

INTERACTIVE PUBLIC EVENT

In chapter 2 we have described the full process of the Parisian activist workshop, and we also told the story of our interactive campaign event of the 28th of July 2017. In this section we'd like to give a comprehensive structured description of how to hold such interactive events.

More or less improvised interaction with the audience has been integrated into art performances, installations and exhibitions for a while and it has been a privileged ingredient of activist actions.

Some examples

The exhibition of Tino Sehgal in 2016 in Palais de Tokyo (Paris) involved participants in several interactions: participants were welcomed individually or pairs by a several hosts. The first host was the youngest, then consecutive hosts were each time one generation above. Different hosts had different subject matters to chat about: what is progress, what are revolutions for etc. In a following space the participants of a choreographed dance performance engaged with visitors telling them intimate stories that left a trace on their life.

⚡ https://www.pluris.fr/publication/les-choregraphies-sociales-de-tino-sehgal-au-palais-de-tokyo_2-14-2768.php image by Sophie Colin

La fura dels baus 2015 la villette :

⚡ <https://www.lafura.com/en/news/m-u-r-s-se-instalara-en-holland-festival/>

Whatever the concrete form, interactive sessions usually have the ambition to engage visitors more directly, provoking their immediate reaction, hoping to trigger reaction.

TITLE OF THE ACTIVITY	INTERACTIVE CAMPAIGN EVENT
DURATION	1-2-3 hours /depending on how many stages / phases we wish to include
NUMBER OF THE PARTICIPANTS (FROM-TILL, IDEAL)	20-100 – depending on how many helpers we have who accompany visitors through the different stages Completely subject to the stages we invent, the games we propose and the art works we wish to introduce. We'll propose some activities as example, which you can freely adapt or change in accordance with your context.
MATERIAL	1. For the welcoming reception: drinks, snacks 2. A map of the parcours printed on a card or A4 paper for each visitor 3. For the contact activity: a hat, small bits of coloured paper or stickers 4. For the questions: a hat, small bits of paper with questions 5. Sound / light equipment according to needs, in particular for the ending session. 6. Food and drink for the farewell reception
AIMS	Within an activist project we can work towards the following aims with an interactive campaign: Trigger contact between the activist participants and people external to the activist project: Trigger contact with a space: interactive campaigns are necessarily site specific: they happen within a physical context. We can prepare a parcours through the space that invites visitors to discover the space through a specific path. We can prepare different events or

«tasks» in specific parts of the space. Interactions with the hosts or guides can further help getting acquainted with the space by directing the attention of the visitors to specific details, asking or answering questions about the space.

Trigger deeper reflection about the subject matter of the campaign: the host can orient the thinking of visitors, asking them to reflect on issues, connect through personal experience to the subject matter etc.

STEPS/INSTRUCTIONS

1. Design a parcours in advance

An interactive campaign is too complex to leave it completely to improvisation. Unexpected moments will happen anyways, even if you design the parcours in advance. This parcours or path will help you to avoid complete chaos and keep focus.

In designing the parcours think of inviting your visitors to a diversity of spaces, and if possible offer a diversity of stimuli, sensations, art forms etc. Do not create a too ambitious programme, bear in mind the human and material resources you have and the time that visitors can be expected to wish to spend with you.

As an example you can read about the stages of our Parisian activist parcours in chapter 2.

2. Welcome visitors (and guides)

Most of the time people experience some apprehension in getting in contact with unknown others. Especially if (by design or coincidence) visitors and guides belong to different social/ cultural groups. To reduce anxiety, you can welcome visitors with a small reception, offering drinks, snacks, background music. Such a reception space will also help you to start together once a number of visitors have arrived. If you wish you can give a visible distinguishing feature to the hosts, with costumes or some symbol.

3. Create contact in light, playful ways

Spontaneous contact does not always work, precisely because people tend to remain in the comfort zone of interactions with people they already know. So it is nice to have some easy tool to help people get connected.

The hat technique: imagine you wish to create groups of three, with one guide and two visitors. You can give color cards (or stickers) to each guide and place two stickers / cards of the same colour in a hat. You can then invite participants to draw from the hat and find the guide who has the same color card.

Direct choice: you can also decide that the guides can 'fetch» their visitors directly, simply inviting the visitors to join them.

4. Prepare each station to welcome visitors

Think of who will welcome the visitors in each «station» and how this welcoming will happen. Make sure the «hosts» arrive before the visitors, but don't forget your hosts on stations where / when no visitors are likely to show up.

5. Propose simple ways to induce interaction to walk together from one station to another

To make sure that visitors don't get lost between two stations, the guides can accompany them. To make the joint walking part of the experience you can offer some questions.

6. Close the session with a space for non-formal, free interaction

If possible create a space at the end of the parcours which helps people linger on, enter in interaction in non formal, non directed ways. Having some music (in particular live concert) and a little reception can work nicely.

