STICHTING ALEXANDER

Toolkit Inclusive Youth Participation

"Inclusion is not just about being allowed to dance but also about deciding which music we dance to"

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STICHTING **ALEXANDER**

This toolkit was developed in a participatory process that involved approximately 15 youth in co-creation sessions, and approximately 20 professionals who gave input during "VER_ander", the national event on youth participation organised by the National Youth Council (NJR) and the Dutch Youth Institute (NJi)

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Courtesy of
VER_Ander participants: young people, professionals and experts by experience who gave suggestions and participated in co-creation sessions

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Introduction

The paradox of inclusive working: what good is a toolkit anyway?

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The more complex events and people's behavior seem, the more we experience uncertainty and the harder we look for guidance. We just want to know where we stand, what to expect and what to do. This also applies to situations where we suspect diversity, and mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion, require attention. This Toolkit provides guidance to some extent. But this does not automatically guarantee that the practice of inclusion , no matter the tools, is going to deliver what we expect of inclusion. This does not mean that the tools do not work, or that we are not yet experienced enough in working with the tools, or that inclusion is unachievable. The problem lies elsewhere. Namely, there is a paradox hidden in inclusion. Attention to inclusion confirms that there is no inclusion now and that it will only be realized sometime in the future. But if that outcome is always in the future, it is of no use today. Or, asked with a little more curiosity: if the desired outcome of inclusive youth participation is always in the future, and it is questionable whether the fruits of your labour will ever be picked, let alone eaten: what good are tools for inclusive youth participation today, anyway?

This Toolkit invites users to discover a different kind of value of practicing inclusion: that the value of this type of work lies precisely in the challenges and tensions that cannot be (completely) resolved. This does not sound very appealing: you start to wonder why you have to work so hard to become inclusive or remove barriers to inclusiveness when you know that you will never quite succeed. But it is precisely these kinds of tensions that become visible and tangible through differences between people, cultures and systems. We enrich ourselves and each other with them. It is also these tensions that provide a key to gradually embedding inclusion in groups, organizations and communities in a more thorough and systematic way.

Practicing diversity and inclusion in youth participation requires those who do so to be willing to see opposing views not as friction, resistance or problems, but as varying and normal expressions of differences in organizations, companies or communities. Indeed, it also requires a willingness to practice inclusion while knowing that this practice itself further reinforces frictions, challenges and oppositions in views and desires; or at least makes them more visible and palpable. You then find yourself as a 'practitioner of inclusion' in the paradoxical situation that deployment of tools that are precisely meant to understand and accept differences - which does happen - simultaneously also leads to more criticism and rejection of differences. Accepting and rejecting differences then turn out to be both expressions of inclusion and practicing inclusion, as long as it is done as consciously as possible. At that point it appears that there is actually no room in inclusive working to accept all differences, nor to be against the rejection of certain differences. Success in the practice of inclusion is then the result of the extent to which you manage to accept differences but also to accept when you reject the consequences of certain differences. Whoever practices inclusion constantly has to move within this force field. What does this mean for the practitioner of inclusion or inclusive youth participation?

What is important is to do a reality check on your own expectations about the practicing inclusion, about how inclusiveness emerges in reality (versus: how you think it should emerge), and about the results you hope to achieve with the available tools. This reality check with yourself is actually your most important key to effectively unlocking tools like those in this toolkit.

In addition, it is unlikely that the tensions resulting from the differences in your group, organization, club, neighborhood, city, etc. will completely disappear, even by using the tools offered here. It is more likely that you will discover how messy the situation is: some tensions will diminish, while others (including those tensions you didn't even know were there at the start) will increase, and some will actually not remain equally important to everyone involved. If this is not happening, then chances are you are not yet using the frameworks and tools in this toolkit to their full potential. Those frameworks and tools encourage diversity and contradictions, and their productive use. That starts with, as it's called these days, a *challenge* to supervisors or facilitators to acknowledge, hold and even welcome contradictions embedded in inclusion. It is precisely this acceptance of contradictions, much less the speed at which you reach agreements between people with different views, that equips facilitators to constructively hold their own and continue to effectively reach out to others who still struggle with differences and the ongoing focus on (social) inequality.

Finally, it can help practitioners of inclusive youth participation to become aware of hidden assumptions in their work environment about what works and does not work in inclusive youth participation. Processes, practices and tools for inclusive work often have their own but not always explicit logic for why and when they work. Several assumptions may underlie this logic: not all of the assumptions are true, but neither is it the case that none of the assumptions are true. In the 20ᵉ century, someone once described it this way, "No one is smart enough to be wrong all the time." In using the tools and associated processes in this toolkit, it is important that facilitators remain open to the possibilities and impossibilities of inclusive approaches in specific situations and with specific groups. In short, what works well in one place does not necessarily work well in another. But vice versa, of course, this also applies: in the creative chaos of inclusion and exclusion, it is important to follow your own curiosity and wisdom, and discover for yourself what works, even when an approach has not worked elsewhere.

We do not advocate here that you should stubbornly swim against the current, but we do invite you to remain critical of the certainties of others about how the flow from exclusion to inclusion actually runs. It's about *flowing* upstream, as it were.

This toolkit is for all those working with young people and developing projects to strengthen their participation. Even young people who are part of a youth group and want to do more with inclusion can use this toolkit. In the toolkit you will find tools for engaging with young people and organizations about inclusion, diversity, equality and participation.

