

# APPENDIX

All Items included in the Appendix are labeled as one of the following:

- **TOOL:** Items for use by only facilitators
- **HANDOUT:** For distribution to participants to review as part of an activity
- **WORKSHEET:** For distribution to participants to complete as part of an activity

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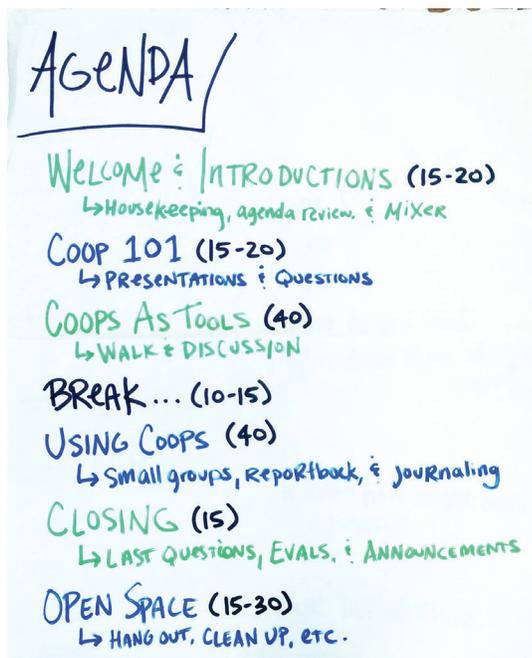


# AGENDAS

## TOOL

Sample schedules provided below are targeted for traveling educators requiring a seasonal schedule for instructors leading a semester long class of weekly meetings, and for a group of people gathering for a single weekend retreat. The curriculum can be broken up in many other ways that suit your unique goals and time requirements. Single curriculum elements can also be used as stand-alone workshops.

Post a simple agenda in the space for participants to refer to during each of your trainings. A simple but informative agenda includes a list of the items to be covered (e.g. "Coop 101"), each item's format (e.g. Presentation), and the planned time (e.g. 15-20 minutes). The sample agendas provided below target important details for inclusion.



### BREAKS

Providing participants some personal time away from the curriculum and group experience typically ranges from nice to necessary. Suggestions for timing breaks are included at the beginning of each agenda in lieu of writing them in the agenda. You may also ask for group input on the need and the timing for break/s when the agenda is first shared.

# SEASONAL SCHEDULE

These agendas were created for traveling educators in agricultural regions where schedules need to navigate planting and harvest times. An initial part of the curriculum is presented in a three hour session during the Summer with an intensive, full day session during the Winter. Due to the time that elapses between sessions and the reality that some participants will only attend one session, a Cooperation 101 refresher is included in the second session. Each section is possible in the stated time by picking only one activity from within that section to present.

## **SUMMER WORKSHOP (3 HOURS)**

Have the group break one or two times throughout this exercise. If choosing to use one break, a 10-15 minutes break is recommended between Step 3 and Step 4.

1. Welcome & Introduction (15-20 minutes)
2. Cooperation 101 (15-20)
3. Coops As Tools (40)
4. Using Coops (40)
5. Bringing it All Together (15)
6. Open Space/Hang-Out (~30)

## **WINTER WORKSHOP (8 HOURS)**

A one hour meal break is essential for this exercise. Breaks are recommended, at least, after Steps 3 or 5 or before Step 8.

1. Welcome & Introduction (15-30)
2. Cooperation 101 Review (15)
3. Demystifying Development (45)
4. What's Your Process? (45)
5. Organizing Your People (75)
6. Storytelling (15-30): Sharing personal cooperative development visions and plans
7. What's the Plan? (120)
8. Bringing it All Together (15)
9. Cooperative Development Workshop (Optional, 60)
  - Those interested in workshopping their personal cooperative development visions are encouraged to stay to discuss their efforts with the educator with the goal of obtaining relevant resources and beginning a mentoring relationship with the educator.

# SEMESTER SCHEDULE

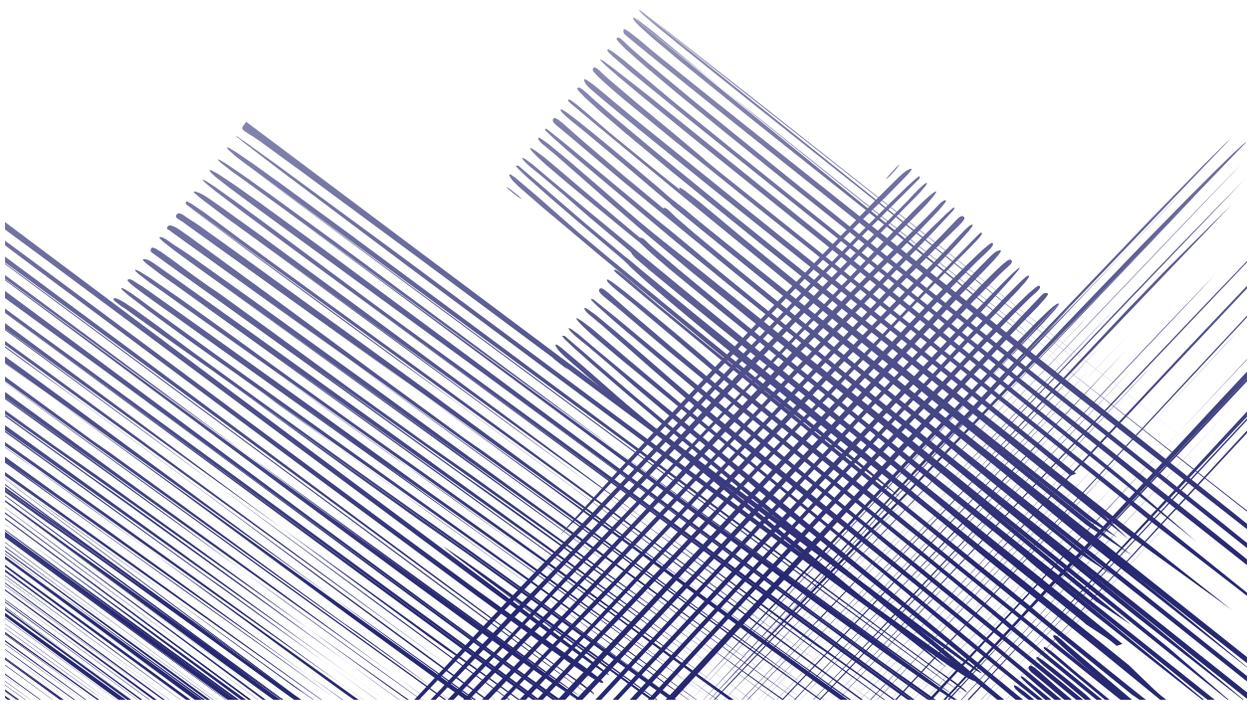
The semester curriculum includes eleven individual sessions ranging from one and one-half to two hour classes. These classes can also be incorporated into a weekly format outside of a formal institution of education (e.g. weekly community study group). Some of the discussion classes can be expanded to explore assigned readings or multi-media resources instead of discussing the previous class activity.

1. Beginning the Work
  - ◀ Video Screening: "Cooperative (n.)" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmgYv3K3gMY>)
2. Cooperation 101
3. Coops As Tools
4. Using Coops
  - ◀ Outside Class Work -
    - ♦ Journaling Reflection: How could a cooperative impact your life or community?
5. Discussion Section
  - ◀ Topics: "Using Coops" Journaling Reflection & Reading
6. Demystifying Development
7. What's Your Process?
8. Organizing Your People
9. Discussion Section
  - ◀ Topic: Review of "Organizing Your People" OR Outside Class Reading
10. What's the Plan?
11. Discussion Section
  - ◀ Topic: Review of "Writing Your Plan" OR Outside Class Reading
12. Bringing It All Together

# RETREAT SCHEDULE

Each session averages ninety minutes. Combining two 90 minutes sessions with a 30 minute break between mealtimes is recommended. Without additions, this curriculum satisfies a weekend retreat schedule - though, depending on the group's size and background knowledge, some activities may need to be abbreviated. Extra readings or activities will optimally require a commitment of three full days. Be sure to plan additional check-ins and breaks throughout the schedule to maintain energy and engagement - see "Welcome & Introduction" for more facilitation game resources.

1. Beginning the Work + Cooperation 101
  - ◀ Video Screening: "Cooperative (n.)" (s.coop/cooptedx)
2. Coops As Tools
3. Using Coops
4. Demystifying Development
5. What's Your Process?
6. Organizing Your People
7. What's the Plan?
8. Bringing It All Together





# ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

## TOOL

### OVERVIEW

The following checklist tool for assessing accessibility of a training is by no means exhaustive. It was created by trainers within the Northcountry Cooperative Foundation's Traveling Cooperative Institute program after looking for a tool of this type and not finding one that satisfied our needs. The checklist invites you to consider the accessibility of the physical space, the logistics (e.g. timing, promotion) of the event, the content type and delivery format, as well as several miscellaneous but still important elements (e.g. food and water provision).

### SPACE

- **LIGHT:** Ensure there is natural light in the room (e.g. no basements!); if natural light isn't possible, make sure time to go into natural light is scheduled for trainings over one hour
- **BATHROOMS:** Bathroom and bathing facilities need to be gender inclusive - either create gender neutral bathrooms or some mixture of other inclusive and safe arrangements (e.g. 1 Male & 1 Women/Trans/Femme bathroom) ; You may need to make your own signs to post over existing bathroom signs (i.e. DIY that ish)
- **SEATING:** Endeavor to provide comfortable or a diversity of seating options (i.e. folding chairs such for long periods of time)
- **TEMPERATURE:** Try to pick spaces in which you have control over the temperature - check in with people about their comfort
- **NOISE:** Spaces that are echo-y or can't block outside noise in them are best avoided
- **MOBILITY:** Pick a space that is accessible for those with limited mobility (e.g. wheelchair users); Indicate mobility access details in promotion for the training
- **SIZE:** Pick a room that has enough space for the group to move within and also for some diversity in where attention is focused and where work happens (i.e. avoid a single point of focus, keep energy and focus moving around the room)

