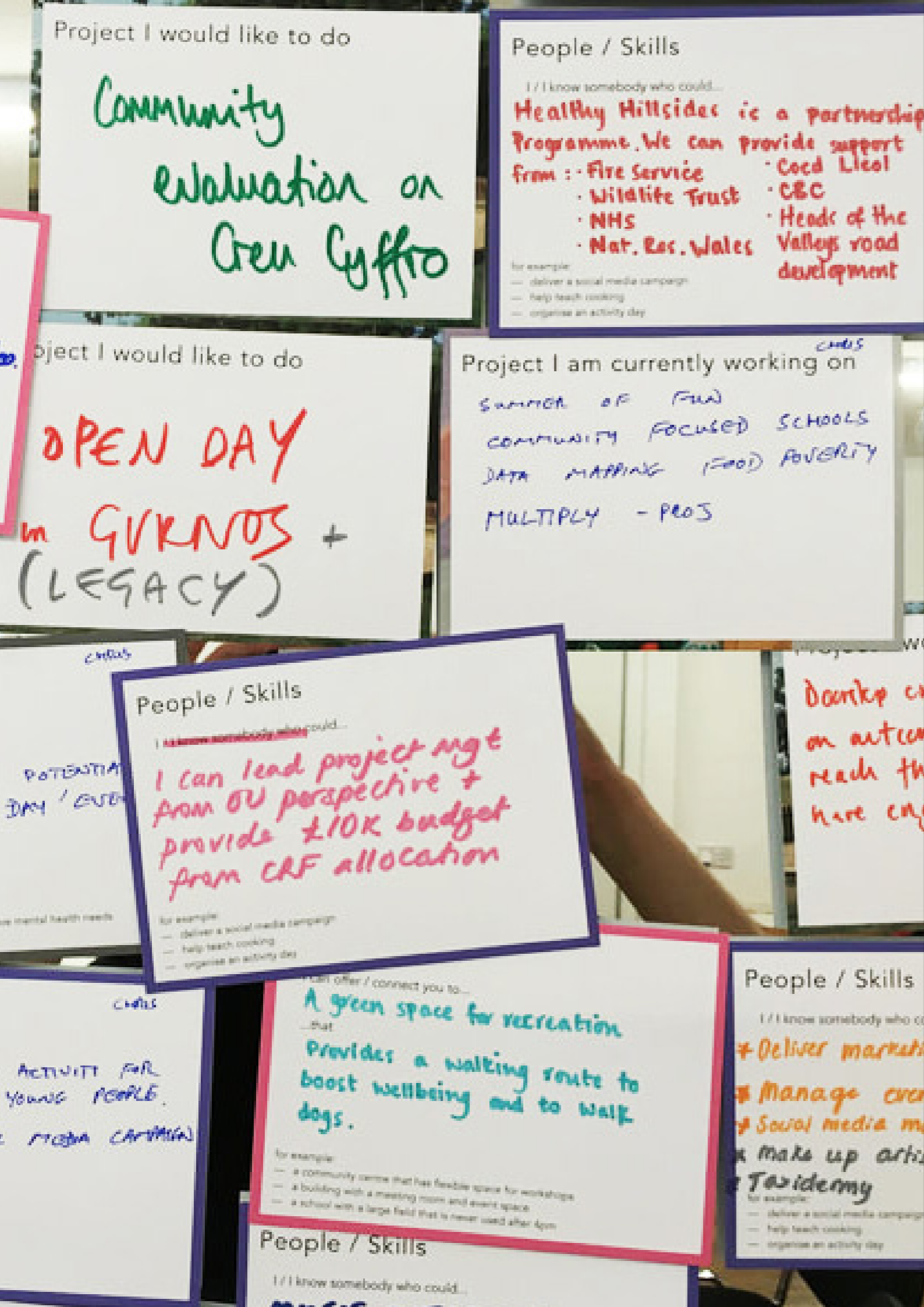


The background is a solid teal color. It features several stylized flowers: a pink one at the top right, a purple one in the middle right, and two light green ones on the left. Green stems and vines curve across the page. A dashed pink line winds through the scene, with three small yellow and black bees positioned along it. The text is centered on the left side.

Cross-pollination Resource Pack

Facilitating cross-sector design collaboration

Feb 2023



Contents

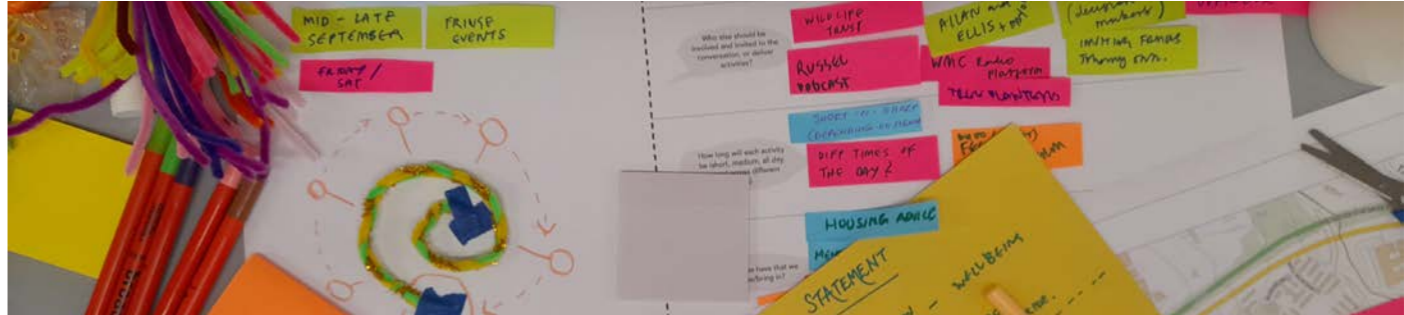
Section 1:	Section 3:
An Introduction to Cross-pollination 3	Cross-pollination Workshop Model 40
1.1 Cross-pollination History	3.1 Key stages of the workshop
1.2 Using Cross-pollination	3.2 Top tips for planning your workshop or event
1.3 Principles of Cross-pollination	3.3 Printed materials
1.4 The Value of Cross-pollination	3.3.1 Workshop instructions
1.5 Key Stages of Cross-pollination	3.3.2 Cross-pollination cards
1.6 Cross-pollination Tools & Methods	
Section 2:	Section 4:
Case Studies of Cross-pollination 20	Acknowledgements & Further Info 71
2.1 Scaling Up Co-design through Collaborative Research	4.1 Related Resources
2.2 Connecting Placemaking Initiatives in Portobello	
2.3 Launching a Community-led Housing Hub	
2.4 Encouraging Collaboration among Housing Providers	
2.5 Disseminating Cross-pollination at Conferences	
2.6 Incubating Civic Leadership in Bristol	
2.7 Supporting Co-creation in Merthyr Tydfil	
2.8 Connecting Ecology Champions in Barnet	
2.9 Reactivating the Gleadless Valley Partnership	



Image Credit: The Glass-House Community Led Design

About This Resource Pack

This resource has emerged from a knowledge exchange project called *Cross-pollination: Growing cross-sector design collaboration in placemaking*. The project was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council under their Place programme in 2022/23 as a partnership between The Open University and The Glass-House Community Led Design, working with a range of local partners in England, Scotland and Wales.



The aim of the project was to grow capacity for cross-sector design collaboration through the use of a creative approach called ‘cross-pollination’. The approach was developed and tested in a variety of research-based and practice-based projects in different settings, and has proved successful in bringing people together to share and connect their assets (human, economic, cultural, social) and form partnerships with the capacity to lead design initiatives.

The resource was created in order to help cascade and enable cross-pollination across locations, disciplines and sectors, and to enable inclusive and sustainable placemaking processes and outcomes.

It will be valuable to anyone interested in exploring the value and mechanisms of collaborative working and applying them in their local project, however big or small. This includes community leaders, community engagement professionals, voluntary organisations, local authorities, businesses or members of public bodies supporting placemaking.

The resource is divided into 4 sections:

- **Section 1** provides an introduction to cross-pollination, presenting its history and explaining its key principles, value and use in practice.
- **Section 2** introduces a series of 9 case studies, which serve to demonstrate the diversity of contexts and situations in which the approach has been used, and to help provide inspiration on how you can adapt it for your own context and objectives.
- **Section 3** provides practical guidance on how you could deliver a cross-pollination workshop to kick-start collaboration in your own network or local place. It explains the key stages of the workshop, together with top facilitation tips and a set of printable materials to use in the workshop.
- **Section 4** provides acknowledgements and some additional links and resources you can explore, as well as information about the authors and how to contact them.

Section 1

An Introduction to Cross-pollination

A practical approach to incubating design collaboration across sectors.

Collaboration and partnership working are essential to any project to shape public services, physically transform a building, space or neighbourhood, or to develop new research, products or technologies. Such complex projects require multiple agencies, disciplines, sectors and communities to come together to design, deliver and maintain them.

However, despite a growing interest in collaboration through co-design, co-creation and co-production, there are still surprisingly few opportunities for this range of different players to come together to develop sustainable solutions to complex problems. For many hoping to kick-start such a collaborative design process, it can be difficult to know where to start.

Cross-pollination is a creative approach used to bring representatives from different groups, organisations and sectors together to identify common and complementary interests, share information on live projects, and work together to unearth and connect their collective skills and resources to enhance existing projects and initiatives or to co-design new ones.

It is rooted in the simple objective of creating a safe space for people to come together, to share information, ideas and resources and to connect and collaborate.

Although certain tools and processes have been developed to aid cross-pollination, which are explored throughout this resource, cross-pollination is best seen as a flexible approach or framework, rather than a method, with a set of guiding principles and stages that can be adapted to fit different contexts and situations.

This resource provides a brief introduction to the cross-pollination approach, examples of where and how it has been used to date, and some practical tools to help you use cross-pollination in your work or area.

Participant & Collaborator Descriptions of Cross-pollination

We asked people we have worked with through our cross-pollination research to describe the approach in their own words. Here are some of their voices:



Bringing partners and people together to look at community assets, and think more around the people and the skills and their experience and their abilities.

A simple way of taking two fertile seeds and blooming into something useful, imaginative, beautiful, unexpected.

A collaboration around a common theme amongst people with different backgrounds to produce something new.

The process whereby projects (which stand-alone) and agencies (who work in isolation) come together to pool ideas, resources and capacity to provide a more rounded experience for those who benefit from them.

A framework to bring people and organisations together to have a positive conversation that recognizes, shares and celebrates skills, experience and assets.

Taking ideas and attributes from a broad range of perspectives to shape an approach to a particular issue.

Cross pollination is about connecting people, ideas and experiences to enhance, support and strengthen collaboration.

I would say cross pollination is an approach that can be used and adapted in different settings or problem solving situations to get a desired outcome by bringing [together] partners and stakeholders, people, community members, anybody that wants to be involved to that space.



Section 1:
An Introduction to Cross-pollination

Section 1.1

Cross-pollination History

The approach was originally developed in the *Scaling up Co-design* research project, funded under AHRC's *Connected Communities* programme in 2013. The research team brought together academics from four universities and six community and voluntary sector organisations, with combined expertise in design, placemaking, technology, media, housing, and social action.

Scaling up Co-design aimed to explore how partners could use co-design to add value and extend the impact and reach of their projects, and how to do this in both creative and economical ways. The collaboration journey started with a series of workshops to identify shared values and goals, explore existing projects and points of connection, and then unearth and mobilise collective assets to deliver small collaborative projects in different places across the UK.

Within a year, the original network grew organically to include partners beyond the research project team and from across the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.

An example of one of the partnerships that emerged from this process was between Sheffield-based social enterprise Silent Cities, national charity The Glass-House Community Led Design and the Glasgow-based Blackwood Foundation's online Bespoken network. It began with representatives from the three organisations recognising their shared objective to empower people on the margins of society to shape the places around them. They realised that bringing together their very different yet complementary approaches and programmes could enhance each other's work and increase what they could individually offer the communities with which they worked.



