Going beyond the usual suspects: engaging street artists in policy design and implementation in Bogotá

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ABSTRACT
This article examines how Bogotá has developed civic engagement with street artists to design and implement a program promoting the responsible practice of graffiti by engaging in a thought experiment. Bogotá used participatory policymaking and public outreach that is carried out by street artists as forms of civic engagement. This article contributes to our understanding of how government officials can engage groups who typically do not participate in the policymaking process. The research reveals there is some effort from the government to build bonds and bridges with the program for the responsible practice of graffiti and the artists. The findings suggest that participatory policymaking and public outreach are useful methods to engage members of the public who are not typically represented in the policymaking process. The article provides key lessons that can be applied to other cities that wish to engage different groups of people who are unrepresented in traditional forms of civic engagement in local government.

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1. Introduction
In 2011, Diego Becerra, a 16-year-old street artist, was killed by a Bogotá municipal police officer while graffitiing. The police officer claimed that Becerra possessed a gun and was involved in a robbery. A forensic report released by the Bogotá Attorney General’s Office determined that Becerra had not been holding or firing the weapon. The Attorney General of Bogotá determined the incident was procedural fraud and falsification of evidence (Bogotá Attorney General’s Office 2014). The Bogotá Municipal Police, located in the Ministry of National Defense, is part of the National Police of Colombia. Colombia has a unitary system of government. The Capital District of Bogotá and departmental governments have limited ability to respond to problems involving the practices of the Bogotá Municipal Police. Becerra’s death must be understood in a larger context of false-positive cases. In 2010, a United Nations Special
Rapporteur to the UN Human Rights Council published a report on the high number of false-positive cases in Colombia (Alston 2010). The report focused on soldiers, but it noted numerous complaints and alleged extrajudicial killings by police (Alston 2010). The report and Becerra’s death led to public protests regarding false-positive cases as well as the treatment of street artists (Barr 2019). The UN’s report, Becerra’s death, and the protests were widely reported in national and international media outlets, such as the Bogotá Post and the Guardian, in both the U.S. and U.K. editions. Becerra’s murder and attempted cover-up were condemned by the United Nations Office for Human Rights (Edwards 2011).

Bogotá’s municipal policymakers were restricted in how they could respond to the situation because they do not have authority over the Bogotá Municipal Police. They responded by decriminalizing graffiti; policymakers referred to this decriminalization as “the responsible practice of graffiti” (Agreement 482, Article 2, Bogotá District Council, 2011), which removed street artists from the jurisdiction of the police. The Bogotá District Council requested the mayor’s office develop a policy to implement the responsible practice of graffiti. Mayor Petro and his administration used participatory policymaking with street artists to design a program for the responsible practice of graffiti. Mayor Petro’s administration, and his successors, continued to engage street artists in program implementation.

Bogotá is a renowned location for graffiti art. There are over 600 graffiti murals directly supported by the program for the responsible practice of graffiti (Bogotá Graffiti District n.d.). The tourism website of the Republic of Colombia promotes Bogotá as a melting pot of cultures where tourists can visit an “open-air gallery” created by street artists (ProColombia n.d., “Bogotá”). The graffiti murals can be found throughout Bogotá. The Bogotá District Institute of Tourism notes the purpose of the graffiti murals is to change the perception that associates urban art with vandalism and to illustrate that graffiti, as a form of art, can transform places (Bogotá District Institute of Tourism 2020).

This study adds to the understanding of how policymakers and administrators can work with groups who do not participate in traditional avenues of public participation, such as citizen commissions. Through engagement with street artists, Bogotá created a policy that identifies graffiti as a form of cultural expression and supports the responsible practice of graffiti. This case can serve as a modest thought experiment on the potential of participatory policymaking and the policies to impact the presence of graffiti art and the identification of Bogotá a renowned location to view graffiti. There has been some effort of the part of the government to create bonds and bridges with the program and with the artists.