### LOGISTICS

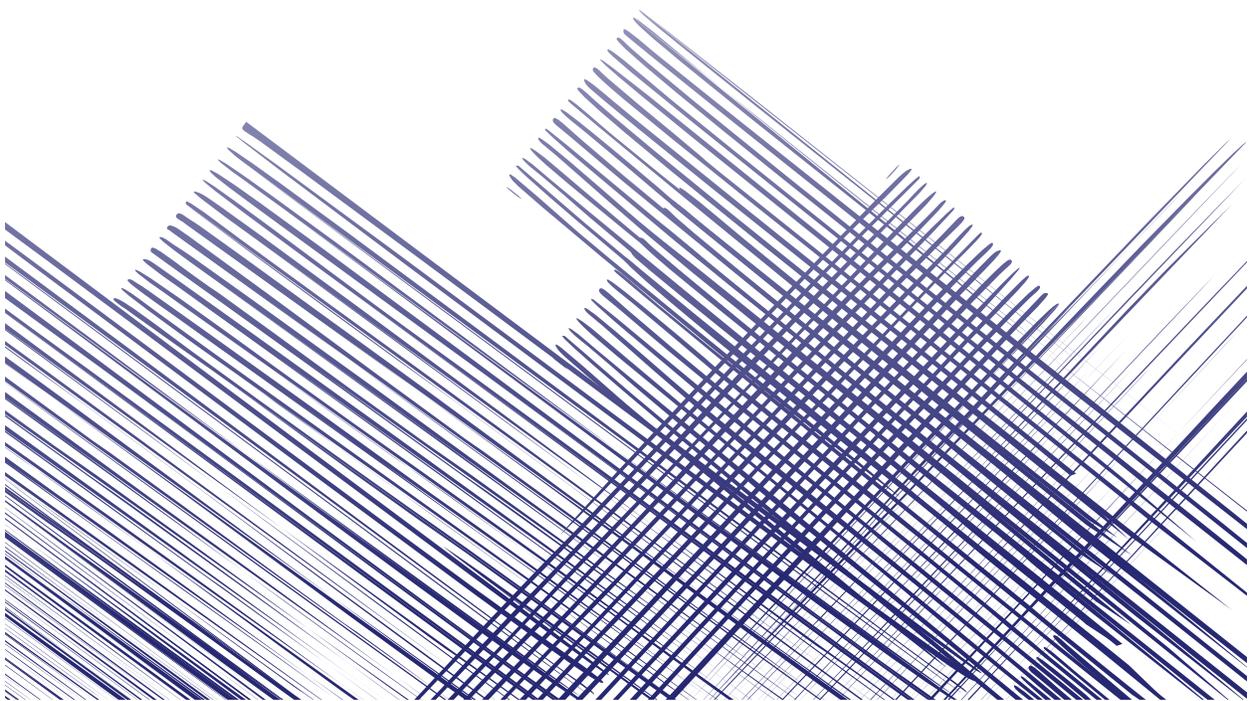
- **TIMING:** Every hour of the day is during someone's work shift, be mindful of whose workshifts you are conflicting with when scheduling your event as they likely can't attend
  - Check in with your community calendar so you don't conflict with other important events
- **COST:** If possible, make your training costs sliding scale to ensure that cost is not a prohibitive factor for anyone
  - If the training requires travel for some folks, endeavor to provide travel stipends and mention the stipends clearly in all training promotion
- **PROMOTION:** Be mindful of where you promote the event, what languages you use, etc.
- **TRANSIT:** Try to pick a location accessible via public transit and with parking options for cars and bikes
- **DIRECTIONS:** Publicize transit information when you promote the training; Make signs at the training location to direct people to the right room

## CONTENT

- **BREAKS:** Ensure you take breaks at least every 90 minutes; Breaks should be long enough for participants to use the bathroom, stretch, make a call, etc.; Endeavor to pick a location that has space outside of it in which breaks can be taken; Don't co-opt breaks because content didn't get covered in the scheduled time (i.e. Breaks are necessary for learning!)
- **ANTI-OPPRESSIVE FRAMEWORK:** Operate from an anti-oppressive framework as a trainer - educate yourself on what this means!
  - If this is true for your location, name that you are on land stolen from indigenous people (research the exact peoples)
  - When providing guidelines for participation, be explicit around why some guidelines are necessary (e.g. "Make Space & Take Space" is necessary because...)
  - Offer "Challenge by Choice" (i.e. allow folks to choose to participate or not in each activity)
  - Have boundaries about what training you can offer given the space and time restrictions - say "no" to doing a training if the context for it won't be accessible or safe
- **IDENTITY:** Provide an opportunity for participants to share whatever about their identity they feel is important to fully participate; This is a vital space to create for folks to share their Preferred Gender Pronouns - encourage that sharing by modeling it as the trainer
- **NEEDS:** Provide an opportunity for participants to share whatever it is they may need to fully participate (e.g. someone has to leave early, someone has difficulty hearing)
- **MOVEMENT:** Incorporate movement of some kind (for those who are able) to keep bodies open to learning
- **LEARNING STYLES:** Try to provide visuals for visual learnings, integrate play to aid in application of the material
- **CONCLUSION:** While many learning processes and conversations are ongoing, provide a clear ending activity or go-around to close out a training so folks leave with some sense of accomplishment

## MISC.

- **TECH:** Make sure you have your technology figured out ahead of time, don't waste training time fiddling with cords, internet, etc.; Don't mess with your personal phone or other technology during training
- **FOOD:** Providing snacks for trainings over 90 minutes; Ensure a multitude of food options are available (e.g. vegetarian, gluten free); Share in promotion if food is provided or not
- **WATER:** Make some potable water (and cups) available throughout the training or event; Beyond cool water, hot water for tea/coffee is ideal; Encourage participants to bring water bottles
- **LANGUAGE:** Be clear about what languages you are able to offer the training in, if there is interpretation, and if you welcome simultaneous interpretation (if an attendee wants to bring their own interpreter)
- **VISUALS:** Are poster and other visuals large enough to be seen by everyone in the training space





# COOPERATIVE IDENTITY

## HANDOUT

Cooperatives are defined by a **Statement**, a set of seven **Principles**, and a set of ten **Values** - the sum of which is referred to as the “**Cooperative Identity**.” The Cooperative Identity is stewarded by the **International Cooperative Alliance (ICA)**. The ICA was created in 1895 to unite, represent, and serve cooperatives worldwide.



## STATEMENT

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and/or cultural needs and/or aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

## PRINCIPLES

1. Voluntary & Open Membership: Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.
2. Democratic Member Control: Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote).
3. Member Economic Participation: Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative.
4. Autonomy & Independence: Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members.
5. Education, Training, & Information: Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperation.
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives: Cooperatives both serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working with each other whenever possible.
7. Concern for Community: Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

## VALUES

- |                       |              |                         |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| → Self-help           | → Equality   | → Openness              |
| → Self-responsibility | → Equity     | → Social-responsibility |
| → Democracy           | → Solidarity | → Caring for Others     |
| → Democracy           | → Honesty    |                         |



# OWN, CONTROL, & BENEFIT WORKSHEET

Who owns, controls, and benefits from the different models of business and organization most prevalent today? The “profit paradigm” (including “for-profit” and “non-profit” entities) encompasses the vast majority of enterprises in the United States.

	FOR PROFIT	NON PROFIT	COOPERATIVE
Example Organization			
OWN			
CONTROL			
BENEFIT			

**Examples of familiar US businesses and organizations:**

- **FOR PROFIT:** Amazon, Wal-Mart, Your local bank
- **NON PROFIT:** World Wildlife Foundation, Red Cross, UNICEF
- **MUTUAL:** REI, Ocean Spray, Your local credit union



# COOPERATIVE STORIES

## TOOL



### **SAMPLE STORIES PROVIDED:**

- Rural Electrics (Consumer, Utility)
- Friendly City (Consumer, Food)
- CHS, Inc (Producer, Agriculture)
- Freedom Quilting Bee (Artisan, Multi-Purpose)
- TESA (Worker, Education,
- New Era (Worker, Manufacturing)

### **TO CREATE YOUR OWN STORIES:**

- Write one to three paragraphs about the cooperative's start-up story. Be sure to include what the coop is, who started it, why they started it, and some additional interesting information.
  - When including this key information that is drawn upon in the accompanying workshop, don't make it too explicit in the narrative so participants can practice their reading comprehension skills through this activity.
- Background stories for hundreds of cooperatives can be found at [stories.coop](http://stories.coop)



# RURAL ELECTRICS

**INDUSTRY:** Utility

**MEMBERSHIP:** Consumers – households & businesses

**TIME PERIOD:** 1930s – Present Day

In the mid-1930s, nine out of ten rural homes were without electricity. The unavailability of electricity in rural areas kept economies entirely dependent on agriculture. Factories and businesses preferred to locate in cities where electric power was easily acquired. For many years, investor-owned power companies ignored rural areas believing there would be insufficient revenue to justify the cost of providing service.

In 1935, President Roosevelt signed an Executive Order establishing the Rural Electrification Administration, which in turn passed legislation creating the infrastructure for a lending program that was used by rural residents to create their own electric cooperatives. These cooperatives built and maintained power lines. Subsequently, the amount of rural farms with electricity increased from 10% to 90% between the late 1930s and 1953.

Today, about 99 percent of the nation's farms have electric service, and the majority of that service is provided by cooperatives. Electric cooperatives serve 12% of the nation's population, yet own 42% of America's distribution lines. Currently, over 90% of electric cooperatives include renewable generation in their portfolios.

IN 2015, US Electric Coops:

- Served an estimated 42 million people in 47 states
- Served over 18.5 million businesses, homes, schools, churches, farms, etc.
- Were in 2,500 of the 3,141 counties in the U.S.
- Owned assets worth \$140 billion
- Owned and maintained 2.5 million miles of the nation's electric distribution lines
- Employed 70,000 people in the U.S.
- Paid \$1.4 billion in state and local taxes

## QUESTIONS:

1. What do you think would have happened if these rural residents didn't form their own cooperatives?
2. If you were a member of an average rural family in the 1930s & 1940s, how would these cooperatives have impacted your daily life?
3. Why do you think these all remain member-owned cooperatives more than 50 years after they were established?
4. How do you think these utility businesses differ from conventional utility businesses in terms of price and service?



**INDUSTRY:** Retail Food

**MEMBERSHIP:** Consumers

**TIME PERIOD:** 2006 - Present Day

In 2005, a local worker owned restaurant called the “Little Grill” in Harrisburg, Virginia created the “Little Store,” which sold local foods and organic products. The Little Store struggled for reasons including poor visibility/marketing, a bad location, and a narrow selection of products. It closed in less than a year. However, the community still desired the products offered by the Little Store, so a handful of the customers began a new process to develop a cooperatively owned grocery store - this time, to be owned by the consumers (rather than the workers).

Together, these consumers were able to access sufficient resources to hire a development consultant and an outreach coordinator to lead the work. The enlistment of additional staff, a lawyer, and a dedicated Founding Team, allowed their cooperative plan to be formalized within a single year.

Within two years, 450 people agreed to become members of this planned cooperative. Most member recruitment was done via word of mouth. In 2009, the cooperative secured a loan for nearly \$500,000 to build a store.

