

Intersectional Approach to Community Engagement



Who is this tool for?

The suggested audience for this tool is broad but it is designed to support organisations who are committed to meaningful community engagement and would like concrete guidance on how to get started.

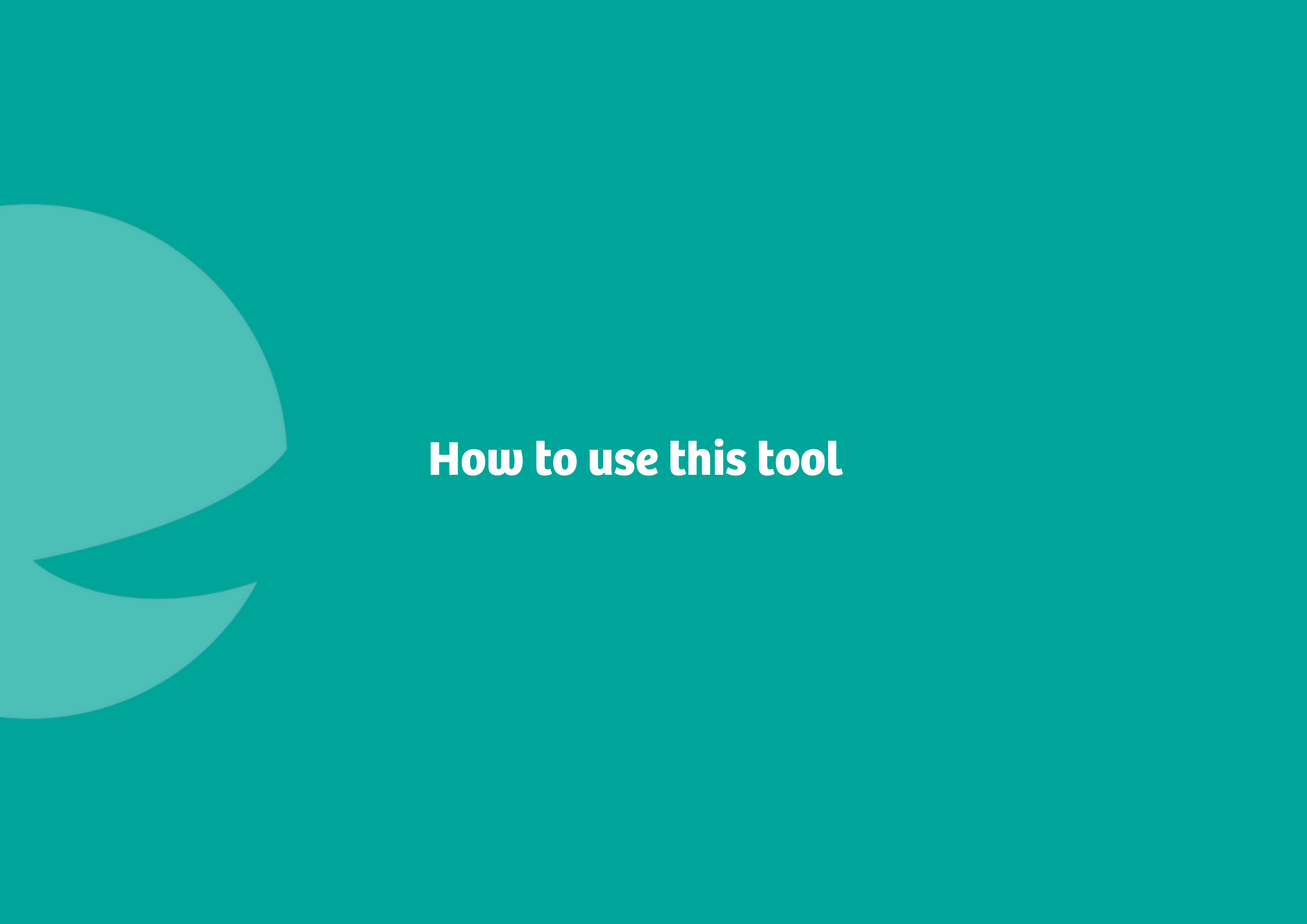
- You can read a blog about these approaches and principles in action here: [**Values-Led Community Engagement: Values led partnership and community engagement | End Mental Health Stigma and Discrimination**](#)

The Tool is designed to be used alongside:

- See Me's Intersectional Stigma and Mental Health Workshop
- Self Reflection Tool and Evidence to Action Tool.

