

Breakout Group Facilitators

Breakout Group Facilitators are mainly needed in the deliberation phase of a Community Assembly, with at least one facilitator per group.

What do you need to do as a breakout group facilitator during the deliberation phase?

- Introduce yourself briefly. (Say this whichever way works for you, in your own words)

“I am volunteering today as a facilitator. Our group is a safe place for us all to share our experience, understanding of the topic and to work together. Please keep confidential what people say in our group today; do not name people and ensure people cannot be identified when discussing today with others.

Remember: no one person has all the answers. Please respect other people's right to hold opinions that you disagree with. We are all here to listen to each other and be heard.

So everyone has enough time to speak, we will be limited to [X] minutes. Everyone will speak uninterrupted for [X] minutes at a time until finished. Everyone else will listen."

- Remind people of the Community Assembly question that is being deliberated on
- Ask for a note taker in the group if you don't have a big enough team
- Show hand signals again for:
 - I want to speak
 - Temperature check
 - Speak up
 - Round up
- Egg timers can be used as visual prompts to ease the timekeeping element of facilitation, as they are visible to all. If no egg timers are available, the facilitator can keep time and make the 'round up' hand signal when the speaker has had their allowed time.
- Remind people of the Inclusivity Statement and need for respectful, active listening and no interruptions allowed as per guidelines they agreed to earlier

“We value all voices equally in the assembly, as the aim is to hear the wisdom of the crowd gathered here and not to have the assembly dominated by individual voices or groups. We recognise that confident speakers are not always right and

that those who are not confident speakers will often have the most useful ideas or opinions to put into the discussion. This is why we value all voices equally and we ask you to do the same. We do not tolerate any calling out, abuse or shaming. We welcome all people but not all behaviours.”

Run a first round of everyone briefly introducing themselves and saying what they hope to gain from the event

- Invite people to voice their opinions, thoughts or questions
- Make sure everyone has a go at voicing their opinion
- If questions arise from speeches and speakers are available for ‘speed question’ sessions, invite to table, via Facilitator speaker management.
- When it is time, indicated by the Lead Facilitator, guide the group to decide on priority statements (ideally 3 statements per break out group. This also depends on what the Community Assembly working group decided, so it could be more or less) to share during the imminent and final integration phase of the assembly
 - Repeat the main topics that have been mentioned
 - Ask the note taker to fill in gaps or topics that you have forgot to summarise
 - Lead a temperature check on which statements should be brought to the main assembly integration phase
- Find someone to present the group’s statements. This can be you or the note taker, but if someone else might want to do it, that should be encouraged.

More (In-Person) Group Facilitation Tips

- Listen more than you speak
- Ensure everyone has the same length of time to speak
- Gently intervene to stop interruptions using name tags of the person interrupting
- Ask questions to invite people to speak if discussion is not flowing
- Also allow silence to run if people don’t come in immediately
- Encourage respect, thanking people for their input, so every participant feels safe to share their ideas
- Encourage reticent members of the group to speak; allow people to write their input or draw images (Post it notes are a great tool here)
- Be sensitive to the emotions that may arise
- Hold the space calmly and without judgement for participants to agree to disagree
- Close each activity by summing up the main themes
- Have fun. A sense of humour makes things work more smoothly
- Ask for one of the group to prompt when ten minutes are left to begin facilitating the group to select their top priorities (See the Review and Prep phase below)

Review Of Break-Out Discussion. Prep for the Final (Integration) Phase

When the discussion has reached its time limit, thank everyone for their contributions. Ask the Notetaker to read group comments out again, one by one. Check with the group that the Notetaker has understood each speaker correctly and recorded them accurately. (Notetaker amends as necessary.)

Ask the Notetaker to summarise themes and any priorities emerging from the discussion.

Also ask group members to indicate the importance of each theme with hand signals (Demonstrate).

The notetaker will make a mark of his/her own choosing next to each theme to denote its level of consensus in the group. (e.g. '+' or '✓' to denote one person's agreement; + + / ✓ ✓ = 2 , etc.

Feedback and Whole Assembly Key Points

Your nominated person will read out your key headings and main themes from your group's discussion to the whole group. The Assembly Notetaker will write these up visibly on flip chart paper.

Other groups can ask your group questions and/or comment. In this way a whole group discussion happens. Timing will be framed by the Main Facilitator. Note: comments at this stage can lead to further comments, so be careful to note that further discussion may be needed at a future assembly in order to keep to time.

Each group will feed back in this way, with the whole group clarifying with questions and commenting within the time constraints.

The Assembly Notetaker will then read out all of the headings one by one, then asks the whole group to vote its agreement (Demonstrate hand signals).

The Assembly Notetaker counts raised hands, adds totals onto the flipchart next to suggestions.

The Main Facilitator then reminds the participants about the eventual usage of the feedback, (e.g. to share with local authority). They may also invite everyone to vote on possible next steps (e.g. follow on assembly along with sharing outputs with the local authority)
