

# Rules Of Play For User Group Organizers

For starting a local user group in your country, region, or organization



# Hello There!



Thank you for joining our community! When we started The Liberators, our dream was to build a global network of peers. We are super grateful that you're willing to help us make this possible. Below, you find the most important things you need to know to get started.

Barry & Christiaan

The Liberators

## Purpose Of Our Community



We – The Liberators Network – are a global community that exists to help practitioners of Scrum, other Agile methods, and Liberating Structures to find support, offer help, and draw inspiration. We believe in the power of peer-to-peer inspiration to overcome the tough challenges we face when we try to liberate teams and organizations from ineffective, de-humanizing, and traditional ways of working.



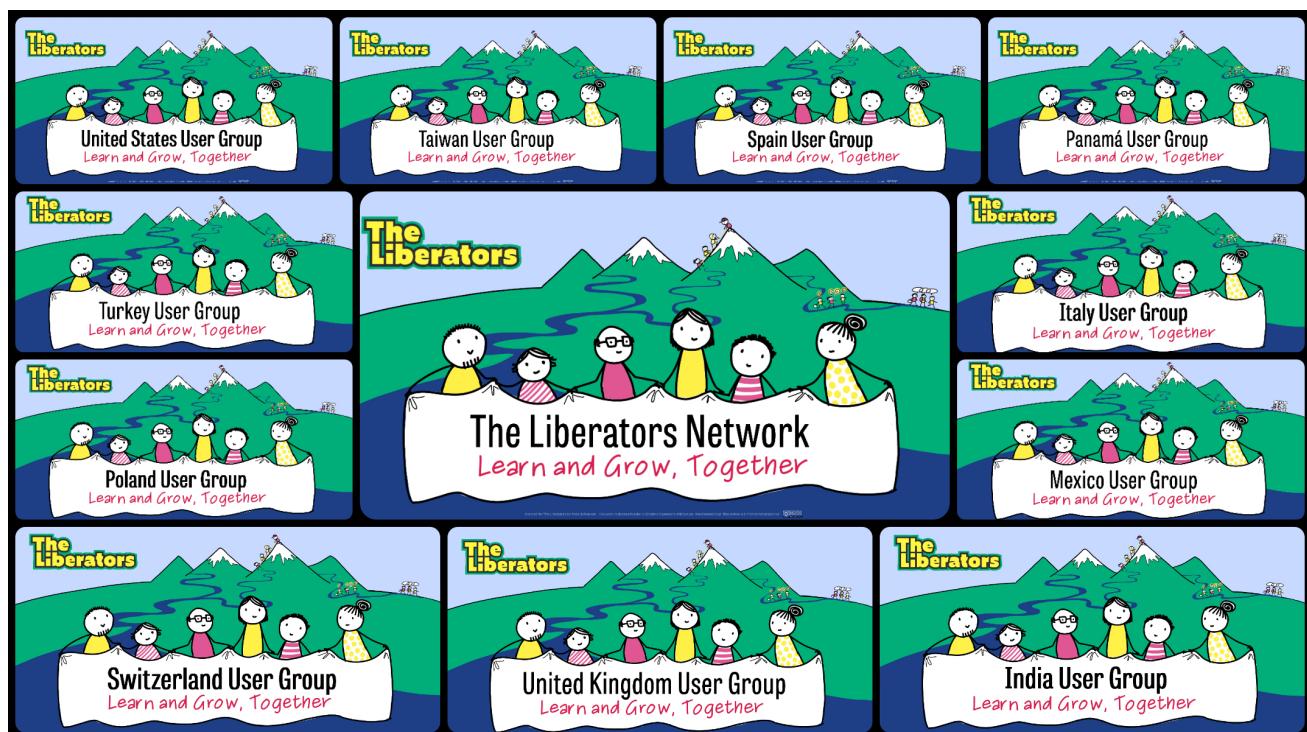
# A Global Community With Local Meetups

While The Liberators Network features global meetups, these can only go so far in offering more personal and local support. This is where our local branches, the user groups, come in. Each user group focuses on a specific region or organization while also remaining open to other participants. To keep the quality high and prevent overload, we aim for one user group per region.