There are a range of other support materials on our website here:

It is not positioned as a tool for advocating for the need for an intersectional approach; the Tool starts from the assumption that the person using it is already motivated by social justice.



How to use this tool



This tool is made up of a series of critical questions to think through alongside those involved in any community engagement process design. It also includes examples of what the intersectional principles may look like in practice.

Please see our [Intersectional Approach to Challenging Mental Health Stigma and Discrimination Explainer](#) for further information





Table 1: Example Critical Questions - p6

**Table 2: Intersectional approach
principles in action - p7**

* The intersectional approach examples on p7 relate to core intersectional anti-stigma intervention principles (Sievwright 2023).

They are designed to help you weave these principles throughout but are not exhaustive.

Principles	Purpose	People	Process	Evaluation
Example critical questions				
What values underpin your work and how will they be evident in your engagement process? Do these values align with your own and the community you wish to engage with?	What are you doing and why are you engaging? Is this clear to all involved and does it take communities ambitions into account? What level of engagement (e.g. consultation) are you hoping to achieve and is this transparent to everyone involved? (Example support resource: Spectrum_8.5x11_Print (ymaws.com))	Who is doing the engaging and who is being engaged? What skills etc. is each side bringing and what training/dev might be needed? Is the engagement trauma informed? How does the community understand the issue? Have you considered Lived Experience leadership and empowerment and how this will be resourced and supported? How do you know this is an issue that interests/affects the people you want to engage? Is the desire for the project coming from the community? What will people need in order to participate on a more equal basis? (money, information in language and format they need, childcare etc.).	How will you go about engaging people? What methods will you use and why are they appropriate? E.g. creative participatory methods shown to support greater equality amongst participants, community building and solidarity, wellbeing and anonymous storytelling. Have you built in flexibility for the project to adapt and change in response to the community? Are safeguards in place throughout the process to ensure all can participate fully and safely	Who and how will you evaluate the experience of engagement from the perspectives of everyone involved? How will you ensure it is appropriate, helpful to the community and not overly onerous? What are you learning and changing as a result? How was the experience for those you worked with? Accountability - Remember it is extremely important to feedback to the group any results of the engagement – any impact or influence.

Principles	Purpose	People	Process	Evaluation
Intersectional approach principles in action				
Recognize and name how systems of power, privilege, and oppression intersect to impact individual experiences and fuel stigma	Social Justice: Is it part of your reason for engaging to empower those you are engaging with to have greater access to resources and influence over the decisions that affect them?	Reflexivity: Include an analysis of how your own biases, attitudes and beliefs influence your opinions and actions in relation to this group. How does your privilege directly or indirectly disadvantage others, for example? And what might you have in common? What can you do to address power inequalities through the methods you chose for engagement, for example? (example tool: INTERSECTIONALITY RESOURCE GUIDE AND TOOLKIT (unwomen.org) p35 ‘Power Flower’)	Equity: Have you asked people what they need to participate? Have you removed physical, transportation, information and communication barriers or provided reasonable alternatives? Have you addressed attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers? For example, are you reimbursing people’s time? Do you have an adequate understanding of	Diverse knowledge: should be actively sought, respected and included. How will you incorporate their knowledge into the project and what will you do with it?
Aim to dismantle systems of power, privilege, and oppression, and mitigate the harms caused by those		Intersecting identities: What are the intersecting identities of the people we engage with? Who is missing? Have you prioritised those who are multiply marginalised? What data will you collect?		
Ensure community leadership and meaningful engagement		Relational power: Be aware of and challenge relational power, including your own. People may experience power in one context/ time and oppression in another. Who holds power and in what circumstances? Who makes decisions? How are they accountable? Think about the methods you are using and how they can create a more equal process (e.g. creative participatory		
Support collective action, cohesion, and resistance to address the intersecting axes of inequities		Diverse knowledge: should be actively sought, respected and included. How will you incorporate their knowledge into the project and what will you do with it? Can you prioritise engagement with <u>community-led</u> organisations? Organisations which are managed by and accountable to community members, which take action on issues identified by the community, and which work to benefit the whole community (SCDC).		

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