

Juliana's Organizer Guide

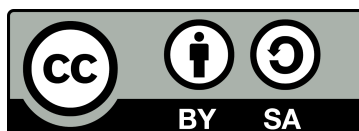
How to start a learning circle community



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Thanks is owed to every librarian in Kenya who has made this work possible. Their names are listed to the left.

Cover photo (left to right): KNLS learning circle coordinator Juliana Muchai, librarians Kaltuma Sama and Purity Kavuri.

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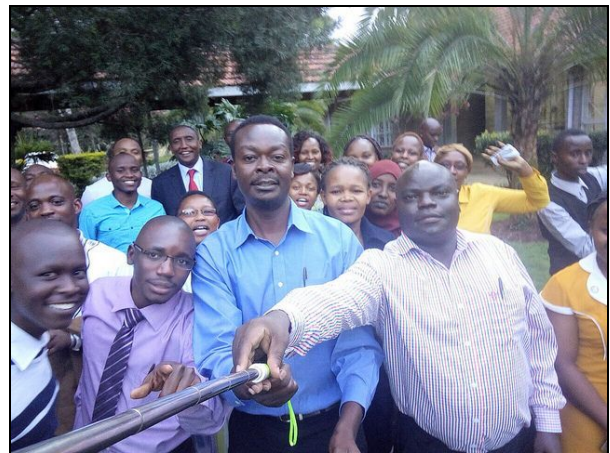
Karibu! Welcome!

On behalf of Kenya National Library Service (KNLS) and Peer 2 Peer University (P2PU), I am happy to welcome you as a new learning circle organizer. We have developed this guide for people who want to plan, coordinate, and support a network of learning circles within an institution or region, similar to what we have done in Kenya. Within this document, you'll learn how to:

1. Orient yourself to P2PU
2. Gather a team
3. Onboard facilitators
4. Support your facilitators
5. Grow your program
6. Participate in the global community

Learning circles started in Kenya in 2016 under the guidance of learning circle coordinator Juliana Muchai. Juliana worked with librarians in Nakuru and Nairobi, representing two of the 62 branches of KNLS.

Since then, the program has grown to a system-wide initiative, reaching more than 1,000 adults all across the country in 2018. Participants have studied everything from entrepreneurship and marketing to public speaking and fiction writing. Many library branches have brokered their own arrangements to have learning circles supported by local businesses and universities, and our librarians have spread the learning circle model elsewhere in Africa, running trainings in Uganda and Zambia in 2018.



In September 2016, we were just a few people sitting in a room. By July 2017, we engaged 35 librarians from across Kenya (selfie stick not included)!

KNLS was initially interested in learning circles because the program is well aligned with Kenya's Vision 2030. This vision aims to create a strong culture of independent learning in our country and highlight the cross-cutting role that libraries should play in society. Through digital technology, strategic partnerships, and staff training, KNLS has become a strong complement to formal education in Kenya.

We worked hard to take P2PU's learning circle pilot with Chicago Public Library and make it work across Kenya. This meant meeting our patrons expectations, and ensuring that they understood what was unique about this program and what they stood to benefit from it. Over time, we have been able to find new ways of talking about learning circles that resonate with our library patrons. We've also been able to integrate learning circles with other programs, including by partnering with technical colleges in two Kenyan town, Thika and Meru.

This program has been a success because our librarians have had true ownership over the program, and because we made a strong investment in ICT capacity building for staff to complement P2PU's training. Ultimately, however, this project is successful because people want to learn, and they think that the public library is a place that can help to transform their lives. We still have work to do to fully integrate learning circles into a ongoing service across Kenya, and we look forward to learning from you as you start your own program. Good luck with your learning circle adventure!

Richard Atuti
Director, KNLS



Richard and his self portrait during the July 2017 workshop in Nairobi.

Step 1: Orient yourself to P2PU

“KNLS’ success with learning circles demonstrates that online learning and public libraries are a perfect match. The resources here can help you create coordinated, network-wide learning circles in your own community.” - Ramune Petuchovaite, Manager of Public Libraries Innovation Programme, EIFL

When KNLS decided to start learning circles in 2016, Chicago Public Library was the only other organization in the world running learning circles. At this point, we (P2PU) had a facilitator handbook and some software tools, but no real supports in place for the people who were organizing everything.

