

Community Engagement Chat: Connecting Organizations with the Community, and Each Other

The Engagement Chat Group discussed various topics including strategies for building connections between community organizations throughout a city or region such as city departments, libraries, other nonprofits, etc. Oftentimes, we rely on a standard meeting format where presenters share information and updates, but what if meetings inspired real engagement and connection?

Here are a few great ideas from the group:

- Establish a show and tell, or a place and time to share news and upcoming events
- Rotate host locations and change up the times of day – try meeting for breakfast, lunch, or a mid-day coffee break
- Create opportunities for small group work or at least small group brainstorming on certain topics of interest
- Allow the group to set the agenda for the meeting, or add items to an established agenda
- Host an informal neighborhood BBQ or other social event for staff and volunteers
- Hold the meeting at a local park or community garden
- Create peer-to-peer mentoring or skill building opportunities
- Send lunch or coffee coupons if meeting virtually
- Find macro-influencers in the network and get them involved
- Use social media
- Attend ‘their’ events: go to events hosted by groups you want to connect with