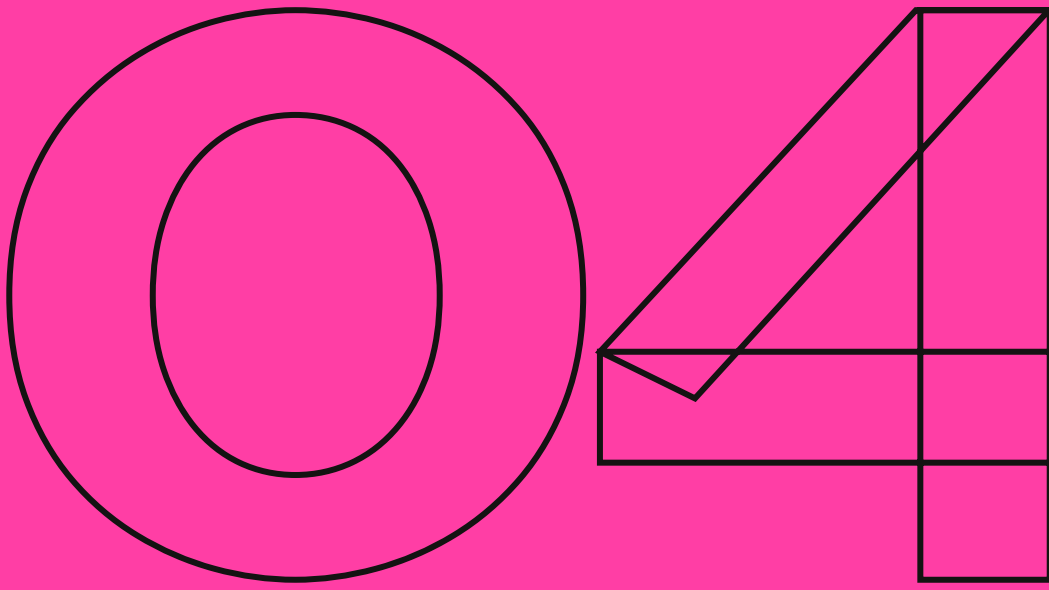
project change

FREE PRACTICAL TOOL · NO. 04



# Before you ask someone

## to share their lived experience

A practical checklist for making sure the request is necessary, clear and respectful.

**A powerful story can move a room. That does not mean you are automatically entitled to one. Ask for the knowledge you need, not the most personal disclosure you can get.**

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BEFORE THE INVITATION

# Seven things to be clear about first

## Ask for expertise before you ask for autobiography.

- [ ] **Purpose:** why do we need lived experience here, and what decision or understanding will it inform?
- [ ] **Necessity:** do we actually need a personal story, or do we need someone's analysis, advice or expertise?
- [ ] **Choice:** can the person decide what to share, how much to share, and whether to share personal detail at all?
- [ ] **Audience:** who will hear or see it? Will it be recorded, photographed, published or reused?
- [ ] **Control:** can the person review how their contribution is represented and change their mind before publication where practical?
- [ ] **Support:** what happens before, during and after if the conversation is difficult or brings things up?
- [ ] **Value:** are time, preparation, travel and expertise being appropriately recognised and paid?

DURING AND AFTER

# Consent is a process, not a sentence on a form.

## During

- Remind people they can pause or stop.
- Do not push for “more detail” because the first answer was not dramatic enough.
- Do not treat silence, emotion or disclosure as content to capture.
- Keep the conversation connected to its agreed purpose.

## After

- Explain what happens next.
- Close the feedback loop.
- Pay promptly where payment was agreed.
- Check any agreed use of quotes, images or recordings.
- Do not quietly reuse a story in a different context later.

**TRY CHANGING THE INVITATION**

**INSTEAD OF:** ~~“Can you tell the room what happened to you?”~~

**→ TRY:** **“What do you think people making this decision need to understand, and how would you like to contribute that?”**


## Better involvement needs better conditions.

ProjectChange helps organisations work with lived experience in ways that are useful, ethical and connected to decisions. **projectchange.scot/work-with-us →**