



CONVENE & CONNECT

Convening is the art of bringing the community (of practice) and relevant stakeholders together to connect members and engage them in meaningful conversations. The diversity of a community and a risk-free and inclusive environment help develop conversations and engage members.

Start small, create the conducive environment to convene and network people.

Proper community management to ensure diversity of views, prioritize equity for access to opportunities and resource and where everyone feels they belong and can actively participate.

Diversified, equity and inclusiveness environment where there is diverse representation, fairness and everyone feel valued and heard.

Activities oriented to developing the practice – Booths and Gallery Walk

WHAT

Booths and Gallery Walk

Moving around a “gallery” of displays to engage in conversations about each other’s practice creates a fair-like atmosphere that is conducive to interesting conversations.

WHY

This is a way for people to take a deep dive into each other’s contexts and challenges. It can be used both within a community for people to understand each other’s context, and across communities at a fair or other broader event.

HOW

We invite participants to create a “booth” representing who they are and what they need or can offer. They can use graphics, pictures, text, and existing artefacts, either on large physical pieces of paper or on a section of a shared online whiteboard.

We then give them time to visit each other, discuss their contexts, and ask questions to understand the relevance of what they are doing and where they want to go.

In some communities, this simple activity has generated the liveliest conversations of all activities we have tried. Be ready to spend plenty of time on it.

Variations

Priming the pump. Sometimes we precede the design of booths with a discussion of what members would like to know about each other. It is useful in guiding the design of booths that will be relevant to fellow members. If you do that, it is important to point out that the booth is not a list of bullets answering the questions; the purpose of the questions is only to help take into account what people are curious about. The display should be an imaginative and ideally visual representation of projects and their contexts.