



**HEAR!
HERE!**

Dialogue
and
listening
platform

**CONSENSUS
BUILDING**

**WORKSHOP #3
FOR TEACHERS**

w/ Angela Jerardi

Wed Nov 27, 5-7pm
4th floor B&C

WORKSHOP #3 CONSENSUS BUILDING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 17:00-19:00

During this workshop facilitated by Angela Jerardi, we discussed consensus decision making. Starting from one of the early historical lineages of consensus, developed by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the workshop discussed the merits and challenges of this form of direct democracy. What are its opportunities and limitations? And how can it potentially reshape how we think about (dis)agreement and deliberation?

While 'consensus' is often associated with a kind of moderate solution seeking, 'consensus decision making' as a process and protocol, if executed well, really aims to take on board all positions – it's not a majority/minority system.

Consensus-based decision making is a collective, creative problem-solving technique: it doesn't mean everyone has to agree, but it needs to be something everyone can live with. It can be an elaborate process, which starts with an information gathering phase ('opening out') and proceeds with discussion moments and a synthesis. What is challenging is that there needs to be a sense of trust and commitment to a common cause for consensus building to really work, as well as sufficient time, a clear process and active participation.



[Angela Jerardi](#) is a [writer, researcher and curator](#) based in [Amsterdam](#). She is [teaching at the Jewellery – Linking Bodies department](#) and is [part of the MR and the Student Council of the Rietveld/Sandberg](#).

TAKEAWAYS

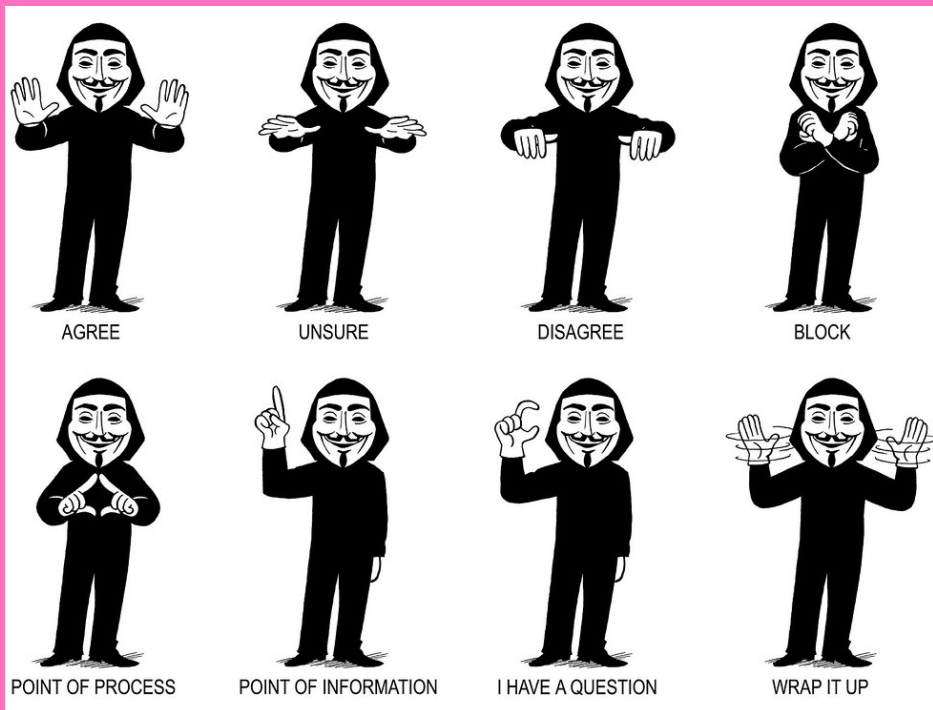
The process of consensus-building decision making looks more or less like this:

- 1) Inventory of pros and cons (how will a decision impact someone/ something else?)
- 2) Synthesis (have a perceptive capacity of how things can connect to each other)
- 3) Proposal
- 4) Test for consensus, modify and test again for consensus (standing aside or blocking is an option)

The different roles in consensus-building processes may include:

- Minute taker (summarises and captures the perspectives that were explored)
- Facilitator (summarises ideas and makes connections between points)
- Vibe feeler (someone whose sole focus is to check how on board the group members are)

Hand signs (for example used during Occupy) can be helpful in speeding up the consensus-based decision making processes.





**ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE?**

EVENT #3
Wed Dec 11, 5-7pm
Sandberg Auditorium
3rd floor B&C

A dialogue hosted by Hear! Here! using consensus building to explore Rietveld/Sandberg's initiatives, attempts and thinking around sustainability issues. (How) can an art school in the 21st century become more 'environmentally accountable'?

HH SCHOOLWIDE EVENT #3 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 17:00-19:00 (SANDBERG AUDITORIUM)

How can an art school in the 21st century become more 'environmentally accountable'? During this schoolwide Hear! Here! event, we attempted to use some of the consensus decision-making techniques to think through issues concerning environmental justice and sustainability in relation to the art school.

We made an inventory where we listed the initiatives that were already taking place, ranging from very practical, small gestures as well as implementation of an awareness within the curricula, including: a nomadic garden, a worm hotel, a compost initiative, the conscious canteen, green week, water systems in the workshops, lights that turn off automatically, district heating, collecting and burning sawdust to provide energy, using recycled paper in the printing workshops, a Basic Year assignment focused on recycling, using grey water (rainwater), a flea market and cloth-swap events.

We then attempted to understand specific perspectives through roleplaying. How does a teacher relate to environmental issues compared to an international student or the facilities manager?

These discussions took the conversation on environmental justice to different levels. We discussed the need for revisiting ideas concerning autonomy, freedom and material use within art practice and education. Who can afford to use eco-friendly materials? How to include an awareness of the (material) afterlives of projects? How international is the Rietveld/Sandberg and how does it depend on global travelling? Can we introduce policies that restrict travelling?

We concluded that all of these questions are very much interconnected to the social fabric in and around the school.