The article is organized as follows. The next section provides a brief literature review of the methods and value of public participation in policymaking as well as Colombia’s participatory democracy and institutions. The methodology section is after the literature review. Following the literature review, there is an examination of Bogotá’s participatory policymaking with street artists and public outreach. After, there is a discussion of the findings, and recommendations are provided for the practice of participatory policymaking and public outreach. The last section is the conclusion.
2. Engagement through participatory policymaking and public outreach

This article’s theoretical framework is shaped by research on the value and methods of participatory policymaking and public outreach. Additionally, in the context of Colombia, the framework incorporates the role of government officials in public participation programs. The policymaking process includes identifying a problem, formulating a policy to solve the problem, adopting the policy, implementing the policy to solve the problem, and evaluating the policy and its implementation to make necessary adjustments (Wu et al. 2018). Citizens involvement in policymaking can include identifying a problem as well as policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation (Mayka 2019; Wu et al. 2018). When the public engages in the policymaking, decision-making is no longer the sole responsibility of government officials (Bishop and Davis 2002; Michels and De Graaf 2010; Wu et al. 2018). Public participation in policymaking “encourages people to listen to a diversity of views” (Michels and De Graaf 2010, 877). Citizens are more likely to follow a policy when they participate, and they can act as partners to encourage others to follow the policy (Aulich 2009). Citizens involvement in implementation ranges from participation in the allocation of public funds (Beckett and King 2002; Wampler and McNulty 2011; Hajdarowicz 2022) to co-management of natural resources (Barahona and Molinet 2021; Carlsson and Berkes 2005). Citizen participation in evaluation can be used to improve polices and alert policymakers to policy failure (Edwards 2003, Mayka 2019).

Public engagement involves a continuum of activities ranging from informing the public to developing joint agreements (Creighton 2005). The continuum implies types of communication between government officials and the public that includes one-way or two-way communication strategies; the type of communication strategy used is dependent upon the goal to be achieved (Bishop and Davis 2002; Bryson et al. 2013). One-way communication, such as distributing materials and making announcements, is used when government officials need to inform and educate the public about a policy (Bishop and Davis 2002). Two-way communication occurs when the government consults with the public to solicit input to shape a policy, collaboratively solve a problem, or provide an opportunity to ask questions (Bishop and Davis 2002; Creighton 2005). Public consultation can take the form of surveys, open forums, using information in reports from the public and civic organizations, and ongoing discussions for drafts and changes to policies (Bishop and Davis 2002).

The benefits of public engagement include providing a link between government officials and the public and building support for decisions (Creighton 2005), strengthening local governance by allowing citizens to shape policy outcomes that directly affect their lives (Wampler and McNulty 2011; Bryson et al. 2013), increasing the legitimacy of the decisions made and accessing input for a diversity of stakeholders (Michels and De Graaf 2010), creating equitable and inclusive public policies and programs (Johnson and Svara 2011; Bryson et al. 2013), improving responsiveness to the needs of citizens (van Ryzin 2011; Speer 2012; Mayka 2019), and furthering social justice (Bryson et al. 2013). Maintaining a favorable or positive reputation is important to government officials because citizens are more likely to trust a government with a positive reputation (Putnam 1993; deLeon 1997; Kim 2005). Engagement that allows for
two-way communication with citizens can help to build and restore trust in government (Municipal Research and Services Center 2021).

Colombia has undergone participatory reforms that are embedded in its constitution (Ramírez Nárdiz 2016; Mayka 2019; Rubio 2021). Participation is a constitutional guiding principle that allows Colombians to directly participate in governance (Rubio 2021). Bureaucrats have impacted participation (Rich, Mayka, and Montero 2019). Some bureaucrats have embraced citizen participation and have served as activists who build new programs with marginalized citizens (Rich, Mayka, and Montero 2019; Mayka 2019). Bureaucrats located inside the executive branch have helped build participatory institutions, which allow citizens to offer insider information that improves policy development and communicate weaknesses of existing policies (Rich, Mayka, and Montero 2019). Government officials have utilized inclusive leadership to improve participation, which means including marginalized groups that alters unequal power relations and promotes social justice (Montero and Medina-Garzón 2021).

The role of Colombia’s participatory institutions and the expansion of who participates in governing, along with the role of bureaucrats in shaping public participation, has been researched in the areas of land management (Shenk 2021), planning councils (Mayka 2019), public budgeting (Hajdarowicz 2022), and indigenous communities (Recondo 2008). Bureaucratic power can limit public participation; urban renewal projects in Bogotá and Medellín was mostly controlled by urban planners and residents input was limited to the scope of a pre-determined framework (van Holstein 2018). In Bogotá, citizens provided input while bureaucrats were the driving force behind improving public spaces (Berney 2010). In the context of graffiti, the mayor and other government officials played a key role in shaping Decree 75, which established the responsible practice of graffiti program; it has been argued the policy was used to support the priorities of Mayor Petro’s administration (Ortiz van Meerbeke and Sletto 2019).

