

EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION

A toolkit for the co-operative movement



NEW
CITIZENSHIP
PROJECT

CO-OPERATIVES UK



WHAT IS EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION?

As co-operatives, we are fundamentally participatory organisations. It's in our DNA.



Until recently, though, participation at scale has been limited to what might be called “economic participation”, by which we mean trading with us; and at the other end of the spectrum, a relatively small number of people able and willing to get involved in “governance participation”, taking an active role in our democratic structures.

However, particularly with the advent of the digital age, there is a whole new space opening up in between these two extremes, where members can get closer to and indeed contribute to our work in small but very significant ways, on an everyday basis - in doing so building loyalty and engagement, contributing ideas and energy to our organisations and the movement as a whole.

This is “**everyday participation**”.

WELCOME

This toolkit is designed for everyone who works on membership - whether in marketing, people or strategy teams - at co-operatives of all shapes and sizes, to introduce the concept of Everyday Participation, and help you start harnessing it for the benefit of your organisation.

It is made up of two main elements: this booklet, setting out the key ideas and giving an overview of the process that generated them; and a set of seven cards, each introducing one of the seven modes of Everyday Participation. Each card has case study examples and idea generation prompts to help you build this approach in your organisation.

SEVEN MODES OF EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION

ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Consume products
Choose options
Feedback comments

EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION

1. Tell stories
2. Gather data
3. Share connections
4. Contribute ideas
5. Give time
6. Learn skills
7. Crowdfund innovation

GOVERNANCE PARTICIPATION

Vote for representatives
Stand for office
Make decisions



EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION INSIDE AND OUT

The concept of Everyday Participation is something co-operatives of all shapes and sizes can benefit from, whether “worker” or “consumer” co-operatives, large or small. Regardless of who your members are, these new modes offer a host of everyday but significant ways for them to shape your co-operative.

Indeed, one of the most critical steps in harnessing Everyday Participation is to build a participatory culture inside an organisation - so even if you are a “consumer” co-operative, you may find experimenting with ways to

harness the ideas and energy of staff a powerful way to start.

Equally, as the examples in the toolkit show, plenty of organisations that are not owned by their customers are harnessing Everyday Participation already - so even if you are a “worker” co-operative, you could still generate great value for your business by using these modes to involve your customers more too.



A MOMENT OF OPPORTUNITY

Everyday Participation is taking shape as an exciting new way of working across many different sectors and industries, as you'll see from the case studies in this toolkit. Now is the time for co-operatives, for whom participation is in the DNA, to reap the benefits of this exciting approach.

The fortunes of BrewDog, one of the pioneers of this way of working, are a particularly powerful illustration of what's possible. The only business to have ranked in the Sunday Times 100 Fastest Growing Companies in the UK for the last six years running, and rooted in equity crowdfunding, their model is almost entirely built around the seven modes we introduce in this toolkit, offering people a fundamentally different relationship with the company.

There is a lot to learn from the way Everyday Participation is taking shape beyond the co-operative movement, but ultimately the ownership structures involved do not back them up. Imagine what our movement will be able to do if we can harness this approach AND put it together with the power and voice that only co-operatives can deliver.

CREATING THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit is the final output of a Collaborative Innovation project convened by creative participation experts the New Citizenship Project, bringing together representatives of four leading organisations to explore what co-operatives specifically can learn from emerging trends in participation.

The process involved a series of collaborative workshops, with the four co-operatives experimenting in between. Throughout, the New Citizenship team worked with them to understand what came easily and what proved more difficult, while also undertaking wide-ranging research to bring inspiration and challenge into the process both from the broader co-operative movement and beyond.

This toolkit builds on previous work by the New Citizenship Project including *The Future of Membership* (www.thefutureofmembership.info) and *This Is The #CitizenShift: a guide to understanding and embracing the emerging era of the Citizen* (www.citizenshift.info).

