

GOVERNANCE

Phases I, II, and III



Activity: Catastrophizing

Goals

1. Understand how the program's current governance model (or decision making) works with unexpected issues
2. Understand if the model works well or has gaps
3. Identify and document issues that need to be solved

Prerequisites

None

Who Should Participate?

Current Governance participants, Community representatives

Length

60-90 minutes

Governance Definition

"A governance model describes the roles that project participants can take on and the process for strategic and tactical decision making within the project. In addition, it describes the ground rules for participation in the project and the processes for communicating and sharing within the project team and community."

- Ross Gardler and Gabriel Hanganu, [OSS Watch Governance Models](#)

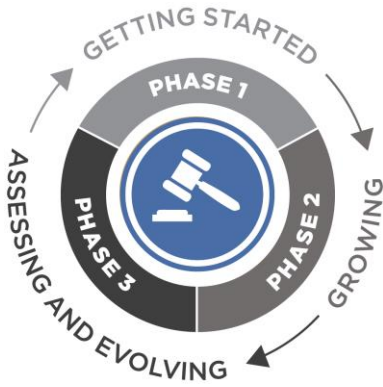
In simpler terms – it can be considered "how decisions get made."

Activity Instructions

1. Brainstorm a list of "catastrophes" that would have a significant impact on your program's ability to fulfill its mission (could impact governance, technology, community, or resources).
2. Prioritize list of catastrophes
3. For the top 2-3, discuss the response to catastrophes within the current governance structure. You don't need to solve the catastrophe; you just need to know who would decide how to solve the problem.
4. Identify gaps
5. Identify issues that may be causing these gaps
6. Consider if the current governance structure needs to be modified to better address gaps
7. Document governance policies or decision-making process as necessary
 - a. If this process has surfaced decision making processes that are not clear or documented, take the opportunity to document them.

Outputs

- A shared sense of potential gaps in current governance
- A shared sense of potential problems that can be used for future activities



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Activity: Catastrophizing

Facilitator Guide

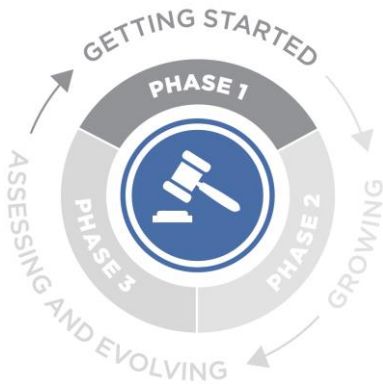
- Facilitate the group in brainstorming a list of “catastrophes” that would have a significant impact on your program’s ability to fulfill its mission.
- During the brainstorming, there are no “wrong” answers. The suggestions can be outlandish. They may be fiscal or technical disasters. The idea is to understand how governance responds and handles the catastrophe and helps identify gaps in the model.
- If no immediate suggestions are given, you can “seed” they discussion with examples (or categories of examples) such as:
 - What if a key person (program director; board chair) won the lottery and moved to Tahiti?
 - What if a key element of your technology stack was discontinued?
 - What if a pivotal partner organization dissolved or stepped away?
- Make sure to encourage broad suggestions from the entire group.
- One way to prioritize (in person) is to use a sticker vote. In a sticker vote, each participant is assigned a number of stickers - these can be physical stickers in an in-person event or a specified piece of text (e.g., +1) in a virtual environment. Participants place their stickers or text alongside the options they’re voting for, according to the parameters of the exercise (e.g., most important, most likely, most interesting, etc.).
- Help participants move through the discussion and highlight the potential gaps in their current governance. This can set up next steps of how to address those gaps.

Potential Considerations

1. Why do some catastrophes resonate more than others?
2. Are some issues more emotional?
3. Is there a theme in the gaps (e.g., lack of partners, resources, etc.)

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Activity adapted from: Kaner, Sam, and Lenny Lind. 2007. Facilitator’s guide to participatory decision-making. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons/Jossey-Bass.



GOVERNANCE

Phase I: Establishing Governance



Activity 2: Governance Elements – Checklist and Planning Tool

Goals

1. Understand the elements of various governance models and the types of strategic and tactical decisions for which governance is responsible
2. Determine which elements your governance structure currently has and who has authority over key strategic or tactical decisions
3. Identify and prioritize the elements you want to add in the future and which decision-making processes might be adjusted as a result

Prerequisites

None

Who Should Participate?

