



*Democracy*  
**2025**

# CO-DESIGN AND DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT

What Works?

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**Report No.3**



Museum of  
Australian Democracy  
Old Parliament House



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## ABOUT DEMOCRACY 2025 – BRIDGING THE TRUST DIVIDE

Across Australia trust in our democracy is on the decline. Trust is the glue that facilitates collective action for mutual benefit. Without trust we don't have the ability to address complex, long-term challenges. Trust is also closely tied to democratic satisfaction. MoAD's (Museum of Australian Democracy) recent research, *Trust and Democracy in Australia*, shows that in 2018 satisfaction in democracy has more than halved in a decade and trust in key institutions and social leaders is eroding. By 2025 if nothing is done and current trends continue, fewer than 10 per cent of Australians will trust their politicians and political institutions – resulting in ineffective and illegitimate government, and declining social and economic wellbeing.

This problem must be addressed as a matter of urgency. MoAD is taking action. We are bringing together every section of the community and igniting a national conversation on strengthening Australian democratic practice. MoAD and our foundation partner, the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis at the University of Canberra (UC-IGPA), have embarked on a bold new initiative, *Democracy 2025*, to bridge the trust divide and re-engage Australians with their democracy.

MoAD holds a unique position, on the frontline of democracy, civic agency and change, a museum not just of objects but of ideas. We empower Australians through exhibitions, schools' learning programs and events that both stimulate and inspire. Trusted by the public, government, public service and business alike, we advance national conversations about democracy, past, present and future.

*Democracy 2025* is driving a process of national reflection and renewal on how we can rebuild trust and strengthen democratic practice in Australia. We believe that this ambitious goal is critical to the health of the nation. Nothing less will do.

**Daryl Karp**

Director,  
MoAD

**Professor Mark Evans**

Director of Democracy 2025  
UC-IGPA

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This third Democracy 2025 report documents findings from a systematic review into what works in public participation.

Uniquely, the report integrates expertise from two distinct approaches to citizen engagement, co-design and deliberative engagement. Each approach offers different yet complementary insights into the variables that lead to effective citizen engagement, providing useful evidence that can inform public sector capability in this area.

This report contributes to the growing body of evidence on effective citizen engagement by developing a conceptual model for assessing the quality and impacts of representation and non-representation related variables.

The conceptual model draws on 33 case studies and 36 theoretical studies to identify six key variables that interact to influence outcomes in co-design and deliberative engagement.

These include:

1. inclusive representation
2. autonomy and equality of all participants
3. plurality of viewpoints and engagement methods
4. quality of process design and facilitation
5. transmission of citizen generated recommendations, and
6. citizen participation as a democratic value.

In addition, the conceptual model identifies three outcome related measures for assessing the impact of each of these variables on the legitimacy of public decisions.

These include:

1. Participants agreeing on the solutions or recommendations,
2. Participants trusting in the legitimacy of the process to influence decision making, and
3. Consequentiality defined as decision makers accepting citizen generated recommendations.

Collectively, the variables and outcome measures form an evidence based conceptual model for assessing the quality and impact of citizen engagement processes, supporting public sector capability, political accountability, and ultimately the legitimacy of public sector decisions.

## PREAMBLE

Co-design and deliberative engagements are two citizen participation methods that are rapidly changing the way governments around the world are grappling with complex public policy problems.

These approaches emerge from distinctly different traditions, the former more dominant in management and public-sector innovation<sup>1</sup> and the latter belonging to the area of political philosophy<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, the practice-based focus of deliberative engagement has developed only recently following a substantial focus on theoretical aspects in the broader field of deliberative democracy<sup>3</sup>. This is in contrast to the focus on application and practice tools that lie at the core of co-design.<sup>4</sup>

Given these differences, it is not surprising that there has been no significant academic attempt to integrate these methods into a cohesive framework for understanding both the theory and practice of citizen engagement, making this research a first in this area.

The underlying hypothesis is that leveraging the expertise of both approaches may lead to new insights into the variables that lead to effective citizen engagement, providing useful evidence that can inform public sector capability in this area.

Both approaches have rapidly expanded in the past four decades from emerging concepts to entire fields of study and application. To illustrate this growth in attention, Graph 1 (page 7) provides results of an advanced Google Scholar search of literature in each discipline between 1980 to 2018 (accessed on 11 August 2018).

These results pale in comparison to the extensive culmination of materials written on each subject in various other forms of investigation, including grey literature, websites, and media.