By the end of 2010, there were over 1,000 identified members and \$1,000,000 in loans provided directly by members. Due to their success in gathering people and money, even more loan and grant dollars became available. In total, the group raised close to \$1.5 million dollars without an actual storefront! They eventually opened their doors in July of 2011 - six years after the original “Little Store” opened, and roughly four years after the planning began for a new version of the grocery store.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. In what ways was the development process different when it was led by consumers versus when it was led by workers?
  - » How about the treatment of the two projects by lenders and other potential stakeholders?
2. Why do you think over 1,000 people were willing to risk their money in this business venture ?
3. What do you think about the reality that the group having money is what attracted more money to the project?
  - » What does that mean for communities or projects without lots of initial money that can be “self-funded?”
4. How do you feel about their decision to hire professional folks to help them create their cooperative?



# CHS, INCORPORATED

**INDUSTRY:** Agriculture

**MEMBERSHIP:** Producer

**TIME PERIOD:** 1931 – Present Day

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, farmers in the United States were being exploited by middlemen to which the farmers were forced to sell their crops, and the railroad barons who had a monopoly on getting the crops to the marketplace. As a result, they were unable to provide themselves and their families a stable income. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, many farmers undertook political organizing to improve their situations through legislative initiatives. However, this was not enough. Farmers continued to face exploitation, this time at the hands of financial institutions. Bankers often foreclosed on the homes of farm families which missed a payment on a loan because the harvest didn't come in on time. The bankers refused to acknowledge the variability of the timing and yield of the harvest, which greatly impacted farmer families' finances.

This bankrupted many families and pushed them out of farming altogether. Farmers needed more stable incomes and access to marketplaces to sell their crops without middlemen. Using the lines of communications and communities built through their earlier political organizing, farmers started to economically organize themselves into producer cooperatives (farmers = producers). Through these cooperatives, farmers could market and sell their crops in bulk on the market and be assured both a better price in the marketplace and a more consistent income stream. Over time, these cooperatives experienced great success and many have merged to achieve an immense economic scale and level of political influence.

CHS Incorporated is a large cooperative that has many of these smaller farmer-owned cooperatives as its members (i.e. a cooperative of cooperatives). Founded in 1931, CHS is now a Fortune 100 company and the largest cooperative (in terms of assets) in the United States. Over the years, CHS has expanded its activities to several sectors including, but not limited to, food processing, wholesale food, farm supply, retail fuel, fuel processing, and financial services. The cooperative has over 14 billion USD in assets and uses millions of dollars of its annual net revenue to support cooperative education, promote agricultural safety, and strengthen rural communities.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. Are there other aspects of agricultural work that you think could use the cooperative model?
2. Why do you think CHS has been so effective?
3. Do you think cooperatives need to grow as large as CHS to be considered successful?
4. Is there anything to learn or observe about techniques for cooperative development from this era of the US cooperative movement's growth?



# FREEDOM QUILTING BEE

**INDUSTRY:** Multi-Purpose

**MEMBERSHIP:** Workers/artisans, mostly women

**TIME PERIOD:** 1966 – 2012

The Freedom Quilting Bee (or “the Bee”) was initially a handicraft cooperative established in Alabama in 1966. It was the brainchild of female family members of sharecropping farmers. Sharecropping farmers rented their farmland in exchange for a small share of the crops they grew on that land. Such an arrangement makes their livelihoods incredibly vulnerable and subject to the whims of the landowner. At this time and in this region, all sharecroppers were poor, many were black, and many were former slaves. If their rent was raised or the land-owner decided to no longer rent to them, they would have no way to earn an income. The Bee was founded at a time when many black sharecroppers were losing their rented land, because the land-owners disapproved of the farmers’ participation in activities supporting the Civil Rights Movement.

To provide income, women began selling quilts through the Bee to offset the loss of land and income from farming. The Bee’s products were in such demand that a group of women in New York opened a store called the “Bear Paw” dedicated to selling the Bee’s products, and their work has been displayed at the Smithsonian Institute. The Bee was credited with being responsible for the revival of American quilting in the 1960s and 1970s.

In 1968, the success of the quilt sales enabled the Bee to buy 23 acres of land used to build a sewing plant (which still exists today) and homes for sharecropping families who were evicted from their land. From 1970 to the mid-1990s, the cooperative leased part of one building for a day-care center that served the entire community. By 1992, the cooperative was the largest employer in town.

However, beginning in the late 1990s, the market for quilts produced in the US significantly declined due to insufficient labor protections and poor wage standards in other countries where quilts could then be made more “cheaply.” This competition made it impossible for the Bee to remain competitive in the quilt market. In response, the Bee adapted and diversified its product offerings to include canvas bags. The Bee ultimately closed in 2012.

## QUESTIONS:

1. Can you think of ways in which people in our modern day communities experience a high degree of interdependence (e.g. how the actions of a few landowners would impact multiple families)?
2. What other businesses do you know of that might choose to work together like the quilters did with the sharecroppers and daycare providers? Why or why not?
3. Most of the members of worker cooperatives in the United States as of 2016 were women of color – does the story of the Bee suggest any reasons for why this is the case?



# TESA

**INDUSTRY:** Education

**MEMBERSHIP:** Worker

**TIME PERIOD:** 2010 - Present Day

TESA creates educational resources for multiple and varied social and economic change issues. The worker cooperative produces products for sale (e.g. board games and curricula) and provides educational services to other organizations. TESA creates educational resources that both address many issues not taught in schools and employ teaching methods not used in most schools.

The Toolbox for Education and Social Action (TESA), a worker-cooperative of educators, began as a college project. Following graduation, the student initiating the project began working to establish TESA as a formal organization. The work eventually became a full time job for that student, and - about a year and a half later, a second person joined TESA in a paid staff role, which began the organization's transition from a project to a worker-owned cooperative.

In its short history, TESA has grown to a handful of worker-owners. The cooperative is still developing and has weathered some difficult financial times. Some of its struggles are explained by how education work is greatly undervalued. This has forced TESA to be creative in the types of projects it embraces and the ways it raises money to support its initiatives. To fund the creation of its flagship education product, CoOpoly: The Game of Cooperatives," TESA used a crowdfunding campaign on Kickstarter. TESA also seeks support from grants and foundations for its targeted projects. Through these creative approaches and varied mediums, TESA has been able to provide compensation for its worker-owners to allow them to continue to create powerful educational resources for changing the world.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. How is the founding of TESA similar or different to what you think of when you hear the word "entrepreneurship?"
2. Why do you think they chose to pursue educational objectives in a cooperative environment instead of working at a school, university, or existing institution?
3. Why do you think they opted for a worker-cooperative model?
4. What do you think about their difficulty in funding education-related initiatives?



# NEW ERA WINDOWS

**INDUSTRY:** Manufacturing

**MEMBERSHIP:** Worker

**TIME PERIOD:** 2010 – Present Day

In 2008, after many decades of successful operation, Republic Windows and Doors shut down its operations as a result of bankruptcy. This news was surprising to many, as the business appeared profitable – its owners had even opened additional windows factories in recent years elsewhere in the same city.

Ultimately, it was revealed that the owners were engaged in fraudulent behavior and were being sued by banks over outstanding debts. It became apparent that the workers were not losing their jobs because they weren't doing good work or because the business couldn't provide itself to be viable – instead, it was because the owners of the business acted unethically and without the interests of the workers and other stakeholders in mind.

The workers were told that their jobs would be terminated immediately and that they would not receive the backpay or severance that was contractually obligated to them. Strongly supported by the local community, the workers occupied the factory in protest. Through the occupation, the workers were successful in getting the backpay and severance owed to them. Soon after the successful protest, a new company purchased and reopened a portion of the factory, which allowed some workers to keep their jobs. Unfortunately, this business struggled and also faced foreclosure. The remaining workers found themselves losers in a financial game they did not control.

This proved to be the last straw. The workers decided it was imperative for them to be in charge of their own employment and livelihood. They began to plan to start a new window manufacturing business they would collectively own. They called the business venture New Era as a signal and inspiration to others to participate in a new era of American workers owning their own industrial jobs. They use the following statement to guide their work: “Everyone can participate in building the economy we all want, and no one should be treated as temporary or just raw material for someone else’s business.”

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What do you think would have happened in the lives of these workers if they had not taken control and ownership of the business?
2. What impact does a business that employs a large number of people have on a town when it shuts down and lays off some or all of its workers?
3. What challenges do you think they faced in the transition to a worker cooperative?



# INTER-COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

**INDUSTRY:** Housing

**MEMBERSHIP:** Residents, students

**TIME PERIOD:** 1932 – Present Day

In 1932, in response to the harsh economic times imposed by the Great Depression and resulting difficulty in finding affordable housing, male members of a student group at the University of Michigan founded the Michigan Socialist House. In return for four to five hours of work and two dollars every week, each of the 18 founding members received room, board, barber services, canning assistance, and laundry service. The success of the Michigan Socialist House fueled other cooperative endeavors, the most notable being Michigan Wolverine Eating Cooperative. The dining cooperative served as a common ground for many student groups - specifically, the Student Christian Association, the Wolverine Eating Cooperative introduced the idea of housing cooperatives to many within the religious community.

In 1936, a group of male students from the religious community chose to move into a rented house that they named the Student Cooperative House. Since the University did not allow for males and females to cohabitate, only men lived at the Student Cooperative House; a group of women later rented and ran their own Girls' Cooperative House.

In 1937, the four existing student cooperatives joined together to form the Campus Cooperative Council. This organization later became known as the Inter-Cooperative Council (ICC) and was formerly ratified and recognized by the University and all its member cooperatives in 1939. The increased economy, efficiency, and publicity gained through the establishment of the Inter-Cooperative Council facilitated the establishment of many more student cooperatives on the University of Michigan campus over the next several decades.

As of 2016, the ICC owns 19 houses, which range in size from about 12 to 85 members of a diversity of genders. Houses manage their finances, do minor maintenance, prepare house-wide meals, and coordinate with all cooperative housing units on campus. House meetings, which are held once or twice a month, provide a forum for open communication and, if necessary, conflict resolution. Members vote on such issues as how much to spend on food, how many meat meals to serve per week, which newspapers to order, and when to schedule the next party.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. How would you describe the growth process that brought about the first four student cooperatives? Have you seen this kind of growth happen in other situations?
2. What skills do you think a member develops through the student housing cooperative?
3. Why do you think the ICC still exists today - in a similar structure, name, etc - almost a century after its inception, despite the membership in its houses changing dramatically each year?