One problem with public engagement is moving beyond the usual suspects, meaning people who are easy to recruit or who are already involved in local government by voting regularly or serving in voluntary civic associations, to engaging with groups who are unusual suspects. Street artists, by the nature of their work being underground and subversive, are not part of the groups who typically engage in local government processes. This article is situated in the previous studies regarding participatory policymaking and the role of bureaucrats in framing participatory programs. This article adds to the understanding of participatory policymaking and engagement with street artists by examining Decrees 75 and 529 to understand how the participatory policymaking process and critical comments evaluating the weaknesses of Decree 75 were incorporated into Decree 529. This research does not refute the study by Ortiz van Meerbeke and Sletto; it goes beyond the previous study by examining Decree 529. Moreover, this article examines how public outreach with street artists was incorporated into policy implementation and used to build support for the program. Examining the participatory process used in Bogotá provides an example of how to engage groups who may be difficult to reach, how to collaborate with them to build support for a program, and lessons learned that can be applied to other situations.
3. Methodology

The research used qualitative methods that include document analysis and two interviews to supplement the document analysis. “Document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge” (Bowen 2009, 27). The analytic procedures include appraising and synthesizing data according to themes or evidence found in the documents (Bowen 2009). The document analysis included a report from street artists, Diagnóstico Grafiti Bogotá-Informe Final, and three policies- Agreement 482, Decree 75, and Decree 529. The policy documents served as official government acts; the report from artists was used as a written documentation of participation in the policymaking process that comes directly from artists and does not rely on interviewees recalling the past. The analysis of the report and policies were to determine if the policies reflect input from street artists. Document analysis can also be used to provide context and background information for a research case study (Bowen 2009). This case utilized additional document analysis for context and background information; these documents include a statement from the Attorney General’s Office of Bogotá, a report from the United Nations titled “Report of the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions,” newspaper articles, and the Bogotá Graffiti District website. See Table 1 for a list of the document and the data analyzed from each source.

Interviews with the Deputy Director of Art, Culture, and Heritage for the District Secretariat of Culture, Recreation, and Sports and a member of the street art community were used as supplements to understand how street artists engaged in the policymaking process and public outreach. The two interviewees were selected because of their knowledge of the earlier stages of the policymaking process and the implementation of the policies. I visited over 100 murals with one of the interviewees. They have extensive knowledge of many artists and the content of their work. Both interviewees played a key role in developing the program for the responsible practice of graffiti.

| Table 1. lists the selected documents and the data that was analyzed for the content analysis. |
|-----------------------------------------------|
| Document                                      | Data analyzed                                      |
| Agreement 482                                 | Government response to protests and treatment of street artists |
| Decree 75                                     | Government response to artist recommendations and development of responsible practice of graffiti program |
| Decree 529                                    | Government response to artist recommendations, address weaknesses of Decree 75 |
| Diagnóstico Grafiti Bogotá-Informe Final (report from street artists) | Information and recommendations from street artists |
| Bogota Graffiti District website               | Number of murals and location, evidence of workshops with street artists and Bogota municipal police |
| United Nations Report of the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions | Contextual data on significance of false-positives |
| Attorney General’s statement on Diego Becerra   | Evidence of false-positive for Diego Becerra |
| News Outlets- Bogota Post and Colombia Reports | Contextual information on protests and Isupport for graffiti murals |
4. Engaging street artists in Bogotá

Bogotá is Colombia’s capital and largest city with over one million people. It is estimated that Bogota has thousands of street artists. This section examines how Bogotá’s government officials engaged street artists in policymaking to develop a graffiti program. Once the program was designed, government officials worked with street artists to implement the program and conduct public outreach. The engagement with street artists established support for the graffiti program and the resulting murals.