THE PARTICIPANTS

Great experience and eye-opener. Provided the vision and support needed in order to make it clear the direction that the co-operative movement needs to go.

THE CO-OP GROUP



Along with rolling out our new purpose and approach, we are really starting to consider 'Everyday Participation' as a means to delivering 'bringing together ideas, energy and resources to make life better in our communities.

LINCOLNSHIRE CO-OP

Taking part in this project gave us the renewed focus and confidence that participation is the key to building a thriving membership and as a mutual society is still core to our purpose.

NATIONWIDE

WHY EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION MATTERS

Deeper engagement - whether customers or staff, offering more dynamic opportunities to participate deepens engagement, resulting in members who are more likely to stay longer, contribute more value, and spend more money



Better ideas - participatory processes harness more ideas from more people who are closer to the problem we are trying to solve



Greater social impact - more, better ideas delivered through a more engaged member base results in greater impact on the communities we work in

Tell me and I will forget
Show me and I might remember
Involve me and I will understand

CHINESE PROVERB



The New Citizenship Project is an innovation company who specialise in participation, helping organisations involve people as Citizens rather than solely selling to Consumers. For more, please visit NEWCITIZENSHIP.ORG.UK



Co-operatives UK is the network for Britain's thousands of co-operatives. Our mission is to grow the co-operative economy and alongside our members we work to promote, develop and unite co-operatives across all sectors, from major high street retailers and large agricultural businesses to community owned pubs and credit unions. For more information, visit UK.COOP



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7 MODES OF EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION

This set of cards is intended to help you build your ideas as to what Everyday Participation could look like in your organisation.



Each card introduces one of the Seven Modes of Everyday Participation, providing a brief introduction to the mode and how best to use it, some prompts to help you come up with ideas for how you could use it in your organisation, and on the reverse some quick fire case studies - drawn from a wide range of organisations - to give you some inspiration.

These modes can be used to design and develop initiatives aimed at increasing participation for workers or customers, or both. You'll find case studies that cover both groups.

7 MODES OF EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION

EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION

Tell stories

Gather data

Share connections

Contribute ideas

Give time

Learn skills

Crowdfund innovation



1. TELL STORIES

What is it?

Giving people a framework and structure to share their personal experiences.

When should you use it?

Real stories of personal experience relevant to your product or cause can be very powerful marketing material, but simple, shareable stories can also be useful market research.

FIVE STARTING POINTS

1. What story about your organisation should everyone know and why?
2. How could collecting stories help you build confidence, focus or celebrate what you do?
3. Pick a common area in your organisation (like the kitchen, printer area or reception) to start gathering and celebrating member or customer stories, or use lunch breaks to share those stories
4. Come up with five positive and generative questions to help uncover great stories (eg. what's great, what are you most proud of, what is your dream?)
5. Come up with three organisations you can partner with to crowdsource, tell or celebrate stories that matter to you



TELL STORIES: INSPIRATION

The Brigade is a unique social enterprise restaurant in London. It has a training kitchen which provides apprenticeships to help homeless people find employment in the hospitality sector. Throughout the venue there are framed photos of staff with introductions to their stories. This not only builds and boosts staff confidence and pride, but also showcases The Brigade's purpose to diners.

I AM PUNK is a digital campaign from BrewDog to showcase the diversity of its community and to celebrate the punk mentality that underpins everything BrewDog does. At the 2017 AGM (Annual General Mayhem) BrewDog harvested the stories of 2,500 'Equity Punks' before travelling across the country to collect more stories. Brewdog also sent every Punk a poster with one of the images with the task "to do with them what they dare"...

'History Matters - pass it on', a national campaign which ran back in 2006, aimed to highlight the importance of history in our everyday lives by asking people to tell stories about why history matters. Over the six month life of the campaign, the public shared over 76,000 messages about why history matters to them via a series of postcards, comments, and blogs. The campaign had business results for the sector too; more than 1 million people visited a heritage site during a single weekend of the campaign.



