

Pittsburgh Learning Pathways Summit

Facilitation Instructions

Event Details

Friday, November 21, 2014, 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Spirit of Pittsburgh Ballroom

[1000 Fort Duquesne Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15222](#)

Event Agenda (subject to change)

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|--------------------|--|
| 8:00 - 9:00 (60) | Coffee & Registration
<i>Dustin Stiver and facilitators day-of briefing</i> |
| 9:00 - 9:15 (15) | Welcome & Opening Statements
<i>Emmai Alaquiva welcomes attendees</i>
<i>Cathy Lewis Long provides context for event</i> |
| 9:15 - 9:30 (15) | Keynote: The Power of Connected Learning Pathways
<i>Patrick Dowd discusses city of learning ethos</i> |
| 9:30 - 10:00 (30) | Roundtable Discussions: City of Learning
<i>Dustin Stiver on stage & facilitators scattered at tables</i> |
| 10:00 - 10:25 (25) | Case Study: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy
<i>Taiji Nelson & Stacy Kehoe present alongside 5 HS students</i> |
| 10:25 - 10:40 (15) | Digital Badges: An Overview
<i>Matt Hannigan reviews badges and City of Learning pilot</i> |
| 10:40 - 10:50 (10) | Case Study: WPWP (ECS) & CSC
<i>Joe Burke & Alana Kulesa present about summer program</i> |
| 10:50 - 11:15 (25) | Roundtable Discussions: Badges
<i>Dustin Stiver on stage & facilitators scattered at tables</i> |
| 11:15 - 11:40 (25) | Lunch
<i>Everyone gets a boxed lunch and returns to their table</i> |
| 11:40 - 12:20 (40) | Ignite Talks: Working Groups
<i>8 presenters, Khalif Ali and one person from each Working Group</i> |
| 12:20 - 1:45 (85) | Feedback Stations: Competencies, Learning Pathways & Badges
<i>Dustin Stiver on stage & facilitators at stations near edge of room</i>
<i>Emmai Alaquiva does 4 quick interviews with participants on stage</i> |
| 1:45 - 2:00 (15) | Closing Remarks: What's next?
<i>Dustin Stiver leads one question survey; facilitators assist</i>
<i>Cathy Lewis Long discusses next steps</i>
<i>Emmai Alaquiva leads group picture</i> |
| 2:00 - 3:00 (60) | Strike: Collect and organize materials; help with tear down |

Event Overview

Teachers, students, museum educators, librarians, and education experts of all stripes have been invited to share their expertise at the Pittsburgh Learning Pathways Summit. The event is designed to convene experts in education and learning for an entertaining, fun, and free town hall-style gathering to help design learning pathways for Pittsburgh. With the introduction of digital badges, Pittsburgh is building an ecosystem where educators can share resources more effectively and help youth connect in-school and out-of-school learning experiences to create new pathways of opportunity.

Background Information

“In today's world learning can look very different than traditionally imagined. Learning is not just ‘seat time’ within schools, but extends across multiple contexts, experiences and interactions. It is no longer just an isolated or individual concept, but is inclusive, social, informal, participatory, creative and lifelong.

And it is not sufficient to think of learning simply as consumption, but instead learners are active participants and producers in an interest-driven, lifelong learning process. The concept of a ‘learning environment’ no longer means just a single classroom or online space, but instead encompasses many spaces in broader, networked, distributed and extensible environments that span time and space.

And across these learning environments, learners are offered multiple pathways to gain competencies and refine skills through open, remixable and transparent tools, resources and processes. In this connected learning ecology, the boundaries are broken and the walls are down — now we just need to help it reach its full potential.

Without a way to capture, promote and transfer all of the learning that can occur within a broader connected learning ecology, we are limiting that ecology by discouraging engaged learning, making critical skills unattractive or inaccessible, isolating or ignoring quality efforts and interactions and, ultimately, holding learners back from reaching their potential.

Badges can play a crucial role in the connected learning ecology by acting as a bridge between contexts and making these alternative learning channels, skills and types of learning more viable, portable and impactful. Badges can be awarded for a potentially limitless set of individual skills regardless of where each skill is developed, and the collection of badges can serve as a virtual resume of competencies and qualities for key stakeholders such as peers, schools or potential employers.” – [Mozilla Foundation and P2PU White Paper](#)

General Facilitation Tips

Information used in this section has been gathered from a variety of high quality sources. Much of this content is not original to The Sprout Fund and we are grateful to the original authors. Below you will find information about common challenges faced by facilitators, as well as helpful tactics that will ensure you can successfully moderate a productive session.

