



Project Description: Art At Work is a national initiative to improve municipal government and the communities they serve through strategic arts projects with municipal employees, elected officials, residents and artists. Creative Placemaking with people at the center, AAW generates cultural, civic and economic vibrancy by engaging people in making and experiencing art that matters.

Since 2007, with the City of Portland, Art At Work has put creativity to work delivering measurable outcomes that have improved police morale, deepened cross-cultural understanding in the Public Works Department, and increased awareness & appreciation for art, local government and civic engagement. Our NEA Our Town project, Meeting Place, worked with artists to develop four neighborhoods. Art At Work Holyoke launched in 2012.

To Do Checklist:

1. **Build Relationships** with department heads, union members/leaders, elected officials, artists/art community, community leaders (make sure to reflect city's diversity)
2. **How?** Attend meetings, award ceremonies, employee recognition ceremonies, drop by, hang out, ask who is respected, read papers, be bold, don't wait to be asked/wanted, be willing to 'walk away' if you can't get agreement re: integrity of AAW goals
3. Develop an **evaluation plan** with goals, indicators, outcomes, strategies
 - Invite stakeholders to give their input, lend expertise to refining/defining the plan
 - Process lends real credibility to the project, contradicting notions that art is trivial, marginal & has no place in a serious municipal context
4. Stay very clear about **methodology**: 1) identifying non-arts challenges, 2) Designing arts solutions, 3) Implementing projects, 4) Documenting process and 5) Measuring & disseminating outcomes
5. **Identifying Artist(s) Collaborators**
 - High quality
 - Already established/published/gallery/recorded, produced, etc;
 - Experience with community engagement and diversity
 - Confidence = Ability to not be in spotlight
 - Willingness to be led, to follow, to trust
6. **Generate good-looking materials/art** and distribute regularly to your stakeholders, partners, and participants. These materials will be invaluable in establishing credibility of idea & process.
7. **Choose the department, a challenge, and an art form**
 - don't be afraid of going BIG
 - Go for multiple gains
 - Consideration: Do you have artists that match form?
 - Choose something you personally connect with