Contributed by:

SETTING UP A VIRTUAL CALL

Steps to set up a virtual call

1. Set-up the basics (goals, member value, first structure, audience)

see separate tool for this purpose

2. Creating a save the date

Information to include in save the date and call for speakers:

- The general purpose of the event + target audience
- Key dates and times
- Call for speakers/contributors if appropriate & what would be expected from them
- Contact Details of the event coordinator
- Links to sites or spaces you intend to use for announcements and communication before (email with more infos) and potentially during the event (twitter, a channel in your community platform)
- Use imagery and language that is eye-catching and engaging

3. Creating the agenda

- Define subjects and formats used ie. plenary or brainstorm session that fit the purpose of the call best
- Set-up a facilitation agenda which provides hosts and presenters with more details on the content of the call, methodology used for each item, timing, etc.
- Agree with presenters and contributors on content and time needed
- Recheck agenda on how realistic and doable it is, include buffer time and decide which element you can skip or cut short if time is running out
- Compile the essentials in a public agenda, which is circulated with attendees to build excitement and anticipation

4. Designing the sessions

- Develop the content of the sessions with input providers such as speakers or members of the community and prepare the necessary materials such as presentations, google docs, videos, etc.
- Design interactive elements

- Ensure that the content works towards the session goals and the output you wish for at the end of the call
- If useful send out pre-reads or surveys to ensure that participants arrive prepared

5. Sending out the invite:

- Calendar Appointments with the external agenda and more infos
- Decide if people should register for the event through eventbrite or other tools or if you want to be surprised

6. Think how to harvest

- Recordings can be a helpful tool to involve those not present - important is to think about which elements of the call are actually relevant for those not present and only record those pieces - the shorter the more likely people will watch it (Zoom has a built-in recording function where you can pause the recording if needed)
- Presentations and recordings should be made accessible via a Google Drive or other options within your community platform as soon as possible after the session + provide a short written summary of the main points
- If budget allows a graphic recorder can join the session. This should only be an option if you have a clear idea how you will use the drawings produced.
- At the end of each session the facilitator and host would have a short discussion and capture their main takeaways to share with the wider community

7. Evaluation

- You can ask people for immediate feedback at the end of the call via a poll, spoken or written feedback (how could the next call be improved, what did you like and should be repeated?)
- Another option is a session evaluation form (i.e. Google forms or if more question options are needed SurveyMonkey) that the facilitator would ask participants to complete before leaving each session or send afterwards via email (risk of lower response rate). The questions in the evaluation form should be related to the goals and member value you hoped to create.
- Important is to actually analyse the answers and draw conclusions for future calls

8. Follow-up

- Communicating after the event is as important as communicating before especially if you hope for participants to take concrete actions. A follow-up email to remind people of their commitments might be useful.
- If the call is scheduled regularly making the bridge from one call to the next is important and can start with an announcement of the next calls topics and how it connects to the previous one.