



Teach For All
Community Building
Toolkit

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How To Use This Toolkit

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Starting Your Community



Watch this video for advice from Henry May, Teach First alumnus on community leadership

At Teach For All we believe that great leaders inspire leadership in others. For your community to thrive, you'll need a strong team of community leaders who are committed to organizing activities to build and add value to your community. The leadership team should also be open and willing to support other community members who want to show initiative and leadership.

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Today there are nearly 80,000 participants and alumni of Teach For All network partners in more than 50 countries across the world. One of Teach For All's biggest priorities is to build an interconnected, global community of participants and alumni who are learning from and supporting each other. We believe that local leaders can often move much faster when they have the tools and resources to start their own connections with peers, share their experiences and work together to have a greater impact.

To strengthen this effort, Teach For All have created this **Community Building Toolkit** that brings together best practices from a variety of sources to support Teach For All network participants and alumni with step-by-step guidance, theory, videos, and templates to help those who are interested in doing so to start their own communities, and organize in-person and virtual activities that foster learning across the network. This toolkit offers practical advice and top tips from network alumni on how to manage costs and funds, evaluate the impact of an activity, and much more!

We recommend that you download a local copy of the toolkit to your device in order to maximize its functionality, including the clickable links.

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Forming a Leadership Team



You may already be working in a team or have individuals in mind to form a leadership team with. If so, you can formalize the team by inviting them to join you, and start building your community!

If you don't have teammates to collaborate with, you could ask your peers if they'd like to join you, or launch an application process or a call for interest. This can be an effective way to find out how different individuals can contribute to the leadership team, identify and fill any skills or experience gaps, learn about their motivations, and gather ideas for how your community can learn from each other.

[Here is a template for a leadership team recruitment form](#) that you can adapt.



Leadership Team Roles

Once you have a leadership team in place, it's important to get clarity on what each person will be responsible for so everyone is clear about their role, and can keep each other accountable.



Here are some examples of how different responsibilities might be divided among a leadership team:

Meeting Organizer

You'll have to come together somehow (in person or virtually) with your leadership teammates to make decisions and discuss activities. Someone should be responsible for organizing the logistics of these meetings.

Activity Organizers

A few people might be responsible for organizing in-person and/or virtual activities that help your community to learn from each other.

Online community Manager

Think about how your community will connect between activities and assign a few people to manage your chosen platform and encourage engagement between members.

Promotion Manager

Someone will need to be responsible for promoting the activities your community organizes within the Teach For All network.

Membership Manager

You may need to recruit and select new members to join your community and/or virtual/in-person activities, and/or recruit new leadership team members to ensure the community is sustainable over time.

Fundraising Manager

Depending on what activities you decide to organize, you may need someone from the team to be responsible for fundraising to help cover costs.

Budget Manager

Someone from the team should be in charge of figuring out the costs related to your community's activities, negotiating with vendors and keeping track of all expenses and receipts to ensure you're within your budget.

Impact & Evaluation

As a leadership team you'll want to know whether the activities you organize are making an impact and how your community think they could be improved.



Leadership Team Best Practices

Plan Your Meetings

Agree on how often you will meet, when you will meet and how you will meet. Then send out calendar invites well in advance! *Teach For All* can provide a Zoom virtual meeting space if needed. Contact your community coach to request access or email zaira.mughal@teachforall.org

Share Responsibility

Create a rotating roster so that different leadership team members can chair each meeting.

Co-Create The Agenda

Create an online shared agenda before meetings. Share it with your team, ask for inputs and agree on it before you meet to make best use of time.

Communicate Outside of Meetings

Set up your own Whatsapp, Slack or Facebook Messenger group so you can communicate with each other easily in between meetings.

Share and Store Information

Create a shared space online to store and collaborate on documents such as [Google Drive](#).



Pro-Tip: It's easy to get straight into action, but we know that for teams to work successfully time must be spent building genuine relationships, ways of working and trust. This makes the work more fun and helps people to feel accountable to one another.

Building Your Community

One of the first actions you'll take to build your community is to define the purpose of the community (the why) and the goals you want to achieve (the what). This is important because it will help to guide your activities (the how) and decision making as your community evolves.



Think about your (potential) community members.



Who are they (yourself included)?

What might they be interested in learning about?

What could they contribute to the community?

Use [this worksheet](#) to help guide your thinking.

Co-Creating With Your Community

Invest time in building relationships with your community members. The more you understand each other, the easier it will be to find common ground, build trust, and collaborate, while having fun!

Listen First

One way of building excitement and interest in your community is by speaking to potential community members. Try to understand their values, current challenges, professional development needs, and ideas about how to connect and learn from each other.

Here are some guiding questions that you might want to ask in the methods mentioned on the next page:

- What challenges are you currently grappling with?
- Why is this community important to you?
- What do you see as the community's major strengths and assets?
- What do you think should be the purpose of this community?
- What would a successful community look like?
- How can you contribute to the community?
- What would you like to receive from this community?
- What ideas do you have for ways to connect and learn with each other?
- What impact will this community make on your community members' personal and professional lives?





Co-Creating With Your Community

Host an online conversation for your peers to share their collective thoughts

There are many ways to structure a call that will give you the insights you're looking for. Here's an example of [a call with the newly formed coding community](#). The purpose of the call was to introduce members for the first time, get an understanding of why this coding community is important for everyone on the call, and to allow everyone to share their ideas about what they would like to give to, and receive from, the community.

Have a 1:1 conversation with your peers to gather insights

With your leadership team, agree on what questions you want to ask and why it is important to ask these questions. A great way to track and analyze reflections, especially if more than one person from the leadership team is making calls, is to create a simple online form. Each team member can input answers to questions online, and that ensures feedback is stored and can easily be reviewed in one place. See the section on [Evaluation and Impact](#) for more advice.

Share an online survey

Once you have chosen your questions, create an online survey and share it with your peers. See the section on [Teach For All Support](#) for more advice on promoting your survey. It's good practice to share the results of the survey with everyone that took part, just ensure that names, contact information, and any other sensitive information is removed before sharing.



Pro-tip: You may decide to create an online survey, share the results with your peers, and then host a conversation to discuss the results. This is a great way to make sure your community members feel heard and are vested in their community from the outset.



Recruiting Community Members



Check out these [tips](#) from Vikas Plakkot, Teach For India alumnus on selecting community members

In this section you'll find advice on how to recruit and select new members to be part of your community. It includes guidance on creating and promoting membership application forms, as well as advice on how to consider diversity, equity and inclusion in your decision-making.

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Open or Closed Communities

 One of the first big decisions you'll need to make is whether your community should be open or closed.

Open communities can be joined by anyone who learns about the existence of the community.

Open communities are inclusive of anyone who wants to take part which can allow lots of diverse and interesting perspectives to surface. The downside is you might find individuals want to join who do not share the interests, passions, experience or expertise on which your community focuses. This may dilute the quality of discussions and learning which takes place.

Example:

Teach For All Europe Exchange is a space for *Teach For All* network participants and alumni to connect with peers in Europe when travelling. It's a space to arrange meetups, school visits or ask for advice on where to stay, visit and so on. The community is open to any participant or alumni of the *Teach For All* network.

Closed communities have certain criteria that only individuals who meet them can become members.

These criteria are useful to ensure members share some common characteristics and/or shared experiences which helps to keep the community focused. Having clear criteria can also be useful if your community has a limited number of places to help you decide how to allocate those places. The downside of closed communities is that they might exclude some perspectives or experiences of those who do not meet the entry criteria.

Example:

The Scaling Social Entrepreneur Community of Practice is only open to *Teach For All* network alumni entrepreneurs. New places are limited to 10 per year and members must have founded a social enterprise that they have been running for at least three years, and be grappling with how to scale their social enterprises.

If you decide that your community will be a closed community, you will need to develop the eligibility criteria. Here are some questions to help you think through this:

- Do people in this community need to have had a certain shared experience?
- Is this community for people in a specific career pathway or position of leadership?
- Is it for people that are interested in a particular topic or shared challenge?
- How must members be able to contribute to this community?
- Is this community for people in a particular region or context only?



Accepting New Members



Consider the existing membership of your community.



How diverse is your membership?

Are there voices and perspectives missing?

Do you want to encourage new members who can bring new inputs to your community?

Once you've determined the eligibility criteria for your community, it's time to figure out how you'll assess whether members meet this criteria.

Member nominations

Existing members of your community already understand why and how the community interacts, and are well placed to recommend potential participants and alumni from their networks who they believe can add value to the community.

Simple questions

If you have a platform your community uses, like Facebook, you can ask questions when people request to 'Join' to help you assess if they meet the eligibility criteria.

For example:

1. Which *Teach For All* network partner are you affiliated with?
2. Why do you want to join this community?





Developing a Selection Process



If you have limited places in your community, or very specific eligibility requirements, you may decide you want to develop a more formal selection process for selecting new members.

Step 1: Developing the questions

Create an [application form](#) which asks questions to assess the eligibility requirements. Here's an example of an application form used to recruit members for the Education Policy Community of Practice. We recommend that you use [Microsoft forms](#) if you have a Microsoft account because it's free to use and globally accessible. Google Forms can also be effective, though Google is not accessible in China, which may limit your reach if you intend to work with Teach For China participants and/or alumni.

Send your form to connect@teachforall.org if you'd like *Teach For All* to give you feedback.

Confirm who from your community will review and select the successful applicants.

Step 2: Promote the opportunity

Promote your form in Teach For All's monthly newsletter CONNECT which is sent to Teach For All network participants and alumni on the last day of each month. The deadline for submitting opportunities is the 15th of each month.

Share with your network! Email your peers, share in relevant WhatsApp or other groups you're in, and post on your social media channels.

Ask your *Teach For All* network partner to help you promote the opportunity through their communication channels, i.e. social media, newsletters, direct emails, etc. if relevant.

Step 3: Prepare the selection committee

It's important to think about the diversity of the selection committee and make sure multiple perspectives are represented. The committee should be clear on the eligibility and selection criteria and have a collective commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusivity. It's important they are aware of their own biases and space is created for them to challenge each other during the selection process. Find out more about [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#) here.

Step 4: Notify applicants

Don't forget to notify unsuccessful candidates and thank them for their interest in joining your community. You may also consider providing them with feedback on their application.



Creating a Community Platform



Hear advice from Zaira Mughal, Director of Communities at Teach For All about engaging your community members online

Another key part of building your community, is figuring out how your community will connect with one another in between organized activities. You'll need to create a space where your members can ask questions, swap ideas, share their opinions, and most importantly, build their relationships!

This is where technology platforms can really help. In this section, you'll find advice about the different technology platforms available to your community; and practical suggestions for making sure your members feel like they're part of a valuable and thriving community.