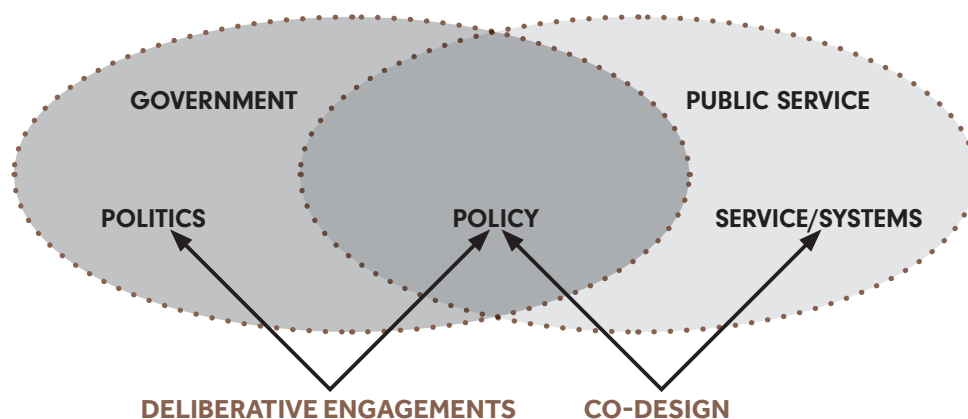


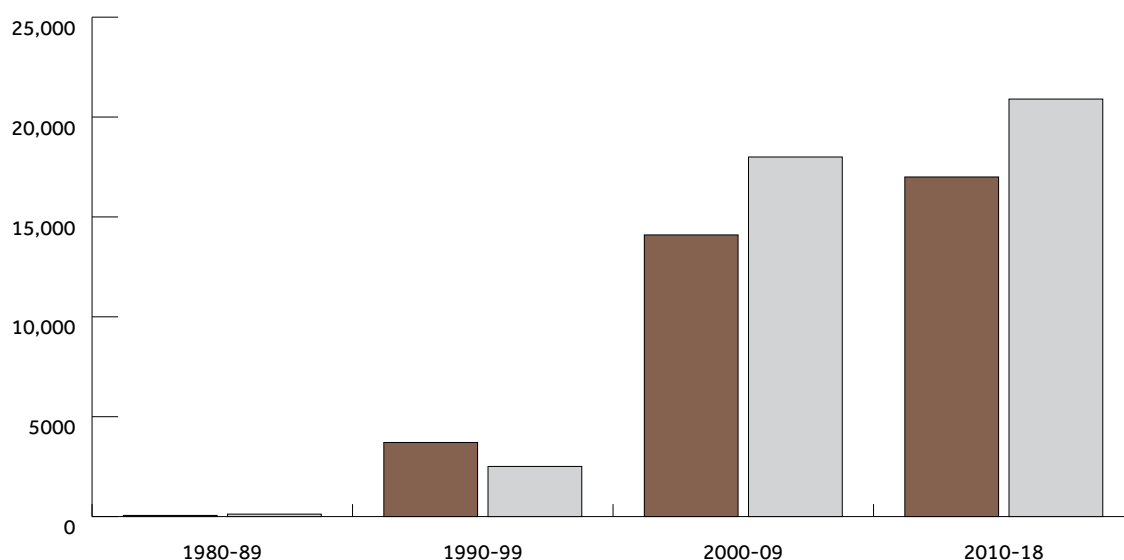
Figure 1: Defining spaces between deliberative engagements and co-design

1 See: Bason, 2010.

2 See: Florida, 2018.

3 See: Elstub and McLaverty, 2014.

4 See: Evans and Terrey, 2016.



Graph 1: Co-design and deliberative democracy literature from 1980 to 2018

### What is a Deliberative Engagement?

Deliberative democracy as a theoretical tradition is now informing democratic engagements, most commonly (though not exclusively) in the form of mini-publics. Democratic engagements, following the principles of deliberative democracy, are designed to enable a plurality of voices, to shine a light on the tensions and conflicts between different actors, and to enable a shared space for forging understanding on collective problems<sup>5</sup>.

### What is Co-design?

Co-design processes involve citizens in the iterative development of insights, prototyping, evaluation and scaling of new solutions<sup>6</sup>. Design thinking enables repositioning of paradoxical perspectives into new problem-solving frames<sup>7</sup> with the underlying belief that engagement with citizens in the development and delivery of

products or services will lead to better (and shared responsibility for) outcomes<sup>8</sup>.

### Legitimacy and Representation

Both approaches recognise that all citizens have legitimate voices in public policy processes<sup>9</sup>. To be legitimate; however, participation should enable equitable opportunities to contribute to decision making, regardless of personal circumstances or contexts. In large and complex societies, it is not possible for all affected people to be involved in decision making<sup>10</sup>, necessitating some form of representation.

<sup>5</sup> See: Baiocchi and Ganuza, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> See: Evans and Terrey, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> See: Dorst, 2011.

<sup>8</sup> See: Parker and Heapy, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> See: Holmes, 2011; and Ercan et.al, 2018.

<sup>10</sup> See: Cohen, 1997; Michelman, 1997; and Florida, 2013.

Powerful groups tend to dictate how less powerful groups are represented in policy debates and how a social group is represented will determine how legitimate their interests and perspectives are perceived to be<sup>11</sup>. Marginalised groups and individual citizens have a lower capacity for driving policy narratives, compelling arguments, and voicing concerns compared to powerful stakeholder groups, businesses and politicians<sup>12</sup>. Since representation has a significant impact on how equally the needs of affected people are considered, it is important to understand how representation impacts outcomes in citizen engagement processes.

For the purpose of this report, representation refers to the collection of variables that describe participants in citizen engagement processes, such as how inclusively participants represent affected people, how equally participants contribute to discussions and decisions, and the diversity of viewpoints they hold.

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<sup>11</sup> See: Habibis and Walter, 2015.

<sup>12</sup> See: Lowndes, 2016.



## METHODOLOGY

The Systematic Review Framework (hereafter the framework) presented in Box 1, was developed to identify key questions and definitions for the

systematic review, along with criteria for the selection of relevant literature and the process to be undertaken to identify and assess literature.

### Box 1: Systematic Review Framework

KEY QUESTIONS	
1.	What variables influence outcomes in co-design and deliberative engagement?
2.	Is there a relationship between those variables and representation in co-design and deliberative engagement?
Definitions for the purpose of this review (P=population   I=intervention   C=control group intervention   O=outcome)	
<b>P= Representatives</b>	<i>Individuals acting on behalf of others in the context of public participation</i>
<b>I= Co-Design</b>	<i>Citizen involvement in public participation processes where design thinking is used to drive innovation and creativity</i>
<b>C= Deliberative Engagements</b>	<i>Citizen involvement in public participation processes where deliberative reasoning is used to drive shared decision making</i>
<b>O= Legitimacy</b>	<i>The genuine and effective involvement of citizens in decision making processes</i>
Criteria for Literature Selection	
1.	Literature must describe variables related to representation in co-design or deliberative engagement to address the key questions for this review
2.	Literature may include both theoretical and case studies to cover empirical and normative perspectives
3.	Literature should be peer reviewed with suitable citations to ensure reliability of findings
4.	Literature must be written in the English language with full text available to support in depth review
Search Strategy	
1.	Google Scholar, Analysis and Policy Observatory, Wiley Online Library, JSTOR, Web of Science, SCOPUS, and Australian Public Affairs Full Text will be reviewed to identify suitable literature
2.	Abstracts reviewed initially to confirm suitability against the selection criteria
3.	Select literature reviewed in detail to identify conceptual themes

## Data analysis

The data analysis involved a three-stage process to identify variables that influence outcomes in co-design and deliberative engagements. Both representation and non-representation related variables were assessed to determine if representation matters when engaging citizens

### *Stage one: analysis of case studies*

A review of 13 case studies was undertaken to identify frequently occurring variables. Notes were taken on variables cited in each case to enable emergence of themes which were then coded into sub-variables for comparative analysis.

In addition to descriptive variables such as location, duration, and form of representation, any benefits or negative impacts cited in the case studies were also recorded to assess if particular variables influenced outcomes.

### *Stage two: analysis of theoretical studies*

Building on the findings of stage one, a review of 36 theoretical studies was undertaken to assess if the variables identified as influencing outcomes in stage one, were also commonly cited as important in co-design and deliberative engagement theory.

Variables cited by the majority of studies (50 per cent or more) were considered of higher relevance than variables cited by fewer studies. In addition, stage two also identified sub-variables that provide a deeper understanding of how variables influence outcomes.

### *Stage three: validation of review findings*

A validation exercise was undertaken to confirm the relevance and measurability of the sub-variables identified through stages one and two.

