

Making Space @ NYCHA: Youth Workshop

Workshop Agendas and Facilitator Guide

Background: This workshop series was piloted through a partnership at a technical high school focused on engineering, architecture, and technology. Students arrived with prior experiences in these areas. As such our focus was an introduction to urban planning, urban design, and landscape architecture principles. We invite you to use this guide to facilitate youth centered workshops about design in any context, and in any place. Youth are experts of their lived experiences. They have insights to share that benefit people of all ages. We need their perspectives to create more just places.

Purpose: Making Space for Youth is a workshop for teenagers exploring urban planning, urban design, advocacy, and organizing. The goal of this 4-day workshop series is to engage young people in a process that centers youth-led design of open spaces. The guide explores open space on and surrounding a specific New York City public housing development. The workshop overviews site analysis, asset mapping, design framing, creative process, and ideation. Students conclude the workshop series with a clear vision and skills to pursue accountable relationships with stakeholders necessary to create community-led urban designs. Our curriculum can set students up for important next steps in a community-accountable design process: design research, model design, community feedback (woven throughout each step of the process), construction, engineering, and programmatic planning of space activations.

Objectives: Youth will create design interventions for the open spaces at Red Hook Houses, the NYCHA campus in Red Hook, Brooklyn. They will design for youth their age and tie-in local culture and history.

Target Audience: High school age youth

Ideal Number of Participants: 15 young people (*adjust workshop activities and times if of number of participants changes*)

Learning Outcomes:

- Youth participants will learn and experience the process of idea formation and project development to create youth-led spatial futures that prioritize NYCHA youth-residents.
- Youth will learn about the history of public housing in the U.S. and tenant organizing.
- Youth will learn design thinking skills to execute their final projects.

Necessary Partnerships:

- A local organization whose focus is to serve the residents of a specific affordable housing development.

- A youth organization that serves youth in public housing or a youth organization/school with shared thematic interests.
- A group of engaged public housing tenant organizers. This can be a tenant association or an independent group of organized residents.

Process:

- Participants will access a physical site. They will participate in a walking tour of the site guided by local residents and tenant organizers. The goal here is to connect with the space, those who inhabit it, and those who hold pieces of its history.
- Participants will learn alongside public housing tenant organizers and advocate allies.
- Participants will complete a series of design modules with members of their team, that will result in paper models of their designs.
- Participants will present their group projects and learn best practices for giving and receiving feedback.
- Participants will receive a stipend for their time.

Day 1: Into the Neighborhood!

Duration: 3 hours

Objectives: Participants will visit the site and begin to frame their thinking around the project focus. Participants will gather information via workshop packets and photos.

Location: The workshop begins in a predetermined location with appropriate seating near the starting point for the site visit. Indoor location with access to projector screen to share slide show presentation preferred.

Key Partners: You may have public housing tenant organizers and ally advocates join you for the first portion of the workshop as participants. Our team worked with the Committee for Independent Community Action (CICA) in New York City. A member of their group joined us at every workshop. Likewise, it is important to identify a knowledgeable site tour guide or guides.

Materials:

- Slide show presentation (*visuals are always helpful*)
- Post it notes in various different colors
- Large scale map of your site
- Large easel pads
- Clip boards

- Markers
- Pens
- Tape

Duration	Activity	Helpful tips
15 mins	<p>Welcome and Overview: <i>(on site at predetermined meeting location)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce yourselves to the youth participants. - Introduce the purpose and goals of the workshop. - Introduce the tour guides and any other partners or organizations participating. 	<p>Include music and snacks.</p> <p>Explain the goals of the workshop.</p>
30 mins	<p>Introductions Pair and Share Icebreaker (5 mins)</p> <p>Participants turn to the person next to them and introduce themselves to each other using the prompts below. Each participant will be asked to introduce their partner to the group. This is a good exercise to work on active listening skills and accurately representing someone else's story to the group.</p> <p>Icebreaker Prompts (5 mins/2.5 mins each) <i>Facilitator keeps time</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Share your name, your pronouns if you'd like to. 2. What grade are you in and what neighborhood are you coming from? 3. What is your favorite place to hangout in? Why? 4. What would make this hangout spot even better? 5. Why did you want to join this workshop series? <p>(2 mins) After time is up, remind students that we'll be sharing and ask if they want to clarify anything with their partner before we return to the circle.</p> <p>(10 mins) With partners sitting next to each other. Ask one pair to volunteer. Participant 1 will introduce participant 2 to the group and vice versa. After sharing, ask your partner "<i>Did I get that right?</i>" This is an opportunity for your partner to</p>	<p>Explain and model the ice breaker.</p> <p>Facilitators should participate in all ice breakers.</p> <p>Adjust the time depending on the number of participants. Prompts can be changed.</p>

