

BEYOND THE PANEL

100+ Participatory Conference Formats

12 PARTS · 100+ ONE-PAGE FORMAT CARDS



From input to interaction, insight, and action

Compiled by
Heiner Böttger

Funded by



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BEYOND THE PANEL

100+ Participatory Conference Formats

A practical book of one-page format cards for conferences, symposia, workshops, retreats, seminars and academic gatherings.

The Motto: From input to interaction, insight, and action

Editorial and rights note

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This independent educational compilation describes established facilitation methods, common conference practices, and original editorial adaptations. All descriptions are newly written and intentionally concise. Names such as PechaKucha, Human Library, World Café, Design Sprint, Three Minute Thesis, Critical Friends Group, and other branded or protected formats remain the property of their respective rights holders. Exact official rules, permissions, training requirements, and licensing conditions should be checked before public or commercial use. Inclusion in this book does not imply endorsement or certification by any source organization.

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Preface: Conferences as learning architectures

A conference is never only a sequence of presentations. It is a temporary communication and learning architecture: a carefully created environment in which people direct attention, encounter unfamiliar perspectives, test ideas, build relationships, and decide what deserves to happen next. The format therefore matters. It shapes who speaks, who listens, who interacts, whose knowledge becomes visible, and whether insight survives the final coffee break.

This book came to life with two formats especially developed for the 2026 conference of the Consortium of Catholic Universities in Eichstätt. The first, the Walk'n'Talk, connects compact input with conversation in motion and a shared return. The Action Café, on the other hand, carries conference insights toward realistic proposals and first steps. Their excellent reception suggested a larger question: What else can a conference become when interaction is treated as part of the intellectual design rather than as an optional extra?

The answer assembled here is deliberately broad. The 120 cards include established facilitation methods, dialogic traditions, research-presentation formats, peer-consultation protocols, decision tools, futures methods, and carefully named conference adaptations – all collected and experienced over many years. Some are suited to ten people around one table; others can involve hundreds. Some need ten minutes; others unfold over several days. All have one common ambition: to replace passive attendance with purposeful participation. A guideline for those who are the unsung heroes of a conference – the conference chairs and moderators.

The cards are not recipes to follow mechanically. They are design prompts. A strong host begins with purpose, participants, context, and ethical responsibility. The selected format should then make the desired kind of thinking and relating more likely. Good facilitation remains responsive: it gives enough structure for safety and momentum while leaving enough openness for surprise, dissent, and emergence.

A special concern throughout the book is access. Participation should never be equated with speaking quickly, moving easily, disclosing personally, or using a particular technology. Each card therefore includes an access and inclusion note. These notes are starting points rather than a substitute for consultation with participants and professional accessibility planning.

May these formats assist conferences and all other educational “summits” become more memorable not because they are louder or busier, but because they allow more people to think, contribute, connect, and act. What more could we wish for?

Eichstätt, November 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Heiner Böttger". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Heiner" and last name "Böttger" clearly distinguishable.

How to use this book

Choose the format only after clarifying the purpose. A lively method cannot compensate for an unclear invitation, insufficient time, or a question that does not matter to the people in the room.

1 Name the desired change

Complete the sentence: “At the end of this session, participants should have...” Use an observable outcome: compared perspectives, generated options, strengthened a relationship, tested a proposal, selected priorities, or committed to a next step.

2 Read the room before designing it

Consider group size, prior relationships, language proficiency, power differences, mobility, sensory needs, psychological safety, digital access, and whether participation is voluntary or expected.

3 Match structure to purpose

Use the Quick Finder and section overview. Dialogue methods deepen understanding; consultation methods help one person or team; generative methods broaden options; decision methods narrow them; futures formats work on direction and shared possibility.

4 Protect transitions

Most failures occur between stages. Explain why people are moving, what they should carry forward, where results will be recorded, and how the next step builds on the previous one.

5 Design the harvest

Decide before the session what will be captured, by whom, in what form, and for whom. Do not collect personal reflections that participants reasonably expected to remain private.

6 Close the loop

End by naming what happened, what remains unresolved, and what will happen after the event. A conference format creates credibility when participants can see how their contribution travels beyond the room.

Anatomy of a format card

Every card is designed as an editable one-page handout. The labels below explain what to adapt before using it.

Best for

The primary purpose. A format may serve other aims, but this is the reason to choose it.

People · Time · Space

Working ranges rather than rigid limits. More participants usually require additional hosts and a stronger harvest design.

Output

The tangible or relational result the format is meant to produce.

Participant flow

A four-stage sequence with indicative timing and interaction mode.

Facilitator focus

The design move most likely to determine quality.

Access & inclusion

A practical adaptation to reduce unnecessary barriers. Ask participants what they need.

Source note

Origins, key references, or a note that the format is an editorial synthesis. For protected formats, consult the official source.

Facilitation principle Keep the invitation simple enough to remember, specific enough to guide attention, and open enough to permit an answer you did not predict.

Quick finder: Purpose

Use these lists to shortlist formats by purpose. Format numbers correspond to the cards and the alphabetical index.

Connect and network

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
001 Walk'n'Talk	2	010 Pair Promenade	11
006 Conversation Carousel	7	017 Birds of a Feather	20
007 Speed Networking	8	019 Topic Marketplace	22
008 Impromptu Networking	9	061 Speed Geeking	74
009 Social Network Webbing	10	118 Hybrid Hub	141

Deepen dialogue and understanding

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
012 World Café	15	023 Socratic Seminar	28
013 Knowledge Café	16	024 Fishbowl	29
014 Conversation Café	17	025 User Experience Fishbowl	30
016 Campfire Conversation	19	027 Story Circle	32
021 Dialogue Circle	26	030 Samoan Circle	35
022 Bohm Dialogue	27	036 Structured Academic Controversy	43

Consult peers on a real challenge

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
015 Pro Action Café	18	046 Critical Friends Protocol	55
041 Case Clinic	50	047 Action Learning Set	56
042 Peer Assist	51	048 Reflecting Team	57
043 Troika Consulting	52	049 Dilemma Clinic	58
044 Wise Crowds	53	050 Mastermind Round	59
045 Consultancy Protocol	54		

Reimagine panels and public Q&A

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
031 Reverse Panel	38	037 Point-Counterpoint-Question	44
032 Empty-Chair Panel	39	038 Audience-as-Panel	45
033 Ask Me Anything	40	039 Myth-Busting Panel	46
034 Fireside Interview	41	040 Jury Panel	47
035 Oxford-Style Debate	42		

Share research, practice, or stories

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
051 Gallery Walk	62	063 Ignite Talks	76
052 Poster Walk	63	064 PechaKucha 20x20	77
053 PICO Session	64	065 Three-Minute Research Pitch	78
055 Shift & Share	66	067 Collective Story Harvest	80
056 Marketplace of Ideas	67	068 Story Slam	81
057 Open Studio Critique	68	069 Learning from Failure	82
061 Speed Geeking	74	070 Demo Jam	83
062 Lightning Talks	75		

Generate and prototype ideas

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
071 1-2-4-All	86	078 Design Studio	93
072 Think-Pair-Share	87	079 Improv Prototyping	94
073 Snowball / Pyramid Discussion	88	080 Idea Sprint	95
074 Jigsaw Exchange	89	114 Design Charrette	137
075 6-3-5 Brainwriting	90	115 Design Sprint	138
076 Mad Tea	91	116 Hackathon	139
077 Crazy Eights	92		

Prioritize, decide, and plan action

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
011 Action Café	14	086 Gradients of Agreement	103
081 Nominal Group Technique	98	087 Agreement-Certainty Matrix	104
082 Dotmocracy	99	088 Impact-Effort Matrix	105
083 25/10 Crowd Sourcing	100	089 Multivoting	106
084 Min Specs	101	090 Action Planning Canvas	107
085 Fist to Five	102	097 15% Solutions	116

Reflect, evaluate, and harvest learning

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
091 What, So What, Now What?	110	096 Nine Whys	115
092 ORID Focused Conversation	111	098 Critical Incident Reflection	117
093 After Action Review	112	099 Learning Harvest	118
094 Plus / Delta	113	100 Silent Reflection Lab	119
095 Start / Stop / Continue	114		

Explore futures and systems

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
101 Wicked Questions	122	106 Future Search	127
102 TRIZ	123	107 Appreciative Inquiry Summit	128
103 Ecocycle Planning	124	108 Systems Mapping	129
104 Three Horizons	125	109 Causal Loop Conversation	130
105 Scenario Planning	126	110 Backcasting	131

Open the agenda or connect hybrid participation

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
111 Open Space Technology	134	118 Hybrid Hub	141
112 Unconference	135	119 Digital Fishbowl	142
113 BarCamp	136	120 Asynchronous Idea Garden	143
117 Flipped Conference	140		

Work with 100+ participants

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
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012 World Café	15	063 Ignite Talks	76
017 Birds of a Feather	20	064 PechaKucha 20x20	77
019 Topic Marketplace	22	065 Three-Minute Research Pitch	78
031 Reverse Panel	38	083 25/10 Crowd Sourcing	100
033 Ask Me Anything	40	106 Future Search	127
035 Oxford-Style Debate	42	107 Appreciative Inquiry Summit	128
038 Audience-as-Panel	45	111 Open Space Technology	134
051 Gallery Walk	62	112 Unconference	135
052 Poster Walk	63	113 BarCamp	136
053 PICO Session	64	118 Hybrid Hub	141
055 Shift & Share	66	119 Digital Fishbowl	142
056 Marketplace of Ideas	67	120 Asynchronous Idea Garden	143

Use in 20 minutes or less

Format no. & title	Book page	Format no. & title	Book page
008 Impromptu Networking	9	086 Gradients of Agreement	103
071 1-2-4-All	86	094 Plus / Delta	113
072 Think-Pair-Share	87	096 Nine Whys	115
082 Dotmocracy	99	097 15% Solutions	116
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PART 01



Move & Meet

Use movement to change attention, relationships, and the quality of conversation.

Movement formats turn corridors, gardens, campuses, and city spaces into extensions of the conference room. They are especially useful after concentrated input, when participants need oxygen, perspective, and a different social rhythm. The host should design a stationary equivalent from the outset so that mobility never becomes a condition for intellectual participation.

The ten formats in this part

001 Walk'n'Talk

002 Walkshop

003 Learning Journey

004 Observation Walk

005 Question Trail

006 Conversation Carousel

007 Speed Networking

008 Impromptu Networking

009 Social Network Webbing

010 Pair Promenade

DESIGN LENS Movement should serve the thinking. Give participants a memorable question, a clear route or return point, and an equally valued non-walking option.



001 Walk'n'Talk

From input to conversation

Walk'n'Talk combines concise presentations, conversation in motion, and a structured return to the presenters. The change of setting helps participants process ideas while creating low-threshold opportunities for connection.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Reflect on input in motion	Pairs or 3s; any total	35-65 min	Safe route + return point	Shared insights and next questions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Frame the walk. Present one or two short inputs and end each with two memorable guiding questions.	20-30 min	Input
2	Choose company. Form pairs or trios; clarify the route, return time, weather plan, and stationary option. Repeat the guiding question(s).	3 min	Set-up
3	Walk and talk. Discuss the questions, listen for links to practice, and identify one idea worth carrying back.	15-30 min	Pairs/Trios
4	Return and harvest. Form new table groups, compare observations, and share one insight, question, or possible next step.	15-20 min	Plenary

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep the prompts few enough to remember without a handout and protect the return time.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer a seated conversation zone, step-free route, weather protection, and permission to walk alone.

SOURCE NOTE Böttger, H., & Költzsch, D. (2021). Walk'n'Talk: Effects of a communicative strategy. *Training, Language and Culture*, 5(4), 9–21.



002 Walkshop

A workshop that unfolds along a route

A Walkshop treats the route itself as workshop material. Participants move through a landscape, building, neighborhood, or campus and use selected stops to connect abstract questions with visible evidence and lived experience.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Explore a question through place	8-40	60-150 min	Curated route with stops	Place-based observations and proposals

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Introduce the lens. Name the inquiry, safety boundaries, route, roles, and what participants should notice rather than merely see.	10 min	Briefing
2	Move through stations. At two to five stops, offer a short stimulus, object, story, or observation task.	30-70 min	Walk
3	Interpret in small groups. Pause for pairs or trios to compare what the setting reveals, hides, enables, or constrains.	15-30 min	Small groups
4	Map implications. Back indoors or at the final stop, convert observations into principles, questions, or design proposals.	20-40 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Curate fewer, more meaningful stops; avoid turning the experience into a guided tour with passive listeners.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide route photographs or a live indoor feed, resting places, accessible transport, sensory warnings, and a low-mobility version.

SOURCE NOTE Practice-based synthesis informed by walking-method and place-based workshop traditions; no single origin claimed.



003 Learning Journey

Visit practice before discussing policy

A Learning Journey takes participants into a setting where the conference theme is already being practiced, contested, or experienced. The visit is designed for inquiry, not inspection, and ends with disciplined reflection on transfer.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Learn from a real site or team	8-60	2 hours-1 day	Host site + reflection room	Transferable lessons and contacts

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare the inquiry. Brief visitors on context, confidentiality, power, and two or three questions that the host genuinely welcomes.	15-25 min	Briefing
2	Encounter the practice. Observe, listen, and speak with hosts; separate description from premature judgment.	45-150 min	Site visit
3	Debrief away from hosts. Name surprises, assumptions, tensions, and missing voices before forming recommendations.	20-35 min	Small groups
4	Return value. Share an appreciative synthesis with the host and record what may transfer, what may not, and why.	20-30 min	Exchange

FACILITATOR FOCUS Co-design the visit with the host and make reciprocity explicit; the site is not a conference exhibit.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Clarify travel and physical demands, compensate community expertise where appropriate, and provide remote or documentary access.

SOURCE NOTE Common practice in organizational learning and systems-change programs; presented here as a conference-ready adaptation.



004 Observation Walk

Notice before interpreting

The Observation Walk slows participants down. For part of the route they refrain from discussion and collect concrete observations; only afterward do they interpret patterns and implications together.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Sharpen perception and evidence	6-50	30-75 min	Indoor or outdoor route	Observation record and inquiry questions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set an observation frame. Choose a lens such as access, communication, sustainability, atmosphere, or invisible labor.	5-10 min	Briefing
2	Walk in silence. Record what is directly observable through words, sketches, photographs, counts, or sound notes.	15-30 min	Individual
3	Separate fact and inference. In pairs, sort statements into "I noticed," "I interpreted," and "I still wonder."	10-15 min	Pairs
4	Build questions. Cluster observations and formulate questions that deserve deeper inquiry rather than instant solutions.	10-20 min	Group

FACILITATOR FOCUS Model the difference between an observation and an interpretation before participants begin.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow audio, photography-free, seated, virtual, and sensory-reduced observation options; obtain consent before documenting people.

SOURCE NOTE Editorial synthesis drawing on learning-walk, ethnographic-observation, and reflective-practice traditions.



005 Question Trail

Let a sequence of questions shape the route

A Question Trail places a carefully sequenced inquiry along a physical route. Each station advances the thinking from experience to interpretation, possibility, and commitment.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Develop thinking step by step	10-100	35-80 min	Route with prompt stations	Progressive response chain

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Begin with experience. At the first station, respond individually to a concrete prompt grounded in participants' own work.	5-10 min	Individual
2	Add perspectives. At middle stations, change partners and address questions that introduce tension, evidence, or another stakeholder.	15-30 min	Pairs
3	Move toward possibility. Use a later prompt to generate alternatives without yet evaluating them.	10-15 min	Small groups
4	End with commitment. At the final station, record one action, experiment, or question to take into the conference harvest.	10-20 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Sequence questions so that they deepen rather than repeat the same conversation in different words.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Duplicate every station digitally and in a seated hub; use large print, plain language, and generous transition time.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial format developed for this collection.



006 Conversation Carousel

Several partners, one developing question

Participants hold a series of brief conversations, changing partners after each round. Unlike speed networking, the questions build on one another so that ideas develop across encounters.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Compare multiple perspectives quickly	12-120	25-55 min	Two facing circles or rows	Cross-perspective pattern list

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Form two lines or circles. Place participants face to face and explain the direction of rotation and signal for change.	5 min	Set-up
2	Open with a concrete prompt. Round one connects the topic to experience; both partners receive equal speaking time.	5-7 min	Pairs
3	Rotate and deepen. Use two or three new partners with prompts about tension, possibility, and application.	12-25 min	Pairs
4	Name recurring patterns. Participants write one repeated theme and one productive difference for the plenary map.	8-15 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Use visible timing and announce the question before people move, not while the room is noisy.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide a stationary partner stream, opt-out seating, written prompts, hearing support, and alternatives to rapid transitions.

SOURCE NOTE Common dialogic conference practice; this progressive-question version is an editorial synthesis.



007 Speed Networking

Purposeful introductions without small-talk drift

Speed Networking uses timed paired exchanges to help participants discover relevant people beyond their existing circles. Strong prompts keep the encounter purposeful while contact exchange remains optional.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Create many first connections	12-300	20-50 min	Open room or tables	New contacts and follow-up matches

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare a useful introduction. Invite a 30-second response: who you are, what you are exploring, and what connection would help.	3-5 min	Individual
2	Meet in timed rounds. Pairs exchange introductions and respond to one topic-specific question.	12-30 min	Pairs
3	Mark promising links. Privately note people to reconnect with; do not require public ranking or contact sharing.	3 min	Individual
4	Create follow-up space. Open a slower networking period or digital board where mutual connections can continue.	8-15 min	Open

FACILITATOR FOCUS Design prompts that reveal complementary interests, not status; protect equal speaking time.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer advance profiles, quiet networking tables, no-handshake norms, name pronunciation support, and a non-rotating option.

SOURCE NOTE Established professional-networking practice; no single origin claimed.



008 Impromptu Networking

Three rapid exchanges around a shared challenge

Impromptu Networking launches a gathering through three short paired exchanges around an invitation such as: What challenge brings you here, and what do you hope to give and receive?