# COOPERATIVE NEWS

## WORKSHEET

1. **Read** through the scenario provided to you for the activity.
2. **Envision yourselves as the protagonists** in the scenario.
3. **Brainstorm potential cooperative solutions** to the issue or need presented.
4. **Select one of the potential solutions** with which to **answer the following discussion questions and briefly record your responses:**
  - A. Who are the stakeholders? Which of those stakeholders are members? Why?
  - B. What is the good or service offered cooperatively?
  - C. What benefit(s) does this cooperative offer to its members?
  - D. How is this cooperative likely to change the life of individual members?
  - E. How is this cooperative likely to change the larger community?
6. **Shift your perspective** from that of a cooperative founder to that of a journalist in the community. Imagine that the cooperative is planning to begin operations in one month.
7. **Design a “frontpage” of an online or paper media outlet** reporting on the upcoming start of operations - create it on a piece of paper. Use the components presented in the sidebar on the right of this page, as well as anything else you can imagine.

### FRONTPAGE COMPONENTS:

- ◀ **HEADLINE** – A few words, often not a complete sentence, that serves as the title to the main front page article about your cooperative scenario.
- ◀ **SIDEBARS** – These are sub-statements that are more detailed than the headline. They may highlight some of the technical and specific aspects of your discussion and subsequent plan, e.g. The new cooperative has already signed up 50 members!
- ◀ **QUOTES** – These are testimonials about the accomplishment or difficulty from interested parties – people quoted can be direct stakeholders (e.g. a cooperative founder) or folks who have more distant relationships (e.g. small business owner).
- ◀ **OTHER** – Anything else you can think of that makes sense on a front page, e.g. related articles with their own headlines, pictures, the weather, community announcements.



# COOP NEWS SCENARIOS

## TOOL



The Cooperative News Scenarios are simple descriptions of a problem or situation to which myriad cooperative solutions could be applied. Provided here are two sample scenarios - one using a real agricultural worker cooperative called the Hoedads ([hoedadsonline.com](http://hoedadsonline.com)) as inspiration and one using a fantastical premise with a community of kittens and unicorns. You can cut out or copy these for use in your group or develop your own.

If creating your own scenarios, keep in mind that they should be no more than 200 words, concise and simple, but not "too easy" (i.e. prescriptive).

### REFORESTATION

You are a seasonal fieldworker forced to move to different farms and areas according to the plantings and harvesting cycles. Each time you transition to a new farm, there is a considerable amount of paperwork and other administrative tasks that have to be done before the landowner can allow you to start work and be paid as an employee. Sometimes you will arrive for work, and the farmer will not have any work left for you to do. Landowners will often take advantage of mobile workers' needs for an income by offering a less than fair wage. Finding and securing work as an individual worker is continually tough and inefficient - as a result, your income is unstable and you are unable to easily arrange for a visit from your family as you are never sure where you may be one month to the next. Most seasonal fieldworkers experience the same challenges.

### CLOUDFOREST

You are a group of cuddly kitten friends who live in Cloudforest, land mostly populated by unicorns. Kittens and unicorns came to live together in Cloudforest because they were both run out of their previous home regions in the last Goblin Raids - the unicorns came to the Cloudforest 44 years before the kittens arrived and used magic to develop their homes, roads, etc. While kittens have now lived in Cloudforest for 11 years, the town is still mostly developed to suit and serve unicorns - i.e. eating tables are troughs anywhere from three to five feet from the ground, grocery stores sell mostly unicorn staples (marshmallows, carrots, tins of buttercream icing). Kittens are unable to build their own infrastructure, as they do not have opposable thumbs and their special kind of magic doesn't work to build things (unlike the unicorn magic). While kittens have many other skills and assets, the situation for kittens in Cloudforest remains poor.



# COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM

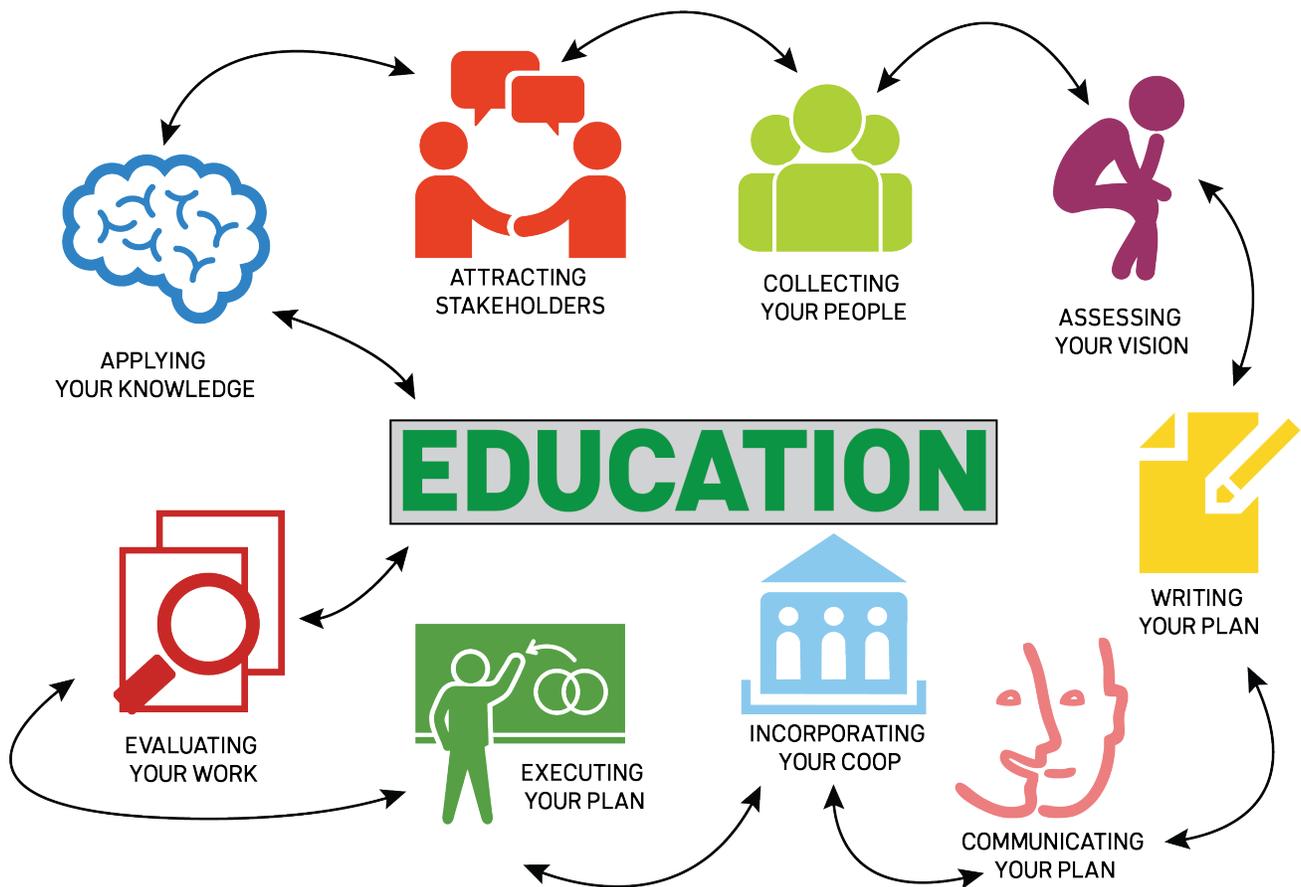
## HANDOUT

### OVERVIEW

This annotation breaks the cooperative development process into clusters of related tasks along a continuum. The process, as a continuum, is defined as anything that goes through a gradual transition from one condition or state to another without abrupt changes. Continuum is a particularly apt way to describe the development process, as the work is sometimes complex and not clearly delineated. You may find yourself moving through phases of development without really noticing. By clustering the tasks into groups and pairing them with “products” that may come out of that task cluster, you will have some orientation for where you are in your work.

### CONTINUUM DIAGRAM

For ease of reference, here are the phases of development in short form -



## CONTINUUM PHASES

The following is an annotated listing of each continuum phase, as well as its potential “products” or deliverables that would be ideal results of each completed phase:

### EDUCATION

- Understand your and your community’s needs or aspirations
- Understand the cooperative model, generally and/or specifically dependent on your goal/s

### APPLYING YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- Explore the potential application of the cooperative model as a solution for meeting needs or satisfying aspirations

**Products:** *An initial idea for a cooperative enterprise*

### ATTRACTING STAKEHOLDERS

- Bring together all those with a direct “stake” in the potential project.
- Meet regularly to strengthen relationships and educate one another about the cooperative model, as well as to explore the relevant needs and aspirations in depth
- Identify which stakeholder group(s) will have membership roles - this informs who is best positioned to serve on a Steering Committee

**Products:** *Regularly meeting stakeholder group, potential membership role structure*

### COLLECTING YOUR PEOPLE

- Decide on the expectations of membership on the Committee (e.g. meeting attendance, amount of time dedicated to committee work) prior to selecting members
- Determine composition of Steering Committee
- As a Steering Committee, develop a decision-making method and group structure (e.g. Will you have a Chair?).
- Create a purpose statement for the Steering Committee’s work – this is different than a purpose statement for the proposed cooperative enterprise and speaks to the intentions and boundaries of the work the selected group can and should do

**Products:** *Empowered and regularly meeting Steering Committee, decision-making method, Steering Committee purpose statement, beginnings of a project “identity”*

### ASSESSING YOUR VISION

- Transition much of the workload to the Steering Committee to complete or delegate
- Create a vision statement for the desired cooperative enterprise, using input from multiple stakeholder groups (i.e. not just the Steering Committee)
- Research and/or engage “experts” in an assessment of the vision statement - specifically, the potential membership, management, and equity models that would facilitate the vision
- Select one to two potential models to test their feasibility by completing some of the following tasks\* -
  - Reviewing case studies or stories of related businesses (e.g. similar cooperatives in other markets, similar non-cooperatives in the same market)
  - Conducting research (e.g. surveys, census data) on market demand (e.g. who is your market, what percentage of that market will you need to capture to be successful)
  - Running financial models (e.g. how much money will your business cost, how much income will you need in what time period)

- Putting your findings into a coherent document that concludes whether or not the project is feasible and, if so, the conditions required for the project to ultimately be successful

⚡ **\*Notes -**

- *You can hire a professional to complete a feasibility study for you, or you can do it yourself.*
- *You will need to decide how rigorous or "professional" the plan needs to be - don't be deterred by example feasibility plans with lots of technical detail! You may not need that. Confer with cooperative development professionals or other experts, if you need advisement on your project's needs.*
- *A lot of this work can be difficult and require special skills - so this step can be a focus on increasing your group's capacity by engaging outside support and expertise.*