The validation process firstly assessed the frequency of each sub-variable being referred to, either directly or indirectly, in 20 additional case studies (10 co-design and 10 deliberative engagement cases) to confirm their relevance for practical application.

Secondly, the validation assessed the apparent achievement of each sub-variable in order to confirm their measurability.

## STAGE ONE: CASE STUDY REVIEWS

Stage one considered a range of variables that may have impacted on citizen engagement, such as the number of participants, duration of participation, selection methods, focus areas, and locations, to identify if any particular variables appeared to increase the numbers of positive benefits cited by each case.

### Co-design cases

A range of benefits were cited across the co-design cases reviewed. The highest cited benefit was the convergence of diverse experiences and expertise<sup>13</sup>, followed by increased understanding of issues and solutions<sup>14</sup>, and increased trust and empathy<sup>15</sup>.

Of the six co-design cases reviewed, four cases focused on human services policy issues<sup>16</sup> with two cases focusing on issues related to transport<sup>17</sup>. When factoring in the number of cited benefits, the human services focused cases recorded a higher proportion of benefits at 75 per cent citing three to four benefits, compared to 50 per cent of transport focused cases citing three to four benefits.

In addition, 75 per cent of cases that targeted known service users as participants<sup>18</sup> and 75 per cent of cases that used design workshops as the primary engagement method<sup>19</sup> both cited three to four benefits, higher than open selection and prototyping design methods.

Finally, both cases that occurred over 12 months or more cited three to four benefits which was not achieved in cases with a shorter duration<sup>20</sup>.

Table 1 provides an overview of the number of benefits reported by cases where the above variables were present. The small sample sizes for these variables and inconsistency in reporting may however impact on the reliability of these results which should be interpreted with caution.

13 See: Lee, 2007; Enserink and Monnikof, 2003; Brandt et.al, 2010; Penuel et.al, 2007; and Bowan et.al, 2013.

14 See: Enserink and Monnikof, 2003; Zimmerman et.al, 2011; and Bowan et.al, 2013.

15 See: Lee, 2007; Penuel et.al, 2007; and Bowan et.al, 2013.

16 See: Lee, 2007; Penuel et.al, 2007; Brandt et.al, 2010; and, Bowen et.al, 2013.

17 See: Enserink and Monnikof, 2003; Zimmerman et.al, 2011.

18 See: Lee, 2007; Penuel et.al, 2007; Brandt et.al, 2010; and Bowen et.al, 2013.

19 See: Enserink and Monnikof, 2003; Lee, 2007; Brandt et.al, 2010; and Bowen et.al, 2013.

20 See: Penuel et.al, 2007; and Brandt et.al, 2010.

Table 1: Number of benefits cited in co-design cases where sub-variable was present

Potentially Influential Variables	1-2 benefits		3-4 benefits		Total Cases	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
<b>Focus</b>						
Human Services	1	25%	3	75%	4	67%
Transport	1	50%	1	50%	2	33%
<b>Selection Approach</b>						
Targeted Selection	1	25%	3	75%	4	67%
Open Selection	1	100%	0	0%	1	17%
Mixed Selection	0	0%	1	100%	1	17%
<b>Co-design Approach</b>						
Design Workshops	1	25%	3	75%	4	67%
Prototyping	1	100%	0	0%	1	17%
Both	0	0%	1	100%	1	17%
<b>Length of Participation</b>						
Several Workshops	1	33%	2	67%	3	50%
Less than 1 Month	1	100%	0	0%	1	17%
12 Months	0	0%	1	100%	1	17%
Over 12 Months	0	0%	1	100%	1	17%

**Note: Benefits per centages refer to the proportion of cases where sub-variable is present (differs by variable). Total case per centages refer to the proportion of all cases (6).**

### Deliberative engagement cases

As with the co-design cases, there were a range of benefits cited in the deliberative engagement cases. Increased knowledge, understanding and empathy<sup>21</sup> was the highest cited benefit, followed by enabling diverse representation<sup>22</sup>. Participants feeling respected and listened to<sup>23</sup>, increased acceptance in trust and legitimacy of outcomes<sup>24</sup>, and enabling convergence and compromise<sup>25</sup> were also commonly cited.

When considering benefits cited by each case, there was no significantly influential factors present in the deliberative engagement cases. However, while experts were involved in six of the seven cases, one case included no experts and still achieved five of the nine cited benefits<sup>26</sup>.

This case was open to diverse viewpoints from all people who lived in a particular region who were invited to deliberate on issues directly concerning them rather than a predetermined topic of focus.

It was not clear if either diverse viewpoints or enabling the focus to relate specifically to participant's lived experiences had an influence on these outcomes.

21 See: McWhirter et.al, 2014; Felicetti et.al, 2015 case studies a and b; Felicetti et.al, 2012; Curato and Ong, 2015; and Niemeyer et.al, 2013.

22 See: McWhirter et.al, 2014; and Felicetti et.al, 2015 case studies a and b.

23 See: McWhirter et.al, 2014; Ercan et.al, 2018 case study b; and Felicetti et.al, 2015 case study a.

24 See: McWhirter et.al, 2014; and Ercan et.al, 2018 case studies a and b.

25 See: McWhirter et.al, 2014; Felicetti et.al, 2015 case study a; and Niemeyer et.al, 2013.

26 See: Ercan et.al, 2018.

Furthermore, while three of the four Australian cases cited five to eight benefits which was not achieved in any of the other locations, the small number of cases would require further investigation into the political and/or social contexts that could have impacted this result.

Table 2 provides an overview of potentially influential variables by the number of benefits reported in the cases.

Table 2. Number of benefits cited in deliberative engagement cases where sub-variable was present

Potentially Influential Variables	1-4 benefits		5-8 benefits		Total Cases	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
<b>Representation</b>						
Descriptive	2	50%	2	50%	4	57%
Surrogate	1	100%	0	0%	1	14%
Geographic	1	50%	1	50%	2	29%
<b>Location</b>						
Australia	1	25%	3	75%	4	57%
Italy	1	100%	0	0%	1	14%
Philippines	1	100%	0	0%	1	14%
United States of America	1	100%	0	0%	1	14%

**Note: Benefits percentages refer to the proportion of cases where sub-variable is present (differs by variable). Total cases percentages refer to the proportion of all cases (7).**

## Key finding one: representation and non-representation related variables matter

The case study review identified a range of variables that potentially influence outcomes in co-design and deliberative engagement cases, several of which relate to issues of representation.