As our project in Kenya began, we decided to document our experience for the benefit of future learning circle organizers, and all of that is now summarized in this guide. Although the context, language, and culture in Kenya might seem very different from your own, we believe there are many universal truths that will have value whether you work in a small town in the United States or are part of large network in India. We also recognize that this document does not represent the end of what we can learn together. It is a living and breathing guide, and we hope to hear from you about how we can improve this guide in the future.

One final point: it might be helpful to think of this guide like a travel book that you’re reading before you start a journey. There will be parts of this guide you’ll really like digging into, and other parts that you’ll graze past. You don’t need to study the guide or take a test at the end, but you will likely be happy that you looked through it all before you arrive. Be warned that the guide won’t plan the trip for you! You’ll have to do that yourself. As you engage with all the materials here, we hope to see you pop up [in our online community space](#). Please don’t be a stranger.

Terminology

Let’s quickly review a few terms and resources to make sure that we are on the same page. A **learning circle** is a group of people who meet in person to learn something together. Learning circles utilize **learning resources** (such as online courses) and **peer learning practices** to help ensure that participants all succeed.

Each learning circle has a **facilitator**, who organizes the meeting and helps to lead discussion. The facilitator does not have to be an expert in the subject, but they should feel comfortable convening a group of people. Facilitators might be librarians, community organizers, educators, or volunteers. Anybody can create a learning circle for free on the P2PU website, and there are a vast array of resources

and software tools available to help facilitators. Facilitator resources are designed to help facilitators do six things:

- Understand the background and history of learning circles.
- Create a learning circle and choose a good course.
- Promote their learning circle and conduct community needs assessment.
- Feel comfortable facilitating a group discussion.
- Reflect on the learning circle experience afterwards.
- Share and learn from other people's experiences.

Facilitator resources, templates, and activities are all available at at p2pu.org/facilitate/

Role of the Organizer

Similar to the way every learning circle has a facilitator, when multiple learning circles are happening within an institution, we find it helpful to have one person take on a leadership role, which we call an **organizer** (and this guide is designed for them!). The network of learning circles that an organizer oversees is called a **team**. You can think about an organizer as being both a leader and spokesperson for your team:

Leader

- Introduce your team to learning circles.
- Host team training workshops and regional meetings.
- Support your team to problem-solve issues related to the implementation of learning circles.
- Distribute and promote new resources, tools, strategies from P2PU and other learning and education partnerships.
- Ensure materials and equipment (such as laptops, internet, projector) are ready and available for use by your team of facilitators.
- Liaise with P2PU team about issues and opportunities that arise.

Spokesperson

- Document best practices and outcomes from your team of facilitators.
- Share outcomes, questions, and resources from your team on the P2PU community forum.
- Represent your team on a community events such as community calls and in-person gatherings.

- Present the impact of learning circles to your institutional management and local partner organizations.

In 2018, about two thirds of all learning circles that met were part of a team, meaning that they were part of an institution-run learning circle program. The other one third of learning circles were run by individual facilitators from around the world who simply found our website and were running a learning circle on their own.

Some organizer roles are **institutionalized** from the beginning: perhaps a community partnership manager or program coordinator at a library is charged with helping their colleagues start learning circles. Juliana at KNLS and Kate at Chicago Public Library are good examples of this type of organizer. Other organizer roles are more **grassroots**: somebody hears about learning circles, tries one out, and then starts sharing the idea with their colleagues. When it catches on, they become the de facto organizer for their community. Q in Detroit and Sherry in Providence both became organizers this way. We doesn't prefer one to the other; we are happy to work with anybody who wants to spread community-based learning in their community.

How to Sign Up

The first thing to do as a new organizer is create a P2PU account at p2pu.org. P2PU accounts grant you multiple permissions. You can:

- Create and publicize [learning circles](#) on our website.
- Participate in our [online community](#).
- Add learning resources you like to our [course database](#).
- Receive announcements and updates about learning circles and related events.

Once you create the account, [say hi on our discussion forum](#) and let us know that you'd like to organize a team. We will set you up with an organizer dashboard, which will help you manage your program.

Step 2: Gather a team

“New partners should be able to mobilize support within their organization and community, so that the whole organization has buy-in from the beginning. When you get buy-in, your colleagues will not allow the program to die.” - Juliana

We recommend gathering a core team of individuals to start your work with. This means both generating interest on an institutional level and finding the right people and places to work with.