	<p>share anything you might have missed. After the first pair share, the students who went pick a direction, completing each partner sharing around a circle. If a pair isn't ready, they can say "pass". Return to those who passed at the end.</p> <p>(5 mins) Full Group Reflection: How was that for you? How did you experience your partner sharing your story? What was it like to share your partner's story?</p>	
30 mins	<p>Making Our Community Agreements Make community agreements together that address some of the group's needs, individually and collectively.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In trios/fours, share one fear you have related to this workshop. 2. Discuss one way your group can support each of the fears you shared. <p>Give a personal example, as needed: I fear that because I am quiet, I am going to not contribute enough to the class. What are some ways we can support this fear?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Would you advocate to add these ways of supporting each other to our community agreements? <p>We can also think about <i>access needs</i> here. An access need is anything that can increase your individual or collective capacity to be with us or in the world with more ease and safety.</p> <p>As a group, take a moment to draft the community agreements that feel important to concretize from your conversations. Write them on post-it notes (one idea per post-it).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Full-group gallery walk: Take a couple of minutes to read the community agreements proposed. 5. Group discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is resonating with you? - Is there anything you'd like to add? <p>Transition into the next section, emphasizing to keep community agreements in mind through the workshop.</p>	<p>Take a moment to explain what access needs are when they come up in this section. We suggest Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha and Jezz Chung's framing of what access needs are for further learning.</p>

15 mins	<p>Introduce Data Collection Methods: The group is going to divide up to learn more about three different types of spaces in Red Hook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open spaces - Paths and Corridors - Neighborhood planning <p>(Other possible topic suggestions include: play areas, plazas, indoor gathering spaces, areas under construction)</p> <p>Site Visit Worksheet The worksheet will ask students to identify <i>strengths, challenges and opportunities</i> of the site. Students can capture these through drawing, writing, diagrams or photos.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strengths: What's worth celebrating in local gathering spaces? b. Challenges: What's missing or isn't working in local gathering spaces? c. Opportunities: What would you like to see more of in local gathering spaces? <p>The worksheet also asks students to capture <i>protection, comfort, and delight</i>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Protection: Are there features to protect from pollution, car traffic, construction, etc.? b. Comfort: Are there features that make it possible to linger, chill, and hang out (e.g., seating, shade)? c. Delight: Are there features that make the space feel special, unique, and true to place (e.g., artistic elements, play features)? <p><i>Participants who take photos will later be prompted to upload all pictures to a shared folder on Google Drive.</i></p>	The ethos of this walking tour is that all participants and facilitators are guests and actively learning together. This means that facilitators should have clipboards and packets that they are working in.
60 mins	<p>Site Visit Walking Tour: Briefly re-introduce the community partner leading the walking tour.</p> <p>Display a visual of the route you will be taking so participants know what to expect.</p> <p>The facilitators and community partners should share some best practices for the site tour. Examples can include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask open ended questions. Our site visit leaders are 	Ask everyone to prepare for the weather in advance! They should also have a full battery and/or bring portable chargers, water bottles, and good walking shoes.

	<p>taking their time to be with you today. No question is too simple to ask.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Be respectful of the area, take all trash with you. 3. If you plan to take pictures of people, avoid pictures of faces and ask consent if you do photograph someone's face. 4. Do not write down people's names unless you have their consent. Initials are always a safe bet. 5. Stay with the group. 	
30 mins	<p>Debrief</p> <p>General Reflection: Students take a moment to write their reflections and takeaways from the site visit.</p> <p>Facilitator will then ask a few volunteers to share parts of their reflections.</p> <p>Group Reflection: Place three big sheets of paper on different sides of the room. One should be titled <i>Keeps</i>, the other <i>Cuts</i>, and the last one <i>Adds</i>.</p> <p>Hand out a total of 9 post it notes to each participant. Ask the group to write 1-3 comments, ideas, and/or observations for each of the sheets of paper. They should all go up and place them once they are finished.</p> <p>Keeps: What's working / worth celebrating?</p> <p>Cuts: What needs to go?</p> <p>Adds: What would you like to see more of?</p> <p>After everyone is done adding their sticky notes, grab a couple that stand out and ask whoever wrote it to share their thought process.</p> <p>This concludes Day 1. Thank participants for their time, and share details on the next meeting date and time:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Share Google Folder to collectively upload pictures 2) Ask everyone to bring a meaningful object with them to the next session 	<p>Share the Google Folder and give participants some time to upload their photos before you end the workshop.</p> <p>Send an email reminder for the next workshop and include anything the Participants need to bring with them.</p>