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Connect people and surface expectations	12-500+	20 min	Open space	Relationships, questions, and offers

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Pose the invitation. Use one two-part question linked directly to the purpose of the conference or session.	2 min	Plenary
2	Pair up. Each partner speaks for roughly two minutes while the other listens, then switch.	5 min	Pairs
3	Repeat twice. Find a new person for each round; carry forward only what is useful, not a rehearsed pitch.	10 min	Pairs
4	Notice the network. Invite a few observations about common needs, unexpected resources, and new connections.	3 min	Plenary

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep the invitation alive and relevant; the method loses value when reduced to generic introductions.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide a seated zone, visual timer, prompt in writing, language-pairing options, and permission to pass on disclosure.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2013). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



009 Social Network Webbing

Make connections and gaps visible

Social Network Webbing helps participants see who is connected to whom around a challenge, where expertise sits, and which relationships could strengthen the work after the conference.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Map relationships around a purpose	8-80	30-60 min	Wall, floor, or digital canvas	Network map and connection actions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define the network. Name the purpose, boundary, and meaning of a connection before anyone begins mapping.	5 min	Briefing
2	Place people or roles. Create nodes for participants, organizations, communities, or needed actors.	8-15 min	Individual/ group
3	Draw meaningful links. Add current relationships, strong flows, weak ties, and absent connections using a simple legend.	10-20 min	Mapping
4	Strengthen the web. Identify one connection to initiate, broker, diversify, or protect and assign a first contact.	10-15 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep the map purposeful and avoid treating relationship quantity as a proxy for influence or value.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow anonymous role-based mapping where relationships are sensitive; avoid public exposure of exclusion or personal data.

SOURCE NOTE Adapted from Social Network Webbing in the Liberating Structures repertoire and wider network-mapping practice.



010 Pair Promenade

A quiet two-person closing walk

Pair Promenade is a gentle closing format. Two participants walk or move through a short route while each names what changed in their thinking and what they intend to carry forward.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Integrate learning and close relationally	Pairs; any total	20-40 min	Short route or indoor loop	Personal synthesis and mutual witness

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Select or assign pairs. Use new partners when cross-pollination matters; use trusted partners when the topic has been personal.	3 min	Set-up
2	First voice. Partner A speaks without interruption: What am I taking with me, and what remains alive for me? Partner B may ask one clarifying question at the end.	6-10 min	Pairs
3	Second voice. Partner B receives the same uninterrupted space; listeners may ask one clarifying question at the end.	3-5 min	Pairs
4	Return with one sentence. Each person records a private intention or contributes an optional line to the collective closing wall.	5-10 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Protect silence and reciprocity; do not turn the close into another problem-solving task.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer seated pairs, solo reflection, written exchange, and a clear choice not to share personal intentions publicly.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial format developed for this collection.

PART 02



Café & Table Dialogue

Use hospitable small-group conversation to connect ideas across a large room.

Café formats create intimacy within scale. Participants work at small tables, often rotating between rounds so that ideas travel and accumulate. Their success depends less on decoration than on purposeful questions, good table size, visible traces of thinking, and a final harvest that does more than repeat every conversation.

The ten formats in this part

011 Action Café

012 World Café

013 Knowledge Café

014 Conversation Café

015 Pro Action Café

016 Campfire Conversation

017 Birds of a Feather

018 Roundtable Rotation

019 Topic Marketplace

020 Unasked Questions Café

DESIGN LENS Design the movement of ideas as carefully as the movement of people. Decide what remains at each table, what travels, and what the whole room needs to see.



011 Action Café

Turning insights into action

Action Café gathers the major themes of a conference at dedicated Action Tables and guides participants from important insight to a realistic proposal, named partners, and a first step.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Convert conference learning into proposals	20-200	60-90 min	Themed high-top or café tables	Prioritized action proposals

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Choose a theme. Join the Action Table whose issue you most want to advance; begin with the insight that must not be lost.	15 min	Discussion
2	Explain its importance. Connect the insight to institutions, communities, partnerships, and the intended common good.	15 min	Table group
3	Translate into action. Specify what should happen, who must be involved, what support is needed, and what impact is sought.	20 min	Planning
4	Record and share. Prioritize one proposal, enter it into the shared harvest, and connect related actions in plenary.	20-30 min	Plenary

FACILITATOR FOCUS Insist on proposals concrete enough to begin, while preserving the larger purpose that made them matter.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide seated tables, digital and paper capture, plain-language templates, and ways to contribute without public speaking.

SOURCE NOTE Böttger, H., & Höppner, B. (2026). *Action Table: Turning Insights into Action*, unpublished CCU conference handout.



012 World Café

Questions that travel across tables

World Café uses successive rounds of small-table conversation around questions that matter. Participants change tables, cross-pollinate ideas, and listen together for connections and emerging patterns.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Connect diverse perspectives at scale	16-500+	60-150 min	Small café tables	Patterns, insights, and shared questions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set hospitable context. Clarify purpose, etiquette, table size, and how participants may draw or write on the table surface.	10 min	Opening
2	Explore question one. Groups of four or five discuss an open, consequential question and leave visible traces.	20-30 min	Tables
3	Rotate and connect. A host remains while others move; new groups link prior ideas to a deeper question.	20-60 min	Rounds
4	Harvest discoveries. Invite patterns, surprises, and unresolved tensions rather than sequential table reports.	15-30 min	Plenary

FACILITATOR FOCUS Invest in the questions and the collective harvest; table rotation alone does not make a World Café.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use accessible tables and circulation paths, a non-rotating table, visual and verbal capture, microphones, and language support.

SOURCE NOTE Brown, J., & Isaacs, D. (2005). *The World Café: Shaping Our Future through Conversations that Matter*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.



013 Knowledge Café

Conversation for sense-making and community

A Knowledge Café combines a short stimulus with lightly structured table conversations and a closing whole-group dialogue. Its primary product is better collective sense-making, not a list of recommendations.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Learn from one another without forcing consensus	12-80	60-120 min	Tables for 4-6 + circle	Shared understanding and relationships

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Open with a short stimulus. Offer a concise provocation and one central question; avoid a presentation that consumes the conversation time.	5-10 min	Input
2	Converse in small groups. Explore the question freely, drawing on experience and asking genuine questions of one another.	20-35 min	Tables
3	Mix the groups. Change tables once or twice so that perspectives and relationships cross-pollinate.	15-30 min	Rounds
4	Return to one circle. Hold an open dialogue about what participants are now thinking; formal reporting is optional.	20-35 min	Circle

FACILITATOR FOCUS Resist over-facilitating or converting the café into a disguised task group.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow participants to stay at one table, contribute in writing, use quiet tables, and receive the question in advance.

SOURCE NOTE Gurteen, D. (n.d.). *How to run a Knowledge Café*. Gurteen Knowledge. <https://www.gurteen.com/gurteen/gurteen.nsf/id/run-kcafe>



014 Conversation Café

A hosted dialogue with equal turns

Conversation Café offers a simple sequence of equal opening turns, open dialogue, and closing turns. It is useful when a topic deserves reflection rather than debate or immediate decision.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Explore a difficult topic respectfully	6-12 per table	45-90 min	Small circle or table	Deeper understanding without forced agreement

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Create the container. State the topic, time boundaries, confidentiality, and listening agreements; introduce a talking object if used.	8 min	Opening
2	First round. Each person speaks briefly without interruption about what the question evokes.	10-20 min	Round
3	Open conversation. Participants respond, inquire, and connect ideas while the host protects balance and curiosity.	20-40 min	Dialogue
4	Closing round. Each person names one insight, shift, or question they are leaving with.	8-15 min	Round

FACILITATOR FOCUS Protect the difference between dialogue and persuasion; intervene when airtime or personal safety becomes unequal.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer pass rights, written participation, content notes, clear confidentiality limits, and alternatives to personal disclosure.

SOURCE NOTE Associated with the Conversation Café movement founded by Vicki Robin and Susan Partnow; adapted for conference use.



015 Pro Action Café

Peer input for projects that matter

Pro Action Café combines project hosting with rotating peer consultation. Project owners remain at their tables while other participants move through rounds that deepen the question, reveal what is missing, and support action.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Develop participant-owned projects	12-80	90-150 min	One host per project table	Sharper projects and next steps

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Invite project calls. Participants briefly name a project, question, or call for action; select enough hosts for tables of four.	15 min	Marketplace
2	Question behind the question. Visitors join a project table and help the host clarify the deeper need or purpose.	25-30 min	Round 1
3	Explore what is missing. New visitors bring perspectives, resources, challenges, and connections the host may not see.	25-30 min	Round 2
4	Integrate and act. Hosts reflect, receive a final round of support, and state what they will do next.	25-40 min	Round 3/close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Choose real projects with genuine ownership; do not use the method to recruit unpaid labor for a predetermined plan.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide a clear way to propose projects in advance, seated rotation options, role cards, and permission to contribute as listener.

SOURCE NOTE Developed by Ria Baeck and Rainer von Leoprechting within the Art of Hosting community; see artofhosting.org and origin accounts by Chris Corrigan.



016 Campfire Conversation

Stories and reflection in an intimate setting

Campfire Conversation creates an intentionally informal circle around a symbolic focal point. A brief story opens the theme; participants then offer resonant experiences and questions rather than prepared mini-speeches.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Build trust through meaningful stories	8-40	40-90 min	Circle, warm focal point	Shared stories and thematic insights

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Light the metaphorical fire. Create a focal point, explain the tone, and offer a short authentic opening story.	8-12 min	Opening
2	Invite resonant stories. Use a prompt that asks for a moment, person, or turning point rather than an opinion.	15-30 min	Circle
3	Explore meaning. Ask what the stories reveal collectively, including contradictions and voices not yet heard.	10-25 min	Dialogue
4	Carry an ember forward. Each person names a phrase, question, or practice worth taking into the next session.	8-15 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Model brevity and vulnerability without pressuring participants to match the host's level of disclosure.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Do not use open flame unless safely permitted; provide pass rights, content notes, quiet seating, and non-personal prompts.

SOURCE NOTE Common storytelling and retreat practice; this conference sequence is an editorial synthesis.



017 Birds of a Feather

Self-selected conversations around shared interests

Birds of a Feather sessions create lightly facilitated, participant-selected gatherings around specific interests. They work well when a conference community has more specialized questions than the formal program can accommodate.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Connect people with a common topic	10-500+	30-75 min	Multiple labeled tables or rooms	Peer communities and follow-up links

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Gather topic proposals. Invite clear topic titles and one-sentence purposes before or during the conference.	5-15 min	Marketplace
2	Choose a flock. Participants join the topic most useful to them; allow new tables when a threshold is reached.	5 min	Choice
3	Converse and compare. Each table identifies needs, resources, tensions, and people who want to stay connected.	20-40 min	Tables
4	Signal continuation. Post a concise takeaway, contact route, and next opportunity without requiring a full plenary report.	5-15 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Make the purpose visible and prevent vague topic labels that reproduce social cliques.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Publish topics early, keep at least one open/quiet table, support remote joiners, and avoid requiring personal contact details.

SOURCE NOTE Longstanding conference and technical-community practice; no single origin claimed.



018 Roundtable Rotation

One issue, several specialist tables

Roundtable Rotation lets participants examine one overarching challenge through several specialist lenses. Small groups rotate between fixed tables, each with a focused question and host.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Consult multiple expertise areas	20-160	50-100 min	Themed tables	Cross-cutting recommendations

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define complementary lenses. Create groups whose questions illuminate different dimensions rather than dividing one task arbitrarily.	Before	Design
2	Begin at one table. Groups discuss the local question and leave a concise record of evidence, concerns, and possibilities.	12-20 min	Round 1
3	Rotate and build. At each new table, review the prior trace before adding, challenging, or connecting ideas.	24-45 min	Rounds
4	Synthesize across lenses. Hosts identify cross-cutting patterns, dependencies, and contradictions for the whole room.	15-25 min	Plenary

FACILITATOR FOCUS Give table hosts a synthesis role, not authority over the topic; preserve minority or dissenting views.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Limit physical rotations, provide a stationary group whose ideas travel digitally, and use consistent accessible templates.

SOURCE NOTE Common roundtable and station-rotation practice; presented as a conference design pattern.



019 Topic Marketplace

Participants choose and shape the agenda

A Topic Marketplace begins with brief invitations from participants and turns them into a visible menu of conversations. It offers more structure than Open Space while preserving meaningful choice.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Surface participant-led topics	20-300	45-120 min	Agenda wall + breakouts	Self-organized topic conversations

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Invite concise offers. Anyone may propose a topic by naming the question, desired participants, and hoped-for outcome.	10-20 min	Pitches
2	Build the marketplace. Cluster duplicates, assign spaces and times, and make undersubscribed topics easy to merge.	10 min	Agenda
3	Choose and converse. Participants join one or two sessions; proposers open the question but need not dominate.	25-60 min	Breakouts
4	Post the harvest. Each group adds a short result, open question, and contact route to the shared wall.	10-20 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Make topic selection transparent and prevent seniority from becoming the informal allocation system.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow digital proposals, accessible rooms, a “help me choose” host, and an online path for people unable to move between spaces.

SOURCE NOTE Editorial synthesis of marketplace, unconference, and participant-led breakout practices.



020 Unasked Questions Café

Make room for what the program has missed

The Unasked Questions Café invites participants to identify questions the conference has avoided, overlooked, or made difficult to voice. Tables then explore selected questions without rushing to resolve them.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Surface omissions and silences	12-100	45-80 min	Café tables + question wall	New questions and agenda corrections

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Collect missing questions. Participants submit questions anonymously or by name; ask what has not yet been discussable.	8-12 min	Individual
2	Cluster with care. Group related questions without sanitizing their language or erasing uncomfortable distinctions.	8-12 min	Facilitation
3	Choose a table. Small groups explore one question, its importance, whose perspective is missing, and what evidence is needed.	20-35 min	Tables
4	Return responsibility. Identify what organizers, institutions, or participants should do so the question remains visible after the event.	10-20 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not promise anonymity you cannot protect; be prepared to name structural power and respond to harm.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer anonymous channels, trauma-aware facilitation, a support contact, pass rights, and a clear process for urgent safeguarding concerns.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial format developed for this collection.

PART 03



Circle & Deep Listening

Slow the exchange so that attention, meaning, and relationship can deepen.

Circle formats change the social geometry of a session: participants can see one another, hierarchy becomes less physically dominant, and listening becomes part of the work. These formats are powerful for complex or value-laden topics, but they require clarity about confidentiality, voluntary disclosure, and the difference between educational dialogue and therapeutic support.

The ten formats in this part

021 Dialogue Circle

022 Bohm Dialogue

023 Socratic Seminar

024 Fishbowl

025 User Experience Fishbowl

026 Human Library

027 Story Circle

028 Listening Triads

029 Talking Object Circle

030 Samoan Circle

DESIGN LENS A circle is not automatically safe or equal. The host must make turn-taking, pass rights, boundaries, and routes for responding to harm explicit.



021 Dialogue Circle

Equal presence around a shared question

A Dialogue Circle brings participants into face-to-face conversation around one meaningful question. Structured opening and closing rounds frame a less scripted middle dialogue.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Build mutual understanding	6-30	45-120 min	Chairs in one circle	Shared meaning and relational trust

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Create agreements. Clarify purpose, confidentiality limits, listening norms, pass rights, and how the group will handle interruption or harm.	8-12 min	Opening
2	Opening round. Each participant responds briefly to the same grounding prompt without cross-talk.	10-25 min	Round
3	Enter dialogue. Explore links, differences, assumptions, and questions; speak from experience without claiming to represent others.	20-60 min	Dialogue
4	Close the circle. Invite one sentence about what participants now understand, value, or need next.	8-15 min	Round

FACILITATOR FOCUS Listen for exclusion as well as insight; use gentle structure before imbalance becomes entrenched.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide pass rights, written responses, an outer listening circle, language support, and clear alternatives to personal disclosure.

SOURCE NOTE Draws on long-standing circle processes in community dialogue and the Art of Hosting community; no single origin claimed.



022 Bohm Dialogue

Suspend assumptions and think together

Bohm Dialogue is a sustained, agenda-light inquiry in which participants attend to how thought, assumptions, and meaning arise in the group. It is less about solving a problem than observing the process of thinking together.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Examine collective thought patterns	10-40	90 min- multi-session	Undisturbed circle	Awareness of assumptions and meaning-making

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Frame the discipline. Introduce suspension of assumptions, inquiry, listening, and the absence of a predetermined decision target.	10-15 min	Orientation
2	Enter with a question. Offer a broad theme or initial question, then allow the dialogue to find its own center.	10-20 min	Opening
3	Observe thought in motion. Participants speak when moved, notice reactions, and hold assumptions where they can be examined collectively.	50-90 min	Dialogue
4	Reflect on the process. Without forcing conclusions, notice shifts in attention, recurring patterns, and questions for future dialogue.	15-25 min	Meta-dialogue

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not fill silence or convert the session into moderated turn-taking; explain that the practice improves over repeated meetings.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide preparatory notes, a quiet environment, permission to remain silent, and explicit support for participants unfamiliar with open-ended dialogue.

SOURCE NOTE Bohm, D. (1996). *On dialogue* (L. Nichol, Hrsg.). Routledge.



023 Socratic Seminar

Inquiry through a common text or artifact

A Socratic Seminar centers a shared text, image, case, or data set. Participants build understanding through open questions, evidence, and responsive listening rather than a sequence of answers from the chair.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Interpret evidence and question assumptions	8-30	45-90 min	Circle + shared text	Evidence-based interpretations and questions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare the common object. Select a rich, accessible text or artifact and provide time for annotation before the session.	Before	Preparation
2	Open with an interpretive question. Use a question that has more than one defensible response and requires evidence.	5 min	Opening
3	Build the inquiry. Participants cite the common object, question one another, connect ideas, and revise interpretations.	30-60 min	Seminar
4	Meta-reflect. Assess both the ideas and the quality of inquiry: whose evidence shaped the discussion and what remains unresolved?	10-20 min	Reflection

FACILITATOR FOCUS Ask fewer, better questions and resist rescuing the conversation with the facilitator's interpretation.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Distribute materials early, offer audio and plain-language versions, allow written contributions, and explain unfamiliar seminar norms.

SOURCE NOTE Rooted in Socratic questioning and seminar traditions; widely used in humanities and civic education.



024 Fishbowl

A small inner dialogue observed by a larger group

In a Fishbowl, a small inner circle discusses a question while an outer circle listens for content and process. Participants may remain in fixed roles or rotate through an open chair.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Make a focused conversation visible	15-300	40-90 min	Inner and outer circles	Observed dialogue plus wider reflection

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set the listening task. Explain the purpose, inner-circle question, outer-circle lens, and whether seats will rotate.	8-10 min	Briefing
2	Hold the inner dialogue. Four to six people converse while the outer group listens without side conversations.	15-30 min	Fishbowl
3	Rotate or reflect. Invite new voices through an open chair, or pause so observers can name patterns and missing perspectives.	10-25 min	Exchange
4	Integrate. Use pairs or plenary to connect observed ideas with participants' own contexts and next questions.	10-20 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Avoid turning the inner circle into a panel; choose participants for perspective diversity rather than status.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide microphones, sight-line alternatives, written observation prompts, optional non-entry, and a clear path for remote participants.