The toolkit is structured as follows:
- In **Part 1** you will find various definitions of the terms inclusion, diversity, equality and participation and a reflection on them. The CLEAR framework of inclusive participation is also described in this section.
- In **Part 2,** we describe what young people and professionals think you might know, feel, and do if you want to get started with inclusive youth participation.
- **Part 3** contains a number of work methods that professionals can use to reflect (with each other and/or with young people) on inclusive youth participation.
- This section includes the option to use the online tool Miro, outlining the work methods on a Miro board.
- In **Part 4,** we give you sources of inspiration and references to deepen your understanding of the topic of inclusive youth participation.

1 Inclusive youth participation

In this chapter we describe some examples of definitions of the concepts of diversity, equality, inclusion and participation. We do not give a comprehensive overview of these definitions, but illustrate the variety of approaches and translations in policy and practice. These concepts are 'social constructs', which are given meaning in the context in which they are used and shaped. Therefore, there is no single answer to what exactly the concepts mean.

What is it about?

Diversity
- Diversity is about mutual differences: visible and invisible (Bouchallikht & Papikonomou, 2021).
- Diversity is on the one hand about visible characteristics in which people differ from each other, such as gender, age and ethnicity (De Vries et al.,2005). On the other hand, it is about the invisible characteristics, such as norms, values, beliefs, needs, competencies, work styles and character traits (Harrison & Klein, 2007).
- More diversity does not necessarily lead to more inclusiveness. Differences also create problems and conflicts between people and in organizations (Çelik, 2021).

Equivalency
- Equivalence is about (power) differences within difference (Bouchallikht & Papikonomou, 2021). Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and are endowed with reason and conscience, and ought to conduct themselves toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood.
- Equivalence means that all humans are of value. It does not mean that they are equal because everyone is different. Equivalence does not imply sameness. If it did, equivalence and diversity would be mutually exclusive (van Houten, 2008).

Inclusion
- Inclusion is about what you do with those differences: do those differences get an equal chance? (Bouchallikht & Papikonomou, 2021).
- Inclusion refers to acceptance and appreciation in a given context (Schippers, Bakker, Peters, 2018). Inclusion means increasing participation of every individual in society, regardless of age, cultural background, gender, income, talents and limitations. An inclusive society is one in which everyone can participate optimally (Bolsenbroek & Van Houten, 2010).
- Inclusion is about including disadvantaged groups in society on the basis of equal rights and duties. The responsibility to "adapt" does not lie with a socially disadvantaged group, as with integration. Inclusion works both ways. The person must want to participate and society must also be open to this. If one of the two does not cooperate, then it becomes very difficult. You can push a person closer to society, but society must also attract the person (Inclusionlab).

- Inclusiveness is about valuing the differences that everyone brings and creating (work) cultures that enable a sense of belonging (and psychological safety) so that everyone feels valued and respected (BE(E) top of mind). Several scholars describe inclusion as the space and appreciation for authenticity and individuality, as well as referring to a sense of belonging and being a natural part of something. It refers to an environment where everyone is treated fairly (Shore, et al., 2011).

Participation
- Participation means that everyone has an equal voice and presence, enabling equitable processes and outcomes.
- Participation can also be defined as a right defined in several articles of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child:
  - Article 3: The best interests of the child must be paramount in all measures affecting children.
  - Article 12: Participation and Right to Hear: Every child has the right to express his/her opinion on matters that concern him/her. That opinion must be taken seriously.
  - Article 13: Freedom of Expression: Every child may freely express his opinions and must have access to information that can help him form his opinions.
  - Article 17: Right to information: Children have the right to information from a variety of sources. Information intended to promote the child's well-being, health and development.

  This applies not only when children and youth interact with the government, but also to all interactions and aspects of a child's life. Thus, these articles also cover organizations that work with children and youth, such as youth work, youth care services, education, etc.

- Inclusive participation is giving people a voice and presence in social life and democratic processes, enabling equitable processes and outcomes (Heimburg, Ness, & Storch, 2021). The Youth Participation Strategy by Salto Youth includes the following definition: "Youth participation in democracy means giving young people the right, resources, space, opportunity and support to express their opinions, to contribute to and influence decision-making that affects them, and to be active within their communities." So this includes "democratic participation" (expressing opinions, contributing to decision-making) as well as social participation (being active within community).
- Finally, there is a model that lays out the principles in inclusive participation processes, which is the CLEAR framework of inclusive participation (Lowndes & Pratchett, 2016). This model is action-oriented. CLEAR then stand for can do, like to, enabled to, asked to and responded to. Section 3.4.1 elaborates on this as a work method.

2 Getting started with inclusive youth participation

Based on research and interviews with youth and professionals, in this chapter we list what knowledge you can gain, what you might feel and what you can do to get started with inclusive youth participation. Many of the topics described here are developed for professionals who guide young people in devising and implementing projects and activities. However, as a youth group it can also be useful and helpful to familiarize yourselves with inclusive youth participation.

> For organizations or young people setting up a youth participation project or activity, an Erasmus+ checklist is attached in Annex 1.

2.1   You can gain this knowledge

- Know what inclusion and participation (in your context) mean. Inclusive participation means that everyone has an equal voice and presence, enabling equitable processes and outcomes.
- Know that young people generally value the following: reward and appreciation, clarity and transparency, that they are truly listened to, and that their input is taken seriously.
- Know that a diverse group of young people means that young people are different from each other. Young people are in different places, have different (support) needs, different interests and different abilities.

