

WHY DOES PARTICIPATION MATTER?

How to evaluate participatory
democracy



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PARTICIPATORY
BUDGETING PROJECT

www.participatorybudgeting.org



PARTICIPATORY
BUDGETING PROJECT

Who We Are

MISSION

*To empower people to decide together
how to spend public money.*

SERVICES

We have helped over 30 governments and institutions launch and improve participatory budgeting processes.

WHERE WE WORK

Across the US and Canada, with offices in
New York City and Oakland.



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HOW TO EVALUATE PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY?

Why evaluate?

- Improve the process
- Support outreach
- Demonstrate impact
- Document outcomes



Evaluation for whom?

- Decision-makers
- Funders
- Practitioners
- Participants



Evaluation by whom?

- External evaluators
- Participants
- Students
- Staff implementers



What to evaluate?

- Process
- Impacts
- Key Metrics for PB evaluation:

<https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/for-researchers/>

<i>Key Metric</i>	<i>Description</i>
1. # of PB participants	Indicates PB's reach and ability to engage the targeted population.
2. % of PB participants who are people of color	Along with metric 12, indicates PB's potential to engage communities that are marginalized in the traditional political process.
3. # of nongovernmental and community based organizations involved in PB	Indicates the extent to which PB engages civil society and fosters collaborations between civic society and local government.
4. # of community events and vote sites	Captures aspects of the process implementation that increase access during the idea collection phase, the project development phase and the voting phase.
5. # of total PB processes	Tracks growth and sustainability in PB processes over time. It will track the # of processes implemented each year overall and track the # and proportion of individual PB processes that continue vs. discontinue over time
6. Amount of funds allocated to PB Projects	Tracks the money allocated through PB in any one year. It indicates the actual amount of money committed to PB projects by officials.



How to evaluate?

- Surveys
 - Pre and post
 - After key stages (voting, assemblies)
- Interviews & Focus Groups
- Outcomes Data
 - Money
 - Projects



How to make evaluation matter?

- Ask staff implementers to review
- Regular memos
- Reports
- Briefings with process leaders and participants
- Webinars
- Outcomes tracking
- Media



What do we already know?

- Who participates
- What participants learn and how they change
- How participation impacts spending in some contexts
- How participation impacts individuals and communities in some contexts



What do we need to evaluate more?

- How to get to yes
- How design affects outcomes
- Who wants what





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