2. GATHER DATA

What is it?

Asking people to collect information with you as part of a data gathering exercise.

When should you use it?

This is most often used in service, product and policy development, as a way of turning product testing processes that used to be private into powerful marketing, but can also be a great campaigning tool to help harness the energy of members in campaigns to change government policy.

FIVE STARTING POINTS

1. What data would be really good to have and why?
2. What information would be great to get but needs more perspectives than just your own?
3. What data could members help you gather that would help make the case for a change you need to make or want to see in the world?
4. Bring a prototype (comms piece, product or service idea etc.) to your next staff meeting and test it with colleagues from different departments
5. Create a simple prototype or one not-quite-finished idea and send it out to a sample of customers for testing and feedback



GATHER DATA: INSPIRATION

Sports brand Under Armour run an employee Beta Programme, where new products are tested and feedback data is provided before products are released onto the market. The company aims to sign all employees up to the beta programme as part of their induction. This allows them to catch issues before products are released and collective testing and improvement have become a core part of the internal culture.

RSPB runs the Big Garden Birdwatch each year, inviting people to become citizen scientists by sharing sightings of specific birds. By using the data of its citizens, RSPB have forged deeper engagement with its members and the public, offering them the opportunity to contribute to and help shape the future of the charity.

Star Citizen is the most crowdfunded computer game of all time, having raised over \$175 million since 2012. In addition to giving money, Star Citizens are invited to join the Public Test Universe - a version of the game that offers experimental versions of upcoming patches. From collecting crash data and submitting it via the Public Crash Handler to reporting system bugs and testing new patches, Star Citizens are gathering data which is helping to refine and improve the game itself.



3. SHARE CONNECTIONS

What is it?

Providing an incentive, structure and purpose for members to talk about your business or organisation to others or each other.

When should you use it?

Similar to member-get-member recruitment approaches, this mode is a great marketing tool, particularly for harnessing the reach of social media. It can also be used for campaigning as it encourages and equips members to communicate with each other about your organisation within their networks, both digitally via social media and in person.

FIVE STARTING POINTS

1. What things about your organisation would you love your members to proudly shout about?
2. When was the last time you did something for another organisation and what can you learn from that?
3. What ongoing conversations could you join, and where are your customers already connecting with each other - how might you build on these?
4. Pick an idea that encourages members to organise themselves to get a big crowd together (eg. fund a party or create a pop-up store)
5. Come up with three creative actions for people to do to help you increase your reach



SHARE CONNECTIONS: INSPIRATION

Waterstones' turnaround and return to profit has been largely credited to treating every branch as a local independent bookstore. They encourage and facilitate connections between customers by displaying customer reviews, inviting people to share recommendations, and running a series of monthly hyper-local book clubs at branches up and down the country. Many branches also run their own social media accounts, facilitating community and discussion.

The oft-cited Ice Bucket Challenge of 2014 was heralded as a global phenomenon, raising \$112 million for ALS in just six weeks and connecting people worldwide over a shared goal. The campaign asked people to share videos of themselves dunking a bucket of iced water over their heads to obtain donations from the crowd before crucially nominating others to do the same. This challenge asked people to contribute to something meaningful in a fun, engaging way - capitalising on the power of the crowd to share the challenge.

The Impact HUB is a global co-working space; a network of collaborators united in their focus on making a positive impact in the world. Whilst members have a physical space to work, they are also welcomed into the global HUB community and connected to thousands of potential collaborators worldwide. Each local HUB runs their own community programme offering member-led feedback sessions, community lunches and mindfulness mornings.

4. CONTRIBUTE IDEAS

What is it?