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Choosing an Online Platform



Here are some questions to think through when choosing a platform for your community to connect with each other online:



How many members are part of your community currently?

How many members do you think your community will grow to?

Where are community members located? (Are any technology platforms not accessible? For example, Facebook isn't accessible in China)

What technology platforms are your community members already using?

We also recommend asking your community how they'd prefer to connect between activities. The more community members feel ownership of their space and their community, the more likely they'll be to engage with one another.



Pro-tip: This section focuses on the platform where the whole community will connect. Sub groups of the community (e.g. the leadership team) may also connect through other channels, such as email or a leadership team WhatsApp group.



Choosing an Online Platform

Here are some pros and cons to consider when using Facebook, WhatsApp, and Slack:

	Facebook Group	WhatsApp Group	Slack
Good For:	Sharing content, having discussions and engaging large groups of people i.e. 30+	Staying in touch with people, and quick conversations in small groups i.e. 2 > 30 people	Working on projects
Share videos, pictures, links and documents	✓	✓ New members can only see content shared once they join the group	✓
Organize content and conversations	✓	✗	✓
Live interaction via text	✓	✓	✓
Live interaction via call	✓ Via Facebook Messenger App	✓	✓



Choosing an Online Platform

	Facebook Group	WhatsApp Group	Slack
Adding members	Members request to join or are invited	Manually added	Manually added
Includes description of group and instructions	✓	✗	✓
Moderate conversations	✓	✗	✗
More than one group admin	✓	✓	✓
Global Accessibility	Not available in China	Not available in China	Not available in China
Other comments	Requires active Creating a Community Platform	People must provide their personal mobile/cell number to join	You can add plugins to slack, such as googledrive
Set up	Click here for detailed instructions on how to set up a Facebook Group	Click here for detailed instructions on how to set up a WhatsApp group	Click here for detailed instructions on how to set up a Slack workspace

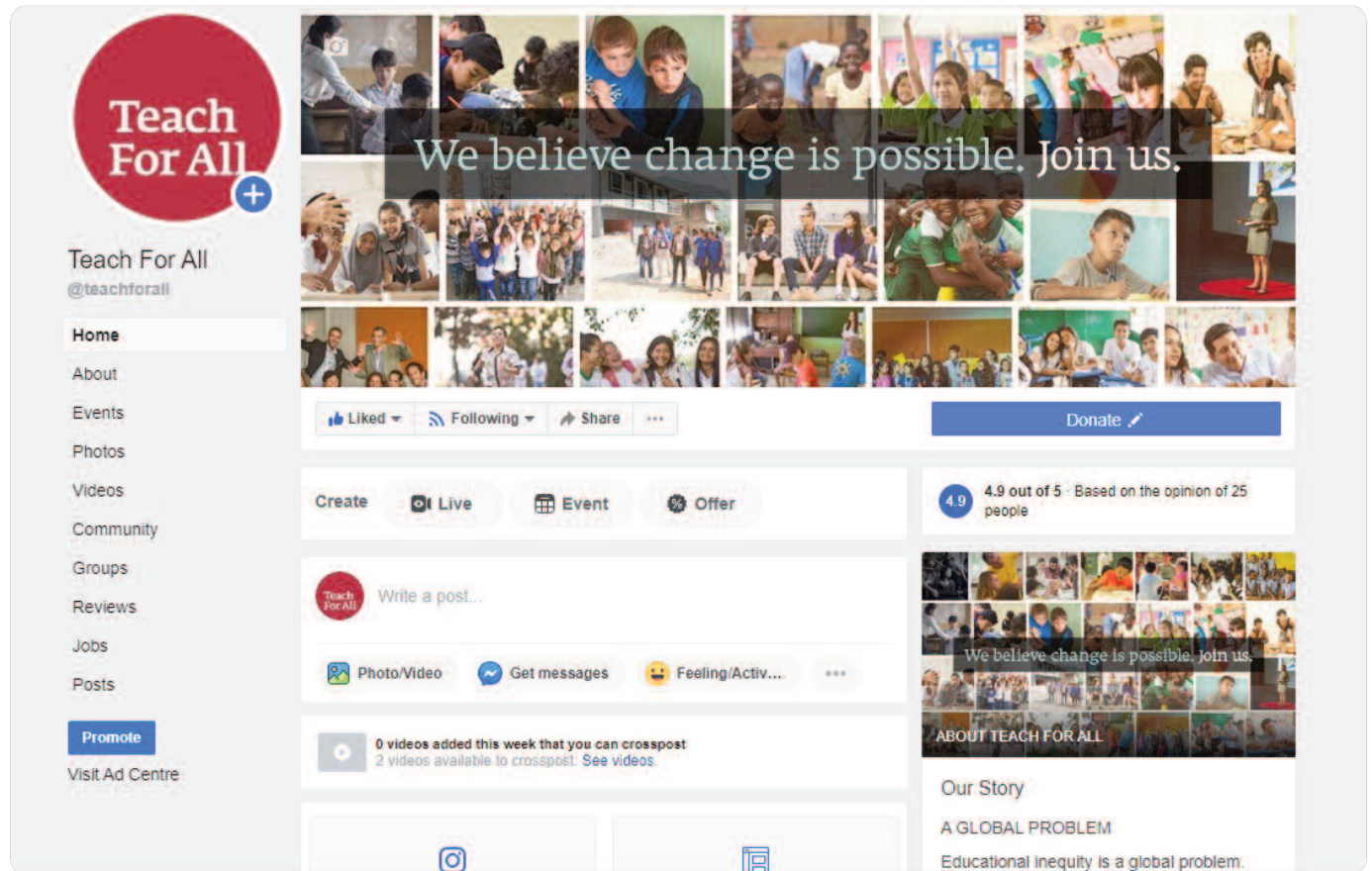


Teach For All Network Facebook Communities



Across the *Teach For All* network, a growing number of communities of network participants and alumni are using Facebook groups to connect regularly on different topics including teacher development, STEM teaching and education policy.

You can see a full list [here](#).



Pro-tip: We recommend using Facebook Groups for your community platform, instead of creating a Facebook Page. Pages are generally used to promote content, products or services from an organization or business, whereas Facebook Groups are designed for like-minded people to share their opinions and have discussions. Groups can be self-sustaining—it's possible that members can be active and create new conversations, which will keep the group engaged without any activity from you. In contrast, pages require constant posts in order to remain active.



Facebook Group Basics



If you've decided to start a new Facebook Group for your community, here are some best practices that will help your community members understand what the community is about and how to engage with each other on the platform.



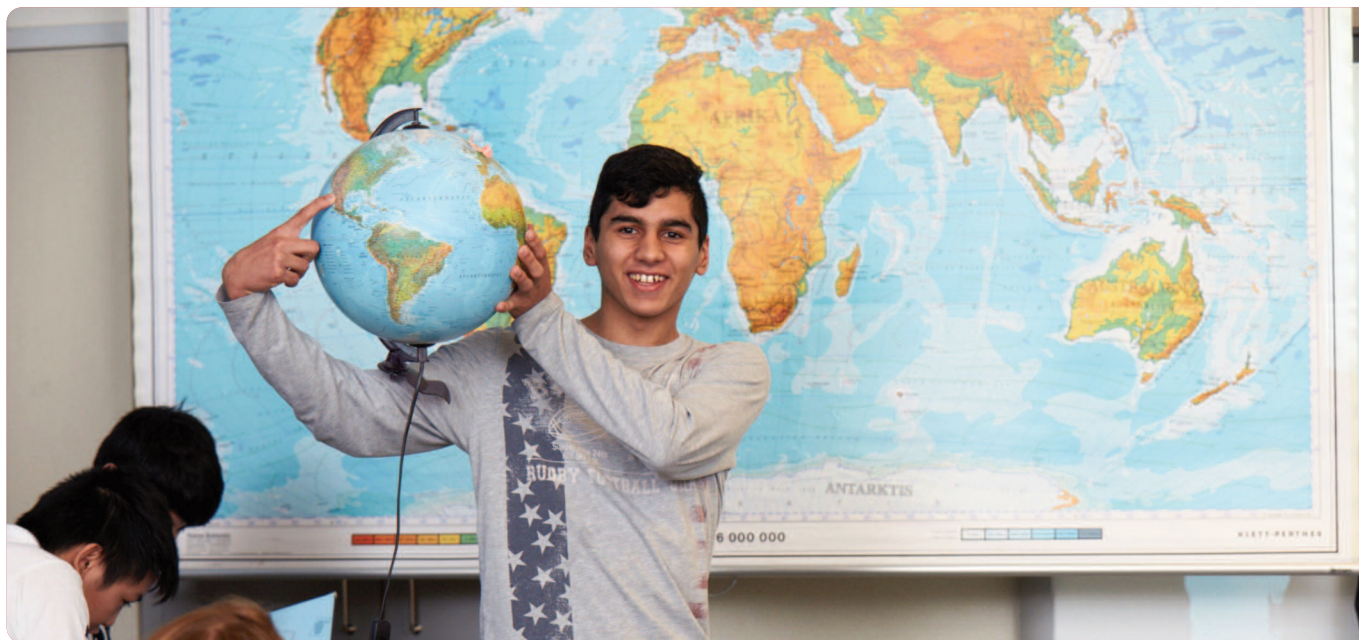
Name Your Group

Adding 'Teach For All network' in the title of your Facebook group will help participants and alumni in the network to find it easily, for example *Teach For All Network Asia Pacific Region* or *Coding@Teach For All network*.



Cover Photo

Use a cover photo that visually communicates your community's purpose. For example, use a picture of a map or a globe if your community is about travel, or use a picture of children at computers if your group is about kids learning programming.



Group Description

In the 'About' section of your Facebook group, include two to three sentences (350 words max) that describe who the community is for, the main purpose, and how members should use the group to connect. Have a look at the 'About' section in the [Teach For All Social Innovation Community](#) Facebook Group for inspiration.

Here are some questions to consider when creating your description:



What is the purpose of the community?

Who should join this community?

Is it for people who share the same practice? For example, school leaders, teachers, policy makers etc. OR is it for people who share the same interests? For example, STEM, or traveling in Europe. OR is your community focused on a particular country or region? For example, educational policy in Latin America?

How should your community members use the space?

Include a few sentences or bullet points that give examples of what to post, what not to post, and what language to post in.



Facebook Group Basics



Closed Group

We recommend that you created a 'closed group' on Facebook so that you can approve or deny people who request to join. This will allow you to control who becomes a member of your community.

You can ask people who request to join your group questions to help you assess if they are genuinely interested in your community/topic and what their contribution will be.

For example:

1. Which *Teach For All* network partner are you affiliated with?
2. Why do you want to join this community?
3. A question related to your community purpose.

