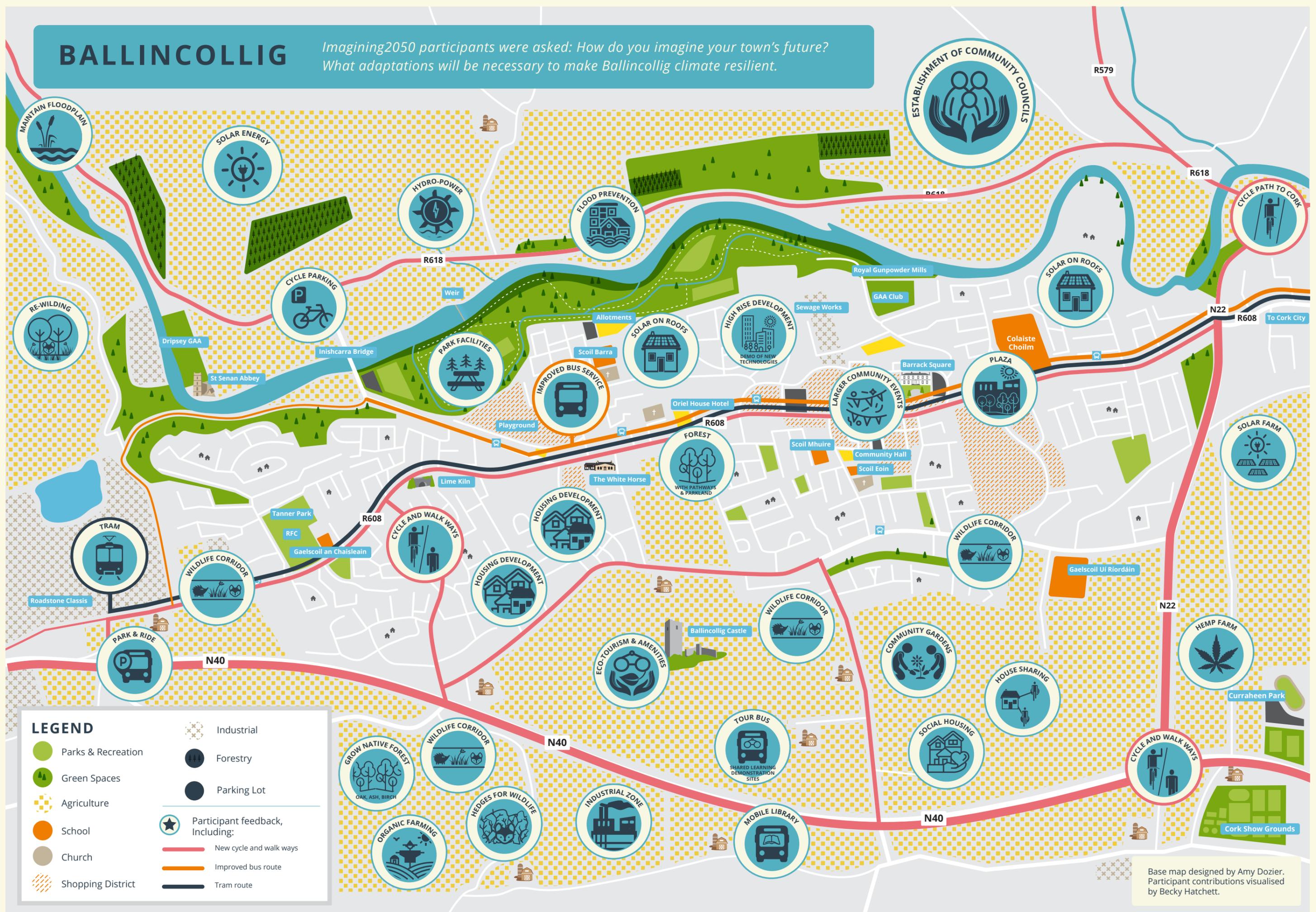
- Medium

Imagining2050 examples of use

- This tool relates directly to the workshop delivered for the imagining2050 project but could be adapted to address other civic agendas.

BALLINCOLLIG

Imaging2050 participants were asked: How do you imagine your town's future? What adaptations will be necessary to make Ballincollig climate resilient.



LEGEND

	Parks & Recreation		Industrial
	Green Spaces		Forestry
	Agriculture		Parking Lot
	School		Participant feedback, Including:
	Church		New cycle and walk ways
	Shopping District		Improved bus route
			Tram route

Base map designed by Amy Dozier. Participant contributions visualised by Becky Hatchett.

ATHLONE

Imagining2050 participants were asked: How do you imagine your town's future? What adaptations will be necessary to make Athlone climate resilient.