Current Governance participants; Community representatives

Length

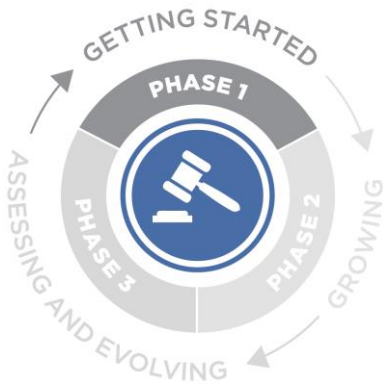
30-60 minutes

Pre-Work Instructions

Each participant should review and complete the checklists below in advance.

Activity Instructions

1. As a group, discuss individual checklist results
2. Review agreement and then focus on differences in areas. This may surface differences about direction that need to be discussed and prioritized together
3. As a group, come to consensus on which gaps, if any, the program has, and prioritize what to address



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Phase I: Establishing Governance



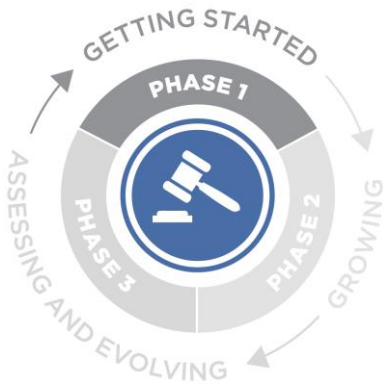
Activity 2: Governance Elements - Checklist and Planning Tool

Governance Elements Checklist and Planning Tool

Organization and Structure

For each element below, note whether your program currently has the element, if it's in progress, if you don't have it now but would like to in the future, or if it's not applicable to your program.

	Have	In progress	Future	N/A
Governance Group Board members, leadership, etc. There is some level of decision making by identified people. This can be formal or informal.				
Governance Leadership/Officers Are there leaders within leadership? Examples include: Executive Committee, Chair/Vice Chair, Co-Chairs, Secretary, or Treasurer.				
“Sub” Groups Reporting to Overall Governance Are there smaller, more focused subgroups that report to a higher governance board? Examples include: Technical Direction, Nominations, or Community Engagement.				
Ad Hoc Groups Are there conference committees, or short term, topical groups?				
Position Descriptions for Governance Members Are there clear roles and responsibilities for governance members?				
Clear Terms for Governance Members Examples include 1, 2, or 3-year terms				
Term Limits for Elected Governance Members Do members depart after specific periods or can they continue indefinitely?				
Transition Plans for Leadership Is there a documented process for how leadership transitions occur?				



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Phase I: Establishing Governance



Activity 2: Governance Elements - Checklist and Planning Tool

Transparency and Inclusiveness

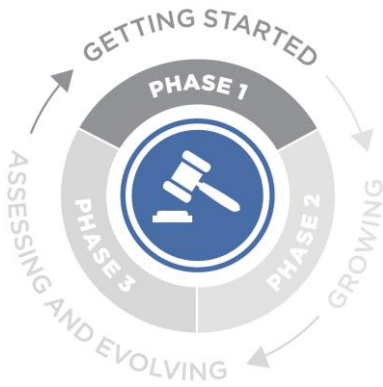
For each element below, note whether your program currently has the element, if it's in progress, if you don't have it now but would like to in the future, or if it's not applicable to your program.

	Have	In progress	Future	N/A
Code of Conduct Is there a clear, publicly available, code of conduct?				
Transparency of Governance Process Are elections, and other structures, clear and publicly available?				
Transparency in Meetings Are agendas, decisions, and/or meeting notes shared with the community?				
DEIA Efforts / Policies Are there DEIA strategies or efforts underway or planned?				
Technology Roadmap Are the technical direction and plans available?				

Financial

For each element below, note whether your program currently has the element, if it's in progress, if you don't have it now but would like to in the future, or if it's not applicable to your program.

	Have	In progress	Future	N/A
Fiscal Stability Is there a Fiscal Sponsor or Organizational Home relationship?				
Reserve Fund Are there enough funds to enable the program to wind down if necessary – potentially three months of operating costs?				