Image credit: *Scaling Up Co-design Research Project*



Image credit: *Scaling Up Co-design Research Project*

In an initial collaboration, the three organisations created a workshop for participants of Silent Cities Community Journalists programme in Sheffield, which trained people on the margins of society in media skills. The workshop brought together the expertise of the three partners, using photography, video and soundscapes to help participants articulate how they experienced the neighbourhood around them. This ranged from finding joy in the small details or memories associated with a particular place, to articulating the feeling of discrimination or exclusion in public space.

The Silent Cities Director and two of the 'graduates' of the Community Journalism programme then supported one of the London-based projects that The Glass-House was working on at the time, which involved helping young people work with a developer to shape ideas for a new open space under development.

The Silent Cities journalists moved quickly from trainee to trainer, providing valuable media skills training to the young workshop participants and giving them a new medium with which to express their views and ideas on the design of local places. The collaboration also brought two new partners The Glass-House had previously been working with, Lend Lease (a developer) and The Citizenship Foundation (an educational charity), into the *Scaling Up Co-design* network of partners.

At the end of the *Scaling up Co-design* project, the cross-pollination process was formalised into a workshop. This uses a set of prompt cards to help participants systematically share and connect their assets, connect and develop ideas for projects or activities in order to enhance their collective work and boost their capacity to carry out collaborative projects.

Since then, the approach has been adapted and used flexibly on many research projects and in practice, to enable cross-sector design collaboration around specific places, or specific issues.



Image credit: Empowering Design Practices Research Project

Section 1.2

Using Cross-pollination



Image Credit: Manisha

Cross-pollination can be useful at different stages of a design process. For example, it can be used at the beginning of a process to help build a sense of community or encourage partnership building. It can also be used with an established partnership as a way to explore future opportunities for projects or expand the membership. It is, however, recommended that enough of a critical mass is already in place for the process to work and to have a greater impact; either in the form of a well-connected individual with the experience and drive to make things happen, or in the form of an interest group or community-anchor organisation, for whom partnership working is within their remit.

Key examples of how this cross-pollination has been used in different situations are summarised in the Case Studies section of this resource. The associated Facilitation Guide section contains specific guidance and information on how to organise and deliver a cross-pollination workshop.

Finally, it is important to note that as a practical approach, cross-pollination is part of a larger toolbox available to those groups and organisations who can support other parts of a co-design or co-creation process, such as community engagement, visioning or evaluation.

Section 1.3

Principles of Cross-pollination



1. Asset-based

Cross-pollination adopts the mindset of **asset-based** development, which focuses primarily on existing strengths (both individual and collective) as a way forward, rather than on needs or weaknesses. Focusing on the negatives often comes with a sense of uselessness, whereas focusing on the positives can help energise and empower participants. What we call assets can be both tangible (such as places, equipment or infrastructure) or intangible (such as personal skills and expertise, experience or connections).

2. Values-based

In the same vein, cross-pollination also focuses on **values** (what people consider important to them), as a starting point for conversation among a range of different people and organisations. Unearthing values at the start of this process can help clarify people's objectives, aspirations and potential conflicts, or 'red lines'. This can also support openness, which can help create both trust and empathy, as well as clarifying the criteria of success for any collaborative work.

3. A Sharing Economy

Another important principle of cross-pollination is the focus on connecting and enhancing existing initiatives to create a '**sharing economy**', essentially seeking to achieve 'more for less'. Although new projects and new ideas usually emerge from the process, it is important that these are embedded in current practice and enhance what each actor is doing individually as well as collectively. Cross-pollination is about building on and with what is already there.

4. Adaptability

Cross-pollination is also **adaptable and sensitive to context**. While in the *Scaling-up Co-design* project, cross-pollination was essentially a year-long process, the workshop format that emerged in the end was delivered in the space of just a couple of hours. Cross-pollination can be, and in fact should be, adapted to the specific context and specific objectives of participating individuals and organisations.

For example, in *Scaling up Co-design* the emphasis was on bringing academic and non-academic partners together to generate ideas for new projects. In another project, *Incubating Civic Leadership*, cross-pollination was used to help bring local authorities and community-based organisations together to experiment with ways to incubate civic leadership in local places.

5. Experimentation

Experimentation is another critical principle of cross-pollination. One of the reasons why cross-sector collaboration often fails to make the leap from theoretical to practical application is because different individuals and organisations from different sectors can hold preconceptions about each other and are therefore sceptical about the feasibility and value of collaboration.

Cross-pollination should help create a safe space for those actors to talk and listen to one another, planting seeds for further collaboration by actually "trying something out" together. Experimentation allows actors to test ideas or relationships in a low cost way and without committing to something bigger immediately. In short, experimentation can help move conversations and ideas into action through small steps.

6. Creativity & Playfulness

The last principles of cross-pollination are **creativity and playfulness**. Cross-pollination places emphasis on experience over outcomes. Activities such as drawing, making, role playing, creative writing or storytelling can help create a more relaxed atmosphere, encourage the formation of affective bonds between participants and bring joy to tasks that might otherwise feel onerous or stressful.

Section 1.4

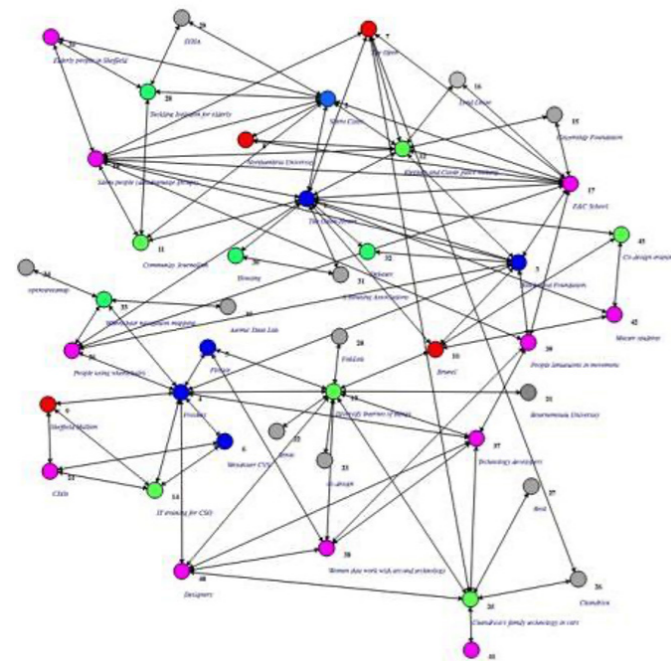
The Value of Cross-pollination

Cross-pollination is an approach that brings with it the potential to create value through the process itself as much as through the outputs:

1. Building Networks

Cross-pollination can help grow and strengthen connections between organisations and individuals and break barriers to collaboration.

During the *Scaling up Co-design* project, the initial network of ten individual collaborations working on three community-based projects grew to thirty-two collaborators working on ten community-projects, within the space of a year. As the network grew, community based organisations became more central to the network, becoming critical connection nodes and strengthening their influence.



Scaling up Co-design: The network after 12 months (32 collaborators, 10 community-based projects)
Graphics courtesy of The Open University

2. Building Capacity

Cross-pollination is as much about developing confidence and skills as it is about changing perspectives and mindsets.

Analysis of participant feedback from both the *Scaling up Co-design* and *Incubating Civic Leadership* research projects showed that participants had gained new knowledge and skills which they also used in other projects as part of their practice, often leading to additional funding.

One example of this comes from the Director of Silent Cities, who reported that she had gone on to use co-design and cross-pollination principles to leverage funding for a £5.9m bid to tackle isolation among the elderly in Sheffield.

A community leader from Bristol reported that they had found it useful to “learn about engagement techniques” and felt that they had personally changed. Whilst previously being used to making decisions by themselves, they found they would now “try to make other people make decisions” and “be more collaborative” in their outlook.

Another community activist from Redbridge, London found that cross-pollination had “opened doors” for them with people in the council and created new connections. A council officer involved in the same collaboration reported gaining “practical knowledge around organising events” and learning “not to wait for others” to do something and to bring new voices in.

3. Empowering People, Groups & Organisations

Above all, the value of cross-pollination as a process has been found to be empowerment. Cross-pollination, and co-design more generally, have massive potential to help disrupt and reorder existing power structures and dynamics, creating new ways of working and new ways of interacting.

One example of this comes from the Gleadless Valley partnership in Sheffield. Following a cross-pollination workshop, the group was then able to draw on conversations and assets recorded during the workshop to develop a funding bid and a renewed vision for the partnership going forward, and reported feeling a greater sense of community ownership and empowerment.

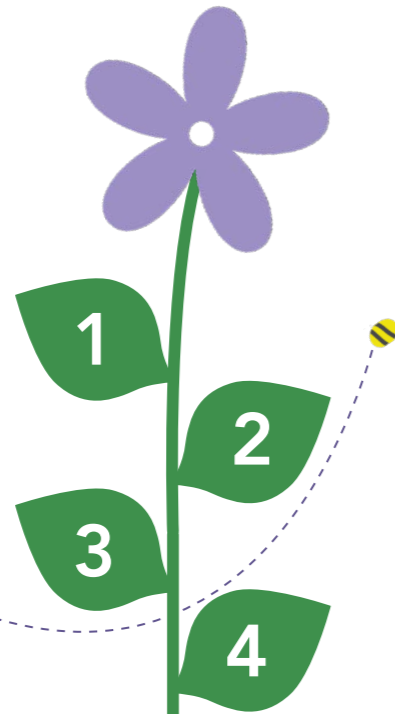
In Portobello, an individual activist was recognised by a large local organisation as a potentially valuable contributor and connector between a city-wide body and her local neighbourhood. This was because the cross-pollination workshop created a space in which the usual power dynamics were shifted, and in that space, the individual and large organisation were simply two people exploring what they could do together that they could not each do alone.



Section 1.5

Key Stages of Cross-pollination

As a process, cross-pollination can be seen as a series of stages:



1. Sharing

Participants individually identify and then collectively discuss their interests and experiences, the projects they are working on and their aspirations. They work to unearth and map their assets both individually and as a collective. Both individual/personal and organisational assets should come into play.

2. Connecting

Participants connect their individual assets, by identifying common or complementary values, themes and objectives. This helps them to organise, or cluster, assets, and usually reveals an unexpected wealth of expertise, experience, relationships and resources. This bank of assets continues to grow through discussion, as participants often think of more assets they can bring to the mix once talking to others in the room.

3. Framing

Participants explore ideas for how existing or new projects activities can use and build on the previously identified assets. At this stage, multiple ideas can be considered at the same time, or ideas can be prioritised against a wider strategy.

4. Cascading

Participants develop a strategy to cascade the ideas. This might involve inviting more people into the conversation and/or finding additional support from other potential partners or supporters (including funders). This could include applying cross-pollination over time, with different groups of people, or for different objectives, as ideas and networks evolve.

Section 1.6

Cross-pollination Tools & Methods

Cross-pollination can be realised in different ways and through the use of different tools. It can be delivered in the form of a workshop, or a series of events, each of which engages different groups of people each time with a focus on different topics, or different places.



Image credit: Empowering Design Practices Research Project



For instance, cross-pollination was used in an iterative way in Merthyr to bring social landlords, the local authority and other groups and organisations supporting community and neighbourhood renewal together to deliver activities in partnership. On another occasion it was realised as a one-off event to help nurture a culture of collaboration among housing providers across the UK. You can explore these projects further in Section 2.

Although most commonly cross-pollination is a highly facilitated process, it does not need to be. There are many ways in which assets can be shared and connected, using for example poetry or performance, or through digital media such as online mapping platforms or social media.

Included in this resource pack is guidance on how to use the cross-pollination workshop model, which can easily be adapted to suit the context and the people and organisations taking part.

Section 2:
Cross-pollination Case Studies



Section 2

Cross-pollination Case Studies

In this section you can explore 9 case studies, examples of how different groups have applied the cross-pollination principles in a variety of sectors across the UK. These are intended to help highlight different applications of cross-pollination, and demonstrate how cross-pollination can be adapted and shaped to each unique project, locality and group of people.

These case studies have been formatted so that they can easily be printed to bring along to cross-pollination planning meetings and cross-pollination workshops to inspire you and your participants on your cross-pollination journey.