In particular; the approach to the selection of representatives, ensuring diverse viewpoints, and involvement of those with lived experiences were identified as potentially influencing outcomes.

There were however, a range of non-representation related variables that also appeared to influence outcomes, including; the focus of the process, the quality and type of methods used, the duration of participation, and the political/social context.

Due to inconsistencies in reporting across cases, the results of this stage of analysis were inconclusive on their own, providing a basis for further investigating the normative value placed on each of these variables in the theoretical literature.

## STAGE TWO: THEORETICAL STUDY REVIEWS

Stage two sought to determine if any of the variables identified as potentially influencing outcomes in stage one, were also commonly cited as important in the theoretical literature.

### Co-design theory

In the 18 co-design studies reviewed, four of the variables identified in stage one, were highlighted in more than 50 per cent of studies. From those variables, five sub-variables were also cited in 50 per cent or more of studies citing each variable.

The most commonly cited variable overall was diverse viewpoints which was cited in 78 per cent of studies. Of those studies, 57 per cent placed particular value on the role of both service users and professionals as equal participants<sup>27</sup> and 50 per cent stressed the need to address power imbalances to enable effective co-design<sup>28</sup>.

The next most commonly cited variable was the co-design method which was cited in 67 per cent of studies however, it was the quality of process design and facilitation which was most commonly identified within these studies rather than specific co-design methods<sup>29</sup>.

In addition, the co-design method was followed closely by political/social context which was cited in 56 per cent of studies, with a significant value placed on citizen participation being accepted as a democratic value<sup>30</sup>, highlighting the important role that co-design can contribute to the legitimacy of public sector decisions.

Finally, the importance of the focus of the case was referred to in 56 per cent of studies which significantly favoured services and product design more broadly<sup>31</sup> rather than human services contexts.

Table 3 outlines the variables cited by the majority of studies, along with their most commonly cited sub-variables.

27 See: Binder et.al, 2008; Szebeko and Tan, 2010; Evans and Terrey, 2016; Trischler et.al, 2018.

28 See: Binder et.al, 2008; Buur and Larsen, 2010; Szebeko and Tan, 2010; Holmes, 2011; Greenbaum and Loi, 2012; Harder et.al, 2013; and Trischler et.al, 2018.

29 See: Buur and Larsen, 2010; Szebeko and Tan, 2010; Holmes, 2011; Harder et.al, 2013; Andersen et.al, 2015; Evans and Terrey, 2016; Trischler et.al, 2018.

30 See: Binder et.al, 2008; Buur and Larsen, 2010; Szebeko and Tan, 2010; Holmes, 2011; Greenbaum and Loi, 2012; Evans and Terrey, 2016; and Huybrechts et.al, 2017.

31 See: Leadbeater, 2004; Parker and Heapy, 2006; Binder et.al, 2008; Szebeko and Tan, 2010; Greenbaum and Loi, 2012; Harder et.al, 2013; Huybrechts et.al, 2017; Bason, 2018; and Trischler et.al, 2018.

Table 3: Variables and sub-variables identified most frequently in co-design theoretical studies

Variable as percentage of total studies	Sub-variables as percentage of studies citing related variable
1. Diverse Viewpoints (78%)	1. Interdisciplinary users and professionals as equal partners in design (57%) 2. Equalising power imbalances (50%)
2. Co-design Methods (67%)	3. Quality process design and facilitation (58%)
3. Political/Social Context (56%)	4. Citizen participation as an accepted democratic value (70%)
4. Focus (56%)	5. Design of services and products (90%)

**Note:** Variable percentages refer to the proportion of all studies citing each variable.  
Sub-variable percentages refer to the proportion of those studies that also cited the sub-variable.

### Deliberative engagement theory

In the 18 deliberative engagement studies reviewed, three of the variables identified in stage one, were highlighted in more than 50 per cent of studies. However, only one sub-variable was cited in more than 50 per cent of studies referring to those variables. Subsequently the highest cited sub-variables were identified from each of the majority cited variables.

The deliberation method was the highest cited variable, referred to in 83 per cent of studies. Of those studies, the transmission of citizen generated recommendations to formal decision-making bodies was the highest cited sub-variable, referred to in 40 per cent of those studies<sup>32</sup>.

Diverse viewpoints was the second most commonly cited variable which was referred to in 56 per cent of studies. Of those studies, 80 per cent referred to plurality of beliefs, convictions, ideals and viewpoints<sup>33</sup>.

Finally, issues related to the political/social context were cited in 50 per cent of studies. Of those studies, the highest cited sub-variables were the recognition that large and complex societies require inclusive representation due to the impossibility of involving all affected people<sup>34</sup>, and the importance of ensuring participants are autonomous and capable of forming a view without external constraints<sup>35</sup>.

Table 4 outlines the variables cited by the majority of studies, along with their most commonly cited sub-variables.

<sup>32</sup> See: Bohman, 1998; Uhr and Uhr, 1998; Parkinson, 2003; Dryzek and Niemeyer, 2008; Hendricks, 2015; and Dryzek, 2016.

<sup>33</sup> See: Cohen, 1997; Bohman, 1998; Uhr and Uhr, 1998; Smith and Wales, 2000; Dryzek and Niemeyer, 2008; Dryzek, 2016; Elstub et,al, 2016; and Baiocchi and Ganuza, 2017.

<sup>34</sup> See: Cohen, 1997; Michelman, 1997; and Florida, 2013.

<sup>35</sup> See: Cohen, 1997; Smith and Wales, 2000; and Florida, 2013.

Table 4: Variables and sub-variables identified most frequently in deliberative engagement theoretical studies

Variable as percentage of total studies	Sub-variable as percentage of studies citing related variable
1. Deliberation Methods (83%)	1. Transmission of citizen generated recommendations to formal decision-making bodies (40%)
2. Diverse viewpoints (56%)	2. Plurality of beliefs, convictions, ideals and viewpoints (80%)
3. Political/Social context (50%)	3. Representation necessary to counter impossibility of involving all affected people in large and complex societies (33%)
	4. Autonomy of participants to counter adaptive preferences (33%)

**Note: Variable percentages refer to the proportion of all studies citing each variable. Sub-variable percentages refer to the proportion of those studies that also cited the sub-variable.**

## Key finding two: quality methods, context and diversity matter

Stage two identified three shared variables that the studies suggest influence outcomes in both co-design and deliberative engagements:

1. quality methods
2. political/social context, and
3. diversity of viewpoints.

In addition, each variable has a number of sub-variables that appear to increase the chances of positive outcomes, some of which relate to representation, and some that don't (as demonstrated in Box 2).