2.2   You might feel this

Start from a generous basic attitude. Engage with young people on the basis of openness, vulnerability, humility, equality and trust. "Sincerity, genuineness, unconditional acceptance, reliability, availability, motivation, and exuding trust" are cited as the most important elements a professional should take into account in their interactions with young people. Realizing these aspects requires professionals to be driven by curiosity and the intrinsic motivation to understand and help the young person. What the professional thinks and feels and what the professional radiates in their interaction should correspond. The professional takes the young person seriously and shows that the young person is important by making an effort to help the young person. It is also important that the professional shows themselves and dares to be open and honest in their contact. In the relationship, equality is assumed and the professional realizes an atmosphere of unconditional acceptance by always putting themselves in the shoes of the young person and their life world. The professional respects the privacy of the young person, is transparent in communication and provides clarity about his/her professional role and associated expectations. Also, the professional takes a positive attitude, exudes confidence and encourages the young person in a way that is pleasant for the young person. Finally, it is important that the professional

has sufficient time and space for the young person and creates easy and accessible ways to contact them. (Youth Platform Amsterdam)"

2.3 You can do this

2.3.1 Before you begin

To get started successfully on an activity or project, the first thing you need is a clear plan. You make this plan before you begin. Having a plan gives you a clear idea of what you want to achieve and how you are going to do it, and therefore contributes to a greater chance of success. You also use your plan to monitor and evaluate your project or activity.

Make sure your plan describes at least the following points:

- Determine what goal you are pursuing.
- Examine what inclusion and participation do/don't mean in your context. Discuss with each other who you want to include (what characteristics, life experiences do the young people have) and in what way they can participate. Make sure that the way your target group can participate matches what they are comfortable with. Make sure to check this with the group you want to include.
- Make an inventory of the resources available (people, time, knowledge, etc.).
- Last but not least, if you do this as a professional: involve young people themselves in making this plan. After all, they know best what works for them. Co-create this in a manner where everyone's perspective is equally valued, or organize a sounding board group of young people who can give advice. And if you do this as a youth group, be aware that not everyone thinks like you. So even if you *are* the target group, it is important to involve more young people in developing the plan.

2.3.2 Recruitment

In youth participation projects, recruiting participants is often a challenge. Many young people have busy lives with school/study, side jobs and a social life. Lack of time, as well as lack of understanding of what participation will bring them are often reasons not to participate in a project. With an effective recruitment campaign that connects with the target group, you have a better chance of getting potential participants enthusiastic about your project. Therefore, ask young people from your target group for advice on recruiting participants.

Some other tips for recruitment are:

- Use different recruitment methods (flyer, word of mouth, etc.), different recruitment materials (textual, visual, etc.), and different recruitment channels (intermediaries, social media, etc.).
- Go to places where you easily find young people (instead of them having to come to you).
- Describe explicitly who can participate (what characteristics, life experiences).

- Think from the perspective of the target group(s) you want to appeal to: what can they gain from participating? Don't just say "you can participate!" but explain what they can gain from it. For example: gaining skills, meeting, networking, and sociability, making a difference, and exerting influence. Name various reasons to appeal to diverse audiences.

2.3.3   Organization

Organizing inclusive youth participation takes time and attention. The way in which you organize participation must fit your intended target group. Participation must be attractive and accessible to the young people you want to involve. By making thoughtful choices about this, the project has a better chance of success.

Some tips for organizing inclusive youth participation include:

- Create different opportunities to participate (once - repeatedly, online - offline).
- Use different ways of working (creative, visual, verbal, debate).
- Offer compensation (financial and otherwise).
- Note representativeness: discuss whether participants speak only from their own experience, or (also) on behalf of a group.
- Be attentive to other people within the organization: explain, demonstrate, actively promote participation.

2.3.4   Facilitate

The facilitator has an important role in enabling inclusive youth participation. It is important that the facilitator gives space to all participants, creates a safe atmosphere, monitors the purpose of the meeting and ensures proper time management.

Some tips for facilitating a participation meeting are:

- Think from the perspective of participants and take their interests into account.
- Supervise in a way that meets the needs of the participants: ask them about this.
- Embrace "conflict": see "different" as an asset rather than a problem.
- Dare to let perspectives collide.
- Recognize the (valuable) contribution of participants, through reward and appreciation.
- Acknowledge all different identities (of both yourself and (future) participants).
- Ensure clarity: be transparent about planning and expectations.

2.3.5   Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are indispensable in an inclusive youth participation project. Monitoring of a project focuses on the process, the implementation of the project. It is therefore carried out during the project. That way, you have the opportunity to still do something with the interim results and adjust the project.

Evaluation of a project focuses on outcomes, the achievement of project objectives, and is usually conducted at the end of the project. However, it can also be done during a project (for example, through a mid-term evaluation).

Some considerations for monitoring, reflection and evaluation:

- Evaluate continuously (both on process and outcomes).
- Build in flexibility: be willing to change (radically).
- Evaluate both with participants (young people) and implementers of the project.
- Also evaluate on your own contribution and reflect on the learning experiences of both facilitators and participants.
- Make sure the evaluation and reflection methods are appropriate for the target group.

2.3.6   Implementation of outcomes

Young people who take part in a participation project cite the fact that their input is taken seriously as one of its most important aspects. You can make this clear to young people by including them in the implementation of the outcomes of the project. Share with the young people what you are going to do with the outcomes.