SOURCE NOTE Longstanding dialogic and conference format; no single origin claimed.



025 User Experience Fishbowl

Listen to experience before offering solutions

User Experience Fishbowl places people with direct experience in the inner circle while designers, leaders, or providers listen. The listeners then make sense of what they heard without immediately defending or fixing.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Understand the lived experience of a service or issue	15-100	35-75 min	Inner-circle users + outer listeners	Experience themes and grounded questions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Invite experience holders. Clarify the topic, consent, boundaries, and what kinds of questions are welcome.	Before/5 min	Preparation
2	Inner-circle exchange. Experience holders talk with one another about concrete moments, needs, and workarounds.	15-25 min	Fishbowl
3	Outer-circle sense-making. Listeners name what surprised them, what assumptions were challenged, and what they still need to understand.	10-20 min	Reflection
4	Respond and identify action. Experience holders may correct interpretations; the group identifies respectful next inquiries or changes.	10-20 min	Integration

FACILITATOR FOCUS Center experience without making individuals responsible for educating or representing an entire group.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Obtain informed consent, offer compensation where appropriate, allow pseudonymous input, and establish support if sensitive experiences arise.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



026 Human Library

Borrow a person, encounter a lived story

The Human Library uses a library metaphor: trained human “Books” share lived experience in conversations with “Readers.” The official methodology requires careful preparation, safeguarding, and respect for the people whose stories are involved.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Challenge stereotypes through dialogue	Variable; trained “Books” + Readers	60 min-half day	Reception + quiet conversation areas	Direct encounters and reflected assumptions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Partner and prepare. Work with the Human Library Organization or authorized guidance; recruit, brief, and support Books and librarians.	Weeks before	Preparation
2	Orient Readers. Explain borrowing, respectful questions, time, consent, and the right of a Book to decline any question.	10 min	Orientation
3	Hold conversations. Readers select a title and meet a Book in a timed, hosted exchange.	20-30 min each	Dialogue
4	Return and reflect. Close each borrowing respectfully and offer private or facilitated reflection on challenged assumptions.	10-20 min	Reflection

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not imitate the brand casually or treat people as exhibits; welfare, agency, training, and follow-up are central.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use accessible, private spaces; offer breaks, support persons, clear safeguarding, and alternatives for Books or Readers who withdraw.

SOURCE NOTE Human Library Organization, humanlibrary.org. The name and methodology are protected; consult the organization before use.



027 Story Circle

One prompt, many lived moments

Story Circle gives every participant an equal opportunity to tell a concise story in response to the same prompt. The first round is received without commentary; reflection follows only after all voices have been heard.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Reveal experience through short stories	5-12 per circle	40-90 min	Small circle	Story collection and shared themes

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Offer a story prompt. Ask for a specific moment, choice, encounter, or turning point rather than a general opinion.	5 min	Opening
2	Think before speaking. Give quiet time to select a story and decide personal boundaries.	3-5 min	Individual
3	Share around the circle. Each person has equal time; listeners do not interrupt, advise, or appropriate another person's story.	25-55 min	Round
4	Notice themes. Reflect on connections, differences, and questions while preserving ownership and confidentiality.	10-20 min	Reflection

FACILITATOR FOCUS Model a story with a clear scene and limit; intervene when participants generalize about another person's experience.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow passing, fictionalized or third-person stories, writing instead of speaking, content notes, and no recording by default.

SOURCE NOTE Draws on community storytelling, oral history, and restorative-circle traditions; no single origin claimed.



028 Listening Triads

Speaker, listener, and observer rotate

Listening Triads make the process of listening visible. In each round one person speaks, one listens and asks only clarifying questions, and one observes the listening before roles rotate.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Practice high-quality listening	Triads; any total	30-60 min	Quiet clusters of three	Insight plus listening feedback

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define the three roles. Explain speaker, listener, and observer; provide a concrete reflection question and observable listening behaviors.	5-8 min	Briefing
2	Round one. The speaker reflects; the listener paraphrases and asks clarifying questions; the observer notes the interaction.	7-12 min	Triad
3	Give micro-feedback. The observer names one effective behavior and one question, without rating personalities.	3 min	Feedback
4	Rotate twice. Repeat until everyone has held each role; close by identifying what supported being heard.	20-35 min	Rotation

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep observer feedback behavioral and specific; avoid turning it into amateur psychological interpretation.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide role cards, allow writing or audio recording for the speaker, use language-matched triads, and offer a pair version.

SOURCE NOTE Common communication-training and facilitation practice; no single origin claimed.



029 Talking Object Circle

One visible object protects one voice at a time

A Talking Object Circle uses an agreed object to indicate who has the floor. The object travels in sequence or is placed in the center for intentional speaking, reducing interruption and making silence legitimate.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Balance airtime and slow response	5-25	30-75 min	Circle	Complete round of contributions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Explain the object. Clarify how it moves, the right to pass, time expectations, and that holding it does not require speaking.	5 min	Briefing
2	First round. Each person responds briefly to the same question while others listen without reply.	10-25 min	Round
3	Second movement. Use a new prompt or place the object centrally so participants speak only when ready.	10-30 min	Dialogue
4	Close deliberately. Complete a final round or return the object to the center with one shared acknowledgment.	5-15 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Choose an object with no unexamined sacred or cultural meaning and avoid rigid ritual without context.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Make the object tactilely and visually accessible, provide a verbal cue online, and allow written or assisted contributions.

SOURCE NOTE Draws on diverse circle traditions. Hosts should avoid claiming or copying specific Indigenous ceremonial practices without relationship and permission.



030 Samoan Circle

A self-renewing inner conversation

A Samoan Circle begins with a small number of occupied inner chairs and at least one open place. Outer-circle participants enter when they have something to contribute and leave after speaking, allowing the conversation to renew itself.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Enable voluntary entry into a public dialogue	20-200	45-100 min	Inner chairs + outer circle	Emergent dialogue with changing speakers

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set the geometry. Arrange three to six inner chairs with one always empty; explain entry, exit, and listening expectations.	5-8 min	Briefing
2	Begin with invited voices. A small diverse group opens the question without delivering prepared statements.	10-15 min	Inner circle
3	Let participation flow. Outer participants take the empty chair; an existing speaker then returns to the outer circle.	20-50 min	Open dialogue
4	Harvest from both circles. Invite observers and speakers to name shifts, missing voices, and implications.	10-20 min	Plenary

FACILITATOR FOCUS Protect the empty chair and discourage repeated entry by the same confident participants.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use a digital queue or facilitator-assisted entry, provide microphones, accessible inner seating, and non-speaking contribution channels.

SOURCE NOTE Known as Samoan Circle in facilitation practice; origins are variably reported. Use the name with cultural humility and avoid claims of authenticity.



PART 04

Panels Reimagined

Keep expertise visible while changing who asks, responds, and frames the conversation.

Panels are useful when a topic genuinely benefits from contrasting expertise, public questioning, or accountable disagreement. They fail when every speaker delivers a second keynote, when status substitutes for perspective, or when audience questions arrive only in the final five minutes. The formats in this part redistribute time and agency without abandoning specialist contribution.

The ten formats in this part

031 Reverse Panel

032 Empty-Chair Panel

033 Ask Me Anything

034 Fireside Interview

035 Oxford-Style Debate

036 Structured Academic Controversy

037 Point-Counterpoint-Question

038 Audience-as-Panel

039 Myth-Busting Panel

040 Jury Panel

DESIGN LENS Design the panel as a conversation with a purpose, not as a row of biographies. Limit opening statements, diversify the framing question, and make audience thinking part of the session.



031 Reverse Panel

The audience speaks first; experts respond second

A Reverse Panel delays expert commentary until participants have surfaced experiences, questions, and assumptions. Panelists listen first, then respond to what is actually in the room rather than to a prewritten script.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Ground expert discussion in participant realities	30-300	45-80 min	Panel stage + audience clusters	Audience-framed expert response

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Frame the challenge. Offer one focused question and introduce panelists briefly without opening statements.	5-8 min	Opening
2	Audience works first. Pairs or tables identify experiences, tensions, and one question they want the panel to address.	10-15 min	Small groups
3	Panel listens and responds. A moderator clusters audience input; panelists respond to themes and to one another.	20-35 min	Panel dialogue
4	Return the final word. Audience groups name what shifted and what remains unanswered; panelists offer one next step each.	10-15 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Prevent panelists from answering every theme separately; invite connection, disagreement, and concise response.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Collect questions verbally and in writing, provide microphones and captions, and give reflection time before public contribution.

SOURCE NOTE Common participatory-panel adaptation; no single origin claimed.



032 Empty-Chair Panel

An open seat keeps the conversation permeable

An Empty-Chair Panel seats several invited contributors and leaves one chair open. Audience members may join for a focused contribution or question, then return the chair so another voice can enter.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Combine expert continuity with audience entry	25-300	45-90 min	Panel chairs including one empty seat	Dynamic expert-public dialogue

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Explain the open chair. Clarify how to enter, how long to stay, and whether the participant may question or join the dialogue.	5 min	Opening
2	Begin with a short panel exchange. Panelists address one common question with no individual mini-lectures.	12-20 min	Panel
3	Open the chair. Audience members rotate through the seat; the moderator protects relevance, brevity, and respectful challenge.	20-45 min	Open dialogue
4	Close across roles. Invite panelists and audience to name one implication or unresolved tension.	8-15 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep the chair genuinely open; do not fill it only with preselected “audience” contributors.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide an accessible chair and route, a remote-entry mechanism, a written queue, and a contribution option that does not require stage access.

SOURCE NOTE Adaptation of fishbowl and open-chair dialogue practices.



033 Ask Me Anything

Direct questions with transparent boundaries

Ask Me Anything creates a high-access question period with minimal prepared input. The guest states legitimate boundaries, participants submit and prioritize questions, and the host protects pace and candor.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Give participants direct access to a person or team	15-500	30-75 min	Stage, circle, or digital platform	Questions answered and boundaries clarified

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set scope and boundaries. The guest names the topic, relevant experience, confidentiality limits, and questions they cannot responsibly answer.	5-8 min	Opening
2	Collect questions. Participants submit questions by voice, card, or digital tool; allow anonymous input where appropriate.	5-10 min	Audience
3	Respond in rapid cycles. The host groups duplicates, alternates themes, and invites brief follow-up rather than long speeches.	20-45 min	Q&A
4	Close with resources. Name unanswered questions, provide reliable follow-up routes, and correct any provisional claims later.	5-12 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Select questions transparently and distinguish honest uncertainty from evasive non-answering.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use anonymous and advance submission, live captions, plain-language restatement, and safeguards against targeted harassment.

SOURCE NOTE Popularized through online communities and adapted widely for conferences; no single origin claimed.



034 Fireside Interview

One host, one guest, one unfolding story

A Fireside Interview replaces a formal speech with a prepared but responsive conversation. The host follows a narrative arc from context to turning points, tensions, learning, and implications.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Humanize expertise through narrative inquiry	20-1000+	30-60 min	Two chairs or accessible equivalent	Insightful story and practical lessons

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Open with relevance. Introduce the guest through the question they help the audience explore, not a full résumé.	3-5 min	Opening
2	Trace the story. Ask for concrete moments, decisions, surprises, and people who shaped the work.	15-25 min	Interview
3	Probe tensions. Move beyond success narrative to trade-offs, uncertainty, failure, and what the guest has changed their mind about.	10-15 min	Inquiry
4	Bring in the room. Use selected audience questions and close with one practical invitation or unresolved question.	8-15 min	Q&A/close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Prepare a question path but listen closely enough to abandon it when the more important story emerges.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Share themes in advance, avoid inaccessible stage furniture, caption the conversation, and do not press for personal disclosure.

SOURCE NOTE Longstanding public-interview and conference practice; often called a fireside chat.



035 Oxford-Style Debate

A motion, opposing cases, and measured opinion change

An Oxford-Style Debate organizes a clear motion, affirmative and negative teams, timed cases, rebuttals, audience questions, and votes before and after. The goal is to test argument quality, not to caricature opponents.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Test competing arguments in public	30-1000+	45-90 min	Two sides + audience voting	Clarified arguments and vote shift

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	State and vote on the motion. Define terms, disclose team roles, and record the audience's initial position including undecided.	5-8 min	Vote
2	Present opening cases. Each side offers a concise affirmative or negative case under equal conditions.	12-20 min	Debate
3	Rebut and question. Teams respond to one another and to moderated audience questions.	20-40 min	Exchange
4	Close and vote again. Each side summarizes; the audience votes and reflects on which arguments changed or complicated its view.	8-15 min	Vote/close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Choose a debatable motion without manufacturing false equivalence on established facts or human dignity.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Publish the motion early, offer multiple voting channels, caption all speech, and establish firm norms against dehumanizing rhetoric.

SOURCE NOTE Based on Oxford Union-style public debate and contemporary Oxford-style conference adaptations.



036 Structured Academic Controversy

Argue both sides before seeking synthesis

Structured Academic Controversy asks pairs to prepare opposing positions, present them, switch sides, and then seek a reasoned synthesis. Unlike competitive debate, success means understanding complexity and integrating evidence.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Understand a contested issue from multiple positions	Groups of 4; any total	50-100 min	Tables of four + evidence packs	Balanced synthesis or clarified disagreement

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare positions. Pairs review balanced evidence for assigned sides and identify the strongest case, uncertainties, and values involved.	15-25 min	Pairs
2	Present and question. Each pair presents while the other listens, paraphrases, and asks clarifying questions.	15-20 min	Group of 4
3	Reverse perspectives. Pairs switch sides and argue the position they previously opposed as fairly as possible.	10-20 min	Role reversal
4	Seek synthesis. Drop assigned roles and create a joint statement of agreement, conditions, evidence needs, and remaining disagreement.	15-25 min	Consensus

FACILITATOR FOCUS Curate genuinely balanced evidence and assess charitable understanding, not rhetorical victory.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide materials in advance and accessible formats, allow written advocacy, and avoid topics that require participants to debate their own humanity.

SOURCE NOTE Developed by David W. Johnson and Roger T. Johnson within cooperative learning; see their work on constructive controversy.



037 Point-Counterpoint-Question

Short claims, direct response, then inquiry

This compact format prevents paired speakers from giving parallel lectures. Each makes one claim, responds directly to the other, and then enters a moderator-led inquiry focused on evidence and implications.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Clarify a disagreement efficiently	20-300	35-65 min	Two speakers + moderator	Defined agreements, differences, and questions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Name the precise disagreement. The moderator states one question and asks each speaker to define where they believe the difference lies.	5 min	Opening
2	Point and counterpoint. Each speaker has equal time for one central claim and the strongest supporting evidence.	10-14 min	Statements
3	Direct response. Each addresses the other's argument, naming agreement before critique.	8-12 min	Response
4	Question the difference. Moderator and audience explore assumptions, consequences, and what evidence could change either view.	12-30 min	Inquiry

FACILITATOR FOCUS Interrupt topic drift and require speakers to answer the argument actually made, not a weaker substitute.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide transcripts or key claims in writing, captions, advance questions, and a way to participate without adversarial language.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial format developed for this collection.



038 Audience-as-Panel

Several participant voices replace the expert row

Audience-as-Panel assumes that expertise is distributed. Participants first identify relevant experience; a moderator then convenes several short, rotating micro-panels drawn from the room.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Surface distributed expertise in the room	30-300	40-80 min	Rotating participant seats	Diverse experience-based perspectives

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Map experience. Invite participants to indicate relevant roles, contexts, or experiences without ranking themselves by status.	5-10 min	Audience
2	Form micro-panels. Select three to five complementary voices for one question; explain that no one represents an entire group.	5 min	Set-up
3	Run short rounds. Each micro-panel converses for eight to twelve minutes, then yields to a new combination and question.	20-40 min	Panels
4	Synthesize the mosaic. Tables identify patterns, contradictions, and perspectives still absent from the room.	10-20 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Select for perspective diversity transparently and avoid repeatedly elevating the fastest volunteers.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow written or remote panel contributions, disclose selection criteria, use accessible seating, and never compel identity disclosure.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial format developed for this collection.



039 Myth-Busting Panel

Examine claims, evidence, and uncertainty

A Myth-Busting Panel begins with commonly repeated claims submitted by participants. Panelists examine what is false, partly true, context-dependent, or not yet known, and show how evidence quality shapes the answer.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Correct misconceptions without shaming	30-500	45-80 min	Panel + claim board	Evidence map and corrected claims

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Collect claims. Gather concise statements before the session and distinguish genuine questions from harmful provocations.	Before/5 min	Input
2	Classify carefully. For each claim, panelists identify the evidence base, scope, uncertainty, and why the claim is attractive.	20-35 min	Panel
3	Interrogate the evidence. Audience questions focus on sources, definitions, mechanisms, and boundary conditions.	10-20 min	Q&A
4	Publish corrected formulations. End with precise replacement statements and links to trustworthy evidence.	8-15 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Avoid theatrical “gotcha” language; correcting misinformation works best when dignity and uncertainty are preserved.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide sources in accessible form, accept anonymous questions, flag distressing claims, and moderate discriminatory misinformation firmly.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial format drawing on evidence communication and misconception-correction practice.



040 Jury Panel

Hear evidence, deliberate criteria, issue a reasoned finding

A Jury Panel separates evidence presentation from deliberation. A participant jury hears contrasting cases, questions witnesses, applies agreed criteria, and publishes a reasoned recommendation rather than a popularity vote.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Evaluate options against explicit criteria	20-200	60-120 min	Evidence presenters + participant jury	Reasoned recommendation with minority view

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Agree the charge and criteria. State the decision question, what is and is not in scope, and the standards the jury will apply.	10-15 min	Briefing
2	Hear concise evidence. Presenters make comparable cases and disclose uncertainty, interests, and evidence limits.	20-35 min	Evidence
3	Question and deliberate. The jury asks clarifying questions, weighs trade-offs, and records both majority and minority reasoning.	20-45 min	Deliberation
4	Issue the finding. Share the recommendation, conditions, dissenting view, and what further information could change it.	10-20 min	Report

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep criteria visible and prevent charismatic presentation from substituting for evidence.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Diversify jury selection, provide accessible evidence packs, allow written questioning, and avoid simulated adjudication of personal rights or trauma.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial adaptation inspired by citizens' juries and deliberative-evaluation practice.

PART 05



Peer Consultation

Turn colleagues into a temporary thinking partnership around a real challenge.