While the focus of the case was highly cited in co-design theory, this was not the case with deliberative engagement. Hence this variable has been excluded for the purposes of identifying shared variables of interest.

## Box 2: Variables and sub-variables influencing positive outcomes in co-design and deliberative engagement

Representation Related Variables		Non-Representation Related Variables	
Quality Methods	Political/Social Context	Diversity of Viewpoints	
Quality of process design and facilitation	Inclusive representation	Involvement of affected people and professionals	
Transmission of citizen engagement outcomes to formal decision-making authorities	Autonomy of representatives	Equality of participants	
	Citizen participation as democratic value	Plurality of beliefs, convictions, ideals and viewpoints	



## STAGE THREE: VALIDATION

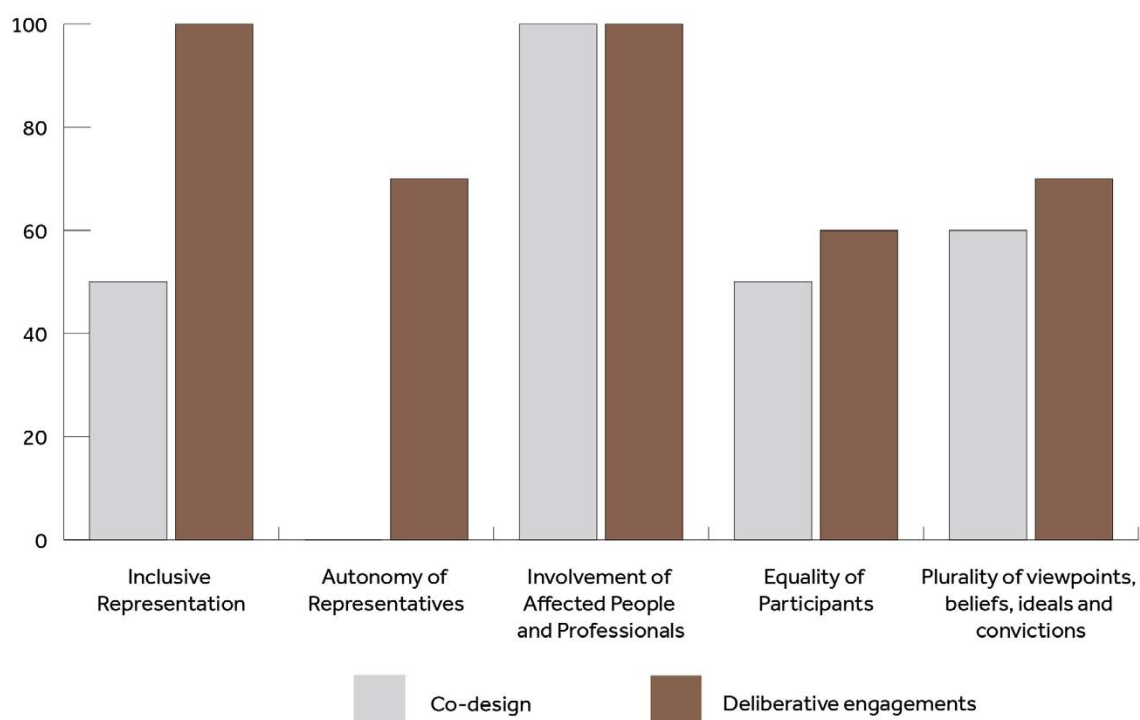
Validation involved identifying direct and indirect references to each of the identified sub-variables, and measuring their achievement in 20 additional case studies, once more using secondary sources.

### Relevance

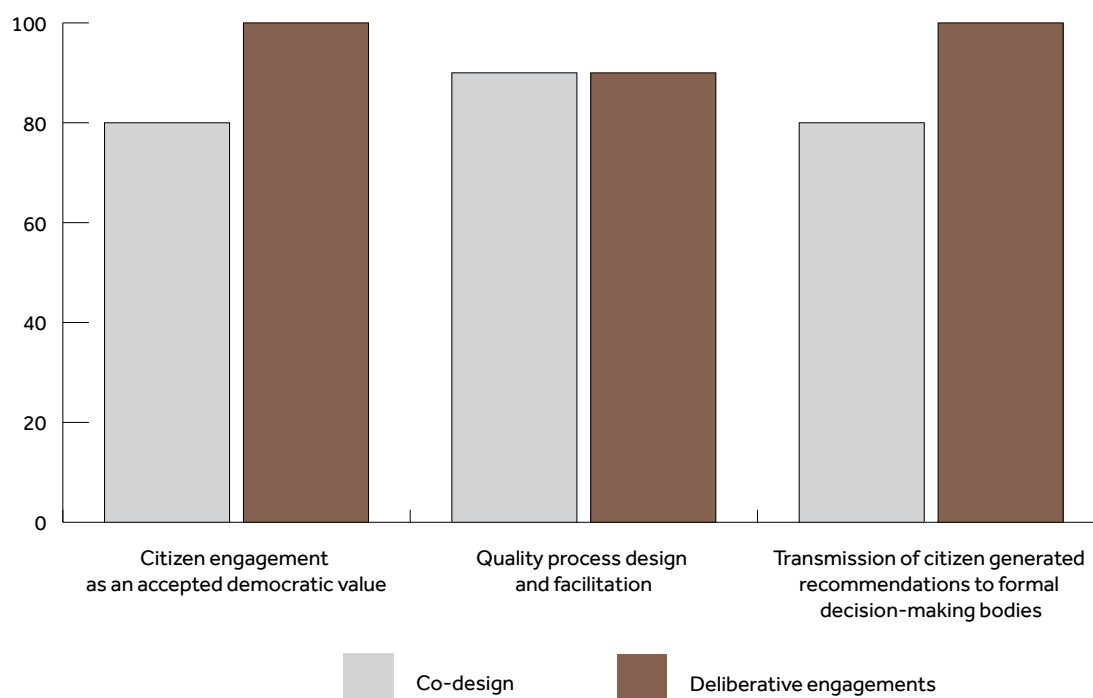
The validation process showed that with the exception of autonomy of representatives, all of the identified sub-variables were referenced in the majority of co-design and deliberative engagement cases, suggesting a high level of relevance.

Autonomy of representatives was also identified in 70 per cent of the deliberative engagements, suggesting that this variable may warrant further investigation in co-design as well (see Graph 2).

In addition to the representation related sub-variables, all three non-representation related sub-variables were identified in the majority of co-design and deliberative engagements, suggesting high levels of relevance (see Graph 3).