Generate interest and buy-in

If you don't have support or buy-in from those who make decisions, your program might not succeed! Especially for larger institutions like libraries, buy-in from management is important. So, how do you get these leaders interested?

When learning circles were introduced in Kenya, Juliana worked to understand the goals and opportunities of the learning circle program, and then framed P2PU to her colleagues in language that they understood. This meant looking through P2PU resources, and understanding how the program could reinforce the goals and strategic plan of the library.

KNLS had recently started an initiative to increase the digital skills of library staff, so emphasizing the online component of learning circles seemed like a good place to start. Next, Juliana was intrigued that P2PU relied on free, online learning resources. KNLS has limited funding to spend on licensed content, so reinforcing the sustainability of the program (due to no subscription costs) was very important for her colleagues. Finally, KNLS has a mandate to work with community organizations outside of the library system. Juliana felt that the social nature of learning circles could help reinforce this goal, as early meetings with librarians and patrons revealed that many students were interested in taking learning circles to complement formal education programs.

So, when it came to pitching learning circles to her organization, Juliana described the program as something that would improve the ICT skills of library professionals while simultaneously bringing the library closer to other community organizations without large software licensing expenses.

As you set out to build a coalition in your organization, read through the [testimonials section](#) of our community forum to understand how learning circles have worked for other organizations, and note anything that resonates with you. Then, take a look at your latest organizational strategy or plan and utilize that

language when speaking with your colleagues about starting a learning circle program.

Find the right people and places

You'll need to start by finding the right people with the right skills that work in locations that are a good fit. These first facilitators, once experienced, should be prepared to train their colleagues in order to share their knowledge within your organization.

Juliana looked out for a few key qualities when finding her first facilitators: interest in embracing new services and initiatives, capacity to create awareness within KNLS, and a commitment to serving their community. Juliana did not specifically require a significant level of technological expertise for initial facilitators, as she felt that this could alienate potential strong facilitators.

In addition to people, sites matter too. Juliana recommends assessing site locations for their equipment and capacity to host learning circles. Consider, too, asking about each site's existing programs. In the best case, you might find a site with experienced and eager staff with an existing learning or education program that might benefit from the integration of learning circles. It might also be interesting to pick sites that have common programming interests such as digital literacy and employment supports so that sites can cross-promote and problem-solve issues together.

Juliana chose four library staff from two different library sites (Nairobi Buruburu and Nakuru) for the pilot due their locations and infrastructural development. Buruburu Library is in Nairobi, with a large population of youth seeking to advance their education. Nakuru library is located in a town with many university satellite campuses. Many students in Nakuru are from rural areas and they spend most of their free time in the library. Buruburu and Nakuru also had the potential to host future regional meetings, which was important for reinforcing the grassroots nature of learning circle expansion.

Reach out to potential facilitators

We think that reaching out to 4-12 people is a good way to start (it's not a coincidence that that is the same size we recommend for learning circles!) We have a variety of resources available to help you explain learning circles to your colleagues. Check out each of these before you reach out:

- [Youtube video](#)
- [Intro slides](#)
- [Infographic](#)
- [One page flyer](#)
- [Survey for new team members](#)

Here is a sample email that you can edit and share with your colleagues:

Hi there,

I'm working with Peer 2 Peer University, a non-profit organization that runs free, non-formal learning programs, to try and start something in our community.

P2PU created learning circles: study groups for people who meet in public spaces like libraries to learn something together, using free online courses and peer learning practices. Learning circles are a proven and cost-effective learning model for accessing high-quality course materials free of charge. By bringing people to the library to take online courses together, learning circles build library capacity as community learning hubs, improve the professional skills of library staff, and provide empowering educational experiences for library users.

Learning circles are free to join and free to create. [Here's a short video](#) that explains the program. You can also visit their website at p2pu.org to learn more about this idea.

At this point, I'm looking for a few volunteers to help us pilot a program here. If you're interested, please fill out this quick form and we can schedule a date to meet:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/19BrhG_u9pwkBm4c37eld3lQT9hw9kw_xMT9OZdPYYId4/edit

Step 3: Onboard facilitators

"It's better when the interest is coming from your colleagues, as opposed to going out and telling them what to do." - Juliana

Once you have a core team, the first thing to do is meet in person with everyone. This can be organized a number of different ways, like hosting a half-day workshop together, meeting multiple times over a few weeks, or scheduling a meeting alongside a regularly scheduled staff meeting. Your agenda, as you'll see below, mirrors the types of interactions that happen in a learning circle.