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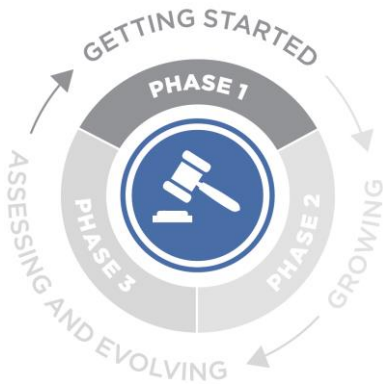


Activity 2: Governance Elements - Checklist and Planning Tool

Strategic and Tactical Responsibilities

For each of the strategic and tactical responsibilities below, note if your program has a role or group responsible for the listed functions, if creating a role or convening a group is in progress, if no role or group exists now but you'd like to have one in the future, if you'd like to change which role or group is responsible, or if it's not applicable to your program.

	Have	In Progress	Future	Change	N/A
Ownership Is there a role or group responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IP ownership • Branding and identity 					
Leadership / Chartering Is there a role or group responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic planning • Mission and vision • Program initiatives 					
Community Management Does a role or group have decision-making authority for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community definitions • Membership policies • Path to leadership/governance 					
Software Development Does a role or group have decision-making authority for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical road mapping • Functional requirements • UX / Design • Quality assurance / Testing • Release management 					
Resource Management Is there a role or group responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgeting and resource allocation • Fundraising • Grant writing and management 					



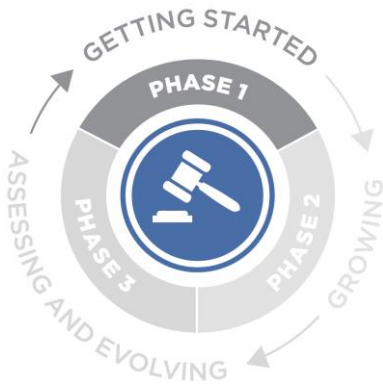
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Activity 2: Governance Elements - Checklist and Planning Tool

	Have	In Progress	Future	Change	N/A
Use of Information and Tools Is there a role or group responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure management (bug tracker, website, etc.) • Community communications • User docs management • Developer docs management 					



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Phase I: Establishing Governance



Activity 3: Understand Governance Models and Process Impact

Goals

1. Understand the range of various governance models
2. How they function
3. What they could mean for your own program

Prerequisites

None

Who Should Participate?

Current Governance participants; Community representatives

Length

120-150 minutes

Activity Instructions

1. Review the Governance Models: Summary Table on pages 2-3.
2. As a group, read through potential scenarios given below, and consider how each scenario would be handled in each governance model defined below. For example, who mediates in each model? Who makes the final decision?

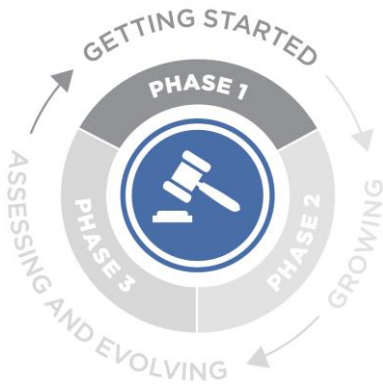
Scenarios

These are given as examples, feel free to substitute with issues relevant to your program.

- Scenario 1: Two developers have submitted pull requests for pieces of functionality that are vastly different.
 - Scenario 2: A for-profit organization wants to participate.
 - Scenario 3: An organization wants to make a sizable financial donation to the program but wants a role in governance and control over the technical roadmap.
 - (Optional) Scenario 4: Select a scenario that came up in Governance Activity: Catastrophizing
3. At the end of each scenario review, discuss the benefits and limitations of each and how that may play out for your program and its needs.
 4. Determine as a group if there are any models you definitely do or do not want to consider for your program.

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Activity and chart adapted from: https://clinic.cyber.harvard.edu/files/2017/03/2017-03_governance-FINAL.pdf



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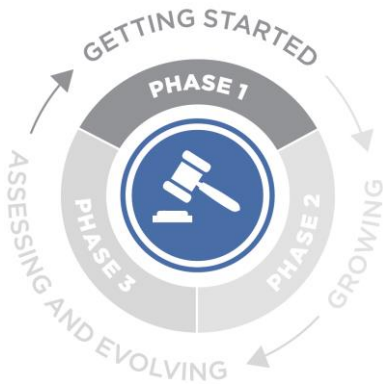
Phase I: Establishing Governance