SOLAR ON ROOFS

HIGH DENSITY DEVELOPMENT

SITES FOR NEW HOUSING

PLANT MORE TREES

DISTRICT HEATING

CLONBRUSK WEST

TWO MILE ROUND

N6

N55

WALK WAY FROM HODSON PAV

TRANSPORTATION HUB

PARK & RIDE

CAR-FREE CENTRE

FLOOD PUMP

STORM/FOUL WATER SEPARATION

MORE TRAIN CARRIAGES

GREENWAY SHELTER

FAMILY FRIENDLY CYCLING

SOCIAL HOUSING

RETROFITS

BUSHFIELD

N6 to M6

TO GALWAY

LINK GREENWAY TO MONKS LANE

BAYLOUGH

Integrated flood management catchment approach

PARK & RIDE

URBAN REGENERATION

RECLAIM MARKET SQUARE

BIKE STANDS

Westmeath County Council

Town Centre

St. Mary's

Athlone Community College

N6 M6

TO DUBLIN

SPACE FOR WILDLIFE

EXTENDED CYCLEWAYS

RECOVERY OF MEADOW

Recovery of natural flood plain

HYDROPOWER

Reinstate trees and hedges to improve water infiltration

HIGH DENSITY DEVELOPMENT

Permeable surfaces along flood plain

NEW HOSPITAL

BONAVALLEY

IMPROVED BUS SERVICE

Athlone Institute of Technology

CLONMACNOISE

Towards Clonmacnoise and Carrickynaghtan Bog

CARRICKYNAGHTAN BOG
NATURAL HERITAGE AREA

Improve accessibility for families at risk of flooding

SPACE FOR WILDLIFE

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Golden Island

Willow Park Housing Estate

N52

Base map designed by Amy Dozier. Participant contributions visualised by Becky Hatchett.