Case Studies

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>1</p> <p>Scaling Up Co-design through Collaborative Research</p> | <p>2</p> <p>Connecting Placemaking Initiatives in Portobello</p> | <p>3</p> <p>Launching a Community-led Housing Hub</p> |
| <p>4</p> <p>Encouraging Collaboration among Housing Providers</p> | <p>5</p> <p>Disseminating Cross-pollination at Conferences</p> | <p>6</p> <p>Incubating Civic Leadership in Bristol</p> |
| <p>7</p> <p>Supporting Co-creation in Merthyr Tydfil</p> | <p>8</p> <p>Connecting Ecology Champions in Barnet</p> | <p>9</p> <p>Reactivating the Gleadless Valley Partnership</p> |

Scaling Up Co-design through Collaborative Research

Facilitating academic-non-academic collaboration and supporting co-design between civil society organisations across the UK.



Find out more about this example by scanning the QR code or visiting: <https://linktr.ee/scalingupcodesign>

In 2013, as part of an AHRC funded research project called *Scaling up Co-design*, six Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working to empower disadvantaged, marginalised or isolated individuals and communities through community journalism, placemaking, media and technology, came together with academic partners in order to explore how the impact and reach of their work could be scaled up through co-design practices and how co-design could be cascaded more widely in civil society. Cross-pollination emerged as a process through which project partners were able to share and identify common and complementary interests, competencies and live projects in order to collaborate on joint work.

What happened?

Through a series of workshops, the team developed their shared principles of action and collaboration. This process revealed what became the defining features of cross-pollination: a commitment to openness and shared decision-making, a focus on building on and enhancing existing assets (skills, knowledge and live projects), and an emphasis on playfulness and experimentation.

At the end of the project, cross-pollination was formalised into a workshop with a set of associated prompt cards, which was used to further connect the team with other partners and potential projects.

The workshop delivered at the final event of the project was organised as follows: Participants were first divided in groups and given a 'cascading' box containing pens, string and a set of three colour coded types of cards: 'Projects I am currently working on', 'Projects I would like to do' and 'Resources I can share'.



They first worked individually to fill in their cards (one idea per card) and then shared their ideas in their group trying to identify links and generate ideas for joint projects.

The next step asked each group to identify a 'champion' or 'ambassador' who took one of the ideas to other tables, pitching it to potential collaborators and collecting more resources that could help realise it.

Outcomes & Impact

- New connections between organisations and individuals were created and these have lasted beyond the life of the project.
- At least three project participants carried out similar practices beyond the confines of the specific research project.
- Participating organisations developed their expertise and reputation in co-design and collaboration and were able to use this to leverage funding for future projects, including a £5.9m bid to tackle social isolation among the elderly in Sheffield.



“ We've learnt from them, they've learnt from us and the collaboration is quite a feat in itself to do between a charity in London, a social enterprise in Sheffield, a mix of volunteers and a school. ”

- Participant at Community Journalists Project

“ Being involved in this project helped me think creatively on how to deliver similar or even better services in different ways. I now look at how co-design principles could help me engage, train and support beneficiaries, especially in an online environment ”

- Participating CSO



Connecting Placemaking Initiatives in Portobello

Bringing people and organisations together to share and connect initiatives in Portobello, Edinburgh



Find out more about this example by scanning the QR code or visiting: <https://linktr.ee/portobelloconnects>

Portobello Connects was a free public event in February 2019, delivered as part of The Glass-House 2018/19 WEdesign event series. It brought together people, groups, organisations and institutions in Portobello, on the Edinburgh shoreline. Event participants spent the evening mapping what was happening in their area, sharing information about projects they were involved in, and exploring how they could connect and enhance local initiatives through collaboration.

What happened?

As people arrived at the event, they were asked to add information onto a map of the local area, using paper labels and push pins to identify local activities and initiatives.

The event involved a series of collaborative tasks. Firstly, participants worked in groups to map the key features of Portobello across five main topic areas: transport; social and cultural spaces; spaces for hire and/or community use; sport and leisure; and service provision (e.g. healthcare, post office, schools). Through discussion, they began to build a shared picture of the physical infrastructure and amenities in the area.

Participants then gathered around the map of Portobello to share and discuss the local projects and initiatives that had already been added to the map, and to add any others that came to mind during the discussion.

Finally, participants were asked to fill in their cross-pollination cards, annotating projects they were working on, projects they would like to do and assets (skills, people, places, equipment, funding) they could offer or connect to other projects.



Outcomes & Impact

- New connections were created between assets, people and projects working at different scales, creating a better understanding of their place and how it is working.
- Participants became aware of the variety of initiatives happening in their area which helped them build confidence in their neighbourhood and what they had to offer.
- An informal network of organisations was created keeping each other informed about live and emerging projects and programmes.



“ We were struck by how dispersed things were – I thought there was more of a central hub but everything is more spread out than concentrated. ”

- Workshop Participant

“ Portobello is better captured on a calendar than a map due to the density of events. ”

- Workshop Participant



Launching a Community-Led Housing Hub

Connecting cross-sector organisations to facilitate the formation of a community-led housing hub in London



Find out more about this example by scanning the QR code or visiting: <https://linktr.ee/communityledhousinghub>

In July 2017, the Greater London Authority (GLA) hosted an event at City Hall, London, which focused on community-led housing. The Open University worked with the GLA to advise on the use of cross-pollination during the event in order to bring individuals and organisations from different sectors (housing associations, community groups and developers) together in a joined-up conversation about community-led housing. This one-off event also aimed to sow the seeds for the creation of a community-led housing network.

What happened?

The format of this event invited participants to share their existing projects and resources in order to combine them, and in doing so generate ideas for shared projects. Participants were divided in smaller groups and used different coloured post-it notes to contribute their assets and projects, which were then clustered together on a large piece of flipchart paper.

Each table then shared their project ideas back with the wider group, inviting further connections and resources from others in the room.



Image Credit: Theo Zamenopoulos

Outcomes & Impact

- Participants across sectors who were otherwise not connected, were brought together to explore common objectives and develop a basis for collaboration.
- Following the workshop, a community-led housing hub (Community led Housing London) was created to provide information, capacity-building and technical support that organisations need to develop community-led housing projects.

“ I had a number of people come up to me after the event to say how much they enjoyed meeting different people, and my sense was that despite people in the room being ‘the usual suspects’, there was an important element of people meeting across sectors in a way that they do not normally do. ”

- GLA Project Manager

Encouraging Collaboration among Housing Providers

Bringing housing providers together to explore the power of collaboration



Find out more about this project by scanning the QR code or visiting: <https://linktr.ee/collaborativehousingproviders>

A free breakfast workshop in September 2015, organised by The Glass-House with the collaboration of the Open University, brought together people working within the social housing sector. At a moment when the sector was facing severe funding challenges, the workshop aimed to explore how they could strengthen their work and their position through collaboration and through unearthing, mobilising and sharing assets.

What happened?

Participants were placed in four groups and asked to map projects, ideas and assets, and create a new project concept.

The groups then each nominated a champion/ambassador to pitch their concepts to other groups in order to gather more assets and resources that could drive the project forward.



Image Credit: The Glass-House Community Led Design

Outcomes & Impact

- New connections and new ideas for collaboration were created
- Participants experienced the power of collaboration in a landscape which traditionally positioned them as competitors

“ By 10 in the morning we were on our way back to the office after a whistlestop tour of projects in the pipeline from housing associations, housebuilders and researchers. No time to sit back and listen, we worked together to develop and promote the best projects, understanding and using our collective resources. Impressive, how quickly and effectively we all did it, from a standing (and fairly early) start. ”

-Head of Design and Sustainability, Homes and Communities Agency

Disseminating Cross-pollination at Conferences

Motivating and evidencing the value of cross-sector, cross-discipline design collaboration in a conference setting



Find out more about this example by scanning the QR code or visiting: <https://linktr.ee/crosspollinationconferences>

The Glass-House and the Open University have engaged in various conference settings, both within the context of research and of design practice, development and regeneration, to introduce participants to cross-pollination as a simple and replicable approach to unearthing, mobilising and connecting a wide range of assets through interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration.

What happened?

Within the context of a conference, there is a short period of time available to engage and activate large numbers of participants who do not know each other. It is generally useful to create break-out groups of 6 to 10 people and set a task relevant to the conference theme or objective. For example, participants may work together to formulate recommendations or potential projects for collaboration.

For example, at Empowering Design Practices (EDP) Live in 2020, the cross-pollination task focused on exploring ways to enable custodians of places of worship to shape the future of their buildings. The aim here was to

form recommendations through combining experience and expertise to help shape policy and practice in the future.

At the Future of London Placemaking Conference in 2017, participants were invited to imagine that all of their collective assets were located in the same place, and to come up with placemaking ideas and initiatives that built on their collective expertise, networks and assets. Here the objective was to explore interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration in placemaking through a playful interactive activity, but also to offer a practical tool that participants could take away and use in their own places.



Outcomes & Impact

- Experiencing the approach first-hand and the way it can lead to joint outcomes helped participants understand the value of asset-based approaches to design and development.
- This first-hand experiences also helped break down perceived (cultural, disciplinary or sectorial) barriers to working together.



“ The interactive session was a good practical example of using techniques to explore design opportunities and develop ideas with groups of people ”

- EDP Live participant



Bottom right & left Image Credits: Empowering Design Practices

Supporting Co-creation in Merthyr Tydfil

Enabling a culture of collaboration to support community and neighbourhood renewal in Merthyr Tydfil, Wales



Find out more about this example by scanning the QR code or visiting: <https://linktr.ee/crosspollinationmerthyr>

In 2022, Wellbeing Merthyr and The Open University in Wales were working together on a Community Renewal Funded project (Crey Cyffro) to deliver a series of community engagement and training events in Merthyr, with a focus on the creative industries. Cross-pollination was used to bring different partners together from the local council, local housing associations and other groups interested in wellbeing, arts and the environment to co-design an event in the Gurnos ward and to ensure that the offer was rooted in local assets and that it would help build capacity for co-design and co-production.

What happened?

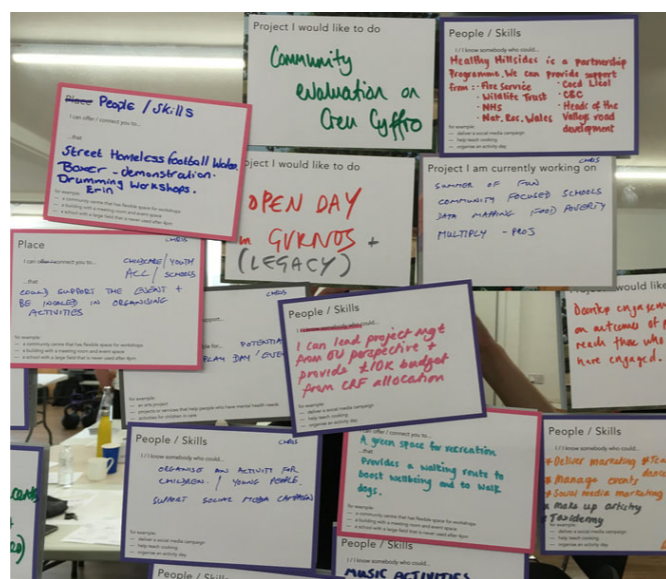
Cross-pollination happened via a series of workshops delivered as part of an AHRC-funded knowledge exchange project with the same name. This included a series of online workshops enabling different parties from Merthyr to meet, collaboratively explore local assets, challenges and opportunities, and define a general area of focus for the collaboration.

Participants identified various challenges linked to high levels of deprivation across multiple dimensions and limited levels of engagement, communication and connection between communities and decision-makers. They also identified numerous assets such as community facilities, existing regeneration programmes and expertise, strong partnership links and existing networks of volunteers.

This led to a focus on the area of Gurnos and the idea of running an open day to engage with local residents in discussions about their place.

Subsequently, in a Design Day, a core group of partners came together in Gurnos to explore the local area (buildings and open spaces), identify potential delivery partners and agree on a vision for the open day.