Peer-consultation formats help a person or team think more clearly without handing ownership to external experts. The most productive protocols separate presentation, clarifying questions, consultation, and reflection. This prevents premature advice and gives the case holder space to listen without defending every detail.

The ten formats in this part

041 Case Clinic

042 Peer Assist

043 Troika Consulting

044 Wise Crowds

045 Consultancy Protocol

046 Critical Friends Protocol

047 Action Learning Set

048 Reflecting Team

049 Dilemma Clinic

050 Mastermind Round

DESIGN LENS A real case, a precise question, and disciplined roles matter more than the amount of advice. The case holder remains free to accept, adapt, or reject every suggestion.



041 Case Clinic

Peer coaching for an immediate leadership challenge

In a Case Clinic, one person presents an urgent leadership challenge while peers listen from different levels: facts, relationships, system dynamics, and emerging possibility. The process includes generative silence and reflective feedback.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Reframe a live leadership case	Groups of 4-5	60-75 min	Quiet small-group space	New perspectives and next steps

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Present the case. The case giver describes the situation, stakeholders, intention, and help sought; peers listen without interruption.	10-15 min	Case
2	Clarify and become still. Peers ask factual questions, then the group pauses to notice images, feelings, and essential questions.	8-12 min	Inquiry
3	Offer reflections. Coaches share observations, metaphors, possibilities, and questions while the case giver listens silently.	15-20 min	Consultation
4	Integrate. The case giver reflects aloud, names what resonated, and identifies one or two next steps.	10-15 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Protect the reflective quality; do not let the consultation collapse into rapid-fire problem solving.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Establish confidentiality, permit a fictionalized case, provide the protocol in advance, and allow written reflection or a support person.

SOURCE NOTE Presencing Institute Case Clinic, part of Theory U; see presencing.org tools and u-school.org/caseclinic.



042 Peer Assist

Learn from colleagues before acting

A Peer Assist allows a team facing a new task to learn from people with relevant experience before decisions harden. The host presents context and questions; peers share stories, cautions, resources, and contacts.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Bring outside experience into a current project	6-12	60-120 min	One host team + invited peers	Practical lessons and connections

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define the request. The host team states the challenge, what has already been tried, constraints, and the specific help needed.	10-15 min	Host
2	Ask clarifying questions. Peers seek context without offering solutions or turning the session into an audit.	10-15 min	Inquiry
3	Share relevant experience. Peers offer examples, failures, principles, tools, and people the team should consult.	25-50 min	Exchange
4	Host team synthesizes. The team says what it heard, what it may test, and what further learning it needs.	10-20 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Invite peers for relevant experience and difference, not only seniority or prestige.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Share a short brief in advance, enable remote expertise, caption contributions, and protect confidential or proprietary information.

SOURCE NOTE Knowledge-management practice popularized by BP and described by Collison & Parcell; also used in NHS learning toolkits.



043 Troika Consulting

Three people, three fast consultations

Troika Consulting gives every participant a turn as client and consultant. The client states a challenge, then turns away or listens silently while two consultants discuss possible help.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Receive practical peer coaching	Triads; any total	30 min	Triads with some distance	Advice and renewed agency

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare the challenge. Each person identifies a real issue, desired next step, and the kind of help they need.	4 min	Individual
2	Client presents. One person describes the challenge while the consultants listen, then asks one clarifying question each.	3 min	Triad
3	Consultants confer. The client turns away or remains silent while the two consultants generate advice, questions, and possibilities.	5 min	Consultation
4	Client responds and rotate. The client names what was useful; repeat until all three have been client.	18 min	Rotation

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep clients silent during consultation so they can listen rather than defend or explain.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer a written version, visible timer, language-matched triads, and a choice not to disclose sensitive cases.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



044 Wise Crowds

One client receives the wisdom of a small crowd

Wise Crowds rotates the client role through a small group. After a brief case and clarifying questions, the client turns away while the consultants discuss what they see and what might help.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Develop helping and inquiry skills	Groups of 5-6	45-75 min	Small circles	Client insight and peer learning

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Form a consulting circle. Create groups of five or six and explain that everyone will be both client and consultant.	5 min	Set-up
2	Present and clarify. The client describes the challenge and responds only to factual or clarifying questions.	5 min	Case
3	Crowd consults. The client listens silently while peers discuss patterns, questions, possibilities, and cautions.	8 min	Consultation
4	Reflect and rotate. The client names takeaways; repeat with the next client as time allows.	30-55 min	Rotation

FACILITATOR FOCUS Encourage consultants to inquire and make offerings, not diagnose the client or prescribe a single answer.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use confidentiality agreements, permit hypothetical cases, provide written prompts, and design sufficient breaks for repeated rounds.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



045 Consultancy Protocol

A structured dilemma conversation

The Consultancy Protocol helps a presenter examine a dilemma through clarifying and probing questions, a consultant conversation heard in silence, and a final reflection. It is especially useful for problems with no obvious technical fix.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Think deeply about a persistent dilemma	6-12	45-60 min	Quiet group space	Reframed dilemma and possible approaches

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Present the dilemma. Describe context, why the issue matters, prior attempts, and one focused question for the group.	8-10 min	Presentation
2	Clarify and probe. Consultants first ask factual questions, then questions that help the presenter think rather than defend.	10-12 min	Inquiry
3	Consult while presenter listens. Discuss the dilemma, alternative frames, assumptions, and possible approaches in the third person.	12-15 min	Consultation
4	Presenter reflects. Name what was heard, what shifted, and what may be tried; the group briefly debriefs the process.	10-15 min	Reflection

FACILITATOR FOCUS Distinguish probing questions from advice disguised as a question and protect the presenter's silent listening time.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use a trained facilitator, explicit confidentiality, a pass option, and a less personal case when trust is still developing.

SOURCE NOTE Consultancy Protocol associated with Gene Thompson-Grove and the National School Reform Faculty; consult nsrfharmony.org for current materials.



046 Critical Friends Protocol

Warm and cool feedback on work in progress

A Critical Friends Protocol combines appreciation, questions, and constructive challenge. The presenter shares work and a feedback request; peers respond to the request rather than redesigning the work according to their own preferences.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Improve a draft, design, or practice	4-10	40-75 min	Small group + shared artifact	Specific feedback and revision priorities

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Share the work and request. The presenter gives context and names the kind of feedback that would be most useful.	8-12 min	Presentation
2	Ask clarifying questions. Peers establish what the work is intended to do, for whom, and under what constraints.	5-8 min	Inquiry
3	Offer warm and cool feedback. Name strengths to preserve, questions, tensions, and suggestions linked to the stated purpose.	15-25 min	Feedback
4	Presenter reflects. The presenter identifies revision priorities and may correct misunderstandings without debating every point.	8-12 min	Reflection

FACILITATOR FOCUS Anchor feedback in purpose, evidence, and the presenter's request; avoid vague praise and taste-based criticism.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Share artifacts in accessible formats, allow asynchronous annotation, explain feedback norms, and protect intellectual ownership.

SOURCE NOTE Critical Friends Group and protocol traditions associated with the National School Reform Faculty; consult official resources and trademark guidance.



047 Action Learning Set

Questions before advice, action before the next meeting

An Action Learning Set is a recurring peer group in which one member brings a real challenge. Others primarily ask questions that deepen thinking; the presenter then chooses an action and reports back at a later meeting.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Support sustained problem solving	5-8	60-120 min recurring	Stable confidential group	Action commitment and later accountability

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Contract the set. Agree confidentiality, attendance, challenge criteria, time discipline, and the role of questioning.	First meeting	Set-up
2	Presenter brings a case. Describe the challenge and desired help; peers listen for assumptions, stakeholders, and agency.	10-15 min	Case
3	Question for insight. Members ask open, concise questions; advice is delayed or offered only with permission.	25-45 min	Inquiry
4	Commit and review. The presenter names an action; the next meeting begins with what happened and what was learned.	10-20 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Coach members to ask questions that expand agency rather than lead toward their preferred answer.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use stable membership, consent-based case depth, accessible scheduling, and an alternative route when confidentiality cannot be assured.

SOURCE NOTE Rooted in Reg Revans's action-learning tradition; adapted here as a conference series or post-conference cohort.



048 Reflecting Team

A case holder listens to a respectful observer conversation

In a Reflecting Team, an interviewer speaks with the case holder while a small group listens. The case holder then listens to the team's tentative reflections before responding to what resonated.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Hear alternative interpretations without debate	5-10	40-70 min	Case pair + reflecting team	New language and perspectives

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Interview the case holder. Explore context, intentions, relationships, and exceptions while the reflecting team listens silently.	15-20 min	Interview
2	Team reflects tentatively. Observers discuss images, questions, strengths, and possibilities using non-diagnostic language.	10-15 min	Reflection
3	Case holder responds. The case holder identifies useful ideas, corrects assumptions, and names what they want to explore.	8-12 min	Response
4	Close and debrief. Agree any next step and reflect briefly on the process and emotional impact.	5-10 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Use “I wondered...” and “I was struck by...” rather than authoritative interpretations about the person.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Do not use as therapy at a conference; offer fictionalized cases, consent, confidentiality, support, and a right to stop.

SOURCE NOTE Adapted from systemic family-therapy reflecting-team practice associated with Tom Andersen; use within facilitator competence.



049 Dilemma Clinic

A compact protocol for a stuck professional situation

Dilemma Clinic is a compact consultation for conference breakouts. It retains the discipline of case protocols while fitting a shorter time slot and ending with small, testable experiments.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Unstick a bounded dilemma	4-7	35-55 min	Small table	Sharper dilemma and experiments

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	State the dilemma. Use three minutes: context, why stuck, what has been tried, and one help question.	3 min	Case
2	Ask only clarifying questions. Establish facts, constraints, actors, and the presenter's degree of influence.	6-8 min	Inquiry
3	Generate alternative frames. Peers offer different ways to understand the dilemma and possible low-risk experiments.	12-18 min	Consultation
4	Choose experiments. The presenter selects one immediate action, one conversation, and one signal that would show movement.	8-12 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep the dilemma bounded enough for the time and distinguish experiments from grand solutions.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Permit anonymized cases, written presentation, a neutral facilitator, and no recording of case details.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial synthesis drawing on consultancy, case-clinic, and action-learning protocols.



050 Mastermind Round

Reciprocal advice with a disciplined clock

A Mastermind Round gives each participant a fixed “hot-seat” period to share a goal or obstacle, receive questions and advice, and state a commitment. The format works best among peers with a shared field but varied experience.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Exchange practical support among equals	4-8	45-90 min	Stable small group	Individual advice lists and commitments

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set mutual expectations. Agree confidentiality, equal time, directness, and that the person in the hot seat owns all decisions.	5-8 min	Set-up
2	State the focus. The hot-seat participant names a goal, current obstacle, and specific request for the group.	3-5 min	Case
3	Question and advise. Peers ask concise questions, then offer examples, contacts, resources, and cautions.	7-12 min	Consultation
4	Commit and rotate. The participant states one next action; repeat until all members have had equal time.	30-65 min	Rotation

FACILITATOR FOCUS Enforce equal time and prevent the highest-status member from becoming the permanent expert.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide advance prompts, written advice, break options, language support, and a right to bring a non-sensitive goal.

SOURCE NOTE Peer “mastermind” groups are commonly associated with Napoleon Hill and later professional-development practice; this timed version is a conference adaptation.

PART 06



Visual & Spatial Exchange

Put knowledge into the room so that participants can inspect, connect, and annotate it.

Visual and spatial formats distribute attention across posters, stations, data displays, timelines, maps, and demonstrations. They work well when a conference has many contributions or when comparison matters more than sequential listening. The central design question is how participants will move from looking to interpreting and from interpreting to a useful harvest.

The ten formats in this part

051 Gallery Walk

052 Poster Walk

053 PICO Session

054 Learning Stations

055 Shift & Share

056 Marketplace of Ideas

057 Open Studio Critique

058 Interactive Timeline

059 Concept Mapping Wall

060 Data Walk

DESIGN LENS Make the visual field legible: limit density, clarify the viewing task, provide enough dwell time, and offer non-visual equivalents.



051 Gallery Walk

Move through visible work and leave useful traces

A Gallery Walk places work around the room and invites participants to circulate, examine, discuss, and annotate. The host gives a specific viewing lens so the activity becomes inquiry rather than browsing.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Compare multiple ideas or products	12-200	30-75 min	Wall displays with circulation space	Annotations, patterns, and selected ideas

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare the gallery. Display readable artifacts with titles, context, and one question for visitors.	Before	Set-up
2	Orient the viewers. Explain route, timing, annotation method, and whether creators will be present.	5 min	Briefing
3	Walk, discuss, annotate. Small groups move through displays, leaving questions, connections, appreciations, or suggestions.	20-45 min	Gallery
4	Harvest across exhibits. Identify recurring ideas, striking differences, and items requiring follow-up.	10-20 min	Plenary

FACILITATOR FOCUS Give a purposeful annotation prompt and prevent the first comments from anchoring everyone else.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use accessible height and spacing, large print, audio descriptions, digital copies, seating, and a non-circulating viewing station.

SOURCE NOTE Widely used in education and facilitation; sometimes associated with Bowman's gallery-walk practice.



052 Poster Walk

Structured exchange around research posters

A Poster Walk adds structured viewing rounds and discussion prompts to the conventional poster session. Participants encounter a manageable subset deeply before free exploration.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Discuss many research projects efficiently	20-500+	45-120 min	Poster area	Author feedback and research connections

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Create themed routes. Group posters into coherent clusters and publish a route or starting point for each small group.	Before	Design
2	Run concise author pitches. At each stop, the author gives the question, method, key finding, and one desired discussion point.	2-4 min each	Pitch
3	Discuss at the poster. Visitors ask questions, compare related work, and leave feedback or contact interest.	5-8 min each	Dialogue
4	Open the floor. End with free browsing and a visible place to record cross-poster themes and collaborations.	15-30 min	Open

FACILITATOR FOCUS Limit pitches ruthlessly so discussion remains the center of the format.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Set accessible poster dimensions and heights, provide digital and text-only versions, seating, captions for video, and quiet periods.

SOURCE NOTE Established research-conference practice; this guided-route version is an editorial enhancement.



053 PICO Session

Two-minute overview followed by interactive detail

PICO - Presenting Interactive Content - combines a very short plenary introduction to each contribution with a longer interactive discussion at screens or stations.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Combine rapid overview with deep author interaction	20-300	45-100 min	Plenary screen + interactive displays	Research overview and targeted discussion

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare concise overviews. Each presenter distills the problem, contribution, and invitation into approximately two minutes.	Before	Preparation
2	Run the overview sequence. Presentations follow rapidly with strict timekeeping and consistent transition cues.	15-30 min	Plenary
3	Move to interactive displays. Authors open fuller material at assigned screens or stations; participants choose conversations.	20-50 min	Interaction
4	Close the session. The chair names cross-cutting themes and directs participants to persistent digital materials.	5-10 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Treat the plenary pitch as navigation to discussion, not as a compressed full paper.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide accessible digital materials, captions, keyboard navigation, text alternatives, seating, and remote interaction.

SOURCE NOTE European Geosciences Union PICO format; consult current presenter guidance at egu.eu before using the name or exact rules.



054 Learning Stations

Different tasks at different places

Learning Stations divide a theme into complementary tasks such as analysis, demonstration, practice, discussion, and reflection. Groups rotate according to a clear schedule or choose a route.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Explore a topic through varied activities	12-120	45-120 min	Multiple task stations	Multi-modal learning record

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Design complementary stations. Give each station a distinct function and a self-explanatory task that fits the available time.	Before	Design
2	Brief routes and roles. Explain rotation, group size, required versus optional stations, and how work will be recorded.	5-10 min	Briefing
3	Rotate through tasks. Groups complete each activity, building on visible traces or carrying a learning passport.	30-80 min	Stations
4	Integrate the experience. Participants connect learning across stations and identify one application or remaining gap.	10-25 min	Synthesis

FACILITATOR FOCUS Avoid ten miniature lectures; vary cognitive demand and ensure stations are genuinely interdependent or meaningfully selectable.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Create a no-rotation pathway, accessible instructions and materials, flexible timing, sensory information, and staffed support.

SOURCE NOTE Longstanding station-learning practice in education and training; adapted here for conferences.



055 Shift & Share

Several innovations demonstrated in parallel

Shift & Share lets several practitioners demonstrate an innovation simultaneously while participant groups rotate. Repeated delivery allows hosts to improve the demonstration and visitors to compare practices.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Spread practices rapidly across a large group	20-500+	45-90 min	Multiple demonstration stations	Exposure to several practices and contacts

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Select demonstrations. Choose concrete practices that can be shown, experienced, or examined in a short repeatable cycle.	Before	Design
2	Brief station hosts. Use a common rhythm: context, demonstration, participant interaction, and one transfer question.	10 min	Preparation
3	Shift through stations. Groups rotate on a visible signal and experience several demonstrations.	25-60 min	Rounds
4	Share transfer ideas. Participants compare what could be adopted, adapted, combined, or explored further.	10-20 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Select demonstrations for relevance and transferability, not only novelty or polished presentation.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer a stationary group with traveling demonstrations, accessible media, quiet stations, and materials available afterward.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



056 Marketplace of Ideas

Browse, question, and join emerging proposals

A Marketplace of Ideas gives proposal owners a small stall, poster, or table. Participants browse, ask questions, offer resources, and signal which ideas they want to help develop.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Match ideas with contributors and resources	30-500	45-100 min	Idea stalls or boards	Improved proposals and new teams

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare concise stalls. Each idea states the need, proposed value, current stage, unanswered question, and help sought.	Before	Preparation
2	Open with micro-pitches. Owners give a brief invitation so participants can choose where to begin.	8-15 min	Pitches
3	Browse and contribute. Visitors move among stalls, adding questions, offers, cautions, and connections.	25-50 min	Marketplace
4	Form next-step groups. Owners summarize what changed and invite voluntary follow-up around selected ideas.	10-20 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Design for contribution rather than popularity; low-visibility ideas need equitable locations and facilitation.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide digital stalls, accessible table height, clear audio conditions, anonymous offers, and a non-competitive participation route.

SOURCE NOTE Common innovation-marketplace and large-group facilitation practice; no single origin claimed.