AUDIENCE POLLS

 Fionn Rogan and James Glynn

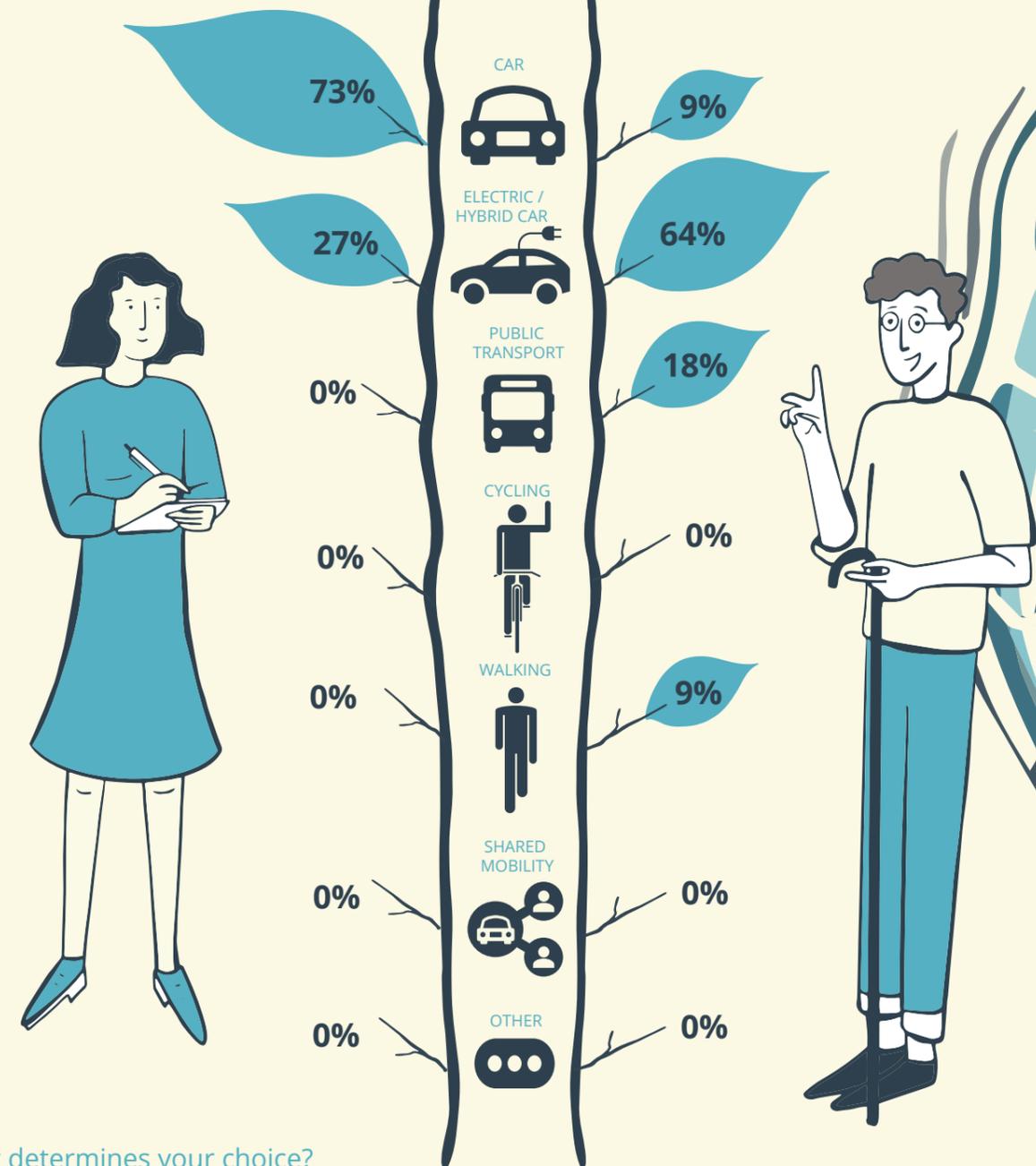
Brief description

Audience polls can be a powerful tool to open up discussion around future energy choices. Although everyone uses energy (electricity, heat, transport), energy transitions are often framed as macro events over long time-scales in which large-scale technology switching issues dominate. In this framing, the link between the energy transition, people's daily lives and decision-making is obfuscated or simply framed as a technology diffusion problem, which typically closes down discussion to a limited number of topics such as barriers and costs. This exercise is designed to make clearer the link between macro energy transition issues and everyday energy decisions, which can open up discussion about a fuller diversity of future energy choices. The exercise engages the audience to think about the implications of their individual decisions on collective or common good goals and what individual decisions mean in the context of a group preference which might or might not align with their own personal preference.

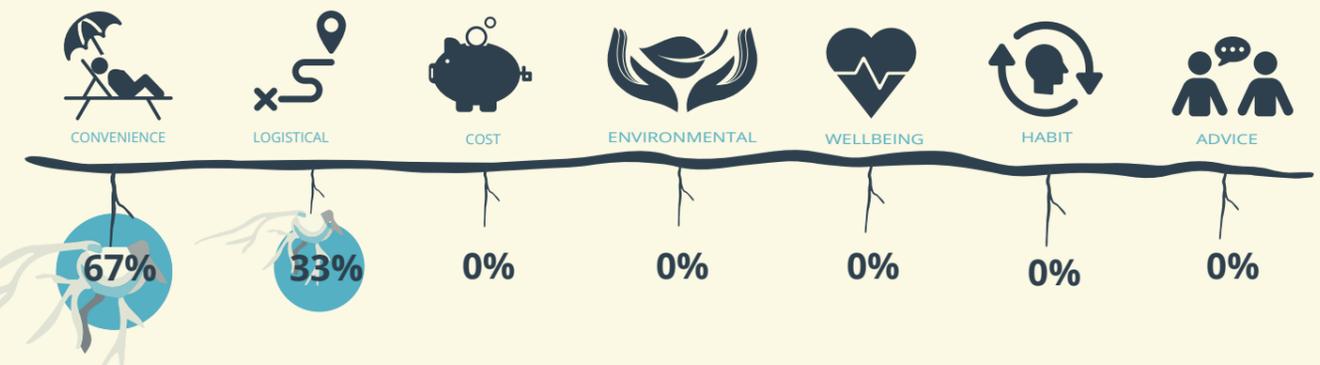
A series of questions are prepared about energy practices and choices at present and in 10 years time, which are asked and answered via an audience engagement smart phone app (Slido was used, but options abound) with the results displayed on a presentation screen where the audience can see the results of the group vote in real time. The facilitator should lead and encourage discussion on the themes that emerge, e.g. comparison with national average, reasons behind preferences, implications of switching rates on total energy/emissions, etc. The facilitator should ensure a diversity of voices participate and that the audience engages with each other as much as with the facilitator.

How do you commute now?

How will you commute in 10 years?



What determines your choice?





Method

The following example worked well but group-appropriate variations are encouraged:

→ **Question 1**

How do you commute now?

Car (petrol or diesel); Car (hybrid or electric); Cycling; Public Transport; Walking; Other.

→ **Question 2**

How will you commute in 10 years?

Car (petrol or diesel); Car (hybrid or electric); Cycling; Public Transport; Walking; Other.

→ **Question 3**

What determines your choice?