For example: What is your connection to students impacted by emergency situations? Or, What do you hope to learn about education policy from this community?

View instructions on how to add questions and approve members [here](#).



Pin Important Information

Pin important information to the top of the group, such as your introduction, rules and guidelines, or posts you don't want new members to miss. A pinned post will stick to the very top of your group feed, regardless of whether you or other members publish new posts. View instructions on how to do this [here](#).



Community Rules

Is this community a safe space, free from bullying, discrimination, and hate speech? Do you want to discourage spam and irrelevant promotions? [Click here](#) for instructions on how to create rules in your Facebook Community.



Be a Community Role Model

Model the type of behavior you'd like to see, help members if they need it, and make them feel comfortable. We recommend a team of 2-5 admins to keep the community engaged and energized and share the following responsibilities:

- Build the community culture by modeling how to engage within the Facebook Community, i.e. answer questions, add comments, reply to comments, like posts, etc.
- Help members get to know each other. See the next page for ideas on building relationships.
- Ensure the community is adhering to group rules, delete any content that violates rules, and communicate to the poster about why it violated rules.
- Manage member requests, i.e. approve/reject new members.
- Respond to members' direct messages and questions within a reasonable amount of time.



A Thriving and Self-Sufficient Online Community



Your virtual platform is the place where your community members will get to know each other, ask questions, share ideas, build relationships, and support each other.

It's unlikely that these things will happen immediately or automatically, so you'll need to plan engagement by modeling ways that members can engage with each other and nurture them to adopt the same behaviors. Your aim over time is for members to self-sustain their community by generating and sharing their own content, as well as authentically engaging with their peers. The next few pages contain engagement ideas to help you get started.



Help the Community Build Relationships

Here are some simple and fun prompts to help your members build relationships, find common interests, and be inspired by others:

1. Share your favorite place – Learn about something community members like by asking a simple question.
2. Share a photo from your window right now – If your group has members in different time zones, this would be especially interesting.
3. Favorite food or dish – Members may find some inspiration, and it's a great way to learn about everyone's culture.
4. Favorite person and why – It can be a celebrity, a family member, a colleague, etc.
5. Rainy or sunny days activities – Everyone can find some inspiration from this engagement post!
6. The first thing you do in the morning – Some of your members may have routines that can benefit others.
7. How do you relax? – Another great one for inspiration.
8. You can't live without... – Engage your group members by asking them to complete this sentence.
9. Your favorite activity from when you were a child - Another way to learn about your community members.
10. Last TV show you watched – Another great one to inspire other members.

Welcome New Members

Inviting new members to introduce themselves helps them feel welcomed in the community.

When you add new members to your Facebook Community, you'll see a message on the right side of the group page that says, "You have X new members this week. Write a post to welcome them." Click the Write Post button, and Facebook will pre-populate a new post for you with all of the new members tagged. Click here for [instructions on how to welcome new members](#).

A Thriving and Self-Sufficient Online Community



Use HashTags to Organize Content and Create Rituals

Organize Posts by Topic

Organize posts by topic. A hashtag is a type of label used on Facebook and other social media platforms, that makes it easier for community members to find posts related to a specific topic. You create hashtags by placing “#” in front of a word or unspaced phrase (ex. #adviceplease #usefulresource #inspiration). When community members search for a hashtag, they will see each post with that hashtag. You might want to decide on a few hashtags for your community, share a post that instructs your members to tag their posts with the same hashtags, and pin this to the top of your group. Click here for [instructions on how to add topics to posts](#).

Create rituals

You can even ask members to post a piece of content using themes that relate to your community purpose.

For example:

#MentorMondays

Ask a question and the community will provide guidance

#TeachingtipTuesdays

Share a teaching tip

#WisdomWednesday

Share advice, or an aspirational quote, blog etc.

#ThursdayThoughts

What's on your mind? Do you have an idea or suggestion?

#FeelgoodFriday

Share something that will make others smile

#Letscelebrate

Share a success, no matter how big or small and celebrate together

Teach For All Education Policy gathering in Manila 2020





A Thriving and Self-Sufficient Online Community



Share Valuable Knowledge and Opportunities

Community members are more likely to engage online if they feel that their community is a useful resource for knowledge and insights. Here are some tips for creating and sharing valuable content that is likely to catch their attention:

Human Centric Stories

Invite your members to share their experiences and personal stories about how they overcame a challenge, a risk they took, or what inspired them to start a new project.

Natural Interests

Share the content you naturally consume from other platforms such as reports, articles, and videos that are related to the purpose of your community. If you enjoy it, share it and tell your community members why... Chances are they'll enjoy it too!

Promote Learning Opportunities

Promote learning opportunities like virtual trainings, events or scholarships. Look at the [CONNECT](#) newsletter, which is published at the end of each month and share opportunities, events, stories, etc. that are relevant to your community.



Spark Conversations Between Community Members

Organize a Facebook Watch Party

Choose a video(s) and create a 'watch party' event on Facebook that invites community members to watch content together and share their reflections. Here's a quick [YouTube tutorial](#) on how to set this up.

Facebook Polls

Use Facebook Polls as a quick and visual way to gauge your community's interest in a particular idea, or use it to spark a discussion. For example: "What do you think about a monthly fireside chat to share our personal/professional stories? Choose an option and comment below to share other ideas! 1) Yes, that sounds amazing! 2) No, I'm not interested."

Click here for [instructions on how to set up a poll](#).

Facebook Live

Facebook Live allows a member of your community to broadcast live from anywhere in the world, and interact with viewers in real time who have tuned in to listen and ask questions. For example, you could run a '20 minutes on....' monthly series using Facebook Live. This is a great way to create content on a topic that members can still enjoy even if they don't tune in live.

Click here for [instructions and best practices for Facebook Live](#).

Shared Documents

Create shared documents in your Facebook Community. This can be a helpful tool for co-creating the community [purpose statement](#) with your community, or any other activity that needs members to write down their thoughts, questions, etc. Click here for [instructions on how to use this feature](#).

Social Learning Units

Use the social learning units feature to share knowledge and resources that you would like community members to engage with. This is helpful if you're using Facebook to share content related to a learning circle or activity that requires members to complete tasks. Click here for [instructions on how to use this feature](#).



Planning Your Content



Consistent engagement is key to keep the energy of your group high. This is a [useful template](#) to help you brainstorm topics, think of engagement ideas for each topic, and create a content calendar so you can decide what to post, and when.

Here is some guidance for how to use the template:

Step 1: Topics and subtopics:

Write down topics that your community might be interested in. For example, a holistic education community might be interested in movement, nutrition, creativity, and mindfulness.

- a. If a topic is broad, you might want to create subtopics related to it. For example, for “movement,” you may choose several types of movement, such as sports / dance / activities to do at home etc. If your topic isn’t very broad, you can go straight to step 2.

Step 2: Ideas generator

List each topic or subtopic at the top of the template and use the engagement prompts in column A to think of ways to share more information related to this topic. Not all engagement ideas will be relevant for your topic, and feel free to add new engagement ideas that aren’t listed.

Step 3: Content calendar

This template is designed to help you plan your content. It’s good practice to plan posts in advance, so that you have enough time to find or create visuals, text, quotes etc.

This template could be helpful for sharing responsibility in your leadership team too.

If you have lots of ideas for every topic, you may decide to create a monthly, bi-weekly or weekly theme. For example, month 1 is all about movement, month 2 is nutrition, month 3 is mindfulness... There’s no right or wrong way of doing this!



Pro-tip: Keep track of ‘global days’ such as World Teachers Day, or global, regional, and national holidays or events that are relevant for your community and create posts related to each.



Monitoring Community Engagement



The Group Insights section in your Facebook Group is a great tool for assessing how your community is engaging with the content you're posting, i.e. is it useful and are members responding to it? Facebook tracks this by looking at the number of likes, comments, and views.

To view this information, click on Group Insights on the left side of your group, then select Engagement. This will bring up a number of charts where you can see how many posts were made on a particular day and members' reactions to each.

At the bottom of the section, you can find Top Posts. This is a great way to see the types of posts that are receiving the most engagement. Click on each post to understand why a particular post is performing better than another. For example, a post that asks a question sparks conversation and therefore might receive more comments than an inspirational quote.

These insights may help you to adjust your content calendar by focusing on engagement ideas that are generating more positive reactions.

Here's a [blog](#) with more information on understanding group insights.





Organizing Virtual Activities



Watch this video from Toni Maraviglia, Director of Virtual Learning and Community, Teach For All for advice about facilitating virtual activities

Hosting virtual activities can be a cost effective and efficient way for your community to connect, share and learn from each other. However, it can also be daunting, especially when you're connecting multiple people across time zones, with multiple languages and different cultural norms! This section contains tips on choosing a virtual format and platform, advice for designing a virtual activity, how to facilitate inclusively, and advice to support people to maximize the learning experience that you can share with your community.

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Useful Tools

[Sign Up To Use Zoom For Free \(up to 45 minutes\)](#)

[Check Global Time Zones](#)

[Doodle Poll](#)

[Eventbrite](#)



Choosing a Format For your Virtual Activity



Here are some questions to think through before choosing a format for a virtual activity:



1. Who is your audience?
2. What are your learning objectives and how will you achieve these through a virtual activity?
3. What is your vision for success? Describe your ideal experience.
4. What constraints are you operating under? For example: availability of content and/or technology, language differences, bandwidth issues, scheduling, and facilitation capacity.

Virtual Activity Type

What Is This?

When Is This Useful?

Virtual Consultancy

- A single community member pitches a problem to the rest of the community. The community then asks clarifying questions, before working together to generate different possible solutions. During this time the community member who pitched the problem stays silent and listens
- The consultancy ends with the pitcher sharing their reflections on the different solutions the community has come up with

- It enables community members to deep dive into a real problem. In many cases this could be a problem that others are also facing
- It provides an opportunity for multiple solutions to be generated based on a multitude of perspectives
- It enables community members to learn from each other

Interview or
“Fireside Chat”

- A conversation between two individuals - one is the interviewer and the other is the interviewee. During the conversation they discuss the personal experience of the interviewee which the audience may be able to relate to
- The rest of the community is a virtual audience.
- There may be time during or after the interview for community members to ask questions, or share reflections in small or big groups

- It allows your community to deep dive into someone’s experience, learn from and reflect on how it relates to their own work
- It can be a good way to engage external speakers in your community. Recordings of interviews can be used within workshops to spark ideas, start dialogue, or used as examples
- This format can often inspire community members to join because of connections with well-known speakers or thought leaders





Choosing a Format For your Virtual Activity

Virtual Activity Type

What Is This?

When Is This Useful?