Graph 2: Proportion of cases citing representation related sub-variables by co-design or deliberative engagement



Graph 3: Proportion of cases citing non-representation related sub-variables by co-design or deliberative engagement

### Measuring sub-variables in co-design cases

Simple descriptors based on the theoretical review were used to assess the achievement of each of the sub-variables. In addition, each case was assessed as either achieving consequential outcomes or not, which was defined as the acceptance of citizen generated recommendations by formal decision-making bodies.

Eight of the 10 co-design cases were assessed as achieving quality process design and facilitation<sup>36</sup> which was not surprising given that studies were drawn from organisations with significant expertise in designing and facilitating co-design processes.

What was more surprising was that two of the eight studies that achieved quality process design and facilitation did not achieve consequential outcomes during the timeframe reported<sup>37</sup>.

The other two non-representation related sub-variables were also achieved in the majority of cases, including seven cases that achieved the transmission of participant recommendations directly to formal decision-making bodies<sup>38</sup>, and six cases achieving citizen participation as an accepted democratic value<sup>39</sup>.

In terms of representation related sub-variables, the involvement of affected people and professionals was achieved in the majority of

<sup>36</sup> See: Hampson et.al, 2013; Design Council, 2016; Woodroffe, 2018; ThinkPlace, 2017 (a); Thinkplace, 2017 (b); Auckland Design Lab, 2015; Auckland Design Lab, 2017; and IDEO, 2015.

<sup>37</sup> See: Auckland Design Lab, 2015; and Auckland Design Lab, 2017.

<sup>38</sup> See: Hampson et.al, 2013; Design Council, 2016; Woodroffe, 2018; ThinkPlace, 2017 (a); Thinkplace, 2017 (b); Budds, 2016; and IDEO, 2015.

<sup>39</sup> See: Design Council, 2016; Woodroffe, 2018; ACT Government, 2018; ThinkPlace, 2017 (a); Thinkplace, 2017 (b); and Budds, 2016.

cases<sup>40</sup>, with plurality of viewpoints achieved in four cases<sup>41</sup>, and equality of participants achieved in three cases<sup>42</sup>.

Inclusive representation however was only achieved in two cases<sup>43</sup> and no cases referred to the achievement of autonomy among representatives, making this sub-variable not applicable to the analysis.

Table 5 outlines the number of cases assessed as achieving each sub-variable and the proportion of those cases that achieved consequential outcomes.

## Measuring sub-variables in deliberative engagements

The same measurement process was followed to assess variable achievement and consequentiality in the deliberative engagement cases.

Of the 10 cases reviewed, quality process design and facilitation<sup>44</sup>, and the transmission of citizen engagement outcomes to formal decision-making bodies were both achieved in five cases each<sup>45</sup>. In addition, citizen participation as an accepted democratic value was achieved in four cases.<sup>46</sup>

Table 5: Achievement of sub-variables and consequentiality in co-design cases

	Sub-variables		Consequentiality	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
<b>Political/Social Context</b>				
Citizen participation as democratic value	6	75%	6	100%
Inclusive representation	2	40%	2	100%
Autonomy of representatives	NA*	NA	NA	NA
<b>Diversity of Viewpoints</b>				
Involvement of affected people and professionals	6	60%	5	84%
Equality of participants	3	60%	2	67%
Plurality of beliefs, convictions, ideals and viewpoints	4	68%	4	100%
<b>Quality Approach</b>				
Quality of process design and facilitation	8	89%	5	63%
Transmission of citizen engagement outcomes to formal decision-making authorities	7	88%	7	100%

**Note: Sub-variable percentages refer to the proportion of total valid cases (those referring to the sub-variable) achieving the sub-variable.**

**\*No co-design cases referred to autonomy of participants, making this sub-variable not applicable.**

**Consequentiality percentages refer to the proportion of cases achieving the sub-variable that also achieved consequentiality, defined as acceptance of recommendations by decision making bodies.**

40 See: Hampson et.al, 2013; Woodroffe, 2018; ThinkPlace, 2017 (a); Thinkplace, 2017 (b); Auckland Design Lab, 2017; and IDEO, 2015.

41 See: Hampson, et.al 2013; Design Council, 2016; Woodroffe, 2018; and ThinkPlace, 2017 (a).

42 See: Hampson, et.al, 2013; Design Council, 2016; and Auckland Design Lab, 2017.

43 See: Hampson et.al, 2013; and Budds, 2016.

44 See: Um, 2013; Hargrave, 2018; Weymouth, 2016; Parry, 2016; and Hosmer, 2017.

45 See: Fung, 2009 and Fletcher, 2018; Faubion, 2012; Weymouth, 2016; Hosmer, 2017; and Parry, 2016.

46 See: Fung, 2009 and Fletcher, 2018; Faubion, 2012; Weymouth, 2016; and Parry, 2016.

In terms of representation related sub-variables, inclusive representation<sup>47</sup> and plurality of viewpoints<sup>48</sup> were achieved in five cases each.

The involvement of affected people and professionals<sup>49</sup> and equality of all participants were achieved in three cases each<sup>50</sup>. In addition, autonomy of representatives was achieved in two cases<sup>51</sup>.

Table 6 outlines the number of case studies assessed as achieving each sub-variable and the proportion of those cases that achieved consequential outcomes.

Table 6: Achievement of sub-variables and consequentiality in deliberative engagement cases

	Sub-variables		Consequentiality	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
<b>Political/Social Context</b>				
Citizen participation as democratic value	4	40%	2	50%
Inclusive representation	5	50%	2	40%
Autonomy of representatives	2	29%	1	50%
<b>Diversity of Viewpoints</b>				
Involvement of affected people and professionals	3	30%	0	0%
Equality of participants	3	50%	1	33%
Plurality of beliefs, convictions, ideals and viewpoints	5	71%	2	40%
<b>Approach</b>				
Quality of process design and facilitation	5	56%	2	40%
Transmission of citizen engagement outcomes to formal decision-making authorities	5	50%	2	40%

**Note: Sub-variable percentages refer to the proportion of total valid cases (those referring to the sub-variable).**

**Consequentiality percentages refer to the proportion of cases achieving the sub-variable that also achieved consequentiality, defined as acceptance of recommendations by decision making authorities.**

47 See: Um, 2013; Hargrave, 2018; Faubion, 2012; Weymouth, 2016; and Parry 2016.

48 See: Um, 2013; Hargrave, 2018; Weymouth, 2016; Parry, 2016; and Shen, 2012 and Fletcher, 2016.

49 See: Fung, 2009 and Fletcher, 2018; Hargrave, 2018; and Parry, 2016.

50 See: Fung, 2009 and Fletcher, 2018; Hargrave, 2018; and Weymouth, 2016.

51 See: Um, 2013; and Shen, 2012 and Fletcher, 2016.

## Validation Outcomes

The validation of sub-variable relevance and measurability highlighted a number of findings of critical importance to the development of the conceptual model for assessing the quality and impacts of citizen engagement processes.