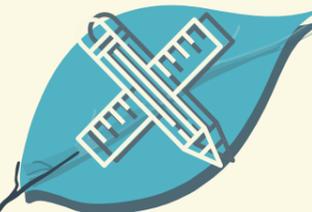
Cost, Convenience (e.g. time), Environment impact, Personal well-being (e.g. health, social), Logistical needs, Habit, Advice or recommendations (e.g. from government, colleagues, family, friends).

Other questions that could be posed to the audience (without using the app) to stimulate discussion:

- ***How long before you would make a different decision?***
- ***What did you feel you lacked if you decided to do nothing: information, money?***
- ***What would make you change your decision?***
- ***What are long-term implications of your decision?***

Questions on other topics that could be asked:

- ***What's the energy efficiency (e.g. BER) of your home now and in the future?***
- ***How do you make decisions about your electricity supplier? E.g. cost, environment, both, never think about it, etc.***



Materials needed:

- Audience engagement app, audience smart phones (organisers can help audience members who aren't equipped), overhead projector.



Facilitation Tips:

- The value of the exercise is in revealing diversity, exploring trade-offs, understanding implications of preferences and assumptions. Unintended consequences should be explored (e.g. does a stated preference for electric vehicles lead to less walking with associated health impacts?). Is there consistency between what motivates current decisions and stated future decisions? Is there consistency between personal private preference and collective commons norms? Sufficient time should be given to deliberation since participants often re-evaluate their preferences in light of group view or discussion. It's also possible that question-options will be partial and that the audience will volunteer extra options, which the facilitator should encourage. In addition, the Slido tool (as used here) can automatically generate an event report based on the levels of interaction via the app.



Ease of implementation:

- Medium

DEVELOPING RECOMMENDATIONS – THE BALLOT PAPER

 Clodagh Harris, Alexandra Revez, Edmond Byrne, Niall Dunphy

Brief description

A variety of methods may be used to decide final recommendations, reports, action plans and so forth. These may include:

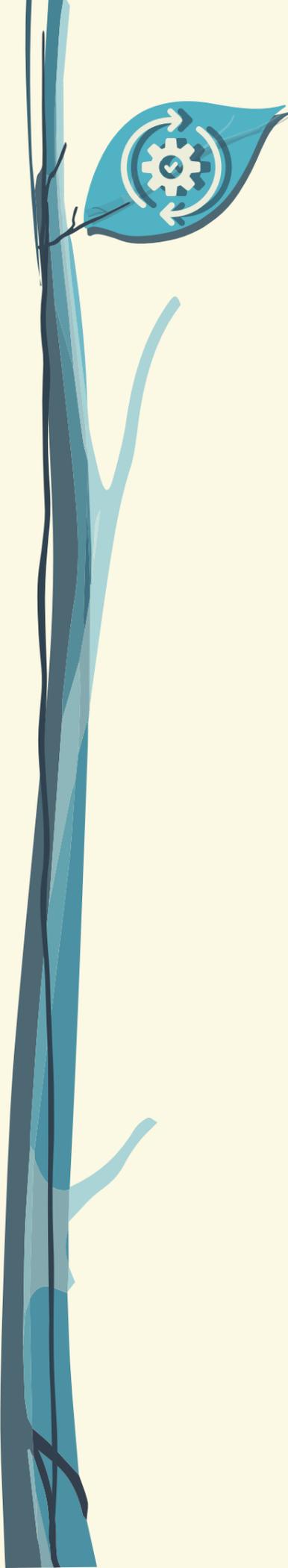
1. The development of a collective report involving consensus decision making and/or voting (often used in a Citizens’ Jury process).
2. Citizens’ Assemblies by virtue of their size and duration tend to use individual voting to develop their detailed recommendations. However, some have opted for a consensus approach.
3. Future workshops may culminate in the development of an action plan employing consensus methods, while others work to collect ideas and/or visions alone.
4. In some cases, questionnaires have been circulated to participants to anonymously gather their opinions on the vision statements that have stemmed from the workshops.

Ideally, whatever the method used, it is agreed by participants at the beginning of the process. A group may opt for consensus or choose to vote on an agreed range of options. Recognizing that consensus could exclude minority views and limit the openness of the discussions, the Imagining 2050 community engagements used ballot papers to decide their final recommendations. These recommendations were included in the final report which also contained visuals from the empathy mapping, the community maps and participant feedback (outlined in the next section).