Learning Circles or Peer Learning Groups

- Members of the community are split into smaller peer groups, to collaborate on challenges or opportunities in their roles
- Small group members may have the same role at different organizations
- There can be an agenda set by a facilitator
- May be used to set aside time for reflective practice and peer support

- Useful for creating a support structure for those facing similar challenges in their daily work
- Enables community members to self-determine the topics of discussion
- Helps to engage in community members in discussions, set goals and keep each other accountable
- Demands less central facilitation during the learning experience, as it is driven primarily by the community members

Workshop

- Opportunity to learn a new skill or acquire new knowledge about a particular topic
- Heavy emphasis is often placed upon gaining new knowledge or the practice of a new skill
- Organized by one or more facilitator

- Useful for engaging community members around one particular topic or objective at a time
- Can initiate further learning by sparking interest in a particular topic
- Can also be a great “starting point” for a topic that community members may have limited knowledge or skills within
- Helps to refresh mindsets or practice skills that community members may already have had exposure or experience with

Virtual Panel Discussion

- Opportunity to hear specific examples around a particular topic or subject
- Combines testimonials of those who exemplify strengths and/or weaknesses of a particular skill or mindset
- Testimonials may be pre-recorded and edited or shared live

- Useful in providing examples or best practices around a topic
- Gives community members concrete examples of what to do or not to do
- Provokes further questioning or deeper probing into a topic or idea

Webinar

- Virtual version of a seminar
- Most focus heavily on listening to someone present
- Often shows a learner how to acquire a new skill
- Audience participation is meant to be about questions rather than practice of a skill or synthesis of knowledge

- Useful for quickly sharing specific skills or knowledge
- Webinars can be video or audio recorded, enabling those who did not attend live to engage in the same learning experience, minus question and answer

Choosing a Virtual Platform

Once you have clarity on the learning objectives and format of your virtual activity, you'll need to choose a technology platform to host it.

Here are some popular platforms to consider:

	Zoom	Skype	Google Hangouts	Facebook Messenger Group Calls	WhatsApp Group Calls
Free	✓ For 45 minutes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Download app	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Video, voice and chat	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maximum number of people on a call	100	50	10	50 If more than 6, users can only see the host	4
Screen sharing	✓	✓ Host must have a business account	✓ With an additional app: Chrome remote	✗	✗
Record	✓ Recordings cannot be shared from a free account	✓ Host must have a business account	✓ Host must have a business account	✗	✗
Available on desktop, laptop and mobile	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Break out rooms	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗



Using Zoom to Connect



Watch this video and be inspired by a virtual learning experience hosted on zoom



At Teach For All, we prefer to use Zoom for virtual activities. If you are planning a virtual activity that needs longer than 45 minutes, and you don't have a paid Zoom account and would like to use one, please contact your community coach to request to use their Zoom meeting room. You can also send an email to zaira.mughal@teachforall.org to request the same. See [this link](#) for more guidance on how to download and use zoom.



Designing Your Content



There are many factors to consider when designing the content of your virtual activity, to ensure everyone can fully participate and meet the learning objectives you have set.

Be Inclusive

It's likely your community will be made up of a diverse group of people. It's important to consider things like language, timezone, audio/visual capabilities, and cultural norms when designing your agenda. Be sure to check out the section in this Toolkit on [Ensuring Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#).

Plan an Agenda

Plan an agenda to help you to stay on track. [Here is a template you can use](#)

Keep introductions short

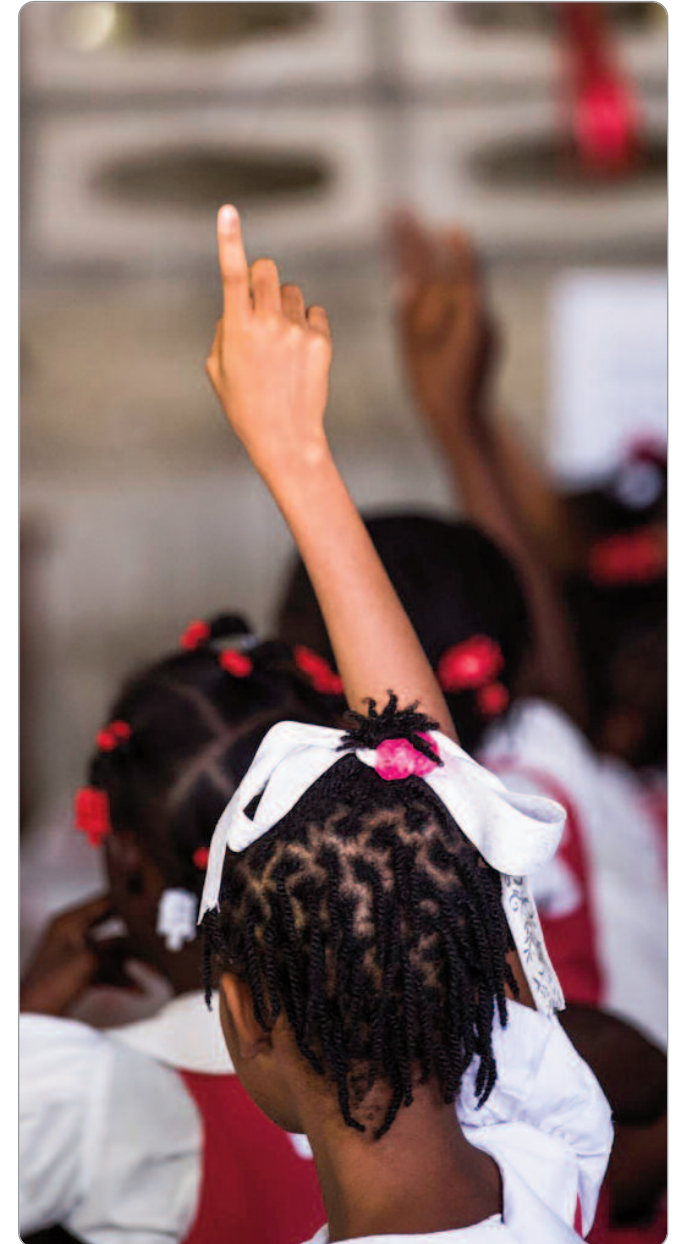
If you have more than 10 people attending your virtual activity, it can be difficult and time-consuming for everyone to introduce themselves. Instead, you could ask people to share things like where are they dialling in from, or what brings them to the call in the chat.

Build in time for community members to get to know each other

To help community members feel at ease, facilitate a simple icebreaker. You can ask a question that community members can easily answer like "What did you have for breakfast this morning?" or "What are your plans for the weekend?" This is a great way to boost energy at the start of an activity.



Pro-tip: Don't forget to get feedback to determine whether your objectives were met and how activities could be improved for next time! See the [Evaluation and Impact](#) section for more advice.





Designing Your Content

Enable Reflection

Adults learn best when they can reflect and personalize the content they are learning about. Consider creating time and activities in your agenda to allow community members to reflect. This could be by breaking into small groups (which also helps to foster relationship building), allotting time for silent reflection, or asking community members to share their thoughts in the group chat.

Plan Engaging Learning Activities

While slide decks can be a great way to engage your community visually, try to mix things up! No one wants to be staring at slides for more than 15 minutes. Try experimenting with different activities and tools to engage your community members in the call.

Give Virtual Breaks

If your activity is more than an hour long, give community members the opportunity to go off camera, stretch, get water, go to the bathroom, etc.

Co-Facilitate

Ask community members to support you by taking on additional facilitation roles during the virtual activity. For example, assign someone else the role of Technical Lead and ensure they have access to assign community members to breakout rooms or monitor messages in the chat so you can focus on facilitating.



Pro-tip: Use interactive features on Zoom

1. You can enable a WhiteBoard function on Zoom to co-create visuals and capture thoughts of your community while sharing your screen [Click here for instructions](#).
2. You can enable a polls feature on Zoom which will allow the Tech Host to create single choice or multiple choice polling questions during your virtual activity. Tech Hosts can launch the poll during your meeting and gather the responses from community members. You also have the ability to download a poll report after the meeting. [Click here for instructions](#).





Preparing Your Community for the Virtual Activity



By now you've planned your agenda and selected which technology platform you're going to use. Now it's time to invite your community to take part, and help them prepare. Here are some tips to ensure your virtual activity is successful.

This [website](#) can help you to view conflicts across time zones. You may want to set up a [Doodle poll](#) with date and time options for community members to choose from to help determine the best time slot. You may also consider running your virtual activity more than once.

Invite community members to participate

Depending on the audience, you could send an email and/or calendar invitation to your community members to join by:

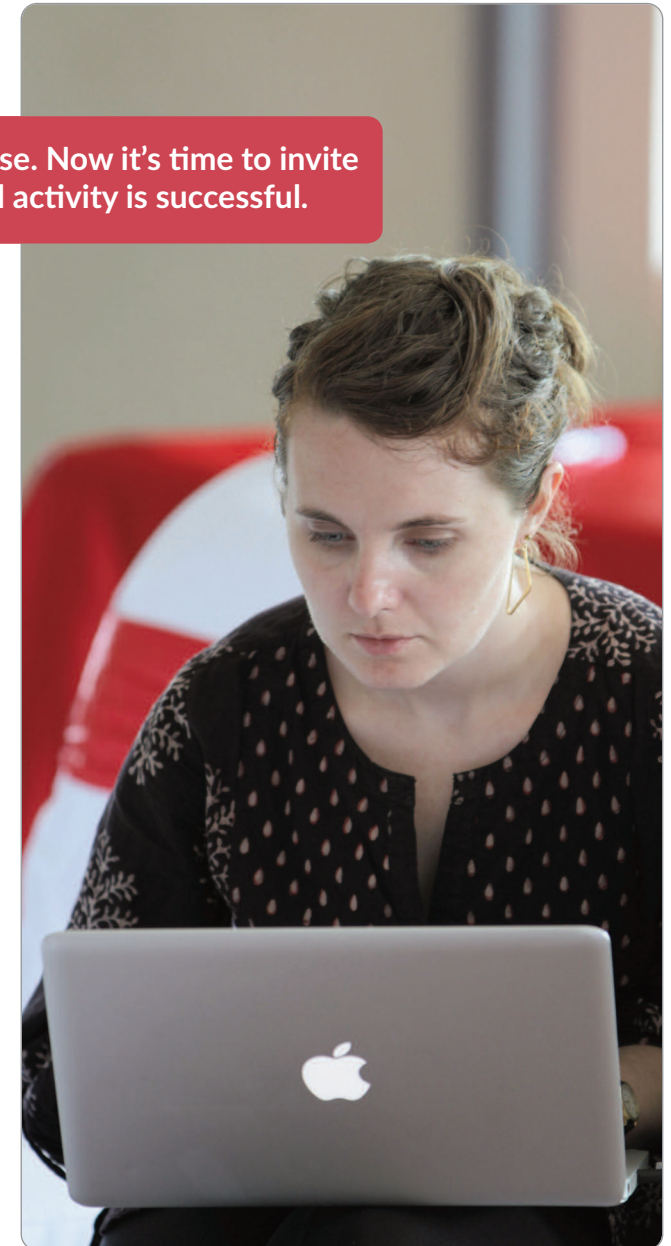
1. Create an event using [Eventbrite](#) inviting your community to register. Here's an example of an [Eventbrite invitation](#) for a coding community call.
2. Set up a Microsoft form or Googleform, or
3. Simply post it in your [online community platform](#).