A user group can be focused on a country (e.g. Switzerland user group), region (London user group), or a specific organization. Whatever you prefer.

User groups are autonomous in the sense that they can pick the topics that matter the most to them, and use the tools and platforms that are most suitable for that. User groups are integrated into the larger community in the sense that all groups are visible on a [public Github page](#). Also, local organizers periodically meet to give and get help and start collective initiatives together. There is the option for local user groups to participate in global topics that are prepared together.

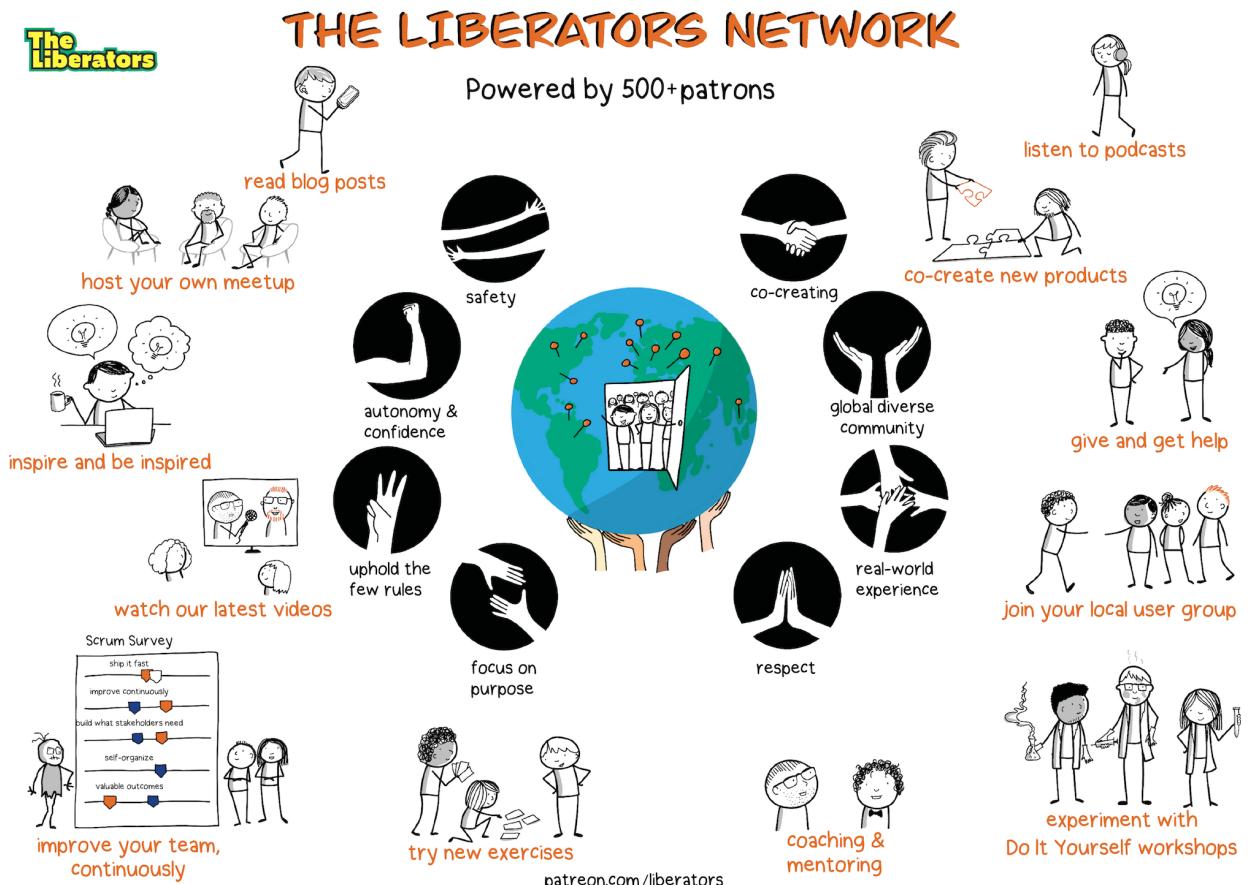
We hope that The Liberators Network allows us all to tap into the potential of the collective brainpower, expertise, and creativity that such a large and diverse network holds. For example, we hope to develop, field test, and report on strings of Liberating Structures (e.g. to overcome Zombie Scrum or navigate conflicts), to develop helpful tools for Scrum teams, and to come up with creative ideas and powerful experiments.



