
Community of Practice Framework

A Template for Bioregional Flow Funding Groups

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Purpose

A **Community of Practice (CoP)** is a shared learning environment — a circle of peers who come together around a common field of practice. Communities of Practice can take many forms. In the context of **Flow Funding**, a CoP serves as the connective field for those **practicing Flow Funding together** — including **bioregional organizing groups, Flow Funders, and supporting partners**. It's a space to learn from one another's experiences, deepen collective wisdom, and strengthen how resources move in service of life.

Kinship Earth offers this framework as a **living template**. Each community decides how it wants to gather, what agreements to hold, and how to evolve its own rhythm and structure over time.

Why a Community of Practice Matters

Flow Funding is relational. It depends on trust, learning, and continual reflection — not on rigid systems or hierarchy.

A Community of Practice ensures that:

- **Learning flows both ways** — from local to global and back again.
- **Stories and insights are shared** rather than siloed.
- **Trust deepens** between those practicing this model in different contexts.
- **Programs evolve organically**, through feedback and peer reflection, rather than from the top down.

Each CoP becomes a microcosm of the Flow Funding approach itself - participatory, and rooted in care.

Co-Creating Agreements

At the heart of every thriving Community of Practice are **shared agreements** — crafted *together* by the community, and revisited as relationships and needs evolve.

Below are examples drawn from the *Agreements co-created by Kinship Earth's Flow Funders*:

Example Agreements (Adapt, Expand, or Rewrite Together):

1. **Trust and Transparency:** We share openly about our processes, learnings, and challenges, knowing this builds mutual understanding and collective wisdom.
2. **Reciprocity:** We approach this space as both givers and receivers — each voice has value, and we uplift one another's contributions.
3. **Non-Judgment:** We listen with curiosity and compassion, not critique.
4. **Confidentiality:** What is shared in confidence stays within the circle unless consent is given to share it.
5. **Integrity and Alignment:** We each commit to practicing Flow Funding in ways that honor its values — relational, grounded, and life-affirming.
6. **Collective Stewardship:** We share responsibility for holding the space — from facilitation and note-taking to care and follow-up.
7. **Adaptability:** We remain open to evolution — allowing the structure and agreements to shift as the community grows.

Tip: Begin your first gathering by co-writing your agreements together. Read them aloud, and ensure everyone's voice is heard. These agreements become your shared compass.

Gathering Rhythm

There is **no single “right” rhythm** for a Community of Practice. The frequency, format, and facilitation should **emerge from the community itself** — shaped by the needs, capacities, and time zones of its members.

Below are examples to inspire your design:

- **Monthly Circle:** 60–90 minutes for check-ins, story-sharing, and peer reflection.
- **Quarterly Deep Dive:** Sessions focused on specific themes (e.g., cross-cultural giving, bioregional funding design, or storytelling for impact).
- **Seasonal Reflection:** Dedicated time to review learnings, celebrate milestones, and refine collective practices.
- **Annual Gathering:** Optional in-person or hybrid event for deeper connection and cross-pollination between bioregions.

Kinship Earth recommends starting simple — perhaps an onboarding call followed by quarterly calls — and letting the rhythm evolve naturally.

Holding the Space

Communities of Practice flourish when leadership is shared.

Common rotating roles include:

- **Facilitator / Host:** Guides the flow of conversation and ensures inclusivity.
- **Story Keeper:** Harvests insights and stories (with consent) for collective learning.
- **Time Keeper / Guardian:** Helps maintain flow and respect everyone’s contributions.

Shared practices might include:

- Opening with **a grounding or check-in** to reconnect with purpose.
- Using **story circles** to highlight the human and relational side of Flow Funding.


- Offering **peer coaching** in breakout groups for shared challenges.
 - Closing each session with **a collective reflection or harvest**.
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Collective Learning & Program Evolution

Each CoP becomes a space to **strengthen and evolve the Flow Funding model** through real-time experience.

Communities are encouraged to:

- Reflect quarterly on what's working well or could be improved.
- Suggest updates to agreements, templates, or onboarding materials.
- Share stories of impact and lessons learned.
- Celebrate local adaptations that bring Flow Funding's spirit to life in unique ways.

 *In this way, every CoP becomes a living laboratory — refining the art of trust-based, bioregional philanthropy together.*

Closing Reflections: Learning From Each Other

At the close of each season or cycle, we invite communities to answer the following questions inspired by **Marion Rockefeller Weber**, the pioneer of Flow Funding.

She asked her Flow Funders to reflect on four simple but profound questions at the end of their time together:

1. **What inspired you?**
2. **What surprised you?**
3. **What challenged you?**
4. **What moved you?**

These questions invite deeper self-awareness, empathy, and collective learning. They help us not only see the impact of our giving, but also how the practice of Flow Funding transforms *us*.

💬 *When shared in community, these reflections become one of the most powerful ways we learn from one another — illuminating the many ways trust, generosity, and kinship flow through our work.*

Closing Note

A Community of Practice is not a meeting — it is a **living ecosystem**.

It grows when nurtured with curiosity, presence, and care.

Through shared reflection and collective evolution, we cultivate a culture of learning that mirrors the essence of Flow Funding itself:

trust, participation, and the continual flow of generosity in service to life.