Activity 3: Understanding Governance Models and Process Impact

Governance Models: Summary Table

Model	Definition & Key Elements	Roles	Conflict Resolution
Benevolent dictatorship	<p>One or a few founders are the final arbiters and ultimate decision makers for all aspects of the program. Community perception of the dictator can impact the success of the project/program.</p> <p>Individual assignments are ad hoc and functionality decisions are usually dependent on the benevolent dictator.</p> <p><u>Examples:</u> Linux, Arclight, and Mirador</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benevolent dictator • Committers • Contributors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal
Meritocracy	<p>Loosely organized, rewards participants who make valuable additions to the program. Standing can be enhanced by “merit.” Decisions are made by the community as a whole.</p> <p>Authority is decentralized, with direction ultimately set by the community at large. Committers play a unique role in shaping the project, and community norms are essential.</p> <p><u>Examples:</u> Apache & Blacklight</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributors • Committers • PM body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal > discussion > vote > decision • Lazy consensus (only requires feedback from opponents)
Delegated Governance	<p>A body of leaders (such as a Council) is chosen or elected to oversee the program, resolve conflicts within the community, modify the community norms and processes, and determine the project’s core values. Delegated Governance has a clear hierarchical structure and a designated set of leaders.</p> <p>Authority is centralized at the top but distributed through a chain of command. Many community members can hold some form of leadership role, and control over</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council members • Sub-council members • Contributors • Committers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor disagreements via lazy consensus • Larger issues discussion > vote > decision by Council • Issue may start in Sub-council,



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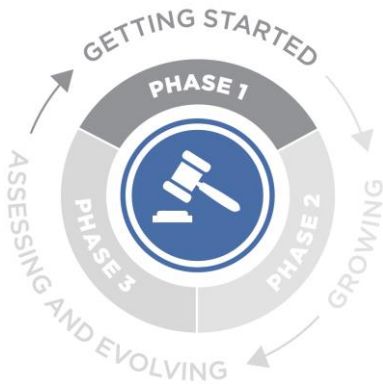
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Activity 3: Understanding Governance Models and Process Impact

	<p>program direction will vary depending on how councils are selected.</p> <p><u>Examples:</u> Ubuntu, Fedora, and DSpace</p>		<p>escalate to Council</p>
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Model	Definition & Key Elements	Roles	Conflict Resolution
Dynamic Governance	<p>All members sit on 1 of its circles, which deal with a specific area of the organization.</p> <p>Decision-making power is highly dispersed. Can empower all elements of community and remove top-down authority.</p> <p>Requires strongly engaged commitment and understanding and acceptance of processes.</p> <p>Risk that smaller decisions get drawn out.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in hierarchical circles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus



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Phase I: Establishing Governance



Activity 4: Choose Your Own Governance

Goals

1. Enumerate the strategic and tactical decisions program stakeholders are faced with, and the areas of responsibility those decisions fall under
2. Enumerate the roles and/or groups responsible for making decisions
3. Match roles and/or groups with decision-making authority / areas of responsibility
4. Validate governance plan against real-life program scenarios

Prerequisites

None

Who Should Participate?

Program leadership,
Program management,
Participants from the larger community

Length

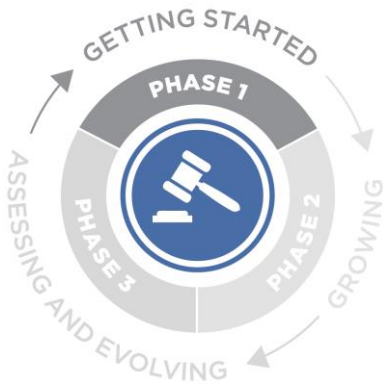
120 minutes

Pre-Work Instructions

- Read: [Organization and Structure of Open-Source Software Development Initiatives](#)
- Review existing governance examples:
 - [ArchivesSpace](#)
 - [DSpace](#)
 - [Samvera](#)

Activity Instructions

1. Review the list of strategic and tactical decisions and areas of responsibility for open-source programs serving cultural and scientific heritage. This list is not intended to be exhaustive; feel free to remove items from the list that are not currently relevant to your program or add high-priority elements that are not represented.
2. Review the list of roles and groups that could have decision-making authority or responsibility over certain areas. As above, you may remove roles/groups from the list that are not currently relevant to your program and add ones that are not represented.
 - a. Note: It is likely that this list will change as you move through this activity, so treat this as a first pass, not a final decision.
3. Using the collaboration tool of your choice (e.g., Google Docs, Miro, etc.), list out the roles and groups, and take a first pass at assigning decisions and areas of responsibility to them.
 - a. For example, you may place User Documentation and User Testing with the User Council, Strategic Planning and Fundraising with the Program Director, and Budgeting and Resource Allocation with the Organizational Home.
 - b. This can be done in-person using a whiteboard or easel, or virtually using a shared online document or virtual whiteboard platform. Examples below.