057 Open Studio Critique

Show unfinished work and think with visitors

Open Studio Critique invites creators to show unfinished work, articulate their intention, and receive structured observation and questions before suggestions. Several studios may operate in parallel.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Improve creative or design work in progress	6-40	45-100 min	Displayed work + critique zones	Revision questions and design choices

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Frame the work and request. The creator names audience, intention, current uncertainty, and the kind of response needed.	5-8 min	Presentation
2	Visitors observe first. Participants describe what they notice and how they experience the work, without evaluation.	8-12 min	Observation
3	Ask and respond. Clarifying and interpretive questions help the creator see assumptions and possibilities.	10-20 min	Inquiry
4	Offer options and close. Visitors suggest alternatives; the creator names revisions to explore while retaining ownership.	10-20 min	Feedback

FACILITATOR FOCUS Separate observation, interpretation, and advice; do not reward clever criticism over useful attention.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide tactile, audio, captioned, or text equivalents; clarify intellectual-property rules and allow creators to limit recording.

SOURCE NOTE Adapted from art, architecture, design, and writing-studio critique traditions.



058 Interactive Timeline

Build a shared history in the room

An Interactive Timeline invites participants to place events, personal experiences, contextual shifts, and future markers along a common line. The resulting visual reveals different memories and causal stories.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Connect events, experiences, and turning points	10-200	40-100 min	Long wall or digital timeline	Collective chronology and patterns

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define scale and lanes. Choose the period and categories such as events, decisions, emotions, evidence, and external context.	5-10 min	Briefing
2	Add individual entries. Participants place concise notes, sources, or images at relevant points.	10-20 min	Individual
3	Read and annotate. Small groups notice clusters, gaps, competing accounts, and turning points.	15-30 min	Gallery
4	Interpret together. Identify patterns, contested memories, and implications for the present or future.	10-25 min	Plenary

FACILITATOR FOCUS Distinguish documented events from remembered interpretations without devaluing either.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide digital and non-visual versions, anonymous entries, accessible wall height, and sensitivity around traumatic histories.

SOURCE NOTE Common visual-facilitation and organizational-history practice; no single origin claimed.



059 Concept Mapping Wall

Connect ideas, evidence, actors, and relationships

A Concept Mapping Wall turns contributions into a visible network of concepts and labeled relationships. Participants add nodes, connect them, and test whether the map explains the issue well enough to guide inquiry or action.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Build a shared model of a complex topic	8-100	45-120 min	Large wall or digital canvas	Collective concept map

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Seed the map. Place the central question and a few neutral categories; define how links should be labeled.	5-10 min	Set-up
2	Add concepts. Individuals contribute evidence, actors, values, processes, barriers, and outcomes on separate notes.	10-20 min	Individual
3	Connect and challenge. Groups arrange nodes, label relationships, identify loops, and mark uncertainty or disagreement.	20-50 min	Mapping
4	Test the model. Ask what the map explains, omits, oversimplifies, and suggests should be investigated next.	10-25 min	Review

FACILITATOR FOCUS Require relationship labels; proximity without meaning produces a collage rather than a map.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use a screen-reader-compatible digital version, high-contrast notes, verbal descriptions, and roles that do not require standing or handwriting.

SOURCE NOTE Draws on concept mapping associated with Joseph Novak and wider visual-facilitation practice.



060 Data Walk

Interpret evidence collaboratively before deciding

A Data Walk displays selected data around the room and asks small groups to observe, interpret, question, and connect findings. It creates space for contextual knowledge alongside statistical evidence.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Make sense of multiple data displays	12-100	45-90 min	Data posters or dashboards	Interpretations, questions, and action implications

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Curate the data. Use readable displays with sources, definitions, denominators, uncertainty, and contextual notes.	Before	Preparation
2	Observe without explaining. Participants record what they notice, including patterns, outliers, and questions about representation.	10-20 min	Walk
3	Interpret in context. Groups discuss possible explanations, lived experience, missing data, and risks of overclaiming.	15-30 min	Small groups
4	Identify implications. Name what the evidence supports, what it does not, and what action or further inquiry is warranted.	10-25 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Avoid using the walk to persuade participants toward a predetermined conclusion; make uncertainty visible.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide accessible tables and text alternatives, color-independent graphics, data in advance, and support for statistical literacy.

SOURCE NOTE Used in education, public health, and community data engagement; no single origin claimed.

PART 07



Short-Form Sharing & Storytelling

Use productive constraints to make ideas memorable and leave time for exchange.

Short-form presentations reward selection, rehearsal, and narrative clarity. They are not simply long talks cut off early. The strongest formats make the constraint visible, keep transitions smooth, and pair presentation with a route for questions, contact, or deeper exploration. Branded formats should be used in accordance with current official rules.

The ten formats in this part

061 Speed Geeking

062 Lightning Talks

063 Ignite Talks

064 PechaKucha 20x20

065 Three-Minute Research Pitch

066 Speakers' Corner

067 Collective Story Harvest

068 Story Slam

069 Learning from Failure

070 Demo Jam

DESIGN LENS Protect preparation quality and transition rhythm. A short talk can be cognitively dense; build in pauses, captions, and persistent materials.



061 Speed Geeking

Several rapid demonstrations in parallel

Speed Geeking places several presenters at stations while participant groups rotate through short, repeatable demonstrations. It combines the pace of speed dating with the concreteness of a live demo.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Sample tools, projects, or methods quickly	20-200	40-80 min	Parallel demo stations	Broad exposure and follow-up choices

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare repeatable demos. Each host designs a concise explanation, visible example, and one interaction that fits the cycle.	Before	Preparation
2	Form rotation groups. Assign starting stations and explain the signal, route, and number of rounds.	5 min	Briefing
3	Run rapid cycles. Hosts demonstrate; visitors ask one or two questions; groups rotate on time.	25-55 min	Stations
4	Choose deeper follow-up. Open a final period for participants to revisit one station or connect digitally.	10-20 min	Open

FACILITATOR FOCUS Select demonstrations that can be understood experientially; avoid repeating mini-lectures at high speed.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use a stationary group, accessible stations, captions, headsets or quiet zones, and digital demos for remote participants.

SOURCE NOTE Longstanding educational-technology and conference practice; sometimes called speed demos.



062 Lightning Talks

Many concise ideas in one energetic sequence

Lightning Talks are tightly timed presentations, usually between three and ten minutes, grouped around a theme. Their value lies in breadth, surprise, and a clear invitation to continue the conversation elsewhere.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Showcase breadth and spark follow-up	Any audience	3-10 min each	Stage + reliable timing	Idea awareness and contact points

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set one common brief. Specify length, audience, required elements, slide limits, and how presenters should invite follow-up.	Before	Preparation
2	Rehearse transitions. Test files, pronunciations, accessibility, and the exact handover between speakers.	Before	Technical
3	Run the sequence. Keep time visibly and consistently; avoid Q&A after every talk.	20-60 min	Presentations
4	Open connection space. Use a shared question board, speaker tables, or themed discussion immediately afterward.	15-30 min	Exchange

FACILITATOR FOCUS Curate the sequence for intellectual rhythm and diversity, not merely submission order.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Require captions and accessible slides, provide transcripts, announce sensory conditions, and schedule processing breaks.

SOURCE NOTE Established technology and academic-conference practice; no single origin claimed.



063 Ignite Talks

Twenty slides, fifteen seconds each

An Ignite Talk uses exactly twenty slides that auto-advance every fifteen seconds, producing a five-minute presentation. The constraint encourages rehearsal, visual storytelling, and ruthless focus.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Communicate one idea with pace and visual discipline	Any audience	5 min each	Stage + auto-advance slides	Memorable five-minute stories

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Choose one through-line. Build the talk around one idea, story, or question rather than a compressed report.	Before	Design
2	Create twenty visual beats. Use image-centered slides and script transitions that work with automatic advance.	Before	Preparation
3	Rehearse with the timer. Practice aloud repeatedly and prepare a recovery strategy if a phrase or slide is missed.	Before	Rehearsal
4	Present and connect. Run the five-minute talk without interruption; offer questions in a later cluster or speaker zone.	5+ min	Presentation

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not relax the timing for some speakers and enforce it for others; the shared constraint is the format.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide captions or transcript, describe essential visuals, reduce flashing or motion, and allow an equivalent accessible format when needed.

SOURCE NOTE Ignite Talks: 20 slides x 15 seconds = 5 minutes. Consult current official guidance at ignitetalks.io.



064 PechaKucha 20x20

Twenty images, twenty seconds each

PechaKucha 20x20 uses twenty images, each shown for twenty seconds and advanced automatically. The 400-second structure favors a clear narrative arc and visual economy.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Tell a visually driven story concisely	Any audience	6 min 40 sec each	Stage + auto-advance slides	Focused visual narratives

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Shape a narrative arc. Choose a beginning, development, turning point, and ending that can live in twenty visual moments.	Before	Design
2	Use images, not text walls. Make each slide legible in seconds and ensure visuals add meaning rather than decoration.	Before	Preparation
3	Rehearse exact pacing. Practice until words and images support one another without sounding memorized or rushed.	Before	Rehearsal
4	Present and extend. Deliver exactly 6:40; move questions and networking to a subsequent exchange format.	6:40+	Presentation

FACILITATOR FOCUS Use the name and event model only in accordance with current PechaKucha guidance and permissions.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide transcript/captions, verbalize essential visuals, avoid rapid sensory overload, and offer an accessibility-equivalent presentation route.

SOURCE NOTE PechaKucha 20x20 was created by Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham. Consult pechakucha.com for official format and brand guidance.



065 Three-Minute Research Pitch

Explain research to a non-specialist audience

This research pitch gives presenters three minutes to explain the problem, approach, key contribution, and why it matters to a non-specialist audience. It is inspired by Three Minute Thesis but is not an official competition unless licensed and run under its rules.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Make research purpose and significance accessible	Any audience	3 min each	Stage + optional single slide	Clear research narratives

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Identify the human question. Begin with the problem or curiosity the research addresses, not with a literature-review inventory.	Before	Design
2	Choose essential evidence. Select only the method and finding needed for the audience to understand the contribution.	Before	Preparation
3	Rehearse for clarity. Remove jargon, define necessary terms, and practice within three minutes without rushing.	Before	Rehearsal
4	Pitch and discuss later. Run a sequence of pitches, then open themed tables or poster conversations.	3+ min	Presentation

FACILITATOR FOCUS Judge comprehensibility and intellectual integrity, not theatricality alone.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Permit captioned prerecorded delivery, accessible static visuals, transcripts, and reasonable adjustments to competition-like timing.

SOURCE NOTE Inspired by the University of Queensland's Three Minute Thesis (3MT®). Official competitions must follow current UQ rules and licensing.



066 Speakers' Corner

Open-mic contributions within clear boundaries

A conference Speakers' Corner offers timed open-mic slots for participants to share an idea, question, call, or response. Light curation and firm conduct rules prevent the format from becoming a queue of unbounded speeches.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Let participants voice ideas not on the program	20-300	30-75 min	Visible open-mic zone	Participant statements and invitations

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Publish the invitation. Define eligible topics, length, conduct rules, and how slots will be allocated.	Before	Set-up
2	Register speakers. Use advance sign-up plus a limited number of on-site slots; support concise preparation.	5-10 min	Registration
3	Run timed contributions. Each speaker receives equal time and a visible end signal; the host links related contributions.	20-50 min	Open mic
4	Create response routes. Direct questions, offers, and follow-up to a board, table, or scheduled conversation.	10-15 min	Connection

FACILITATOR FOCUS Enforce content and time boundaries consistently while preserving genuine openness.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer written, signed, audio, and remote contributions; provide moderation against harassment and avoid inaccessible raised platforms.

SOURCE NOTE Inspired by public speakers' corner traditions; this bounded conference version is an editorial adaptation.



067 Collective Story Harvest

Listen to one story through several lenses

Collective Story Harvest assigns listeners different lenses - such as turning points, relationships, leadership, systems, principles, or questions - while a practitioner tells a substantial story. The group then harvests what each lens revealed.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Extract learning from a rich practice story	12-100	60-120 min	Storyteller + listening groups	Multi-lens learning harvest

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Choose a learning-rich story. Invite a storyteller with a real journey containing uncertainty, change, and consequence.	Before	Preparation
2	Assign listening lenses. Small groups listen for distinct dimensions and know how they will capture them.	8-12 min	Briefing
3	Hear the full story. The storyteller speaks without frequent interruption; listeners take notes through their lens.	20-35 min	Story
4	Harvest and respond. Lens groups share patterns; the storyteller adds reflection and corrects misunderstandings.	25-50 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Select lenses that fit the learning purpose and preserve the integrity of the story rather than dissecting the storyteller.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Obtain recording consent, provide content notes, allow non-personal stories, caption the story, and support written/visual harvesting.

SOURCE NOTE Used in the Art of Hosting community; see artofhosting.org methods and Collective Story Harvest resources.



068 Story Slam

Short true stories around one theme

A Story Slam features short, usually true first-person stories responding to a shared theme. Conference versions can be curated or lightly competitive, but should privilege meaning and ethical storytelling over performance ranking.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Create emotional connection and memorable examples	20-500	45-90 min	Stage + supportive host	Curated set of lived stories

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set the theme and ethics. Invite a story about a moment, not a lecture; clarify truthfulness, consent, confidentiality, and length.	Before	Call
2	Support preparation. Offer a simple arc: scene, tension, choice, change, and why the moment matters.	Before	Coaching
3	Host the story sequence. Introduce speakers briefly, protect equal time, and give the audience a listening task.	30-60 min	Stories
4	Reflect without dissecting. Use pairs or a closing prompt to notice resonances, differences, and questions.	10-20 min	Reflection

FACILITATOR FOCUS Never reward disclosure intensity; stories belong to tellers, and named third parties require care.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow fictionalized details, no-recording rules, content notes, captioned or prerecorded stories, and a non-competitive version.

SOURCE NOTE Draws on contemporary live-storytelling and story-slam practice; this conference sequence is an editorial adaptation.



069 Learning from Failure

Tell the whole experiment, not only the success

Learning from Failure sessions make setbacks discussable without glamorizing harm. Presenters explain intent, assumptions, signals missed, consequences, recovery, and what changed afterward.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Normalize evidence-rich learning from setbacks	15-300	45-90 min	Stage or tables	Lessons, safeguards, and new experiments

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set a responsible frame. Distinguish productive experiment failure from negligence, harm, or stories that expose others without consent.	5-8 min	Opening
2	Tell the failure anatomy. Present context, decision logic, evidence, turning point, impact, and response.	10-20 min each	Stories
3	Interrogate systems, not blame. Participants ask about conditions, incentives, communication, and early warning signs.	10-20 min	Inquiry
4	Extract safeguards and experiments. Name practices to stop, preserve, or test and how learning will be shared.	10-20 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Model accountability and specificity; avoid entertainment that rewards spectacular failure without affected voices.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Anonymize appropriately, protect legal/confidential information, offer content notes, and avoid pressuring junior staff to disclose risk.

SOURCE NOTE Related to failure-conference and “fail forward” practices; presented with an explicit ethical-learning frame.



070 Demo Jam

Show what works, then let participants test it

A Demo Jam gives several teams the same short slot to show a working tool, prototype, resource, or practice. After the stage sequence, participants test selected demos and discuss fit, limits, and transfer.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Compare tools or prototypes experientially	20-300	45-100 min	Stage + hands-on stations	Tested impressions and follow-up interest

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set comparable demo criteria. Require a real use case, live demonstration, known limitation, and explicit audience invitation.	Before	Preparation
2	Run stage demos. Each team shows rather than describes; keep setup and transition time outside the slot.	20-40 min	Demos
3	Open hands-on stations. Participants try the tools, ask contextual questions, and record fit or concerns.	15-40 min	Testing
4	Compare responsibly. Close with criteria such as usefulness, access, evidence, cost, ethics, and interoperability.	10-20 min	Review

FACILITATOR FOCUS Prevent sales pitches disguised as demos and require disclosure of sponsorship, data use, and limitations.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide keyboard-accessible and non-digital alternatives, captions, loan devices, privacy notices, and low-sensory testing space.

SOURCE NOTE Common software, maker, and innovation-event practice; no single origin claimed.

PART 08



Co-Creation & Prototyping

Generate broadly, combine intelligently, and make ideas tangible enough to learn from.

Co-creation formats protect independent thinking before social influence narrows the field. They then create deliberate opportunities to build on others' ideas, combine partial solutions, and test assumptions through sketches, scenarios, or enactment. The facilitator should separate generation from evaluation and make the design challenge concrete.

The ten formats in this part

071 1-2-4-All

072 Think-Pair-Share

073 Snowball / Pyramid Discussion

074 Jigsaw Exchange

075 6-3-5 Brainwriting

076 Mad Tea

077 Crazy Eights

078 Design Studio

079 Improv Prototyping

080 Idea Sprint

DESIGN LENS Diverge before converging. Give participants a clear challenge, equal means of contribution, and permission to create rough work that is meant to be questioned.



071 1-2-4-All

Think alone, build in pairs and fours, share with all

1-2-4-All moves from silent individual reflection to pairs, groups of four, and the whole room. The sequence reduces early domination and lets every participant formulate an idea before collective discussion.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Engage every voice in generating ideas	4-500+	12-20 min	Flexible seating	Broad idea set and shared ownership

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Ask one invitation. Pose a specific question tied to the session purpose and give everyone quiet thinking time.	1 min	Individual
2	Build in pairs. Compare ideas, notice differences, and create one or two stronger responses.	2 min	Pairs
3	Combine in fours. Pairs join, identify standout ideas, and prepare one contribution worth sharing.	4 min	Groups of 4
4	Share with all. Invite one idea per group without repetition; cluster patterns and preserve novel minority ideas.	5-12 min	Plenary

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep the early stages truly simultaneous and do not skip the silent minute.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow writing, drawing, signing, or digital input; pre-assign accessible grouping and provide the question in plain language.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



072 Think-Pair-Share

Private thought before public contribution

Think-Pair-Share gives participants time to formulate an answer privately, test it with one partner, and then contribute to a larger group. It is a simple way to improve both inclusion and response quality.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Increase participation after a prompt	Any total	5-20 min	Seats that permit pairing	Prepared individual and paired responses

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Think. Pose a meaningful question and protect silent time for notes, drawing, or mental rehearsal.	1-4 min	Individual
2	Pair. Partners exchange responses, ask one clarifying question, and notice a point of connection or difference.	3-8 min	Pairs
3	Share. Invite selected pairs or use a round that gathers distinct ideas rather than calling only on volunteers.	3-8 min	Group
4	Connect. Summarize patterns and explain how the contributions shape the next task or decision.	2-5 min	Facilitation

FACILITATOR FOCUS Ask a question that benefits from thought; avoid using the format merely to fill silence after a factual recall prompt.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer solo reflection instead of pairing, language support, written sharing, and enough time for participants who process more slowly.

SOURCE NOTE Commonly attributed to Frank Lyman (1981) within cooperative-learning practice.



