

Community Belonging Audit

Overview

Re-Imagining Migration created this belonging audit to encourage community members to conduct holistic assessments of their environments, focusing on young people, newcomers, and overall community building. This audit aims to deepen one's understanding of how their town or city fosters a sense of community for everyone, particularly for immigrant and newcomer neighbors.

- ❖ Community members are encouraged to tour the spaces they identify as belonging centers in the forms below so they can complete the evaluations on-site.
- ❖ We recommend using public transportation or carpooling to fully engage with the community and observe, for example, the extent to which young people of diverse identities are able to build connections with one another.

The goal is to reflect on personal experiences of belonging and leverage the findings from this audit to cultivate environments where everyone feels included, supported, and celebrated. Ultimately, we hope you **use your insights to develop action plans** that promote a greater sense of inclusion and belonging for all, especially for young people, newcomers, and immigrant-origin individuals.

Directions

- **Recommended:** Complete the [ecology of identity](#) chart before you begin to position yourself within both your immediate community and your broader experiences
- Print out this document so that you can carry it around with you as you evaluate each space. If you want individually printable evaluation forms or black-and-white documents, you can find them [here](#).
- The bottom section of this audit will ask you to create a map of belonging for your city/town, where you draw out / include all the spaces you identified as sites for community building, you may want to start mapping as you evaluate.
- The last step of this audit is to build community: share your audit findings, your map, and your action plan with fellow community members, engage in dialogue, and make plans for at least one initiative you can start and implement within the month.

Youth Spaces Analysis

What/where are the spaces for young people with different identities to meet, gather, and build relationships in your city/town?

- ❖ List out the name of each space/location below, and then, for each, complete the **Youth Spaces: Belonging Checklist** on the following page.
 - Note: You can either print out multiple checklists for each space you evaluate– additional sheets can be found here.
 - Or you can “check off” each box with a different color or symbol representing each different space/location.
- ❖ Once you have completed the checklist for each space, reflect on your responses in the analysis boxes adjacent to each space in the box below.

Name of Youth Space / Location	Analysis of Checklist Scores <i>Consider:</i> What makes this a space where young people can learn how to be community members?

Youth Spaces: Belonging Checklist

☐ **Accessible by All**

- ☐ Open to all identities
- ☐ Free / Low Cost
- ☐ No prerequisites for entering
- ☐ Physically accessible by all (ADA - ramps, lifts, braille, audio support)
- ☐ Health protocols in place to prevent (mitigate) diseases from spreading
- ☐ Reachable by public transport

☐ **Safe for All**

- ☐ Well-lit space, including waiting areas for public modes of transit
- ☐ Supervised by a team of vetted adults
 - ☐ Adults have completed training on:_____
- ☐ Systems of accountability and repair are in place when there is conflict
- ☐ Healthy boundary-setting and self-advocacy skills are modeled by adults
- ☐ Trained health and service professionals on site (physical and mental health workers, special education practitioners, conflict de-escalators, etc.)
 - ★ Note: Many librarians, for example, are trained social service workers!

☐ **Enriching Opportunities for All**

- There are opportunities to:
 - ☐ Learn about / engage with cultures other than their own
 - ☐ Engage in (new) life skill development
 - ☐ Read challenging (academically and emotionally) material
 - ☐ Create/make art (Literary, Digital, Physical, Musical, Acting)
 - ☐ Build physical strength and endurance
 - ☐ Hone athletic and teamwork-centered skills and mindsets
 - ☐ Foster healthy habits of mind and internal reflection
 - ☐ Volunteer to support the communities' needs
 - ☐ Build community with
 - ☐ Other young people (peers)
 - ☐ Local mentors (community leaders, elders, academics, skill/trade/craft workers)
 - ☐ Younger students (mentorship role)
 - ☐ Develop their leadership skills

☐ **Youth-Centered and Lead**

- ☐ Catered to young peoples' vast and expanding interests
- ☐ Opportunities to speak without judgment or without expected silence
- ☐ Music/Entertainment options that are age-appropriate and interesting
- ☐ Initiatives are started, proposed, and/or led by young people

Youth Spaces Reflection

What role could you have in creating spaces where young people feel empowered to build a world where everyone can sustainably thrive and be in the community?

Whole Town/City Community Belonging Analysis

Where are there opportunities for people with different identities to meet, gather, and build relationships?

- ❖ List the spaces below, and then complete the evaluation forms on the following pages for each.
- ❖ For each space/location you evaluate, you should also apply the **Youth Spaces Belonging Checklist** questions where/when appropriate.

Name of Community Space	Analysis of Whole Town/City Evaluation Scores What made you consider this space/ location, and how does this site contribute to your evaluation response?