Example of Imagining 2050 ballot paper question:

Question 9: A key initiative for Ballincollig in the next 10 years	Rank in order of your preference (1, 2, 3...)
Zoning land for energy and community projects	
Power purchase contract for Ballincollig (microgeneration, feed-in tariff)	
Food growing initiatives (community gardens and allotments, community supported agriculture garden)	
Improved bus transport system	
Fleets of small bus carriers	
Segregated cycling routes	
Carbon neutral agriculture	
Community-led housing projects	
Park and Ride (East and West of Ballincollig, with shared mobility facilities and EV points)	
Pedestrianised town centre	
Set-up of local energy co-op	
<hr/>	
Result	





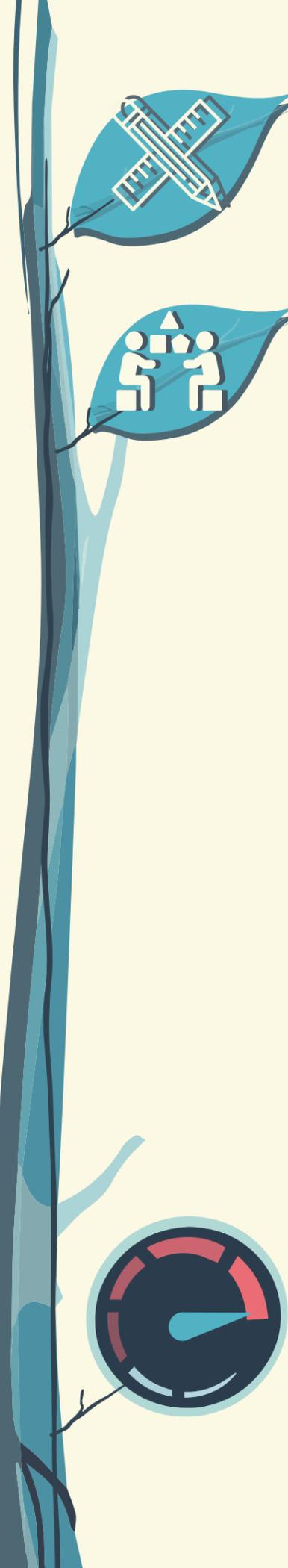
Method

The Ballot Paper voting process used during the Imagining2050 workshops was informed by the Irish Citizens' Assembly process (2016-2018). Materials and discussion notes from Imagining2050 weekend 1 informed the questions on the draft ballot paper presented in weekend 2. The process included assessment and interaction with expert evidence. This was followed by collective deliberations and appraisal of the evidence presented. The process continued with participants being asked to vote on a range of options (in some questions they were asked to choose only 1 option, others asked them to range their preferences). The ballots were conducted privately/secretly to ensure confidentiality, thereby giving everyone involved an equal say in the group's output.

Key Steps:

- Draft ballot papers were prepared by the Imagining2050 team in advance of each community's final meeting;
- On the Saturday evening of weekend 2, the organisers, presenters and note takers convened to amend the draft ballot paper to reflect the group's discussion on that day;
- On the Sunday morning of weekend 2, the group were presented with the draft paper and asked to review and amend it (allow approx. 60 minutes for group deliberation over the draft ballot paper);
- Once the final paper was agreed, the members were asked to complete it privately and to place it in a ballot box (approx. 15 minutes);
- When all the completed ballot papers were collected, they were counted in full view (if the members so wished to observe) of the group and preliminary results returned to the group (allow approx. 15 minutes).

The recommendations are included in a final report.



Materials needed:

- Copies of Draft Ballot Papers (with briefing note), pens, paper, ballot box, ballot papers.

Facilitation Tips:

- Have a copy of the ballot paper on a large screen so it is visible to all.
- Read through it question by question.
- Ensure each individual also has a copy of the draft ballot paper.
- Allow people sufficient time to read it and to discuss in small groups.
- Ensure everyone is invited to contribute.
- If possible, make agreed changes to the paper on the screen so all can see what they look like and to confirm the feedback is fully understood by all.
- Agree the ballot paper.
- Circulate the final ballot paper to each participant
- Ask the participants to complete their ballot paper – allow sufficient time and private space for this.
- Invite participants to place their folded ballot paper in the 'ballot' box (this can be any suitably sized container).
- A member of the organizing team empties the box in front of the participants and counts the ballots. The participants may choose to observe this process.
- Ideally the count result should be relayed back to the participants at the end of the day's proceedings.



Ease of implementation:

- Difficult

PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION

 Paul Bolger, Edmond Byrne and Gerard Mullally

Brief description

The aim of the Participatory Evaluation method can be twofold. The first aim is to gather the views and perceptions of how the workshop has affected the participants in relation to climate action and their future; the second aim is to assess which tools the participants found individually and collectively useful and valuable in terms of exploring their perceptions and views on climate action. In this sense the method is assessing both the process and the outcome. If the evaluation is carried out in a systematic way it will inform future decisions on workshop organisation and focus.

