



POET

Public Outreach
and Engagement Team

LET US TELL THE STORY.

The Public Outreach and Engagement Team at Rutgers-Bloustein (POET) is a multi-disciplinary group with expertise in planning, public policy, marketing, communication, and public engagement techniques. POET offers a full range of outreach and engagement services, from concept and advisory to full implementation of outreach and engagement events. Our team specializes in innovative outreach methods tailored to the specific demographic and community profile of the target population.



Our Services

POET at Rutgers-Bloustein offers a wide-variety of customized, innovative, and targeted outreach, public and stakeholder engagement, and communications services.



Public Engagement and Outreach

- Public engagement plan development
- Open house, workshop and conference execution
- Mobile outreach development and deployment
- Training and educational activities for children and teens

Marketing and Communications

- Project-related marketing and recruitment strategy development
- Public relations, earned media, and social media marketing
- Website, newsletter and electronic communication and material production
- Multi-media production, including short videos, podcasts and web features

Stakeholder Engagement

- Development, management and recruitment for working groups, task forces, and advisory committees
- Expert facilitation for meetings, workshops, or focus groups

Project Highlights



NJTPA "On Air!"

POET teamed up with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) to engage children and teens for the upcoming Regional Transportation Plan. POET developed a simple and fun pop-up activity booth reimagined as a radio studio. Kids sat "inside" the booth and listened to an introductory "newscast" about transportation. They were then "interviewed" and asked to talk into the microphone about what they imagine transportation will be like in the future. POET deployed the activity in kid-friendly locations, including the Liberty Science Center and Boys and Girls Club after school programs.



Set the Table!

POET developed, coordinated, and managed Set the Table!, a civic dinner party program designed to engage Millennials in NJTPA's Regional Transportation Plan process. Adults ages 18-29 volunteered to host dinner parties with their friends where they discussed elements of the regional plan, such as technology, resiliency, the environment and the economy. POET designed a "meeting-in-a-box" to assist each dinner host, including a card game with questions and facts to guide the conversation and forms to collect feedback. POET also created the program's branding and successful social media campaign, attracting many applicants.



TNJ Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement

POET coordinated and managed outreach for the Together North Jersey regional plan – both stakeholder engagement and public engagement. Engagement activities included management of Steering, Executive and Standing Committees (with over 300 members in total); planning and execution of 15 regional workshops; 20 "pop-up" kiosk events at malls, colleges and museums; online engagement via NJ.com (see Summer Engagement Series); three major conferences; and multiple working group meetings.

Project Highlights



DESTINATION 2040: Middlesex County Master Plan Public and Stakeholder Engagement

POET provided Middlesex County with overall public involvement and stakeholder engagement support for DESTINATION 2040, Master Plan update for the county. POET developed a public involvement plan which includes deployment of a variety of engagement strategies such as face to face, meeting in a box, and online engagement. Through this partnership, Middlesex County is committed to extensive outreach to obtain feedback from those who live and work in Middlesex County to inform priorities for the Master Plan. POET is also providing technical assistance and support by training county staff and facilitating and supporting stakeholder meetings.



TCRP – Pathways to Effective, Inclusive, and Equitable Virtual Public Engagement

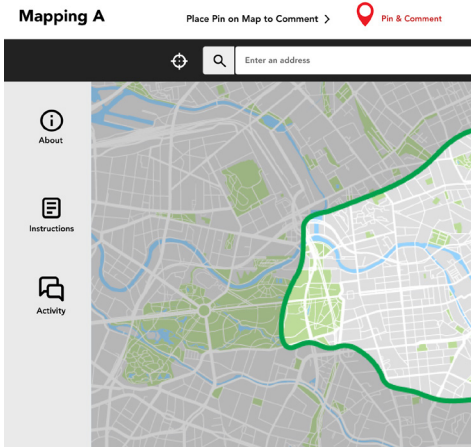
The POET research team worked to assess current and best practices for transit agencies to engage with the public, particularly those of vulnerable communities. Tasks included recruiting for and facilitating focus group discussion with practitioners of virtual public engagement with vulnerable communities, generating summaries and key findings from discussion, contributing to the writing of the final report, summarizing findings from all research tasks, and developing a webinar on research findings.



Innovations in Public Engagement, North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority

POET worked with North Jersey's metropolitan planning organization to deploy creative approaches to public involvement. Tasks included assisting with the implementation of the Outreach Liaisons Pilot Program, a project that recruits and utilizes community members of underrepresented areas to increase engagement with NJTPA, and the implementation of UpNext North Jersey, and innovative young adult advisory group that bridges the connection between the NJTPA and young adults in the NJTPA region.

Project Highlights



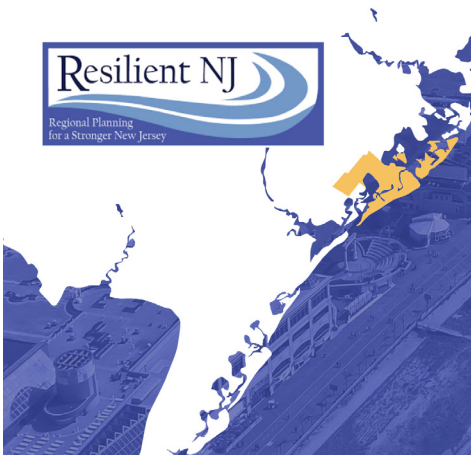
NCHRP 08-142: Virtual Public Involvement: A Manual for Effective, Equitable, and Efficient Practices for Transportation Agencies.

POET worked to research and develop a manual for state departments of transportation (DOTs), metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), rural planning organizations (RPOs), and other transportation agencies who can benefit from the development of structured, research-based guidance on how to choose and employ virtual public involvement (VPI) tools effectively, efficiently, and perhaps most importantly—equitably. The research team conducted a blend of desktop research with quantitative and qualitative research tasks, including surveys, interviews, user experience testing and focus groups designed to identify best practices for VPI in varied planning and project development contexts.



New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), Community Planning Workshops

POET has partnered with NYMTC to execute a series of virtual community planning workshops with communities in the NYMTC region. The workshops facilitate meaningful discussions among local officials, residents, and stakeholders on topics relating to NYMTC's Regional Transportation Plan, Moving Forward. The team assisted in planning, facilitating, and executing community workshops for various towns through research and the implementation of its outreach plan.



Resilient NJ – Atlantic County Coastal Region

POET led engagement to vulnerable populations groups for the Resilient NJ – Atlantic County Coastal Region Resiliency Action Plan. This engagement work included the planning and execution of virtual "Community Conversations" co-hosted with nonprofit and community-based organizations to discuss the needs, priorities and vision of these traditionally underrepresented groups in the regional. The team also conducted a second round of "Community Conversations" in 2022 to present resiliency scenarios to these populations and collect feedback on potential actions and strategies to undertake. In addition, POET provided facilitation support and translation at open houses and virtual public workshops.