- ⚡ Begin recording your research and engagement findings in a working document (see "Writing Your Plan")

**Products:** *Project vision statement, Feasibility Study, beginning of a Business Plan*

## WRITING YOUR PLAN

- ⚡ Continue work on the document drafted in the previous stage, evolve into a formal Business Plan for use with both your internal (e.g. potential members) and external stakeholders (e.g. financiers)
- ⚡ In tandem with your Business Plan, create additional documents and tools that will be implied to or conditioned by intentions laid out in the business plan - those documents are as follows (in priority order)\* -
  - Purpose Statement (distinct from a Vision Statement, included as cornerstone in Governing Documents)
    - » Related - Guiding Principles
  - Governing Documents (i.e. Articles of Incorporation, ByLaws),
  - Refined Financial Projections (Feasibility Study projections used as foundation)
  - Financing/Fundraising Plans
  - Operating and/or Member Agreements
  - Outreach and/or Marketing Materials
  - Execution/Launch Plans (e.g. Project Management timeline of start of operations)
  - Descriptions of Operational Systems

⚡ **\*Notes -**

- *Many of these documents will remain "working" and will be revised periodically throughout the development process.*
- *Many of these documents will be required alongside your Business Plan by outside stakeholders (e.g. financiers) - in particular, the Governing Documents, Financing Plans and Financial Projections, Agreements, Execution/Launch Plans*

**Products:** *Business Plan and related documents*

## COMMUNICATING YOUR PLAN

- ⚡ Begin formal member outreach (e.g. Membership Drive), if relevant
- ⚡ Conduct effective and targeted public outreach with your story
- ⚡ Begin to reach out to potential financiers and funders
- ⚡ Reach out to political actors and advocates if you need to undertake some process with a level of government (e.g. building permit, business license)

**Products:** *Member Drive (if relevant), Political and Social Capital, Growth of Stakeholder Groups*

## **INCORPORATING YOUR COOP**

- Incorporate your business as a legal entity!
  - Decide your cooperative's selection method for its incorporators and plan to execute it in time for incorporation
    - » It is not unusual for the Steering Committee to serve as the incorporating Board of the cooperative, then to hold formal elections with the membership following incorporation
- Incorporate your execution and launch plans into a project management timeline (a recommended tool at any step in the development process)
- Ensure your legal entity is equipped to take on financing, accept donations, and/or collect member equity

**Products:** *Legally Incorporated Entity, Project Management Plan/Timeline for Operational Launch, Beginnings of Capital Structure*

## **EXECUTING YOUR PLAN**

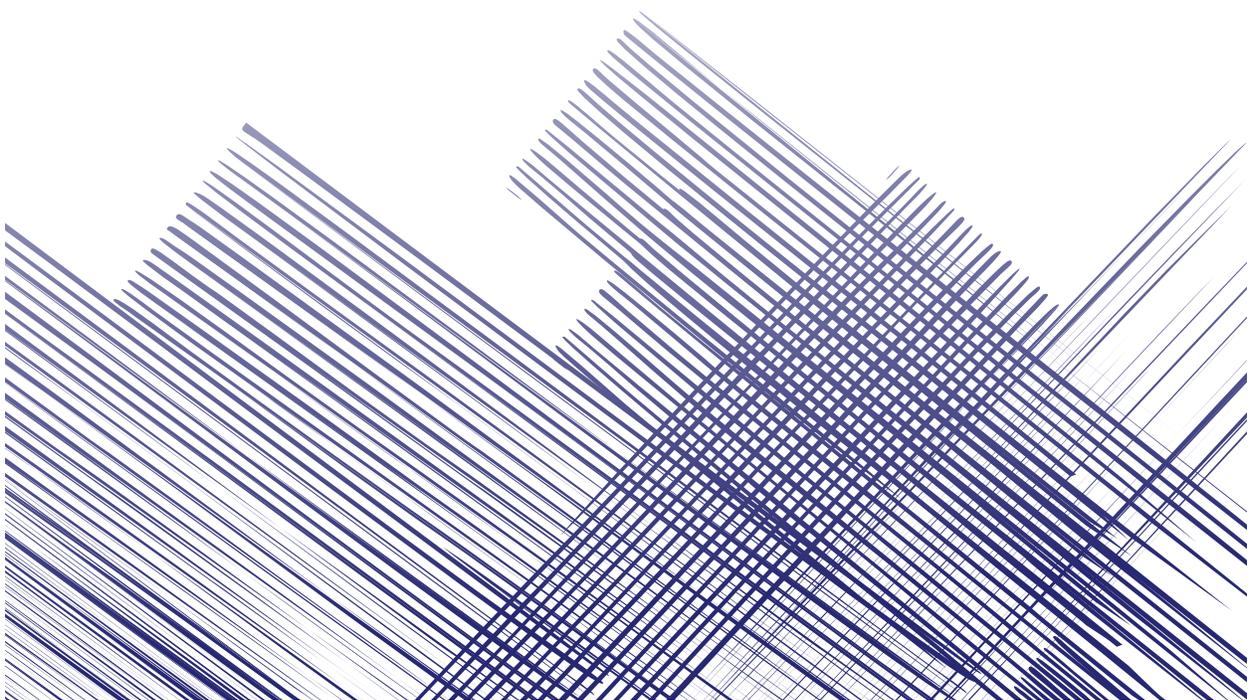
- Secure financing (e.g. loans)
- Conduct Formal Member Drive
- Make any needed leases or property purchases
- Hold Board of Directors elections
- Begin operations...

**Products:** *Cooperation!*

## **EVALUATING YOUR WORK**

- Solicit reflections (e.g. via meeting, survey) from stakeholders on their experiences with and reflections on the development process
  - This step is what makes the process a continuum → by applying the knowledge you gain from the evaluation process, you are able to see how you can continue to develop\* your cooperative
- **\*Notes -**
  - *Development is not synonymous with expansion - it can involve growth that is quantitative and/or qualitative*

**Products:** *An awareness of your needs and the potential of cooperation*





# CONTINUUM COMPONENTS

## TOOL



<b>EDUCATION</b>	Have an awareness of the cooperative model, as well as of your and/or your community's needs
<b>Applying Your Knowledge</b>	See the cooperative model as a potential solution to your and/or your community's needs or aspirations; Have an initial idea for a cooperative
<b>Attracting Stakeholders</b>	Bring together those with something to lose or gain in the potential project; Build trust in that group of people; Assess roles of group members
<b>Organizing Your People</b>	Identify the motivations and capacities of all stakeholders; Determine which stakeholders will serve on the Steering Committee (or comparable); Form Steering Comm
<b>Assessing Your Vision</b>	Create a Vision Statement for the cooperative; Assess the vision's feasibility (e.g. financially) yourselves and/or with support from various professional practitioners
<b>Writing Your Plan</b>	Begin written document detailing how the cooperative will feasibly function in order to achieve the vision; Create supporting and implied tools (e.g. Governing documents)
<b>Communicating Your Plan</b>	Conduct outreach - to attract financiers and donors, enlist political support, develop intra-industry relationships; Begin formal Membership Drive (if needed)
<b>Incorporating Your Cooperative</b>	Incorporate your cooperative as a legal entity OR your project into your existing cooperative; Transition your launch plan into a project management timeline
<b>Executing Your Plan</b>	Secure \$\$\$; Continue Membership Drive (if needed); Elect inaugural Board of Directors (if needed); Begin operations of cooperative or project
<b>Evaluating Your Work</b>	Hold a meeting, conduct a survey, solicit reflections from stakeholders on the development process

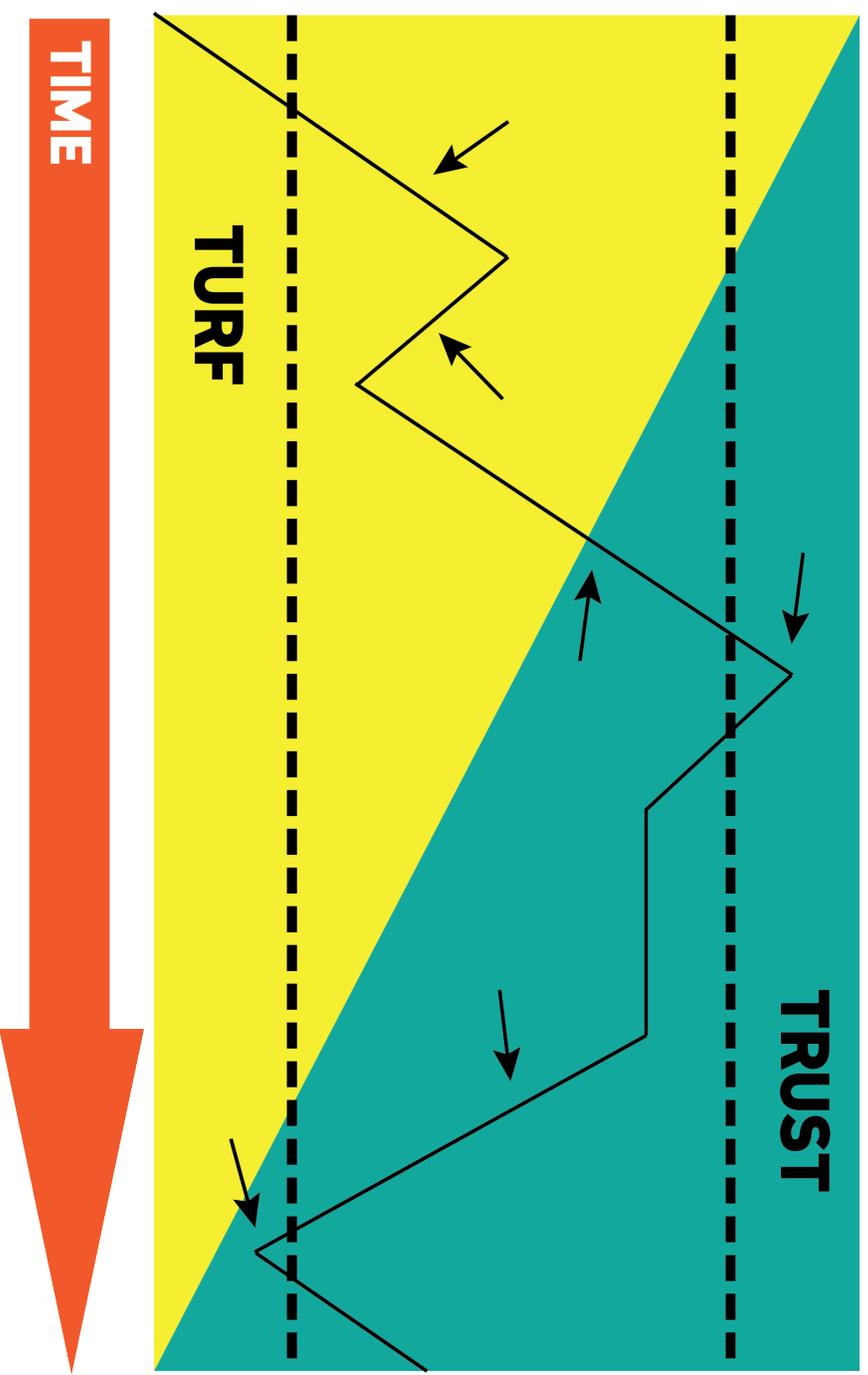


# TURF, TRUST, & TIME

## WORKSHEET

**Collaboration is a process** that makes it possible to reach a goal that cannot be achieved by one person or agency alone. This implies a need for negotiation and agreement about the goal and strategies.<sup>1</sup>

- **Turf** is control over your own resources, ideas, and plans.
- **Trust** in one another and the shared process that is foundational for giving up any Turf.
- **Time** it takes to develop process, build Trust, and share Turf.