# Our Principles & Activities

The Liberators Network exists to help you, and your team, overcome the many hard challenges of unleashing teams with Scrum and Liberating Structures. Our hope is that you find creative support, that you enjoy the satisfaction of helping others, and that you feel part of a larger movement to liberate teams all over the world.

Although this sounds great, we can imagine you wonder what this actually means. So, we created a poster that captures the essence of our community in one overview. We also wrote [a blog post](#), to describe the activities in more detail, the content you can expect, and we highlighted some of the key experiences, findings, and achievements.



# Rules Of Play



As a local user group organizer, we invite you to start a "Liberators Network User Group" in your country, region, or organization. This is a great opportunity to grow a high-quality, local network of practitioners. Although we fully trust your ability to make the right call, we identified the following "Min Specs":

## **As a user group organizer, do ...**

- Launch the user group with the support of 1 or 2 other local members
- Design meetups around the challenges that participants bring
- Design meetups so that every voice can be included (with Liberating Structures)
- Model our [community principles](#) and help people get acquainted with them
- Co-host meetups with another facilitator wherever possible to develop facilitation skills in your group
- Make an effort to attend periodic gatherings for User Group organizers to share and learn from others
- Ask for help or support when you're stuck
- Gently make people aware of the larger community of [The Liberators Network](#), the [Patron community](#) that funds this network, and how they can support it and benefit from it
- Join the bi-weekly call "Conversation Cafe – Local User Group Organizers". We don't expect you to join each call. It would be nice if you show up at least once per month
- Engage with other user group organizers via our Discord server. We want to minimize email and stimulate collaboration via Discord. Check your membership setting in Patreon to get access to Discord
- Make use of all the material we've created: posters, illustrations, DIY workshops, experiments, and other digital product. Most of it is available via our webshop (for free) or Github
- Mix online with offline meetups. Do whatever makes sense and what has your preference
- Host meetups together with other user group organizers. For example, someone from the UK hosts a meetup with someone from Spain

## **As a user group organizer, don't ...**

- Use the meetups to push commercial products or services down people's throats
- Make the meetups about you and your opinion, rather than actively creating space for others
- Act in a ways that harms the reputation of this community and The Liberators



# Join Our Bi-Weekly Conversation Cafe



The Liberating Structure [Conversation Cafe](#) encourages people to listen and understand each other's perspectives on a profound, shared topic or challenge instead of trying to convince or persuade others to see it your way. Sitting in a (virtual) circle with a simple set of agreements and a talking object, small groups engage in consecutive rounds of dialogue. Conversation Cafe invites people to listen to one another's thoughts and reflect together on a shared challenge. It's awesome!

We organize a bi-weekly Conversation Cafe for the Liberators of our Patreon community and the local user group organizers. Here's a simple Q&A to give you more information.

## **When will the Conversation Cafe's take place?**

Every 2 weeks, on different days & times. This gives more people the opportunity to join. We'll only schedule a couple of sessions ahead. One session takes one hour.

## **What will be the topics?**

The Scrum Team Survey contains 30 Scrum-related topics. These topics will be used for Conversation Cafe. The same topic will be used for 2 consecutive sessions. So, if you missed one, no worries, you've got another chance. It can still be valuable to join both sessions with the same topic. Because you'll be in a different group each time, you'll also have different conversations. Eventually, the end goal is to cover all the topics of the Scrum Team Survey. But only if this proves to be a valuable approach for everyone.

## **What will we discuss during Conversation Cafe, exactly?**

That's up to you and your small group. The structure is Conversation Cafe and the topic is predefined. My recommendation (and hope) would be to share experiences, challenges, ideas, insights, problems, etc. Maybe it results in ideas for your own meetup, maybe not. I don't want to make this a "process conversation" in which you discuss your user group. I want to dig deeper into the topic itself and see what we can learn. My feeling is that this is way more valuable.

## **Who can join?**

Everyone who is a local user group organizer and/or a "Liberator" in our Patreon community. Not every "Liberator" is automatically a user group organizer, and not every user group organizer is automatically a "Liberator" (in some countries \$25,- isn't feasible).