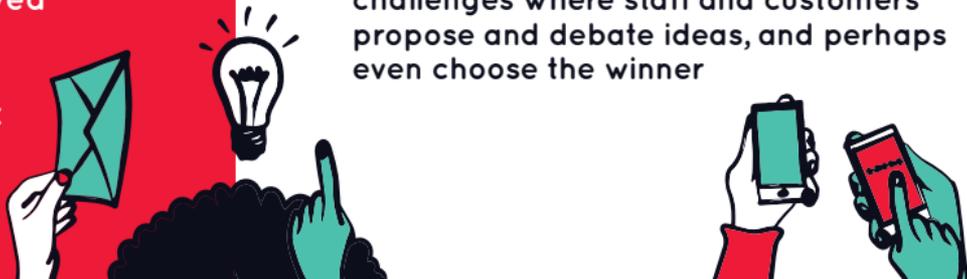
Sharing the problem or opportunity you are working on with people, and asking for their ideas.

When should you use it?

Product or service innovation, overall ideas for how your business could do better, and for any big unsolved strategic challenges that often require people to act or think differently.

FIVE STARTING POINTS

1. Is there a challenge you've had for a while that you could use some collective brain on?
2. Set up a suggestion scheme to collect ideas to improve operations and build staff confidence in creativity and problem solving
3. Come up with three ways to turn existing feedback mechanisms into meaningful idea generation opportunities
4. Use different existing social media channels to pose a question or challenge, and see which one works best for crowdsourcing ideas
5. Set aside some money to run annual challenges where staff and customers propose and debate ideas, and perhaps even choose the winner



CONTRIBUTE IDEAS: INSPIRATION

Walmart founder Sam Walton believed in “making ideas bubble up”, creating a ‘Tell Sam’ suggestion scheme which encouraged employees to propose ideas for how Walmart could do better - direct to him (or at least his personal office). Thousands of suggestions were submitted and each suggestion received a personal response from Walton. Recognising his employees’ contributions directly increased the number of submissions and employee satisfaction.

In 2017, Pret a Manger CEO Clive Schlee used Twitter to ask the public ‘How can Pret encourage more customers to bring a reusable cup?’. The invitation saw Pret inundated with suggestions, ideas and feedback from the public. As a direct response to these contributions, Pret has implemented a 50p discount for bringing a reusable cup, and are exploring further ideas to source a new well-designed reusable cup to sell in-store as well as increasing the use of china cups in their shops.

Amnesty International’s ‘Panic Button’ is an app which transforms a smartphone into a secret alarm that alerts friends and colleagues that the user is in danger of illegal arrest. It’s the Amnesty crowd’s response to a challenge - ‘How can technology help people working to uphold human rights in the face of unlawful detention?’ - on innovation platform OpenIDEO. This process invited high levels of participation throughout - from idea generation to testing, constantly sourcing ideas and feedback.



5. GIVE TIME

What is it?

Offering people opportunities to do (usually) short but meaningful tasks to help your organisation.

When should you use it?

This is a great way to give people a different view of your organisation or of their community, as a HR exercise or a community engagement approach.

FIVE STARTING POINTS

1. What simple, short tasks could people do for or with you?
2. What structures or tools allow people to share and celebrate their contribution in a creative way?
3. Get colleagues to spend time in different departments to learn more about your business, contribute their knowledge or build internal collaborations
4. Ask your members to come up with actions they can do about something that matters to them
5. Create three non-financial thank-yous for those giving time to help create community belonging or a sense of pride



GIVE TIME: INSPIRATION

Clark is a live chat and customer support software company which gives every employee in the company the option of a regular support shift away from their normal responsibilities. CTO Matt Pizzimenti says “People here love getting that hands-on time with new features. It also gives non-product people the chance to have some ownership of a new feature, and influence the changes directly.”

GoodGym is a running club with a difference - harnessing people's energy towards social good whilst building on an activity that people are already doing. It offers multiple ways for individuals to contribute - from mission runs (running to help older people with one-off tasks) to coach runs (running regularly to see an isolated person) and group runs (running together with a group to a fixed location to help out with community projects).