Finally, the Our Gurnos event provided an opportunity for local residents to see their place and its assets differently, understand the value of collaboration and take part in co-creation.



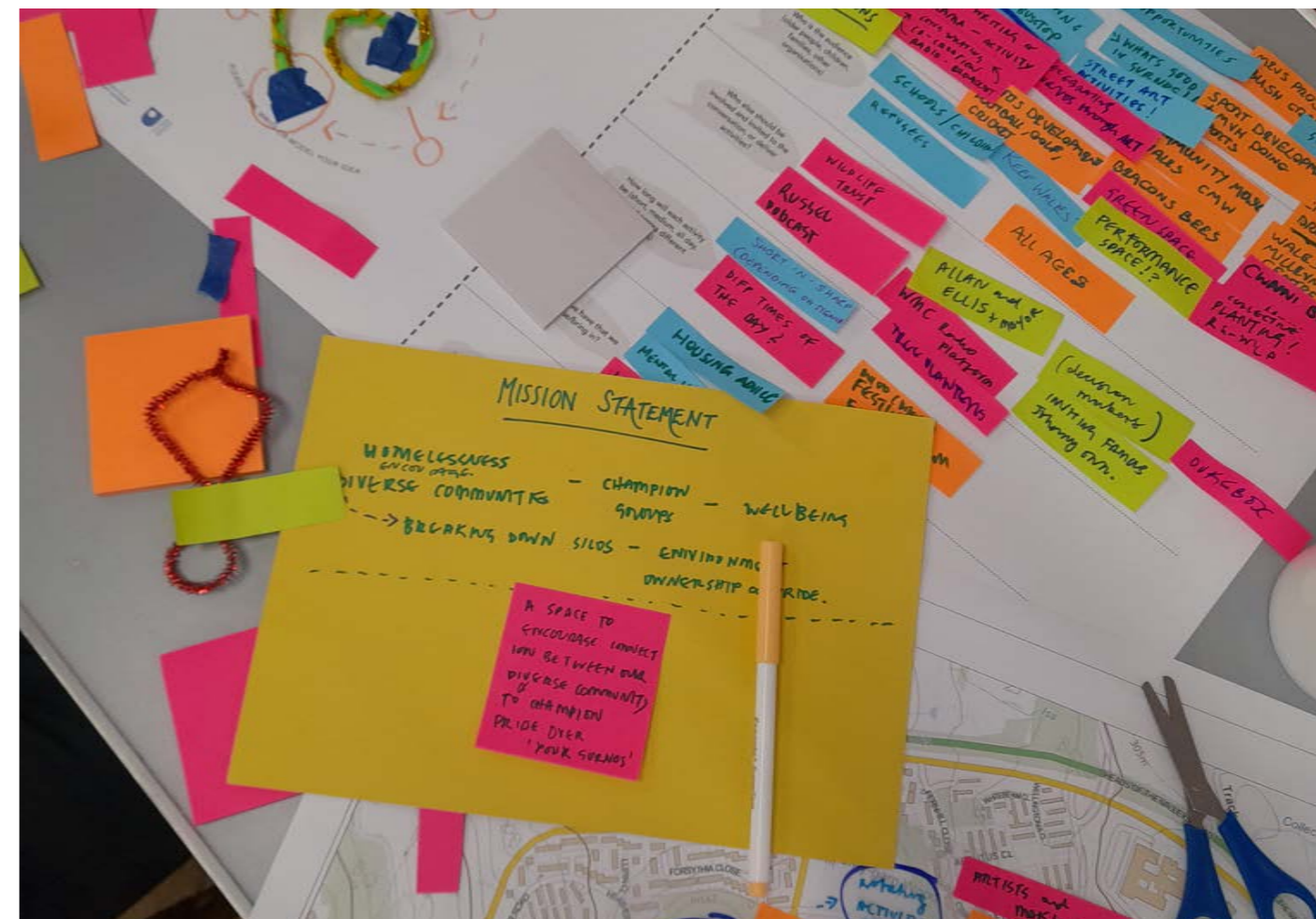
Outcomes & Impact

- Relationships between the university and local organisations were strengthened and expanded
- Learning from activities fed back into the work of the main resident social landlord in Gurnos (around green spaces, food growing and education) and their work in other places in Merthyr
- The experience led to new ideas for collaborative projects with other areas
- New partnerships between local organisations were created
- Local residents communicated and further developed a sense of pride for their place and their community

“ What we ended up creating was bigger than the sum of its parts... [Cross-pollination] is that process whereby the potential project that could stand alone, and agencies who may work in isolation, they come together, they pool their ideas, they pool their resources, they pull their capacity

to provide. It's that more rounded experience for the end user, for that community member who then benefits from all of those organisations coming together. ”

- Tenant Engagement Lead of a Resident Social Landlord



Incubating Civic Leadership in Bristol

Developing local leadership, support and cohesion in Knowle West, Bristol



Find out more about this example by scanning the QR code or visiting: <https://linktr.ee/civicleadershipbristol>

As part of the HEIF-funded Incubating Civic Leadership knowledge exchange project in 2021, the Open University and The Glass-House used cross-pollination to bring together different actors involved in placemaking in two locations in London and Bristol, and to explore ways to incubate and support civic leadership locally. One of the pilot projects was developed in collaboration with Knowle West Media Centre (an arts and technology charity) and Knowle West Alliance (a partnership of residents and local organisations active in Knowle West) and focused on the area of Filwood Broadway, a historically important area that has suffered as a result of deindustrialisation and subsequent lack of investment.

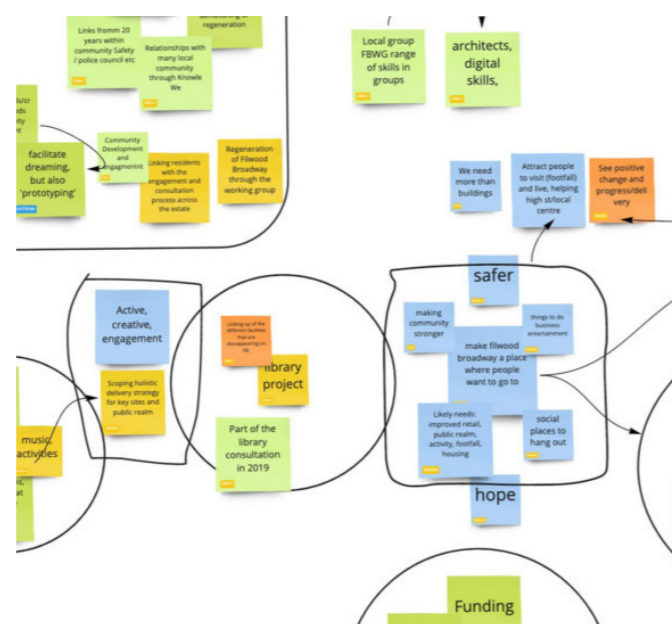
What happened?

The cross-pollination process was structured in four stages that enabled: 'sharing' interests, aspirations and values; 'connecting' to identify common areas of interest; 'framing' a plan of action; and 'cascading' collaboration through connection with wider networks.

The first three stages were facilitated online, using a digital version of the cross-pollination cards (facilitating participants to share existing projects, assets and ideas) which were linked and clustered together using a digital whiteboard (Miro).

Through the process, the pilot project in Bristol became focused on supporting the emerging Filwood Broadway Working Group (FBWG), a resident-led group, to get more local people involved in their work and to influence the local Council's plans for the area, which has some funding through the Filwood Broadway regeneration project.

As part of the cascading stage of the research, each locally-based pilot project was apportioned an amount of seed funding to help them carry out further activities and/or develop infrastructures that would enable their local civic action to grow. FBWG was able to hire a stall at the weekly local market which allowed them to engage with local residents and capture their voices.



Cross-pollinating digitally using Miro

Outcomes & Impact

- Local civic leaders became more confident about their role in the community and developed their skills in community engagement and community organising.
- Community members and organisers developed an understanding of the value and opportunities of cross-sector collaboration, and the value of starting from existing assets to support organic growth.
- More local people became actively involved in the activities of the local group, helping to feed into local regeneration plans and promote a more inclusive and community anchored future for the area.

“ The challenges are around communication, between what the community want and what the council want... They are similar, but they're kind of communicated in a different way (...) It's enabling a space where the two can talk to each other, and there's people in the middle who can help facilitate that discussion and help weather the challenges. ”

- Knowle West Media Centre partner

“ ...starting by supporting something in the community, which the community wants to do. Start things off locally and the momentum grows locally and then suddenly starts to cascade over into other communities. ”

- Filwood Broadway group member



Image Credits: Incubating Civic Leadership

Connecting Ecology Champions in Barnet

Facilitating the connection and creation of a network of ecological organisations and individuals in the London Borough of Barnet



Find out more about this example by scanning the QR code or visiting:

<https://linktr.ee/crosspollinationbarnet>

In 2022, cross-pollination was used by London National Park City Ranger, Becky Lyons, a local artist and ecologist, to unearth and connect grassroots ecological organisations across Barnet and to kickstart collaboration. Rangers are key catalysts for helping London National Park City work with citizens, visitors and partners to improve access to green and blue spaces, to support health and wellbeing and tackle climate and ecological crises. Becky responded to an open call for expressions of interest from networks interested to try cross-pollination, which was issued as part of the AHRC-funded Cross-pollination project and delivered in collaboration between the Open University and The Glass-House.

What happened?

The cross-pollination team delivered an online training event for successful applicants and provided seed funding to cover participants' time and materials to deliver a cross-pollination workshop in their locale.

Becky convened and facilitated a workshop, 'Barnet Gathers', with individuals and groups with an interest in ecology ranging from community harvesters, friends-of-groups, gardening groups, allotment caretakers, conservationists, tiny forest seeders, biodiversity initiatives, clean-up groups, mothers action networks and allotments.

Alongside the cross-pollination cards and following the general stages of sharing, connecting and framing (re-framed as 'mapping', 'clustering' and 'harvesting'), she added several unique activities, e.g. each participant was given a lump of clay to make something with their hands as a way to inspire creativity and catalyse conversation.

She also used other playful activities that welcomed physical movement and valued different learning styles, such as 'musical chairs' where participants move around and held quick conversations about their projects and mixing up the levels of social interaction by incorporating full group discussions as well as intimate one-to-one chats, small group discussions and solo work.



Outcomes & Impact

- New connections and relationships were created, and participants developed their awareness of what is happening locally, which formed the basis for exploring opportunities for collaborative projects.
- Participants developed their awareness of the value of collaboration and gained practical knowledge to apply in future collaborations and contexts.
- Following the workshop, the Barnet Directory was launched on Instagram, which showcases and connects grass-root organisations across the borough.
- The benefits of the approach in Barnet, ideas started developing for using it broadly within the LNPC network, first to start extending work with other organisations, local authorities and businesses in the different neighbourhoods; and second to support the network of Rangers connect and learn from one another.

“ People definitely hadn't thought about their assets before. You know, asking people to really think about your personal and your professional [assets] (...) that's not something that usually gets put into the room. So it's definitely really powerful. And you can see once people had a few examples,

just seeing them start to cascade, and then, all of a sudden, it's really quite moving how much you've got all on there. ”

- Workshop participant



Reactivating the Gleadless Valley Partnership

Consolidating and creating a vision for a place-based partnership in Gleadless Valley, Sheffield



Find out more about this example by scanning the QR code or visiting: <https://linktr.ee/crosspollgleadlessvalley>

The Gleadless Valley Partnership made up of the area's tenants and residents association, the local food bank, two churches, a local city farm and the community anchor organisation, was formed to oversee a capacity building project in the area for which Sheffield Council secured a modest amount of funding. The partnership was one of the participants who responded to the open call for expressions of interest which was issued as part of the AHRC-funded Cross-pollination project and delivered in collaboration between the Open University and The Glass-House. The Cross-pollination project was seen as an opportunity to help the organisations who make up the partnership (and broader stakeholders including the council, police, local businesses) understand more about their own strengths, assets, aims and priorities, and how they can create a shared vision for the partnership going forward.

What happened?

