

Case Studies Series 2023

Case Study: Brisbane City Council and Articulous – Inner Spark



Highlights at a glance

Inner Spark challenged industry stakeholders, organisations and the community to imagine how inner city Brisbane will transform and become the Host City of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. It was creative, bold, aspirational and exciting and community feedback has helped shape the four pillars and future directions of the recently released Brisbane's Inner City Strategy to help drive the evolution of Brisbane as a liveable city and destination on the world stage.

Brisbane City Council's Inner Spark engagement program secured remarkable community engagement and development outcomes, empowering inner city residents, and generating over 2,000 transformational ideas for the future of Brisbane. Ideas gathered will be directly invested in inspiring many future transformational projects to enhance the experience of residents and visitors alike during the 2032 Games and beyond.

The project was guided by two central objectives:

- 1) Spark excitement and passion within the Brisbane community in acknowledgement of the transformative impact of investment in transport, cultural and sporting infrastructure in preparation for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The purpose of engaging with diverse stakeholders was to instil a sense of pride and ownership among all Brisbane residents regarding the future of the inner city and ensure that Council's planning programs – including Brisbane's

Inner City Strategy, the new City Centre Master Plan, and other inner city precinct plans and strategies – incorporate city-wide needs and desires.

- 2) Generate community feedback to assist in the process of identifying and prioritising 'Big Ideas' for city-shaping projects featured in the development framework and masterplans for Brisbane's inner city.

The purpose of engagement was to facilitate the collation of Big Ideas through a 'call for ideas' process with targeted stakeholders, which would then be assessed and expanded on by members of the Brisbane public. The scope of this project, namely the delivery of a six-week extensive program of engagement methods (both online, through social media and in person), was intended to guarantee the inclusion of Brisbane's diverse community members, in addition to key industry, business and institutional stakeholders, in the process of identifying ideas for the development of Brisbane. Innovation and collaboration underpin this process of working to understand the hearts and minds of the Brisbane community through the engagement process. Key outcomes demonstrating the impact of this landmark engagement are:

- 1) Distinct community investment in the revitalisation of the Brisbane inner city, as demonstrated by the submission of 1,348 ideas in total from the community and 30,000 combined votes on Big Ideas and community ideas, derived both online and with the input of 6,760 in-person attendees.
- 2) Almost 700,000 impressions across Council's social and external media despite the impacts of the social media blackout for the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.
- 3) Consideration of a diversity of opinion through engagement with a broad cross-section of the community, including 15 unique primary stakeholder groups and Brisbane's youth community (who were responsible for the submission of 451 community ideas).
- 4) Targeted investment in the inner city community, with 25% of feedback representing residents within a 5 km radius of the CBD, and an overall comprehensive consideration of broader reaching of Brisbane residents, with over 75% of Brisbane suburbs represented in the feedback data.

This project generated a wealth of high-quality and innovative insights and sets out a replicable framework for the co-development of community planning initiatives by industry stakeholders and community members. Three key engagement takeaways are:

- Industry and organisational leaders were generous and ready to embrace the opportunity to share their technical knowledge, expertise and brilliant minds in transformative ideas for the future of Brisbane.

An amazing and diverse array of ideas was gathered, showcasing the ability of community to step up and address urban design and planning challenges. Some of these projects are already being delivered to transform the inner city.

- Through trust and genuine partnerships with industry, organisations and community, traditional limitations can be overcome and our imagination can be stretched far beyond expectation for real transformation

Key search words: Public, local government, community vision, deliberative engagement, collaborate, urban design, masterplan

1.0 Objectives

Organisation and background

Brisbane City Council is the largest local government entity in Australia, comprising 26 electoral wards and spanning 1,339 km² of land within the Brisbane metropolitan area. Inner city Brisbane is anticipated to experience unprecedented growth and development over the next ten-year period, resulting from economic, transport and industry investment heralded by the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Brisbane residents are eager for Olympic legacy investment to deliver statewide benefits and align with sustainable, connected and inclusive visions for the future of the city.

The engagement

The Inner Spark engagement program, launched in April 2022, was intended to bring together innovative and aspirational ideas from the key stakeholders and community members for the future of Brisbane city, across four distinct stages. The purpose of engaging in this broad cross-section of stakeholders and community members was to ensure that the actions Brisbane City Council is undertaking across the next 10 years are both stakeholder derived and community approved – aligning Council action with the priorities, needs and interests of community members concerning the future of their inner city.

