

## **Harvest Themes/Feedback**

Below is a list of comments and questions reported out from a convening hosted by IPCE: Building a Community of Practice for D&D for Civic Engagement in Chicago on December 5, 2012.

### **BUILD FOUNDATIONS FOR A COMMUNITY of PRACTICE (CoP)**

#### 1. Develop relationships and connections

- Make more face-to-face discussion time to get to know one another
- Create list-serve or other online space for peer-to-peer issue discussion and sharing
- Develop easy-to-use listing with contact information for groups/people involved in this work
- Devise methods to encourage sharing across "streams"

#### 2. Identify shared purpose

- Talk at greater length and depth to surface the central issues (interests, goals, challenges) of our individual and collective work
- Develop a collective vision for how D&D can strengthen civic engagement in our area
- Define shared language to discuss this work

#### 3. Identify who needs to be part of CoP

- Consider how to involve people who value this work, but are not practitioners

#### 4. Identify resources for CoP support

- UIC/universities -- e.g., conceptual clarity and knowledge for capacity-building
- UIC/IPCE -- meeting space, research, list-serve, gathering in spring
- "Assets map" -- what already exists and how can we use it

### **ENVISION AND BUILD A CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### 1. Define geographic scope

- What is the best geographic level for cooperation? City of Chicago, Cook County, Metropolitan Area, Northeastern Illinois, State of Illinois?

#### 2. Explore how to define and measure "success"

- What does "success" look like? Commonalities and differences across streams
- Metrics for evaluating success. What do we measure and how?

#### 3. Develop a research-supported "case" for D&D for Civic Engagement

- Create convincing and succinct materials to share with prospective supporters
- Develop rationale for why this work is important, what it can achieve, etc
- Establish value of D&D for funders
- Tap into university resources -- how to connect researchers with practitioners and activists
- Find research confirming the relationship between participating in one method and impact on another (e.g., how exploratory dialogue can lead to collaborative action)

#### 4. Support skills sharing and development for designing & facilitating D&D

- Expand awareness of the diversity of methods. For example, via a "methods showcase" where people can share the methods they use, explain strengths/weaknesses, etc.
- Identify skill sets among local people and organizations. Who does what and where?
- Skills training. For example, Great Cities Institute could develop an online 6 week class + discussion forum using their online adult learning pedagogy or other kinds of facilitation training and mentoring.
- Explore and develop use of online space for D&D.
- Think more broadly about how to develop trained, coordinated human capital for this work.

#### 5. Strengthen civic skills for D&D among residents

- Restore civic education mission of public schools and ensure that state standards provide adequate skills training and practice in D&D
- Design civic education to bridge "civic achievement" gap based on race/ethnicity/income
- Develop responsible citizenship -- e.g., teach ethics in schools, about corruption
- Create physical spaces for civic skills development open to adults

#### 6. Identify and create public spaces for D&D in the area

- Compile list of safe, free, or inexpensive locations throughout the area that could be used for community D&D
- Create spaces where community dialogue happens on a regular basis (face-to-face and online)

#### 7. Publicize existing and create additional opportunities for public dialogue

- Identify and publicize D&D activities so more people may participate -- e.g., press + online to general public, via schools (so teachers/students can participate), etc
- Create regular opportunities for residents and politicians to connect on specific issues

#### 8. Develop structures for connecting conversations across separate communities

- How to connect conversations that are already taking place in individual communities and organizations with others across the city/county/region/state.

#### 9. Explore power issues that impact D&D in our region

- Roles of politicians and residents -- who leads, who follows, how can they work together
- How might citizens be more empowered?
- How might we build on example of Participatory Budgeting?
- What can we learn from community organizing about power?

#### 10. Explore how to better integrate issues of race-ethnicity-income inequality

- How to productively acknowledge the "elephants in the room" in D&D
- How to bridge the "civic achievement gap" between white/affluent and minority/less affluent residents

11. Develop technology tools

- University support for data visualization software

12. Connect with good government efforts

- How could D&D help shift region away from culture of corruption

13. Identify and/or develop processes communities can run themselves

- Clear, easy conflict resolution and management model

14. How to identify and manage risk and opportunity