If it appears that the results cannot be used (or only partially), explain why this is the case:

- Provide feedback to young people.
- Ensure that those who are in the position of making changes based on the outcomes (e.g., an organization or policy makers) also provide feedback.
- Describe explicitly what outcomes apply to whom (or not).

3 Exercises for inclusive youth participation

In this chapter we describe a number of exercises that can be used to foster inclusive youth participation. The methods are divided into different categories based on the purpose of the activity: defining inclusive participation, shaping inclusive participation, experiencing inclusion and diversity, and evaluating inclusive participation. Most of the methods are particularly suitable to be carried out in groups. This can be done within one's own (youth) organization or group, as well as within activities and projects with young people. At the end of the section we have included an exercise that is aimed at self-reflection.

In consultation with young people, we opted to primarily include exercises that lead to a deeper understanding of inclusion within the context of collaboration and co-creation by, with and for young people.

In the next section you will find the instructions and required work methods. The exercises are organized as follows:

1. Image search (15-30min)
2. Concepts (20 min)
3. Head, hands and heart (20-30 min)
4. Privilege walk (45-80 min)
5. Step into the circle if you are like me.... (10 min)
6. CLEAR (45-60 min)
7. Inclusion - exclusion (20-30 min)
8. Storytelling (60 min)
9. Self-reflection (25 min)

We wish you success and we hope you enjoy using the exercises!

Miro

Instructions for the various exercises are also available in Miro (in Dutch).

Miro is an online environment where you can collaborate on a digital white board. You can draw, stick post-its, write, basically do everything you can do on Flipcharts during a workshop, and more. You may work in an online group setting with these exercises , or in real life.

You can find the Dutch version of this toolkit and the exercises via this link or QR code:

https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVMF4fuB0=/?share_link_id=283556965653

3.1 Exercises for groups - defining inclusive participation

### 3.1.1 Image search (15-30 min)

Purpose of the activity

The purpose of the activity is to visualize what the concepts of inclusion and participation can encompass, and to experience that inclusion and participation are social constructs, which different individuals and organizations have different definitions and ideas about.

Supplies

Internet OR magazines, newspapers, etc.

Instructions for the activity

1. Each participant individually searches for pictures, videos, drawings, photos, etc. that have something to do with inclusion and participation for them.
2. Each participant pastes these pictures on a large whiteboard.
3. Discuss in the group what has been put up: what similarities do you see? What stands out? What do you have questions about? Why do some of the pictures appeal to you/don't appeal to you?
4. Reflect: what do you take away from this activity?
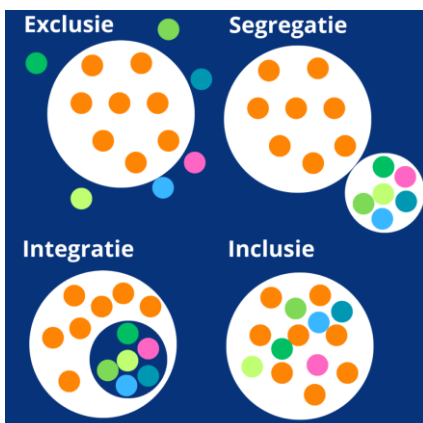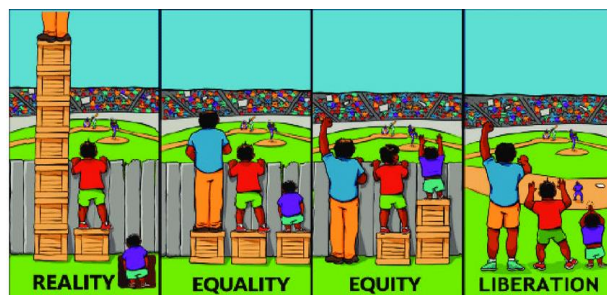
3.1.2   Concepts (20 min)

Purpose of the activity

The goal of the activity is to agree on what participation and inclusion (do not) mean in your context.

Supplies

Pens, post-its, 2 sheets with, respectively, the concepts 'participation' and 'inclusion' written on them.

Instructions for the activity

1. Each participant writes on post-its what according to them fits the concepts of participation and inclusion and sticks them on the sheets.
2. The group discusses together what has been written down.

3.2   Exercises for groups - shaping inclusive participation

3.2.1   Head, hands, heart (20-30 min)

Purpose of the activity
The purpose of the activity is to clarify various necessities that shape inclusive participation.

Supplies
- 3 sheets with 'Head', 'Hands' and 'Heart' written on them respectively.
  - Head: what knowledge do you need to have to get started with inclusive youth participation? thinking/mental
  - Heart: what attitude do you need to have? feeling/emotion
  - Hands: what tools do you need /what do you need to be able to do? doing / physical
- Post-its
- Pens

Instructions for the activity
1. Give each participant a pen and some post-its.
2. Ask each participant to think for themselves about what it would take to get started with inclusive participation and to categorize the post-its with ideas under 'Head, 'Heart' or 'Hands'.
3. Discuss afterwards in the group: what did you discover? What do you already know/feel/do? What deserves extra attention?

3.3   Exercises for groups - experiencing inclusion and diversity

3.3.1   Privilege Walk (45-80 min)
You can use this activity to learn how to recognize power and privilege and how they affect people's (educational) careers, even if we are not aware of them. The goal is not to blame the participants who have more power, privilege or more resources, but to clearly identify the obstacles and resources in the educational process.

