

Envisioning and Planning the Community Challenge

Step One: Define and articulate what a “Community Challenge” is and the role of the planning committee.

Define the plan:

To gather a representative planning team, first, write a concise description of what a community challenge is and the role of the planning team. The planning team will be responsible for designing the challenge related to the community’s best features, identifying the need it addresses, ensuring all members of the community are welcome, and overseeing the implementation of the project. While the project is mostly youth-led, the planning committee should include facilitators of all ages, who bring connections and experiences as they support youth.

Ideally, the concept is short enough to memorize as an “elevator pitch” – something you could share with a peer that would take no longer than an elevator ride to explain.

Sample Description/Invitation:

“A community challenge is a community-wide project centered on the unique features of the region, with a focus on bringing diverse community members together in ownership and belonging around a goal.”

“We would like your talent on the diverse, intergenerational committee that plans a spirited youth-led, community-wide challenge with the purpose of building community spirit while addressing a community need.”

The planning committee’s responsibilities include the following:

- Listening to and trusting youth voice and action
- Brainstorming the area’s unique features and strengths respected by all community members (keeping equity and inclusion at the center)
- Connecting with diverse community partners – business, government, and nonprofit
- Collaboratively brainstorming and articulating the challenge concept – What are we going to do? What does success look like?
- Collecting feedback and input on the plans from a variety of perspectives to assure inclusion and respect before finalizing and making it public – Will our plan be embraced by all in the community, regardless of race, culture, age, faith, and gender expression?
- Promoting the challenge in their networks
- Facilitating the planning, implementation, and celebration.
- A time commitment of ... (sample: one hour a week for 10 weeks and then periodic check-ins)

Note about this description:

Bear in mind at this stage, the challenge itself is not fleshed out. It is important that your planning partners have the opportunity to co-design the challenge, so do not overbuild the concept at this early stage.