073 Snowball / Pyramid Discussion

Small conversations combine into larger syntheses

Snowball discussion begins individually or in pairs and successively combines groups. At each stage participants integrate ideas rather than simply repeating them, producing a progressively negotiated synthesis.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Build consensus or complexity gradually	8-128	25-60 min	Flexible grouping space	Layered synthesis

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Start small. Individuals or pairs answer the question and identify one essential point and one uncertainty.	4-8 min	1s/2s
2	Combine to four. Compare responses and create a joint statement that preserves meaningful differences.	6-10 min	Groups of 4
3	Combine again. Groups of eight or sixteen integrate statements, criteria, or options.	8-15 min	Larger groups
4	Bring the pyramid together. Share final syntheses and note what was lost, transformed, or unresolved along the way.	8-20 min	Plenary

FACILITATOR FOCUS Require integration at every stage; otherwise louder ideas merely accumulate authority.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use digital group rooms, stable seating, written artifacts that travel, and roles that prevent one reporter from controlling the synthesis.

SOURCE NOTE Longstanding cooperative-discussion method, also called pyramid or snowball discussion.



074 Jigsaw Exchange

Become an expert, then teach a new group

Jigsaw divides a larger topic into complementary pieces. Participants first develop expertise in one piece, then move to mixed groups where each member teaches their part and the group assembles the whole.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Distribute complementary knowledge	12-120	45-100 min	Expert and mixed groups	Shared understanding across subtopics

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Assign the pieces. Create subtopics of comparable complexity and provide clear, accessible source material.	5 min	Briefing
2	Meet in expert groups. Participants analyze one piece, identify essentials, and plan how to explain it.	15-30 min	Expert groups
3	Re-form mixed groups. Each new group contains one member from every expert area; members teach and question one another.	20-40 min	Jigsaw groups
4	Assemble the whole. Groups apply the combined knowledge to a case, model, decision, or synthesis task.	10-25 min	Integration

FACILITATOR FOCUS Balance the pieces and provide a backup route if an “expert” is absent or uncertain.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer materials in advance, accessible formats and languages, co-expert roles, written summaries, and alternatives to oral teaching.

SOURCE NOTE Developed by Elliot Aronson and colleagues; see Aronson & Patnoe, *The Jigsaw Classroom*.



075 6-3-5 Brainwriting

Six people, three ideas, five minutes per round

In classic 6-3-5 Brainwriting, six participants each write three ideas in five minutes and pass the sheet through six rounds. Participants build on what is already written before clustering and evaluating.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Generate many ideas without verbal domination	Groups of 6	35-50 min	Tables or shared digital sheets	Up to 108 idea entries per group

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define the challenge. State one concrete problem and explain that quantity and development come before judgment.	5 min	Briefing
2	Write three ideas. Each participant adds three concise ideas to their sheet within five minutes.	5 min	Individual
3	Pass and build. Repeat five more times, extending, combining, or varying ideas already present.	25 min	Rounds
4	Cluster and select. Group related ideas, identify distinctive options, and choose candidates for development.	10-15 min	Convergence

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep the challenge narrow enough for short written ideas and separate generation from evaluation.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use keyboard-accessible templates, flexible idea counts, language support, large print, and additional writing time where needed.

SOURCE NOTE Developed by Bernd Rohrbach and published as Methode 635 in 1968/1969.



076 Mad Tea

Rapid paired exchanges complete provocative sentences

Mad Tea uses a sequence of sentence starters in rapid partner rotations. Participants complete each prompt spontaneously, hear another response, and move to a new partner.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Surface many perspectives with energy	12-200	20-30 min	Two facing lines or circles	Range of concise responses

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Create facing partners. Arrange two lines or circles and explain the rhythm, movement, and right to pass.	3 min	Set-up
2	Read one sentence starter. Use prompts that progressively explore experience, risk, possibility, or commitment.	1 min each	Prompt
3	Exchange and rotate. Both partners complete the sentence briefly, then one line shifts to a new partner.	12-20 min	Pairs
4	Pause and harvest. Participants note an idea that surprised them and a pattern they heard across exchanges.	5-8 min	Reflection

FACILITATOR FOCUS Write sentence starters with care; speed should unlock spontaneity, not force disclosure.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide a stationary line, written prompts, slower alternatives, hearing support, and explicit permission to pass or respond generally.

SOURCE NOTE Liberating Structures method, historically titled Mad Tea; consult current official guidance at liberatingstructures.com.



077 Crazy Eights

Eight sketches in eight minutes

Crazy Eights asks participants to divide a page into eight frames and sketch one idea per minute. The pace suspends perfection and encourages variations before group selection.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Push beyond the first obvious idea	4-40	20-40 min	Tables + paper or tablet	Eight visual options per person

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Clarify the target. Define the user, need, and design question; show that rough symbols and labels are sufficient.	5 min	Briefing
2	Fold the page. Create eight frames and prepare a visible one-minute timer.	2 min	Set-up
3	Sketch eight options. Generate a distinct idea or variation in each frame without discussing or judging.	8 min	Individual
4	Share and develop. Participants explain selected sketches; the group combines promising elements into stronger concepts.	10-25 min	Synthesis

FACILITATOR FOCUS Emphasize idea variation rather than drawing skill and resist turning the share-out into a pitch contest.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow written lists, collage, tactile or digital sketching, extra time, and private submission for participants uncomfortable drawing publicly.

SOURCE NOTE Popularized within the GV Design Sprint and wider design-thinking practice; see Knapp, Zeratsky, & Kowitz (2016).



078 Design Studio

Sketch, critique, iterate, and converge

Design Studio combines individual sketching, structured critique, and iterative synthesis. Participants externalize ideas early so that the group can compare possibilities without arguing only in abstractions.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Co-create interface, service, or process concepts	4-20	60-150 min	Tables + wall space	Iterated concept sketches

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Align on the challenge. Review user needs, constraints, evidence, and the decision the session must support.	10-20 min	Briefing
2	Sketch independently. Each person creates several rough concepts before seeing others' work.	15-25 min	Individual
3	Critique with criteria. Presenters explain briefly; peers ask questions and offer feedback linked to users and constraints.	20-45 min	Critique
4	Iterate and converge. Create revised concepts, combine strengths, and select what to prototype or test next.	20-50 min	Synthesis

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep critique about the concept and evidence, not about artistic quality or the status of the creator.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer non-visual concept templates, accessible drawing tools, asynchronous annotation, and multiple ways to explain a design.

SOURCE NOTE Common user-experience and product-design practice; no single origin claimed.



079 Improv Prototyping

Act out a future interaction before building it

Improv Prototyping turns an idea into a short enacted scene. Participants play users, staff, systems, or stakeholders, observe what happens, and revise the interaction in rapid cycles.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Test behaviors, services, or processes quickly	6-60	45-90 min	Open space + simple props	Enacted prototypes and learning notes

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Choose a critical moment. Select one interaction where the proposed practice succeeds or fails; define roles and context.	8-12 min	Set-up
2	Enact a rough version. Run the scene quickly with minimal props and no pressure for polished performance.	5-10 min	Prototype
3	Observe and inquire. Audience names what the enactment revealed about needs, assumptions, friction, and unintended effects.	10-15 min	Feedback
4	Revise and replay. Change one or two design elements and test the scene again; record what should be built or investigated.	15-35 min	Iteration

FACILITATOR FOCUS Frame the activity as testing a design, not testing people's acting ability.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer observer, narrator, or script roles; avoid identity caricature; provide content boundaries and alternatives to physical enactment.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



080 Idea Sprint

A compact sequence from challenge to testable concept

Idea Sprint compresses framing, individual generation, combination, selection, and a first test into a conference workshop. It is useful when a full design sprint is impossible but a tangible output is needed.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Produce and select concepts in one session	6-40	75-150 min	Workshop room	Concept poster and test plan

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Frame the opportunity. Define user, need, evidence, constraints, and a “How might we...?” question.	15-20 min	Framing
2	Generate independently. Use brainwriting or sketching so every participant produces several options.	15-25 min	Divergence
3	Combine and select. Cluster ideas, build hybrid concepts, and choose using explicit criteria.	20-35 min	Convergence
4	Make a test card. Describe the concept, riskiest assumption, smallest test, evidence to collect, and responsible owner.	20-40 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep the sprint honest about what has not been tested; a workshop concept is not evidence of effectiveness.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide accessible templates, solo and group roles, flexible media, breaks, and remote collaboration options.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial synthesis drawing on design-sprint, brainwriting, and lean-experiment practices.



PART 09

Prioritize, Decide & Act

Move from many possibilities to transparent choices and owned next steps.

Decision formats are not neutral containers: the voting rule, criteria, sequence, and visibility of preferences shape the result. A good process distinguishes consultation from authority, protects minority information, and explains what will happen with the outcome. The tools in this part range from rapid temperature checks to structured ranking and action design.

The ten formats in this part

081 Nominal Group Technique

082 Dotmocracy

083 25/10 Crowd Sourcing

084 Min Specs

085 Fist to Five

086 Gradients of Agreement

087 Agreement-Certainty Matrix

088 Impact-Effort Matrix

089 Multivoting

090 Action Planning Canvas

DESIGN LENS State who decides, what is being decided, and what threshold applies before asking people to vote. Never stage participation around a decision that has already been made.



081 Nominal Group Technique

Silent generation, round-robin clarification, and ranking

Nominal Group Technique balances independent idea generation with structured sharing and private ranking. It is useful when equal participation and a visible priority order matter.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Generate and prioritize options fairly	5-12 per group	45-90 min	Table + visible list	Ranked options with rationale

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Generate silently. Participants write responses to one precise question without discussion or collaboration.	8-12 min	Individual
2	Collect round-robin. Each person contributes one idea at a time until all are listed; no evaluation yet.	10-20 min	Round
3	Clarify and consolidate. Discuss meaning, combine true duplicates, and preserve distinct alternatives.	10-20 min	Group
4	Rank privately. Participants score or rank the options; calculate results and discuss implications or disagreement.	10-20 min	Vote

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not merge ideas because they sound similar until their authors confirm the meaning is genuinely the same.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer digital or paper ranking, large print, language support, anonymous scoring, and enough time for silent generation.

SOURCE NOTE Delbecq, A.L., Van de Ven, A.H., & Gustafson, D.H. (1975). *Group Techniques for Program Planning: A Guide to Nominal Group and Delphi Processes*. Scott, Foresman Glenview.



082 Dotmocracy

Visible voting with a short discussion of the pattern

Dotmocracy gives each participant a limited number of dots to place on options. The result is a quick preference map, not automatically a final decision; the discussion afterward should examine concentration, trade-offs, and minority support.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Prioritize a visible set of options	10-500	15-40 min	Option wall or digital board	Preference pattern and shortlist

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare comparable options. Write each option at the same level of detail and state the voting criterion.	Before	Design
2	Explain the rule. Specify number of dots, whether stacking is allowed, anonymity, and how results will be used.	3-5 min	Briefing
3	Vote independently. Participants place physical or digital dots without lobbying during the vote.	5-10 min	Vote
4	Interpret the pattern. Discuss top options, close clusters, strong minority choices, and any decision threshold.	8-20 min	Review

FACILITATOR FOCUS Use dots to inform judgment, not to hide who actually holds decision authority.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide accessible-height boards, tactile or digital voting, color-independent marks, anonymity, and a non-standing route.

SOURCE NOTE Common facilitation practice also called dot voting or multivoting; no single origin claimed.



083 25/10 Crowd Sourcing

Rapid peer scoring of bold ideas

In 25/10 Crowd Sourcing, every participant writes a bold action idea. Cards circulate through five random exchanges and receive a score from one to five each round, producing a maximum of twenty-five.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Surface high-energy actionable ideas	20-500+	30 min	Open space + idea cards	Top-scoring ideas owned by participants

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Write one bold idea. Complete an invitation such as: What first step could make a major difference here?	5 min	Individual
2	Exchange cards randomly. Move, swap cards, and stop on a signal so nobody keeps or promotes their own idea.	2 min	Movement
3	Score five rounds. Read the card, score it from one to five against the stated criterion, add the score, and exchange again.	12-15 min	Scoring
4	Reveal and claim. Read highest scores first; invite authors or volunteers to say how the idea could move forward.	8-12 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Choose a criterion that rewards value and possibility, not merely excitement or familiarity.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use digital randomization or seated card exchange, accessible cards, private scoring, and an alternative to rapid movement.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



084 Min Specs

Identify the few rules that are truly essential

Min Specs helps a group distinguish indispensable rules from habits and preferences. Participants list every requirement, then test each by asking whether the purpose could still be achieved without it.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Reduce over-control while protecting purpose	4-80	35-60 min	Small groups + shared list	Minimum essential specifications

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Name the purpose. State what the system, event, or practice must make possible and for whom.	5-8 min	Framing
2	List all current rules. Generate explicit and implicit requirements, policies, habits, and assumptions.	8-12 min	Groups
3	Test one by one. Ask: If we broke this rule, could we still achieve the purpose? Remove anything not essential.	12-20 min	Testing
4	Publish the minimum. Rewrite the remaining specifications clearly and identify what freedom they create.	8-15 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep returning to purpose; people often defend familiar controls as though they were requirements.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide rules in writing, clarify legal or safety constraints with qualified expertise, and enable anonymous challenge to power-laden norms.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



085 Fist to Five

A quick visible measure of support

Fist to Five asks participants to show zero to five fingers, from blocking concern to enthusiastic support. The host then invites low scores to explain what would improve the proposal.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Check readiness and identify concerns	4-100	5-15 min	Any setting	Support distribution and concerns

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define the scale. Explain each number and whether a fist means veto, serious concern, or simply no support.	2 min	Briefing
2	State the proposal. Present the exact wording, implications, and decision status before asking for a signal.	2-5 min	Framing
3	Show simultaneously. Participants reveal scores at the same time to reduce social copying.	1 min	Vote
4	Learn from the spread. Invite the lowest scores first, then ask what adjustment could increase safe support.	5-10 min	Dialogue

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not average away a principled objection; clarify whether the process seeks consent, consensus, or advice.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer anonymous digital or card signals, verbal alternatives, and avoid assuming everyone can display fingers.

SOURCE NOTE Common consensus and agile-team practice; origins are diffuse.



086 Gradients of Agreement

Name the quality of support, not only yes or no

Gradients of Agreement uses a multi-point scale ranging from wholehearted endorsement to veto or non-support. It reveals whether a proposal has active commitment, workable consent, hesitation, or fundamental objection.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Make nuanced agreement visible	5-100	15-35 min	Scale poster or digital poll	Agreement profile and revision needs

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Publish the gradient. Define each level in plain language and state the threshold required for the decision.	3-5 min	Briefing
2	Present the proposal. Use exact wording and allow clarifying questions before positions are signaled.	5-10 min	Framing
3	Place positions. Participants choose a point privately or visibly, depending on the context and power dynamics.	3-5 min	Signal
4	Work the differences. Hear concerns, revise if appropriate, and signal again; record unresolved reservations.	8-20 min	Deliberation

FACILITATOR FOCUS A gradient supports conversation only when the meanings and decision threshold are explicit.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use anonymous channels where power is unequal, non-visual alternatives, clear wording, and a protected route for dissent.

SOURCE NOTE See Kaner et al., *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*, for gradients of agreement and related tools.



087 Agreement-Certainty Matrix

Sort options by support and confidence

This matrix places proposals along two dimensions: degree of agreement and degree of certainty about evidence or consequences. It prevents confident consensus from being mistaken for knowledge and helps choose an appropriate next move.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Distinguish consensus from evidence confidence	6-80	30-60 min	Large 2x2 matrix	Portfolio of act, test, discuss, or pause

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define both axes. Clarify what agreement and certainty mean in this decision and whose knowledge counts.	5-8 min	Framing
2	Place proposals. Groups position each option using evidence and expressed support, noting disputed placements.	10-20 min	Mapping
3	Choose a response by quadrant. High-high may act; high agreement/low certainty may test; low agreement/high certainty needs deliberation; low-low may pause.	10-20 min	Analysis
4	Assign next moves. Name the experiment, conversation, evidence, or authority required for each selected option.	8-15 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not let formal research automatically erase experiential or contextual knowledge; make evidence standards explicit.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide an accessible digital matrix, high-contrast labels, anonymous positioning, and spoken descriptions of visual placement.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial format developed for this collection.



088 Impact-Effort Matrix

Compare expected value with required work

An Impact-Effort Matrix positions options by expected impact and required effort. It creates a useful first portfolio of quick wins, major projects, low-value tasks, and uncertain items, provided assumptions are discussed openly.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Shortlist initiatives or tasks	4-80	25-50 min	2x2 matrix wall or screen	Priority portfolio

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define impact and effort. Specify beneficiaries, time horizon, evidence, cost categories, and whether risk is included.	5-8 min	Framing
2	Place options independently. Individuals or teams estimate positions before seeing the group's consensus.	5-10 min	Assessment
3	Discuss discrepancies. Compare placements, surface hidden assumptions, and mark uncertainty rather than forcing precision.	10-20 min	Dialogue
4	Select a balanced portfolio. Choose quick wins, strategic investments, and evidence-gathering steps; assign owners.	8-15 min	Decision

FACILITATOR FOCUS Treat the matrix as a conversation aid, not a quantitative model; impact estimates often hide values and power.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use non-color coding, accessible digital placement, anonymous estimates, and explicit attention to impacts on marginalized groups.

SOURCE NOTE Widely used in project management, innovation, and design; no single origin claimed.



089 Multivoting

Reduce a long list through successive ballots

Multivoting uses several rounds of voting to reduce a large option set. Between rounds, participants may clarify choices, see the distribution, and reconsider before the next ballot.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Narrow many options efficiently	8-100	20-45 min	Visible option list	Shortlist or ranked finalists

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare the option set. Remove duplicates, number items, and ensure each is comparable and understandable.	5-10 min	Preparation
2	First broad vote. Give participants several votes to identify all options they consider viable.	5 min	Ballot
3	Reduce and clarify. Remove low-support items according to a preannounced rule and discuss remaining ambiguities.	5-10 min	Review
4	Vote again. Use fewer votes or ranking to produce the shortlist; record minority support and decision ownership.	5-15 min	Ballot

FACILITATOR FOCUS Publish elimination rules before results are visible and do not manufacture closure when options are not ready.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use anonymous and accessible ballots, allow remote participation, and provide sufficient reading and processing time.

SOURCE NOTE Common quality-improvement and group-decision technique; related to nominal group and dot-voting practices.



