

Factsheet	
Name	Unconferences / Open Space conferences
Brief Description	<p>Unconferences enclose a variety of gatherings, all of them based on high levels of participation and attendee-driven, where participants shape the agenda and are required to participate one way or the other. Unconferences are “designed on the go”, basically based on attendees’ interests and particular needs. During the working phase, attendees usually gather according to topics of interest, and are free to roam from one conversation to the next one. This format is greatly based on flexibility. Unconferences usually follow the principles of the Open Space Technology, which according to Owen (2008) are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whoever comes are the right people, 2. Whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened, 3. Whenever it starts is the right time and 4. When it’s over, it’s over
Methodology	<p>Before the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the overarching topic - compelling enough to drive interest and participation • Spot key participants that could act as influencers and attract other attendees, and would be able to spark discussion easily • Find a suitable venue • Craft a compelling invitation • Create a wiki for the event in an online space, where participants could learn about the basics (logistics), suggest topics and get familiar with the concept of “unconferences”. • Set up registration • Invite for sponsorships • Disseminate the event • Sculpt the event: decide on facilitation techniques, select facilitators <p>During the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the event (purpose, topic, format) in a brief welcoming presentation. An ice-breaker could also be organised. • Craft the agenda with the participants, define main topics of interests • Divide participants in groups if needed • Facilitate the conversation among participants • Collect results and solutions
Estimated planning time needed:	10-40h
Estimated budget needed:	<p>Low</p> <p>Main entries: small room; paper material; whiteboard</p>
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of topics • Knowledge exchange • Brainstorming ideas • Networking

Time estimated:	>4h
Target Audience:	All audiences
Number of audience:	10-40 participants
Group composition:	Homogeneous
Level of Knowledge required and possible challenges	The organiser should have a sound understanding of the subject matter of the conference
Facilitator skills	High-skilled <i>facilitator with ability to improvise and a flexible agenda</i> <i>The facilitator should oversee all the event, greeting participants, setting the right atmosphere and conducting dialogues</i>
Example	AscUS Unconference - Actionable science for Urban Sustainability (3-5 June 2020) https://ascus.metabolismofcities.org/
Relevant sources	<p>Budd, A., Dinkel, H., Corpas, M., Fuller, J. C., Rubinat, L., Devos, D. P., ... & Sharan, M. (2015). Ten simple rules for organizing an unconference. <i>PLoS Comput Biol</i>, 11(1), e1003905. Available at: https://journals.plos.org/ploscompbiol/article/file?id=10.1371/journal.pcbi.1003905&type=printable</p> <p>Greenhill, K., & Wiebrands, C. (2008). The unconference: a new model for better professional communication. Available at: https://researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/id/eprint/624/1/Published_Version.pdf</p> <p>Facilitating unconference agenda creating Step-by-Step: http://unconference.net/facilitating-unconference-agenda-creation-step-by-step/</p>