

# EngageTech Forum 2018: New Zealand

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August 2018



**The  
Policy  
Project**

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# EngageTech Forum – Opening Panel

The EngageTech Forum was an interactive event designed to help government staff understand the spectrum of technologies available for community consultation and stakeholder engagement both online and offline. The forum explored the different ways government can use technology to understand, engage and work with communities and stakeholders. It provided an opportunity for public servants to connect with peers, technology experts and vendors.

65 people from the NZ government participated in the EngageTech Forum, from 25 government agencies and four councils. Engage2 organised the forum and prepared a report on the observations and findings to share with those who participated in the forum.

This conversation tracker explores the key themes discussed by the opening panel, and we invite you to share it widely. The opening panel featured presentations from the following speakers:



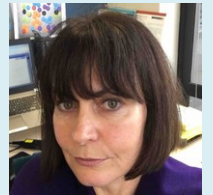
**The Policy Project**

**Diane Owenga**, Programme Director, gave the first presentation about where engagement fits in the policy cycle.



**Te Tari Taiwhenua  
Internal Affairs**

**Christine Bennett**, General Manager, talked about how technology can support government engagement with the public and stakeholders.



**Elizabeth Eppel**, Senior Research and Teaching Fellow, discussed how government can improve its engagement with the public.



**Kenneth Aiolupotea**, Head of Citizen Engagement and Insights, shared his experience of engaging the public in Auckland, NZ's largest, most diverse city.



**Amelia Loye**, Founder and Managing Director, explored industry trends and how technology can support different types of engagement.



**PEP**

BUILDING "ARCHITECTURES OF LISTENING"

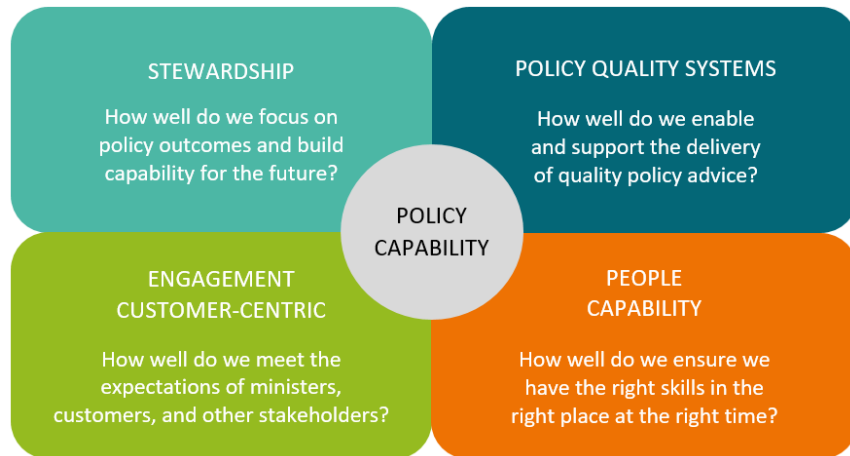
**Simon Wright**, Partner, concluded the opening panel by holding a question and answer session with the participants.





Diane Owenga described the way in which the process for developing policy is changing to meet increasing citizen expectations, embrace technological change, seek better ways to develop policy in a contested market, and ultimately empower citizens.

The ability to engage and collaborate with diverse stakeholders and co-create solutions is an important skill for today's policy practitioner. It is also important for building and maintaining trust in government.



The Policy Project has created three policy improvement frameworks to help agencies deliver great advice. The frameworks are mutually reinforcing and contain common themes, such as engagement and seeking out diverse perspectives.

Today, the nature of how and when engagement occurs depends on the policy challenge. It can encompass the more traditional techniques (e.g. discussion paper) to the newer techniques of placing decision-making in the hands of a citizen jury, and everything in between.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Much will depend on your stakeholders, timeframes, budget and who has decision-making authority. It can be challenging to know how and when to engage the public and stakeholders. At the same time, it opens the door to experimentation with new technology and ways of reaching stakeholders.

Diane asked the audience to think about how they can use engagement to help ensure they are creating the best policy advice to improve the lives of New Zealanders.



### Policy Project

[www.dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/policy-project](http://www.dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/policy-project)

### The Head of the Policy Profession

Want to know what the Head of the Policy Profession thinks about? Join the LinkedIn Page [Head of the Policy Profession Group New Zealand](#).

# How digital can support engagement

Christine Bennett spoke about the role of digital engagement, and that effective engagement uses both online and offline methods. In 2017, the Department of Internal Affairs researched the ways in which technology can support participation in government. They talked to 195 citizens, nine non-government organisations and 20 government agencies.

## The insights from this research were developed into draft participation principles:

- Be genuine and meaningful
- Be clear on your intent
- Collaborate
- Go to where the people are
- Be open and honest
- Personalise the way people can engage
- Keep people informed
- Respect diversity
- Respect the information

For more information, go to [www.digital.govt.nz](http://www.digital.govt.nz)



## The Marketplace

The Department is currently testing the Marketplace with a group of agencies and suppliers. The Marketplace will simplify how the NZ Government buys ICT and lower the barriers for suppliers to provide services. This will make it easier for agencies to purchase online engagement tools.

## Questions

Christine posed the following questions to the audience:

1. Would there be interest in establishing an engagement community of practice?
2. What digital tools are currently being used by agencies and could be included in the Marketplace in the future?

Elizabeth Eppel spoke about her observations of government agencies engaging the public and stakeholders. She reflected that agencies require the right capability and a process of continuous learning to drive a strategic approach to engagement.