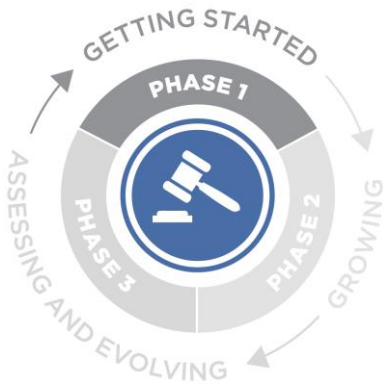
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Activity 4: Choose Your Own Governance

4. Once the roles and areas of responsibility are mostly sorted, walk through two or three governance scenarios that your program is currently facing or is likely to face in the future, understanding how the decision would be made or scenario resolved with the structure you have created.
 - a. Example scenarios may be taken from the Catastrophizing exercise, a quick brainstorm, or the below:
 - i. Two developers have submitted pull requests for pieces of functionality that are vastly different.
 - ii. A for-profit organization wants to participate in the program.
 - iii. An organization wants to make a sizable financial donation to the program but wants a role in governance and control over the technical roadmap.
 - iv. The program wants to rebrand with a new name and visual identity.
5. Based on the results of the scenario walkthrough, make changes to your draft structure.
6. Repeat steps 5 and 6 until you've reached consensus on the governance structure.
 - a. Note: The structure just needs to work for your program right now - it can always be changed as program needs change.
7. Move to [Activity: Documenting and Implementing a Governance Structure](#)



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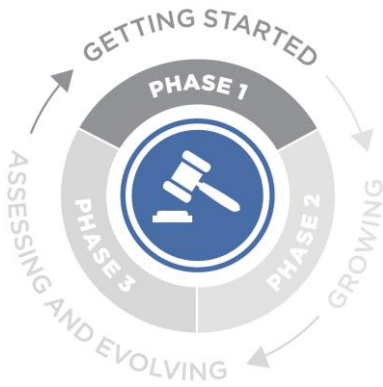
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Activity 4: Choose Your Own Governance

Example Strategic / Tactical Decisions & Areas of Responsibility

Dimension	Decision / Responsibility Examples
Ownership	IP ownership Control over branding/identity ...
Leadership / Chartering	General program leadership Strategic planning Mission and vision Program initiatives ...
Community Management	Community definitions Membership policies Path to leadership/governance ...
Software Development	Technical roadmap Functional requirements UX / Design Quality assurance / Testing Release management ...
Resource Management	Budgeting and resource allocation Fundraising Grant writing and management ...
Conflict Resolution and Rule Changing	Conflict resolution Changes in how conflict is managed, or decisions are made ...
Use of Information and Tools	Program infrastructure management (bug tracker, website, etc.) Community communications User docs management and sharing Developer docs management and sharing ...



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Activity 4: Choose Your Own Governance

Example Roles and Groups

Note: Titles are given below to give a general sense of roles. Any of these can be renamed to reflect your program's needs.

Groups

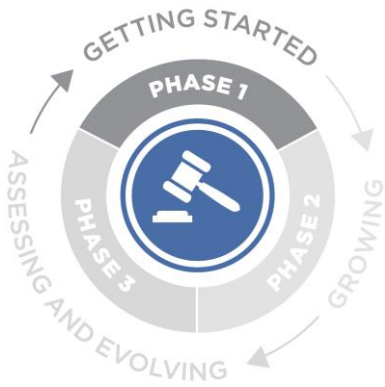
- Board / Leadership Council
- User / Member Council
- Technical Council
- Ad hoc / Project-based
- Code Committers
- Etc.

Roles

- Program director
- Program manager
- Technical lead
- Community manager
- Etc.

Other

- Organizational home
- Fiscal sponsor
- Etc.