Juliana started by gathering four librarians for a training workshop with P2PU in Nakuru in September 2016. Together, they walked through the P2PU resources, practiced facilitation skills, and hosted focus group meetings with library patrons.

We've designed these materials so that you can go through them on your own, or involve P2PU in the process. If you'd like, P2PU is happy to support your training workshops either virtually or face-to-face. Reach out to us directly at thepeople@p2pu.org to talk about options.

Whether or not P2PU is participating in your workshop, we recommend a five-part process for your first learning circle onboarding meeting. At a minimum, this is a two-hour process, but it can also be expanded to fill half a day or a full day.

- 1) Check-in
- 2) Coursework
- 3) Reflection
- 4) Planning
- 5) Plus/Delta

1. Check-in

Description: It's important to start any meeting with a 'check-in' that makes space for your team to introduce themselves to one another and explain what they are hoping to learn during this meeting. If you're looking for additional ideas, check out the "Weekly Check-in Activity" thread on the P2PU community forum.

Discussion Prompt: *"Thanks for joining us today! Learning circles begin with a check-in, where the facilitator leads an icebreaker question or a round of introductions. So, today, I'd like to do a check-in with each of you. What brings you here today? What are you hoping to accomplish? I will go first."*

Task to Complete: Make sure everyone knows one another; get a sense of how people are feeling coming into the meeting.

Resource: Weekly check-in activity thread:

<https://community.p2pu.org/t/weekly-check-in-activity/2778>

Estimated time: 15 minutes

2. Coursework

Description: Once you've done a check-in, the next step is to present and review featured resources from the P2PU facilitator page. This webpage is structured like an online course, so exploring it together (moving from in-person group discussion to an online learning space and back to group discussion) will give you a good sense of what a learning circle is like.

Discussion Prompt:

- *First, share your experience with P2PU and learning circles so far, what you like about learning circles, and why you think learning circles fits into your vision and plan. Afterwards, introduce this section of the meeting:*
- *"P2PU recommends we take a look through some of the resources on their website to learn more. To start, let's take a look at their opening video and a few other resources on their facilitate page together. By the end, we can all create draft learning circles to be sure that we know how this all works".*

Task to Complete: Each member should create a P2PU account and a draft learning circle using the P2PU website.

Resource: P2PU facilitator page: <https://www.p2pu.org/facilitate/>

Estimated time: 45 minutes

3. Reflection

Description: It's important to remember that learning circles are a flexible model, and as such, it will be implemented differently in every town that tries it. Because of this, your team will have to think about how you will adapt learning circles for

your community. As in a learning circle, work alongside your colleagues to reflect on this and troubleshoot and questions that arise.

Discussion Prompt: *"Now that we've gone through these resources, what is still unclear about learning circles now? We can use the P2PU community forum to search for some answers. For any questions we can't answer together as a group, let's post them to the community forum and see who replies."*

Task to Complete: Answer as many questions as possible based on your own knowledge and by looking through the community forum; post unanswered questions to the community forum.

Resource: P2PU community forum: community.p2pu.org

Estimated time: 20 minutes

4. Planning

Description: Before ending, it's important to take a little time to document your progress and establish next steps. We've created a learning circle planning worksheet that can help you clarify your team's vision and start planning your work together.

Discussion Prompt: *"Ok, it sounds like we're ready to do this! P2PU has a worksheet that we can fill out together that can help us make a plan."*

Task to Complete: Fill out the planning worksheet; share it on the community forum if you feel comfortable doing so!

Resource: Learning circle planning worksheet:
<https://community.p2pu.org/t/team-planning-worksheet-for-your-p2pu-community/2783>

Estimated time: 30 minutes

5. Plus / Delta

Description: In a learning circle, we encourage a closing activity by having everyone share one thing that went well ("plus"), and one thing to change for next week ("delta").

Discussion Prompt: *"A learning circle starts with a check-in, just like we did already, and it ends with a check-out, or a plus/delta: saying one thing that worked well and once thing that can change. Let's try that together now."*

Task to Complete: Find closure for the meeting; reflect on how things went.

