

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT 101

## Key Definitions

### Outreach:

One-way communications that help generate attention to a topic or an issue

*Examples: Setting up a booth at a fair, information sessions with a planned presentation*

### Engagement:

Two-way conversations that provides opportunities for mutual learning

*Examples: Coffee-chats, roundtable discussions*

## Questions for Self-Reflection

Am I listening and asking the right questions?

Were the discussions surrounding the project, or any benefits, collaborative?

Are developments following community engagements mutual? Sustained? Reciprocal?

Have I been inclusive of the history and goals of the community?

## Overview

Outreach and engagement are crucial for raising CCS awareness and disseminating information. Early and successful community engagement fosters cooperation and reduces risks for developing projects. Here are some tips and best practices:

- Research the community's history beforehand. Showing up without prior knowledge of the history and goals of the community may not convey a strong interest in their concerns.
- Be aware of your audience's needs and consider providing additional support for in-person events or meetings such as translators, transportation, childcare, handout materials, or other resources.
- You may consider dressing casually, and/or with the idea of fitting in with your community.
- It is important to build trust and connections. This may often take form in making contact with a spokesperson who is a trusted community member. Additional contacts may also include advocacy groups, local government, and others.
- Many projects will take time to get off the ground, do not disappear after making the obligatory appearances. We recommend continuing to maintain and grow your contacts.
- Effective engagement relies on listening and responding to ensure collaborative discussions. Listen to feedback and reflect (see the reflection questions on the bottom left of this page).
- Include the community while writing your community benefits plan.

## What do community benefits look like in practice?

This is not an all-inclusive list, but here are some common examples which highlight benefits that are sustainable and reciprocal:

- Improving local infrastructure (roads, drainage, internet access, access to emergency services, etc.)
- Committing to workforce developments in the community
- Investing in educational programs or job training
- Targeting contracting commitments from local businesses