

**FUTURE OF ORBOST
& DISTRICT
PROJECT**

Stakeholder Communications and Engagement Plan 2024

Version 1.1

WORKING DOCUMENT

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1. Introduction

Good communications and engagement practices are central to good project/Program management and governance and ensuring responsiveness to the needs of stakeholders. Effective engagement -:

- Ensures common understandings and supports realistic expectations;
- Ensures relevance;
- Builds trust;
- Ensures transparency;
- Generates conversations;
- Supports inclusive participation;
- Supports innovation and collaboration;
- Assists in needs, interests, and opportunities;
- Assists in addressing tight budgets and limited resources;
- Maximises value from public funds.

This document outlines the purpose, framework, and principles of the Future of Orbost (FoO) Program communications and engagement plan.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Communications and Engagement Plan is to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower project stakeholders, and is aligned with the Future of Orbost Program Logical Framework and its stated purpose.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the Communications and Engagement Plan are to-:

1. Increase awareness and support shared understandings of the Future of Orbost (FoO) Project across stakeholders.
2. Ensure consistency of messaging in relation to the FoO project and the funding agreements that are supporting it.
3. Facilitate active engagement and participation in FoO Program activities – with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion across the quadruple helix of community, industry, knowledge institutions and government.
4. Identify and understand the activities, needs, interests, aspirations and challenges of community, industry, and other stakeholders in order to drive alignment across initiatives, identify potential new projects, identify potential new partnerships, and identify advocacy opportunities.
5. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and adapt as required.

4. Stakeholders

Stakeholder mapping is a strategic process to be employed across all elements of FoO Program management to identify, analyse, and visualise individuals, groups, or entities that have an interest or influence on the Program and all its project elements. The process involves creating a visual

representation or map that categorises stakeholders based on their attributes, interests, and levels of influence. Online tools like Mural and Miro can greatly support this. Where applicable stakeholder mapping may also extend to network analysis. By employing network analysis in stakeholder mapping, organisations/Programs can gain a comprehensive understanding of the overall structure of the stakeholder network and identify key influencers, connectors, and dependencies.

In terms of the current structural arrangements of the FoO Program the 'Critical Stakeholders; (i.e. those who currently have the 'power' to stop the Program) are considered to be:-

- DEECA (Program sponsor)
- Orbost & District Chamber of Commerce and Industry (host)

Other stakeholders across the quadruple helix need to be considered in terms of those that represent:-

- Low interest, low influence – (i.e. those who need to be kept informed)
- High interest, low influence – (i.e. those who need to be consulted with and involved)
- Low interest, high influence – (i.e. those that need to be involved – considering varying requirements of co-ordination, co-operation and collaboration)
- High interest, high influence – (i.e. those that with whom collaboration and/or empowerment will be key for delivering positive impact).

5. A framework of engagement (which draws on the IAP2¹ model)

The framework below outlines different levels of engagement, ranging from inform, consult, involve, collaborate, to empower. Each level represents an increasing degree of stakeholder influence on the decision-making and implementation processes, reflecting a commitment to more inclusive and participatory practices.

The implementation of the framework will be included in 90-day activity plans – and needs to consider:-

- 'what' (message);
- 'who' (target audience);
- 'when' (timeline);
- 'how' (channel);

(refer simple template in Attachment 5-1).

¹ [IAP2 spectrum \(iap2.org.au\)](http://iap2.org.au)

Increasing level of impact				
Stakeholder Participation Goal				
INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
To keep stakeholders up to date with FoO Program and related activities.	To receive ideas on needs, projects and activities	To work with stakeholders to ensure that ideas, needs, expectations and feedback are incorporated into IWGs and other Program activities.	To facilitate partnerships across stakeholders to achieve shared goals.	To place final decision-making and commitment to act in the hands of community and industry representatives.
Promise to stakeholders				
We will keep you informed	We will keep you informed and listen to your needs, expectations, feedback, and ideas – and ensure that all feedback loops are closed-out.	We will work with you to ensure that your ideas, needs, expectations and feedback are factored into what we do	We will work with you to facilitate mutually beneficial and integrated outcomes, whilst respecting that each stakeholder may also have different individual needs and expectations	We will support what you decide
Tools				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Social Media • Newsletters • Forums • Local print media and radio/TV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Forums • Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Co-design • Planning sessions • Vibrant project/ co-working space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements of intent/ partnership arrangements • Steering Committees/ Working Groups • Multi-stakeholder business models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegated/ considered decision making
Examples of behaviours that demonstrate levels of engagement				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know what is going on • Read newsletters (opens/clicks) • Social media reach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in surveys, forums, meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participate in events/ workshops • Share ideas, knowledge, connections • Respect the ideas of others • Can see a “what’s in it for me” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to pooling resources and/or power/influence for agreed outcomes • Collective/Systems Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complementary initiatives being independently pursued

6. Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI)

The above framework will also support MERI – with an emphasis on monitoring shifts in engagement towards more impactful levels of engagement.

Key will be the establishment of some form of ‘Customer Relationship Management’ (CRM) system. (CRM’s support the management of relationships and interactions with ‘customers’ or in this case stakeholders.)

7. Roles and responsibilities

The Program Manager is responsible for developing, delivering and monitoring the plan. Endorsement and oversight will be via the Governance Group.

Media releases and newsletters will be prepared by the Program Manager and approved by a nominated representative of the Host Organisation and/or Chair of the Governance Group

In terms of official Program spokesperson/s-

- The Program Manager is the spokesperson to the public and government for matters of an operational nature;
- The nominated representative of the Host Organisation and/or Chair of the Governance Group is the spokesperson on sensitive and strategic matters which would be discussed and agreed in advance with the ‘Critical Stakeholders’.

Any communications referencing the agreement between the Chamber and DEECA and/or Victorian Government’s Forestry Transition Program needs to be coordinated between the parties.

Members of governance and working groups can play an important role in supporting more informal lines of communication within the community and across other stakeholders. The Program Manager will support with key messaging that is periodically updated. In the case of members of governance and working groups speaking on behalf of the FoO Program at specific events/forums this should be in consultation with the representative of the Host Organisation and the Program Manager.

Consideration should also be given to:-

- how community members often wear many ‘hats’ and they need to be clear on which ‘hat’ they are ‘wearing’ when speaking on the behalf of the project;
- how communications is not just about ‘words’ spoken but also non-verbal communications/behaviours and the need for alignment and consistency with Program purpose, values, etc.

8. Key Messages

- Factual overviews of agreed plans, activities, progress, challenges
- (fact sheets/FAQs)
- Purpose Statement
- Collaboration, Collaboration, Collaboration
- Place-based/community decision-making

Sample template for communications planning

WHAT (Message)	WHO (Target Audience)	WHEN (Timeline)	HOW (Channel and/or who will deliver message)	Comments

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