Three members of the partnership attended an online cross-pollination training session which introduced the approach, and its main principles and mechanisms. The partnership was then provided with a set of materials and seed funding to run a cross-pollination workshop at an off-site venue in Sheffield.

An independent facilitator from Voluntary Action Sheffield was commissioned to help run the workshop in a neutral way that would help balance group politics and dynamics.

The workshop started with a conversation where participants shared their hopes for the day. Subsequently, using the cross-pollination cards, participants discussed the projects they were already working on or would like to do.

Next, the group explored and agreed their top 3 priorities for the future which provided the focus for sharing and collating skills, resources, connections and places that can help develop and deliver them.

Outcomes & Impact

- Participants felt they were part of something bigger; the group came together with a renewed energy and was able to agree some shared priorities and better understand each other's potential contributions.
- New ideas were developed alongside some older ones that were reinforced
- Having a positively framed conversation about people's skills and assets helped build individual and collective community confidence.
- A funding brief was subsequently put together drawing on the conversations during the day and with a greater sense of community ownership and empowerment.



“ I've often felt like I'm trying to carry the weight of Gleadless Valley on my shoulders, which is exhausting, but now I've really seen that I'm not on my own. ”

- Cross-pollination Participant

“ A valuable time spent together. We were listened to, heard, and valued. ”

- Cross-pollination Participant





Image Credit: Scaling up Co-design, research project

Section 3

Cross-pollination Workshop Model

This cross-pollination workshop model is flexible and can be adapted to a number of contexts and facilitation styles. It can be a practical approach to incubating networks of place-based projects, collaborative research and innovation, or simply a way to help individuals or departments within a single organisation work better together. As set out in previous sections, the approach is based on the principle of creating a sharing economy of assets (skills, connections, places and resources) among different people and organisations, and across disciplines and sectors.

In very simple terms, this workshop is about bringing people and organisations together to:

- connect with and learn from each other
- share information about their experiences, initiatives and projects
- identify, share and connect their individual and collective assets (knowledge, skills, resources, networks or places)
- generate ideas about joint projects and activities that can enrich, enhance and build on what they are already doing.

With this in mind, it's useful to plan both how you will invite people into this space, and how you will keep the conversation going after the workshop.

Section 3.1 sets out four key stages of the cross-pollination workshop model: setting the scene, mapping the context, cross-pollinating and planning forward.

In each stage, examples drawn from different cross-pollination workshops are used to illustrate how the general model can easily be adapted to the specific context and personalised by the facilitator. The descriptions focus on a face-to-face workshop delivered in a physical location, but the workshop can be delivered online using digital prompts and materials on a digital whiteboard. The stages remain the same.

Some of the materials commonly used to facilitate the process are:

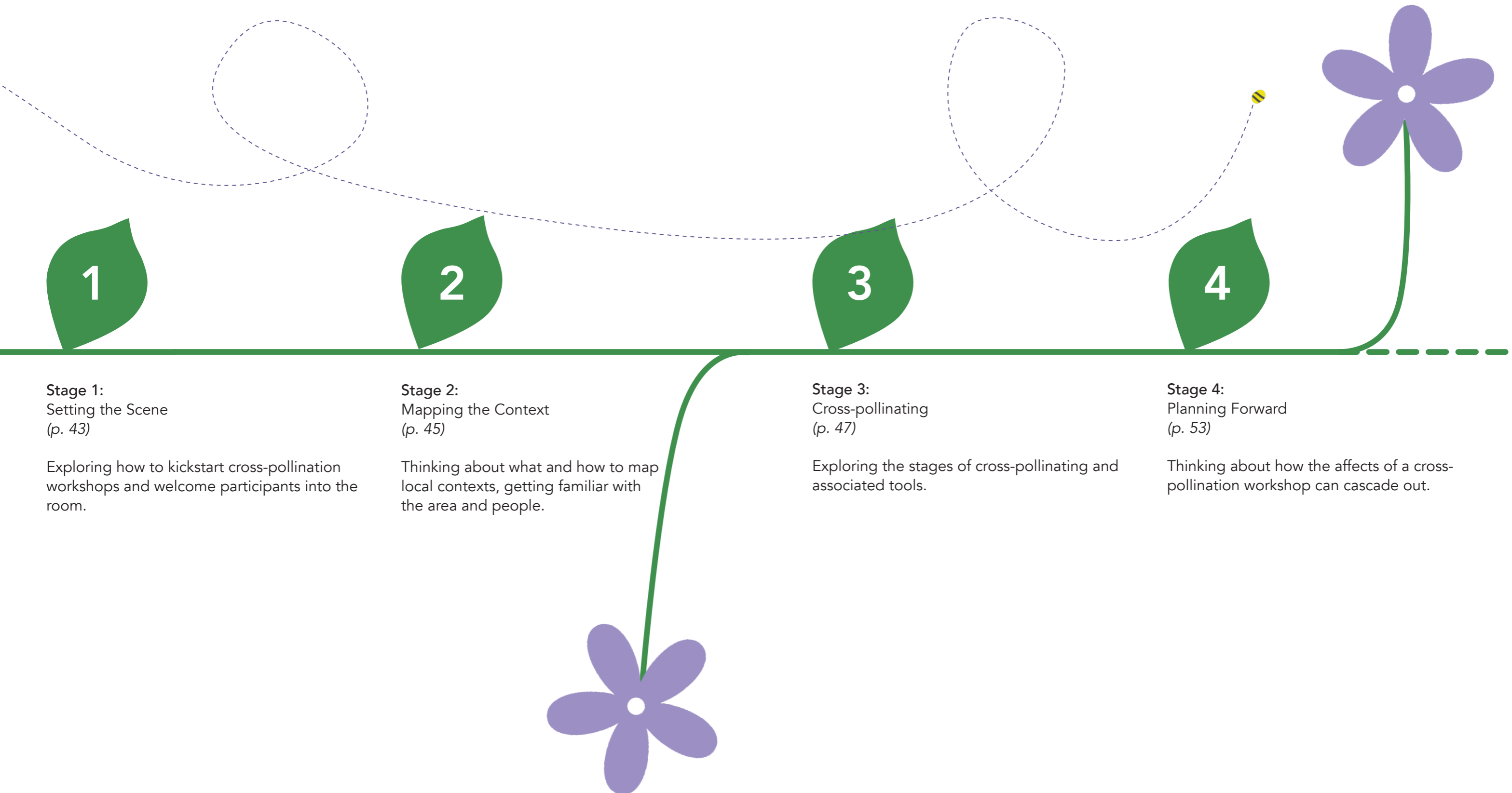
- labelled postcards which participants can use to record their assets, projects and ideas
- digital and physical whiteboards for clustering assets
- materials to link assets and ideas such as string or coloured masking tape.

Section 3.2 outlines some Top Tips for Planning a Workshop or Event, which can help you prepare for a cross-pollination workshop, or indeed any other interactive workshop and event.

Section 3.1

Key Stages of the Workshop

This diagram provides a brief graphic overview of the cross-pollination workshop stages. These are explored in more detail in the following pages.



Section 3.1

Stage 1: Setting the Scene

The lead facilitator should welcome participants and introduce the workshop. This should include:

- Setting the context of the workshop, setting out why you have convened this group of people and organisations and why you are using cross-pollination.
- Explain that this cross-pollination workshop will help map what's already happening in the area and explore ideas for what could happen, as well as help to unearth and connect local initiatives with new resources and partnerships.
- Explain how the workshop will work.
- Create a space for participants to introduce themselves, which can form part of an icebreaker activity.



Image credit: Ben Elford

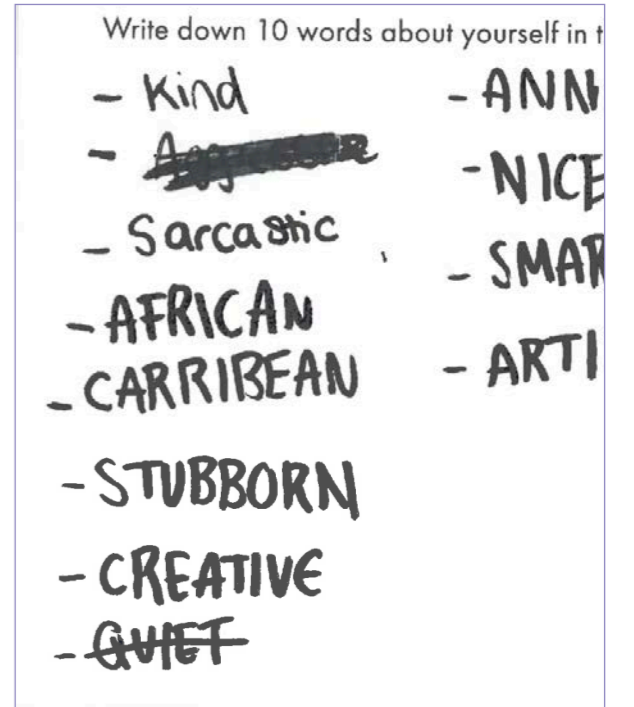


Facilitation Snapshot: Stage 1 Examples

Me in a Nutshell Worksheet

This activity has been used as an icebreaker at many cross-pollination workshops. Each participant is given a sheet of paper, and asked to write down up to 10 words to describe themselves. These can be nouns, verbs, adverbs, or a sentence, whatever they feel best describes them.

This helps participants get to know each other as people, and helps break down perceptions of hierarchies and power linked to roles and organisations.



Playing with Clay

In Barnet, participants were asked to respond to the question 'How are you?' using a piece of clay to make something. This 5 minute activity served as an icebreaker for the session.

Bringing an element of play into the session through the use of clay helped participants feel at ease, and facilitated a memorable way of getting to know each other. It also set the creative intentions for the rest of the cross-pollination session, helping people limber up for later creative activities.

Section 3.1

Stage 2: Mapping the Context

The aim of Stage 2 is to co-create a 'map' of what participants know about the context. This could be what they know about the local area, a field of research, a shared area of interest, or a combination of these.

This can take the form of a literal map, a list or mindmap, but it should use the collective knowledge of those in the room to create a shared picture and understanding of the context being explored together. For example, if you are mapping a neighbourhood, the 'map' of the local area might identify local initiatives, venues, activities, amenities or services that participants are aware of or connected to.

This stage is formed of two core elements:

- Inviting all participants to share projects, initiatives, groups and organisations, locations, activities, amenities or services they are connected to or aware of
- Recording this information in some way



The specific format of how the objectives are achieved can be shaped by your group. They can be done separately in two steps or as a single activity.

The 'map' created will become an important resource to support further conversations during the workshop, and can help introduce participants to initiatives, organisations or networks they did not know about.

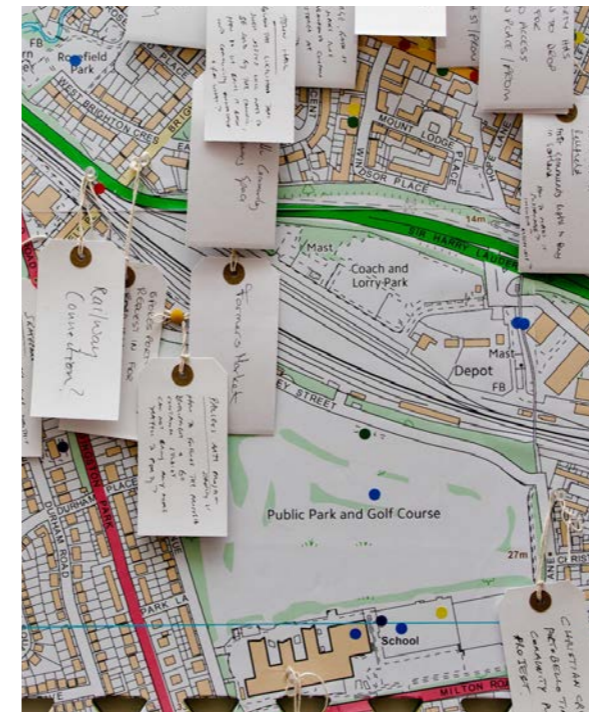


Facilitation Snapshot: Stage 2 Examples

Walking Tour

In Merthyr, participants went on a walking tour around the local area to allow everyone to get a feel for the place, and to explore the facilities and possible locations they could focus on for their collaboration.

