How to Get Authentic Data

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Purpose/Goals

1. Get an authentic grasp of how to initiate work
2. Explore the collective focus of the project and the reasonings behind it
3. Build up a strong team that are fully in alignment of the project’s Values
4. Begin an objective data collection process
Complete a Situational Analysis

- Check within the community to see if the data is truly needed
  - Residents
  - Stakeholders
  - Business owners
  - Investors
Acknowledge the History of the Community

- Do your research: What has already happened here?
- What needs to happen to help this community grow?
- What will this project do to be able to assist?
- Once the project becomes public, will there be enthusiasm or caution circled around this project by the community?
Decenter Power

- Understand that the true Value/Key/Elements of your project is not who is funding it, but ultimately the people that it’s serving
Establish Project Values

Include all planners in an exercise in order to get a collective agreement on what Values will be guiding your work. Then grow your mission and vision statements from these Values.
Include the Community

- Be sure to include vested community people as advisors on the project
- Let them have a say in the direction of the project as well as the purpose and outcomes
Authentically Invest in the Community

- What equity will this project provide?
- How do you plan on ensuring that equity?
Establish Trust

- Be transparent about your intentions and strategic plan/outline from the beginning of the project
Build Relationships

- Establish Common and continuous exercises to keep the transparency open
  - Exercises
  - Outings
  - Icebreakers
  - Check Ins
  - Check Outs

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Revert back to Values as Needed

- When intentions and plans become unclear, revert back to your intentions to ground the purpose of the project and everyone attached to it.
THEN, and only then, attempt to collect data.

- This is the last and final step!
Action Items

- Complete a situational analysis
- Acknowledge the history of the community
- Decenter power
- Establish project values
- Include the community
- Authentically invest in the community
- Establish trust
- Revert back to values as needed
- NOW, collect data
Shameless Plug

THE EAST BALTIMORE RESEARCH PROJECT

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN, SOLUTION-ORIENTED, PURPOSE-FILLED.
Questions?

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