## **What's the difference with the public meetups in The Liberators Network?**

The meetups that we organize for The Liberators Network can be joined by all Patreons. Some meetups are connected to the Scrum Team Survey, some aren't. The Conversation Cafe's we organize for you, are mostly with the same people. Meaning we don't have to explain the structure too often, and can really focus on the topic itself.



# Prerequisite: Join Our Patreon Community As A Liberator

One extra rule of play is that you join our [Patreon community](#) as a Liberator. Patrons are people who feel that our mission, and our work, are valuable enough to justify a monthly contribution. The support of our patrons gives us the financial space to invest time in initiatives like the local user groups.

It could be that \$25 dollars per month aren't feasible for you. Maybe because \$25 dollars means way too much money in your country, or your personal situation doesn't allow it. If that's the case: no worries. Just reach out to us to explore what's possible. We don't want the money to be a bottleneck.

## Select a membership level

Supporter	Contributor	Liberator
		
<b>\$1</b> PER MONTH (+VAT)	<b>\$5</b> PER MONTH (+VAT)	<b>\$25</b> PER MONTH (+VAT)
<a href="#">Join</a>	<a href="#">Join</a>	<a href="#">Join</a>
This tier is for people who appreciate our podcasts, blog posts, videos, meetups, and online apps. With your donation, you encourage us to create more of it.   <a href="#">Free access to online meetups</a> <a href="#">Show more</a>	This tier is for people who appreciate our work and want to actively participate in the community. You can share insights, learn from peers, and support each other to overcome tough challenges.  <a href="#">Show more</a>  Includes Discord benefits	This tier is for people who are eager to liberate teams in their own organization or region. You'll get full access to the Scrum Team Survey. Use it to drive change in your environment!  <a href="#">Show more</a>  Includes Discord benefits



# Scrum Team Survey



We created the [Scrum Team Survey](#) to make Scrum teams, and the organization it is a part of, more effective.

Although our tool creates much-needed transparency and offers many recommendations, it can still be hard to know where to start. Or to get everyone on board in the shared diagnosis and identification of what to improve. At least, this is what many teams told us :)

The local user groups can play a key role in supporting these Scrum teams around the globe. Especially, since we recently expanded the survey with a community page, and the local user groups are clearly mentioned. So, you can also expect participants in your meetups with questions, challenges, or ideas.

Good to know: we don't make the connection with the Scrum Team Survey purely for commercial reasons. Sure, it would be awesome if this approach results in more subscribers. But participants that join the local user group can also use the free version. The most important reason is that with the Scrum Team Survey and the underlying scientific model we use real data and research to make adaptations. This is a unique approach in the Scrum community, and you can be part of it!

**Request our help**

REPORT  
MODEL  
TIPS  
ACTIONS  
COMMUNITY  
INVITE

**Join meetups**

**Experience Interview With Bas Vodde**

During this meetup, you have the opportunity to ask your questions to Bas Vodde. Together with Craig Larman, Bas developed Large-Scale Scrum to medium to large projects while staying true to the original Scrum principles.

Zoom link:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87404121704>

**Let's Create Quick Tips To Improve Release Frequency**

Our research shows that teams are more effective when they release frequently. These teams have more satisfied stakeholders and higher satisfaction levels. What are good first steps to improve the release frequency of your team? Finding an answer to these questions is the purpose of this meetup.

Zoom link:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83141996625>

**Connect with other teams**

We frequently match and connect teams from across the globe. This is a great way to learn together, exchange experiences, share success stories and help. Interested? Contact us with the link below.

[Learn more >](#)

**Join a local user group**

We are a global community of like-minded people that exists to help practitioners of Scrum, other Agile methods, and Liberating Structures to find support, offer help, and draw inspiration. We believe in the power of peer-to-peer inspiration to overcome the tough challenges we face when we try to liberate teams and organizations from ineffective, de-humanizing, and traditional ways of working.