4.1. Participatory policymaking with street artists

Street artists were invited to participate in the policymaking process for Decree 75 of 2013 and its amendment, Decree 529 of 2015. After the Bogotá council passed Agreement 482 as a response to the death of Diego Becerra, they called on the mayor’s office to formulate a policy and implement a plan for the decriminalization of graffiti. Mayor Petro’s office asked representatives from several public agencies and a representative from the street art community to collaborate in the drafting of a decree that would outline a plan to implement Agreement 482. Some street artists were easier to identify because they formed collectives or were hired for commissioned works for private businesses; however, they knew others who were not represented and worked mostly underground without permission. The agencies included representatives from the District Secretariats of Culture, Recreation, and Sports; Government; Environment; Planning; Urban Development; Office of Public Space; and the District Institute of the Arts. The collaboration, called Mesa Distrital del Graffiti (District Graffiti Board), held three public meetings during June and July 2012. The District Graffiti Board invited street artists to attend public meetings to comment and influence the content of the policy (District Secretary of Culture, Recreation, and Sport 2013). Each meeting provided an opportunity for participants to ask questions and provide ideas for a program that would regulate and support graffiti.

During this process, street artists asked for additional time to conduct research. The street artists on the research team interviewed 67 people, including other street artists, business owners, residents, and some government officials who were not represented on Board, to solicit their input and researched policies that regulated graffiti in cities throughout the world (Castro et al. 2012). Their report was given to the District Graffiti Board; it provided numerous recommendations to support the practice of graffiti in Bogotá (Castro et al. 2012). Foremost, street artists asked for graffiti to be recognized and promoted as a form of cultural expression. The artists called for the designation of public spaces where graffiti is allowed and a permit process for painting on private property with the owner’s consent (Castro et al. 2012). The report recommended education and training for police officers, street artists, and other members of the public on the rights of street artists and the regulations that would be enacted (Castro et al. 2012). The report requested opportunities to improve the relationship between the street artists and the Bogotá Municipal Police Department. Street artists requested an ongoing cycle of competitive opportunities for their work to be funded (Castro et al. 2012). Finally, artists called for a separate public agency to oversee
funding opportunities and the responsible practice of graffiti program, including the permitting process (Castro et al. 2012).

In 2013, after the District Graffiti Board finalized the policy, Decree 75 was signed by Mayor Petro (District Secretary of Culture, Recreation, and Sport 2013). Some recommendations from the report were included in Decree 75 while other recommendations were included later in Decree 529. First, Article II of Decree 75 recognizes graffiti as a form of artistic and cultural expression (Mayor’s Office of Bogotá 2013). Second, Decree 75 specifies education and training on the rights of street artists and the responsible practice of graffiti. Articles 9 and 10 require the District Secretary for Culture, Recreation, and Sports to implement educational strategies to the public and street artists (Mayor’s Office of Bogotá 2013). Third, the permitting process to authorize places where graffiti can be practiced has been developed over time. Article 11 of Decree 75 requires the District Secretary of Culture, Leisure, and Sport, and the “localidades,” elected officials who represent subregions of Bogotá, to collaborate when the approval of new places is required, but it does not provide a list of places where graffiti can be practiced (Mayor’s Office of Bogotá 2013).

Street artists criticized the shortcomings of Decree 75. During an interview, Natalia Bonilla, Deputy Director of Arts, Culture, and Heritage explained some of the criticisms from street artists. The decree did not specify permitting process or explain how street artists should obtain permission for private property, which left street artists seeking permission on their own with no way to provide formal documentation (Bonilla 2020). In a separate interview, Camillo Lopez, a member of the street art community, noted many street artists were confused about what they could or could not do that allowed under the program. The decree did not identify places where graffiti could be practiced or create a separate agency to deal with graffiti in public spaces; street artists unsure about who to contact when they had questions or needed assistance (Bonilla 2020; López 2020). Bonilla explained that most public spaces appeared to be off-limits. Lopez summarized the sentiment by noting, “Street artists knew graffiti was legal, but many didn’t know exactly where it could be practiced” (López 2020)

By 2015, Mayor Petro agreed to amend Decree 75 using a participatory process. The District Graffiti Board attempted to use a process similar with public meetings. However, the Board received little feedback from few participants. Street artists expressed frustration after recommendations and ideas from the report were not reflected in Decree 75 (Bonilla 2020; López 2020). Ultimately, the Board incorporated the feedback it received and recommendations that were made in the previous report into the amendment for Decree 75.