Resource: Weekly plus/delta wrap up activity thread:

<https://community.p2pu.org/t/weekly-plus-delta-wrap-up-activity/2779>

Estimated time: 10 minutes

Possible Add On: Library Patron Focus Group

Description: KNLS took the opportunity to host focus groups with library patrons during their first meeting of new facilitators. During the focus group, Juliana learned what interested and concerned potential learning circle participants, and gained a better understanding of the level of digital skills she could expect from participants. Focus groups can be done formally or informally, and either as part of a training workshop or individually by facilitators.

Discussion Prompt: *"Let's spend the afternoon together trying to understand what might interest our patrons and what their digital literacy skills might be. Here are some questions P2PU suggests we ask."*

Task to Complete: Better understand patron needs and interest for a learning circle program.

Resource: Library Patron Focus Group Questions thread:

<https://community.p2pu.org/t/library-patron-focus-group/3129>

Step 4: Support your facilitators

“Every week, I check to see what facilitators are doing through the P2PU Dashboard, and then I follow up if there seems to be problems. Being in touch with the facilitators is very important.” - Juliana

The first few months following the onboarding meeting were “a learning process” for Juliana and her team. It wasn’t always easy or straight forward! One challenge was that not all her team felt comfortable finding, registering for, and navigating online courses. Juliana also learned that for each learning circle to succeed, the facilitator needed to feel supported from within their local site location. As such, it was important to ensure each site’s management and staff were aware of the program and were ready to offer assistance when needed.

Initial promotion also took some extra consideration as learning circles were a completely new program. In Buruburu, librarians handed out informational materials to patrons during the focus group, [used the Q-Method](#) to document community interests and raise awareness of the program, put up flyers around town, and proactively reached out to specific groups like senior citizens clubs and student groups.

To support her team, Juliana met with, spoke to, and checked-in regularly with her colleagues to find out how things were going and where they needed support.

After better understanding what was taking up a lot of Juliana’s time, created an **Organizer Dashboard** with KNLS, designed to help learning circle organizers communicate with and keep track of their teams. As an organizer, when you log into your P2PU account, you’ll find an organizer page with four tabs:

- The **upcoming meetings** tab is an overview of what learning circles are meeting this week across your team. You can also see what is happening the previous week or the next week.
- The **active learning circles** tab is a list of all the learning circles that still have meetings scheduled in the future.
- The **facilitators tab** is a list of all the facilitators that are currently part of your team.
- The **invitations tab** is where you can invite new facilitators to your team.

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Organizer Dashboard

Upcoming Meetings

Active Learning Circles

Facilitators

Invitations

Upcoming meetings Week of Oct. 22, 2017

Week of Oct. 15, 2017

Week of Oct. 29, 2017

This week

Sun, 22 Oct

Details	Facilitator	Time	RSVPs	Feedback
No meetings				

Mon, 23 Oct

Details	Facilitator	Time	RSVPs	Feedback
Fundamentals of Public Speaking - week 1	Arystin	18:00 CDT		

Tue, 24 Oct

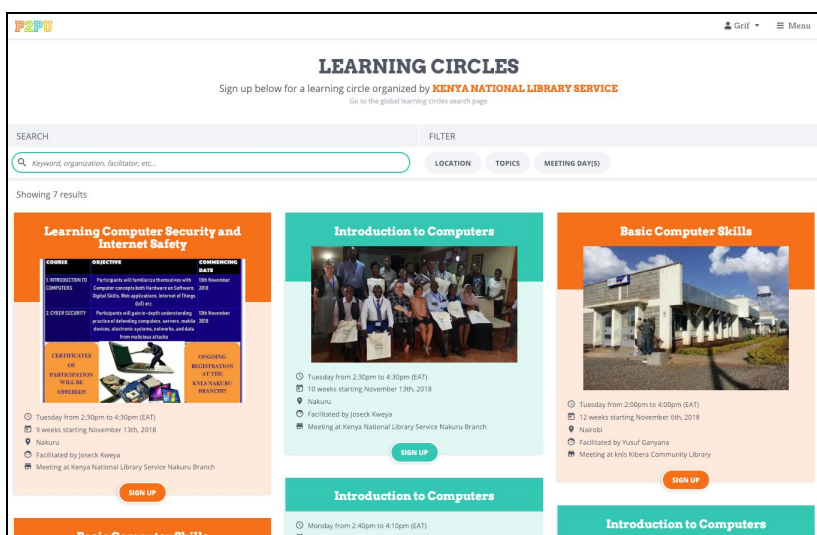
Details	Facilitator	Time	RSVPs	Feedback
How Music Can Change Your	Patrice	17:30		

Example of an organizer dashboard

In addition to the organizer dashboard, you will get a custom team URL and a weekly email update whenever you have active learning circles in your team.

