Building Communities
Building Communities Session Objectives

• To understand what community is and what communities you are part of and why these are important to your role.

• To understand where existing communities are and how to connect with these communities within your role.

• To be able to enact the methodology of listening campaigns as a tool of connecting with and building communities.

• To have an understanding of key principles of community organising such as collectivism, empowerment and building diverse coalitions and how this approach can mobilise student communities to bring about change.
Sentence Completion

• The communities’ I belong to:
• I know I belong to that community because
• I think communities at University are important because
• _____ makes me feel part of a community
• My vision for my community is
Mapping your communities

Take 5 minutes solo to use your phone to map out the different communities that come under your role.

Within this, identify any potential influencers/leaders within these groups.

For example:
- Women’s Network features Women in Politics, Women in STEM, Women & Politics.
Self-Interest: a 101

• Self-Interest is Not Selfishness

- Discovering your self-interest means finding out what matters to you. Who are you? What is important to you?

• If you understand and can tap into someone’s self-interest
  • You will capture their time, energy, talents, and passions.

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<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Selfish</th>
<th>Self-Interest</th>
<th>Selfless</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>Non-relational</td>
<td>Relational</td>
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<td>Power</td>
<td>Power Over</td>
<td>Power With</td>
<td>Giving Up Your Power</td>
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Discovering your self-interest!

1. What are my self-interests (short-term, long-term, etc.)?
2. How have they changed in the past year? In the past 5 years? Which ones take priority in my life?
3. What were the important past influences, events, mentors, and people in my life?
4. What do I like in my current work, study, family, friends, community involvement, hobbies, etc.?
5. What do I not like and want to change?
6. If there was one thing I could change in my neighbourhood or city, what would it be?
7. What do I want my life to look like one year from now? 5 years from now?
The Art of Listening Campaigns

• Relationship building is at the core of organising and is key in building active, thriving communities.
• For community organising, direct person-to-person interaction works best
• One core technique for this is: the one-on-one (1-1)
  • Build and strengthen new relationships
  • Central in growing your community and networks
The 1:1 Meeting

The 1:1 meeting is a tool to establish, maintain, and grow relationships as a community organiser.

Each 1:1 meeting has four key elements:

1. Purpose
2. Exploration
3. Exchange
4. Commitment
Things to remember:

Who do we meet with:
- Peer leaders
- Allies
- Followers – who could be leaders in the future.

Where do we meet:
- Set up the meeting in a comfortable place for both people.
- Ideas: In either person’s home, coffee shop, park, etc.

What it is NOT:
- An Interview
- Trying to sell anything / sales pitch
- Chit Chat
- Therapy Session
Time to try it out!

• Turn to the person next to you, form a pair and initiate your first 1-1!
• Make sure you alternate and ensure both of you get a chance to speak.
Things to do going forward

• What did you get out of your 1-1?

• Make a pledge to have 1-1s with 10 people in the next few months.

• Think about who you would want to meet in relation to your role.

• Use the list of leaders and groups you identified from the sentence completion task earlier!
What do organisers do?

“Community organizers are responsible for building a group of people or institutions to work towards a common goal through collective action.

In order to work towards this objective, community organizers must be trained to really listen to people when they articulate their concerns and voice their fears."
Examples – Sisters Uncut

• Sisters Uncut have an intersectional approach to organising and centre the voices, concerns and needs of the community in their campaigns.
  • Last year, Hackney council had been telling 60% of domestic violence survivors that they couldn’t be housed while 1000 council properties sat empty.
  • Sisters had been holding weekly stalls in the local community,
  • Ran a listening campaign where they asked women what the biggest issue affecting them were
  • The most common answer was housing.
Questions...

• What are your thoughts on this approach?
• How could you use this approach in your work?
• What more do you need to know to use this approach?

• What’s one thing you will take from this session and use next year?
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