<sup>1</sup> ACT Center for Youth Excellence, <[actforyouth.net/youth\\_development/communities/collaboration](http://actforyouth.net/youth_development/communities/collaboration)>



# CHARACTER & COOPERATIVE CREATION: STEWARD'S GUIDE

## HANDOUT



**YOUR OBJECTIVE:** Walk your group through the Character and Cooperative creation process. Each person will need to roll dice for each character identity element or cooperative enterprise trait. At the end, all group members should have a character complete with name, backstory, and tie to the group. The group should have a cooperative in a known sector, industry, urban/rural, niche, and with a tie to the group.

### INSTRUCTIONS

**1. Guide the group through creating their Characters** by rolling each of the following identity elements and use the rolling key to determine their identity-

- Employment Status
- Income
- Age (optional)

Ensure that participant fill in their resulting character data on their Character Sheet.

**2. Guide the group through creating the Cooperative** by rolling each of the following cooperative characteristics and use the rolling key to determine the cooperative -

- Sector
- Industry
- Niche
- Urban or Rural

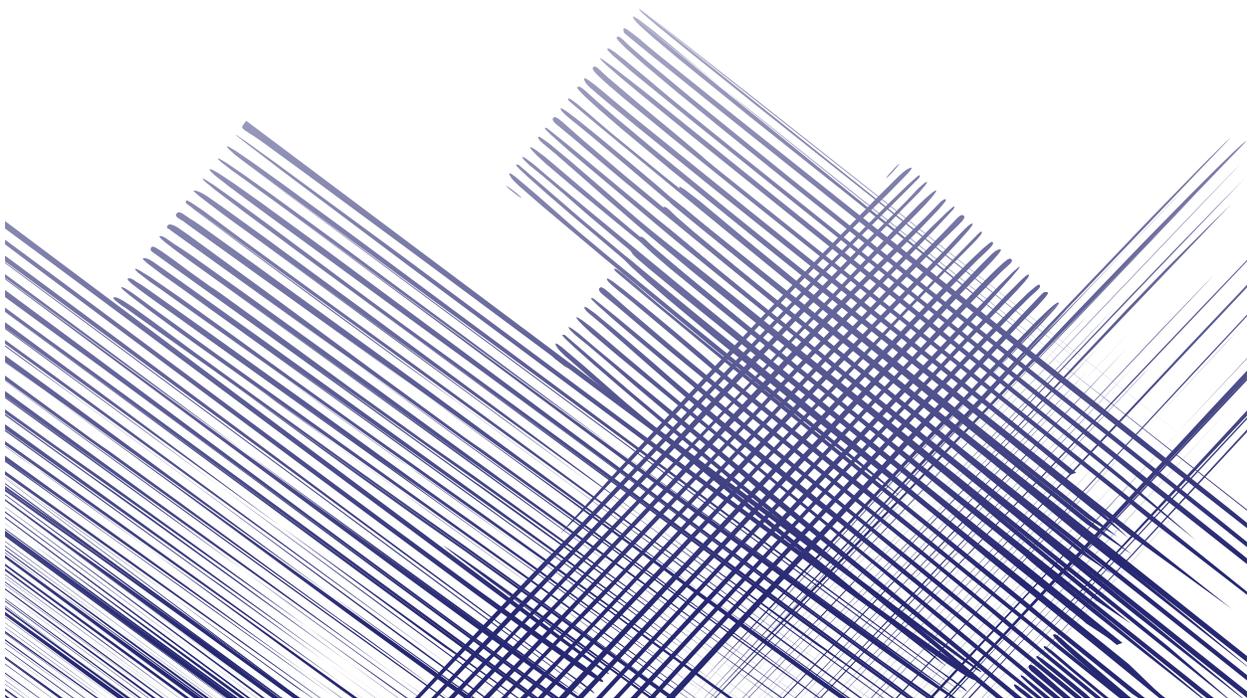
**3. Engage the group in determining the exact type of cooperative they will roleplay,** within the framework rolled in the previous step.

- A. Ask each participant to write up a specific business type that fits the rolled stats on a piece of paper.
- B. Crumple up the pieces of paper, put in a pile, and mix the pile
- C. Draw one, and – if the group thinks it is able to comfortably roleplay – announce the specific coop type the group will roleplay. If the group doesn't feel comfortable, keep drawing until an appropriate option is found.

**4. Instruct participants to imagine their Character's backstory and its tie to the cooperative project.**

- A. Have participants respond in writing to the prompts on their Character Sheet to guide their imagination. Let participants know that they can check in with you or the session trainer(s) if they're having difficulty.
  - Even if a set of identity elements seems incoherent, remember that there are all kinds of people in this world – and, cooperation is for everyone because it takes all kinds!
  - If the rolled elements ultimately do result in an incoherent character, assess which element is the most incongruent and have the participant re-roll it. Only adjust one stat at a time.

5. **Have participants roll for skill development** by rolling a ten-sided die to gain up to ten points to spend on any of the listed skills. All skills can be acquired at different levels - “basic” (1 point), “skilled” (2 points), and “expert” (3 points).
  - Group Process Experience
  - Industry-Specific Experience
  - Financial Management
  - Writing
  - Humor
  - Marketing
  - Wild Card (anything you choose!)
  
6. **Instruct participants to pick their “Leadership Style (LS)”** by circling one of the six options on the Character Sheet (and listed below for reference). Explain that the LS defines a lot of how the character interacts in the group processes.
  - Individualistic & Rule-Governed
  - Individualistic & Chaotic
  - Mainstream & Rule-Governed
  - Mainstream & Chaotic
  - Collectivist & Rule-Governed
  - Collectivist & Chaotic
  
7. **Ask for a volunteer to add on the role of “Facilitator” to their character.** This means the participant will serve as the group’s Facilitator in the roleplay – i.e. they will facilitate the meeting as their character. Encourage participants to consider their alignment and identities to inform when considering the role.
  
8. **Pass leadership to the Facilitator** once the Character and Cooperative creation process is complete.





# CHARACTER & COOPERATIVE ROLLING KEY

## HANDOUT

Use the following tables to create a character and a cooperative project by rolling dice for each identity and cooperative element, respectively. Participants should roll "Percentage Dice" using one of the following dice and methods →

- Roll one ten-sided die twice in a row to identify, first, the digit in the tens place and, second the digit in the ones place.
- Roll two ten-sided dice of different colors or styles, with the tens and ones digits assigned to each die ahead of the roll.
- Roll one double digits ten-sided die (e.g. 00, 10) to identify the digit in the tens place and roll one ten-sided die to identify the digit in the ones place.

	ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION	FROM	TO
CHARACTER	EMPLOYMENT bls.gov	Full-Time	1	78
		Part-Time	79	95
		Looking for Full-Time	96	99
		Looking for Part-Time	100	100
	INCOME (annual) census.gov	No Income	1	13
		1 - 19.9k	14	45
		20k - 39.9k	46	68
		40k - 59.9k	69	81
		60k - 79.9k	82	89
		80 - 99.9k	90	93
	100k+	94	100	
COOPERATIVE	SECTOR	Worker	1	25
		Producer	26	50
		Purchasing	51	75
		Consumer	76	100
	SPECIAL STATUS	Multi-Stakeholder <sup>1</sup>	1	29
		Nothing Special	30	70
		Conversion	71	100
	INDUSTRY <sup>2</sup>	Sales & Marketing	1	12
		Social & Public	13	51
		Financial Services	52	85
		Utilities	86	100
	LOCATION	Urban	1	81
Rural		82	100	

### NOTES:

#### 1. MULTI-STAKEHOLDER:

If rolled, re-roll until two of the following three sectors are represented - Worker, Producer, Consumer. While other stakeholder types and combinations exist, the possibilities are limited in this activity to simplify roleplaying.

#### 2. INDUSTRY:

- **Sales & Marketing**  
- e.g. farm supply & marketing, grocery & consumer goods, arts & crafts, entertainment
- **Social & Public Services** -  
e.g. housing, healthcare, daycare, transportation, education
- **Financial Services**  
- e.g. credit union, farm credit, mutual insurance, analysis
- **Utilities** - e.g. broadband, electricity, water



# CHARACTER & COOPERATIVE ROLE SHEET

## WORKSHEET

<u>CHARACTER DETAILS</u>	
NAME	
EMPLOYMENT	
INCOME	
OTHER...	

<u>SKILLS</u>	<u>LEVEL</u> basic, skilled, or expert

<u>LEADERSHIP STYLE</u> circle one	
Individualistic & Rule-Governed	Individualistic & Chaotic
Mainstream & Rule-Governed	Mainstream & Chaotic
Collectivist & Rule-Governed	Collectivist & Chaotic

What is your economic backstory (e.g. education or training history, role of identity in economic experience, work history)?

How are you connected to this coop idea?

Anything else about yourself you can share (e.g. hobbies, favorite outfit)?

<u>COOPERATIVE DETAILS</u>			
NAME		INDUSTRY	
SECTOR		LOCATION	
STATUS		OTHER...	



# STEERING COMMITTEE

## AGENDA

### HANDOUT

**TIME:** 65 minutes, suggested agenda item lengths are included as minutes in parentheses

#### 1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS (15)

Get introduced and oriented

- Introduction Format
  - Name
  - Identity (share your preferred gender pronouns, age, etc.)
  - Economic Backstory (explain your employment status, income level, education level, etc.)
  - How are you connected to this coop idea?
  - Anything else?