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Phase I: Establishing Governance



Activity 4: Choose Your Own Governance

Example 1: Virtual Governance Modeling with Google Docs

Board / Leadership Council

- General program leadership
- Strategic planning - e.g., mission and vision
- Set membership policies
- Approve program initiatives

Organizational Home

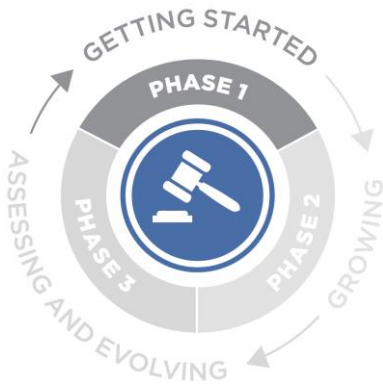
- Approve budgets and resource allocation
- Raise funds and secure resources
- Manage program infrastructure (e.g., bug tracker, website)

User Council

- Receive, suggest, discuss, and vote on new features/functionality
- Create and update user documentation
- Conduct user testing of the application

Technical Council

- Create and update technical documentation
- Conduct ongoing usability studies



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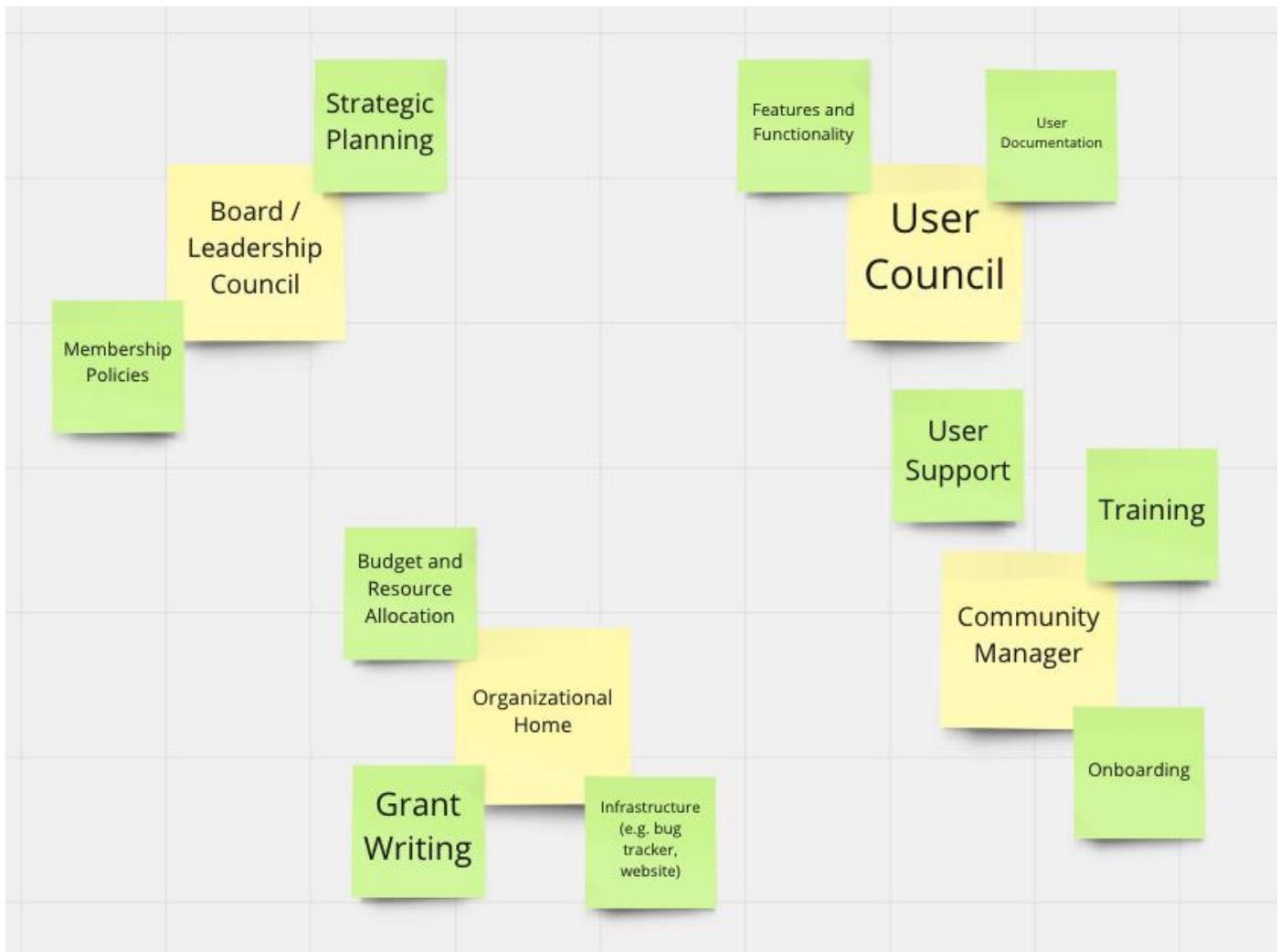
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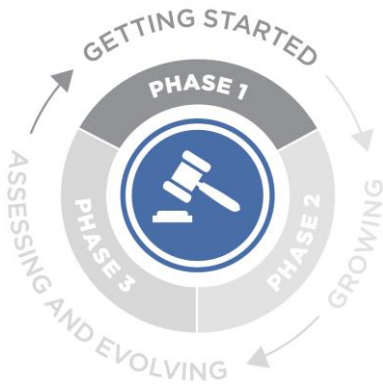


