

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Does Community Building mean we're not doing Actions?**

Community Building fuels our ability to take action and talking action strengthens our community. They support each other, not as separate things but as a positive feedback loop.

**AND**

Community building is in itself a tool for change. By forging connections, identifying strengths and cultivating curiosity in our communities we create and grow power on our own terms. We divest from the pillars of power through communities withdrawing consent and coming up with ideas for the world we want.

## **What does Community Building and Action look like?**

Our Actions are one of our strongest tools in building community! They bring us together in place, with a shared purpose. We tell stories about our actions which define our community.

Community Building is one of our strongest tools for creating actions! Wider community support helps create inclusive and well supported actions. The insight, interests and issues local communities face bring new ideas and perspectives into our action planning, design and messaging spaces. Our local communities have shared causes that motivate them. By being part of these communities, as rebels, we can enhance our collective capacity to safely engage in more contentious action.

**AND**

The efforts of community citizens generate their own power and pressure which, through the addition of our assets, can amplify the impact and really drive change. Remember, it is the multiplicative effect of different groups (beyond the activist identity) that is a threat to the pillars of power, not many people joining one group.

## **How does Community Building get us closer to our demands being met?**

Community Building is a tool to create change, it doesn't just sit alongside NVDA, it fuels and powers it, and in turn NVDA strengthens and empowers our communities.

To build the **cultural momentum** needed to meet our demands we need strong bases of community power and this means meeting, joining and building the communities we exist in.

Community support can come from surprising places but we only uncover it if we start the conversation.

## **AND**

Through communities we are able to create change for ourselves. Stepping into the power we can generate ourselves to meet the challenges we face. Instead of asking the government to meet our needs, we meet them ourselves.

## **What is a Community?**

Community can mean a group of people who share aspects of identity, purpose, interest or experience. This could be a Local Group or a Circle within XR, a group that meet locally such as a sports club or allotment group, or it could be a group such as the wider LGBTQIA+ community or faith based communities.

Community can mean the space between individual change and governmental change where people collectively make change that matters to them. This could be a litter-picking group looking after their local environment, a tenant association supporting each other on an estate, or a group of friends hosting rent parties to support each other financially.

Community can be a verb, the things people do that build trust, connection, and collective action. This could be the sharing of food, the act of making inclusive decisions, or the process of sharing skills.

## **What does Community Building mean in an XR context?**

Community Building is both an internal and an external practice for XR. We build community for ourselves really effectively through action and support. We can build on these skills and turn them out into our wider communities.

Through identifying the strengths we have in our groups we can share those with confidence and humility. There are some spaces where we are welcomed as an XR unit, and others where we are better stepping in as community members with something to offer.

This can look like having a local band who drums at strikes, rallies and marches when asked for. It can look like holding banner making workshops for local actions to create space for the community to come together even when some of those people cannot be on the streets. Your Local Group may have strengths in face-painting, infrastructure like PA systems, storage space, poets and gardeners and musicians, all of which can be shared.

Once we know what strengths and assets we have in our Local Groups we can turn those from being focused on our work alone to being assets for the whole community.

## **What does Community Building ask us to do?**

The current ask comes in three parts:

1. Recognise and Celebrate what we are already doing!
2. Get even more confident in what we do well!
3. Connect with opportunities to use those strengths to amplify the work of your wider community.

This can look like:

1. Telling stories about what your local group has achieved (e.g. using block printing ahead of a banner drop)
  2. Finding out who and what skills made those achievements happen (Who made the banner, how was it done)
  3. Nurture those assets by teaching others (open block printing trainings to the wider community using your experience)
  4. Discover ways to amplify the efforts of the local community using the assets of your local group. Step into the interconnectedness of justice (making connections with other groups and ask how they might value print blocks)
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