The evaluation should be seen as part of the toolkit itself and sufficient time should be built into the workshop programme for it (ideally not a questionnaire left on the table as people are leaving).

Three different methods are proposed. The first method (Feedback Board) is done alone, is non-prescriptive, is used throughout the workshop, and is anonymous. The second technique involves open discussion on how the workshop has prompted changes of attitude towards climate future pathways and action. The third method is part of the final workshop evaluation and uses a questionnaire evaluation focused on the deliberative process as well as more practical organisational components.

Start with the end in mind.

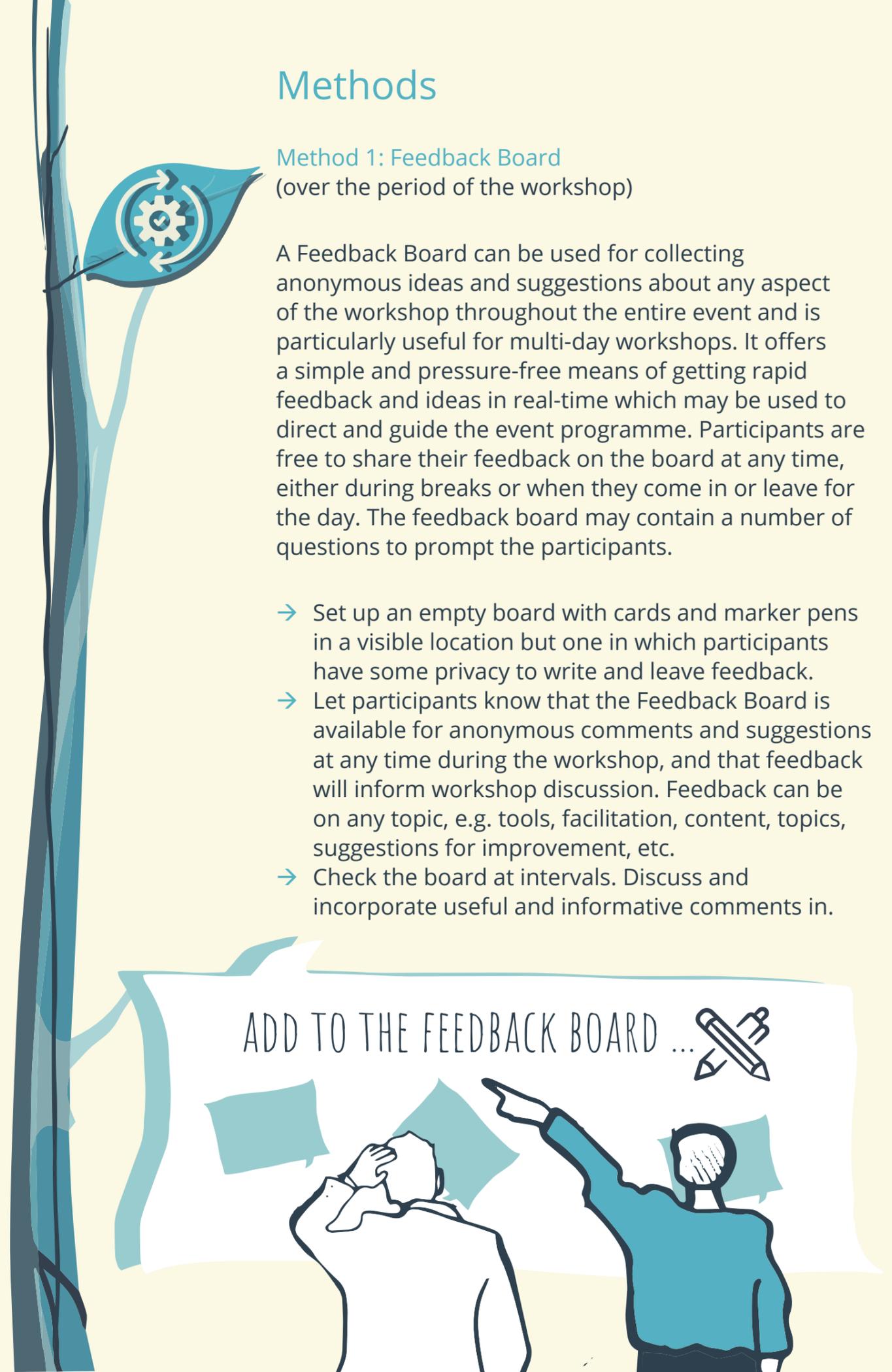
Establishing your evaluation questions and processes before selecting the tools and developing your workshops is important. It will give you, your participants and your facilitation team a clear understanding of your objectives and purpose.

