Hosting Versus Facilitating

The host and the facilitator share responsibility for creating the conditions for success, based on the type of meeting being planned, which may inform how much internal and external support you need.

Host

- Manage technical aspects and logistics.
- Handle invitations.
- Recruit support roles from staff or partners or play support roles themselves.

Facilitator

- Guide the discussion.
- Take responsibility for creating a safe, participatory, inclusive, accessible, and effective environment.
- Oversee agenda design, processes, and tools to achieve a desired outcome.
- Advise on selecting between various meetings and collaboration platforms.

Support Roles

- Create and monitor breakout rooms.
- Facilitate and take notes in each breakout room.
- Monitor the waiting room and admit participants as they join.
- Manage tech support questions.
- Monitor the chat for questions and comments and read them aloud as needed.
- Share resources (links, PDFs, etc.) in the chat.

Sample Meeting Types

Brainstorming

- Generating ideas to solve a problem or complete a task.
- Soliciting a broad range of feedback.
- Receiving guidance from partners.

Planning

- Identifying goals, timelines, or outcomes.
- Creating, assigning, and tracking action items.
- Overcoming barriers.

Decision Making

- Reaching consensus.
- Committing to take action or use resources.
- Aligning different types of plans (strategic, operational, etc.).
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities.

Relational

- Fostering collaboration and camaraderie.
- Strengthening relationships and networks.
- Developing shared values, missions, and visions.

Working

- Accomplishing specific action items or tasks as a group during the meeting.

Reflection

- Evaluating a project at completion and/or at stages along the way.
- Identifying successes and opportunities for improvement.