Purpose of the activity
The purpose of this activity is to make inclusion, exclusion and diversity tangible and personal.

Supplies
- List of statements related to privileges or obstacles (in the educational process) --> see the 3 frames below for inspiration;
- Role descriptions --> see the last frame below for inspiration;
- Slide or handout with the instructions for the activity;
- Space large enough to allow all participants to form a straight line at an arm's length from each other; there should also be room to step forward and backward multiple times (approx. 3 meters on both sides).

Instructions for the activity
1. **Ask participants to form a straight line in the center of the room at an arm's length from each other.**

2. **Give each participant a role.** They should not tell this role to each other. Be sure to assign the same role to two people. (So in a group of eight people, there are 4 different roles.)

3. **Explain the activity to the group**: Listen to the following statements and follow the instructions given to you. For example, when I say "Take a step forward if you are a girl," only girls are allowed to take a step forward while everyone else remains standing. Each step should be about an average step: not too big, not too small. No one is going to check the steps you made, so if you feel the statement applies to you, you take a step forward; if you feel the statement does not apply to you, you stay where you are. In this activity, you judge for yourself whether you take a step or not.

4. **Read the statements one at a time and give participants time to look at their profile card to see whether or not they should take a step forward or backward.**

5. **When all the statements have been read aloud and everyone has reached their final position in the room, you can round it off with a plenary reflection exercise by using the following questions**:

* What is your initial reaction to your position after this activity? [These attributed characteristics partly determine your opportunities and experiences in education. It shows that not everyone has equal opportunities to do equally well because, after all, everyone grows up in a different situation and environment].

* There is someone in the room who has been assigned the same role as you. Is that person at the same height as you? If not, how big is the difference? And on which statements did you have a different opinion?

* Where do the boys/young men stand versus the girls/young women and/or other genders? Where do people with an migration background stand versus the natives? Where are the participants with practically educated parents versus the participants with theoretically educated parents? Etc.

* Have you come to any new insights? If so, did anything surprise or shock you?

* So how should we eliminate barriers in school careers?

* Now when you look over all the diversity, do you still believe in "all rules apply for everyone"?

3.3.2 Step into the circle if you are like me ... (10 min)

You can use this activity to experience and visualize what identities and experiences others share with you and where you differ from each other. You can also use this activity as an icebreaker during introductions.

Purpose of the activity

The purpose of the activity is to experience and visualize what identities and experiences others share with you and where the differences lie.

Supplies

No/ or paper and top hat/bowl.

Instructions for the activity

1. Ask everyone to stand in a circle.
2. One person steps into the circle and says something they want to share. For example: step into the circle if you like cooking like me. The other people who also like cooking then step into the circle, and then back to a different place from where they were standing.
3. One person stays in the circle, and this person says something again. The exercise continues until everyone has stood in the middle at some point.

Note: It is important for facilitators to keep the balance between light and heavy, safe and exciting.

ALTERNATIVE: You can also have participants first write things on a piece of paper and take them out of a hat/bowl one at a time and then do the exercise.
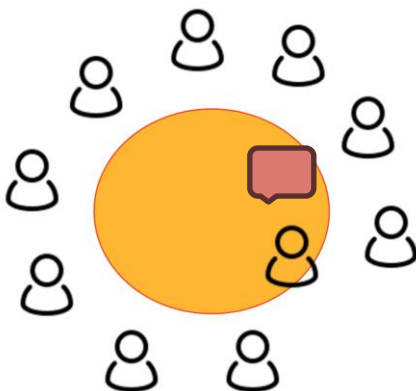
3.4 Exercise for groups - evaluate inclusive participation

3.4.1   CLEAR (45-60 min)

Purpose of the activity
The goal of the activity is to discover how inclusive the participation opportunities within your organization currently are, and in what areas participation can be organized even more inclusively.

According to the CLEAR framework, people can participate if they:

Can do: Young people should be *able to* participate. Lack of time/money/skills or all other forms of limitation should not be a reason for not participating.

> Example: rewarding participants with a volunteer contribution, thinking carefully about its amount, as well as creating occasions to participate in wheelchair-accessible spaces.

Like to: Young people must *want to* participate and feel part of both the process, and the relevant institutions. How do you motivate young people to do so?

> Example: organizing social activities around a participation process, like a pizza night or creative workshop while discussing a certain topic.

Enabled to: Young people must have *the opportunity* to participate. This means that the space to facilitate this should be made available (both logistical and organisational) and young people must be given the right tools, networks and guidance to do so. *Can do* is about the individual young person, *enabled to* is more about their environment.

> Example: setting up infrastructure for this purpose, such as youth councils, interest groups and political youth organizations.

Asked to: Young people should be *asked to participate*. How do you communicate about participation opportunities? How do you make sure you involve all young people? And do you let them know that young people are not only allowed to participate, but to decide as well?

> Example: questionnaires, when a new bill or project is proposed, agree in advance that young people will help design it.

Responded to: There needs to be *feedback* to young people so they can see what is being done with their input (or why something is being rejected!). This is about reciprocating in an equal manner and expectation management.

Example: agreeing in advance during a participation process that there will be a feedback moment after the process is completed, or how their input will be processed and what that involves.

Supplies
Explanation of the CLEAR framework.

Instructions for the activity
1. Explain what the CLEAR framework is.
2. Discuss by letter (C, L, E, A, R):
3. Is this the case for your intended target group?

