MULTIVOTING

By design, *Brainstorming,* generates a long list of ideas. However, also by design, many are not realistic or feasible. The *Multivoting* activity allows a group to narrow their list or options into a manageable size for sincere consideration or study. It will not help the group make a single decision but can help the group narrow a long list of ideas into a manageable number that can be discussed and explored. It allows all members of the group to be involved in the process and ultimately saves the group a lot of time by allowing them to focus energy on the ideas with the greatest potential.

When to use Multivoting:

- When the group has a long list of possibilities and wants to narrow it down to a few for analysis and discussion.
- When a selection process needs to be made after *brainstorming*.

Guidelines for Conducting the *Multivoting* Activity:

1. ***Brainstorm a list of options***. Conduct the *Brainstorming* activity to generate a list of ideas or options.

2. ***Review the list from the Brainstorming activity.***   Once you have completed the list, clarify ideas, merge similar ideas, and make sure everyone understands the options. **Note:** at this time the group is not to discuss the merits of any idea, just clarify and make sure everyone understands the meaning of each option.

3. ***Participants vote for the ideas that are worthy of further discussion***. Each participant may vote for as many ideas as they wish. Voting may be by show of hands or physically going to the list and marking their choices or placing a dot by their choices. If they so desire, participants may vote for every item.

4. ***Identify items for next round of voting***.   Count the votes for each item. Any item receiving votes from half the people voting is identified for the next round of voting. For example, if there are 12 people voting, any item receiving at least six votes is included in the next round. Signify the items for the next vote by circling or marking them with a symbol, i.e., all items with a star by the number will be voted on the next round.

5. ***Vote again.*** Participants vote again, however this time they may only cast votes for half the items remaining on the list. In other words, if there are 20 items from the last round that are being voted on, a participant may only vote for ten items.

6. ***Repeat steps 4 and 5.*** Participants continuing voting and narrowing the options as outlined in steps 4 and 5 until there is an appropriate number of ideas for the group to analyze as a part of the decision-making or problem solving process. Generally groups need to have three to five options for further analysis.

7. ***Discuss remaining ideas.*** At this time the group engages in discussing the pros and cons of the remaining ideas. This may be done in small groups or the group as a whole.

8. ***Proceed with appropriate actions.*** At this point the group goes to the next steps. This might be making a choice of the best option or identifying the top priorities.