090 Action Planning Canvas

Turn a chosen idea into owned first steps

The Action Planning Canvas moves a proposal from aspiration to implementation by specifying intended change, first step, people, resources, risks, evidence, and review. It is a practical close for action-oriented conferences.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Specify implementation after a decision	4-40 per action	35-75 min	Action tables + canvas	Named action plan and review date

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Restate the intended change. Name who should experience what difference and why the action matters.	5-10 min	Purpose
2	Design the first step. Choose an action small enough to begin soon but meaningful enough to generate learning.	10-15 min	Planning
3	Build the support map. Identify owner, partners, people affected, resources, permissions, risks, and communication needs.	10-20 min	Mapping
4	Define evidence and review. State what progress would look like, when the group will review it, and how learning will be shared.	10-20 min	Commitment

FACILITATOR FOCUS Require a real owner and review date; “we should” is not an action plan.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use plain-language templates, role rather than personal names where appropriate, accessible digital/paper versions, and voluntary commitments.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial synthesis informed by action-planning, project-charter, and theory-of-change practices.

PART 10



Reflect, Learn & Harvest

Make experience discussable, extract learning, and carry it into the next cycle.

Reflection formats convert activity into learning. They help participants distinguish what happened from how it felt, what it means, and what should change. A good harvest respects privacy and does not treat every personal reflection as conference data. These methods work as session closes, project reviews, conference evaluations, or bridges into action.

The ten formats in this part

091 What, So What, Now What?

092 ORID Focused Conversation

093 After Action Review

094 Plus / Delta

095 Start / Stop / Continue

096 Nine Whys

097 15% Solutions

098 Critical Incident Reflection

099 Learning Harvest

100 Silent Reflection Lab

DESIGN LENS Do not ask for more disclosure than the purpose requires. Design the reflection product, ownership, and follow-up before collecting it.



091 What, So What, Now What?

Move from facts to meaning to action

What, So What, Now What? separates description, interpretation, and action. The sequence prevents groups from jumping to solutions before they have agreed what happened and why it matters.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Reflect on an experience systematically	4-200	20-45 min	Pairs, tables, or circle	Shared learning and next steps

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	What? Describe observations, events, results, and evidence without evaluation or explanation.	5-10 min	Reflection
2	So what? Explore significance, emotions, patterns, assumptions, consequences, and different interpretations.	7-15 min	Dialogue
3	Now what? Identify implications, choices, experiments, responsibilities, and next questions.	7-15 min	Action
4	Harvest. Share selected learning while preserving private reflections and naming what will happen next.	5-10 min	Plenary

FACILITATOR FOCUS Hold the stages apart; “what” should not become disguised blame and “now what” should not begin too early.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide prompts in writing, silent reflection first, non-verbal response options, and a clear choice about what remains private.

SOURCE NOTE Included in the Liberating Structures repertoire; also widely used in reflective practice and associated with several learning-cycle traditions.



092 ORID Focused Conversation

Objective, Reflective, Interpretive, Decisional

ORID structures a conversation through four levels of questions: objective facts, reflective responses, interpretive meaning, and decisional implications. It creates a natural movement from surface to depth.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Guide a group from experience to decision	4-100	25-75 min	Any facilitated setting	Integrated understanding and decision

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Objective. Ask what participants saw, heard, read, or observed; establish a shared evidence base.	5-12 min	Facts
2	Reflective. Invite immediate reactions, associations, surprises, concerns, or energy without debating them.	5-12 min	Response
3	Interpretive. Explore meaning, patterns, consequences, learning, and different explanations.	8-20 min	Meaning
4	Decisional. Agree what the group will do, remember, investigate, or communicate next.	7-20 min	Decision

FACILITATOR FOCUS Design the questions backward from the rational and experiential aims; do not treat ORID as four generic headings.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow private reflection and written responses, use plain questions, support language access, and make emotional participation voluntary.

SOURCE NOTE Focused Conversation Method developed by the Institute of Cultural Affairs within Technology of Participation; see Stanfield (2000/2024) and ICA resources.



093 After Action Review

Compare intention, reality, causes, and improvement

An After Action Review is a candid, learning-focused discussion of what was intended, what actually happened, why, and what should be sustained or changed. It examines the system and decisions rather than seeking a person to blame.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Learn from a completed activity	4-40	30-75 min	Team room with evidence	Practices to sustain and improve

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	What was supposed to happen? Revisit objectives, standards, assumptions, roles, and intended sequence.	5-10 min	Intent
2	What actually happened? Build a shared account using observations, data, and multiple perspectives.	8-15 min	Reality
3	Why was there a difference? Examine conditions, communication, decisions, adaptations, strengths, and constraints.	10-25 min	Analysis
4	What will we sustain or change? Choose specific practices and assign how learning will enter the next cycle.	8-20 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Create enough psychological safety for candor while retaining accountability for consequential decisions.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use neutral facilitation where power is high, anonymous pre-input, accessible evidence, confidentiality rules, and support after serious incidents.

SOURCE NOTE Formal AAR practice was developed by the U.S. Army and has been adapted broadly in organizations and knowledge management.



094 Plus / Delta

What helped, and what should change?

Plus / Delta is a concise review that separates what contributed positively from what should be different next time. “Delta” emphasizes change rather than complaint.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Improve a session or process quickly	4-200	10-25 min	Two-column board	Strengths to preserve and changes to test

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Name the object of review. Specify whether participants are evaluating content, process, access, logistics, or all four.	2 min	Framing
2	Generate pluses. Identify concrete elements that supported learning, participation, or outcomes.	3-7 min	Input
3	Generate deltas. Name specific changes, unmet needs, or experiments for the next iteration.	3-7 min	Input
4	Choose responses. Clarify what will be preserved, changed, investigated, or explained and by whom.	4-10 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Ask for behavioral and design-specific feedback; “great” and “bad” provide little learning.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow anonymous input, screen-reader-accessible forms, multiple languages, and a route for concerns too sensitive for the public board.

SOURCE NOTE Widely used in education, facilitation, and quality-improvement practice; no single origin claimed.



095 Start / Stop / Continue

Three lenses for practical improvement

Start / Stop / Continue asks what new practice to introduce, what current practice to discontinue, and what valuable practice to maintain. It turns evaluation into a balanced change portfolio.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Review ongoing practice	4-100	20-45 min	Three-column board	Prioritized practice changes

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Reflect independently. Participants write specific behaviors or practices under all three headings.	5-8 min	Individual
2	Cluster without debate. Group similar items and preserve unusual or minority observations.	5-10 min	Mapping
3	Discuss consequences. Examine evidence, dependencies, costs, and whose experience each proposed change affects.	8-15 min	Dialogue
4	Commit selectively. Choose a small number of starts, stops, and continues with owners and review dates.	5-12 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not let the “stop” column become a blame list; frame entries as practices or conditions.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use anonymous input, accessible templates, silent generation, and explicit review of impacts on people with less power.

SOURCE NOTE Common retrospective and team-development format; no single origin claimed.



096 Nine Whys

Keep asking why until purpose becomes clearer

Nine Whys uses repeated, respectful “Why is that important to you?” questions to move from an activity or goal toward deeper purpose. The number nine signals persistence rather than a rigid count.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Clarify purpose behind an activity or initiative	Pairs; any total	20 min	Pairs + whole group	Concise statement of purpose

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	State the activity. Each participant names what they are working on or want to make happen.	2 min	Individual
2	Ask why it matters. Partners repeatedly ask why the answer is important, listening without arguing or supplying their own purpose.	8 min	Pairs
3	Switch roles. The second partner explores their purpose through the same disciplined inquiry.	8 min	Pairs
4	Name the deeper purpose. Participants write one concise statement and notice shared or divergent purposes in the room.	2-5 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep the questioning curious rather than interrogative and stop when the participant reaches a meaningful boundary.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide opt-out, written self-inquiry, language support, and permission to keep purpose statements private.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



097 15% Solutions

Act on the part you can influence now

15% Solutions asks participants what they can do now, without additional permission, resources, or authority. It redirects energy from the whole unsolved system toward meaningful local action.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Turn reflection into immediate agency	4-200	20-35 min	Pairs or small groups	Feasible next actions within current discretion

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Name the challenge. Describe the issue briefly and distinguish what is outside from what is inside current influence.	3-5 min	Framing
2	Generate individual 15%. Write actions you can begin with existing discretion, relationships, and resources.	5 min	Individual
3	Consult in small groups. Peers ask clarifying questions and help make actions smaller, more concrete, and more connected.	10-15 min	Groups
4	Commit and connect. Choose one action and identify who should know, support, or learn from it.	5-10 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not use local agency to excuse structural responsibility; connect 15% actions to the larger change picture.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow private commitments, accessible written templates, role-based actions, and explicit acknowledgment of unequal discretion.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



098 Critical Incident Reflection

Examine one moment that changed the course

Critical Incident Reflection focuses on one specific event that was surprising, difficult, successful, or consequential. Participants reconstruct the moment, examine interpretations and alternatives, and derive learning without generalizing too quickly.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Learn deeply from a significant event	4-30	40-80 min	Quiet groups	Incident analysis and learning principles

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Describe the incident. State what happened, when, who was involved, and what made the moment significant.	8-12 min	Narrative
2	Reconstruct perspectives. Identify available information, emotions, assumptions, constraints, and how different actors may have understood it.	10-20 min	Analysis
3	Explore alternatives. Ask what other responses were possible, what signals were missed, and what supported or hindered judgment.	10-20 min	Inquiry
4	Extract learning. Formulate a principle, safeguard, question, or practice for future situations.	8-15 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep the inquiry specific and compassionate; hindsight should increase understanding rather than certainty or blame.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow anonymization, fictionalized composites, pass rights, trauma-aware facilitation, and private reflection for sensitive incidents.

SOURCE NOTE Inspired by Flanagan's Critical Incident Technique and later reflective-practice adaptations.



099 Learning Harvest

Collect meaning, not merely notes

A Learning Harvest intentionally gathers what the conference has generated: insights, relationships, questions, commitments, stories, and evidence of change. It is designed before the event and completed with participants, not added as an afterthought.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Synthesize learning across a gathering	10-500	20-60 min	Wall, tables, or digital canvas	Curated themes, questions, and commitments

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define harvest categories. Choose what matters to capture and what should remain private; assign hosts and tools.	Before	Design
2	Gather throughout. Use visual notes, cards, digital boards, table traces, interviews, or designated listeners.	During	Collection
3	Make sense together. Cluster material, test interpretations, preserve disagreement, and identify missing voices.	15-35 min	Synthesis
4	Return the harvest. Publish a concise, accessible record with ownership, next steps, and a route to correct misrepresentation.	After/10 min	Return

FACILITATOR FOCUS Harvest only what someone will use and return it quickly enough to maintain trust.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Clarify consent and data ownership, provide accessible formats, avoid attributing private comments, and include remote participants equally.

SOURCE NOTE Common in the Art of Hosting and graphic-facilitation communities; no single origin claimed.



100 Silent Reflection Lab

Think, write, and make meaning without immediate discussion

Silent Reflection Lab offers intentional quiet within a conference. Participants choose among prompts, reading, journaling, sketching, or contemplative stations and decide what, if anything, to contribute to a shared harvest.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Create low-stimulation integration time	Any total	20-60 min	Quiet room with stations	Private reflection plus optional contributions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Create the quiet contract. Explain duration, station choices, movement expectations, device use, and that sharing is optional.	5 min	Orientation
2	Choose a reflection pathway. Participants select prompts about learning, emotion, questions, relationships, or action.	10-30 min	Individual
3	Make a personal synthesis. Write, draw, record audio privately, or create a small artifact that captures what matters.	5-15 min	Individual
4	Offer an optional trace. Contribute one line, question, or commitment anonymously or keep the reflection entirely private.	5-10 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Protect actual quiet and avoid turning the closing contribution into a hidden requirement.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide low-sensory and ordinary rooms, screen-reader-ready prompts, audio options, comfortable seating, and no spiritual assumptions.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial format developed for this collection.

PART 11



Futures & Systems

Work with complexity, competing truths,
long time horizons, and interdependence.

Futures and systems formats help groups move beyond a single linear plan. They surface paradoxes, map relationships, imagine multiple futures, and connect preferred direction with present choices. Some are compact conference exercises; others are whole-system interventions requiring extensive preparation and expert facilitation.

The ten formats in this part

101 Wicked Questions

102 TRIZ

103 Ecocycle Planning

104 Three Horizons

105 Scenario Planning

106 Future Search

107 Appreciative Inquiry Summit

108 Systems Mapping

109 Causal Loop Conversation

110 Backcasting

DESIGN LENS Do not present the future as predictable or the system as fully knowable. Make assumptions, boundaries, uncertainty, and excluded perspectives visible.



101 Wicked Questions

Hold two opposing truths at the same time

Wicked Questions reveal tensions in the form: How is it that we are both X and Y simultaneously? The format replaces either/or framing with questions that acknowledge two legitimate, interdependent demands.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Surface paradoxes that must be managed, not solved	4-100	25-45 min	Pairs and groups	Productive paradox statements

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Generate opposing demands. List qualities, goals, or obligations that appear to compete in the challenge.	5-8 min	Individual/pairs
2	Form wicked questions. Combine two truths using "How is it that we are both... and... simultaneously?"	8-12 min	Groups
3	Test their vitality. Choose questions that create productive tension rather than a false contradiction or easy answer.	5-10 min	Review
4	Explore design implications. Ask what practices could honor both poles and what happens when one dominates.	8-15 min	Dialogue

FACILITATOR FOCUS Protect the tension from premature resolution; a wicked question should remain useful over time.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide written examples, language support, anonymous submission, and explicit safeguards where one "pole" would legitimize harm.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



102 TRIZ

Design the worst result, then stop helping it happen

TRIZ invites groups to design a reliable way to achieve the worst possible outcome, then identify which of those behaviors they already practice and what they can stop. The inversion makes taboo routines discussable.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Expose counterproductive practices with humor and honesty	4-100	35-60 min	Small groups	Stop-doing list and first changes

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define the worst outcome. State the opposite of the desired purpose in clear, even exaggerated terms.	3-5 min	Framing
2	Design how to guarantee it. Generate every strategy that would make the worst outcome inevitable.	10-15 min	Groups
3	Face current reality. Privately and then collectively mark which strategies resemble present practice, even slightly.	8-15 min	Reflection
4	Choose what to stop. Identify one concrete behavior to discontinue and the support needed to do so.	10-20 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Use humor to reduce defensiveness, never to ridicule people affected by the problem.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow anonymous self-recognition, avoid naming individuals, provide content boundaries, and separate structural critique from personal blame.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



103 Ecocycle Planning

See activities as birth, maturity, destruction, and renewal

Ecocycle Planning maps activities across gestation, birth, maturity, and creative destruction, with traps of scarcity and rigidity. It helps groups decide what to nurture, scale, stop, or release.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Rebalance a portfolio of activities	8-100	60-120 min	Large ecocycle map	Portfolio shifts and action priorities

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	List activities. Individually identify projects, practices, relationships, and investments relevant to the purpose.	8-12 min	Individual
2	Place on the ecocycle. Small groups position items and discuss evidence, maturity, and where energy is stuck.	20-35 min	Mapping
3	Identify traps and balance. Notice poverty traps, rigidity traps, overinvestment, neglected birth, and needed destruction.	15-25 min	Analysis
4	Choose portfolio actions. Select what to nurture, connect, scale, stop, or let go and assign first steps.	15-30 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep the portfolio at one coherent level and treat “creative destruction” as deliberate release, not careless abandonment.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use accessible digital mapping, non-color coding, anonymous placement, and careful language where stopping work affects people or livelihoods.

SOURCE NOTE Lipmanowicz, H., & McCandless, K. (2014). *The surprising power of liberating structures: Simple rules to unleash a culture of innovation*. Liberating Structures Press.



104 Three Horizons

Connect the dominant present, emerging innovations, and desired future

Three Horizons distinguishes the dominant system losing fit, a desired future system, and transitional innovations that may support either. Participants map signals, conflicts, and choices across the three curves.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Explore transition across time horizons	8-100	60-120 min	Three-horizons canvas	Transition map and strategic questions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Describe Horizon 1. Identify the current dominant system, what it still provides, and where it is losing fit.	15-20 min	Present
2	Imagine Horizon 3. Describe the future pattern that would better meet enduring needs and values.	15-20 min	Future
3	Explore Horizon 2. Map innovations, experiments, and conflicts that could be captured by the old system or enable the new.	20-35 min	Transition
4	Choose strategic attention. Identify what to sustain, transform, protect, test, and stop across horizons.	15-25 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Avoid treating Horizon 1 as simply bad or Horizon 3 as a fantasy without transition costs.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide non-visual explanations, accessible templates, multiple time perspectives, and deliberate inclusion of future generations and affected communities.

SOURCE NOTE Sharpe, B. (2013). *Three horizons: The patterning of hope*. Triarchy Press.



105 Scenario Planning

Explore several plausible futures, not one forecast

Scenario Planning identifies critical uncertainties, builds a small set of distinct plausible futures, and tests strategies across them. The scenarios are tools for learning, not predictions.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Stress-test decisions under uncertainty	8-80	2 hours-2 days	Workshop room + scenario materials	Plausible scenarios and robust options

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Frame the focal question. Define decision horizon, system boundary, stakeholders, and what must remain uncertain.	15-30 min	Framing
2	Identify driving forces. Gather trends, predetermined elements, uncertainties, disruptions, and weak signals.	30-60 min	Scanning
3	Build distinct scenarios. Combine uncertainties into coherent worlds with names, narratives, and consequences.	45-120 min	Creation
4	Wind-tunnel choices. Test current plans and new options across scenarios; identify robust actions and signposts.	30-90 min	Strategy

FACILITATOR FOCUS Make scenarios plausible, internally coherent, and meaningfully different; avoid best-case/worst-case caricatures.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide pre-reading in accessible formats, multiple modes of imagination, explicit uncertainty, and voices affected but absent from the room.

SOURCE NOTE Schoemaker, P. J. H. (1995). *Scenario planning: A Tool for Strategic Thinking*. Sloan Management Review, 36, 25–40.