#### 2. GOALS, DECISION-MAKING, & AGENDA REVIEW (5)

Review the following items to set the tone and get everyone on the same page for the meeting's propose and process

- **Meeting Goals**
  - Gather and hear from all those interested in participating in discussing the possible development of a new cooperative
  - Begin developing a shared vision for the cooperative enterprise
  - Determine each person's motivations and capacity for participation in developing the cooperative
  - Build trust among the group, as well as collective momentum for continuing work on the cooperative
- **Decision-Making:** Any decisions will be made by a majority vote of those present unless another method is decided by the assembled group
- **Agenda Review:** Look over the meeting agenda together, provide any needed clarification, consider proposals for amending the agenda – especially in the context of the question, “Will this agenda help us meet our goals?”

### GROUP PROCESS CONCEPTS

- ◀ **STEERING COMMITTEE**  
A body within a project or enterprise that supports the guiding of its work. Its main concern is the making of strategic decisions concerning the future realization of the project or enterprise.
- ◀ **FACILITATE**  
Generally, an act that makes a task easier for others; in the context of a meeting, making an experience more inclusive and effective through effective facilitation of the discussion/s inherent in spontaneous communication exchanges during a scheduled group meeting. (*Seeds for Change, "A Consensus Handbook" 2013: Leeds, UK, p 220*)
- ◀ **QUORUM**  
The minimum number of relevant members who must be present at a noticed meeting for those members to conduct business (i.e. make decisions) in the name of the group.
  - E.g. - a majority of voting members, a supermajority of 65% of voting members
- ◀ **DECISION-MAKING METHOD**  
The process by which a group determines an opinion or course of action.
  - **Voting** – everyone provides their vote and, typically, a decision is made if a pre-determined percentage of voters agree (e.g. 51%, 85%, majority, etc.)
  - **Consensus** – everyone involved must be able to live with the final outcome of the decision.

### 3. VISION DISCUSSION (15)

Move through the following questions by, first, journaling responses on Role Sheets. Then, begin discussion by sharing responses.

- What is your ideal vision for this cooperative?
- What would it mean to you and your life?

### 4. ASSESSING CAPACITY (10)

Move through the following questions in a roundrobin or popcorn discussion format.

- What can you contribute to realize that vision?
- What limits are there to your participation?

**Steering Committee Participation Straw Poll:** Without knowing the logistical details, who is interested in serving as a member of the Steering Committee at this moment?

- The question will be posed again at the end of the meeting, so this is an informal assessment to inform how much each person should weigh in on some of the logistical items (e.g. if not interested, expressing a strong opinion about when the Steering Committee should meet doesn't make sense).

### 5. STEERING COMMITTEE LOGISTICS (15)

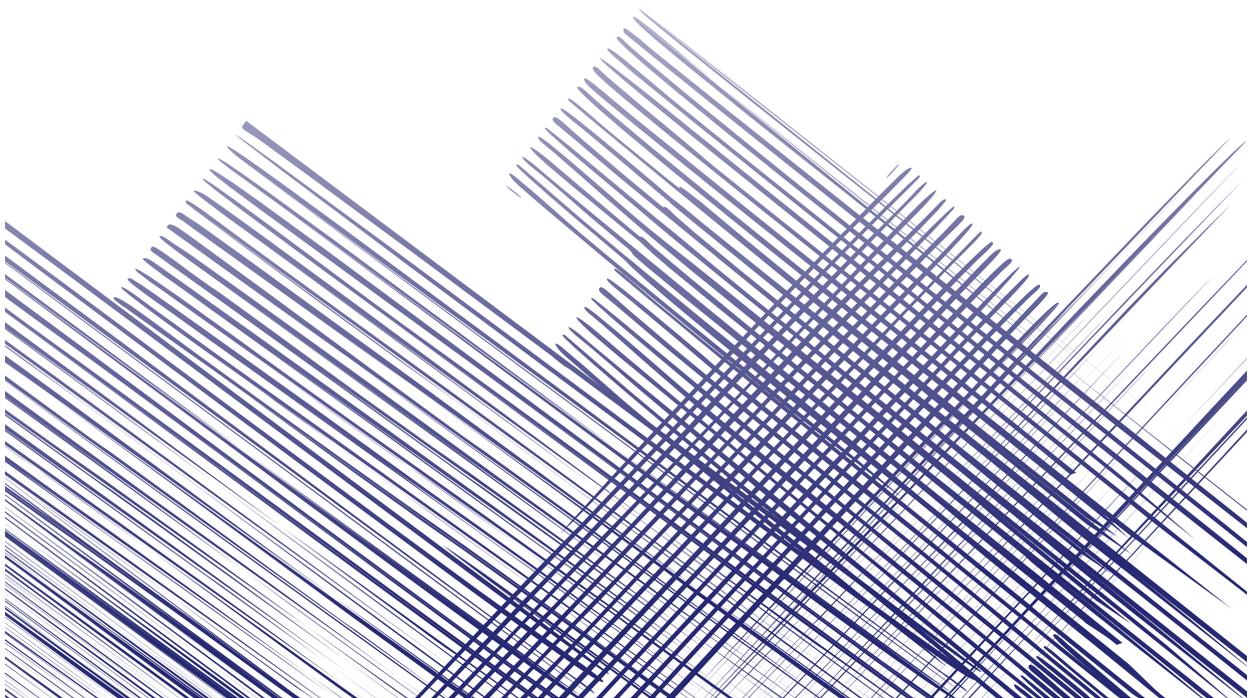
Move through and make decisions about the following items. Ensure decisions are recorded.

- **Meetings**
  - How often should the Steering Committee meet over the next three months to begin work on the project?
  - Where and when will the next meeting take place?
  - Are the meetings open to anyone or just specific people?
- **Membership & Roles**
  - After hearing the general meeting requirements of a Steering Committee member, who will commit to serving?
  - For those uninterested or unable to serve on the Steering Committee, suggest the preferred means of communicating the progress of the Committee? Are there any contributions that you would like to make to support the project in the future?
  - Who is willing to form the agenda and facilitate the next meeting? During the next meeting, you can discuss leadership of the Steering Committee and how facilitation can be handled in perpetuity.

### 6. CLOSING & NEXT MEETING (5)

**Query the group for the following information in order to close out the meeting.**

- What items do members want to see on the agenda for the first meeting of the Steering Committee? e.g. Quorum & Decision-Making Method, Steering Committee Purpose
- Any action items from this meeting?
- Reminder of the time, place, and facilitator of next meeting





# COOP BIZ PLANNING AGENDA

## HANDOUT



**TIME:** 60-70 minutes, suggested agenda item lengths are included as minutes in parentheses

### 1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS (5\*-15)

- **Welcome:** The Steering Committee for the cooperative development project has asked all community stakeholders to a meeting to help begin the project's written Business Plan.
- **Introduction Format**
  - Name
  - Identity (share your preferred gender pronouns, age, etc.)
  - Economic Backstory (explain your employment status and income level)
  - What do you do in your free time?
  - How are you connected to this coop idea?

*\*If your group has met recently, just do a go-around sharing names & identities.*

### 2. GOALS, DECISION-MAKING, & AGENDA REVIEW (5)

- **Meeting Goals: To identify...**
  - assets and skills present in the group to help create a Business Plan
  - some key elements of the cooperative's design to include in a Business Plan
  - what elements need to be researched (+ where that research could be conducted)
- **Decision-Making:** To make things simple for this meeting, decision-making will be made by a majority vote of those present unless another method is consensused upon by the group

### 3. REVIEW KEY QUESTIONS & ASSESS COMMUNITY ASSETS (10)

Read through the Key Questions Worksheet as a group.

- Individuals should step up to take on sections that relate to their skills & experience.
- If a section is unassigned at the end, have the person who has the most free time commit to researching that section after the meeting.

### 4. KEY QUESTIONS: SMALL GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL WORK (20)

Respond to each question in your respective section(s) on your own or with the others assigned to the same section.

- If no answer is known, a recommendation to the Steering Committee of where and how to research the answer, and/or the decision the Steering Committee will need to make to get the answer.

### 5. KEY QUESTIONS: REPORTBACK (15)

Go through the Key Questions Worksheet again as a group, this time having those assigned to each section to report on their findings or recommendation to the Steering Committee for each question.

### 6. CLOSING & NEXT MEETING (5)

Select Presentor(s) for sharing with the larger group your process on the Business Plan according to the following presentation format:

- » Name & Type of Cooperative
- » Summaries of two of the sections your group finds the most interesting



# COOP BIZ PLANNING: KEY QUESTIONS

## WORKSHEET

### INSTRUCTIONS

Move through the following prompts, answering them to the best of your ability. Use phrases, words, pictures - no need to write an essay. If there is no way for you to answer some at this point in time, write in what you need to do or what needs to happen, first, in order to get the given question answered. The goal of moving through these questions is to identify both what you already have figured out about your cooperative, and how you are going to figure out the rest of the needed information that you don't yet have.

SUMMARY	
Who are the people founding the cooperative?	
What is the cooperative's purpose?	
What need is the cooperative meeting?	

STRUCTURE	
<b>Governance:</b> Through what mechanism(s) are "big picture" decisions (e.g. buy property) made within your cooperative?	
<b>Operations:</b> Through what mechanism(s) are day-to-day operational decisions (e.g. staffing schedule) made within your cooperative?	

**CONTEXT**

In what industry are you working?	
In what geographic area do you work?	
Who are you trying to serve? Where are those people? Will you be providing them a new service or are you seeking to replace a competitor?	

