



Participatory Budgeting Digital Toolkit for Youth Delegate Committees



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Design Project Presentation



About the course and assignment

INFO 678: Growing Up Digital

“This course explores, from a user centered perspective, digital technologies for young people and the ways that children and teens navigate contemporary socio-technical systems in their everyday lives. ... The driving goal of the course is to invite students into a culture of dignity that will help guide the design of positive socio-technical worlds for young people...”

Assignment: Design project to support civic literacy and community engagement

“Develop a low-tech prototype for a digital environment or online activity for children or teens (an app, an online service, an online scavenger hunt, online workshop) that supports civic literacy and community engagement.”

Background: Participatory Budgeting (PB)

- City Councilmembers set aside funding for projects that are proposed and voted on by constituents.
- Community members volunteer as delegates — take ideas and turn them into concrete ballot proposals.
- Delegates work in committees — some districts have youth committees composed of middle and high school students.



Project outcomes

Change in attitude:

- “In order to feel capable of exercising their civic responsibilities, young people must develop a belief in their individual as well as group efficacy. ... They are unlikely to develop such a belief without having firsthand evidence that they can indeed make a difference” (Walter, 2020).

Change in knowledge:

- Increased knowledge about the work of elected officials and/or city agencies (Kasdan et al., 2014).
- Better understanding of their neighbors and their community’s particular needs (Kasdan et al., 2014).

Change in skills:

- Quantitative data analysis, qualitative research methods, project management, teamwork, etc.

Digital toolkit components

- Project management templates.
- Resources and interactive templates to support development of the proposal.
- Resources about other funding sources, in case the proposal does not get funded through PB.
- Social features and other activities — supporting peer-to-peer connection and recognition of participant accomplishments.

Social features & other activities

HOMAGO: Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out (Koester & Haines, 2019)

Hanging Out:

- “Walled garden” social environment for youth delegates.
- Option to mark posts for public consumption through the official PB Instagram account.

Messing Around:

- Opportunities to involve other young people (such as delegates’ friends/classmates or young people who drop into the library).
- Example activities: brainstorming ideas for PB projects; mining city data for insights.

Geeking Out:

- Virtual badge system, recognizing and rewarding skill development and hard work (inspired by Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh teen badges).

Participatory Budgeting Digital Toolkit for Youth Delegate Committees

User profile: Taylor D.

Your badges [See all](#)

Top badge category

#2 badge category

Your posts [See all](#) New post

Yesterday Public Yesterday Private 2 days ago Private 4 days ago Public

Your materials

[Bookmarks](#) [Project schedule](#) [Shared calendar](#)

[Saved files](#) [To-do list](#) [Invitation materials](#)

[Shared folders](#) [Team deliverables](#)

Site name — links back to site homepage.

Menu — expand for full site navigation.

Your Badges section — dynamically generated, showing most recent badges earned by this user, with an indication of upcoming badges still to unlock. Supports “Geeking Out” by recognizing skill development.

See All Badges link — takes the user to a page where they can see branching badge pathways. Supports “Geeking Out” by giving youth ownership over their learning experience.

Your Posts section — dynamically generated, showing most recent posts by this user. Supports “Hanging Out” by providing secure opportunities for peer-to-peer connection.

New Post button — opens modal window for adding new post to either private “walled garden” for youth delegates or to public PB account.

Star icon — alert for new comments on the user’s post, click for more details.

Your Materials section — links to various individual and team materials that this user is working on.

Invitation Materials link — provides resources for the user to welcome classmates/friends into discrete PB activities identified for one-time participation. Supports “Messing Around” by youth who are not official delegates.

Connected civics

Connected learning (Ito & Martin, 2013):

- Shared purpose.
- Centered on production.
- Powered by young people's interests.
- Tied to skills.
- Openly networked infrastructures.

"Connected civics"

Connected learning that is centered on civic and political interests (Ito, 2015; Ito et al., 2015).

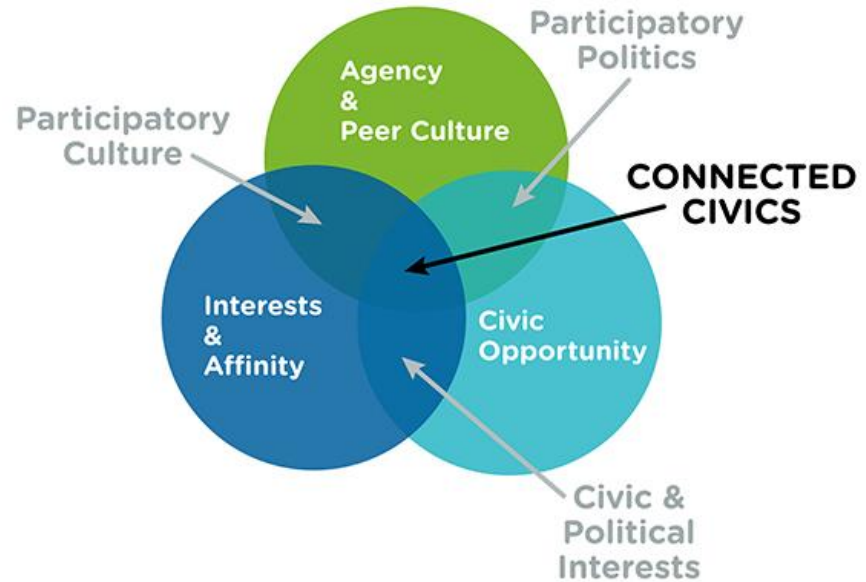


Image from Connected Learning Alliance blog post, Ito (2015)

Project evaluation

Primary Outcomes	Indicators	Sources/Methods	Inputs	Outputs
<i>Change in attitude:</i> individual & group efficacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Retention● Positive response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Retention rate compared to other youth programs● Participants' social content● Feedback from youth, including likelihood to participate again	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Youth librarian volunteers as facilitators● Library facilities, platforms, and equipment● DOE-issued devices	At least one annual youth-related proposal for the PB ballot in each district with youth delegates
<i>Change in knowledge:</i> government machinations and community	Improvement in youth-created deliverables and related discourse	Youth-created deliverables and social content from the end of the project, compared to the beginning		

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Thank you.