The engagement exercise was centred on Brisbane's inner city, including the CBD, Breakfast Creek, Woolloongabba, Boggo Road, Kurilpa, Toowong, Milton and Herston precincts. Furthermore, Council's areas of influence in Brisbane city shifted the focus towards tangible city-shaping ideas related to hard and soft infrastructure, inner city transport connections, entertainment and activity offerings, local roads and footpaths, local parks and sport/playing fields, Council libraries, local programs and services, local infrastructure (i.e. stormwater drains) and local environmental areas and green spaces. While specific decisions regarding the Brisbane 2032 Olympics and Paralympic Games are made by the International Olympic Committee and Games Delivery Partners, Big Ideas submitted and judged were proposed to ignite the inner city for a brighter and stronger future.

Engagement across the first two stages were centred on receiving inputs and gauging opinions of industry stakeholders and organisations (Phase one), and community members (Phase two). Phase one allowed public stakeholders, including urban planners, designers, university students, industry body

- Inner city Brisbane will experience unprecedented growth and development over the next ten-year period, resulting from economic, transport and industry investment heralded by the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games
- Brisbane City Council wanted to ensure this growth and development is stakeholder derived and community approved!
- Council needed to excite, grab attention and issue a call to action to all of Brisbane to participate in a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform an entire inner city
- Innovative and inspiring methods were needed to excite young people and the athletes of the future about the possibilities this city transformation can bring
- The project needed to make it easy for young people to participate and ensure the diverse Brisbane community could access the process and were able to take part!

representatives and professionals in the built environment industry to contribute their Big Ideas across 17 workshops. Of 650 individual and group ideas collected, 66 were shared widely throughout Brisbane, thereby assuming a position of major influence.



Phase two enabled the broader community, through a mixture of face-to-face and online channels, to have their say on the Big Ideas submitted in Phase one and submit ideas of their own. The feedback gathered from this phase will have a significant influence in shaping actionable projects for inclusion in Brisbane's Inner City Strategy, City Centre Master Plan and other precinct plans.

Stakeholder sentiment throughout this process was highly engaged, given the remarkable level of input received across multiple channels.



The various participatory modes for engagement were chosen to ensure an equitable opportunity was provided for consultation with those who may not typically have a chance to contribute, including Traditional Custodians, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island community, multicultural and CALD communities, people living with disability, young people, children and homeless/low-income people. Eighteen diverse community events were facilitated for this reason, in addition to engagement online. The PEDESTRIAN.TV campaign in particular involved a 'call for ideas' campaign and competition specifically targeting young people through the use of the youth-centred online news and entertainment publisher. This program generated 451 ideas from the youth community.

2.0 Methodology

Plan engagement

Brisbane City Council sought to collate the Big Ideas from stakeholders and community members that would shape the future of the inner city. It was determined that these ideas would transform the future of our inner city through activities, economic opportunities, events or infrastructure improvements in private or public places and spaces.

The project was delivered by the Brisbane City Council, following the development of an engagement strategy by Articulous Communications. The project, however, was supported by bespoke social media and webpages to create brand awareness and shift perceptions away from typical day-to-day local government activities.

The engagement program was diverse and extensive, intended to facilitate stakeholder input, field community feedback, deliver key messages and address key topics of the master planning process of interest to the community. Key to this project was the recognition that Brisbane will transform as it prepares to be the host city for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This transformation will have a profoundly positive impact on the inner city, and the people who live, work and play in the inner city would need to be directed and engaged in this transformation, upholding **Core Value #1**.

The Inner Spark program was designed around seven themes, which were determined to stimulate and organise feedback according to visions for the future. These themes included: green, welcoming, beautiful, connected, animated, future focused, resilient.

The engagement process included eight objectives, which aimed to:

- Excite, grab attention and issue a call to action to all of Brisbane
- Generate transformational and relevant ideas to use in the master planning process in the inner city and city centre
- Generate and shortlist bright and bold design solutions and set the priorities for the future
- Close the loop and show people how the ideas and bright and bold design solutions have been used in the master planning processes
- Make it easy for younger people to contribute
- Reach and engage a diverse range of community members in a meaningful way

- Co-deliver with community groups, organisations, businesses, industry and across Council's extensive festival and event programs.

A range of communication tactics and engagement methods were proposed to meet project and audience needs. A key focus of these efforts was not only to share information, but also to educate people about the needs and interests involved in being the host city of Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the transformation required in the inner city. This effort upheld **Core Value # 3**.