Methods

Method 1: Feedback Board (over the period of the workshop)

A Feedback Board can be used for collecting anonymous ideas and suggestions about any aspect of the workshop throughout the entire event and is particularly useful for multi-day workshops. It offers a simple and pressure-free means of getting rapid feedback and ideas in real-time which may be used to direct and guide the event programme. Participants are free to share their feedback on the board at any time, either during breaks or when they come in or leave for the day. The feedback board may contain a number of questions to prompt the participants.

- Set up an empty board with cards and marker pens in a visible location but one in which participants have some privacy to write and leave feedback.
- Let participants know that the Feedback Board is available for anonymous comments and suggestions at any time during the workshop, and that feedback will inform workshop discussion. Feedback can be on any topic, e.g. tools, facilitation, content, topics, suggestions for improvement, etc.
- Check the board at intervals. Discuss and incorporate useful and informative comments in.





Method 2 Open-ended evaluation (15-20 mins)

This method evaluates how the workshop has been perceived and evaluated by the participants. The evaluation should be held at the end of the process and it should encourage discussion in an active way opening the door for dialogue. It offers an informal and dynamic way to get feedback and can increase the quantity and quality of feedback received compared to written methods.

- To enable conversation, two to three open-ended questions should be posed to participants.
- Questions should focus on what ways the workshop has enabled new insights, what expectations it has generated, and what different measures of success participants attach to their participation and the process.
- Ask participants to reflect individually on these issues, allowing enough time for reflection.
- Encourage wider group deliberations on reflections offered.
- Make detailed notes of this open evaluation process to feed into your analysis of the workshop.

Open-ended evaluation occurs as an emergent process where participants themselves name relevant criteria. This is a valuable opportunity to explore a diversity of ideas and measures driven by individual wants and needs rather than the needs of the organisers.

Relating to all three evaluation methods:

Ease of implementation:

- Easy



Method 3 Questionnaire on process (15-20 mins)

To evaluate how the deliberative process was experienced by different participants several relevant process questions should be included in an anonymous questionnaire to allow the organisers to assess if people felt included and engaged at the workshop.

Questions include:

- If participants felt they had equal opportunities to voice their perspectives, if there was relevant and insightful information provided to enable deeper discussion, if the dialogue dynamic allowed for open and respectful exchange, if the tools and activities were engaging and inclusive, and if people felt motivated to continue further dialogue after the workshop.
- Some questions with respect the more practical components of the workshop should also be included such as ease of access, information and communication with organisers, food choices, etc.

This method is carried out towards the end of the workshop to allow participants to reflect on the various tools deployed and their value in helping them to explore different aspects of climate change. Enough time should be allowed to complete the questionnaire and an open comments box should be included to allow for any further comments.