- **Custom team URL.**

While each learning circle has its own webpage where people can sign up, we've found that it is also useful to have a team page that displays all learning circles currently happening across a team. These will automatically be



posted on a separate page dedicated to your organization, and you can share this page with the public and use it as a promotional tool. For an example, check out Kenya's page at www.p2pu.org/knls

- **Weekly email updates to organizers.** The weekly updates help organizers keep track of what is happening within the team. These updates include the number of learner sign-ups from each learning circle, a weekly team schedule, and a summary of facilitator feedback from the week. When learning circles finish, a summary report will be shared with you through this weekly digest as well. This allows organizers to quickly see who is active and who they might need to follow up with.

The latest documents for using our software tools are available at <https://learning-circles-user-manual.readthedocs.io/en/latest/index.html>

Step 5: Grow your program

“Having regional leaders helps. I created a regional support system so I knew who I could rely on to help others. Not everyone has to work at same level. Identify who is on the right track and is ready to support others.” - Juliana

Following the first meeting in Nakuru in September 2016, Juliana regularly met with and communicated with her team over the next year. By July of 2017, 14 learning circles had been run in four Kenyan libraries. At this time, the original (now “veteran” facilitators) co-led a larger full day training workshop for their colleagues in Nairobi. Throughout the rest of 2017 and 2018, Juliana supported regional meetings with all old and new learning circle facilitators. In 2018 alone, KNLS ran 64 learning circles in 15 libraries supporting more 1,000 learners!

Here are a few things that helped Juliana scale the program on her own:

Ongoing Training

After the first meeting in Nakuru, Juliana offered training workshops without P2PU support in Murang’a, and Narok. She brought an experienced facilitator with her to meet with new groups of librarians. She invited both potential new facilitators to these meetings, as well as technical staff who might assist in promotion and informing program development. In both training workshops, Juliana updated the initial training agenda to include recent examples and best practices from Kenya.

Juliana always kept an eye out for facilitators who were interested in becoming trainers. In her second year, Juliana supported experienced learning circle facilitators to run their own training workshops with neighboring libraries. This strengthened learning circles without taking up Juliana’s time, created new professional development opportunities for librarians, and quickly became a cost effective alternative to hosting large training workshops in Nairobi or Nakuru. In each of these regional training workshops, trainers were encouraged to customize the training workshop to include their own knowledge and experience.

Regional Meetings

In addition to ongoing trainings, Juliana hosted a number of regional meetings which aimed to build relationships, share outcomes and expertise, solve issues, and plan for the coming months. The first of these regional meeting was in Murang’a in April, 2018. Ten librarians representing four different libraries joined.

Some of these librarians had just started learning circles, while others had over a year of experience. She followed a simple and effective agenda:

- 1) Presentations from each learning circle facilitator or library branch:
 - a) Summary of their experience, outcomes and impact
 - b) What worked well
 - c) Challenges
 - d) Questions from the audience
- 2) Discussion of common strategies
- 3) Next steps and upcoming plans

Juliana also used these regional meetings as a way to prepare facilitators to co-run future trainings and meetings. For instance, when she received interest in learning circles from four libraries on the Kenyan coast, she decided to invite the coastal librarian, who was already facilitating a learning circle, to the next regional meeting. This librarian then went back to the coast and trained the four other coastal libraries together.

Asynchronous Communication

To support communication between facilitators, Juliana created a chat group using Whatsapp, a mobile phone chat application. Starting with her core group of facilitators, her Whatsapp group has now grown to almost 30 members, with new KNLS facilitators encouraged to join. This group shares experiences, stories, learning circle photos, posters, news articles, and lots of Kenyan memes. For KNLS, it's also become the fastest way to get a response when a facilitator has a quick logistical or technical question. The visibility of the group amongst librarians also means that new librarians are reaching out to Juliana to get involved with learning circles, not the other way around.

In Kenya, Whatsapp is very popular, so it was easy for many facilitators to start using it right away. In your own organization, you should consider communication tools which your current facilitators are comfortable using, whether a organizational listserv or another social media platform. You should also remember that P2PU has our own community forum (community.p2pu.org) which we encourage you and your team to use to post questions, resources, photos and testimonials with us all.