A walkabout is a great way for participants to unearth their views about a place, what they like and what they don't like or want to see improved, in an experiential way. A walkabout allows informal conversations and connections to happen and helps create a shared 'image' of a place as a basis for further discussion.



Themed Mapping

For Portobello Connects, a large map of the area was printed and mounted on big puzzle mats made of foam. As participants arrived, they were asked to identify places, organisations and initiatives of interest to them and which they felt contributed to the life of the community, and mark them on the map with a label and push pin. The labels allowed them to write longer notes and keep the map clear and legible.

Image credit: The Glass-House Community Led Design, Jonny Bosworth



Section 3.1

Stage 3: Cross-pollinating

At this stage, participants unearth, share and connect their interests, knowledge, projects and assets to form a basis for collaboration.

This stage is supported by the use of 3 types of cross-pollination cards included in the Section 3.3 of this resource. These 3 cards are:

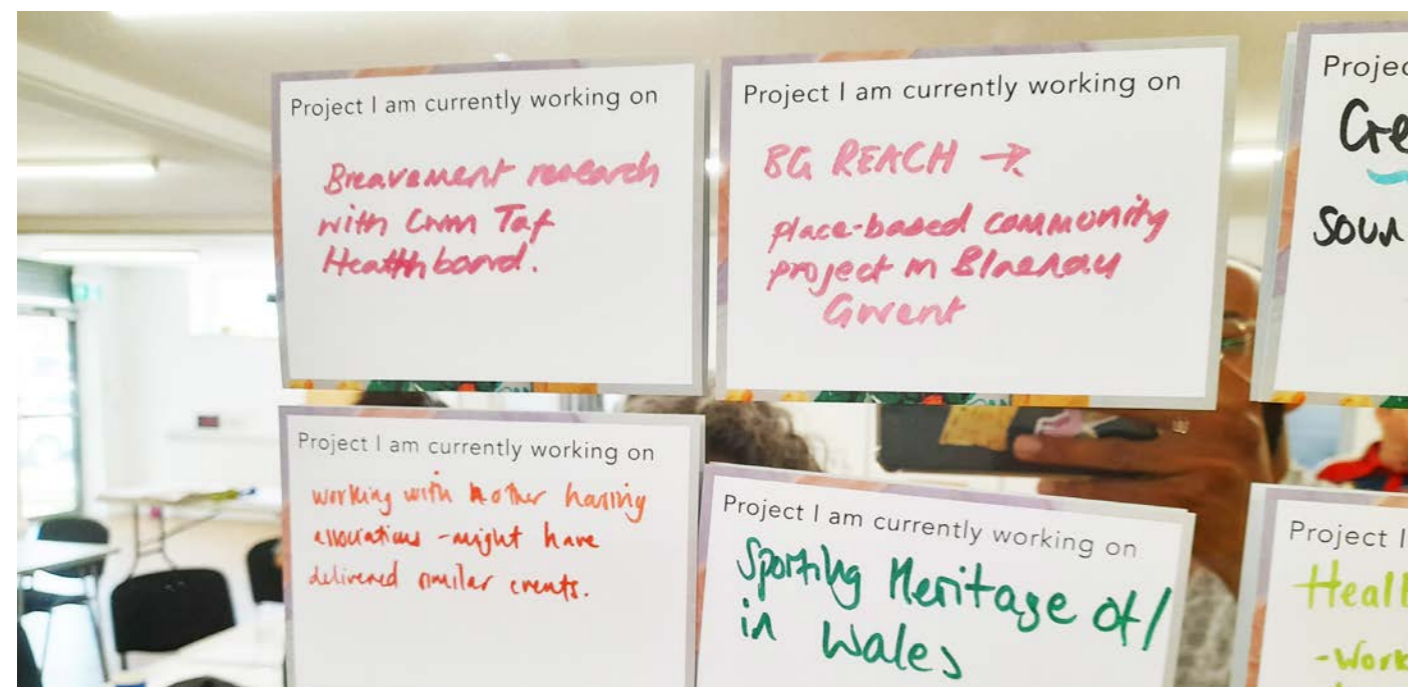
1. *Project I am currently working on*
2. *Project I would like to do*
3. *I can contribute*

The language on the cards can be adapted to suit specific context and participants (e.g. to talk about initiatives or activities instead of projects).

Alternatively, different colour post-it notes can be used to record each different type of information.

This stage is best delivered with a large, clear space set up for displaying the cross-pollination cards as you work with them. A template of instructions that you can print and use on the day is also provided in Section 3.3.

Participants should each be provided with several copies of each card, and the lead facilitator should then invite participants to work through this stage's steps (outlined further in the following pages).



Materials Required:

- Instruction sheets, outlining how to move through the steps that make up this stage (provided in Section 3.3 of this resource)
- Sharpies or other felt tip pens (choose the pen weight so that participants can write legibly, and the writing can be read and photographed easily)
- White tac (which avoids marks or damage to walls/ surfaces)
- Cross-pollination cards (or post it notes):
 1. *Project I am currently working on*
 2. *Project I would like to do*
 3. *I can contribute*

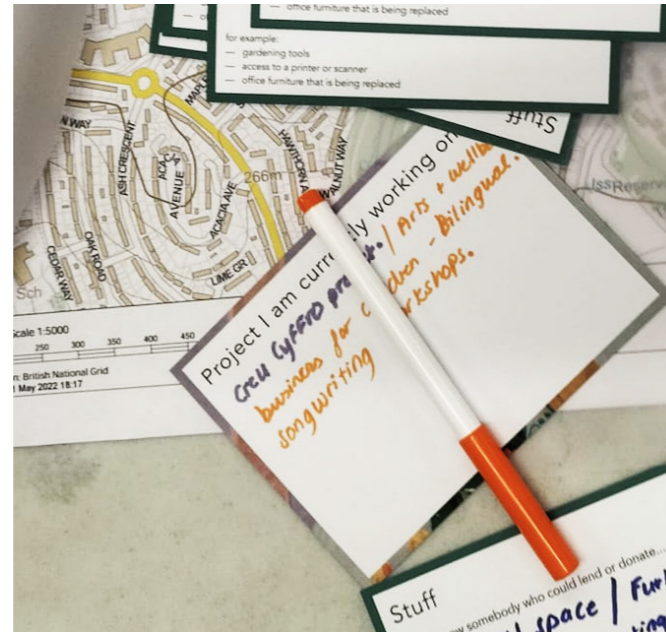
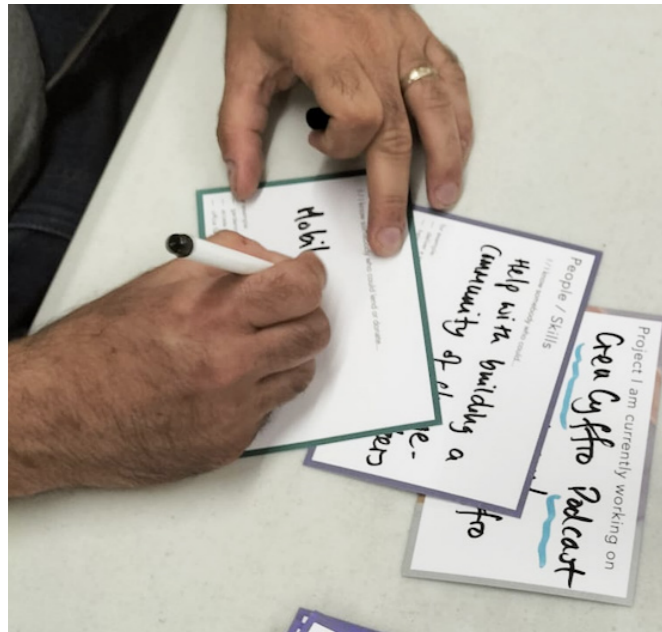
Other materials that can be used include string, masking tape etc.

Generally, participants will need around 5 cards each of the *Project I am currently working on* and *Project I would like to do* cards, and 10 of the *I can contribute* cards.

Section 3.1

Stage 3: Cross-pollinating

Structure of the Cross-pollination Activity



Step 1: Exploring Existing Areas of Work & Future Aspirations

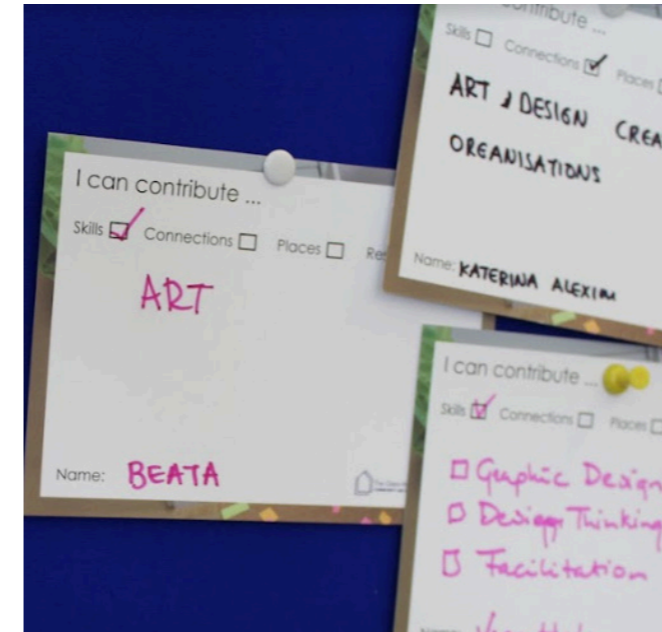
Using the *Project I am currently working on* and *Project I would like to do* cross-pollination cards (or a suitable alternative e.g. post it notes), participants should be given some time individually to write down:

- Initiatives that they are leading or connected with on the 'Project(s) I am doing' cards.
- Things that they would like to see happening or initiatives they would like to lead themselves on the 'Project(s) I would like to do' cards.

Ask participants to write simple and brief information (as neatly as possible) about each project they would like to share. Participants should write only one project per card to facilitate making connections. It is a good idea to have a person acting as a scribe in case any participants feel uncomfortable with writing.

After a few minutes ask participants to place their cards on a table/wall and share with others.

Projects or ideas that are similar or connected can be put close to one another.

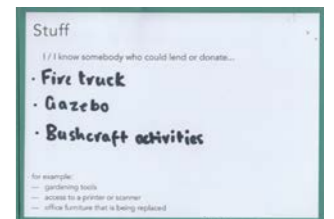
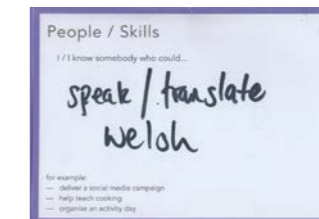
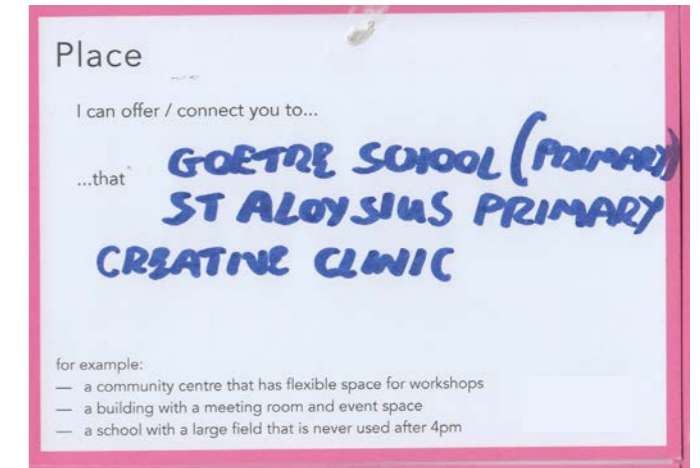


Step Two: Unearthing Assets

Participants should then be provided with several *I can contribute cards*, and given time to think individually about what they could offer or help with (which are referred to as 'assets').

Assets can be tangible (spaces, equipment, funds) or intangible (knowledge, skills, connections). Participants should be encouraged to think about what they could offer to other projects through either their personal or professional experience, skills and networks.

