

## ***Art of Hosting FAQ***

### ***What is Art of Hosting and where did it come from?***

Art of Hosting is a practice of looking for the deep patterns around groups that work and creating meetings where people can do their best work together. Practically, it is a fusion of some very powerful participatory facilitation tools and practices (appreciative inquiry, world café, proaction café, open space technology, and circle practice). Each of these practices is powerful in its own right and has been in use for more than 20 years, with international practitioner communities and solid case study examples. Many of these practices came out of the need for radical change. Used together, they are a flexible way to help people lead and help groups move into connection and deep conversation and action. It has come from a group of practitioners who were looking for ways to support the people they were working with to work at the boundary of connection and innovation.

Art of Hosting trainings have been offered all over the world and across Minnesota since 2011, including 3 trainings specifically for University of Minnesota faculty and staff.

### ***But what do you mean by ‘hosting’?***

We’ve noticed that plenty of people *hold* meetings, many people *lead* meetings, and some people *facilitate* meetings. But there aren’t many meeting spaces where people step in, step up and take action together. This demands a different way of working and a different type of container to work in. The word “hosting” indicates a different kind of approach. Being a good host means making sure people are looked after well so that they can do their best work together and step onto common ground. We’ve all been to meetings that have been well managed, but not well hosted and often the result is “same old, same old.” Just as “hosting” has a particular connotation, so does “art,” indicating that this way of working is not a recipe or a set of tools, but an art form in practice. You’ll notice a different language around the **Art of Hosting** and there’s a reason for that – we want to stimulate our thinking about this way of working in a new way.

### ***What’s unique about the Art of Hosting training?***

Two things. First, the training is offered by a Hosting Team using action learning. Participants will be asked to step forward to lead and the Hosting Team will become the clients and coaches, supporting participants to “learn on the job” and gain hands on, practical skills. We learn together as a community and immediately apply what we learn.

Secondly, there is a focus both on *hosting* the meeting and on *harvesting* the meeting. **Hosting** is about how you create group meetings that help people to work well together, innovate from within and make a commitment for action. **Harvesting** is about making sure that what gets covered in a meeting actually goes somewhere. We’re finding the harvest is one of the most important parts of our work now. After all, why have a meeting if nothing comes out of it?

Participants will come away with practical experiences in group processes. Following the training, all participants are invited to join the community of practices among colleagues at the University of Minnesota, a community of practice developing statewide, and an international community of practitioners.