The range of methods included:

Communications (informative and raising awareness)

- Emails and newsletters
- Advertising
- Paid media advertising
- Social media campaign
- Interactive project website

Call for Bright and Bold Design Solutions

- Spark Bright and Bold Thinking
- Spark Bright and Bold Thinking Big vote

Online ideation methods (online activities and primary input mechanisms)

- Spark an Idea (ideas board to see/contribute and react to ideas)
- Place a Spark (online tool to 'pin' for place-focused needs and addressing key themes)

Place-based ideation methods (in-person events)

- Pop-up engagement booth
- Interactive QR code
- Spark an idea that grows
- Street closure events

In-person deep-dive ideation methods

- Conversations with Spark

Communications (outcomes reports for process transparency)

- Spark shortlist (shortlisted from Stage 1 Bright and Bold Thinking for voting purposes in Stage 2)
- Brisbane's Book of Big Ideas (summary of highlights from final Engagement Outcomes Report and the top ideas from Bright and Bold Thinking)

The engagement sequencing is summarised in the following table from the engagement plan to depict the sequencing of the project and the types of methods being used.

Detailed extract highlighting the project sequencing from Engagement Plan:

	Phase 1: Call for Spark Bright and Bold Thinking	Phase 2: Spark an Idea	Phase 3: Refine ideas + Phase 4: Draft ICF and CCMP
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct call out (BCC BAU <u>i.e.</u> emails and invitations to industry and key stakeholders e-newsletters and email blasts) • Advertising (BCC BAU <u>i.e.</u> BCC owned channels) • Social media campaign and media advertising (to build excitement for Spark an Idea) • Prepare materials and kits for Conversations with Spark series 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing communications campaign (per previous stage) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing communications to share outcomes • Spark outcomes report (report on final engagement participation data – publicly released document) • Showcase ideas – Book of Big Bright Ideas
Place-based ideation methods		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive QR code (QR code projection linking to the Spark an Idea method) • Pop up engagement booth (at Council events with interactive tools including EHQ survey and EHQ places tool) • Spark ideas that grow (gathering additional ideas that respond to thematic questions) • Spark bright and bold thinking – vote! (cast your vote on the bold design solutions) • Street closure events (various activities) • Spark an idea (iPad at events for anyone to share their idea online using an EHQ Survey or ideas board) • Place a Spark (iPad at events for anyone to use the EHQ places tool to explore precincts online engagement) 	
Online ideation methods		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spark an idea (Anyone can share their idea online using an EHQ Survey or ideas board) • Place a Spark (to explore precincts online engagement using EHQ places tool) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EHQ/Project website (update latest information and outcomes)
In-person deep dive ideation methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations with Spark (Face to face or digital, facilitated sessions for key groups and underrepresented and distribute DIY kits – This method can launch in phase one then continue throughout subsequent phases) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations with Spark continued (Face to face or digital, facilitated sessions for key groups and underrepresented and distribute DIY kits) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share Spark outcomes report in phase 3 (closing the loop asap!)
Call for Bright and Bold Design Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spark bright and bold thinking (Call for bright and bold design solutions from the brightest thinkers in universities, institutes, schools, creatives and industry. Entries via EHQ document upload tool) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spark bright and bold thinking - big vote (cast your vote for the bright and bold design solutions via EHQ survey for voting) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spark bright and bold thinking winners (Book of Big Bright Ideas and on social media)

In April 2022, the Inner Spark engagement program commenced with the first phase of a four-phase program, involving a six-week city-wide conversation with key industry, business and institutional stakeholders. This aimed to gather the brightest of ideas to help shape the future of Brisbane's inner city. This innovative and collaborative approach involved a series of Council-led workshops and a call to action to provide Big Ideas, which would be shared with the wider Brisbane community in Phase two.

Brisbane's community was given an opportunity, from July to September 2022 (Phase two), to view these Big Ideas. The community were invited to provide feedback in person, at pop-up community events or online via the Engagement HQ portal, Council's website and social media platforms, and vote for their favourite ideas via a QR code. They submitted their own creative ideas on themed lightbulbs to display at our pop-up engagement booth, or online via the Engagement HQ portal. Council ran an advertising campaign through PEDESTRIAN.TV to engage a younger audience within the community to ensure a widespread range of feedback was received, demonstrating the diversity of ways **Core Value #4** was upheld in this project.