Decree 529 was passed in 2019 as an amendment to Decree 75. It addressed some of the shortcoming of Decree 75 and included additional recommendations from the report. First, the amendment allows graffiti under bridges (Article 3 of Decree 529, Mayor’s Office of Bogotá, 2015). Second, the requirement for a separate public authority to deal with graffiti was met by establishing the Committee for the Responsible Practice of Graffiti. The committee is composed of representatives from various public agencies, most of which were represented in the District Graffiti Board, as well as a representative of street artists and the Bogotá Municipal Police (Article 8 of Decree 529, Mayor’s Office of Bogotá, 2015). This is significant as street artists are represented...
in the formal committee that carries out additional recommendations from the report, such as recommending the criteria for identifying walls or places suitable for the practice of graffiti (Article 7 of Decree 529, Mayor’s Office of Bogotá, 2015). The committee is also responsible for creating guidelines for the responsible practice of graffiti, strategies for promoting graffiti, and educational programs for outreach (Article 7 of Decree 529, Mayor’s Office of Bogotá 2015). The Committee for the Responsible Practice of Graffiti is not an independent authority, as requested from street artists. It is an ongoing collaboration between public agencies and street artists. Decree 529 also requires graffiti murals to be removed after two-years, providing a new opportunity for another street artist (Article 6, Mayor’s Office of Bogotá). Beyond the Decrees, each mayoral administration has provided public funding to support the practice of graffiti. Artists can apply for a stipend and funding for materials when they have permission to create a mural and agree to engage in community outreach before and during the project. See Table 2 for a list of recommendations from street artists and how they have been embedded in policy or the implementation of the program.

### 4.2. Public outreach with street artists

Street artists requested opportunities to promote street art and educate others about their work and the policy (Castro et al. 2012). The Committee for the Responsible Practice of Graffiti decided to work with street artists to carry out this recommendation in the form of public outreach. When a street artist has been granted permission to create a graffiti mural, they are required to engage the community members where the mural will be located. Artists incorporate the area’s history or ideas and feelings that a community wants to convey into their artwork (Bonilla 2020). Other forms of public outreach by street artists include workshops and art fairs with brief lectures on topics related to street art and how it can be practiced within the bounds of the policy. Street artists have provided targeted outreach to other street artists regarding the responsible practice graffiti; these are opportunities to encourage others to follow the policy and inform them of the program’s benefits (López 2020). The Committee for the

| Recommendations from Street Artists | Included in Decree 75 | Included in Decree 529 | Implemented in Practice after Decree 529 |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Recognition of Graffiti as a form of Cultural Expression | X | | |
| Promote the Practice of Graffiti | X | | |
| Educational Opportunities for Street Artists, Police Officers, Public for Responsible Practice of Graffiti | X | | |
| Public Agency Dedicated to Overseeing the Responsible Practice of Graffiti | X | | |
| Permitting Process for Private Property | X | | |
| Opportunities to improve the Relationship between Street Artists and Police Officers | | X | |
| Ongoing Cycle of Funding for Street Artists | | X | |
| Identification of Designated Public Spaces for Graffiti | X | X | |
Responsible Practice of Graffiti held workshops for the Bogotá Municipal Police; they included site visits to some graffiti murals and talks from the street artists who created them (Bogotá Graffiti District, n.d.). These forms of outreach generate a dialog between the street artists and the attendees that builds support for graffiti.

5. Discussion

Participatory policymaking aided in the creation of dynamic program for the responsible practice of graffiti that benefits street artists and other stakeholders, including residents and business owners. Public outreach established support for the program and practice of graffiti. In Bogotá, bureaucrats worked with street artists to solve problems. The result was graffiti being acknowledged as a form of cultural expression and a program to support graffiti that is embedded in public policy (Article 1, Decree 75, Mayor’s Office of Bogotá, 2013). The responsible practice of graffiti and the murals that are created have public support, which is evidenced by community complaints when a mural is scheduled to be removed after the two-year period, and business owners rarely refusing an opportunity to have a mural painted on their property (Bonilla 2020). Residents and business-owners express appreciation for the murals upon completion (López 2020). Additionally, residents protested when some murals in La Candelaria, the historic city-center, were scheduled for removal (Hopson 2017).

Participatory policymaking and outreach may have cultivated an environment in which graffiti paintings could thrive. Between 2012 and 2020, over 600 graffiti murals were created (Bogotá Graffiti District n.d.). The area of Puente Aranda has nearly 100 graffiti murals, making it one of the largest concentrations of graffiti murals (Bogotá Graffiti District n.d.). Puente Aranda’s heavily-trafficked bus stop was renamed Graffiti District-Puente Aranda, emphasizing the significance of graffiti (López 2020). The murals form an open-air gallery and serve the city’s effort to promote specific neighborhoods (Evans 2016).