Your Role (Source: *The Interaction Method*)

The moderator is a neutral servant of the group. The responsibility of the moderator is to help the group focus its energies on a task by suggesting methods and procedures, protecting all members of the group from attack, and making sure that everyone has an opportunity to participate. The moderator serves as a combination of tour guide, traffic cop, and meeting chauffeur.

The Moderator's Dilemma (Source: *Alphachimp Learning Systems*)

Keeping things moving while encouraging wild, innovative ideas. Your role is not to manage people (that's too unpredictable!) but to manage the things we can control: time, energy and the process.

Common Challenges (Source: *The Interaction Method*)

While you are moderating discussions, you will likely face the following challenges and dilemmas. It is best to be aware of these common challenges so that you can recognize and combat them.

- ★ **Chaos:** Everybody going in different directions
- ★ **Personal attacks:** Attacking individuals rather than their ideas
- ★ **Traffic problem:** Difficulty getting into the conversational flow
- ★ **Unclear roles and responsibilities:** Who is supposed to be doing what?
- ★ **Manipulation by group leader:** Abuse power to achieve personal goals
- ★ **Data overload:** Holding on to too many ideas in your head at one time
- ★ **Repetition and wheel-spinning:** Going over the same old ideas again and again

Things to Keep in Mind (Source: *Alphachimp Learning Systems*)

- ★ **Authenticity.** Be yourself: serious or silly, precocious or ironic—it doesn't matter. People can sense if you are faking it. You don't have to know any answers to any issues. Just know what happens next.
- ★ **Attitude.** You set the tone. If you're excited to be with these people, they'll feed off it. If you're nervous, that's OK, too. In the words of Craig Finn of The Hold Steady, "you gotta stay positive!" Ask for help if you need it: from the participants and staff.
- ★ **Awareness.** Scan the room and take in everything without focusing on anything. Notice body language. Is someone scared, tired, bored or angry? Acknowledge it—if appropriate—without putting anyone on the spot. You can slow down or speed up to change the energy, or transition.
- ★ **Acknowledgement.** Every suggestion or idea deserves a "Thanks!" or "Good one!" It's not your job to filter or judge yet. Just to catch everything the crowd pitches at you.

Useful Tactics *(Source: Designing The Conversation)*

- ★ **Use questions to lead conversations.** Humans feel compelled to respond to just about anything delivered in the form of a question. Right?
- ★ **Protect the timid.** Brainstorming can be scary for some and rather than fighting that, the facilitator should take full responsibility for allowing participants to react in their own way to the brainstorming environment.
- ★ **Encourage the bold.** If someone risks experiencing embarrassment by participating, the facilitator needs to lavish that individual with praise and appreciation.
- ★ **Embrace surprises.** The best material often comes from unexpected sources at unforeseen moments.

Helpful Skills *(Source: The Sprout Fund)*

- ★ **Conversational Awareness:** Sometimes you may need to be the center of attention, while at other moments you may need to stand back and let the conversation run itself. It will be important to hear what's left unsaid, draw out those who may be holding back, and reign in those who may be grandstanding.
- ★ **Separate Process from Content:** You will need to keep track of the substance of the conversation as well as your group's progress through the activity. You may have to redirect the discussion to stay focused and on schedule.
- ★ **Managing Multiple Viewpoints:** Participants will bring different and potentially divergent views. It is the Moderator's responsibility to balance everyone's input and to look for ways to build consensus between people who may seem to be speaking different languages. Asking specific participants for feedback after others have made a point is an effective way to start, just make sure the responses stay on topic.
- ★ **You Don't Need To Be A Know-It-All:** Encourage participants to talk through questions together rather than asking you how something should go. Everyone in each group will have varying levels of knowledge, but no group will be composed of folks who are totally in the dark.

Event Specific Responsibilities

The following notes and instructions specifically pertain to the Pittsburgh Learning Pathways Summit on Friday, November 21, 2014.

- ★ Plan to arrive at the Convention Center by 8:00AM
- ★ Expect a diverse crowd of about 400 people comprised of teachers, students, museum professionals, librarians, administrators, artists, etc.
- ★ Expect a crowd of people with differing amounts of knowledge about digital badges and learning pathways. Meet people where they are.
- ★ Sprout will help facilitate the group activities from the stage. You will be our eyes and ears on the ground.
- ★ You will be responsible for moderating the activity happening at *two tables* at the event. ~ 6 people will be assigned to each table.
- ★ Be cognizant of how much time you are spending with each group and make sure that all attendees are participating in meaningful ways, especially students!
- ★ All facilitators have some knowledge of digital badges and learning pathways. Use your knowledge wisely. Don't dominate conversations, but help out if people are confused.
- ★ All tables will have a big *question mark sign* that participants can use to get your attention. Keep an eye out for it and assist people as soon as possible.
- ★ Be mindful of time. The schedule is tight and we need your help to use our time wisely and make the most of the summit.

