

# Criteria, idea generation & proposals

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DEMOTEC training programme

# Participatory budgeting

**Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a democratic way for people to have a direct say on how a budget or public money is spent.**

- There are a range of different models of PB in use across the world.
- PB processes can be instigated by decision makers like government, local government or services, schools and communities. In some countries there are national policies in place to ensure participatory budgeting and community empowerment are taken seriously and becomes part of everyday practice in how we do things.
- PB processes can include but are not limited to; setting up steering groups to co-design a process, theme and criteria setting, idea and proposal generation, dialogue, debates, conversations or deliberation, reduction of ideas, voting or consensus, communication and implementation of selected proposals and these practical elements can be done online, in-person or a combination of both online and in-person.
- It's also important to note the design of a PB process doesn't have to be done in this particular order but can be designed to suit the specific needs of the city or place.

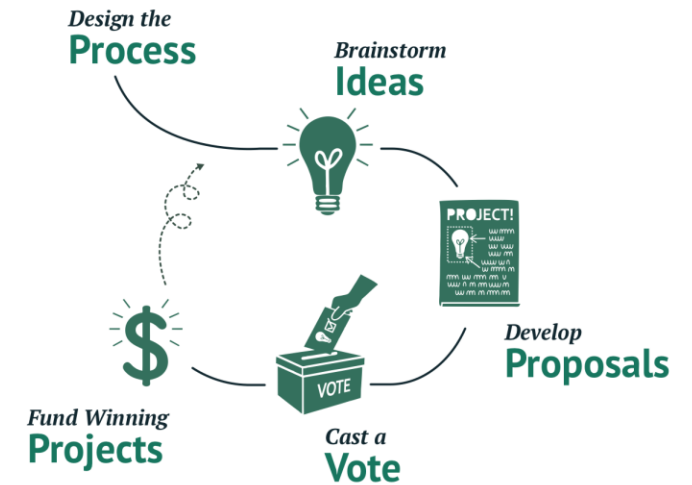


Image Credit ParticipatoryBudgeting.org

# Participatory budgeting: idea generation

'Idea generation' in the context of PB is simply the means by which you surface proposals for how to spend the money. This could be as simple as asking people to share ideas for priorities in how the budget is spent, or it could involve asking the community to create proposals.





# Setting criteria

**Criteria is a set of guidelines created when designing the PB process that participants can follow to create more meaningful ideas and proposals**

- Any restrictions timeframe/theme/policy/focus or regulatory standards to adhere by (i.e proposal has to be around food poverty or climate related)
- Region/neighbourhood (can only people from certain areas submit proposals?)
- Budget (this could include options depending on scale i.e small proposals or large proposals)



## Funding criteria

The funding criteria offer a first selection on formal grounds. As a city you leave the judgement for which projects are best to residents voting. The criteria are meant for a common frame to make sure the projects will be feasible to execute, e.g. within the given timeframe, budget, capacity and location of the city.



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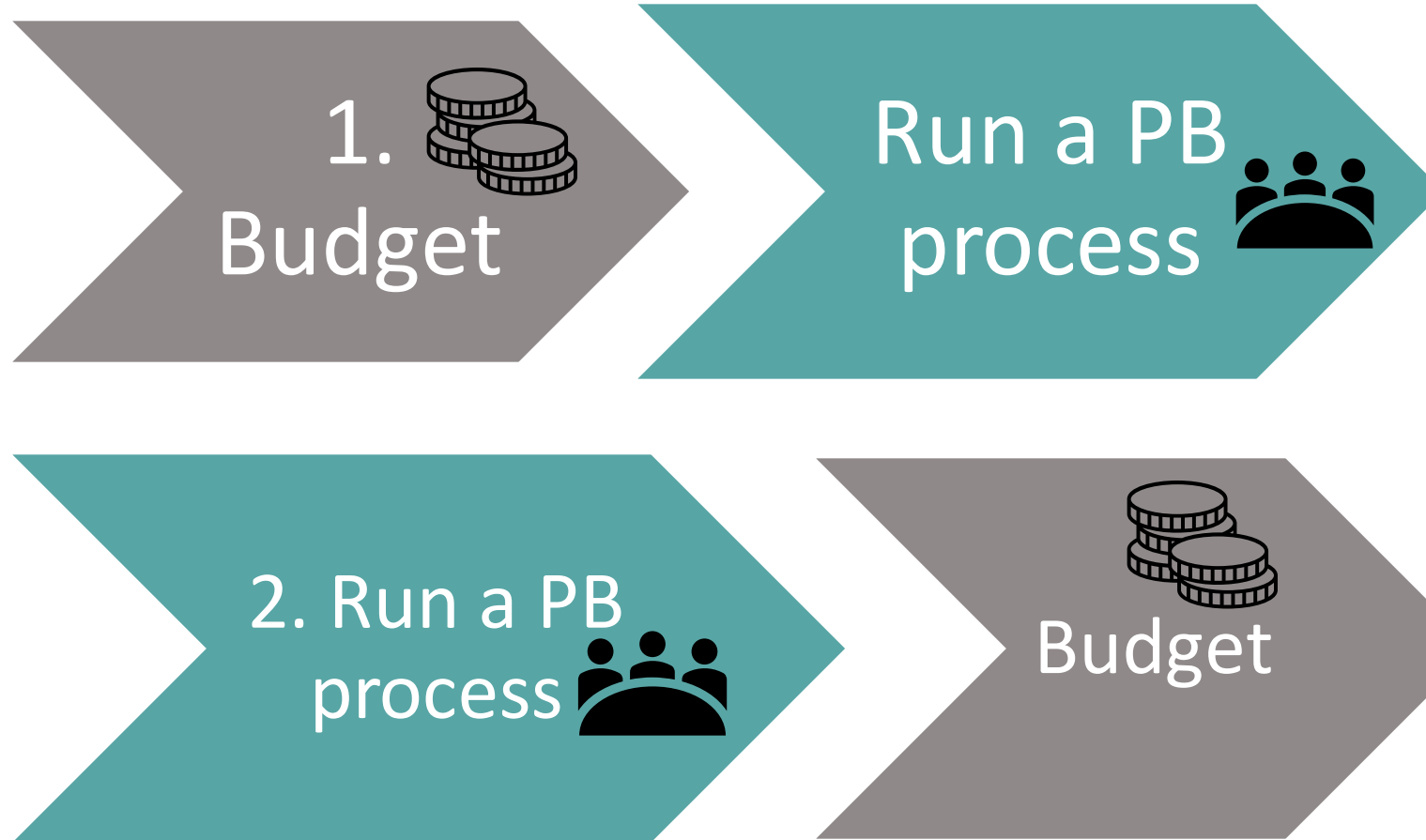
## Deciding on the topic/theme