Day 2: Grounding and Public Housing Context

Duration: 3 Hours

Objectives: Participants will learn about the history of NYCHA organizing and advocacy, and also get context pressing challenges facing NYCHA today. Participants will team up based on a shared topic of interest to focus a group project on.

Location: Classroom or Community Center

Key Partners: Continue to invite local tenant advocates and incorporate the insights and observations.

Materials:

- Markers, pens and paper
- Large easel pad
- Post-it notes in various colors
- All (students, facilitators, and key partners): Bring a meaningful object of any kind for opening story-share

Duration	Activity	Helpful tips
15 mins	<p>Welcome and Overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce Day 2's agenda and invited guests - Provide a synopsis of the previous workshop's activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose one student to sum up the previous session to report to those that could not attend. 	<p>Recaps are helpful, especially if a few days have gone by since you last met.</p> <p>If using a different space on Day 1, check in with the group about access needs.</p>
15 mins	<p>Icebreaker</p> <p>Share a story about the object you brought. Alternatively, if we notice a majority don't have objects: What's the most beautiful place, to you, in all of New York City (<i>in your city/town</i>)?</p>	<p>Facilitators should participate in the icebreaker.</p>
60 mins	<p>Public Housing Tenant Organizing</p>	<p>This is most effective when you have established a</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite member(s) of a tenant organizing group to share remarks to ground and frame the day. - Encourage organizers to include poetry, music, and art in their remarks if they feel moved to do so. - Provide 5-10 mins for the tenant organizing group to share a bit about their vision and the work they are doing. - Show a portion of a film or another piece of media that models the tenant organizing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite youth to share their observations and insights of the film. - Invite youth to share how this relates to things they saw or heard during the walking tour. - Talk about the history of public housing, particularly from a social justice framework. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite youth to share more about what public housing means to them and their communities. - Invite youth to share what they perceive to be the challenges and opportunities for stronger youth-led public spaces on NYCHA campuses. 	<p>partnership. We invited CICA “Committee for Independent Social Action” to join us for the entirety of the workshop and we had one member from CICA with us each day of the workshop. CICA was a key stakeholder in our project and played an enormous role in shaping our vision, specifically around the issue of privatization. Their participation in the workshop was essential not only for maintaining a connection to grassroots organizing.</p>
30 mins	<p>LUNCH</p>	<p>It is helpful to provide lunch so that everyone stays in the same location and can get to know each other in a relaxed way.</p>
10 mins	<p>Youth-Centered Open Space Regroup by asking students to write down one thing they desire and seek in public space and add it to a poster. Share out.</p>	<p>Use post-it notes and big paper to facilitate this.</p>
50 mins	<p>Asset Mapping Convey objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You can only design with what is there - Form a cohesive team - Identify things we can build off in these categories 	<p>Helpful to have a slideshow to introduce the concept of asset mapping.</p> <p>.</p>

	<p>Asset Map</p> <p>Invite students on each of three teams to practice asset mapping based on their own strengths. This asset map is broken into three categories: skills, resources, interests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explain to students that their team is unique and that their combined interests and skills will inform whatever they design even if they seem unrelated. Students write their strengths in each of three areas on post-it notes and then place them on a venn diagram drawn on butcher paper. Resources, in this case, can be the room, materials, tools present in the space, etc. - Next, pull out a new sheet of big paper for each team. Invite each team to sketch out a diagram of circles around their theme (open space, pathways, neighborhood, etc). Around this theme, create areas for Community, Environment, Transportation, Housing/Infrastructure, Organizations, and Community. - Now, ask each team to ask the question, “What’s abundant here?” for each category as it relates to the site. Students can recombine or borrow from observations that they listed in the previous exercise, but should reframe them as opportunities and abundances. - Each group shares out. <p>This will conclude Day 2. Thank participants for their time, and share details on the next meeting date and time.</p>	<p>A site visit in a disinvested area may cause students to recognize only what needs to be fixed or problems to solve. The goal of the Asset Mapping exercise is to reframe and refocus on opportunities and positives.</p>
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Day 3: Designing in Place