In late 2022, all ideas were reviewed by a carefully selected panel and shortlisted, with the feedback drawn from the submissions. From this, Council was able to understand community desires and understand priorities for inclusion in strategic planning outcomes for Brisbane's inner city, guiding Brisbane towards a clean, green, connected, active and more liveable future.

Conditions enabling broad, city-wide participation across multiple demographics, included the extensive variety of opportunities to contribute, including through pop-up engagement booths, interactive street art and in-person deep dives. This provided opportunities for both low-interaction engagement, and intimate, slow-paced or one-on-one engagement with disadvantaged, and commonly underrepresented communities.

Engagement 'in place' activities were targeted at inner city workers and residents, and diverse communities were directly engaged in conversations with Spark activities. Users of public transport and home owners/rate payers were targeted by pop-up engagement booths in close proximity to relevant services. Furthermore, youth communities were invited to submit Bright and Bold Thinking entries via a dedicated youth challenge and social media campaign.

Online engagement tools were also designed with the user experience in mind, featuring mobile-friendly design, screen reader compatibility and user accessibility measures. Finally, high-level investment in the project was also supported, with participants allowed to submit more comprehensive ideas through a survey form featuring document upload capability.

To uphold the **IAP2 Core Value #2**, any contribution from participants needs to be genuinely used, analysed and reported on in the process. Core data collection pieces for this project included workshop outputs (ideas by theme and entries to Bright and Bolding Thinking competitions), discussion summaries

from Conversation with Spark, including ideas suggested, issues raised and group contributions, social media impressions and online surveys.

Submission outputs were collated using the portal Engagement HQ and within Excel documents. Quantitative questions were largely selected to reduce data analysis burden, with some qualitative (open-ended) questions included to support deeper insights and ideas. Questions were standardised and used consistently across engagement questions where possible, to support easily collation of outputs. Data was tagged and coded according to predetermined categories. Qualitative data was summarised on Engagement HQ through using key word and sentiment features.

The project took place across 2022 and 2023, with phases one and two completed across April 2022 to September 2022. The final two phases of the program highlight how **Core Value #7** has been upheld and include the delivery of Brisbane's Book of Big Ideas to showcase the diverse collection of ideas gathered and feedback received, and the release of Brisbane's Inner City Strategy, as well as the future release of the new City Centre Master Plan, and subsequent precinct plans for priority precincts across the inner city.

Budget

There would have been a significant cost impact on rate payers if Council had engaged planning or urban design consultants to develop the vast range of transformative ideas that this project gathered for the inner city. Instead, by actively collaborating with the industry and by partnering with existing city-wide community events, compelling and transformative ideas were generated for Council in the spirit of advancing the future of Brisbane. This demonstrates the value-add of effective partnerships and community-led engagement. Council liaised directly with industry to ensure the process seeks input from industry participants in designing how this would work in accordance with Core Value #5.

The project was internally delivered by Brisbane City Council, with the contracted support of Articulous Communications.

Alignment with IAP2 Core Values for the practice of public participation

From the beginning of the engagement planning process, the IAP2 Core Values were a central focus for best practice and were used to guide the development of the engagement strategy. The following is an extract from the engagement plan, and these actions were undertaken throughout the process.

IAP2 Core Values	Example of how this was considered in the design of your project methodology
1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue high levels of participation and engagement through a diverse program of methods delivered across the 5 km inner city and online Monitor participation rates and ensure representation of impacted stakeholders
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only seek feedback on the negotiables Ensure primary, secondary and thematic questions are reviewed and fully supported across the various project teams and areas of Council Work in partnership to co-deliver with groups, and manage expectation on what can be influenced through this work Analyse and report on all data collected
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share project non-negotiables and constraints and communicate the key challenges to address to ensure participant understanding Use the Spark a Conversation series to fully understand diverse stakeholder needs and interests and share Council's needs
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure equity in the engagement process by reaching out to underrepresented groups and providing dedicated opportunities to participate (in the conversations with Spark method, radio, and advertising) Reach community and stakeholders who might not typically participate via engaging methods (QR code, social media campaign and engagement at place-based events)
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the Call for Bright and Bold Ideas in partnership with applicants Reach out to industry, businesses, universities and underrepresented groups and ask them how they would prefer to contribute to the process and how their participation can be supported (i.e. meeting, conversation kit)
6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide engaging visual aids to help participants understand the planning area, constraints and opportunities Explain how to make a successful idea
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showcase the successful ideas online and throughout the strategy documents Share successful ideas online via project website and social media Acknowledge and attribute the ideas to the people who created them

'We know Brisbane residents are passionate about their city. This is why we started a conversation to help spark the brightest and biggest ideas for the future of our inner city... We are now using those ideas as creative input to help drive the evolution of Brisbane as a city and destination on the world stage.'