Share pre-work in advance

Consider sending the agenda, learning objectives, presentation materials, discussion questions, and other learning resources in advance of the call, to give your community members enough time to read, digest, and prepare questions.

Send reminders

Remind community members about your virtual activity before it happens by sending reminders a week and/or day in advance. This can be a good way to re-share any pre-work materials, and ensure that everyone has received the correct details for how to join the virtual activity.





Organizing In-Person Activities



Teach For All Scaling Social Entrepreneurs self-organized event in Bulgaria 2019

Hosting in-person activities is a fantastic way to deepen relationships between members of your community, leverage peer to peer learning, and accelerate the sharing of ideas. There are however, a number of elements that you will need to think through to plan and implement a successful in-person event. This section includes advice on key things to consider, like inviting and managing attendees, designing your content, organizing logistics, and roles within a planning team.

When organizing and hosting a cross-border event, Teach For All encourages event organizers to take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of organizers and participants. While the appropriate steps needed to ensure the safety of organizers and participants will

differ for every event, Teach For All has provided in this section a general description of certain issues that organizers should consider when organizing or hosting an event, including certain safety precautions. This section does not provide a comprehensive list of safety or other issues that you should consider when organizing or hosting an event. This section is intended for informational purposes only and is not intended to serve as legal advice. Teach For All advises all event organizers to consult with their own legal advisors and other consultants to ensure that their events are conducted in accordance with the requirements of applicable law and appropriate steps are taken to protect the safety of the organizers and participants.

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Resources

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[Example of a Logistics and Culture memo](#)



Planning Team Roles



In-person activities often need several people to manage them. You may also work with venue representatives, external suppliers, and other stakeholders who will need managing.

The list below includes some of the main roles your internal team may need to take on:

Content team/lead

The content lead works with multiple people (e.g. other community members, external speakers, *Teach For All* staff, etc.) to create the overall agenda, and ensure sessions are aligned with the theme and objectives of the event. The content lead's job is to design and implement a compelling agenda that ensures attendees meet their learning objectives from the event in an engaging way. The content lead isn't necessarily responsible for designing and delivering every session - they may decide to delegate different parts of the agenda - but the person/team in this role does have oversight of the overall content for the event.

Logistics team/lead

The logistics lead organizes the operations and logistics of the event. This can include sourcing and working with the venue, arranging accommodations, organizing meals (and taking care of dietary requirements), supporting attendees to secure visas, arranging local transportation, sourcing materials, organizing audio and visual equipment, and more.

Safety and security lead

This person is responsible for ensuring a thorough risk assessment is completed, a plan for emergencies is in place, emergency contact details for attendees have been collected and attendees have information about local services in case of emergency. Their contact details should be shared with attendees in advance. See the section on [Safety and Security](#) for more details.

Attendee manager

This person designs and manages the process for inviting and selecting attendees. The attendee manager may also be the main point of contact for attendees, working closely with the logistics team to share important information about each attendee. See the section on [Recruiting Community Members](#) for advice on how to design an application form for potential attendees.

Budget manager

The budget manager is responsible for creating and managing the budget, working out the event costs, identifying income streams, making sure payments are made and contracts are adhered to, keeping track of receipts, and ensuring your event stays successfully within budget. See the section on [Managing Costs and Fundraising](#) for more advice.



Planning Team Best Practices



Hold Regular Team Meetings

Hold regular team meetings about deadlines and capacity, and give each lead time to share their updates, challenges, successes, and next steps.

Create a Shared Project Plan

Create a shared [project plan](#) early in your planning process. It will help you to track important project milestones, as well as information about your attendees that will help you to plan logistics, hotel and venue information, meal planning, and track materials.

Share a Summary of Your Activity

This is a useful [in-person activity planner template](#), especially if you need to share a summary of your in-person activity with stakeholders.

Create a Shared Filing System

Enabling your event team to have shared access to a [Google Drive](#) and [Google Documents](#) can make planning much easier for everyone, especially if you're working across contexts and time zones. Use these tools to store your to-do list, tasks, deadlines, and responsibilities for all team members, as well as to store contracts, payment receipts, etc.





Choosing a Format for Your In-Person Activity



Here are some questions to think through before choosing a format for an in-person activity. You may combine several formats, depending on your learning objectives, how much time you have, and budget restrictions.



1. Why are you hosting an in-person activity? Could you host this activity virtually?
2. Who is your audience?
3. What are your learning objectives and how will you incorporate these into the in-person activity?
4. What is your vision for success? Describe your ideal experience.
5. What is the impact of this in-person activity, i.e. what do you think attendees will do differently as a result of this activity?
6. What constraints are you operating under? For example: availability of content, language differences, scheduling, facilitation capacity, and budget.

In-Person Activity Type

What is this?

When is this useful?

Networking or meet-up

- Designed to bring like-minded people together to chat, share experiences and hopefully find common ground that could lead to opportunities to collaborate

- Useful for relationship building
- Can be informal with no program

'Lightning talk' or fast presentation

- Lightning talks are fast paced presentations (i.e. speakers are limited to around 10 minutes)
- Most focus on listening to someone present
- Audience participation is meant to be about asking questions rather than to practice a skill

- Useful for presenting many ideas in a limited period of time
- Keeps the attention of the audience



Choosing a Format for Your In-Person Activity

In-Person Activity Type	What is this?	When is this useful?
Panel discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity to hear specific examples around a particular topic or subject• Combines testimonials of those who exemplify strengths and/or weaknesses of a particular skill or mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Useful in providing examples or best practices around a topic• Gives community members concrete examples of what to do or not to do• Provokes further questioning or deeper probing into a topic or idea
Interview or “Fireside Chat”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A conversation between two individuals - one is the interviewer and the other is the interviewee. During the conversation they discuss the personal experience of the interviewee which the audience may be able to relate to• There may be time during or after the interview for community members to ask questions, or share reflections in small or big groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It allows your community to deep dive into someone’s experience and learn from and reflect on how it relates to their own work• It can be a good way to engage external speakers in your community• This format can often inspire community members to join because of connections with well-known speakers or thought leaders
Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity to learn a new skill or acquire new knowledge about a particular topic• Heavy emphasis is often placed upon gaining new knowledge or the practice of a new skill• Organized by one or more facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Useful for engaging community members around one particular topic or objective at a time• Can initiate further learning by sparking interest in a particular topic• Can also be a great “starting point” for a topic that community members may have limited knowledge about or skills in• Helps to refresh mindsets or practice skills that community members may already have had exposure to or experience with
Hackathon, thinkathon, or ideathon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• These activities are centered around a specific challenge.• Teams (often including diverse stakeholders) are given a specific period of time to develop a concept and/or project plan that solves the challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good for inspiring creative thinking and collaboration• Great way to ‘test’ ideas by having attendees look for issues with the proposed solution



Choosing a Format for Your In-Person Activity

In-Person Activity Type	What is this?	When is this useful?
Roundtable discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually 4-10 people participate in a discussion around a table• The discussion is centered on a theme, and/or specific questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Useful for when you have a large group, and want to give everyone a chance to share their perspectives• Great way to present key points and insights to the larger group
Pitch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rapid-fire session (3-5 minutes) where people pitch their ideas to a panel of experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good for presenting a lot of ideas within a small period of time• Can be used at the end of a hackathon or problem solving workshop to present solutions
School visit or stakeholder visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendees observe first-hand practices by visiting a stakeholder. For example, a local school, NGO, business, network organization, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Useful for seeing live applications of a particular skill• Great way to deepen understanding of a particular context by experiencing it



Designing Your Content



An inspiring theme that is relevant to your attendees and 2-3 clear objectives will help your content and team stay focused on the core purpose of your in-person activity. It's important that your objectives are centered on the learning outcomes of your attendees. Use [this content plan template](#) to help you capture the below and design your agenda.



Hear from Neha Sahu, Teach For India alumna and content team member for the Scaling Social Entrepreneurs community on how they designed the content for their event

Here are some questions to help you think through your content and agenda:



Adult learning principles

- Have you thought about how learners can draw on their experience to incorporate your content?
- Did you plan the content keeping in mind different learning needs and designing various types of experiences (e.g. ensuring that learning is both active and self-directed and not all passive listening)?
- Did you leave space for action planning and individual and/or group reflection?
- Will attendees need to do any pre-work in order to prepare or come into the event with shared expectations?



Designing Your Content



Watch this video from Sanju Pal, Teach First alumna and content team member for the Scaling Social Entrepreneurs community for advice on relationship building



Pro-tip: Prioritize creating group norms with your community members at the beginning of the in-person activity, or on a pre-event call or meeting. This helps community members agree on behaviours and it can help you to course-correct if you go beyond the norms.

Here's a [template for how to facilitate this](#) and an [example of group norms](#).

Relationship Building

- Have you included icebreakers?
- Have you included informal group time for chatting during coffee breaks and lunch?
- Have you programmed personal time for the group, like dinner, cultural visits etc?



Maintaining energy

- What time are your starting and ending each day?
- How are you opening and closing the activity each day, and/or as a whole?
- Have you included enough breaks between the sessions?
- Have you included 'energizers' in the morning, after breaks, and/or after lunch?
- Have you included space for personal downtime?



Designing Your Content



Ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion

Be mindful of the diversity within your community. There will be different cultural norms, ways of interacting, communication and learning styles as well as languages and other aspects of diversity. You should find out what extra supports individuals in your community may need to be able to participate fully. For example, you might need to find a way to provide translation or support individuals with audio/visual impairments or other disabilities. Try to give your community members an opportunity to share their requirements with you in advance of the event so you can work with them to ensure they are able to participate. Don't assume they will tell you! See the section on [Ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion](#) for more information.



Overall agenda

- When are you likely to go over time? Plan and adjust accordingly!
- If your activities take part in different venues, have you included travel time?

Once you have a comprehensive draft of your agenda, get feedback! You may want to share your content plan with your attendees or an expert within your network to help make it as successful as possible.



Have more than one conversation with different session owners.

If several people are leading sessions, make sure they understand who the audience is, the specific objectives of the session, as well as the overall objectives of the in-person activity.