4. What are you already doing?
5. What else could you do?
6. Discuss after: what did you discover? What will you do differently?

3.4.2 Inclusion - exclusion (20-30 min)

Purpose of the activity
The purpose of the activity is to make visible the extent to which you are being inclusive.

Supplies
Pens, post-its, sheet with the "inclusion thermometer" drawn on it (see example on the next page).

Instructions for the activity
1. Take a case/situation/environment/organization.
2. Write on post-its what practices/activities/social behaviors/expressions belong to them.
3. Stick the post-its on the thermometer: on the far left if you think this promotes inclusivity; on the far right if you think this belongs to exclusivity.
4. Discuss the taped post-its and their location.
5. Discuss afterwards: what did you discover?

ALTERNATIVE
Instead of inclusion-exclusion, use other terms, such as participatory/not participatory.

Inclusive   **Exclusive**

3.4.3 Storytelling (60 min)
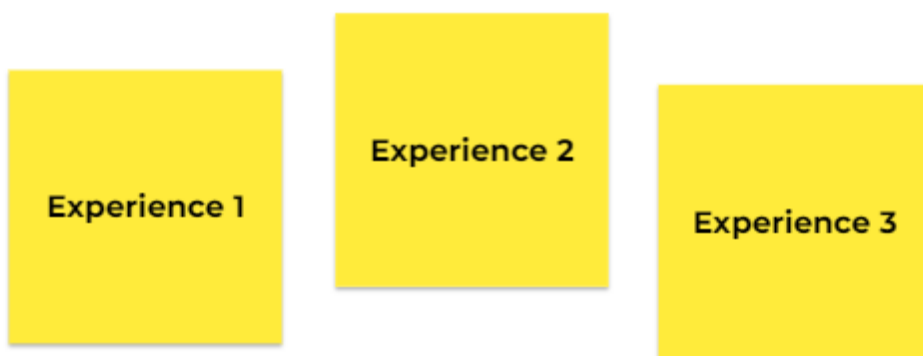
Purpose of the activity
The purpose of the activity is to share positive examples of inclusive participation and to experience that there is already a lot of knowledge and experience in the group.

Supplies
None.

Instructions for the activity
1. Make groups of 3 people: preferably people who do not know each other very well.
2. Each group member will have 10 minutes to talk about an example in which they have experienced inclusion (with regard to themselves, another person, or group of people) as extensively and in as much detail as possible: 3 minutes to narrate, 3 minutes to allow the other group members to ask questions for clarification, and 4 minutes to provide additional explanation.
3. Each group uses the last 10 minutes to find the common threads in their stories.
4. Discuss afterwards with the whole group (15 minutes): what are the common threads? What is already going well? What can be done differently? What is still missing?

3.4.4   Looking better to see better

You can use this activity to practice "flowing upstream" by practicing with your perception, alone or (preferably) with colleagues.

Purpose of the activity
The purpose of the activity is to practice "flowing upstream" by practicing your perception.
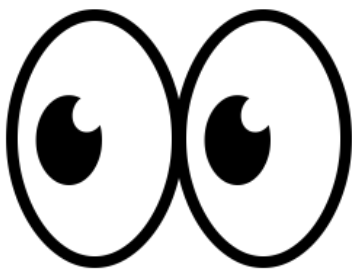
Supplies
None.

Instructions for the activity

Part 1: **Look at your target group and share what you see** (15 minutes)

1. Form a trio (or pair).
2. Briefly describe who is your target group, and reflect on the extent to which they have participated / how their participation is going so far? Also explain what characteristics you ascribe/observe with regard to your target group and their situation: what do you see? Your partners listen and do not comment. The second and third participant each also do step 2.
3. Now take a DEEPER and WIDER look at your target group/situation, and REVISIT your initial presumptions. What other things play a role in what you are describing? What other aspects of the target group/situation can you see? How realistic is your view of your target group/situation: are you sure about what you think you know?
4. Tell each other what you now notice about the target group/situation you have described yourself.
5. Tell each other what you now notice about the target group/situation the others have described.

Part 2: **The Harvest** (10 minutes)

"Gather the harvest" from this exercise, and exchange with your colleagues: What new things have you discovered about the young people you work with? What does this tell you about inclusion in the group/activity? Can you use that to take the next step in making the group/activity/approach more inclusive? What step would that be?

3.5   Individual exercises

3.5.1   Self-reflection (25 min)

Do you ever ask yourself....

Me	Who am I? Which identities apply to me?	How do I feel in this project?	Do I dare to be myself? Why (not)?	How much power do I have?
Others	With whom do I collaborate in this project?	How do others feel in this project?	Do I think that others can be themselves in this project? Why (not)?	How much power do others have?

Which differences emerge?	What do those differences mean? What impact do those differences have on myself? and on others?	What did I discover? How do I feel about that?	How does this affect my future actions?

4 Sources of inspiration and references

When it comes to inclusive youth participation much has already been spoken about, written about, imagined, conceptualized, developed, and published. We have listed a few sources of inspiration, but there are many more!

4.1   Research and opinion

- Bell, J., Vromen, A., Collin, P. (2008). *Rewriting the rules for youth participation*. Available for download here: Rewriting the Rules for Youth Participation : Inclusion and Diversity in Government and Community Decision Making | Western Sydney University ResearchDirect.

- Kaulingfreks, F. (2019). *Word in progress: Stories of growing up in a multi-voiced community.* Available for download here: Word in Progress (inholland.nl).