Adrian Schrinner, Lord Mayor

'As we look towards the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and beyond, Council is committed to achieving sustainable long-term outcomes that will benefit Brisbane. The Games offer a truly unique opportunity to help deliver our residents a lasting legacy of better transport, greener streets and more sports and cultural facilities for our city... we are committed to continuing to work with residents, businesses, governments and the community to deliver the best possible outcomes.' Adrian Schrinner, Lord Mayor

Engagement snapshot - what we achieved

15

industry stakeholder groups and organisations reached through workshops

18

pop-up community events during phase two

650

individual and group ideas generated through workshops

29,789

votes on Big Ideas and community ideas

Green

was the most popular engagement theme

696,544

impressions across Council's social and external media

17

workshops conducted with industry stakeholders and organisations

6760

people attended community events

1960+

total ideas generated through Inner Spark

60+

Big Ideas submitted through call for ideas process

1250

community ideas gathered through phase two

35,882

combined Council website and YourSay Brisbane page views

By the end of Inner Spark phase two, the community had helped us prioritise the Big Ideas. This book showcases the 'top three' ideas within each theme as well as other ideas from the community.



3.0 Manage engagement

One of the biggest challenges this project faced was delivering a high quality of engagement during a COVID-19 outbreak in South East Queensland. With state government restrictions on large gatherings in public, we decided to break down the engagement into discrete phases across the nine-month timeline, with the ability for Council to easily pivot between digital and online engagement to face-to-face and in-person engagement post-outbreak.

Another challenge was wanting to draw meaningful contributions from stakeholders and the community and to ensure the project would reach and engage with a diverse range of people. To overcome this challenge and uphold **Core Value #4**, multiple methods of engagement that were inclusive and made it easy for participants to contribute included:

- A combination of in-person and online engagement methods
- Working with established networks and through existing relationships 'stewards' or liaison officers in Council to reach different groups
- The use of multicultural services, such as bilingual media networks to promote the project
- Incorporating engagement activities into the existing Council events program to broaden project exposure
- Inviting community groups and peak bodies to participate in the Conversations with Spark focused conversation methods, and share information with their networks
- Development of a comprehensive social media strategy and campaign using bespoke Instagram pages and advertising to increase audience reach.

These methods (and in particular working with established networks and through existing relationships to reach different groups) upheld **Core Value #5**, as the preferred approaches have been identified on previous engagement projects and major master planning activities undertaken throughout the city of Brisbane, including the Victoria Park Master Plan.

The Big Idea voting system through Woobox was identified as the best approach to seek engagement, as it was the easiest way for the community to see the ideas and vote for their favourites, with ease of use prioritised.

The Big Idea voting system enabled a regular vote count to be supplied weekly to the project team. Due to the platform used, the data collected was a simple cumulative count per Big Idea.

Community ideas were submitted via Engagement HQ – these ideas were publicly available so the project team could always view what was being submitted and provided transparency to the community.

Community ideas were counted and summarised into themes after consultation ended.

Ideas submitted through the PEDESTRIAN.TV competition were supplied to Council at the end of the competition and added to the community ideas pool (those who gave consent for Council to receive their idea).

The project team put together weekly internal reports tracking engagement statistics, web views and analysis of the generated findings.

All Big Ideas and community ideas and votes were recorded, analysed and tallied under the engagement theme categories and location of idea – either a specific precinct or whole of inner city.

Engagement reporting was undertaken weekly during Phase two to track the number of attendees, number of ideas submitted (lightbulb ideas) and the most popular themes at each of the 18 community engagement events. Whole-of-engagement reporting was completed at the end of Phase two to review the total number of:

- **6,760** attendees at events
- **23,631** votes on Big Ideas (determining the most popular ideas and engagement themes)
- **464** number of ideas submitted via Engagement HQ
- **6,158** votes on community ideas (determining the most popular community ideas)
- **329** lightbulb ideas received at events
- **104** ideas received via email
- **451** ideas submitted through PEDESTRIAN.TV
- **3,142** QR code hits, **27,282** webpage views, **8,600** Engagement HQ webpage views and **469,410** total social media reach.