Pro-tip: If you want to invite external speakers, invite them early, as you'll need time to coordinate their calendars. Think about how diverse the different speakers are and if they truly represent the context/topic.



Organizing Logistics

Host Country

Consider any systems of oppression within the host country, which may concern, or burden your attendees in terms of their personal safety and comfort. Also think about the accessibility of the country for your attendees in terms of visa requirements and the level of ease or difficulty of obtaining a visa for some nationalities.

Visas

Advise your attendees to start organizing their visas as soon as you possibly can - ideally three months or more before the event. Attendees can check if they require a visa to the country where the event is taking place on [this website](#). You may need to provide the attendee with an official invitation letter for their visa. Use this [visa invitation letter template](#) and please ask your Teach For All community coach for guidance about who should sign the letter.

Flights

Encourage your attendees to book their flights at least three months before the in-person activity to get the best available prices.

Travel insurance

All attendees should purchase their own travel insurance for the entire duration of their visit to the host country. See the section on [Safety & Security](#) for more information.

Accommodation

To keep costs to a minimum, consider recommending local family stays, hostels, or hotels to your attendees that are close to the venue, as this will also save on transportation costs. You could also see whether the community has any members in the host country who might be able to host attendees during the event.

Venue

Depending on where your event is taking place, check if there is a Teach For All network partner or a Teach For All office in the area. If there is, consider asking if they would kindly lend you the use of their office for your activity (depending on your requirements). Local organizations such as schools and community centres can also be cost effective options and see whether there are any other local organizations, NGOs, or companies that might be able to provide you with a venue for free or at a reduced rate.

Food

Ask your attendees if they have any dietary requirements before the in-person activity to make sure you accommodate everyone's needs and be mindful that some members might feel uncomfortable being around alcohol. See the section on [Managing Attendees](#) for more advice,

Other special requirements

Ask your attendees about any special requirements

before the in-person activity, such as disabilities (blindness, mobility, deafness, etc.), religion (time and space for prayer, holy days, etc.), parenting (breast feeding, childcare, etc.) and psychological (quiet spaces) to ensure you are creating an inclusive experience in which everyone can participate. See the section on [Managing Attendees](#).

Language support

What is the primary language of your in-person activity? Check if attendees require support before the in-person activity and make the appropriate arrangements.

Easy communication

You might want to create a WhatsApp group to help coordinate logistics and share reminders with your attendees in the run up to and during the event.

Emergency guidance

Make sure all attendees have the contact names and local numbers for emergency services, such as the police, ambulance, and a local contact.

Document the event

Ask attendees to share photographs and videos in your group WhatsApp chat to document the gathering. Encourage attendees to write down their learnings and reflections during the in-person activity, as this will help you to share learnings with the network after the event has ended. See section on [Sharing Inspiring Stories](#).

Safety and Security

 A critical part of organizing your event is to plan, in advance, for how to ensure the safety and security of all of the attendees during your event.

A critical part of organizing your event is to plan, in advance, for how to ensure the safety and security of all of the attendees during your event. Teach For All believes in the power of cross border connectivity and encourages participants and alumni to take initiative to create new ways to self-organize, to learn from one another's contexts. Teach For All's advice to event organizers is to:

- Conduct a thorough risk assessment for your event.
- Develop a plan for evacuation if disaster occurs.
- Require attendees to provide their Emergency Contact information in advance, and have it printed out and stored somewhere that is easy to access in case power goes out and it's needed.
- Provide attendees with information about local emergency services before they arrive. See the section on Preparing Your Attendees for the In-Person Activity.



- Strongly encourage attendees to arrange their own travel insurance and to bring their policy with them. They should also check and organize any recommended vaccinations before they travel.
- You may decide to require attendees to sign a liability waiver to attend your event. Find a template here. We recommend that you seek legal advice from a local counsel if you decide to do this. Teach For All will not provide any legal advice.
- To ensure appropriate and respectful behaviour from attendees at your event, you may decide to generate a Code of Conduct. You could also create this with your attendees at the start of (or even before) the event. You could also share Teach For All's Code of Conduct with attendees so that everyone knows how they are expected to behave.

Disclaimer: Teach For All takes no responsibility for any aspect of participant and/or alumni self-organized event planning or execution, including travel and accommodation of attendees. In addition, Teach For All assumes no responsibility for any liability, damage or injury of any kind that any person may suffer or incur as a result of the acts or omissions of any event participants, event organizers, or other persons involved in or connected with the event. The responsibility for the safety and security of attendees at self-organized participant and alumni events rests solely on the attendees who travel to, and attend the events at their own risk; and the event organizers.



Pro-tip: Assign a person dedicated to Safety & Security for the planning, preparation of attendees and execution of your event. This person should be responsible for ensuring a thorough risk assessment is completed, a plan for emergencies is in place, emergency contact details for attendees have been collected and attendees have information about local services in case of emergency. Their contact details should be shared with attendees in advance.



Managing Attendees



Team Roles

You may want to share the roles your team members are playing with attendees to help them know who to talk to about their specific issue. For example, “If you need a visa invitation letter, contact (name and email address), and for all other questions, please contact (name and email address).”



Logistics

Once you have a confirmed list of attendees, think about the type of information you need from them to help you to plan content and logistics. We advise creating and sharing a [logistics form](#) to capture the details you need. Don't forget to provide clear instructions and a deadline for when you need the information.

You can include details such as:

- Phone number to join WhatsApp group
- Confirm the language that the in-person activity will take place in and ask if the attendee requires additional support
- Dietary restrictions (gluten free, celiac, pescatarian, vegetarian, vegan, halal, kosher, other)
- Special requirements such as disabilities (blindness, mobility, deafness, etc.), religion (prayer room), parenting (breast feeding, childcare etc) and any other requirements.
- If attendees have arranged their own accommodation, you can ask them to provide the address.
- If attendees have arranged their own flights, you can ask them to provide their arrival and departure details.
- Ask attendees to provide you with the contact details of a person you can contact in case of an emergency
- Do attendees have any special learning needs?
- Any other information that is necessary for you to plan a successful in-person activity.





Preparing Your Attendees



Host a virtual call ahead of the in-person activity

Host a virtual call ahead of the in-person activity and use this time to get to know each other, share information about the agenda, content, logistics, and cultural considerations, and give attendees a chance to ask questions. Consider what time of day works best for people across time zones. This [website](#) helps schedule meetings across multiple time zones. You may want to set up a [Doodle poll](#) with date and time options for attendees to choose from before deciding on a time slot. Once you have chosen a date and time, send a calendar invitation. Consider recording the call to share afterwards with those who can't make it.



Ensuring attendees are prepared for the event

For many of your attendees, this may be the first time they have traveled to this context, and for some it may be the first time they have traveled outside their own country. To help your attendees feel prepared and comfortable, we recommend sharing a [detailed logistics and cultural memo](#) that includes helpful information like:

- How to get from the airport to the accommodation and what to expect at the airport
- Local point of contact phone number
- The local currency and the availability of ATMs, or any other advice related to money matters
- The average or expected weather conditions during the in-person activity
- Electrical sockets and reminder to bring an adapter
- Dress code for the in-person activity
- Cultural context and norms, such as how to greet local people, etc.
- Overview of the history of the country as it relates to the population, communities, and systems of power
- Simple phrases in the local language
- Information about local transportation and suggestions for transportation related-apps to download.
- Emergency services information and local emergency contact
- Any other information that is useful for the attendees to be aware of ahead of time



Set expectations and share pre-work in advance

Consider sending the agenda, learning objectives, presentation materials, discussion questions, and other learning resources in advance of the in-person activity, to give your attendees enough time to read, digest, and prepare questions. Share materials in formats that include talking points and spaces to write notes.



Pro-tip: Don't forget to plan your post-activity survey! See the section on [Evaluation and Impact](#) for more advice.



Managing Costs & Fundraising



Watch this video from Nathan Pai Schmitt, Teach For America alumnus for tips on covering costs

Your community's activities may incur some costs. For example, in-person events will include costs for travel, accommodation, transport, venue, etc. Virtual activities may also incur costs such as speaker fees or technology or equipment costs. The key to managing costs is to plan ahead and be as resourceful as possible! This section contains a template for managing your budget, and advice on ways to cover your costs, including how to fundraise.

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[Covering costs](#)

[Managing your budget](#)

Resources

[Managing your budget: Template](#)

[Covering costs: Teach For All Communities and Connections Fund](#)



Creating Your Budget



Start by defining your budget as early as possible and list all of the things that will need to be paid for to deliver the activity.

For example:

- Food and drink
- Venues
- Travel and transport (in country)
- Travel and transport (internationally)
- Accommodation
- Resources and technologies
- Language translation support
- Speaker fees
- Gifts



The next step is to determine how much these things will cost and allocate a budget towards them. Try using this [budget template](#) to record the costs.





Reducing Costs



Once you've determined all the things which need to be paid for and allocated a budget for each, you can start thinking about ways to reduce these costs.

In-Person or Virtual

If your costs are due to your activity being in-person, ask yourself why you are hosting this activity, and if your objectives could be achieved with a virtual activity instead? What would be the trade-offs? Are they worth it?

Location

Countries which host large airport hubs are often cheaper and more accessible to fly to. Consider the cost of living, day-to-day and resource costs in different countries as well. Are some countries going to be cheaper to host events than others?

Research Venues

Consider researching to see if there is a *Teach For All* network partner or a *Teach For All* office in the area where you want to host your event. If there is, you could ask them if they would let you use their office for your event (depending on your requirements). Local organizations such as schools and community centres can also be cost effective options, as well as often being aligned to the vision of community events. You could also see whether there are any other local organizations, NGOs, or companies that might be able to provide you with a venue for free or at a reduced rate.

Accommodation

Consider recommending local family stays, hostels, or hotels to your attendees which are close to the venue, as this will also save on transportation costs. You could also see whether the community has any members in the host country who might be able to host attendees during the event.

Food and Beverages

Decide whether subsistence will be provided, or whether attendees will be required to organize their own food. Consider organizing some meals, but not all of them. Instead of eating at restaurants for every meal, consider buying supplies at a local supermarket and cooking a meal together, or getting take out. This can also be a great way to get to know each other.

Negotiate with Your Vendors

Don't be afraid to negotiate with your vendors! The worst that can happen is they'll say no to your counter-offer, and you can decide if you want to go with their price. Especially if you are booking hotel rooms or a particularly large dinner venue, asking for upgraded rooms or a small percentage off the total bill can sometimes pay off.

Speakers

Decide whether you will pay your speakers. More often than not speakers enjoy being asked to share their wisdom and expertise. Consider what potential speakers can get from being part of the event and appealing to these when inviting them to take part. Alternatively, consider the expertise that lies within your community and whether external speakers are really necessary.