3 Things for Calgary is an online platform that asks people to think about three things they could do to make their city better. Citizens are then invited to do these, share them online and nominate 3 other people to do the same. Its success in empowering citizens across the city has ultimately increased the city's feeling of belonging and collective placemaking.



6. LEARN SKILLS

What is it?

Providing a formal or informal learning offer related to an aspect of your business for staff or members.

When should you use it?

Thinking about what skills people might find interesting to develop can create powerful advocates of both staff and customers. Even if only a few people actually participate, the impact on people's perception of your organisation, just by them being aware of the offer, is significant.

FIVE STARTING POINTS

1. What skills do you have that you can easily share or teach?
2. What can you learn from existing skill sharing platforms like TimeRepublik or FutureLearn?
3. Create a buddy or mentor system in which you can be both teacher and learner
4. Set up an internal platform to offer and ask for skills, or run an event for staff to offer their various different skills to each other
5. Could you spend the first ten minutes of your next team meeting on this?



LEARN SKILLS: INSPIRATION

Marks and Spencer 'Don't just be a colleague, be a buddy' is the mantra of M&S employee-led group The Buddy Network. Set up by two employees, the network is for staff currently managing health conditions. It operates both online and offline via the online M&S Yammer group and face-to-face 'coffee and chat' sessions. Whilst encouraging and enabling employees to buddy-up, the network has also been used as a touchpoint for the M&S senior team, offering them a different way of thinking about how best to support employees.

The Re-Start Project is a social enterprise that encourages and empowers people to use their electronics longer, equipping people with the skills and resources to repair them, catalysing a movement of repairers. They run regular 're-start parties' with 'party-kits' provided for the hosts. Hosts share their repair skills and knowledge, and guests are able to learn in a fun, informal environment.

The Guardian Masterclass programme is an international series of face-to-face courses. It offers everything from writing classes with leading Guardian writers, to data visualisation and food styling, as well as providing expert advice. The classes encourage open discussion and the peer-to-peer sharing of ideas. This approach gives real insight into what it is to be a journalist, providing a product that can be sold but also builds understanding and appreciation of the organisation as a whole.



7. CROWDFUND INNOVATION

What is it?

Asking people to fund new products or services before they exist, or adding features or improvements to existing products or services.

When should you use it?

New product development and concept testing done in this way can develop huge member engagement and loyalty, and build an audience for a product before it even exists. This is also a great way to reinforce relationships and loyalty between customers and existing products or services.

FIVE STARTING POINTS

1. What's an idea you've been sitting on for a while that others could help make a reality?
2. Who could you partner with to get a new idea or product going?
3. Get a number of departments to collaborate together to fund an innovative product or idea
4. Come up with three different experiences or non-financial rewards people get for contributing money
5. Create an innovation challenge that's useful to your business cause or offer and match-fund the proposals which receive the greatest financial backing



CROWDFUND INNOVATION: INSPIRATION

SOUP is a growing worldwide experiment in crowdfunding, whose purpose is to change cities over dinner. Run as a series of public dinnertime events, attendees pay roughly £10 (or the local equivalent) for a ticket, then hear four pitches for ideas to make the local area better, before eating a meal of soup and bread together. Attendees then vote for the winning project pitch, which receives all the ticket money.

Technology Will Save Us is a toy company that create make-it-yourself kits and digital tools to help kids play, code and invent, and empower parents to become creators of technology. Encouraging people to join the 'mover-ment', this company crowdfunds all its products on Kickstarter, receiving not only financial backing, but creating a movement of makers in the process.

Spacehive is the UK's dedicated crowdfunding platform for placemaking. Any citizen can pitch ideas that will make the local area better (but which need funding in order to happen). Once a project has gained the backing of fellow citizens, Spacehive's model then connects ideas to the people, councils, companies and grant-makers ready and willing to fund them - forming partnerships that can enable the idea to grow from the ground up.