They should fill in one asset/item per *I can contribute card* and post them on the appropriate section of the table or wall.



If they think one of their assets could help a particular project on the table/wall, they should place it near the relevant idea or project card.

Note that in this resource, there is one *I can contribute card*, with tick boxes to help indicate different kinds of assets. In some of the example case studies provided in this resource you can see other ways to work with assets, for example using a different coloured postcard for each type of asset (e.g. places, people/skills or stuff).

Section 3.1

Stage 3: Cross-pollinating

Structure of the Cross-pollination Activity (cont.)



Step Three: Connecting to Create Ideas

Now it's time to get connecting!

Ask participants to have a look at the cards that have been shared by others and have a chat with fellow participants about the projects that interest them and how they could connect.

At this point, new assets can emerge that can be associated with different projects and further clustering of projects or new ideas can emerge. The aim is to create ideas for actions that can enhance what is already there.



Image credits:
Top left: The Glass-House Community Led Design
Above & right: Scaling Up Co-design Research Project



Facilitation Snapshot: Stage 3 Examples

Cross-pollination Wall

At *Share, Connect, Create Glasgow*, a cross-pollination wall was created to help display, group and connect the cards that had been completed by participants.

The wall created an active space where people could read and organise the cards individually or in pairs or groups, leaving the tables as quieter spaces for people to think and write. Using white tac to attach the cards to the wall meant that the cards could easily be moved around without damaging the wall.



Cascading Box

At the *Scaling Up Co-design Sharing Event*, participants worked in small groups to map and connect their projects and assets, and to identify one project (or group of linked projects) they would like to pitch to the others. They placed the relevant project and asset cards in the cascading box and nominated a champion to take their box to another table. Each champion then moved to a new table, pitched the idea and collected projects and assets to enrich and connect with what was already in the box.



Section 3.1

Stage 4: Planning Forward

Before you close the workshop, it's helpful to create a space to reflect on the day, to draw together key ideas and to agree on the next steps.

Participants are likely to feel excited about future possibilities, so it is important not to lose momentum. Encourage participants to think about whether and how they would like to stay connected and whether specific projects, or specific connections can be further explored and developed. Explore who may have an interest or capacity to take ownership of different future directions.

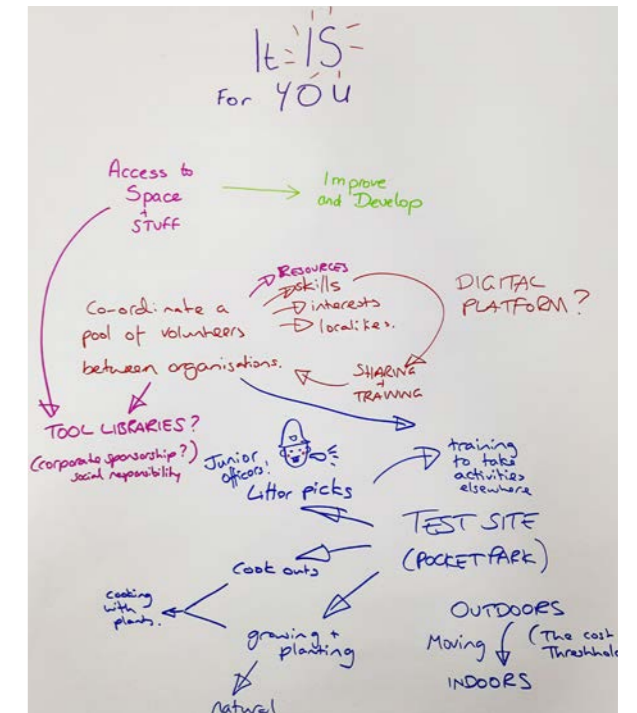


Facilitation Snapshot: Stage 4 Examples

Creating Priorities

At *Share, Connect, Create Glasgow*, an action-planning session was organised around a shared flip chart, with everyone gathered around a table to work on an idea that had emerged from the cross-pollination wall.

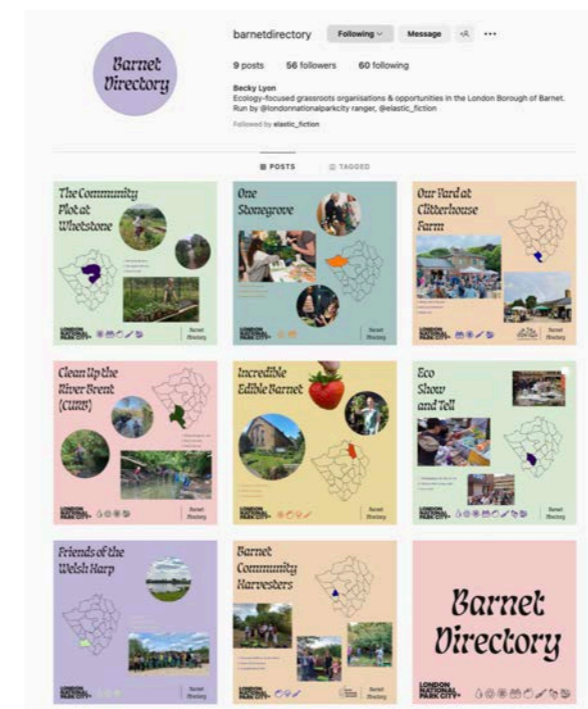
They created a poster which provided a focus for further work and a basis for extending collaboration with others who were not present at the workshop but could be linked in through their collective networks.



Barnet Ecological Directory

In Barnet, the 'Barnet Directory' emerged as an outcome from their cross-pollination process. This resource showcases the ecological projects and groups going on within the borough, and broadcast opportunities to get involved. This was created as an online directory using the social media app, Instagram.

Not only did this create a great way for the network created through the cross-pollination workshop to keep in touch, but it also created something tangible from the session to show others, invite them to join in and further sew ideas for future collaborations.



Mi fedra'i gyfrannu...

- Sgiliau
- Cysylltiadau
- Lleoedd
- Adnoddau

Project I am currently working on ...

Name

Y prosiect yr hoffwn ei wneud...

Project I would like to do ...

Y prosiect rwy'n gweithio arno ar hyn o bryd...

I can contribute ...

- Skills
- Connections
- Places
- Resources

Section 3.2

Top Tips for Planning your Session

This section offers some general advice and considerations for facilitating an in-person workshop or event. These can help you plan for a cross-pollination workshop, but may also help with planning any interactive workshop activity that brings people together.

Participants & Objectives

When you are planning a workshop, it is important to have a set of clear objectives for the day, what you hope to achieve by the end of it, and who should be involved. Make sure to communicate this clearly when you invite participants in and consider who should be invited, why and how. Who is important to reach beyond connections you already have, and what is the best way to reach them?



Image credit: Ben Elford

Your Facilitation Team

It is important to think about how many facilitators you will need for your workshop/ event. You will need to calculate this based on:

- The activities you are planning
- The number of people in the room
- The facilitators' experience and skill sets
- The maturity and experience of the participants

If the workshop involves a large number of people, consider creating spaces for them to work individually, collectively and in smaller groups. When you have less experienced facilitators working with large numbers of people, we recommend that you break participants into groups and plan to have one facilitator who can chair the workshop and guide all the groups through the series of tasks, and then one facilitator working individually with each group.

While the groups are working on the activities, the chair can be time-keeping, and moving around the room to check that all is going well at the tables, on hand to provide any additional support when needed. It is also useful for this person to be able to quickly supply any additional resources that are required by the groups while they are working.

The facilitators working at the tables should be comfortable guiding participants through the steps, and should be familiar with all of the material in order to be able to answer any questions that emerge throughout the activity.

We have included some tips on facilitation in the following pages, which will help you with both delivering a cross-pollination event or facilitating other types of sessions.

You can also choose to hire an independent facilitator, or facilitators, for your workshop. This can be useful if:

- You would like to partake in the cross-pollination session as a participant instead of a facilitator
- You feel you do not have the skills to facilitate a session alone
- You think an independent facilitator could help minimise tensions or power structures within the working group

If you do hire an independent facilitator, it is important to give them a thorough briefing and access to resources. It may be useful to share this cross-pollination resource with them to allow them to acquaint themselves with the methods and processes.

Section 3.2

Top Tips for Planning your Session

Getting Facilitation Right

Here are a few things to think about when deciding how to facilitate the session and who is best placed to do it:

1. Enabling

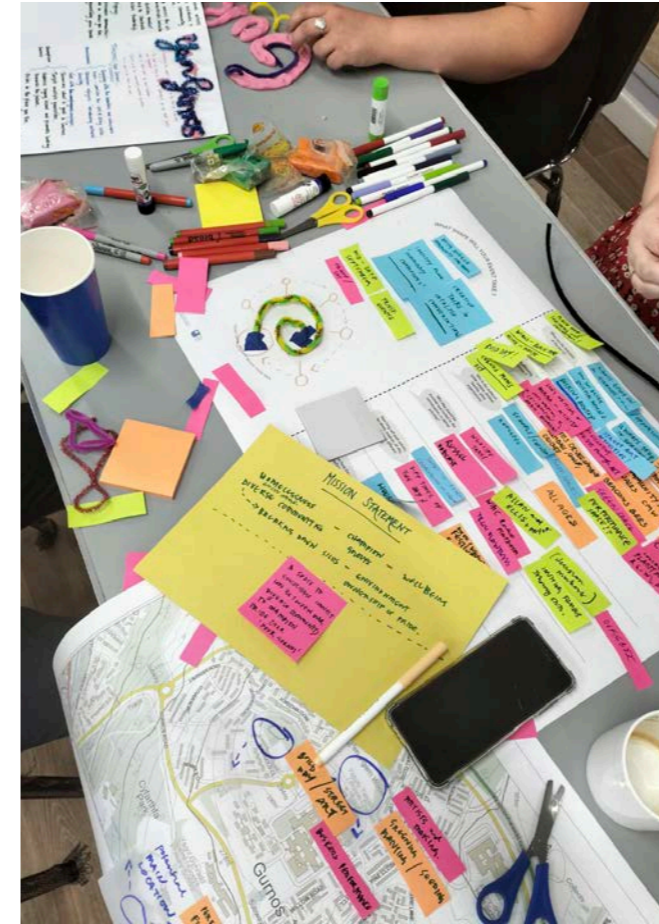
- A Be a guide, not the main character:**
You are there to help, manage and steer conversations and tasks. The facilitator should not be providing all the answers.
- B Set the scene:**
Start sessions by introducing the housekeeping rules and setting expectations for the session (e.g. no talking over each other). Think of yourself as a host; it's part of your role to make sure everyone remains respectful.
- C Get the tempo right:**
When pulling together workshop programmes, make sure to create a programme with varying tempos of activities to keep people engaged throughout.
- D Watch the room:**
Keep a mental tag of those engaging easily and those hanging back, and invite (but don't force) engagement from the quieter voices. This skill will develop through experience.
- E Allow quiet lulls:**
Silence can be difficult in group settings, but it can be an important part of the process. If you feel the need to fill silences as a facilitator, try to give the room 5 seconds before jumping in.



2. Empowering

Part of your role as facilitator is to empower participants to engage in the session. It is important to be mindful of the following:

- A Consider different learning styles:**
Different activities will be accessible for different people, so if you are unsure of capabilities and levels of confidence, make sure you have a variety of activities pitched at different levels and using different learning styles.
- B Make things accessible:**
Make sure to enquire about any accessibility requirements from participants beforehand and plan accordingly. You will need to consider how to make the venue, activities and resources used feel inclusive to everyone in the room.
- C Make it fun:**
When creating your programme or stepping into a facilitator role, consider how you can inject playful and creative elements into the session. Bringing fun into your session can help people work together, and they are likely to bring more to the table if they are finding the session enjoyable.



Section 3.2

Top Tips for Planning your Session

Planning Your Workspace

It is useful to think about a number of things when selecting your venue and setting up the room. A space that feels comfortable and welcoming immediately helps set the tone for a good session. The room should have ample space for the participants and activities, and should have comfortable levels of light and temperature.

Tables should be large enough to comfortably seat all of the participants who will be working at that table, but also small enough for all participants to reach the middle of the table. This will allow everyone to play an active role in conversation and in activities that will require them to work together and share resources.