**STRATEGY**

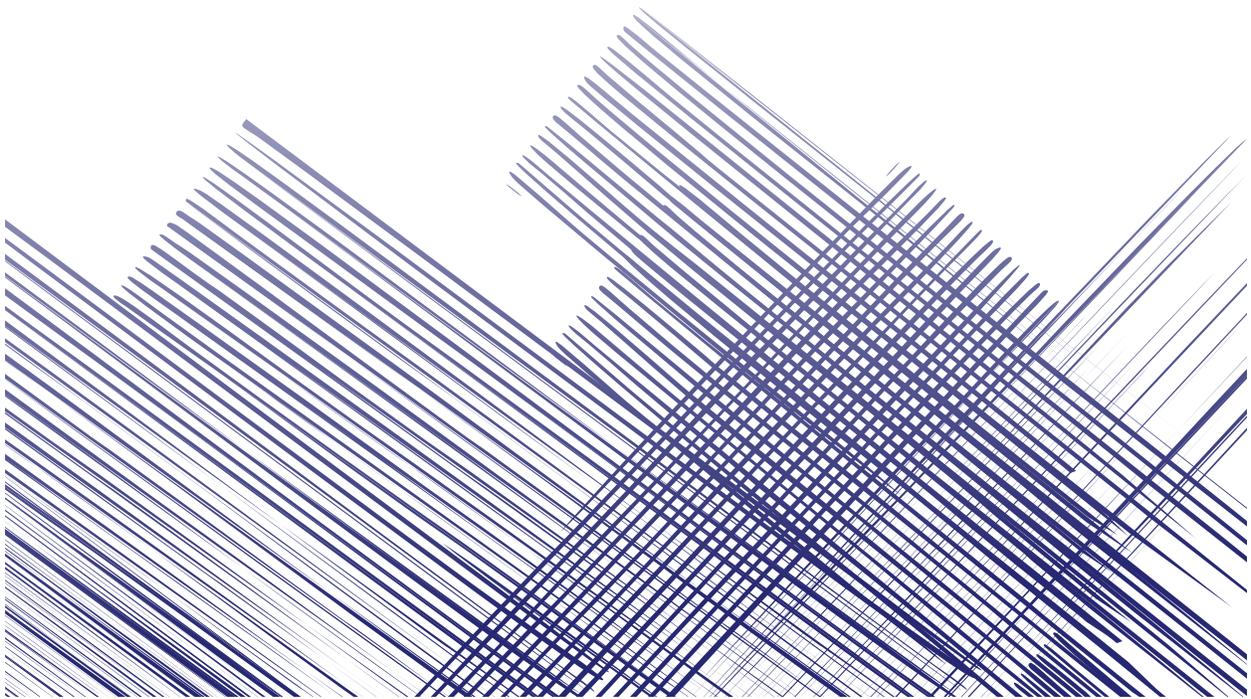
How will you connect with your target market? What will you say to your target market?	
How will you connect with supporters (e.g. financiers, elected officials)? What will you say to these supporters?	

**PLANNING**

What if you don't have money and cant get money?	
What if your target market is uninterested in your services?	

**ASSESSMENT**

How will you know when you are successful?	
What are at least one of each of the following goals for your cooperative: short-term (3 mnth), mid-term (1 yr), long-term (5 yrs)?	





# COOP BIZ PLANNING: LEARNING AID HANDOUT

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## SUMMARY

Business planning is a process and tool for developing an organization, project, or program - regardless of whether or not you think your group or initiative fits well into a conventional understanding of "business." Below is an annotated Table of Contents of a Business Plan sketching out a summary of the narrative content, tips on tone or formatting, as well as listings of other documents or items that need to be included in or used to inform a given section.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

The following content listing is only a suggested template. It can be useful to start with this outline and change section names, consolidate or split sections, disregard or add sections, and otherwise amend to suit your unique situation.

### SUMMARY: What, Why, Who

- ◀ **It should briefly chronicle** the overall plan for the organization, project, or initiative. Tell your story, as well as included some informational updates. Include:
  - ♦ **Purpose statement or vision statement in your narrative**
  - ♦ Summary of **who is involved**
  - ♦ **Summary of what you do** - alongside descriptions of any elements of what you do that may not be common knowledge (e.g. "Popular Education" would need to be explained)
- ◀ Depending on your audience, you may need to include an explanation **of cooperation and the cooperative model** (e.g. include the ICA Cooperative Identity, share a brief history of cooperation relevant to your industry/geography).
  - ♦ Clarify the **particular type of co-operative you are** (e.g. sector, membership).
- ◀ **Describe the history or your philosophy behind the type of work you do** beyond cooperation (e.g. education, local food).
- ◀ It is important it **be compelling in tone and content** - appeal to emotion or share intriguing statistics or facts in order to motivate the reader to review the remainder of the report (e.g. "We want to create a cooperative to provide meaningful employment for young people in an area where 65% of youth are unemployed.").

## STRUCTURE: Membership & Management

- Expanding on the previous section, this section should lay out your **organizational structure (i.e. how governance and operations are organized)**. This is a useful place to include an organizational chart, staffing/management chart (if different from organizational chart), and a (potential) member list.
- **Brief bios for key people** (e.g. inaugural Board of Directors) belong in this section. [Complete CVs for key people should be included in the Appendix.]
- **Reference secondary stakeholders** - such as advisors, financial partners, or industry connections - and their affiliations in a more shortform manner than the bios for key people.

## CONTEXT: Market & Niche

- This section should describe **where you are oriented within a larger market** and/or community context. Key questions to answer here are:
  - ♦ What is the **industry** in which you work (e.g. grocery)?
  - ♦ Who is your **target market** in that industry (e.g. food consumers)?
  - ♦ What **reach and effect** will you have on that target market in that industry (e.g. Around 4,000 people who live in my neighborhood are currently without an area grocery store - we will provide a local option for groceries so community members won't have to transit 20 minutes to the nearest store.)?
- Additionally, focus on the specific **need you are addressing** and how your cooperative will fulfill the stated need. Be sure to reference your **competition**, and where you fit in the context and history of your industry.
- You'll need to **demonstrate that your business idea is feasible** - that you will actually be competitive in the marketplace. Responses from surveys of your target market, percentages of households in your geography that may frequent your cooperative, and other project assessment deliverables should be included to demonstrate that feasibility.
  - ♦ If completing a feasibility study was relevant to your project or organization for this vision, this section will draw largely from that work.

## STRATEGY: Outreach & Marketing

- In this section, you will detail **how you will attract and retain stakeholders - ranging from potential members, other users who are distinct from members (if applicable), and potential supporters (e.g. financiers)**. This section can address topics ranging from plans for initial advertising campaigns to your long term messaging and branding.
- You will likely have **several different ways in which you outreach and market to different stakeholders**. Figuring what "hat" you will be wearing as you market or "speak" to each stakeholder and how you will manage each of your different hats is a good way to think about this task.

- ♦ For example, if you are starting an affordable housing cooperative - you will wear the hat of an affordable housing provider to potential residents, while you would wear the hat of a responsible and accountable neighbor to other homeowners in the area.
- ◀ The **medium for how you are reaching each stakeholder group** is also important to include (e.g. walk door-to-door to connect with each potential new neighbor).

## CAPITAL: Finances & Fundraising

- ◀ You'll need to answer some basic, but big, questions in this section:
  - ♦ **Do you have money?** If so, how'd you get it? If not, how and where will you get money?
  - ♦ **What will you do with money?**
- ◀ **What other kinds of capital** are you using to make this project or organization work? In a cooperative enterprise, a variety of capital is utilized (e.g. sweat equity or volunteer/time). You might have to explain these concepts a bit (similarly to how you explained "cooperation" in the opening sections) as they may be unfamiliar to a reader of your plan. However, these **"other" kinds of capital inputs deliver real value** to an initiative or organization and demonstrate the value of cooperation.
- ◀ **"Triple Bottom Line" budgeting** is a practice that starts tracking and calculating non-fiscal types of costs and gains – you can use that format as a guide or just create your own by estimating the value of the hours of labor you're inputting and include that in your financial reports. *Check out [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triple\\_bottom\\_line](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triple_bottom_line) for more information.*
- ◀ Some **financial communication tools** that are always good to include, if relevant:
  - ♦ **Cost Schedule:** Consists of all the costs occurring in the implementation process of the project, creating a total expense budget for the effort prior to the start of when revenue is earned (if applicable).
  - ♦ **Pro Forma:** In this context, a model of what the project will look like financially as it is completed, including revenue. You can do this kind of modeling report for various stages of development (e.g. purchasing a building and paying on the financing, conducting a construction project on one room, expanding the membership class to bring on new members and dues).
  - ♦ And, like CVs, you can put the full reports into the Appendix and put **nice visual or informative "excerpts" from financial communication tools** into the body of the section.

## PLANNING: Risks & Obstacles

- ◀ This section asks you to preempt some of the questions potential stakeholders might ask - some examples are as follows:
  - ♦ What if you **can't get enough money**, what if you **lose money**?
  - ♦ What if your **target market proves to be uninterested**?
  - ♦ What if the **market changes** and you have more competitors than you anticipated?

- The various **types of risk that you might need to address vary by your market, management, industry, and more** – it is up to you to pick what key risks are worth highlighting in this section.
- Demonstrating your awareness **of potential issues or obstacles** showcases both the due diligence you have done in assessing your project’s feasibility, as well as your likely level of resilience in the face of that risk.

### **ASSESSMENT: Goals, Objectives, & Benchmarks**

- Include in this section **concrete and measurable goals and benchmarks** that will allow you to self assess your success and failure in implementing your project (e.g. 500 new members by the month before the cooperative starts operation).
  - ◆ These concrete and measurable objectives will keep you accountable to your stakeholders with whom you share your plan.
- The tools you create to include in this section can serve as the basis for **project launch plan**, which should also be included in this section, if started.

### **CONCLUSION**

- Use this section to **round out the narrative you began in your summary** by tying the “why” of the project into the logistics you described throughout the plan.
- Often, a conclusion **talks about the future** (e.g. what your project could mean to your community in the next ten or twenty years) – which can be a powerful and inspiring. That kind of messaging can compel the reader to continue or begin their engagement with you and your project (e.g. restate the real impact you’ll have in the lives of your members or other beneficiaries).

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Use endnotes throughout the plan to reference documents or articles you used in substantiating a claim – pull together the **endnotes** as part of the bibliography. Related to this, use footnotes throughout, as well, to spell out definitions or describe concepts that may be unfamiliar.
- **Reference readings, articles, or supporting materials** (e.g. blog post on a similar cooperative to your project) that you used to shape your plan and vision. Include these in whatever style is appropriate to your project (e.g. simple list with urls, APA style format).
- Be sure to include any **media coverage** of your group (e.g. radio interviews, blog posts, social media posts), alongside any **self-promotion** you’ve done (e.g. presentations made).

## APPENDIX

- ◀ Tuck into the appendix anything that doesn't quite fit in the narrative format or is just a good addition to the overall picture you are trying to present in your plan. For example -
  - ♦ **Curriculum Vitae/Resume for folks mentioned in the "Structure" section**
  - ♦ **Development-specific documents** (e.g. visioning, grant applications, art projects)
  - ♦ **Operation-specific documents** (e.g. membership applications, flyers, food buying list, orientation/education tools, etc.)
  - ♦ All your **financial reports** referenced in your "Capital" section



# WORKSHOP EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS: List 0-3 pieces of feedback in each of the below boxes on the content, format, delivery, logistics, accessibility, and/or culture of the workshop.	
Plus // Stuff you liked	Delta // Stuff you would amend

**WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT YOU LEARNED?**

**WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT?**

**IDENTITY:** Who has what feedback on the workshop is important. We ask that you provide as much of the following information about your identity as you feel comfortable. This helps in improving future workshops.

Age:

Where You Live:

Gender:

Cooperative Experience:

Race(s):

Anything else?:

**ANYTHING ELSE?**