Whole Town/City Community Evaluation

Evaluate each question on a scale of 1 to 5, where;

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Schools are supported in their ability to serve all learners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Schools are supported in their ability to be civic centers of the town/city	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All members of the community feel invested in the success and happiness of young people in their schools	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People who have newly moved to the town/city are encouraged to practice their civic agency?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Newcomers and Immigrant-origin individuals are immediately welcomed into the community and made to feel like they belong	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Local libraries and museums are celebrated as spaces for life-long learning for all demographics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People with all commitments and lifestyles (work, family structure, SES, health, etc) have an opportunity to access involvement in a range of community events/activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are necessary translation resources available at all civic sites	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When there is community conflict, steps are taken to resolve tension and maintain healthy relationships	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are spaces where anyone can go, meet new people, make lasting friends, and build community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are spaces where people can go to voice their opinions and engage in safe, productive disagreement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are spaces where community members can go to learn about others' cultures, histories, and practices	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are places where community members can go to celebrate and be celebrated by others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are places where community members can go to hold space for people who are grieving or have experienced trauma	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Whole Town/City Community Rubric

Circle the box in each row that best answers the question above it.

1	2	3
What does welcoming newcomers look like?		
Newcomers are not welcomed; little to no support is provided.	Some efforts are made to welcome newcomers, but they are informal or limited.	Newcomers are actively welcomed with structured support and integration efforts.
How are people who are not in the majority in your town treated?		
Non-majority groups are marginalized or excluded.	Non-majority groups are treated with some respect, but inequalities remain.	Non-majority groups are fully accepted and included, with equitable treatment.
Who is in your town's leadership?		
Leadership is homogenous and unrepresentative of the broader community.	Some diversity in leadership, but key groups are still underrepresented.	Leadership is diverse and representative of the community's demographics.
What does community involvement in policies and protocols look like?		
The community has no role in policy decisions and is prevented from engaging their civic agency.	Limited community involvement in policy-making, with input on some issues.	Active and widespread community involvement in policy-making and protocols.
How are young people treated when they share their perspectives?		
Young people's perspectives are dismissed or ignored; they are not given meaningful opportunities to express their views.	Young people's perspectives are acknowledged to some extent, but there is limited follow-up or integration into decision-making processes.	Young people's perspectives are actively sought out and integrated, demonstrating genuine empowerment.
What does community celebration look like?		
Celebrations are not representative; they primarily reflect a single demographic, cultural perspective, singular history, and/or interest, with little to no inclusivity.	Celebrations include some diversity, but many groups, perspectives, and/or interests are underrepresented, limiting inclusivity and involvement.	Celebrations are highly representative, showcasing a wide range of cultures, traditions, and community voices, fostering a sense of belonging for all.

Whole Town/City Community Space Reflection

What role could you play in building, supporting, and scaling spaces where new people of all identities are welcomed, integrated, and celebrated as vital community members?

Create a Belonging Map of Your City / Town

Overview

Create a belonging map of your community by mapping out each of the sites you have or will evaluate in the form above. Label each site with the name of the location or what it is (ex: Town Middle School) and represent it with the symbol(s) that align with its label in the Map Key. You may want to do a soft sketch of the city/town, including each site you plan to evaluate while referencing a map, and then add the symbols after you have evaluated each site. You can determine how realistic or “to scale” you want your map to be. The goal is to be able to have a bird's eye view of navigating belonging in your city that you can compare and contrast with others.

Materials needed:

- Paper: either at the end of this form or on a separate sheet
- Reference map: physical or digital
- Pencil
- *Optional:* Colored pencil

Directions:

- List all the sites you plan to or have evaluated, noting which symbols or colors represent each. Lightly sketch your community's outline, ensuring all locations you evaluated are included. Then, label and mark the sites on your map using the corresponding symbols or colors. Some sites may have multiple symbols/colors.
- In the box below, identify a symbol or color to represent each of the following types of spaces. (*examples provided*)
 - You feel like you belong: *Ex: Heart symbol or green color*
 - You don't feel like you belong: *Ex: X symbol or red color*

- You think everyone feels like they belong: *Ex: Circle symbol or yellow color*
- You think some people might feel like they don't belong: *Ex: Triangle symbol or orange color*
- You think all youth belong: *Ex: Star symbol or blue color*
 - **There are blank map key rows for you to come up with your own "type" of places if you wish to**

Map Key	
Places Where:	Symbol or Color
<i>You feel like you belong</i>	
<i>You don't feel like you belong.</i>	
<i>You think <u>everyone</u> feels like they belong</i>	
<i>You think some people might feel like they don't belong</i>	
<i>You think <u>all</u> youth belong</i>	
<i>You think youth might avoid out of safety concerns or a lack of belonging</i>	

Space to Draw Your Belonging Map *on the following blank page*