



### Handout

#### Audience engagement during the entire story cycle

Audiences can be engaged and encouraged to participate during the entire story development and publication process – both with face-to-face events and through social media and other communication channels. The Constructive Institute has mapped out a plan in which a variety of actors – from the public to decision-makers and other stakeholders – can enrich reporting.

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- **Idea development:** Before finding a story, see if you can involve the public so you can learn which issues are important to them. You can reach out to them via social media, surveys, newsletters or on other platforms.
  - **Research:** Once the story topic has been found, consider involving the public in researching it. That way you can access new knowledge, find sources and get unexpected input by going beyond the “usual suspects”. The goal is to arrive at a mutual understanding of the issue, not just your personal perception of it.
  - **Writing:** As the story is coming together, consider reaching out to the public when new issues or angles come up. Maybe it’s a dynamic situation and things are changing frequently. Get input along the way. Do you show members of the public your drafts for input? Some reporters even engage in co-writing strategies.
  - **After publication:** Once the story is out there, solicit feedback. How was it received? What were its strengths and shortcomings? Should there be a follow-up piece? Use this feedback to inform which stories you’ll cover in the future and how you’ll cover them.