- The council or a public authority have identified a budget that should (or could) be allocated with community involvement, for instance, on health or tackling inequalities.
- Citizens are involved in deliberation on priorities (open or thematic) and make an informed decision about the priority area of focus for the PB process. They may start with a 'blank page' or be informed by a wider and connected community consultation or participation process.
- Communities can organise a **community-led deliberation on priorities, and then approach funders** to support a PB process on the selected topics.
- Wider public are involved in generating ideas and voting.

**Best practice is where the community is involved at the beginning of the process in setting the priorities and coming up with solutions. This means they are far more likely to own the process, own the projects that are funded, and have a greater sense of shared responsibility.**

# Planning your PB

## Designing your PB: budget consideration



**1. More traditional design with known budget.**

**2. Example: Madrid-ongoing PB, set priorities and proposals for future budget.**

## ***'Who's Whoville'* Funding Criteria mock example**

This funding programme is managed by Whoville Community Council. We want to spend £60,000 (Local Authority funding) on a PB process for the town. We are looking for project ideas that will benefit the community and make a significant difference to the town and local people. Project ideas should be focused on improving the physical infrastructure of the town which involves local people and healthy activities for young people.

- Age for voting - Primary age 12 and over
- Upper limit for project ideas - £10,000
- Funding must go to projects within Whoville geographical boundaries.
- Only projects based within the town can apply for funding



## Criteria Roeselare, Belgium

- **Timeframe** - Can the project be executed within the given timeframe (for example 2021-2022)
- **Competences of the city** - Does the project fall under the city's competences/ capacity?
- **Budget** - Can the project be executed within the available budget?
- **Done by citizens** - In principle, citizens carry out the project themselves with government support. If necessary, city can also play a role implementation, e.g. interventions in public space.
- **New project** - Is the project not yet included in the year planning?
- **Location** - Is the project taking place within the given city?
- **Residents will benefit** - Does the project benefit the residents of the neighbourhood?
- **Purpose** - Is it not a religious event, commercial activity, political activity or fundraising?

## Criteria Gent, Belgium

The city of Gent has added two extra criteria:

1. Projects were created in a co-creative manner
2. Projects fit within the DNA of the neighbourhood

--> These criteria are more subjective and offer a bit more space for the city to take charge, but given these criteria can be interpreted in multiple ways one should always be transparent about how they are used: who is judging these criteria and how is it done?

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## Benefits of using digital tools to support deliberation & idea generation

- **Removes barriers of space & time** making it easier for a wider range of citizens and residents to have chance to get involved.
- Creates an **online presence and community that can later be used** to share the ongoing progress of successful projects (e.g. media, timelines and milestones), while unsuccessful projects can continue development for the future, maintaining an ongoing dialogue with citizens.
- Tends to **create a longer deliberation phase**, longer than a single event, allowing citizens/residents to discuss these ideas with others in their community, or carry out their own research into what the projects are trying to address.
- **Increases transparency of the process.**
- Provides **another space for citizens to think outside the box** and potentially save money on projects (e.g citizens can review their priorities and come up with unique solutions to community problems that might not have been thought of before).





## Challenges



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- Online deliberation rarely, if ever, provides the same level of deep dialogue and empathy that deliberating face-to-face can provide;
- Moderation and facilitation can take up a reasonable amount of staff time;
- Moderation and facilitation is a skill that not everyone feels comfortable with, and there may be some training requirements for the staff engaging on the site;
- Without finding ways to draw people back to the site (for instance, through email reminders), some individuals may only engage once, and then forget about the site.



# Tools & methods





# Thank you!



For more info please visit our website

[annie@demsoc.eu](mailto:annie@demsoc.eu), [sophie@demsoc.eu](mailto:sophie@demsoc.eu)

**demsoc.org**