4.0 Outcomes, impact and insights

Reflection and evaluation of engagement

Collaboration was at the heart of Inner Spark, in direct engagement with industry to generate the Big Ideas. This approach enabled Council to tap into the expertise in the urban planning and design sector throughout Brisbane to think differently about the future of the inner city.

By thinking outside the proverbial box, and adopting multiple engagement streams and innovative engagement methods, the project reached and engaged a diverse range of primary stakeholder groups and community members. The project team received feedback and ideas from children, students, younger adults, wider community groups, arts and creative organisations, design studios, universities, industry

groups, as well as families. Significant community conversation was created by the process, generating media interest in Brisbane's transformation and comprehensive news coverage of the breadth of change taking place in the city.

The end result of the creative thought behind the Inner Spark engagement program was a highly successful and broad-reaching engagement campaign that achieved the following:

- 17 workshops conducted with primary stakeholders
- 15 primary stakeholder groups reached
- Over 2,000 aspirational ideas generated by primary stakeholders and the Brisbane community, including:
 - 1,348 ideas submitted by the community (via Engagement HQ, emails, at events and through the PEDESTRIAN.TV campaign and competition, which resulted in 451 ideas submitted from Brisbane's younger community)
 - 80+ Big Ideas submitted through 'call for ideas' process
 - 580+ individual ideas and suggestions generated through workshops.
- 30,000 votes on Big Ideas and community ideas
- 18 pop-up community engagement events held across the inner city with 6,760 attendees
- 469,410 social media reach
- 10,000+ social media link clicks to Inner Spark landing page
- 27,282 webpage views, plus 8,600 Engagement HQ views.

The excitement the Inner Spark engagement program generated and the eagerness the community showed to get involved in thinking about what Brisbane could look like in next 10 years is reflected in the number of attendees at events, and especially by the number of ideas submitted at events and online, as well as the high tally of votes submitted (almost 30,000) for the Big Ideas.

Council staff actively supported community to participate, sharing project information and explaining the challenges of enabling people to participate and understand the transformation taking place through the project. Meaningful materials, explainers, conversations and ultimately participation upheld **Core Value #6**. The program's scale and reach provided an opportunity for people of all ages to participate, while the pop-up booth's activities, its vibrant colour and the quantity and quality of Big Idea images used, was a distinctly different type of Council-led engagement event and attracted significant community interest and participation. Many of the hand-written light bulb activities at community events were popular with families – with many of the light bulb ideas being hand drawn by children. The online voting system worked seamlessly, with a QR code used to encourage participation from a large number of Brisbane community members at events throughout the city.

Overall, this project achieved key goals of reaching young people and the diverse range of Brisbane's community. A broad cross-section of the community was reached through a range of engagement channels, with more than 1200 ideas gathered from children, teenagers, students, younger adults, wider community groups and organisations, as well as families.

Lessons learned

One key learning was that partnerships are not only important, but they were the stimulus for this conversation. Phases one and two worked well with the targeted 'call for ideas' process generating the Big Ideas, as opposed to using a traditional public callout approach. This provided the stimulus for broader engagement with the community using the pre-existing ideas to vote on in Phase two.

Some of the key takeaways from the unique partnership approach used in this process highlighted the generosity of industry and organisational leaders, who were ready to embrace the opportunity to share their technical knowledge, expertise and brilliant minds in transformative ideas for the future of Brisbane. This yielded an amazing and diverse array of ideas, showcasing the ability of community to step up and address urban design and planning challenges. Some of these projects are already being delivered to transform the inner city. The most important lesson learned was that through trust and genuine partnerships with industry, organisations and community, traditional limitations can be overcome and our imagination can be stretched far beyond expectation for real transformation.

Additional learnings included:

- Attributing Big Ideas to individuals was successful and allowed external stewardship of ideas / also created organic advertising by contributors
- The July to September timing was ideal as it enabled the project team to leverage off the diverse range of community events, activities and programs taking place across Brisbane
- This 'piggybacking' off existing events across the city for our pop-up booth worked well – it was efficient, cost-effective and allowed for a broad demographic to be reached
- Woobox only allows for positive voting, some participants wanted to be able to downvote
- Booth location at events is critical for display material and attendance
- Instructional posters were useful when staff were busy and helped participants understand the process.

