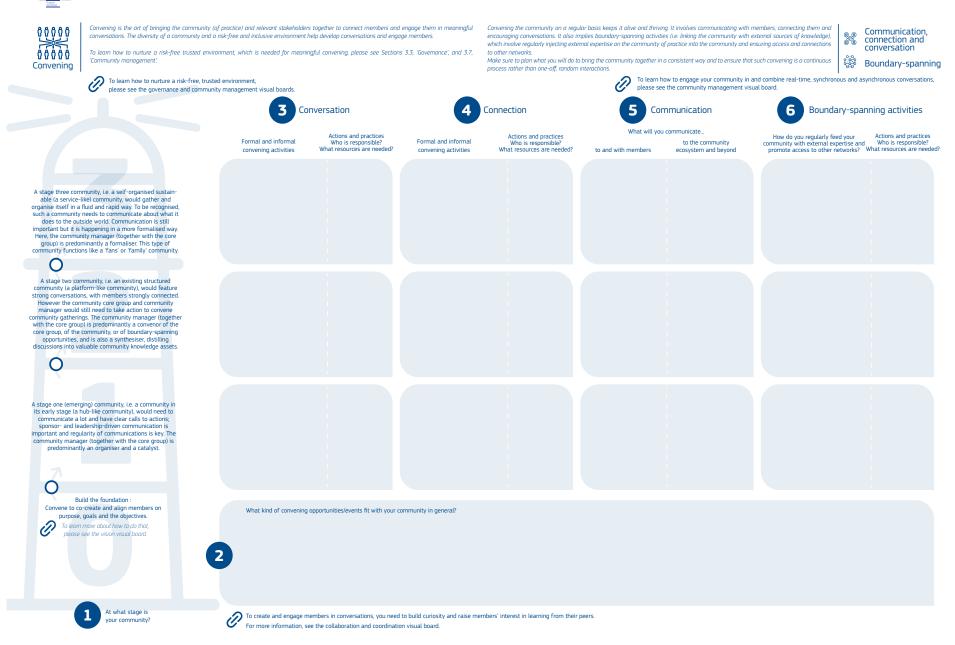# Communities of Practice Playbook | Convening

Convening

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.

To learn how to nurture a risk-free trusted environment, which is needed for meaningful convening, please see Sections 3.3, 'Governance', and 3.7, 'Community management'.

Convening the community on a regular basis keeps it alive and thriving. It involves communicating with members, connecting them and encouraging conversations. It also implies boundary-spanning activities (i.e. linking the community with external sources of knowledge), which involve regularly injecting external expertise on the community of practice into the community and ensuring access and connections to other networks.

Make sure to plan what you will do to bring the community together in a consistent way and to ensure that such convening is a continuous process rather than one-off, random interactions.

Communication, connection and conversation

Boundary-spanning

To learn how to nurture a risk-free, trusted environment, please see the governance and community management visual boards.

To learn how to engage your community in and combine real-time, synchronous and asynchronous conversations, please see the community management visual board.

3 Conversation

Formal and informal convening activities

Actions and practices
Who is responsible?
What resources are needed?

4 Connection

Formal and informal convening activities

Actions and practices
Who is responsible?
What resources are needed?

5 Communication

What will you communicate...

to and with members

to the community ecosystem and beyond

6 Boundary-spanning activities

How do you regularly feed your community with external expertise and promote access to other networks?

Actions and practices
Who is responsible?
What resources are needed?

A stage three community, i.e. a self-organised sustainable (a service-like) community, would gather and organise itself in a fluid and rapid way. To be recognised, such a community needs to communicate about what it does to the outside world. Communication is still important but it is happening in a more formalised way. Here, the community manager (together with the core group) is predominantly a formaliser. This type of community functions like a 'fans' or 'family' community.

A stage two community, i.e. an existing structured community (a platform-like community), would feature strong conversations, with members strongly connected. However the community core group and community manager would still need to take action to convene community gatherings. The community manager (together with the core group) is predominantly a convenor of the core group, of the community, or of boundary-spanning opportunities, and is also a synthesiser, distilling discussions into valuable community knowledge assets.

A stage one (emerging) community, i.e. a community in its early stage (a hub-like community), would need to communicate a lot and have clear calls to actions; sponsor- and leadership-driven communication is important and regularity of communications is key. The community manager (together with the core group) is predominantly an organiser and a catalyst.

Build the foundation :
Convene to co-create and align members on purpose, goals and the objectives.
To learn more about how to do that, please see the vision visual board.

What kind of convening opportunities/events fit with your community in general?

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1 At what stage is your community?

To create and engage members in conversations, you need to build curiosity and raise members' interest in learning from their peers.
For more information, see the collaboration and coordination visual board.