Street artists have been involved in most of the policymaking process. Wu et al. (2018) explain the policymaking process includes agenda setting through problem identification, formulation, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation. Street artists identified a problem and helped set the agenda by participating in protests. Michels and De Graaf explain citizens provide input and ideas for solving problems during participatory policymaking (Michels and De Graaf 2010). Street artists participated in the formulation of Decree 75 and their ideas were used in the amendment, Decree 529. During public meetings, they were able to voice concerns and provide ideas for supporting and regulating graffiti. The report clarified street artists’ input and added details for addressing their concerns. The engagement of street artists has been shaped by bureaucrats. Bureaucrats can impact public participation by shaping the scope of participation or the framework it operates within (Rich, Mayka, and Montero 2019), and some bureaucrats have embraced citizen participation by building programs with marginalized communities (Rich, Mayka, and Montero 2019). In this case study, the District Graffiti Board solicited input from street artists and provided extra time for input upon request. While the District Graffiti Board made the final decision for the policy and selected to not use some input in the initial policy, the board did use the
Incorporating street artists into the policymaking process allows government officials to work toward multiple goals of public engagement outlined by Bryson et al. (2013) that includes democratic participation and inclusion, advancing social justice, informing the public, and producing policies and programs with higher quality content. See Table 3 for an overview of the process that includes activities, outputs, and outcomes.

### 6. Recommendations for practice

1. Identify the target group. People engage when an issue directly impacts them. Street artists wanted better treatment from the Bogotá Municipal Police and acknowledgement their work is a form of cultural expression. Bogotá’s policies and public outreach provided an opportunity to achieve both goals.

2. Establish group connections early. The Graffiti District Board connected with street artists once it was established and included a representative from the street art community in their membership. Since the process of connecting with other street artists began early, they could provide extra time for street artists to conduct research and provide recommendations during the policymaking process.

3. Be flexible with time. Flexibility is linked to identifying the target group and establishing early connections. The District Graffiti Board was able to slow the
formulation process to provide time for additional research that resulted in more
detailed recommendations from street artists.
4. Be transparent with goals of the engagement process. Street artists were frustrated
when some recommendations were not incorporated into Decree 75. Street artists
were not aware the District Graffiti Board had a framework for Decree 75, which
led to diminished trust.
5. Develop a communication strategy. Ongoing communication can help improve
transparency and maintain trust. The Graffiti District Board did not communi-
cate enough with street artists after Decree 75 was passed to explain which rec-
ommendations were not used. There was less participation when the decree was
being amended. After Decree 75 trust between the street artists and government
officials was diminished; it took nearly four years of reaching out to street artists
and showing results for the support of graffiti to re-build trust (Bonilla 2020;
López 2020). The newly formed Committee for the Responsible Practice of
Graffiti maintained communication through a website and by connecting to
groups of street artists throughout the districts in Bogotá (Bonilla 2020).
6. Utilize the group’s resources. A small group of street artists connected to their
larger community to provide input during the policymaking process and for dis-
seminating information during program implementation. In this case, street
artists can also speak about the program and its impact to police officers and
other citizens.
7. Create an evaluation strategy. Work with the group during a formal evaluation
process. Street artists provided comments regarding the weaknesses of Decree 75,
but these were not part of a formal evaluation process. In a more formal process,
a larger group of people could be solicited for feedback; bureaucrats could pro-
vide aggregate information regarding the feedback and how it resulted in
improvements to the program.

7. Conclusion

The objective of this study was to investigate Bogotá’s engagement with street artists
that include participatory policymaking and public outreach. To achieve the objective,
a thought experiment was used in this case study. The evidence provided from the case
is that there is at least some effort on the part of the government to create bonds and
bridges with the program for the responsible practice of graffiti and the street artists.
This evidence supports previous findings regarding the value of participatory policy-
making and public outreach and the role of bureaucrats in participatory institutions.
Government officials were able to gain insight into the needs and perspectives of street
artists through their participation in policymaking process; they also tracked comments
about the policy’s weaknesses and referred back to previous input when amending the
policy. Outreach efforts conducted by street artists served to inform the public, build
support for program, and promote the responsible practice of graffiti. The participatory
policymaking and outreach efforts may have aided in shaping an environment that
supports both graffiti as form of cultural expression and public funding for the murals
and street artists who create them. The program and process can be improved through
evaluation that includes feedback from street artists in addition to community members and business owners where graffiti murals are located.

**Disclosure statement**

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