The PReP Framework for Public Engagement

Public Engagement Pathways

"Pathways" refer to various public engagement contexts, including the different types of who, what, where, when, and why of engagement activities. Pathways have different norms, goals, approaches, practices, opportunities, pitfalls, and impacts. Pathways are also flexible, and the boundaries that separate them are permeable - often any one specific engagement activity fits into multiple pathways.

Alternative, Informal, and Lifelong Learning



connecting with free-choice learners of all ages in nontraditional educational settings to support exploration and learning

Ex: public speaker series, museum exhibits

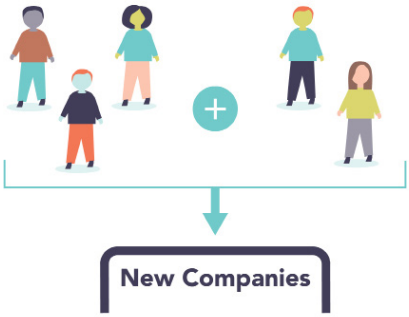
Applied Practice and Professional Consulting



offering professional services, often on a pro-bono basis or in practice-based educational contexts, to address basic needs or complex problems

Ex: community health clinics, consultations for small businesses

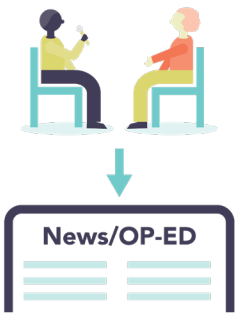
Capacity-Building and Training



providing or receiving training to develop relevant skills or capacities, and/or building resources such as support, funding, or infrastructure

Ex: workshops that prepare people to work together, leadership trainings

Communications and Media Engagement



sharing information related to scholarship or creative practice to enable broader understanding and application of that information

Ex: creating content for public consumption, discussing research on social media, connecting with media

Community-Engaged Learning and/or Service



partnering with communities to address community-identified needs and expand the context of student learning

Ex: community-engaged coursework, student service organizations

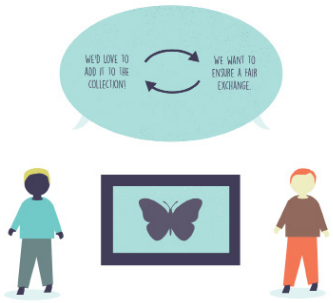
Community-Engaged Research



partnering with communities to advance scholarship and address community-identified issues

Ex: community-based participatory research, oral history projects originating from within a community

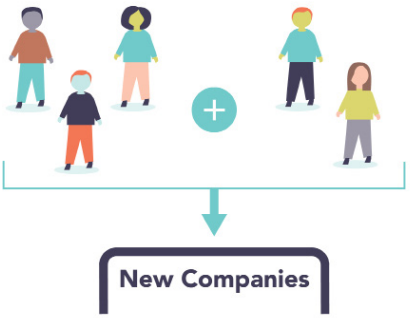
Holdings and Collections



ethically negotiating, acquiring, and sharing assets held by the institution - both tangible and digital - to expand knowledge

Ex: museum collections, botanical gardens collections, libraries

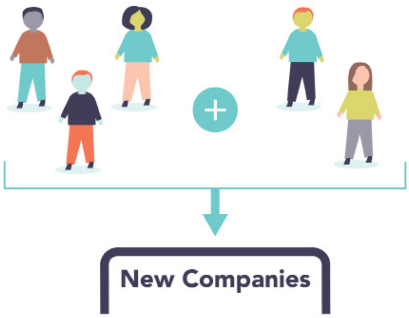
Industry Partnerships, Commercialization, and Entrepreneurship



connecting with industry or private-sector entities to advance product, technology, and/or service innovations

Ex: sharing resources for collaborative research, facilitating career pipelines, commercialization of ideas or technology

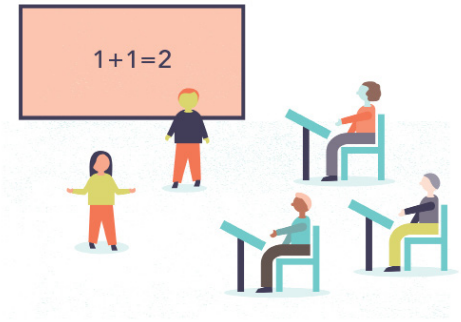
Internships and Residency Programs



embedding individuals temporarily within different spaces to contribute work and ideas in exchange for learning and growth

Ex: artist-in-residence programs, summer externships or work programs

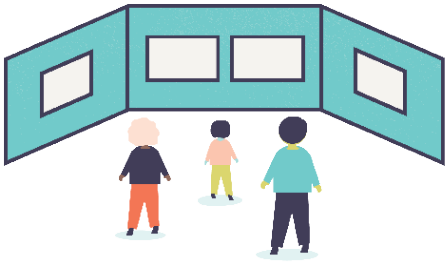
P-14 Education and Educational Outreach



supporting the P-14 educational system to address the educational and developmental needs of students

Ex: in-school presentations, partnering with teachers on curriculum development, summer or pipeline programs

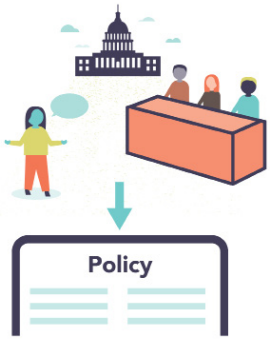
Performance, Exhibition, and Installation



creating public spaces, experiences, creative works, and/or displays to inspire personal meaning-making and understanding

Ex: co-creating artistic works with communities, public concerts or installations

Policy, Advocacy, and Government Relations



engaging with political decision-makers and members of various publics to support informed policy decisions

Ex: meeting with representatives or testifying before Congress, serving on national advisory boards, partnerships with city councils

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This version includes a title change for the framework and updated language. The previous version can be found here: https://bit.ly/mpef-4-1-domains