

4 Agendas in Collaborative Innovation

CONNECTING



HEART

THE CONNECTING AGENDA is about building trusting connections across the many boundaries between us.

KEY QUESTIONS

Do we have the right people for the work, and are we personally connected to one another in trusting relationships?

EXAMPLE OUTCOMES

- We have built trusting and productive connections across participants based on shared values and mutual safety.
- We have a mix of participants who bring the diversity of views, experience, and approaches we need.

METHODS

Introductions.
Check-ins.
Sharing stories.
Sharing values.
Empathy interviews.

TRAPS

Focusing on building relationships to the neglect of moving ahead on real work. We sometimes believe that if we can work out all our interpersonal differences up front, then the work will happen, but doing the work itself helps us build real trust.

ALIGNING



SPIRIT

THE ALIGNING AGENDA is about aligning around a clear and deeply shared intent for our work together.

KEY QUESTIONS

Are we aligned around a clear goal, scope, and desired future? (If not, then the other agendas won't matter.)

EXAMPLE OUTCOMES

- We have clearly and explicitly decided to work together to achieve a powerful and meaningful goal.
- We have a shared strategic focus and frame to define what we're doing, and not doing, in our work together.

METHODS

Working Goals.
Focus & Frame.
Critical Shifts.
Visual Intent.
Best & Worst Scenarios.

TRAPS

Trying to work out the goal and scope in detail, to the neglect of getting started with the learning and making. We just need the goal, scope, and shifts to be "good enough" to get started together on meaningful and aligned work.

LEARNING



HEAD

THE LEARNING AGENDA is about deeply understanding the system and the human experience within it.

KEY QUESTION

Do we have a clear understanding of the problem and the dynamics that are contributing to that problem?

EXAMPLE OUTCOMES

- We have a compelling and useful shared understanding of the system and human dynamics within it.
- We have begun to draft a shared learning agenda, with identified gaps in our current knowledge as a group.

METHODS

Hypotheses.
System Leader Interviews.
Empathy Interviews.
Current Journey Maps.
Deep Dives.

TRAPS

Getting caught in the assumption that we can learn all we need to know before we start designing solutions. Many things can only be learned by making things and testing them out, not through thinking alone.

MAKING



HANDS

THE MAKING AGENDA is about building and testing tangible solutions and will bring them to scale.

KEY QUESTION

Are we making tangible work products or strategic plans that embody our best thinking and will drive systemic change?

EXAMPLE OUTCOMES

- We have a working set of strategic interventions that will address different parts of the challenge.
- We have commitments to immediate next steps, including who else to engage and how to actualize the solutions.

METHODS

Concepts.
Prototypes.
Future Journey Maps.
Design Criteria.
Pilot Roadmaps.

TRAPS

Rushing to action before we have the right people gathered around the a clear goal and scope, and before we have really learned about what's happening in the system.