

Democratising 21st Century ways of life

A Raymond Williams Foundation and Compass project to:

- Identify what the conditions are in different contexts and what the specific problems are that different civil society organisations face or are working to respond to
- Identify key obstacles that different civil society organisations face or are working to respond to
- Map initiatives and domains of activity in accessible and engaging way
- Involve and network key civil society practitioners
- Amplify calls for support and highlight possibilities and potential benefits of further developing these activities

Initially a series of interviews will be carried out with representatives of relevant organizations.

The Key themes to explore in these interviews....

- (i) We're interested in finding out about public participation and democratization initiatives they've worked on
- (ii) We want to know about the obstacles that exist to democratisation in their particular context, the conditions that exist and that they need to negotiate; the problems they are working to address; and the possibilities they are looking to realize
- (iii) We're also interested in talking to them about what further support they need to develop these kinds of activities. Who would it be useful for them to network with? What additional resources could help them do? How would they like to develop their work?

Preliminary list of research objectives:

- We are looking to shine a light on contemporary democratization projects; including similarities and differences between approaches
- There will be different possible ways these initiatives can be mapped, so we will need to reflect typologies it may be useful to develop, to organise the initiatives help people to search and navigate our emerging map in different ways
- We are looking to deepen understanding of the conditions that exist in particular settings; the obstacles that hinder development of democratization, what blocks experimentation with these practices or uptake; i.e. what problems practitioners face *within* and *across* different domains. We also need to consider how we communicate the problems that practitioners face and engage people in conversations about these obstacles.
- We are also looking to develop new insights into how this sector could be further developed and what could be realized by doing this. So we might look at resource constraints that currently exist? Explore existing hierarchies that privilege certain kinds of participatory and democratic practice over others? We should probably look at over-laps and possible points of intersection between different kinds of initiative or project, in order to point to possible alliances that could be forged? We could also try and pinpoint what we (and others) think constitutes a 'progressive' democratization project?