Public Events

Public events are a great way to celebrate all those involved in learning circles and raise the profile of your work to prospective learners, potential facilitators and future partners. For example, graduation ceremonies are a very important custom in Kenya. In Murang'a, a graduation ceremony was organized for 40 recent learning circle participants with invitations also sent to local partners and prominent guests. The ceremony included food, speeches, music, presentations of learners final works, cake, and the distribution learning circle certificates. Some other graduation ceremonies have become opportunities for educational partners outside of the library to learn more about the program. Above, a cake at a Nairobi learning circle graduation.



Professional Development

Professional development events and opportunities create a number of benefits for your team. For facilitators, being able to step outside of their work environment, reflect on on their practice, and prepare a paper or presentation can be rewarding experience. So whenever it was possible, Juliana looked for opportunities to send her team to present their initial findings at work-related events in Kenya, and also at library conferences in South Africa, Cameroon, and Denmark. One of her facilitators (Joseck) led a [P2PU community call](#) about supporting volunteers to run learning circles. (By the way, you should consider sharing your own stories and insights during a P2PU community call when you're ready!)

Additionally, we were able to organizer international trainings for KNLS librarians in partnership with EIFL. While promoting the learning circles model was an important aim of the initiative, an additional goal was the opportunity to strengthen the professional skills of Juliana's team. In April 2018, two KNLS librarians, Joseck and Kaltuma, offered a two-day training workshop with P2PU to 25 public librarians in Uganda. Joseck and Kaltuma had both previously run a number of learning circles and both had plenty of first-hand experiences and facilitation skills to offer. Later, in October 2018, Juliana and a KNLS librarian named Miriam ran a training workshop for 25 librarians in Zambia. As a direct result of both these experiences, Juliana concluded that all three librarians are now more

active within their library system and more able to deal with challenges related to learning circles on their own. In addition, each of these trainers gained significant 'train-the-trainer' expertise, which is not only valuable for learning circles, but also for other KNLS training initiatives.

Step 6: Participate in the global community

"If we're going to change how the world learns, we're going to have to form a global learning circle." - Nico Koenig, Community Lead at P2PU

P2PU's goal is for every learning circle that happens to be a little bit better because of every other learning circle that came before. This means that sharing our experiences as learners, facilitators, and organizers is central to how we grow as a movement. To help orient you and your colleagues, here is an overview of P2PU's points of access:

Community Forum

The central place for discussion is on the forum at community.p2pu.org. This is where we onboard new facilitators, brainstorm new software features, talk about specific courses, and grow as an organization. In most cases, this is the first place to turn when you have a question. (For things that you would rather share privately, you can either send us a private message through the community or email us at thepeople@p2pu.org).

Community Digest

When you create your P2PU account, you'll be prompted to receive news and announcements from P2PU. We suggest you check this box, as this is how we reach out to our community once every three weeks to let them know what is coming up in terms of events, conferences, and community calls. It's also where we highlight specific work that's happening around the world.

Community Calls & Virtual Events

P2PU hosts monthly Community Calls, featuring members of our community who want to share their experiences. These are complemented by more focused calls that cover feature development, new facilitator training, and a variety of other topics. All of our calls are listed - you guessed it - [on our forum](#).

Courses Database

When we started working with Juliana, she found that Googling around for MOOCs was taking way too long. We worked with KNLS to launch a [public courses page](#) that anybody with a P2PU account can contribute to. Our goal here is not to build a repository of every online course that has ever existed, but rather to highlight free

materials from around the web that our colleagues have tried and liked. You can add courses from your P2PU Dashboard and if you'd like to be involved more in helping us moderate this database, drop us a line :-).

Regional Meetings and Training Workshops

P2PU relies heavily on its team organizers and veteran facilitators to co-facilitate training workshops for new learning communities. Depending on where you are geographically, we may call on you to help us with a training, in which case we'll work closely with you to make sure you're prepared and well equipped with stickers and t-shirts. If you're interested in bringing in a new community partner and running a training with us, let us know.

Annual Gathering

We meet as a community at least once per year. In 2018, [our gathering was at the Kansas City Public Library](#). We do not charge any entry fee on top of covering food costs; if you can get yourself to the gathering then you've already done enough. We work very hard to allocate funds to bring a wide group of people together; so please be proactive about planning with us if you'd like to attend.



Group photo from the KNLS learning circle workshop in Nairobi in July 2017.