Without a strategic approach, government engagement with the public and stakeholders tends to:

- focus on the agency and what it needs, rather than identifying and learning from the knowledge of others
- be episodic and waste collaborative capital. Different agencies, or even the same agency, ask citizens the same questions and don't learn from the engagement that has gone before with the result that the goodwill of the public to collaborate and share is undermined.

“An episodic approach to engagement results in citizens being asked the same questions over and over.”



## Question

Elizabeth asked the audience to think about how agencies can conserve collaborative capital in the community and build on the insights from each public engagement so that they can be accessed from across government?



Kenneth Aiolupotea shared his insights on public engagement in Auckland, New Zealand's largest and most diverse city.



Engagement with residents happens in three equally important areas where digital technology is having an increasingly profound impact:

- as citizens, exercising their rights to engage in representative and participatory democracy
- as communities, where the focus is on developing and maintaining relationships with and between diverse groups in order to achieve shared outcomes
- as customers, who receive services and access to public goods that directly affect their quality of life.

For more information, go to [www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/have-your-say](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/have-your-say)



## Engagement examples

Kenneth provided examples of different types of engagements undertaken by Auckland Council:

- Consultation on the 10-year budget and Auckland Plan 2050. Feedback was received across three broad channels – written, in-person and digital – with over 30,000 pieces of feedback received in four weeks.
- Upsouth, the community-led platform operating in South Auckland, which is led by the Southern Initiative. Different groups can pose a question about a local challenge and people can post their thoughts and ideas. People who contribute ideas can earn an income for their effort.

## Initiatives to support engagement

Auckland Council has a growing suite of initiatives to support engagement with Māori and diverse communities including:

- the People's Panel which is an online panel of 32,000 citizens who provide feedback through surveys
- robotics used to automate the feedback processing process to reduce cost and improve efficiency
- Insights Library which brings together the results of citizen engagement across the Auckland Council in one place.

Amelia Loye spoke about the importance of multi-channel engagement and that one channel won't work for every audience. Amelia has discovered 95 different technologies being used by governments in English speaking countries to support engagement. It is becoming more important for governments to learn the language of the technology providers. When planning an engagement, consider the following key points:

- Who is your audience, how do they receive information they trust and what are their preferred channels? How can you understand and reach representative samples of your community?
- How can you collect and analyse information quickly and reuse the insights for future work?
- How will your engagement contribute to building trust in the NZ government?

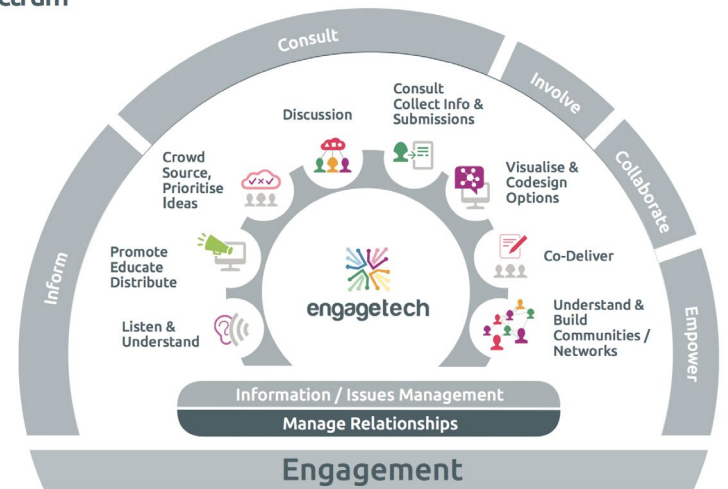
Technology, as part of a multi-channel engagement, can help you with each of these points.



For more information, go to [www.engage2.com.au](http://www.engage2.com.au)

## Engagement spectrum

engagetech  
Spectrum



The engagetech spectrum categorises the different types of technologies available to engage community and stakeholders, and emphasises the importance of managing information and the relationships created. The spectrum was developed by engage2 to compliment the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum.

The spectrum is surrounded by a semicircle with an outer ring that represents the five levels of participation within the IAP2 model. The inner ring of the semicircle matches the types of technology that can be used to engage for each purpose.



Simon Wright concluded the opening panel by holding a question and answer session with the panel and participants. The main points discussed are below.

- A multi-channel approach is important to include the digitally excluded. Taking the technology to the community is a way of building capability.
- Need to consider the engagement from the participant's perspective in terms of 'what's in it for them'.
- Report back to the community on what was learnt, what this means and what is going to be done based on the findings.
- Need to be clear and up front about how the information will be used. This is important for building and maintaining trust in government.
- Understand how people engage with government, as well as social networks and how people engage with each other.
- Sharing information with other government agencies can be challenging if the engagement has not been set up at the beginning with this reuse in mind.

### Examples of how to use engagement

- Engage to understand the problem and gather ideas. This is where using the insights from previous engagements can add value.
- Engage to test the draft policy solution and seek feedback. Consider identifying influencers in the community to help share and distribute information.
- Engage with stakeholders to co-deliver the policy intervention.

### Want to get help or find out more?

For information on why you should engage individuals and groups in policy design and development, what it involves, what you'll get out of it, when to use it, limitations, tools or concepts, and existing expertise, see the Policy Project's [Policy Methods Toolbox](#).

For help with designing an online engagement strategy, visit the [Online Engagement Guidance](#) developed by the Department of Internal Affairs.

Before going live with your engagement, remember to submit information about your consultation on the public-facing website [Govt.nz](#). This page makes it easier for the public to find information about online engagements.

For any other help or to share lessons or training material please [email the Policy Project](#).