Activity 4: Choose Your Own Governance

Example 2: Governance Modeling with Sticky Notes

Note: This example can be done in-person with physical sticky notes, or virtually using an online whiteboarding tool such as Miro or Google Jam.





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Phase I: Establishing Governance



Activity 5: Documenting and Implementing a Governance Structure

Goals

1. Finalize an initial governance structure
2. Document the structure

Prerequisites

[Activity: Choose Your Own Governance](#) or equivalent

Who Should Participate?

Current Governance participants; Community representatives

Length

45-60 minutes per role or group

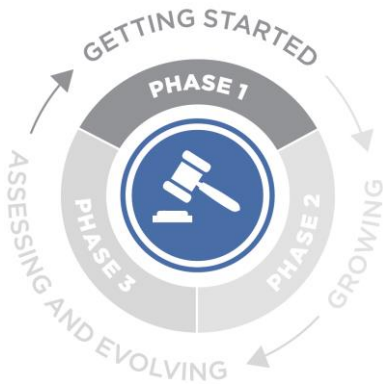
Pre-Work Instructions

Each participant should review the results of [Activity: Choose Your Own Governance](#) and examples of shared governance such as: [ArchivesSpace](#), [Data Curation Network](#), [DSpace](#), and [Samvera](#).

Even if roles and groups for your program did not change as a result of the Choose Your Own Governance Activity, this activity should still be completed, and the results shared to improve program transparency.

Activity Instructions

1. As a group, review the results of [Activity: Choose Your Own Governance](#). Identify the roles and/or groups that have specific areas of responsibility or decision-making authority.
2. For each role or group, document the following (template below):
 - a. What is the name of the role or group? Examples include Program Director, Program Staff, Advisory Group, Leadership Council, Organizational Home, etc.
 - b. What are the role or group's roles and responsibilities as determined during Activity: Choose Your Own Governance? You may also wish to revisit [Activity: Governance Planning Checklist Tool](#) to see if there are additional roles and responsibilities or decision-making areas that haven't been covered.
 - c. Who is eligible to be a member of the group? E.g., users of the software, paying members, program staff, etc.
 - d. Who leads the group? How is leadership elected or appointed?
 - e. What is the process for appointing, electing, or hiring for the role or members of the group? For group leadership?
 - f. How often will the group meet?
 - g. How will the group communicate meeting agendas, minutes, and/or work product with the community?
 - h. Who are the current officers and/or members of the group?



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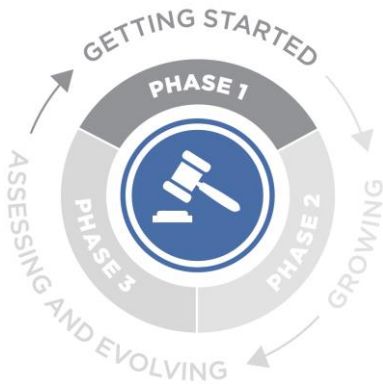


Activity 5: Implementing a Governance Structure

3. For groups with defined membership eligibility, elections, and decision-making authority, consider creating a charter. The charter has similar elements as the list above but provides more specificity about the group's mission and authority. [Activity: Creating a Committee Charter](#) can be used for guidance.
4. Outline a schedule to revisit the governance structure on a regular basis. Consider an annual review at first to incorporate feedback and make necessary modifications. Within that review, revisit [Activity: Governance Planning Checklist Tool](#).

