Toolkit for conversation teams

V1.0

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About this booklet

This booklet is a work in progress – it's being co-created by the community that is working together to support Wellington Conversations.

If you find any mistakes, errors, or things that could be better about it, please let the Wellington Conversations team know. You can email the team with any feedback on: connect@wellingtonconversations.nz

To learn more about Wellington Conversations, visit the project website: www.wellingtonconversations.nz

Wellington Conversations
KIA WHAI TAKE I PŌNEKE

Contents

How the teams work 4

Who can join a team 4

Team roles 5

The members: Conversation facilitators 4

The seed(s): Where everything starts 5

Guide for your first team hui 6

Begin by getting to know each other 6

Work out how you're going to work as a team 6

What to discuss to become clear on these questions 6

Tools for reflective practice 8

Team debrief 8

Key practices 8

Process 8

Quick check-in and check-out questions 9

Flowchart: Forming teams 11

Note on printing: This document is formatted for A5, half of an A4. It will look best if you print it as a two page spread on each A4 sheet, or as a booklet.

How the conversation teams work

Each team will be different – because it's made up of different people! Everyone in the team is equal – you're all conversation co-facilitators, and you'll work together to run each event. Of course, you also bring different skills, so it's up to you to work out how your skills will best work together.

A big part of your **first team hui** (and following team huis!) will be talking about this stuff: what you enjoy doing, how confident you feel, what practice you'd like together – so on. It's up to you to work out how to work together: how to stay in touch (email, WhatsApp, etc); who will run events; how you'll plan events; etc.

The Wellington Conversations team is here to support you – for example, if things in your team aren't working well; if you need coaching or support; or anything else.

Joining a team

After going to a Wellington Conversations training event, the conversation facilitators can join any of the teams. It's up to individuals to work out which team suits them best.

A conversation facilitator may join a team because of:

- The **timing of the conversations** at each location – you'll need to be able to make it to the events, so choose a time that works for you and your commitments
- The **location** where the team will run conversations – this may be near where you live (it doesn't have to be)
- The team needing **more members** – or they are seeding a new location team somewhere else in the city

What a team looks like

Each **conversation team** of conversation facilitators will be:

- based at one of the locations
- stewarding/hosting the monthly conversations that happen at the location
- composed of at least 3 people, with around 5 or 6 people being an optimum number

Team roles

The members: Conversation facilitators

The team is made up of equal members. Everyone in the team is a conversation facilitator – some might be more or less confident, but they're all valued and essential members to keep the group going.

As a team of conversation facilitators, you are collectively responsible for:

- Running events – set up, facilitation, pack up, etc
- Reflective practice, including debriefing
- Sharing learnings back to the Wellington Conversations team, including survey and feedback details from events
- Coming to the Facilitator Hui (ideally everyone can come to the hui but at a minimum one person from each team should attend the hui)

Ideally, each person will be a member of only one team at a team. This helps make sure they don't burn out or overcommit to volunteering – and so the team knows it can rely on everyone. Running a conversation may take a surprising amount of work and energy!

The seed(s): Where everything starts

The seed is the starting person (or persons – there can be more than one) for each of the conversation teams. This is a temporary role – you start the team, and then you merge into being an equal member of the team.

Their role is to:

- Act as a contact point for other people who want to join the team;
- Allow the project team to share their contact details (phone and email) so that others can contact them to join the team; and
- Schedule the first team hui (meeting) for the team

The seed's job is to get the group up and running – that's it! Once the group has had its first team hui, their job is done.

Guide for your first team hui

The team seed or contact person will schedule a first team hui (meeting) for the co-facilitators to get together and have a connective team chat. This is a pivotal moment – it's the opportunity for you to start off your team's relationship on a solid and clear footing. It might also be the first time some of you have met each other in person.

You'll probably need at least **one hour** for this first meeting. We suggest you meet at the location you'll be facilitating at – or nearby – so you can check out the venue.

Begin by getting to know each other

We suggest you **begin** by getting to know each other (the word for this in te reo māori is whakawhanaungatanga – learning how we are connected and where stand in relation to each other). The quality of your relationships with each other will impact on the quality of your events. You each might want to share:

- Where you're from, and where you live
- Your name
- Why you've chosen to be part of Wellington Conversations, and
- What drew you to joining this particular team

Work out how you're going to work as a team

We then suggest you work out how the team is going to work. It will be helpful for you to write down your answers to each of these questions as a **team agreement**.

The project team will be available to help you run your first team hui – and in future, if there are any issues that arise (for example, communication issues or conflicts between team members).

What to discuss to become clear on these questions

Some of the **key questions** you'll want to discuss include:

- What's the thing that we're here to do together?
    - Which location are we supporting?
    - When are we running events?
- How confident is everyone feeling with running the model?
    - What practice or collective learning does the team (or individual team members) need to do together to feel ready?