- Min. of I&W (2021), Quick study Participation and inclusiveness_No. 3: handlerdownloadfiles.ashx (kennisknooppuntparticipatie.nl)

- Schippers, A., Bakker, M., Peters, L. (2018). *From participation to social inclusion:* ntzt201802_p106-118_schippers_ea_van.pdf (disabilitystudies.co.uk)

- *Children and youth active in scientific research: Ethics, methods and results of research with and by youth* - Kitty Jurrius, Xavier Moonen, Leo Rutjes

- Guidelines for Meaningful Collaboration in Research: 2023_Ruidelines-YoungParticipation-in-Research.pdf (schoolforparticipation.com)

- Video Lisa Wilderink about participatory action research and project MAPZ: Lisa Wilderink §about participatory action research and project MAPZ - YouTube

4.2   Tools, manuals, methods

- A seat at the table for everyone: A seat at the table for everyone. Promoting inclusive youth participation through the EU Youth Strategy 2019 - 2027 - SALTO

- ARC - Foundation Module 4: Participation and Inclusion | Save the Children's Resource Centre

- ChildHub search: find news, resources and events related to child protection: search | ChildHub - Child Protection Hub

- Council of Europe Handbook for Children's participation: 1680a14539 (coe.int)

- Database for tools/methods in youth work: <u>SALTO-YOUTH - Toolbox - Tool for youth work and projects - or recruit </u>participants.

- Portfolio on Experience-Based Knowledge and Youth Participation of the NJi: <u>Experience Knowledge and Youth Participation | Netherlands Youth Institute</u>

- Ethical Guidance on children and young people's participation for LEAP partners: <u>LEAP Participation Ethics (childhub.org)</u>

- Handbook "Exchange of Good Practices in the Accessibility of Electronic Platforms between Young People with Disabilities." <u>Copy of ENG_E-participation project Report (accessibleyouthelectronicplatforms.eu)</u>

- Invent handbook on inclusive youth work: <u>INVENT - European cooperation for more effective and better youth work (125procent.co.uk)</u>

- Toolkit youth participation from Salto Participation & Inclusion (focusing on the role digital transformation plays in it): <u>Youth Participation Toolkit - SALTO (participationpool.eu)</u> and <u>Participation Pool | Resources on Youth Participation & Media Literacy - Participation and Information </u>Centre

- BE(E) Book Diversity: <u>BE(E) Book Diversity (beetopofmind.co.uk)</u>

- Flagship projects collection with all kinds of sample projects from Salto PI: <u>Projects | Participation Resource </u>Pool

- Good example of an inclusive youth participation project: <u>2DO: participation theater for and by young people | Erasmus+ (erasmusplus.nl)</u>

- Roadmap Ede Includes: <u>https://www.inclusionlab.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Routekaart-Ede-Inclusief-S-juli-2017.compressed.pdf</u>

- Guide to Student Participation for Inclusive Education Participation: <u>Student Participation for Inclusive Education Approach (ecio.co.uk)</u>

- Infographic 6 tips for inclusive student participation: <u>Student participation for inclusive educational approaches (ecio.co.uk)</u>

- Interactive online lessons on diversity and discrimination: <u>Stories that Move | Anne Frank</u> House

- Toolkit participatory video: <u>toolkit-participatory-video-vso-1-01-2.pdf (st-alexander.nl)</u>

- Wekker, G., Ditchman, M. W., Icaza, R., & Vazquez, R. (2016).*Diversity is a verb. Report Committee on Diversity University of Amsterdam*. University of Amsterdam.

4.3   Media

- Episode of the podcast ONBESPROKEN on inclusive language: <u>Inclusive Language | ONBESPROKEN - SESI Community Center | Podcast on</u> Spotify

- Outsiders: <u>Outsiders | Podcast on</u> Spotify

- Inclusion Marathon the podcast: <u>Inclusion Marathon The Podcast | Podcast on</u> Spotify

- Not So Black and White podcast: <u>Not So Black and White - Podcasts | NPO</u> 3FM

- The WhyPAR podcast: <u>The whyPAR Podcast | Podcast on</u> Spotify

- America To Me: <u>https:</u>//www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fbfx9OpcUoc&feature=youtu.be

- The raving reporter visiting ... Stigma Tools: <u>The raging reporter visiting ... Stigma Tools -</u> YouTube

- Stories That Move YouTube channel: <u>Stories that Move -</u> YouTube

- Magazine on youth participation and the use of experts by experience: <u>VER_haal by Communications NJR -</u> Flipsnack

4.4   Literature used for parts 1 and 2

- BE(E) top of mind https://beetopofmind.nl/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/BEE-Book-Diversiteit-2.pdf

- Bouchallikht, K., & Papikonomou, Z. (2021). *The Inclusion Marathon: on diversity and equality in the workplace*.

- Bolsenbroek, A. K., & van Houten, D. J. (2010). *Working towards an inclusive society: good practices*.

- Çelik, S. (2021). Diversity and inclusion in central government: moving forward with policy. *Policy and Society*, *48*(4), 353.

- Harrison, D.A., & Klein, K.J. (2007). What's the difference? Diversity constructs as separation, variety, or disparity in organizations. *Academy of Management Review,* 32 (2007) 4, 1199-1228.

- Heimburg, D. V., Ness, O., & Storch, J. (2021). Co-creation of public values: Citizenship. *Social Justice and Well-being. I AO Thomassen & JB Jensen (ed.), Processual Perspectives on the Co-Production Turn in Public Sector Organizations*, 20-41.