Covering Costs



As you think about how to pay for the costs, consider the following:

Ask your members to contribute

For example by paying for their own flights, accommodation, meals and transport. It's important to be clear about financial expectations from the start, i.e. if you're creating an application form for people to attend your event, include information about costs that attendees will need to cover in the description.

Community members should also consider where they could get financial support from if they need it. For example, in many cases activities may be aligned with the vision of employers, or could be positioned as a professional development opportunity. Encourage your members to consider grants, fellowships and other such opportunities which could support them to meet the costs of attending.

Speaking to Teach For All network partners.

They might be able to help you cover costs such as food, or transport, give you advice on local sources of funding to apply to like grants, or introduce you to potential sponsors.

Grants and funding schemes

There maybe grants and funding schemes that your activity may be eligible for. Just make sure you check timelines for awarding and receiving funding, and have a back-up plan in case your application is not successful.

Sponsors

There may be businesses or organizations which would be interested in being affiliated with your activity. Consider asking them to sponsor specific parts of the activity and think about what you could offer in return.

Providing a Service

Providing a service in return for costs being covered. There maybe local businesses or organizations interested in learning from your community members. You could consider hosting a training session before or after your activity in return for them providing a venue, accommodation, subsistence, ground transportation and/or other costs.

Crowdfunding

Consider setting up a crowdfunding campaign on sites like [gofundme](#) to fund your activity. Successful campaigns usually have a compelling story, a clear description of how funds will be used and the impact of the activity.

Communities and Connections Fund

The *Teach For All Communities and Connections Fund* supports network participants and alumni to develop self-organized, cross border initiatives that fuel learning through peer to peer connectivity. If your event requires additional funding, read the eligibility criteria and consider applying.



Managing Your Budget



It's good practice to update your budget tracker with updates in costs and funding regularly, and share this with the leadership team, so that you're aware of any potential gaps in funding.

Here are a few extra tips for managing your budget.

Contingency

Include a 'contingency fund' for any unexpected costs that you didn't plan for. For example, you may need to buy a gift or print a certificate for an additional last minute speaker, or buy water for attendees during a school visit etc.

Receipts

Don't forget to save the receipts for all costs related to the activity, especially for items like meals, taxis etc. This will help to track the final cost of your budget and may also be needed for claiming expenses.



Pro-tip: Be mindful that the value of 1 USD is different in every context. To support attendees from different socio-economic backgrounds to be able to participate, consider asking attendees to contribute what they can to a pot of money that can be used for group meals and other group expenses.

You could also choose one or two community members to be 'Money Managers' during the event in charge of holding onto the group's money, and ensuring bills are paid. Money Managers can also support people privately in cases of cash flow issues.



Evaluation & Impact



As educators we can all appreciate the importance of evaluation and measuring impact. This section includes guidance on how to think about evaluating specific activities your community delivers (for example, evaluating a particular event or webinar), and also advice on how you might measure the overall impact of your community on members and the people they interact with locally.

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[Evaluation example questions](#)

[Evaluation survey template](#)



Evaluating Your Activities



Evaluating your activities will help you to understand what went well, what could be improved for the future, and the impact of the activity on community members who took part.



When evaluating activities, it is useful to think of evaluation in two distinct ways.

1. Evaluating the delivery of the activity
2. Evaluating the impact of the activity

Evaluating the delivery of the activity means understanding how the activity was experienced by the people who took part.

For example, were the timings right? Were the session structures effective? Were the resources useful? Was the venue adequate? Did the technology work? How many people showed up? What barriers stopped people from showing up? Was the organization effective? Were the breaks long enough? Evaluating the delivery of activities will help you know what could be improved for next time.

Evaluating the impact of the activity means understanding what the people who took part got out of it.

For example, how were they impacted? What changed for them?

Usually this will mean assessing whether your activity met its objectives. For example, if the objective was to increase attendees' understanding about a particular topic, you will assess whether or not this increased understanding has happened.



Pro-tip: People commonly confuse delivery and impact evaluation. Keep your questions separate to help you to understand what went well and what to improve next time (delivery); and what changed for the people who took part (impact).



Evaluating Your Activities - Gathering Information



Once you have confirmed what you want to learn about how your activity was delivered, and what you want to learn about your activity's impact, then you can start to think about the best way to gather this information.

Surveys are a common data collection method used after activities to get feedback. It's important to remember they are not the only tool you can use though! Sometimes your observations, informal interviews, focus groups, quick polls, group debriefs, and reflections can be more effective.

Here are some [examples of questions](#) that you can include in your survey and here is an [example of how you can format your survey](#)



Pro-tip: If you're going to use a survey keep it short and to the point. Think about how you will actually use the data you collect and make sure you only ask useful questions.

Measuring Community Impact



When thinking about your community's impact, it's important to revisit your community purpose statement and goals. Remember 'evaluating impact' is all about understanding what changes are happening as a result of your community, for community members and others they may interact with.



Key questions to consider are:

1. To what extent is our community purpose being achieved?
2. What are our community members getting out of being part of our community?
3. What are our community members doing differently as a result of being part of this community? How is being part of the community affecting their work locally? What is this leading to?
4. What is happening differently as a result of our community?



You might be able to identify:

- A set of short-term outcomes that will give you confidence a change is happening for community members. For example, do you expect them to feel part of something bigger than themselves? Has ideas exchange between members taken place? Are members feeling more inspired and supported? Are they collaborating on projects and/or supporting each other?
- More medium-term outcomes you'd expect to see as a result of the short-term outcomes might be different or new actions being taken by community members as a result of learning from and collaborating with others. For example, an innovation in teaching being adopted and adapted in a new classroom in a different context.
- Longer-term outcomes that will be linked to the results of actions taken by community members such as changes in student academic outcomes as a result of the innovation in teaching being put into practice in the classroom



Measuring Community Impact - Gathering Information



To understand how being part of your community is impacting your members you'll need to ask them!



CLOSED QUESTIONS:

You may want to share the purpose, goals and objectives of the community with members and ask them to assess how well they are being met.



OPEN QUESTIONS:

You may want to ask your community some open-ended questions to gather more information on how they are being impacted, and what they are doing differently.

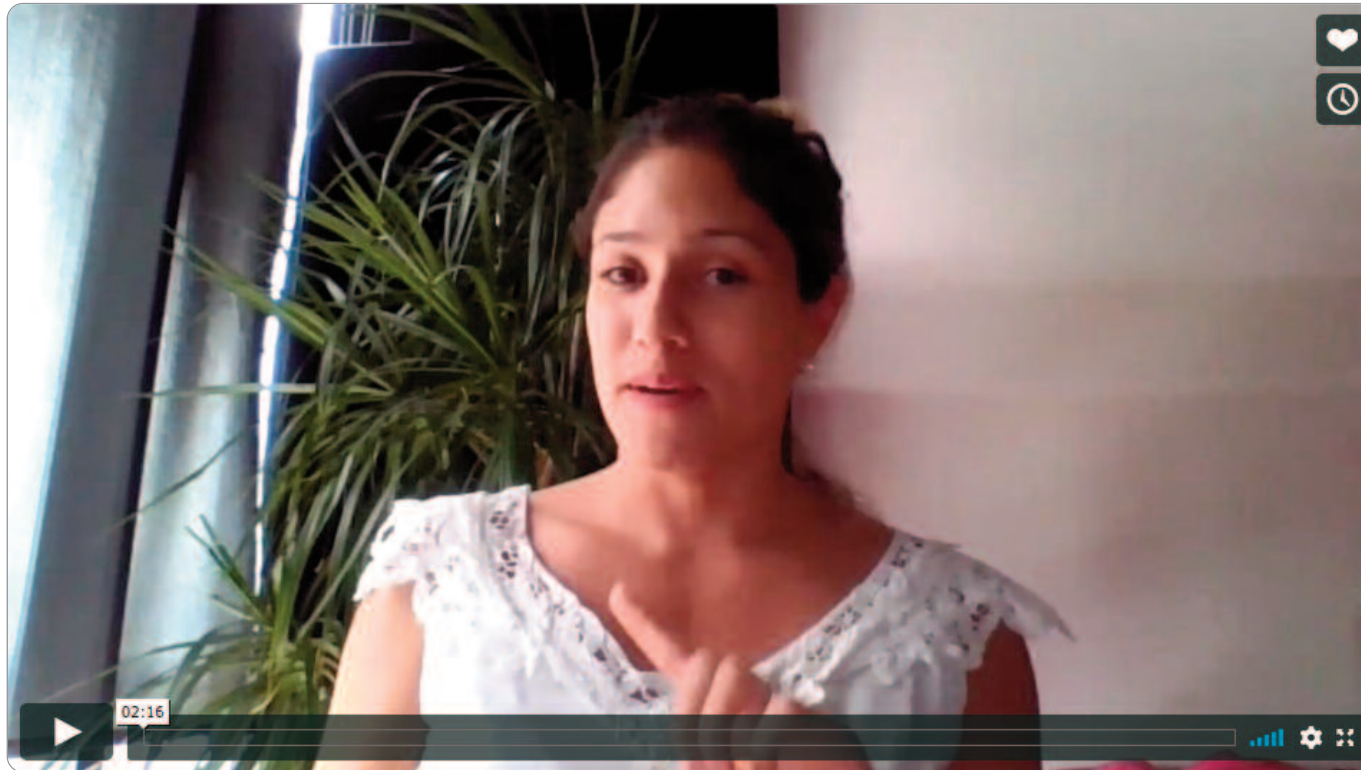
There are many ways you can collect this information including creating surveys, conducting informal interviews, focus groups, quick polls, group debriefs, and reflections.

At *Teach For All* we're always interested to learn about stories of cross-border learning and impact, and about how network teachers and alumni are collaborating with one another to make a difference. See the section on ['Sharing Inspiring Stories'](#) for advice.





Sharing Inspiring Stories



Check out these tips from Paola Gomez, Director of Communications and Storytelling, Teach For All about sharing inspiring stories

Stories are a powerful way of celebrating your community's successes, sharing lessons learned and motivating others. On top of this, they can be a useful tool to help promote your community's work and impact to encourage new members to join or attract support for future activities you have planned.

This section contains guidance on creating a story and some examples from the *Teach For All* network to get you inspired.

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[Creating your story](#)

[Choosing a format to share your story](#)

[Sharing your story with the network](#)



Creating a Story



First get clear on the purpose of your story: who is your intended audience and what do you want them to feel, think and/or do after learning about your story?

If you're telling a story about a specific event your community organized, consider the following questions:



Why did you, personally, want to be part of the activity?

What were your expectations?

How did the activity live up to those expectations?

What surprised you the most?

What were one or two of the most meaningful moments for you?