Duration: 2 hours

Objectives: Participants will learn the basics of design framing through collaboratively determining design values, an approach, and key ideas. Participants will workshop initial design ideas in an open-ended charette exercise.

Location: Classroom or community center

Key Partners: None, workshop 3 is a time for the youth to take ownership of their ideas without too much outside influence. That being said, partners interested in partaking in all workshops should be welcome to participate, observe and reflect with students when appropriate.

Materials:

- Printed out site photographs
- Colorful construction paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Glue
- Big paper
- Post its
- Markers

Duration	Activity	Helpful tips
30 min	<p>Asset Mapping Wrap Up Introduce Day 3's agenda</p> <p>Re-group around the in-progress asset maps from the previous session.</p> <p>Use printed pictures on a new sheet of paper to illustrate and progress the maps from the last session.</p> <p>Note abundances and observations.</p>	This is both an exercise and a warm up: each group may approach the task at hand differently and that's ok. Allow the groups to make choices around how they represent information.
5 min	<p>What is Open Space? Briefly discuss different kinds of open space beyond parks like streets, temporary activations, and community gardens</p> <p>Brainstorm: What are some of NYCHA's available gathering spaces?</p>	Show images for inspiration. Keep it brief!
30 min	<p>Design Framing Set up each team with a piece of big paper and markers.</p> <p>Explain that this is how we'll move from asset mapping into the design process.</p> <p>Use a slide deck to prompt students to define design values, list out design ideas that fit that value, and then a design approach that explains their project and applies it to their</p>	<p>Keep time and move at a fast pace through these sections. It can be helpful to include "5 Min" on the slide.</p> <p>Assure students that ideas don't have to be final or perfect.</p>

	<p>“site” (open space, pathways, or neighborhood).</p> <p>Design Values define what matters and who is impacted. Example: “Preserving the cultural identity of a neighborhood is important.”</p> <p>Design Ideas are specific actions that support the value. Example: “the color red, drums, shade trees.”</p> <p>Design Approach is what ties everything together. Example: “This project preserves the cultural identity of a neighborhood through creating a gathering place for sharing musical traditions, including seating and rotating, painted drums.”</p> <p>Have teams share out after each prompt.</p> <p>Include examples of projects to illustrate these concepts.</p> <p>Ask students to give examples as you go to check comprehension</p>	<p>Emphasize how to reconcile seemingly contradictory design values.</p> <p>Tie back to the tour site whenever possible.</p>
45 min	<p>Design Sprint Switch gears to a making-focused activity.</p> <p>Students work in a free-form way with construction paper: drawing, sketching, modeling, crumpling, and folding to represent their ideas.</p>	<p>This is a time to step back and allow relatively unstructured work time.</p>
10 min	<p>Closing Discussion Round table share out of each student and team’s work in the design sprint.</p> <p>Ask students to tie it to what they observed on site (Asset Map), and Design Framing work.</p> <p>What will they do next?</p> <p>How did the different methods of working feel?</p> <p>This concludes Day 3. Thank participants for their time, and share details on the next meeting date and time.</p>	

Day 4: Bring It All Together

Duration: 3 hours

Objectives: Participants will learn presentation skills and explore a model for giving and receiving feedback that prioritizes designers' needs. Participants will have unstructured work time with community partners' support. All will engage in a presentation, feedback, and reflection process at the workshop's close.

Location: Classroom or community space.

Key Partners: Public housing tenant organizers and ally advocates join for the first portion of the workshop as participants. They support groups with helpful insight on the presentation tips section, offer guidance during students' structured work time, and participate in the project feedback and reflection processes.

Materials:

- Bring back materials from Day 3. Replenish materials, as needed.
- A home-baked dessert by one of your team members that can be used to model the Critical Response Process. Note: You can buy a dessert and pretend, for the sake of the exercise, that someone on your team made it.