If you will be dividing participants into groups at more than one table, make sure there is enough room between the tables and chairs for people to comfortably circulate around them. Also be mindful of the space between the tables if you are planning group activities that will require discussion, as this can sometimes get noisy. Make sure that the tables are far enough apart to make it possible for participants to hear others at their own table, and not be too disturbed by others.

If using a projector and/or screen to share work at the end of the session, each person in the room should have a clear view of the screen or there should be space to move all the chairs to an area in front of the screen. Make sure that you are able to control the light in the room so that people are able to see the screen if using a projector.



If using a number of resources and materials for the workshop or event, it can be helpful to set up a resource table for use by the facilitators, and potentially also for the participants to access throughout the workshop.

Equipment & Resources

Make sure you create a checklist of all of the equipment and resources you will need to run your workshop/event as you would like to. This will help you make sure that the venue provides what you need, or that you are able to source things elsewhere.

Having high quality, tactile materials and resources, such as good pens and markers, helps set the tone for an enjoyable session, and helps you create more photogenic scenes for capturing the activities.

It is recommended that you include some element of playfulness in your workshop, which can help make the experience more enjoyable. Think about how arts and crafts materials, other props and activities can help make the workshop more interactive, engaging and memorable.



Catering

It is important to make participants feel welcome and to offer at least light refreshments at a workshop or event. It is useful to have a dedicated table on which you can set out basic refreshments, including jugs of water, tea and coffee, and other drinks, as well as light snacks.

If you are planning to offer people a meal during the workshop, it is often useful to have a dedicated space for this, as this will allow you to set up the space for a meal while participants are involved in an activity, and to welcome them straight in for a meal at the specified time. It also helps avoid creating clutter or damaging resources at the workshop/event tables.

Make sure that you check dietary requirements and are informed of any allergies or relevant health conditions with every participant and facilitator both before and during the session. Make sure any food or drink is clearly labelled so that people do not accidentally eat or drink something that will either harm them or cause them distress.

Section 3.2

Top Tips for Planning your Session



Capturing the Session

When you are bringing people together through a workshop or event, there is often a desire to capture what happens there. This might be to share what happened with those who attended, or those who were unable to. It may also be important if the intention of the workshop is to gather data, views, ideas, or to form an action plan.

If you would like to capture the event, be mindful that you will need to make sure that everyone is aware of your intent to use photography, video or audio recording and that you will need to gain the consent of all those participating. This is particularly important when you are involving children or vulnerable people. We recommend that you do this before the workshop, and that if any participants are uncomfortable about being captured, you are able to either avoid capturing them or able to remove them from any recording that will be shared.

Always be very clear about what you wish to capture, how you will capture it and with whom you intend to share it. Are you trying to just capture a flavour of workshop or documenting stages and outputs for a case study or as an evidence base?

Clarity on your objectives and how you will use what you capture will help both your facilitation team and those taking part feel more comfortable, as well as help ensure that you are documenting what is most useful to you.

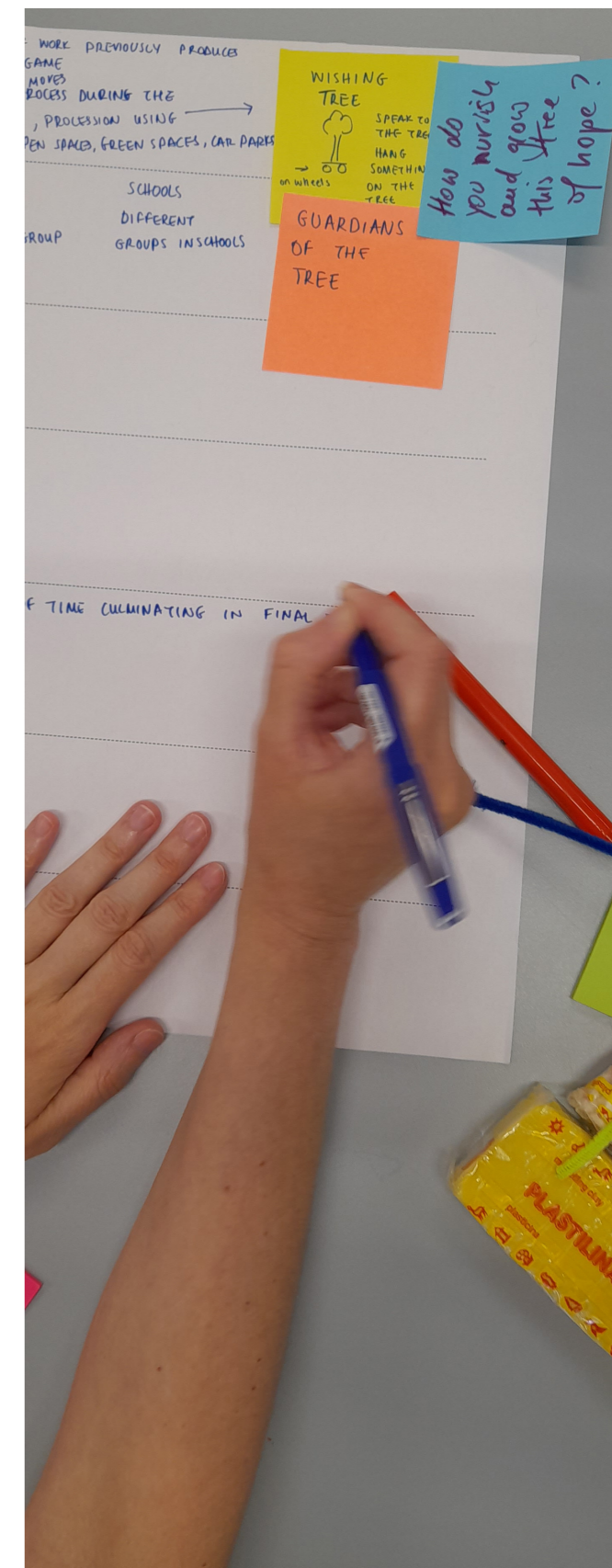
Where possible, we would recommend having one or more people whose sole role is to capture what happens on the day. This may be a scribe, who takes notes, or someone tasked with taking photographs or making video and/or audio recordings.

Planning for Accessibility

Any time you convene a group of people for a workshop or event, it is essential to ensure that you can cater for a range of needs, abilities and experiences. As well as physical requirements, also be aware of neurodiversity, literacy of fluency with the language used and any adjustments that may need to be made to the venue, resources or activities to support those taking part.

If you have a registration process for your workshop/event, build in a question about any needs or requirements each participant may have, so that you can make any necessary preparations in advance to help them take part comfortably and confidently.

As a rule, we would strongly recommend using venues that provide step-free access and accessible toilets and that are able to provide or access equipment to support those with auditory impairments and other needs.



Section 3.3

Printed Materials

This section contains copies of resources developed to support cross-pollination. They have been included in this resource so that they are easily photocopied for use in workshops/ events.

These resources include:

- Workshop instructions:
A set of instructions that can be printed and laid out during sessions to support participants moving through stage 3 of cross-pollination.
- Cross-pollination cards (opposite page):
We have formatted this page with 2 *Project I am working on cards*, and 1 each of *Project I would like to do* and *I can contribute* cards, designed to be easily photocopied or printed for use.

All of these resources can also be accessed as pdf files to download and print from:
https://linktr.ee/crosspollination_resources

You can also access all of these files by scanning the QR code below on your phone:



Project I am currently working on ...

Name:



I can contribute ...

Skills

Connections

Places

Resources

Name:



Project I would like to do ...

Name:



I can contribute ...

Skills

Connections

Places

Resources

Name:



Name:



CROSS-POLLINATION SPACE

This is a cross-pollination space. It is a space to collect and share ideas, and to kick start connections and collaborations to support local initiative to improve our area.

Using the cards provided, please share information about projects you are working on or that you would like to do, as well as what you can contribute to making interesting things happen.

This space will help us map what's already happening in the area, and explore ideas for what could happen. It will also help us unearth and connect local initiatives with new resources and partnerships.

If you are happy to be contacted about your ideas and connect with others, please put your name on the card. The information we gather here will only be shared amongst those participants who have taken part.

If you would prefer to remain anonymous, your ideas and contributions are still welcome and valued.

Step 1

Write simple and brief information about a project (or several) you are already doing and/or that you would like to do on the cards provided and add them to the PROJECTS section of the wall.

Please write only one project per card.

If you see another idea which you think is similar or connected to yours, try to position your card near it.

Step 2

Have a good think about what you could offer to other projects, either through your personal or professional experience, skills and networks.

Fill in the relevant asset cards and post them on the I CAN CONTRIBUTE section of the wall.

If you think your assets could help a particular project on the wall, place it near the relevant project card.

Step 3

Get talking and get connecting!

**Section 4:
Acknowledgements**

Section 4

Acknowledgements

This resource is an output of the project *Cross-pollination: Growing across-sector design collaboration in placemaking* in 2023.

Text written by:

The Glass-House Community Led Design:
Sophia de Sousa, Elly Mead and Jake Stephenson-Bartley

The Open University:

Katerina Alexiou, Theo Zamenopoulos, and Vera Hale

Design by:

Elly Mead and Jake Stephenson-Bartley.

All images courtesy of the Cross-pollination project unless otherwise stated.

The resource is an output of our project, *Cross-pollination: Growing across-sector design collaboration in placemaking*, which is funded and part of the AHRC Place Based Research programme. To find out more about the programme and its nine KE projects, please go to gla.ac.uk/place. The project was developed and delivered in partnership between The Glass-House Community Led Design and the Open University working with locally based partners in Scotland, England and Wales.

Local Partners:

Edinburgh: Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council (EVOC)

Glasgow: Many Studios, DTA Scotland and Glasgow Community Food Network

London: Becky Lyon and London National Park City

Merthyr: Wellbeing Merthyr, Merthyr Valleys Homes, Healthy Hillside, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, and The Open University in Wales

Sheffield: Gleadless Valley Partnership and Sheffield City Council

Thanks to Brian Evans, Glasgow Urban Lab and Michael Judd, Clapham Junction BID for their advice.

Thanks to all the participants in the local workshops and to everyone who explored cross-pollination with the team and provided feedback to help develop this resource.



Section 4.1

Related Resources

Publications

Alexiou, Katerina; Zamenopoulos, Theodore; Hale, Veronica and de Sousa, Sophia (2022). *Incubating civic leadership in design: The role of cross-pollination spaces*. In: DRS2022: Bilbao (Lockton, D; Lenzi, S; Hekkert, P; Oak, A; Sabada, J and Lloyd, P eds.), Design Research Society. Available at: <http://oro.open.ac.uk/83873/>

Zamenopoulos, Theodore; Lam, Busayawan; Alexiou, Katerina; Kelemen, Mihaela; de Sousa, Sophia; Moffat, Sue and Phillips, Martin (2021). *Types, obstacles and sources of empowerment in co-design: the role of shared material objects and processes*. *CoDesign: International Journal of CoCreation in Design and the Arts*, 17(2) pp. 139–158. Available at: <https://oro.open.ac.uk/59969/>

Lam, Busayawan; Phillips, Martin; Kelemen, Mihaela; Zamenopoulos, Theodore; Moffat, Susan and de Sousa, Sophia (2018). *Design and Creative Methods as a Practice of Liminality in Community-Academic Research Projects*. *The Design Journal*, 21(4) pp. 605–624. Available at: <https://oro.open.ac.uk/55251/>

Scaling up Co-design: a journey of collaboration in research, practice and communities (2014). Available at https://scalingup-codesign.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/8/5/12856329/scaling-up_booklet_spreads.pdf

Media

Cross-pollination project website: <https://growing-cross-pollination.weebly.com/>

The Glass-House Community Led Design: <https://theglasshouse.org.uk/>

The Open University: <https://open.ac.uk>

Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMNCIcsBnH9h6Gp5LkhFglg>

Related Projects

Scaling up Co-design: <https://scalingup-codesign.weebly.com/>

Incubating Civic Leadership: <https://incubatingcivicleadership.org/>