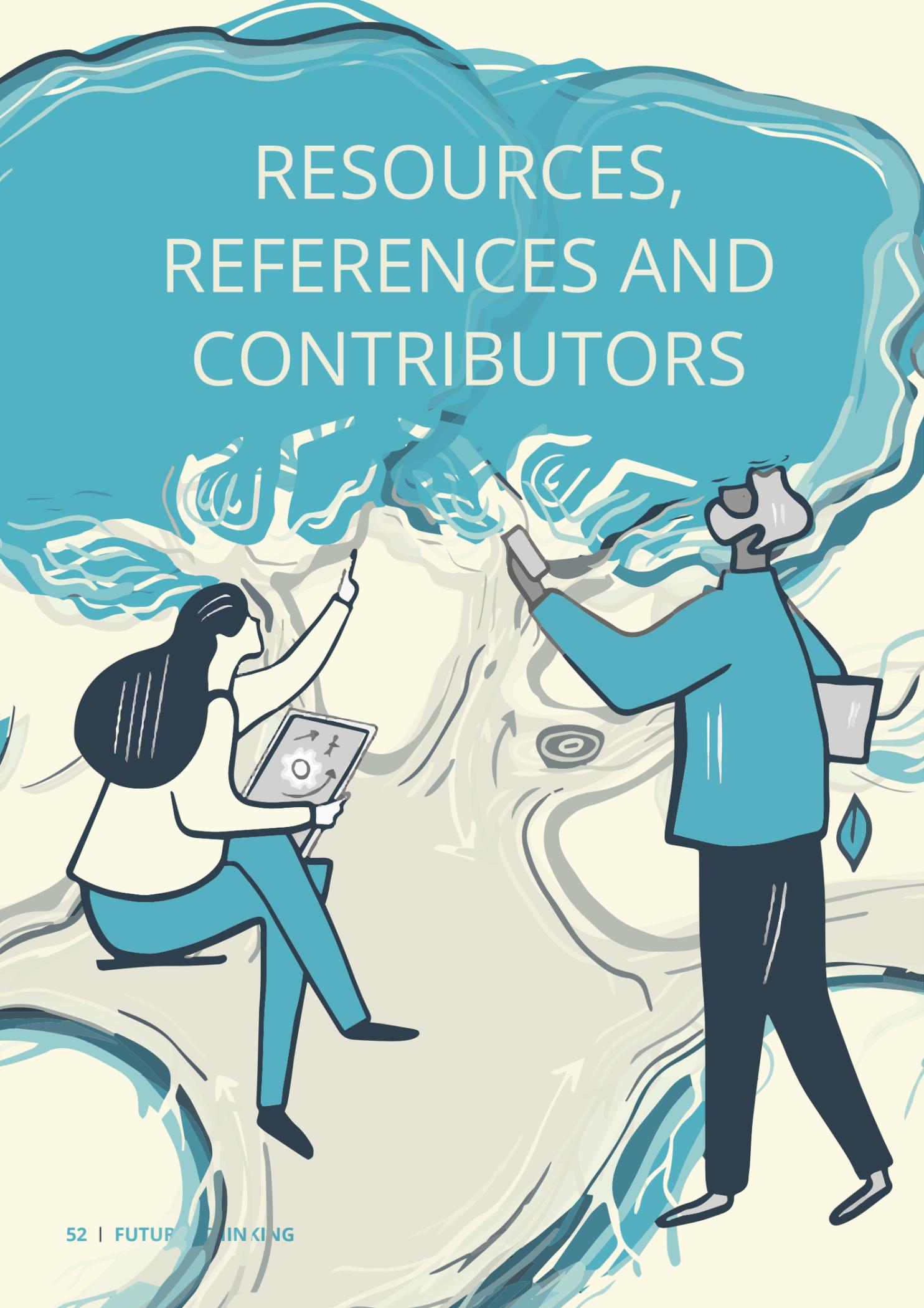
Relating to all three evaluation methods:

Materials needed:

- Method 1: Large sheet, pens, cards, and corkboard.
- Method 2: Flipchart. Notebook for key comments.
- Method 3: Printed questionnaire, pens.



RESOURCES, REFERENCES AND CONTRIBUTORS



OTHER RESOURCES

 Connor McGookin, Clodagh Harris, Niall Dunphy

There are number of research centres and government institutions that offer further guidance and insights into these fields. Below we have collated a few additional resources and toolkits to support further activities and insights towards future-led participatory engagement practices. The resources we have identified below are free to access and a link to each resource is provided below.

Resources on Deliberative Engagements:

[Democracy Cookbook \(LINK\)](#)

'Recipes' feature tried and tested activities that will help explain democracy and politics to young people. It includes a range of worksheets and prompt cards. Most activities can be adapted to own needs.

[Involve \(LINK\)](#)

Engagement agency offering examples of strategies to transform cultures, brand engagement and deliberation.

[Enhancing Citizen Engagement On The Climate Crisis: The Role Of Deliberation \(LINK\)](#)

Irish led contribution to enhancing public engagement on the climate crisis, and developed guidelines for conducting and communicating within citizens' assemblies and other types of deliberative forum when appropriate.

[Participedia \(LINK\)](#)

A crowdsourcing platform for researchers, activists, practitioners, and anyone interested in public participation and democratic innovations. It offers user-friendly information on organisations and initiatives worldwide.

Resources on futures-thinking and foresight practices.

[UNESCO: Futures Literacy Labs \(LINK\)](#)

Offering guidance on adopting action-research/action-learning methodologies that allows people to discover and share both the reasons for using the future and how to use it toward societal transformation.

[The Long Time Tools \(LINK\)](#)

A guide created by policymakers, for policymakers to enable integration of longtermism into work. It contains a series of different tools to be testing out at work.

[UK The Government Office for Science \(GO-Science\) The Futures Toolkit \(LINK\)](#)

A resource targeted at policy professionals to help embed long term strategic thinking in the policy and strategy process.

[Nordkapp: Actionable Futures Toolkit \(LINK\)](#)

Modular toolkit consisting of three types of tools: Worldbuilding, Predictive Analysis and Optimal Futures. The authors further propose methods for Setting Up and Follow-up steps. The resource is designed for group work.

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Involve methods [LINK](#)

Involve case studies [LINK](#)

Finland futures research centre - Practical guide for facilitating a futures workshop [LINK](#)

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