Innovation and uniqueness

The collaborative engagement approach with industry to develop the Big Ideas, which were then used as the stimulus for broader community participation and engagement, demonstrates that Council did not have to have all the answers. This approach challenged industry to provide transformative solutions for Brisbane, as they have the expert mindset needed to drive the conversation about shaping the future of the inner city. This approach advances the practice by recognising that community-led solutions in turn challenge government to embrace new ways of thinking in traditional planning processes. This wasn't a typical 'we develop the plan and consult to understand what people think of it'. Inner Spark asked industry to develop

the plan then community to vote on industry ideas! The end result was bold, innovative, unique and transformative ideas.

Some of the example ideas included:

Big Ideas for a greener city



During Inner Spark phase two, the community provided feedback on the 66 Big Ideas and indicated they liked these three ideas the most for 'a greener city'.

Green the Queen

This Big Idea proposes to transform the Victoria Bridge into a subtropical public space offering diverse, shaded, multi-levelled garden outcrops for rest and unimpeded views.

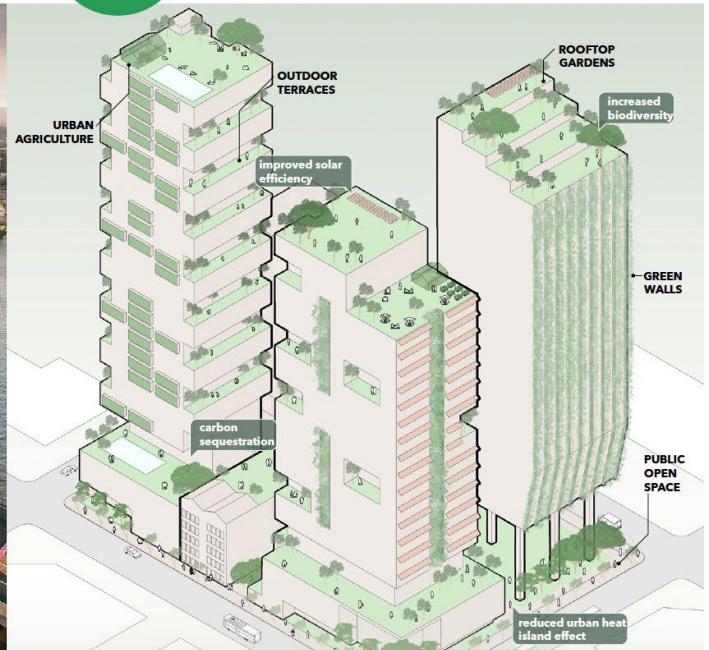
Idea by Simon White, ARIA / Urbis



Green Plot Ratio

Create standards around 'green plot ratio' as a Big Idea to ensure new buildings also create public spaces and gardens that improve visual amenity to reinforce a distinctly Brisbane character.

Idea by Urbis



Big Ideas for a more animated city



During Inner Spark phase two, the community provided feedback on the 66 Big Ideas and indicated they liked these three ideas the most for 'a more animated city'.

Subterrain

A Big Idea to enable Brisbane's emerging artists to create visual art and stage cultural events via an 'experimental contemporary art space' under the Riverside Expressway.

Idea by Andrea Goodwin, Creative Road Art Projects

Heart of Woolloongabba

Heart of Woolloongabba is a Big Idea to create a pedestrian-only hub on Logan Road, decked out with plants, lights, games, shaded seating areas, water refill and bike stations, and colourful artworks.

Idea by Emily Griffioen



The project was also unique in using the diverse range of innovative methods to ensure the engagement program was successful, including:

- Using individual QR codes on posters linking directly to Woobox voting system for Big Ideas
- Public-facing ideas submission tool and liking capability on Engagement HQ
- Bright, engaging pop-up engagement booth
- Inner Spark device that was clearly identifiable separated engagement from Council branding – added personality
- Social media to promote engagement
- Rewards-based engagement through PEDESTRIAN.TV.

Acknowledgements and to find out more:

We would like to thank Brisbane City Council for agreeing to share this case study and insights to advance engagement practice. This case study was co-authored by Articulous Communications.

At the time of publishing, Alice Sherring and Amanda Newbery were employed by Articulous in the position of Managing Director and Group Executive respectively. Alice and Amanda have significant experience and expertise in community and stakeholder engagement.

For more information about this project see:

- Brisbane City Council – [Inner Spark Website](#)
- Inner Spark Brisbane's Big Book of Ideas - [PDF](#) or [Word](#)

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