Roundtable Discussion #1: City of Learning (30 MIN)

Quick Introductions (5 MIN)

Each member of the group should take 30 seconds to introduce themselves by saying their name and affiliation.

If participants have questions at any point during the event, they should grab and raise the *question mark sign* and a facilitator will be along to assist.

Statement Starters (5 MIN)

Individually, participants should choose one of the pre-printed notecard templates and complete the statement:

“Pittsburgh will be a city of learning when... _____.”

“Pathways enable learners to... _____.”

“I’m motivated to learn when... _____.”

Share Out (10 MIN)

As a group, participants should share their responses with one another by reading their statement and briefly describing the motivation for their response. Participants should tweet their answers to this question to #learningpathways

Discussion (10 MIN)

After hearing everyone’s responses, the group should consider the following question:

★ How can we create a more integrated learning environment in the Pittsburgh region?

Roundtable Discussion #2: Digital Badges (25 MIN)

Pair and Share (10 MIN)

Participants should find a partner at their table and spend ten minutes discussing the following prompts. Participants are encouraged to tweet their responses to #learningpathways.

★ *Digital Badge technology can help capture learning that happens anywhere, anytime. Consider your context, what opportunities can you identify? What challenges might you encounter? What questions do you have?*

As you discuss, use the colored post-it notes on your table to record your thoughts using the following framework, which we call **Stoplight Notes**:

Green Post-Its = Opportunities

Red Post-Its = Challenges

Yellow Post-Its = Questions

Share Out (15 MIN)

Next, each pair should report out to the group and participants should attempt to answer questions that are posed to the group. As the group talks, the post its should be categorized in the center of the table.

If the group has extra time, prompt participants to answer the following question: *What would motivate you to design and issue digital badges? What would motivate you to want to earn digital badges?*

Workshop (85 MIN)

Working Group Feedback Stations

Seven stations will be staffed by Working Group members and facilitators, and be comprised of four activities each: (1) Competency Critique, (2) Learning Experience Identification, (3) Learning Pathway Design, and (4) Ask Me Chats.

- ★ **Competency Critique:** Review a list of competencies that each Working Group created and provide feedback with post-it notes. Here's an example (display a competency and a corresponding post-it with feedback).
- ★ **Learning Experience Identification:** Fill out a Learning Experience Card that details a learning experience you know about (at your school, your library, an afterschool program, etc.) that aligns with some or all of the featured competencies within these topic areas. List the learning experience and write a brief description. Then circle the competencies the learning experience addresses. Lastly, you can place the Learning Experience Card on a pathway where it makes the most sense, either beginner, intermediate or advanced.
- ★ **Learning Pathway Design:** Learning Pathway Development Worksheets will be created and placed at each station. The activity will encourage participants to gather a few colleagues and begin designing a learning pathway about a topic of interest.
- ★ **Ask Me Chats:** Working Group members will be available throughout this portion of the event to engage with participants about the Working Group process, learning pathways, digital badges, and their topic of expertise. Participants will be encouraged to ask them questions at each feedback station.

Media Station

The eighth station will be focused on capturing stories from participants about their own learning pathways. This station will be led by **Margaret Krauss** of *What What Why*. Participants will be interviewed by Margaret, have their photo taken by a photographer (potentially with a marker board..."Pittsburgh will be a city of learning when..."), and have their learning pathway drawn by graphic artist **Leah Silverman** and/or **Emily Marko**.

Interviews

Additionally, during this segment of the event, **Emmai Alaquiva** will perform ~4 short interviews with participants from the stage (on video). The interviews should occur approximately every 20 minutes and invite diverse participants to share their unique passion for learning pathways.

Smooth Jazz

During the workshop, The Center of Life **student jazz band** will play from the stage.

On The Spot Reflection (5 MIN)

One Question Survey

Participants should use the notecards that have been provided to answer the following one question survey:

- ★ What is the most important thing that should be done to develop learning pathways for local youth?

Strike (60 MIN)

Tear Down and Load Out

Immediately following the event, facilitators should plan to collect and organize all materials and generally assist with tear down.