106 Future Search

Bring the whole system together to find common ground

Future Search is a highly structured whole-system meeting. Stakeholders explore past and present, create preferred futures, confirm common ground, and self-organize around action commitments.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Create shared direction and voluntary action	50-100 typical	16 hours over 2.5-3 days	Large room with mixed stakeholder tables	Common ground and action groups

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Bring the whole system. Recruit a broad cross-section of stakeholders with authority, knowledge, resources, and lived experience.	Before	Convening
2	Explore past and present. Create shared timelines, map external trends, and examine what stakeholder groups are doing now.	Sessions 1-2	Inquiry
3	Create preferred futures. Mixed groups imagine desirable futures and dramatize or present them vividly.	Session 3	Vision
4	Find common ground and act. Confirm shared statements, leave disagreements aside, and form voluntary action groups.	Sessions 4-5	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Follow the method's whole-system principles; this is not a single short workshop and needs experienced design.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Fund participation equitably, provide accessible multi-day conditions, language support, childcare/remote access as needed, and transparent stakeholder selection.

SOURCE NOTE Weisbord, M. R., & Janoff, S. (2010). *Future search: An action guide to finding common ground in organizations and communities* (3rd ed.). Berrett-Koehler Publishers.



107 Appreciative Inquiry Summit

Discover strengths, dream, design, and deliver

An Appreciative Inquiry Summit brings a whole system together around a generative topic. Participants discover life-giving experiences, imagine possibilities, design desired arrangements, and commit to action.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Co-create strengths-based system change	40-1000+	1-4 days	Large mixed-stakeholder gathering	Shared vision, designs, and commitments

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Define the affirmative topic. Frame an inquiry that is honest about the challenge while inviting study of strengths and possibility.	Before	Design
2	Discover. Interview across boundaries about high points, conditions that enabled them, and values worth carrying forward.	Phase 1	Inquiry
3	Dream and design. Imagine the desired future and create propositions, structures, and prototypes that could support it.	Phases 2-3	Co-design
4	Destiny / deliver. Form action groups, commitments, and learning mechanisms that begin during the summit.	Phase 4	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not use positivity to suppress injustice, grief, or critical evidence; the affirmative topic must remain credible.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Include the whole system, support multiple languages and access needs, compensate community participation, and create safe routes for dissent.

SOURCE NOTE Appreciative Inquiry developed by David Cooperrider and colleagues; see Whitney & Trosten-Bloom and official AI practitioner resources.



108 Systems Mapping

Make actors, structures, flows, and feedback visible

Systems Mapping creates a shared visual model of actors, resources, relationships, rules, boundaries, and dynamics around a challenge. The map is a hypothesis to refine, not a complete representation.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Develop a shared picture of a complex system	8-80	90 min-1 day	Large canvas or digital map	System map and leverage questions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set purpose and boundary. Define the question, level of analysis, time horizon, and perspectives represented.	15-25 min	Framing
2	Add system elements. Map actors, institutions, resources, incentives, information, events, and contextual forces.	25-50 min	Mapping
3	Connect dynamics. Label flows, influence, dependencies, delays, feedback, and contested relationships.	25-60 min	Analysis
4	Find leverage and gaps. Ask where small changes may matter, whose view is absent, and what evidence would improve the map.	20-40 min	Inquiry

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep boundary choices and uncertainty visible; a beautiful map can still conceal power and missing knowledge.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use tactile/non-visual descriptions, accessible digital canvases, anonymous contributions, and active inclusion of lived expertise.

SOURCE NOTE Meadows, D. H. (2008). *Thinking in systems: A primer*. Chelsea Green Publishing.



109 Causal Loop Conversation

Map reinforcing and balancing feedback

A Causal Loop Conversation helps participants move from event stories to feedback structures. Variables are connected with directional links and organized into reinforcing or balancing loops.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Examine how patterns reproduce over time	6-40	60-120 min	Whiteboard or mapping canvas	Causal-loop hypotheses and intervention questions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Name a dynamic pattern. Choose a behavior over time, not a static problem label, and sketch its trend.	10-15 min	Framing
2	Identify variables. List factors that can increase or decrease and define them consistently.	10-20 min	Preparation
3	Build causal links. Connect variables, mark same/opposite direction and delays, and identify loops.	25-50 min	Mapping
4	Test the story. Ask whether the loop explains the pattern, what evidence is missing, and where intervention may backfire.	15-30 min	Review

FACILITATOR FOCUS Use precise variable language and challenge links that are only correlations, assumptions, or moral labels.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide non-visual narration, accessible mapping software, a glossary, and permission to challenge technical language.

SOURCE NOTE Adapted from Sterman, J.D. (2000). *Business Dynamics: Systems Thinking and Modeling for A Complex World*. McGraw-Hill Companies, New York..



110 Backcasting

Start with the desired future and work backward

Backcasting begins with a clearly described desirable future and works backward to identify milestones, decisions, capabilities, and immediate steps. It is useful when incremental projection from the present is insufficient.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Identify pathways toward a normative goal	8-80	90 min-1 day	Future-state and timeline canvases	Milestones, decisions, and near-term actions

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Describe the future state. Specify what would be observably different, for whom, by when, and according to which values or constraints.	20-40 min	Vision
2	Identify necessary conditions. Ask what must already be true just before that future can exist.	20-30 min	Backward step
3	Build the pathway backward. Continue through milestones, dependencies, decision points, and risks until reaching the present.	25-50 min	Planning
4	Choose present moves. Select no-regret actions, experiments, and signals that indicate whether the pathway remains viable.	15-30 min	Action

FACILITATOR FOCUS Make the desired future concrete and ethically examined; backcasting is only as sound as its endpoint assumptions.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use accessible timeline formats, non-visual alternatives, multiple future voices, and explicit consideration of who bears transition costs.

SOURCE NOTE Associated with John Robinson and sustainability futures; see Robinson (1982/1990) and subsequent backcasting literature.

PART 12



Open, Design & Hybrid

Let participants shape the agenda, build together, and connect across time and place.

Open-agenda and design-intensive formats redistribute authorship of the conference. Hybrid and asynchronous variants extend participation beyond one room, but they also create new inequities of attention, technology, and influence. These approaches require strong purpose, simple participation rules, and explicit stewardship of outputs after the gathering.

The ten formats in this part

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 111 Open Space Technology | 116 Hackathon |
| 112 Unconference | 117 Flipped Conference |
| 113 BarCamp | 118 Hybrid Hub |
| 114 Design Charrette | 119 Digital Fishbowl |
| 115 Design Sprint | 120 Asynchronous Idea Garden |

DESIGN LENS Openness needs a container. Clarify the theme, non-negotiable boundaries, decision rights, documentation, access, and what organizers will do with participant-created work.

Open, Design & Hybrid

Let participants shape the agenda, build together, and connect across time and place.



111 Open Space Technology

Participants create the agenda around a compelling theme

Open Space Technology begins without a detailed session agenda. Participants propose issues they care about, build a marketplace, convene self-managed sessions, and document results under a small set of principles and the Law of Two Feet.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Self-organize around complex issues	5-2000+	Half day-3 days	Large room + many breakouts	Participant-led sessions and proceedings

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Open the space. State a compelling theme, explain the principles, Law of Two Feet, roles, times, and documentation.	20-35 min	Circle
2	Create the marketplace. Participants announce session topics, choose times and places, and post them on the agenda wall.	20-40 min	Agenda
3	Self-organize sessions. People join, leave, host, and document conversations according to energy and responsibility.	2 hours-2 days	Breakouts
4	Converge and close. Publish proceedings, review patterns or priorities, and invite action commitments in a closing circle.	30-90 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Use a real issue with complexity, diversity, urgency, and voluntary participation; do not over-engineer the agenda afterward.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Ensure accessible rooms and agenda systems, online/physical parity, mobility alternatives, support for first-time hosts, and rapid accessible proceedings.

SOURCE NOTE Owen, H. (2008). *Open space technology: A user's guide* (3rd ed.). Berrett-Koehler Publishers. .



112 Unconference

A participant-shaped event with minimal hierarchy

An Unconference replaces most preselected presentations with sessions proposed and shaped by participants. The exact mechanics vary, but meaningful choice, low barriers to proposing a topic, and peer-to-peer learning are central.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Let the community determine relevant sessions	20-1000+	Half day- multi-day	Agenda wall + flexible spaces	Emergent program and peer exchange

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set the purpose and boundaries. Define the community, theme, available resources, code of conduct, and what remains fixed.	Before	Convening
2	Co-create the schedule. Collect session proposals, clarify formats, resolve collisions, and publish a visible agenda.	20-45 min	Agenda
3	Run participant-led sessions. Hosts convene questions, demos, discussions, or workshops; participants move where they can contribute or learn.	2-8 hours	Sessions
4	Share learning and continue. Gather concise notes, contacts, unresolved questions, and routes for post-event collaboration.	20-45 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Explain the culture explicitly; “no agenda” without support often privileges experienced insiders.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Allow advance proposals, remote participation, accessible rooms and tools, session-host coaching, quiet space, and transparent conduct enforcement.

SOURCE NOTE Unconference is a broad participant-driven event tradition; no single origin or fixed recipe.

Open, Design & Hybrid

Let participants shape the agenda, build together, and connect across time and place.



113 BarCamp

An open schedule of participant-led sessions

BarCamp is an unconference model in which participants propose sessions at the event, place them on a visible grid, and take responsibility for hosting. Sessions may be discussions, demos, workshops, or questions rather than formal papers.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Share practical knowledge in a peer community	30-500+	1-2 days	Central grid + breakout rooms	Self-organized session program

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Welcome and orient. Introduce the open-grid process, participation expectations, code of conduct, and documentation tools.	20-30 min	Opening
2	Pitch sessions. Participants briefly name a topic, format, and intended audience; proposals go onto the grid.	20-40 min	Marketplace
3	Run the grid. Sessions occur in parallel; hosts facilitate, participants move freely, and schedule changes remain visible.	Half/full day	Breakouts
4	Close the community loop. Share highlights, links, thanks, and what will continue after the BarCamp.	20-40 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Make room for questions and beginners, not only confident presenters with polished expertise.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Offer advance and online pitching, accessible room information, captions where possible, quiet sessions, and a clear anti-harassment process.

SOURCE NOTE BarCamp emerged from the technology community in 2005 and has evolved through open community practice; check local brand and community conventions.

Open, Design & Hybrid

Let participants shape the agenda, build together, and connect across time and place.



114 Design Charrette

Intensive stakeholder co-design around a concrete challenge

A Design Charrette brings stakeholders and designers into an intensive cycle of briefing, sketching, review, revision, and public feedback. It is particularly suited to complex design questions with visible constraints and affected communities.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Develop and test a place, policy, or service design	15-150	Half day-several days	Studio space + evidence and maps	Iterated design proposal

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare the design brief. Assemble evidence, user/community input, constraints, decision rights, and criteria for success.	Before	Preparation
2	Work in design cycles. Mixed groups create concepts, maps, models, or policy arrangements in focused time boxes.	45-120 min	Co-design
3	Review publicly. Stakeholders inspect work, identify implications, and provide structured feedback tied to criteria.	30-90 min	Review
4	Revise and document. Teams integrate feedback, explain trade-offs, and state what is decided, open, or requires further study.	45-120 min	Iteration

FACILITATOR FOCUS Clarify who has authority after the charrette and how community input will influence the final design.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Compensate affected participants, use accessible maps/models and venues, provide language access, childcare or remote routes, and publish responses to feedback.

SOURCE NOTE Established architecture, urban-planning, and participatory-design practice; see public-sector charrette guidance such as U.S. EPA resources.

Open, Design & Hybrid

Let participants shape the agenda, build together, and connect across time and place.



115 Design Sprint

Map, sketch, decide, prototype, and test

The classic GV Design Sprint is a five-day process that maps a challenge, sketches solutions, decides what to pursue, builds a realistic prototype, and tests it with users. Conference versions should not claim equivalent evidence if compressed.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Answer a critical question through a tested prototype	5-7 core team	5 days classic	Dedicated project room	Prototype and user-test evidence

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Map and choose a target. Align on the long-term goal, questions, actors, and one critical moment to address.	Day 1	Map
2	Sketch solutions. Review inspiration and create detailed individual solution sketches.	Day 2	Sketch
3	Decide and storyboard. Critique anonymously where possible, select a concept, and plan the prototype.	Day 3	Decide
4	Prototype and test. Build a realistic facade, interview users, and identify patterns rather than vote on preferences.	Days 4-5	Test

FACILITATOR FOCUS Keep a real decision-maker involved and protect user testing from becoming a presentation to stakeholders.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Recruit diverse users accessibly and ethically, compensate participation, ensure prototype accessibility, and offer remote testing where appropriate.

SOURCE NOTE GV Design Sprint developed by Jake Knapp and colleagues; see gv.com/sprint and Knapp, Zeratsky, & Kowitz (2016).



116 Hackathon

Build working responses in an intensive time box

A Hackathon brings interdisciplinary teams together to build prototypes around a challenge within a fixed period. Responsible design includes problem-owner input, data governance, accessibility, realistic judging, and a route beyond the final demo.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Create prototypes and teams rapidly	20-500+	6-72 hours	Team workspace + technical support	Prototypes, demos, and learning

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Frame challenges responsibly. Provide evidence, users' perspectives, data conditions, ethics, and judging criteria; avoid solutionism.	Before	Preparation
2	Form teams and scope. Match skills and interests, define a small problem, and agree roles and working conditions.	1-2 hours	Team formation
3	Build and check in. Teams research, prototype, test assumptions, and receive mentor or user feedback.	4-60 hours	Creation
4	Demo and continue. Present the problem, prototype, evidence, limitations, and next step; support promising work after the event.	1-3 hours	Showcase

FACILITATOR FOCUS Judge learning, relevance, ethics, and evidence - not only technical polish achieved through unequal all-night labor.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Avoid mandatory overnight work, provide food and rest, accessible tools/venues, childcare, diverse mentors, safe data, and equitable prize rules.

SOURCE NOTE Hackathons evolved from software and open-source communities and now span many fields; no single fixed model.



117 Flipped Conference

Use event time for exchange, not first exposure

A Flipped Conference gives participants concise, accessible content before the event and reserves live time for questions, cases, practice, feedback, and collaboration. The design succeeds only when pre-work is realistic and live sessions truly depend on it.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Shift content delivery before the event	Any total	Pre-work + live event	Digital materials + interactive venue	Deeper live discussion and application

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Create essential pre-work. Provide short videos, texts, podcasts, or data with guiding questions and accessible alternatives.	Before	Preparation
2	Check entry points. Use a low-stakes poll or recap so participants who completed different amounts can still join.	10-20 min	Opening
3	Use live time interactively. Work on cases, controversies, peer feedback, design tasks, and expert clinics.	Main event	Application
4	Extend the learning. Return recordings, harvests, discussion spaces, and clear post-event pathways.	After	Follow-up

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not overload participants or punish those whose access, workload, or language needs make pre-work difficult.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide downloadable low-bandwidth formats, transcripts, generous lead time, a no-prep entry route, and accessible live materials.

SOURCE NOTE Adapted from flipped-classroom and blended-learning practice; no single conference origin claimed.

Open, Design & Hybrid

Let participants shape the agenda, build together, and connect across time and place.



118 Hybrid Hub

Several local rooms connected as one distributed gathering

A Hybrid Hub conference connects several facilitated local gatherings rather than treating remote participants as isolated viewers. Hubs share selected plenaries, work locally, and exchange harvests across locations.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Combine local belonging with cross-site exchange	20-1000+	Half day- multi-day	Local hubs + common platform	Local and cross- hub dialogue

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Design one event, not two. Decide which moments are shared, local, asynchronous, and optional; appoint a host and technician in every hub.	Before	Design
2	Open locally and globally. Build local relationships first, then connect hubs through a brief common welcome and visible map.	20-30 min	Opening
3	Alternate scales. Move between cross-hub input, local dialogue, and structured exchange of questions or artifacts.	Main event	Hybrid
4	Harvest across hubs. Compare local differences, shared patterns, and commitments; publish one accessible distributed record.	20-40 min	Close

FACILITATOR FOCUS Give local hubs agency and equal visibility; avoid a central stage that merely broadcasts to peripheral rooms.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use captions, interpreters, low-bandwidth options, time-zone fairness, accessible local venues, and clear technical fallback plans.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial pattern developed for this collection, informed by distributed and hybrid-conference practice.



119 Digital Fishbowl

A small live conversation with a transparent entry queue

Digital Fishbowl recreates an inner conversation online. A small set of active speakers remains on camera while others listen and may enter through a transparent queue, response form, or rotating invitation.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Host focused dialogue online at scale	15-500	40-80 min	Video platform + queue tool	Dynamic online dialogue and chat harvest

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Set roles and channels. Explain active speakers, listeners, queue, chat purpose, recording, captions, and conduct.	8 min	Orientation
2	Begin the inner dialogue. Three to five speakers address one question while a host watches balance and relevance.	15-25 min	Dialogue
3	Rotate voices. Listeners join via queue; one speaker leaves for each new entrant. Chat contributions are curated separately.	15-30 min	Rotation
4	Integrate channels. Summarize voice and chat themes, identify missing perspectives, and provide asynchronous continuation.	10-15 min	Harvest

FACILITATOR FOCUS Do not privilege camera confidence; use the queue and chat harvest to diversify entry.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Provide captions, dial-in, keyboard navigation, camera-optional participation, screen-reader-ready chat, recordings/transcripts, and time-zone alternatives.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial adaptation of fishbowl dialogue for online and hybrid conferences.



120 Asynchronous Idea Garden

Let contributions grow before, during, and after the event

An Asynchronous Idea Garden is a moderated digital space where participants plant questions or ideas, add “shoots” through responses and resources, and help mature selected contributions into proposals or sessions.

BEST FOR	PEOPLE	TIME	SPACE	OUTPUT
Extend co-creation across time zones and schedules	Any total	Several days-weeks	Accessible digital platform	Evolving idea threads and curated synthesis

PARTICIPANT FLOW

STEP	WHAT PARTICIPANTS DO	TIME	MODE
1	Prepare the garden beds. Create a small number of clear themes, contribution templates, access guidance, moderation rules, and data-retention terms.	Before	Design
2	Plant seeds. Participants post concise questions, cases, ideas, or needs before or during the conference.	Days	Asynchronous
3	Cultivate connections. Others add evidence, examples, challenges, partners, and links; curators merge duplicates transparently.	Days/weeks	Collaboration
4	Harvest and replant. Select ideas for live sessions or action, summarize the rest, credit contributors, and keep an agreed archive.	After	Synthesis

FACILITATOR FOCUS Active curation is essential; an empty or chaotic platform is not participation.

ACCESS & INCLUSION Use an accessible low-bandwidth platform, email contribution route, clear moderation, multilingual support, privacy controls, and compensation for substantial community input.

SOURCE NOTE Original editorial format developed for this collection.

Selected Sources

The source notes below the formats point to origins or key practice communities. The list below supports further reading and rights checking; it is not intended as an exhaustive bibliography.

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From input to interaction, insight, and action.