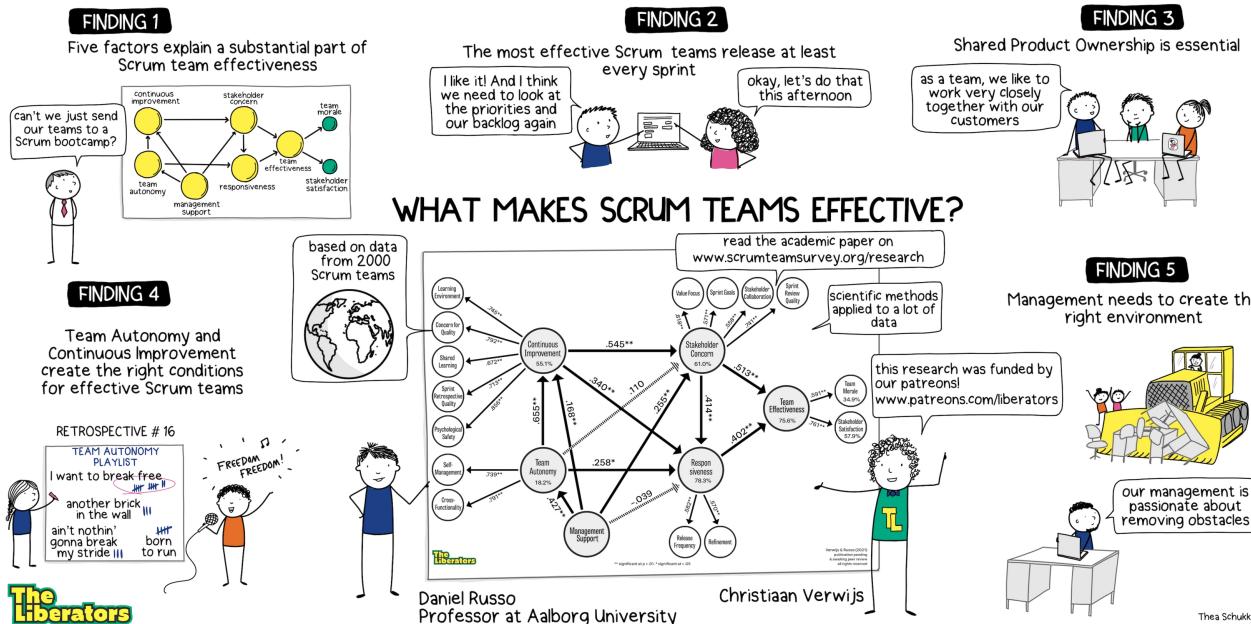
**Recent content**

- Technical Debt and Code Smells
- Five Tips Every Starting Scrum Master Should Know
- A Simple Exercise To Define The Product Of Your Scrum Team
- 10 Powerful Strategies To Break Down Product Backlog Items

# Scientific Research

How can you make Scrum teams more effective? While opinions are easy to find, it is much harder to find evidence-based recommendations. Unfortunately, scientific research in this area has been limited. So we decided to perform this research ourselves, together with other academics, statisticians, and psychologists. We hope that this allows you to more effectively apply Scrum and support Scrum teams.

You can find more information about [our research here](#). It's our intention to use our findings as inspiration for meetups. Maybe we can even do some research together!



# Please, Benefit!

If you are organizing a local user group, we encourage you to benefit from the local community that you are investing time and effort in. It is a great way to start collaborations and distinguish yourself in a competitive marketplace. Feel free to add your logo subtly or mention your services briefly at the end. Of course, you can mention your role as a user group organizer on LinkedIn or your website. On LinkedIn, we invite you to join the organization "[The Liberators Network](#)".

In your communications, always keep in mind that "The Liberators Network" and "The Liberators" are different organizations. Although they are definitely related, we ask that you don't create the impression that you represent "The Liberators", work for us, or offer our services.