In particular, the validation process showed that while the sub-variables could be measured, degrees of achievement would allow for more accurate assessment. For example, affected people and professionals may be involved throughout the participation process, at particular points in the process, or not at all.

Having a measurement scale capable of accounting for degrees of achievement would enhance the reliability of a conceptual model for assessing quality and impacts.

In addition, while secondary sources were used to test the sub-variables, the use of primary data to apply the conceptual model would enable consistency of data collection and increase the accuracy of the results.

## Key finding three: interactions matter

Further to the validation outcomes already discussed, all variables were present both in consequential and non-consequential cases, suggesting that while they may or may not be necessary, individual variables are unlikely to be sufficient in and of themselves.

This finding supports a set theory approach to analysing both the impacts and interactions between representation and non-representation related variables in citizen engagement processes.

## CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF ENGAGEMENT WITH CITIZENS

The aim of the conceptual model is to provide a tool for public sector organisations to evaluate the quality of engagement with citizens to improve both theory and practice in this space. The conceptual model also supports strengthened accountability of public sector organisations by ensuring citizen engagement adequately represents the communities of people most affected by public sector decisions.

The conceptual model includes three representation related variables, which have been developed by merging the following sub-variables: inclusive representation and involvement of affected people and professionals, and autonomy of representatives and equality of all participants, in order to reduce complexity and enable more holistic variable descriptors; and by reframing plurality of viewpoints, beliefs, ideals and convictions to also recognise that a plurality of engagement methods are required to ensure diverse viewpoints can participate in citizen engagement processes.

Representation related variables therefore include:

1. Inclusive representation of affected people and professionals;
2. Plurality of viewpoints and engagement methods; and
3. Autonomy and equality of participants.

The conceptual model also includes three non-representation related variables:

1. Citizen engagement as an accepted democratic value;
2. Quality process design and facilitation; and
3. Transmission of citizen generated recommendations to formal decision-making bodies.

In addition to the representation and non-representation related variables, the conceptual model includes three suggested outcome related measures to assess the impact of variables achieved through the citizen engagement process.

Outcomes measures include:

1. Citizens agreeing on the solution or recommendations arising through the citizen engagement process;
2. Citizens trusting in the legitimacy of the citizen engagement process to influence decision-making; and
3. Consequentiality defined as decision-making bodies accepting citizen generated recommendations.

These outcomes measures speak to the overall legitimacy of the process in engaging citizens in decision making and can be substituted for case specific outcomes where deemed suitable. The measurement scales for each of the variables and outcomes discussed above are outlined at Box 3.

**Box 3: Variable and Outcomes Measurement Scale**

Variables	Not achieved	Partially Achieved	Fully Achieved
<b>Representation Related Variables</b>			
Inclusive representation (affected people and professionals)	No strategies in place to ensure representatives are inclusive demonstrated by lack of representation of affected people and relevant professionals at any stage in the design and deliberation process	Some strategies in place to ensure representatives are inclusive demonstrated by representation of affected people and relevant professionals at various stages throughout the design and deliberation process	Effective strategies in place to ensure representatives are inclusive demonstrated by representation of affected people and relevant professionals throughout all stages of the design and deliberation process
Autonomy and equality of all participants	No evidence of power sharing and free deliberation among participants demonstrated through low levels of contribution by all participants and low preference transformation	Some evidence of power sharing and free deliberation among participants demonstrated through medium levels of contribution by all participants and medium preference transformation	Evidence of power sharing and free deliberation among participants demonstrated through high levels of contribution by all participants and high preference transformation
Plurality of viewpoints (and engagement methods)	No strategies in place to engage diverse viewpoints demonstrated through low levels of diversity in original positions	Some strategies in place to engage diverse viewpoints demonstrated through medium levels of diversity in original positions	Effective strategies in place to engage diverse viewpoints demonstrated through high levels of diversity in original positions
<b>Non-Representation Related Variables</b>			
Quality of process design and facilitation	No expert facilitation and lack of methods to support effective engagement demonstrated through low participant satisfaction with the process	Some facilitation expertise and methods to support effective engagement demonstrated through medium participant satisfaction with the process	Expert facilitation and methods to support effective engagement demonstrated through high participant satisfaction with the process
Transmission of citizen engagement outcomes to formal decision-making bodies	No transfer of citizen generated inputs or recommendations to relevant political actors or public service organisations	Indirect transfer of citizen generated input (via stakeholder developed recommendations) to relevant political actors or public service organisations	Direct transfer of citizen generated recommendations to relevant political actors or public service organisations

Variables	Not achieved	Partially Achieved	Fully Achieved
Citizen participation as an accepted democratic value	No political/public sector support for citizen participation in the engagement process demonstrated by lack of authorisation by political actors or public service organisations	Some political/public sector support for citizen participation in the engagement process demonstrated through upfront authorisation by political actors or public service organisations	Full political/public sector support for citizen participation in the engagement process demonstrated through upfront authorisation by political actors or public service organisations and in-principle commitment to the acceptance of citizen generated recommendations
<b>Outcomes Measures</b>			
Agreed Solution or Recommendations	No evidence of agreement demonstrated by low levels of participant support for the final solution or recommendations.	Some evidence of agreement demonstrated by medium levels of participant support for the final solution or recommendations.	Evidence of agreement demonstrated by high levels of participant support for the final solution or recommendations.
Legitimacy	No evidence of legitimacy demonstrated through low levels of trust held by participants in the power of the engagement process to influence the decisions made by government.	Some evidence of legitimacy demonstrated through medium levels of trust held by participants in the power of the engagement process to influence the decisions made by government.	Evidence of legitimacy demonstrated through high levels of trust held by participants in the power of the engagement process to influence the decisions made by government.
Consequentiality	No evidence of consequentiality demonstrated by no or limited acceptance of participant recommendations by decision making authorities.	Some evidence of consequentiality demonstrated by partial acceptance of participant recommendations by decision making authorities.	Evidence of consequentiality demonstrated by full acceptance of participant recommendations by decision making authorities.