What are you taking away from the activity? What do you think/hope

When sharing your story about a community you belong to, you could consider the following questions:



What values make you believe in this community and its members?

What shared experiences have had the greatest impact on you and your community?

What does your community hope for?

What would the world look like if your community were able to create that change?

What about this community would inspire others?





Choosing a Format to Share Your Story



Common ways to share stories include writing a blog, creating a post on social media, or editing a video. Here are some tips for each, with examples from across the Teach For All network.

Writing a Blog

- Keep it simple and focused; make every word count to make your story valuable.
- The recommended length is between 500-800 words.
- Consider co-authoring the story with other community members. Each person could write a different section. Plan this in advance to ensure you're not all discussing the same things .
- Include photos to bring your words to life along with captions that describe your photos.

Editing a Video

- You can use your phone or a professional camera to capture video footage. Homemade videos can be just as effective at telling stories as professionally made films. If using a SmartPhone try filming in landscape and getting clear audio.
- The ideal length of a video is less than 3 minutes.
- Plan out what footage you want to capture in advance. It's usually good to capture interviews/testimonies from different people, along with footage of different activities to bring their testimonies to life. The different footage can then be edited together to tell the story.

- Pre-select people that you would like to interview and share your questions in advance to give them time to prepare their answers.
- Adding music when editing the footage together can help create emotion and link up the different clips.
- You may also want to include text on screen to provide more context to viewers as well as captions to make your videos more accessible.
- Free video editing platforms include: [iMovie](#), [Moviemaker](#), [Movavi](#), [OpenShot](#), [Lightworks](#), [YouTube](#) (option to add captions).

Posting on Social Media

- Think about who your audience is and determine the best platform to reach them on, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, etc.
- Make your post simple and focused, and include a call to action if relevant.
- Use images if possible, to bring your post to life.
- Depending on the platform and purpose of your post, consider encouraging questions, comments, likes to help you to engage with your audience.

Examples

Blogs

- [Madrid Calling 2019 - global network alumni gathering](#)
- ["Sprout to Be Teach" - Network teachers and alumni gathering in Brussels](#)
- [Latido Latino 2018 - Enseña por Colombia alumna's reflection about the Americas network alumni event](#)
- [Policy Community of Practice in Finland](#)

Videos

- [Social innovation Community of Practice - gathering in Bulgaria](#)
- [Asia Pacific network alumni gathering](#)

Social Media posts

- [Social media campaign of Yerevan Calling 2020 - global network alumni gathering](#)
- [Social media post from Henry May about the Social Innovation Community of Practice gathering in Bulgaria](#)
- [Social media post from Arnold Kiss about his experience at the Teach For All Global Conference in Armenia](#)



Sharing Your Story With The Network

Teach For All Education Policy
gathering in Manila 2020



We're always excited to hear about activities and connections being organized by network participants and alumni. We love sharing these stories with the rest of the Teach For All network through social media, as well as on *Teach For All's* website and newsletters.

Contact Paola [paola.gomez@teachforall.org] if you have a story about your community to share.

Ensuring Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



Being part of a global community provides an incredible opportunity to learn from a diverse group of people and cultures. Every community member has a rich and unique perspective to bring, formed by their identity, experiences and background. At the same time, there will be power dynamics within your community which, if unchecked, could mean that not everyone can fully participate. Therefore, it's vital that you think carefully about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) to ensure that everyone can participate fully and the value of your community is maximized.

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[Dismantling Power Dynamics](#)

[Recruiting & Selecting Community Members](#)

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[Dismantling power dynamics:
Facilitating a group norms session](#)

[Virtual activities:
10 pieces of virtual etiquette](#)

[Simple language guidelines](#)

Dismantling Power Dynamics

We all know that skin colour, gender, sexuality, citizenship, language, race, religion, disability and other identities afford some individuals more power than others due to complex systems of oppression which were created long before any of us were born. It's a fact that these power dynamics will exist in your community. What's critical is that your community takes action to actively dismantle them, so that everyone can fully take part. If unchecked, those with the most power will dominate your community, and community members with the least power will be less able to contribute.



Take action by raising the issue with your community from the outset.

Being a global community creates an enormous potential to harness the diversity of the group, but in order to do this successfully, it's important to recognise the diversity and take steps to make sure the community is fair and inclusive.

Assess the needs of your community members:

- What language(s) do they speak? To what level of proficiency?
- What technology preferences and/or limitations do they have?
- Do they have any audio, visual or other physical impairments?
- Is there anything specifically related to their identity, culture or context which they'd want to share to enhance their experience within the community?



Pro-tip: Check out these [simple language guidelines](#) for more practical tips on how to communicate with global audiences.

Co-create a community culture:

Establishing a shared set of norms between community members can really help to make your community a diverse, equitable and inclusive space. [Here's an example](#) of how to facilitate this discussion with your community.

Once your community has agreed the community norms, it's good practice to refer to them at the start of activities, build in time for your community to openly reflect on these norms and whether they are being adhered to, or if they need to change, and refer back to them when there's misalignment to bring your community back on track.

Examples of group norms which foster DEI include:

- **Talking without jargon.** Using simple sentences, without idioms or phrases that are not easily translatable, and without acronyms and abbreviations. Clearly defining any specific terminology into easy to understand terms. Assigning one or two people to listen for jargon and idioms, and ask them to speak up with clarifications to avoid confusion. Jokes, especially puns and sarcasm, can be hard to understand.
- **Starting with non-native speakers.** Agreeing that members who do not speak the language the conversation is being held in fluently will speak first to share their opinions during a discussion and giving them the time and space to form and translate their opinions to do so
- **Speaking slowly and clearly.** It's important to speak much slower than may feel natural to you in your first language, and support other facilitators and community members to speak slower too.
- **Pausing to check for understanding.** And setting a tone that it's a positive thing to ask questions and seek clarification.
- **Acknowledging cultural differences.** Recognising that in many cultures being direct, "thinking out loud" and "brainstorming" together are not the norm, and that operating like this can be a barrier for individuals from cultures which communicate differently. Consider other ways of organizing discussion and decision-making.
- **Listening to encourage participation.** Being active listeners and agreeing to proactively support everyone to participate.
- **Not taking up too much space.** Agreeing that members will be aware of, and self-regulate, how much time they are using to share their ideas and energy with the group. Agreeing that it's okay for the group to hold each other to account on this.
- **Building in time for personal reflection.** Create regular spaces for community members to process what has been said, formulate thoughts in their own language, and decide how to respond (verbally or in the chat/shared document). This is especially useful after presentations, and before asking for questions or participation.

Recruiting & Selecting Community Members



Consider the existing membership of your community

How diverse is your membership? Are there voices and perspectives missing? Do you want to encourage new members to join who can bring new inputs to your community?



Consider whether you need to translate it into a different language

If you decide to create a membership application form for your community, remember that English is not everyone's first language so check your application form for ease of understanding and consider whether you need to translate it into a different language or use a different way of recruiting members. For example, conducting interviews or receiving nominations or referrals.



Consider the diversity of the selection committee

If you're going to have a selection committee to decide who will join your community, it's very important to consider the diversity of the selection committee and to support committee members to acknowledge their selection biases.



In-Person Activities



Consider the factors which may affect your members being able to participate

When deciding where to host your event, consider the factors which may affect your members being able to participate. For example, visa requirements, costs of travel and on the ground costs, accessibility for disabled members, safety for members of particular genders, sexualities or religions.



Remember that the value of money is different in every context

Depending on where your community members come from, costs at your event may be much higher or lower. Contributing towards group costs may be difficult for members. See the section on [Managing Costs & Fundraising](#) for more advice on how to support members from different socio-economic backgrounds.



Check in with your community members in private and seek to understand their situations

For some members being around alcohol may cause discomfort and exclude them from participating in the community. Check in with your community members in private and seek to understand their situations and how they can feel supported.

Virtual Activities



Consider what time of day works best for community members across time zones

This [website](#) can help you to view conflicts across time zones. You may want to set up a [Doodle poll](#) with date and time options for community members to choose from to help determine the best time slot. You may also consider running your virtual activity more than once.



Set expectations with members

Set expectations with members before the virtual activity so members know what to expect. For example, you could create guidance like the [10 pieces of virtual etiquette](#).



Live notes on a shared document to capture insights

Ask a team member to be a live note-taker on a shared document to capture insights, and give community members a chance to read key points throughout the activity – this can really help non-native speakers follow the discussion.



Pro-tip: Silence during virtual calls is okay. It's important to create space for members to share their opinions and participate. Especially members who are more introverted, or who don't speak the language fluently, or who come from cultures where it's not common to share opinions straight away.

Teach For All Support

Today there are nearly 80,000 participants and alumni of network partners in more than 50 countries across the *Teach For All* network. While each local context is unique, similarities in the nature of the challenges facing children mean that solutions are often shareable and local leaders can often move much faster when they are exposed to what is possible in other contexts. **We believe that cross-border learning can accelerate local progress.**

To make it easier for network participants and alumni to connect, collaborate and build learning communities *Teach For All* can offer the following support:

Community Coaches

If you have ideas for forming, or have already started to build a new community, you can access support from a Community Coach for advice and guidance on your ideas and plans. [Register for a 30 minute meeting](#) with a coach.

Communities and Connections Fund

The [Communities and Connections Fund](#) supports network participants and alumni in developing self-organized, cross border initiatives that fuel learning through peer to peer connectivity.

Join an Existing Community

More than twenty five global communities of network participants and alumni exist already. [Find out how to join!](#)

CONNECT Newsletter

CONNECT is the *Teach For All* monthly newsletter for network participants and alumni. It is sent to *Teach For All* network participants and alumni on the last day of each month. Promote your community, share application forms, or publicize activities your community is organizing. Use this link to [submit](#) an opportunity - the deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month.

[Sign up](#) to receive CONNECT.

Share Your Stories

We love sharing stories about connections between network participants and alumni with the rest of the *Teach For All* network through social media, on *Teach For All*'s website and newsletters. Contact Paola, paola.gomez@teachforall.org, if you have a story about your community you want to share.

Video Tips Library

Check out our [library of videos for tips](#) (Password: TeachForAll20 – case sensitive) from alumni community builders on organizing an event, selecting community members, managing funds, and more. If you have a piece of advice you'd like to share from your own experiences, please contact zaira.mughal@teachforall.org.

Using Zoom for Virtual Activities

If you are planning a virtual activity that requires a virtual meeting space for longer than 45 minutes, and you don't have a paid Zoom account, please contact your community coach to see if you can use their Zoom meeting room. You can also send an email to zaira.mughal@teachforall.org to request the same.



Contact Us

If you would like further advice and support related to any sections in this toolkit, contact zaira.mughal@teachforall.org.

Find opportunities, communities, stories and more at teachforall.org/network-teachers-alumni

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