- van Houten, D. (2008). Working towards inclusion. *Social Intervention, 17*(3).

- Inclusionlab, in Krimpen aan den IJssel; towards an inclusive society (2018). via https://www.krimpenwijzer.nl/fileadmin/user_upload/Krimpen_aan_den_IJssel__naar_een_inclusieve_samenleving__vanaf_2018.pdf

- International Convention on the Rights of the Child (e.g., at: https://www.kinderrechten.nl/professionals/kinderrechten/)

- KeTJA (Kenniswerkplaats Transformatie Jeugd Amsterdam). How youth professionals treat young people (16 - 23 years). Bejegening-of-youth-16-23-years-by-youth-professionals-June-2019.pdf (neja.nl)

- Lawinsider dictionary https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/full-and-effective-participation-and-inclusion

- Lowndes, Vivien & Pratchett, Lawrence. (2006). CLEAR: Understanding Citizen Participation in Local Government-and How to Make it Work Better.

- Roberson, Q.M. (2006). Disentangling the Meanings of Diversity and Inclusion in Organizations. *Group & Organization Management, 31*(2): 212-236.

- Schippers, A.P., Bakker, M., Peters, L. (2018). From participation to social inclusion. *NTZ,* 2018(2): 106-118. https://disabilitystudies.nl/sites/default/files/beeld/publicaties/ntzt201802_p106-118_schippers_ea_van.pdf

- Shore, L.M., Randel, A.E., Chung, B.G., Dean, M.A., Ehrhart, K.H., & Singh, G. (2011). Inclusion and diversity in work groups: A review and model for future research. *Journal of Management, 37*(4): 1262-1289.

- De Vries, S., Van de Ven, C., Nuyens, M., Stark, K., Van Schie, J., & Van Sloten, G. C. (2005). *Diversity in the workplace: How does it work?* Hoofddorp, The Netherlands: TNO.

Appendix 1: Checklist

Checklist for designing and implementing inclusive youth participation projects and tracks

Are you getting started on creating and implementing an inclusive youth participation project or track? Then grab this checklist!

1. **Start from a need.** A project always starts from a need that exists among a group of young people. This is how you make it attractive and accessible for young people to participate. Has this need been surveyed and checked among a diverse group?

2. **Make sure there is enough space and commitment for participation.** With youth participation projects, it is also important to check in advance the scope for participation with the decision-makers and to make clear agreements with them. In what way can young people participate, think and decide, what will be done with their voices? This is to allow young people to assess whether they find this way of participation worth the effort and energy, as well as to avoid disappointment among young people afterwards.

3. **Ensure diversity in the group, in your activities, and your work methods.** When devising your project plan and activities, it is important to again involve a diverse group of young people. This way you ensure that these connect with young people from different backgrounds and walks of life, and increase the inclusion of your project. Perhaps different activities are needed to reach and engage different groups of young people. For example, one young person may prefer to have their voice heard through a discussion or debate, and another young person may prefer to do so through a creative form such as spoken word or theater.

4. **Organize accessibility.** Ask your target group what possible extra support they might need. It is even more inclusive if you indicate that these extra modes of support/facilities (e.g., wheelchair-friendly buildings, a sign language interpreter, extra guidance or an low-stimulating space to recover between activities) are available (regardless of whether they need them), then young people with extra support needs will feel even more welcome.

5. **Make sure that your communication speaks to your target group.** Make sure not only that you adapt your project activities, but also your recruitment methods and communication strategy to the social environment, educational level and interests of the group of young people you want to reach. This may also mean communicating differently with certain groups and creating different messages.

6. **Pay attention to visual representation through images.** If you use images in your recruitment and communication efforts: make sure that different young people (within the (sub)target group) can recognize themselves in your pictures. This way you make it attractive for young people with diverse backgrounds, characteristics and abilities to participate. And remember: even if you organize a project for young people with visual impairments, for example, diversity can be found within that target group.

7. **Monitor what you are doing.** As the project progresses, make sure you regularly check that the activities, methods, messages and other matters match their needs and preferences, and that everyone feels part of the project.

8. **Create awareness around inclusion and diversity.** It is important to make your group of participants aware of the added value of (making space for) an inclusive voice, of gathering input from a diverse group of people, and of identifying the blind spots that everyone has. To create this awareness, you may do one of the exercises that are presented in this toolkit.

9. **Listen to everyone.** When collecting the voices and opinions of young people: make sure that minority voices or participants who are not very prominently in the foreground are also heard; it can quickly get snowed under by participants who are quick to make up their minds and are very outspoken. A great method to take this into account is [Deep Democracy.](#)

10. **Ensure safety.** Always, but especially in youth participation projects and tracks, it is important that a safe space is created and that everyone can, may and dares to make themselves heard in a way that suits them. So make sure you build in sufficient measures to create a safe space. Examples include appointing a (external) counselor, creating a code of conduct and group agreements and creating check-in and check-out moments during activities.

11. **Ensure that young people's voices remain authentic.** When transmitting the voice of young people to decision-makers, make sure that the various voices (perhaps also in various forms) are still audible. This does not always have to be adapted to the language of decision-makers; rather, dare to let the voice and sound of young people be heard. Is this far from the language/jargon used by decision-makers? Then support them (at a later stage) in translating this message into input for policy and decision making.

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