



# WHAT IS ARIA-C3?

## Seeing through three lenses

*The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes. M. Proust*

The **ARIA-C3 process** systematically assists individuals and groups as they collaboratively set and implement a value-driven agenda for change. Based in action research, conflict resolution and organizational learning theory, C3 is a participatory planning and change process. Rooted in participants' passionate commitments, C3 enables groups, organizations and communities to deeply articulate shared goals. Building on these goals and values, C3 supports ongoing reflective practice in designing, monitoring and implementing effective action.

## How does C3 work?

C3 moves through three stages and three lenses as the gap between *Is* and *Ought* is bridged by the goals of Individuals, consensus of their Groups and co-designed actions of a Community of Practice.



### Individual lens (C1)

Participants begin by articulating their individual goals, values and action ideas for a new initiative through responding to a Web-based (or hard copy) questionnaire about **WHAT** they envision, **WHY** they deeply care, and **HOW** they think the change can happen.

**Example:** In a project for a foster care agency's Transition to Independence program, the youth participated in actively designing the project. One young man said after participating, "Yeah, it affected my attitude. I mean a lot of people just get what people hand them down, you get no say in it. With this you have a say; you got to speak up. I guess I feel important in a way."



## Group lens (C2)

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Participants then reach consensus with members of their own group on their shared goals.

**Example:** In an IS department of a major corporation, C3 allowed management and staff to come to consensus on overarching goals for the department. An example of one of these goals was: *Work effectively as a unified and participatory team*. This goal was formulated around the team's values of: *synergy/connectedness, satisfaction, identity, participation, responsibility*. After the process was complete, one employee stated, "Intense communication has begun between IS ops and IS programmers, making IS groups as one group. A unified team is future proof of success."



## Community of Practice lens (C3)

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Finally, group representatives reach consensus on inter-group or system-wide goals and action plans and establish action design and implementation teams.

**Example:** During a community wide project in a city divided across racial lines and with a police department accused of racial profiling, representatives from different stakeholder groups – including police, youth, African Americans, business, education, religious and social service leaders, government - were brought together to reach consensus on goals for the future of police-community relations for the city. By working together to create a platform of goals, many citizens began to feel a deep sense of ownership of the process. "This is the vehicle for change," said one participant. "It gives me hope and encouragement that there is common ground to build on."

## What are action teams?

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**Action Teams** are organized around each of these project-wide goals and are charged with developing operational plans to accomplish their goals. As these teams implement their plans, they are asked to be conscious of their core motivations and values (their *whys*) and continually reflect on their efforts using this value-orientation. The Action Teams are encouraged to use this **ongoing reflection** as a mechanism for learning and continuous improvement.