



STILLWORK
— CONSULTING GROUP —

COMMUNITY LISTENING: Gaining the 10,000 Foot View

A Community Listening Tour is a unique tool to help funders and community leaders gain greater clarity on issues of local importance. Listening Tours provide a neutral and intentional process for learning about community needs and perspectives by engaging ALL voices equally. Interviews are not only with the “usual suspects” (community leaders, nonprofit agency heads, and government representatives, for example) but also individuals with lived and work experience in the community/locale. Designed to gather knowledge through discovery, learning and listening, this process provides valuable insights that are often crucial to guaranteeing buy-in and success for new initiatives.

The guiding questions of a Community Listening Tour are simple: what are you curious about? What are some perspectives you should be considering as you design a new initiative? The structure involves a series of confidential conversations during which Stillwork Consulting Group will sound out interested parties and constituencies to achieve a prismatic view of an issue. As neither a nonprofit or funder, we are a neutral party, and thus able to unearth challenges and problems so they can be addressed proactively. Our philosophy is that the smartest people in the room are often those most impacted by community initiatives, and their voices must be heard and respected for positive, sustainable change to take place.

This engagement includes assessment, interviews and/or discovery sessions, and a written report.

I. GROUNDWORK

- 10 hours of preparation by SCG, including document review and planning conversations with “host” organization/team.
- 5 hours research and analysis of the issue and community, including understanding the big picture of the issue or initiative and how other communities have addressed/handled it.

II. INTERVIEWS

- SCG will conduct ~25 confidential 45-minute phone or Zoom interviews: 15 to be selected by contracting organization and 10 determined by discovery.
- A core set of questions, developed in partnership with the contracting organization, is asked at each interview so that patterns can be recognized/identified and understood.
- Process is iterative and without predetermined outcomes— SCG can build upon conversations to test assumptions and explore heretofore/previously undisclosed perspectives.
- Interviews with each person will be summarized; common themes and patterns are identified while still maintaining confidentiality.
- Confidentiality ensures a safe space for honest reflection.

III. DELIVERABLE

- Report includes
 - Snapshot of current community activities on identified issue
 - Links and summaries of how other communities address the issue
 - Summary of interviews and interpretation of what was learned
 - Recommendations for next steps

Cost: \$15,000- \$20,000