Next Steps

Move to [Activity: Creating a Committee Charter](#) or [Activity: Articulate the Case for Change](#) for communicating the governance changes to the community.



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Phase I: Establishing Governance



Activity 5: Implementing a Governance Structure

Governance Role or Group Description Template

Role or Group Name

- *Examples: Program Director; Program Staff; Advisory Group; Leadership Council; Organizational Home*

Role and Responsibilities

- *Examples: Approve annual budget; Create user documentation; Conduct QA testing*

Membership

- *Examples: No more than 10 members elected by all members of the community; One representative from each partner organization; Unaffiliated individuals invited by a committee member*

Leadership

- *Examples: The Leadership Council is led by an elected Chair who serves a two-year term; The Chair of the User Committee is elected by existing members of the Committee*

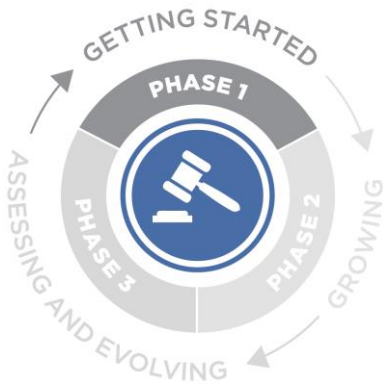
Meeting Frequency

- *Examples: Quarterly (two in-person and two conference calls); Annually; In conjunction with annual meeting*

Communication Strategy

- *Examples: Agendas and minutes for Leadership Council meetings will be shared on the program wiki*

Current Membership or Role-Holder



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Phase I: Establishing Governance



Activity 6: Articulate the Case for Change

Goal

1. Draft your communication strategy

Prerequisites

None

Who Should Participate?

Those interested in creating and executing the plan, and at least one person involved in selecting the change.

Length

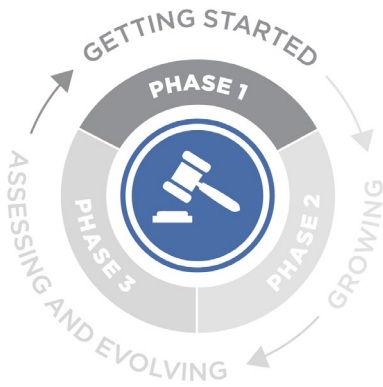
60 minutes

Activity Instructions

1. Create a plan to communicate any governance changes using the Nexus LAB worksheet. For the most up-to-date version of this exercise, please visit: [Articulating the Case for Change](#).
2. Determine timeline or schedule for communication. This is not in the template, but may be important to consider whether all communication happens in one day, or if an email needs to go out this week and then a teleconference in the following week for Q&A, etc.
3. Communicate to your stakeholders according to plan.

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Worksheet courtesy Nexus LAB <http://educopia.org/resources/nexus>.



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Phase I: Establishing Governance



Activity 7: Evaluate Feedback on Communication Campaign

Goals

1. Evaluate how well your communication campaign was received

Prerequisites

Activity: Articulating the Case for Change

Who Should Participate?

TK

Length

60-90 minutes

Activity Instructions

1. Assess whether execution went according to plan
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of the communication plan
3. Document lessons learned

Category 1: Did Everything Go According to Plan?

1. Did you articulate a specific message?
2. Did you identify specific primary targets and secondary audiences?
3. Did you identify specific channels and formats for primary targets?
4. Did you identify specific channels and formats for secondary audiences?
5. Did you craft specific messages for specific groups (if relevant)?

Category 2: How Effective Was the Strategy?

1. Do you have metrics for where it was sent such as direct contact, blogs, listservs?
2. Do you have metrics for open rates for email communications?
3. Did you include a feedback mechanism?
 - a. Consider a quick poll/survey - did they support the changes? What concerns did they have? Did they change their behavior, i.e. participate in new governance?
4. How well did the specific stakeholder groups act on the message?
 - a. Are there measurable outputs, e.g., how many signed up for an informational webinar or clicked on a blog link?
5. Did you consider other methods of feedback - individual contacts?

Category 3: Document Lessons Learned

1. What went well and is worth repeating again?
2. What would you do differently?