Also, because you're a local user group organizer, you're automatically also a "Liberator" in our Patreon community. This means you have the following benefits:

- Get a 100% discount on a Scrum Team Survey subscription for up to three teams!
- Start a personal call to get started with the survey
- Receive a 15% discount on our webshop
- Organize your own meetups in local user groups
- Access to our community platform Discord
- Early access to our new content
- Download digital products for free



**Workshop: Explore The State Of Your Product And Market Conditions**  
€5,00 (ex vat) | €6,05



**Workshop: Interview Your Stakeholders And Learn What Matters Most**  
€5,00 (ex vat) | €6,05



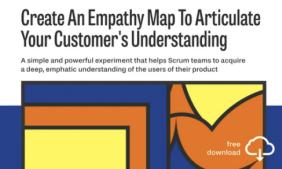
**Workshop: Discover The Needs Of Your Stakeholders With UX Fishbowl**  
€5,00 (ex vat) | €6,05



**Workshop: Use Ecocycle Planning To Make The State Of Your Product Transparent**  
€5,00 (ex vat) | €6,05



**Experiment: Generate Insights And Ideas For Your Product With "Design The Box"**  
€0,00 (ex vat) | €0,00



**Experiment: Create An Empathy Map To Articulate Your Customer's Understanding**  
€0,00 (ex vat) | €0,00



**Workshop: Improve How Your Team Uses The Definition Of Done**  
€5,00 (ex vat) | €6,05



**Workshop: Take Your Definition Of Done To The Next Level**  
€5,00 (ex vat) | €6,05



# Frequently Asked Questions

## How much time does being a user group organizer require?

You have complete freedom to decide how much time you want to invest in your local user group. Getting your user group up and running takes the most time. Ideally, you don't do this alone, so you can distribute the time. The minimum time invested would be 1 meetup per month & 1 Conversation Cafe together with the other organizers. So, this would be roughly 4 hours each month.

## Do I need to create a public user group?

No. Many user groups that are focused on a country or region have created a public user group in Meetup. For example, check the group from [Switzerland](#). If your user group is within your organization only, this doesn't always make sense.



## When can I start or stop a user group?

You can start a new user group at any time. There's no specific date or period to start a new group. You can also stop a user group whenever you want. If it's a public user group, then it would be nice to find someone else. As such, the user group stay's alive.

## I've created a user group, now what is a good way to start?

When you start a new initiative, meetup, or community, it is helpful to start with a good appetizer that is representative of what else people can expect. We designed [his workshop](#) to help you do that. Two good follow-up workshops are [Purpose-to-Practice](#) and [Your Impact As A Scrum Practitioner](#).

Another option is to use your user group to start your own Zombie Scrum learning journey. In [this blog post](#), we share the 6 do-it-yourself workshops we hosted earlier. For each workshop, we share the Google presentation that contains all the steps, invitations, and opportunities to learn more. Just copy the presentation, and host the meetup!



# Let's Learn and Grow Together!

In all our work, we always emphasize two themes. The first is that people should be put in a position where they can drive change themselves (and not consultants, coaches, or experts) and that there is great potential in the creative intelligence and wisdom of diverse groups. With The Liberators Network, this is exactly what we hope to do. It's super cool to know that you're along for the ride. Let's enjoy it, and learn and grow together!

