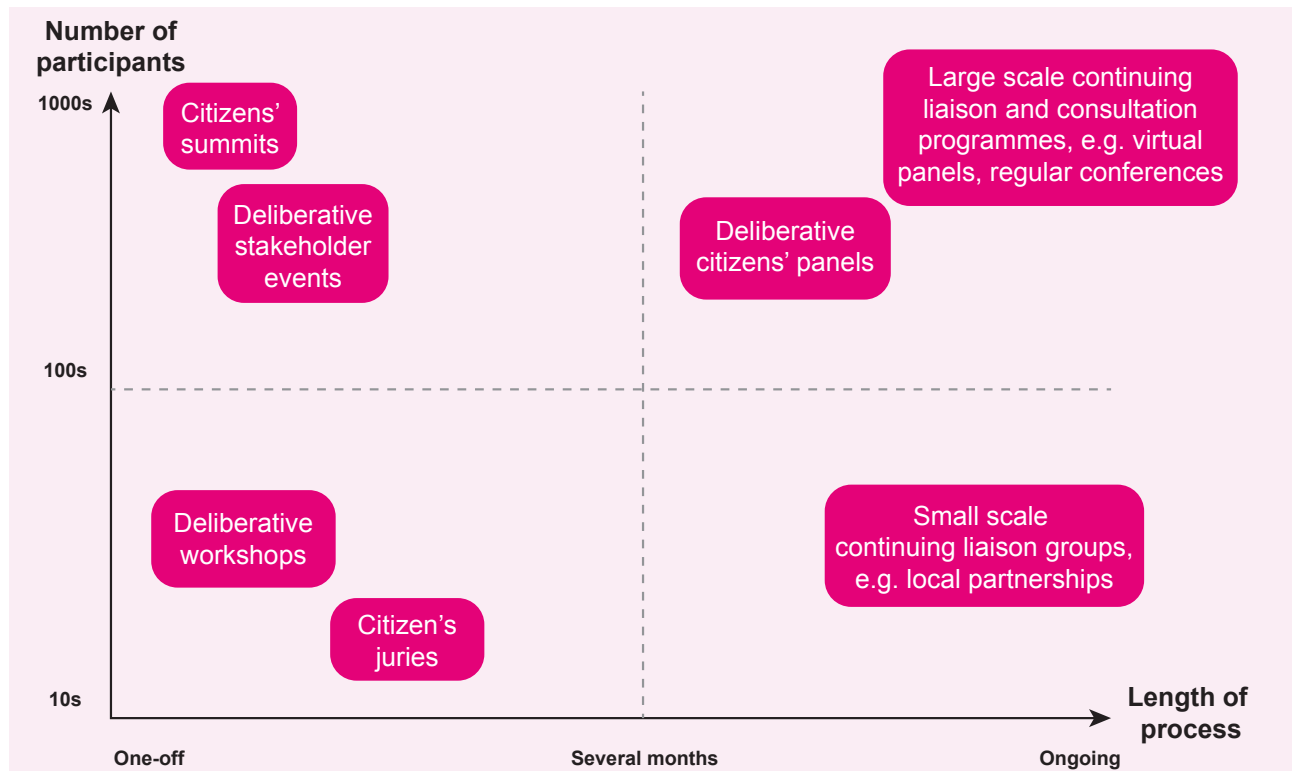# Tool: What type of engagement to use to promote dialogue and considered discussion

'Involve', an organisation that promotes public involvement, provide the following chart for working out which sort of format to use for this type of engagement. The chart maps the size of the stakeholder sample against the length of the engagement. You can read more here.



**Number of participants**

- 1000s
  - Citizens' summits
  - Deliberative stakeholder events
  - Large scale continuing liaison and consultation programmes, e.g. virtual panels, regular conferences
  - Deliberative citizens' panels
- 100s
  - Deliberative workshops
  - Citizen's juries
  - Small scale continuing liaison groups, e.g. local partnerships
- 10s

**Length of process**

One-off · Several months · Ongoing

'Involve' has also put together a useful nine-step guide to getting public engagement right. The key is not to start with a method because it sounds spectacular, but to think through the nine steps and then choose a method.

1. **Scope**
   What is actually open to change and have you made that clear to the public? Which of the following levels of engagement do you want?

   - inform: provide information to the public

   - consult: obtain feedback from them

   - involve: work with them to answer a pre-set question

   - collaborate: define the question together and share each aspect of decision-making

   - empower: place the final decision-making in their hands

2. **Purpose**
   Why the engagement? What kind of information are you trying to get from the public that you can't get any other way? What do you want to do with it?

3. **Outcomes**
   What specific outcomes, linked to the purpose, are you looking for? And how about secondary outcomes, like increasing mutual understanding or developing contacts that might be useful later?

4. **Outputs**
   What should the engagement process produce? eg a report

5. **Participants**
   Who needs to be involved to make the answers to the above possible?

6. **Budget**
   How much money is available?

7. **Timescales**
   When do you need the results by? Are there any other time constraints for the project as a whole or any of its stages?

**8. Institutional response**

When and how will the relevant decision-makers review the results of the engagement process and respond?

**9. Monitoring and evaluation**

What information would it be useful to collect about the project (eg performance against desired outcomes, successes, learnings etc)? How are you going to go about it?