7. Give a chance to visitors to leave traces of their impressions

You can offer spaces or tools for visitors to leave traces of their experiences, reflections etc. See below section on «evaluation method».

8. Thank your participants with a joint dinner, close the work with a debrief session.

Don't forget to celebrate symbolically and practically what you have achieved together. The festivities can happen after a debrief session so that you can be sure to collect impressions, share experiences, potentially solve tensions and explore incidents.

HINTS/TIPPS FOR FACILITATORS

Interactive campaigns depend most of all on the human factor, more specifically on the motivation and preparation of the helpers /volunteers who assist visitors. It is crucial to prepare well together, to ensure that the «guides» have ownership of the programme, they don't feel instrumentalized or merely puppets in the hands of the director / artist / facilitator. Several preparation sessions are necessary to build up the programme together. A good debrief session is welcome to draw conclusions together, reflect on what happened, what results were reached. A joint dinner or final gift is nice to symbolically thank participants for their involvement.

If the participants of the activist workshop belong to specific social, cultural groups, take extra care to ensure that the interactive campaign does not backfire: the participants are not put in vulnerable situation, they are not exposed in ways they are not prepared for.

EVALUATION METHOD (IF APPLICABLE)

To assess the campaign you can collect impressions from the visitors on written form on a wall, on postcards. Some simple questions can be proposed such as:

- Was there anything that surprised you during the exhibition?
- What was your favourite encounter?
- Did your way of thinking change in any way?
- What was your favourite idea during the exhibition?

A debrief session with the assistants can help learn about the interactions that happened, and how they felt during the interactions.

CAMPAIGN RECIPES CHALK FOR CHANGE!

//EXAMPLE: CHALK FOR PARTICIPATION//

Aim: to engage people in discussing about certain topics (in this case: the importance of the national elections)

What you need: chalk, public space, 10 minutes, 1 question

Flow: Choose a convenient spot on a square or a street and start to write down your question. Our experience is that while drawing on the surface by-passers start asking questions spontaneously about what we are drawing – so we could easily start a conversation based on the question we were interested about. We decided not to engage in a political campaign, what we aimed was to call attention to the importance of the participation in politics. The discussion is the principal aim, but secondary benefit is the drawing that can point out your case even after you left the space.

Pay attention: to the group decision among the organisers! Having a conversation with the others can be very personal and of course can express subjective ideas, but it is crucial to have a common message and agreement on what you would like to communicate (and what you wouldn't).



BINGO TO TAKE ACTION

// EXAMPLE: ARTIVISM BINGO //

Aim: Bingo is not only a game for the elderly to socialize but can serve as a tool to motivate people to take action. Do you want people to do nice things to each other? Want to challenge your participants with diverse artistic actions? This is your tool!
What you need: 8-9 statements in a grid of 3x3.

Artivist bingo

WRITE DOWN 3 THINGS WHAT YOU ARE PROUD OF ABOUT YOURSELF!	FINISH THE SENTENCE: BEFORE I DIE I WANT TO...	WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE MEMORY FROM THIS WEEK? WRITE IT DOWN OR TAKE A PICTURE THAT REMINDS YOU OF IT!
WRITE A POSTCARD TO SOMEONE AND GIVE IT TO THEM/SEND IT BY POST!	SHOW YOUR FAVOURITE IMAGE FROM THE EXHIBITION TO SOMEONE!	DO SOMETHING NICE WITH SOMEONE YOU DONT KNOW!
ASK SOMEONE A QUESTION THAT EXCITES YOU TODAY!	THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT TO DO IN 3 YEARS AND WRITE IT DOWN NOT TO FORGET IT!	CREATE A DANCE MOVE FOR TONIGHT!

Flow: Think about actions you think would create an impact or provide a meaningful experience for the person completing the bingo. As you can see in the below example game some things that can be done in an event where you can approach other people but other options can be realised alone as well. We wanted to tackle imagination and movement to make people talk to each other. Copy or alter the example and get inspired!

Tips: You can create a competition: first person who finishes the bingo wins a price!

Be aware: If the tasks are too simple, people won't be challenged enough to participate, but if the tasks are too hard, they will lose motivation.

Think about the duration: how long you want to keep them busy? And the resources: what do they have around that can be involved in the game?

if you bring the usual ritual elements of the white box out to the street.

IMAGE

Be aware: You have to find a way to fix the images on the wall without breaking the law, consult a lawyer about your options!



COLLECTIVE COLLABORATIVE PHOTO EXHIBITION

//EXAMPLE: I SCREWED UP THEREFORE I AM –
LAUDATION FOR OUR FAILURES//

Aim: Use the public space as a gallery; invite people to add their work to the collection.

What you need: images and a wall or shop window



Flow: Find a topic to what people can connect to. Launch a call. Find a surface in the public space that people can visit – this is going to be a reappropriation of public space to directly serve as a venue of a cultural event for public. You can also play with the frame of the opening event to see what happens



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