~ Barry and Christiaan

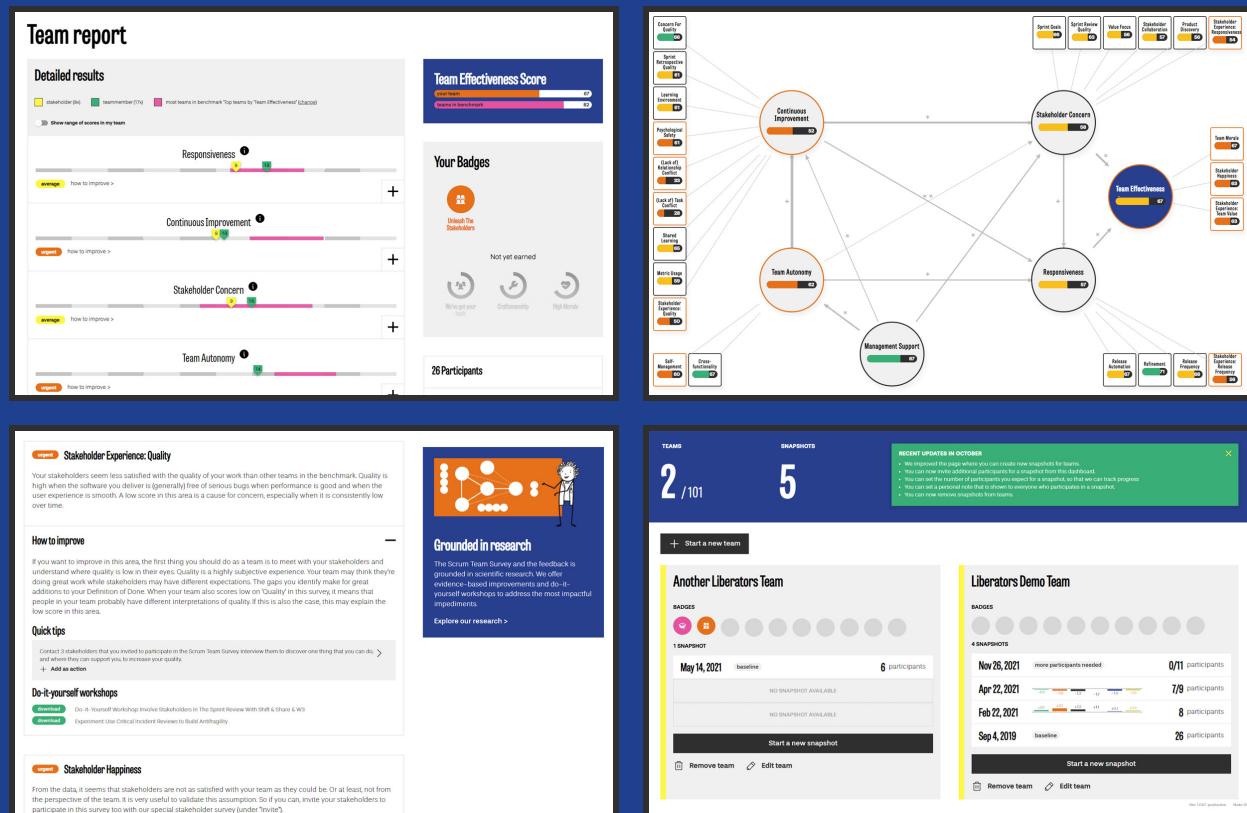


Created by Thea Schukken for the Zombie Scrum Survival Guide  
by Christiaan Verwijs, Johannes Schartau & Barry Overeem  
[zombiescrum.org](http://zombiescrum.org)



# Make Your Scrum Team More Effective

Want to make your Scrum team more effective? We created the Scrum Team Survey to help. Invite members and stakeholders to a detailed questionnaire and diagnose the results together. You receive tons of actionable feedback based on your results, including dozens of quick tips and useful do-it-yourself workshops. You can use the Scrum Team Survey for free with your team. No account or e-mail address is required. You can also subscribe for more advanced features.



	Essential	Liberator
Invite team members & stakeholders	unlimited	unlimited
Quick Tips for your team per topic	3	unlimited
Recommendations to your team	5	unlimited
Compare your team against different benchmarks		✓
Analyze the range of scores in your team		✓
Receive our personal guidance on how to get started		✓
See where your team improves over time with Team Trends		✓
Support our academic research to help more teams		✓
<b>Pricing per team per month</b>	<b>€ 0</b>	<b>€ 10</b>

# Unleashing Teams All Over The World

We are The Liberators – Barry Overeem and Christiaan Verwijs. Our mission is to create data-driven products to unleash the superpowers of teams all over the world. We do this together with a growing community of patrons.

## Awesome content for awesome teams

We unleash teams with our [blogposts](#), our [podcast](#), our [newsletter](#), our [videos](#), and our frequent [meetups](#). While we offer most of this for free, we also have plenty of premium content in [our webshop](#) for you to explore.

## Supported by the community

We are super proud that The Liberators is almost entirely funded by the community. If you appreciate our work too, you can already support us for 12 dollars/year by becoming a [patron](#). In return, you gain free access to premium content, we share our work-in-progress and involve you in creating more awesome content.



## Thank you for respecting our work!

We work hard to create high-quality content that puts you in a position to unleash your team. We're sure you appreciate that a lot of our time and money goes into this. At the same time, content like this is our main source of income. It's what pays our bills :)

If you purchased this content, we ask only that you treat our work with respect and don't share it with people outside your team. If you stumbled on it elsewhere without paying for it, and it offers you value, would you consider [supporting us too](#)? You can also check out [our other offerings](#).