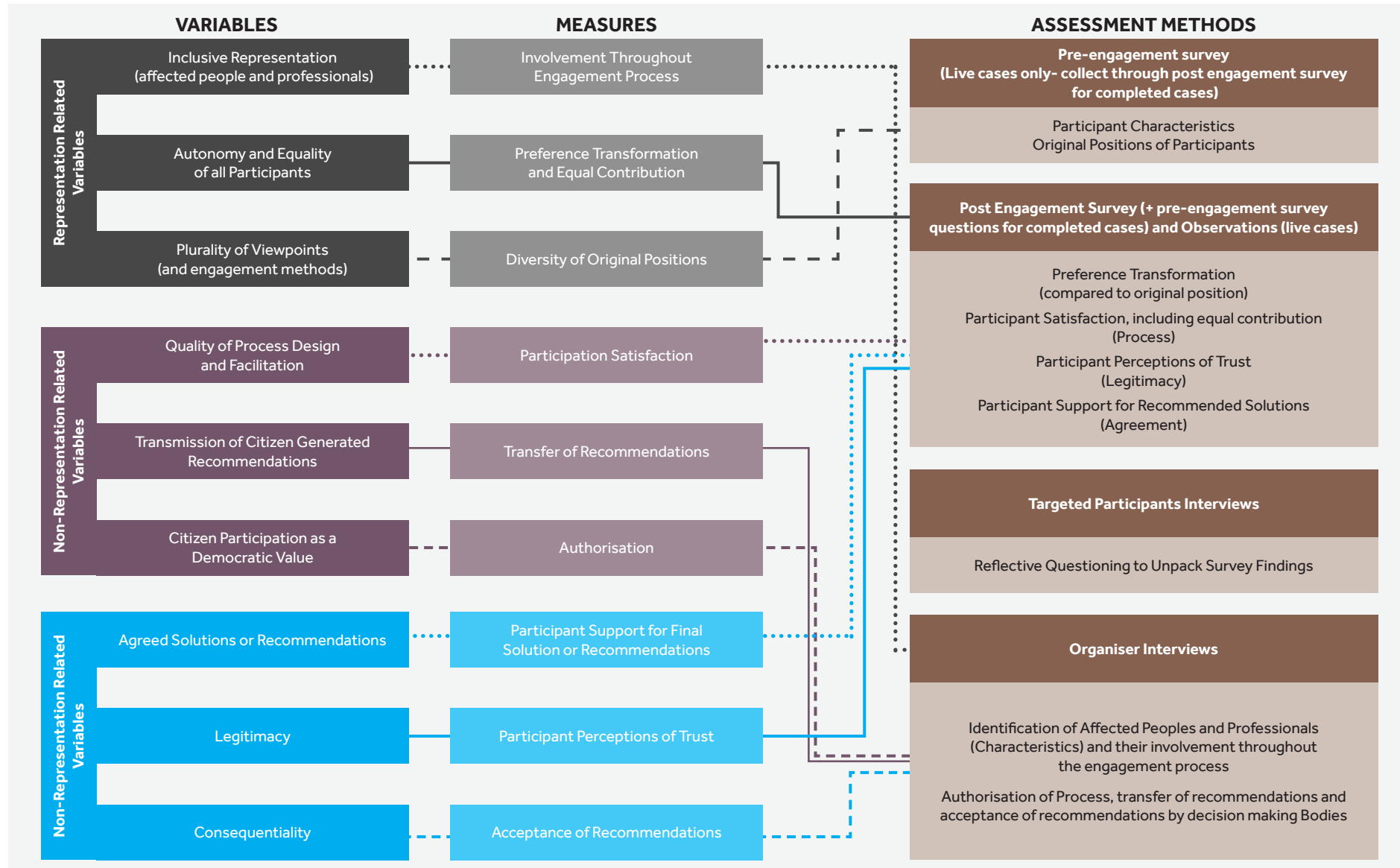


The conceptual model also recommends a range of methodologies for measuring the identified variables and outcomes, including:

1. **Pre-engagement surveys** in live cases to determine participant characteristics and the diversity of viewpoints represented in each process (note: these measures can be collected through post-engagement surveys for completed cases);
2. **Post-engagement surveys** to assess participant experiences, perceptions and agreement on the recommended solutions;
3. **Targeted interviews** with a small number of participants or key stakeholders in order to unpack survey findings using reflective questioning;
4. **Interviews with process organisers** to assess levels of involvement and equal contribution by participants, and to assess the authorisation, transfer of recommendations, and acceptance of recommendations by decision making-bodies; and
5. **Observations** in live cases to assess the equal contribution of participants, quality of process design and facilitation, and apparent agreement with recommended solutions.

Figure 2 provides a visual representation of the variables and their recommended assessment methods.

Figure 2: Conceptual model for assessing the quality of engagements with citizens



## CONCLUSION

Co-design and deliberative engagement both have important and complementary roles to play in modern democracies, and in particular in the way public service agencies engage citizens in designing and deliberating on issues of common good. In addition, they both provide important insights to guide the successful engagement of citizens in public policy and service design.

This systematic review looked specifically at the variables that influence co-design and deliberative engagement practice to determine what role representation plays in enhancing the legitimacy of public decisions.

The systematic review identified three key findings that collectively informed the development of the conceptual model for assessing the quality of engagement with citizens outlined in this report.

### 1. Representation and Non-Representation Related Variables Matter:

Representation related variables, such as inclusivity, autonomy, equality and plurality, influence outcomes in both co-design and deliberative engagements; however, so too do non-representation related variables, such as process quality, political authorisation, and connections between citizen engagements and formal decision-making bodies.

### 2. Quality Methods, Context and Diversity Matter:

The political/social context and diversity of people affected by the topic of focus, will influence the selection of citizen engagement methods. Quality process design and facilitation plays a more significant role in accommodating diverse contexts and participants, than any particular design or deliberation method.

### 3. Interactions Matter:

No one variable is likely to be sufficient in and of itself. Measuring both the achievement and interactions between variables is likely to enhance understanding of the dynamic nature of citizen engagement in an ever-changing social context.

As public service organisations increasingly strive to enhance public trust and the legitimacy of decisions made, effective citizen engagement that adequately represents those most affected by those decisions is crucial. It is not sufficient that public sector organisations seek the views of those most vocal in their communities.

Representation must be inclusive, equal, and diverse. Representatives must be autonomous and supported by quality processes that allow them to be active contributors. And both governments and public sector organisations must value the input of citizens as democratic agents, committing to taking seriously their views and recommendations.

The conceptual model outlined in this report, provides a framework for public sector organisations to measure the quality of their own citizen engagement processes in order to identify areas for improvement.

The model also provides a framework for holding political systems to account over the legitimacy of public decisions through the genuine and effective involvement of citizens in decision making processes.

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