    - What extra support or coaching from the Wellington Conversations team do you need – if any?
- How do we want to organise ourselves to run the events?
    - How do we decide who runs each events? Wil we take turns or host together – in threes, for example
- How do you each want to contribute to the team?
    - What are you each good at?
    - What are you most excited about?
    - What are you less comfortable with?
- How do you want to communicate with each other – and with the Wellington Conversations team?
    - Do you want to set up a WhatsApp or FB messenger group?
    - Does someone want to be the ‘primary contact’ for the team?
- How often will you meet as a team outside of events?
    - Will you meet before an event to chat?
    - When will you do a debrief?
    - How much time do you want to devote to events?
    - Does everyone need to come to each meeting?
- If there’s an issue within the team, or something between co-facilitators that needs discussing – what will you do?
    - When and how will you raise issues? For example, at the team debrief

Reviewing and responding to change

As time passes, there are likely to be changes to your team – so you’ll want to review and respond to these changes by checking in with the agreements you created as a team. Lots of things could happen – for example, your team may have new members – it might lose a few people and no longer have enough members – or you might wish to split into more than one team.

When there is a change to the team, we recommend you come together as a team to review your team agreement. We suggest you make it intentional – schedule the meeting in advance and spend good time together on the questions and on the agreement. You’ll probably want to write down or record the advised agreement.

Tools for reflective practice

We've built reflective practice into the structure of Wellington Conversations so that you can improve your practice, we can learn from each other, and together we can improve and develop the project.

After each event, you'll reflect in your **team debrief** and share key learnings with the project team; and **collectively debrief and review** at the monthly Facilitator Hui. You can also do **check-ins** with your team, and your own reflective practice.

Process for a team debrief

Key practices

- When one person talks, the other listens without interrupting
- When receiving both affirmations and developmental feedback, the person receiving them should try to say just 'Thankyou' - they don't need to justify or explain anything
- If someone feels they don't understand a piece of feedback, particularly a developmental, they should only to ask questions to clarify – not justify!

Set up an agreement around the debrief – and stick to it. This should include:

- Agreement that all debriefing and feedback is subjective – you don't have to agree, but you do need to listen – and should be delivered with kindness
- Time box for the debrief (ie. 30 mins – 10 mins each for three people)
- Privacy – who/what do we share from this?
- Note taking – who will take notes?

Process

Set the **agreement**

Round 1: Affirmations

- Person 1: What did I do well? (Share as many as you like – within time)
- Person 2: What did (Person 1) do well?
- Person 3: What did (Person 1) do well?
- Person 1 thanks P2 and P3 for their feedback.

Switch and repeat.

Round 2: Developmentals

- Person 1: What could I have done better? (at least 1 – no more than 3!)
- Person 2: What could (Person 1) have done better?
- Person 3: What could (Person 1) have done better?
- Person 1 thanks P2 and P3 for their feedback.

Switch and repeat.

Round 3: Process debrief
Together, discuss:

- What worked well about the event?
- What could have worked better?
- How did the questions land with the group?
- How was our communication as a team?
- What can we do to improve our communication?

Together, decide what to share with the project team:

- What **learnings** should be shared?
- What **successes** should be shared?
- Are there any inspiring stories or moments that really stuck out?

Quick check-in and check-out questions

You might be in a rush before and after an event – but it's important to just check in with each out – and check out before going home. You should always debrief the event too – perhaps over coffee on the weekend.

When you **arrive**, you could ask:

- How are we all feeling today?
- How can we best support each today during the event?

When you **finish**, you can just check out with each other:

- How was that for you?
- When are we going to meet for a debrief?

Sharing knowledge back to the project team

Wellington Conversations is a complex project – and the conversation teams are the key pieces of the project out in the community experiencing what works and what doesn't. Sharing knowledge and information helps us understand whether the project works – or why it doesn't work – and improve it in response.

During the pilot, the main way you'll share knowledge back is through **surveys, photos** and the **debrief form.** You'll get copies of the surveys in your team kits. We hope you'll be able to take photos on your phone/camera and send them to us.

The **surveys** you're given are:

- Survey for first time participant – this is for people to fill out the first time they attend a Wellington Conversations event – before the event starts
- Share your feedback – this is for anyone to share feedback on an event
- Suggest a topic form – this is for anyone to use to suggest new topic ideas for the project

Taking **photos** at events is important for us to be able to document the events. We'd appreciate it if you could take photos of:

- The post-it note reflections shared at the end of the event – this is essential for sharing the tone and insights from the conversations with the wider community of people who haven't been able to come along
- The event itself – of people in conversation, of the venue – whatever you think shows the characteristics of the conversation

The **debrief form** is also important because it gives us:

- The number of people who came along to an event
- Any feedback you have about the process and the questions
- Any improvements or suggestions you have

To send this information back to the team, you can either:

- Email copies to connect@wellingtonconversations.nz
- Send them to us on Facebook Messenger or on WhatsApp
- Upload them directly onto the Google Drive (email us for the link)

Flowchart: Forming teams

This flowchart shows how teams grow - from seed, to team, to conversations!

A location is identified for a conversation – either a group of volunteers approaches Wellington Conversations (WC), or WC seeds a location (like all of the starting locations).

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WC asks for facilitators to become seeds for the conversation teams at a location / several locations

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Facilitators let WC know they'd like to be a seed for one of the conversation teams

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WC team sends the contact details of the seeds to all conversation facilitators

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Facilitators contact the seed for the team they'd like to **join** (based primarily on what suits them best)

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The seed facilitator organises a time for the team to meet for their **first team hui** – at least a week before their first conversation event

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The team organises a time to meet with the **location host(s)** and to introduce themselves