Duration	Activity	Helpful tips
2 mins	Welcome + Agenda	Always cover the day's activities.
5 mins	<p>Presentation Workshop</p> <p>Summary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead with your "why" and your heart. We are wired for story! 2. Know and customize to your audience/community. 3. Individually, we don't know everything. Together, we know a lot. 4. Reduce jargon. <p>Explanation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead with your "why" and your heart. We are wired for story! 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As design professionals, when we lead with vulnerability and our “why”, people begin to see that we have a stake in and a commitment to what we’re working on. What’s your connection to the community? Sharing this upfront can be important to building the foundation for trust. If you’re not part of the community you’re designing with, why are you invested in this work? What keeps you invested? People are inherently drawn to storytelling and this approach will help capture your audience’s attention and spark engagement. <p>2. Know and customize to your audience/community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask tenant organizer and advocate partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you approach outreach in your work? - How do you reach people when you want to build a relationship and share important information? - Incorporate suggestions from organizers, participants, and facilitators. <p>5. Individually, we don’t know everything. Together, we know a lot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. “I don’t know” is an honest response. In this context, no question is too simple to ask. Our primary goal is to learn together. In fact, our partners are most excited to learn from your perspectives as high school students. What do you want us adults to know, from your unique perspective as teenagers? <p>6. Reduce jargon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Jargon decreases our ability to connect with each other. It also harms our individual sectors, because it further isolates us (architects, designers, public health professionals, educators, organizers, etc.) from each other. To do justice-oriented, community-accountable design well, we need to be working with each other across sectors. 	<p>Give an example of a time jargon confused you or made something more complicated than it needed to be.</p>
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50 mins	<p>Unstructured Work Time</p> <p>We suggest that facilitators make themselves available but not hover over students working. In our workshop, our facilitation team worked on a project together during this time. It's helpful for students to know you're available but not feel the pressure of your presence, especially at this stage, where there is an intentional amount of space and time for project development.</p>	If there is an option for students to spread out in the location you are meeting (sit in different areas, work outside, etc.) invite them to do that.
30 mins	LUNCH	Invite participants to take a genuine break.
5 mins	<p>Giving and Receiving Feedback: Introduction to the Critical Response Process</p> <p>Ask students if they've ever received feedback that brought them down, deflated them, or made them not want to continue what they were working on?</p> <p>Explain that in our feedback process, we want to take care so that none of them leave the workshop feeling that way.</p> <p>What does good feedback look like and feel like? When the designer receiving feedback can't wait to get back to work afterward, or feels inspired by new ideas they want to bring to other projects. The Critical Response Process was designed by community-based artist Liz Lerman to do exactly that.</p> <p>Summarize the process on a poster.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statements of meaning: Responders state what was meaningful, interesting, or striking about the work. 2. Designer asks questions: Designer(s) ask audience questions about their work. 3. Neutral Questions: The audience asks neutral questions about the work. Designer(s) respond. Questions are neutral when they don't have an opinion attached. 4. Opinion time: Responders state opinions if they're given permission from the designer(s). For example, the responders can say, "I have an opinion about _____." 	

	<p>Would you like to hear it?" Designers have the option to say no for any reason.</p>	
5 mins	<p>Model the Critical Response Process</p> <p>Bring out the baked goods and pass them around allowing a minute for everyone to taste.</p> <p>Led participants through the four points of the giving and receiving feedback process using the cookies as an example case.</p>	
50 mins	<p>Group Presentations</p> <p>Have everyone sit in a circle so everyone can see each other. Each team will have five minutes to present their designs and ideas. Then, we will have seven minutes for the audience and presenters to move through the Critical Response process together.</p>	<p>Adjust the timing of each section of the workshop to ensure that there is sufficient time for all teams to present.</p>
20 mins	<p>Final Reflections</p> <p>Invite participants to reflect and share their takeaways from the workshop series. Encourage feedback and idea sharing for future workshops.</p> <p>If partners and workshop facilitators are able, it is helpful to let youth know that you are available to connect and discuss anything in the future. It is important for youth to make connections with adults working in fields they are interested in. Offer support if youth wish to talk about career paths, networking, or need references in the future. Share contact information and offer to keep communication open if youth are interested in staying in touch.</p>	<p>Recommend developing an anonymous survey to send participants after the workshop as well to allow for more feedback to be captured.</p>