

## NI Open Government Network - OGP Summit Session Proposal

**Working Title:** 'Rules of Engagement'

**Format:** 80 minute workshop

**Track:** How to open government

**Purpose:** To co-design methods & ground rules for engagement between citizens & government

### Context

Citizen participation in policy-making, planning and governance, is a necessary condition for wellbeing, democracy and social justice. Public services, which include our hospitals, schools, police forces and the courts, belong to citizens who all live with the impact they have in our community. The challenge is to create more opportunities for civic society and individual citizens to shape decisions that impact on their community and on their lives.

Social policy would be better researched, more credible, more reliable, and more grounded in real life if it were routinely developed *by and with* both the *providers* and *users* of public services. If people are given a real opportunity to help shape society, this will result in: policy options grounded in better knowledge of public values and priorities; more engaged and empowered citizens; greater public understanding of the issues involved; shared responsibility for policy creation, implementation and outcomes; as well as better understanding of and greater trust in government.

At a variety of levels there is a clear imperative to re-engage citizens in the governing process. The agenda for civic participation and engagement reflects recent national & international developments policies. However, engaging with government is often a challenging experience and could benefit from defining the most effective rules or guidelines for engagement.

### Event Format

4 x 10 minute lightning talks sharing experiences of citizen/government engagement.

We intend to present our reflections on the process of engagement with government in Northern Ireland. We would welcome presentations from other nations on their experience of engaging with government. These global perspectives will inform and set the context for the workshop sessions which will explore:

- *Attendees experience of engaging with government*
- *Collaborative agenda setting and engagement processes*
- *Effective methods of engagement*
- *Adopting protocols for open and transparent communications*
- *Tools and structures for effective collaboration and co-design*
- *Deliberative Engagement and Innovation examples from elsewhere*

### Final output:

A set of guidelines on the rules of engagement produced by session participants to be made available in a toolkit format for all OGP reformers.