

# HOW TO RUN A DONOR DIALOGUE IN 6 STEPS

**This short overview highlights some practical guidance for anyone who is interested to run a Donor Dialogue – you can find out more about the Dialogues [HERE](#).**

**Before you get started, here are a few things to consider...**

- Plan a Donor Dialogue that focuses on specific issues that are most relevant for your networks.
- Consider the resources and capacity you have available – could there be an opportunity to plan a Dialogue that can support or connect into existing programmes or can help to leverage established partnerships.

If you want to discuss your ideas or need any support to set up a Dialogue, you can get in touch with [freya@restlessdevelopment.org](mailto:freya@restlessdevelopment.org) or use [these different planning templates](#).

## FIRSTLY, WHAT IS THE POINT OF THE DONOR DIALOGUES?



The Donor Dialogues aim to create a platform for youth civil society organisations (CSOs) and different donors (for example foundations, governments, international organisations) to engage in productive and meaningful exchanges to promote a better, more sustainable funded youth civil society sector. This platform can be an opportunity for you to bring together youth CSOs and donors from your networks and partnerships, to strengthen collaboration, address some of the evidenced challenges of ensuring a properly funded youth sector and to co-create practical solutions.

Read more about the Donor Dialogues in this [short summary](#).

# I AM INTERESTED IN COORDINATING A DONOR DIALOGUE, WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?

# 2



## Understand the big issues affecting youth CSOs by speaking to your partners and doing research:

First it is important to understand what are some of the big challenges or issues affecting youth CSOs in your network, and to find out whether these could be addressed through the Donor Dialogues. There is a lot of evidence documenting some of the barriers and solutions for collaboration and resourcing between CSOs and donors, for example [‘Working Better Together’](#), that you can build up from as a starting point. This is important because the Dialogues are most helpful when they explicitly speak to the most pressing issues identified by youth CSOs in your context.

## Develop a clear concept:

Once you have done some initial research and discussed with partners in your network, it can be helpful to develop a short outline that clearly highlights the themes your Donor Dialogues will address – ultimately, what are the outcomes you want to achieve? The Dialogues will not solve all of the funding challenges youth CSOs and donors are facing, but could help kickstart action or generate important insights on specific priority issues for youth CSOs. This outline or concept note can then become a short ‘pitch’ or invitation to share with potential speakers and participants over email or via a call, to clearly communicate your ask.

# WHO SHOULD I INVITE TO THE DONOR DIALOGUES?

# 3



Once you have spoken to partners, done your research and developed a concept for the dialogues, the next step is to identify who would be best placed to speak on, share learning and exchange insights on the issues you wish to address. When selecting participants and speakers, try to ensure a diversity of genders, organisation (such as grassroots movements), views and experiences, as it will lead to a richer discussion that can help generate broader insights and understanding. It is also a great opportunity to recognise the work of youth leaders in your network and provide them a platform to share their knowledge and experiences. The Dialogues may also provide a strategic opportunity to strengthen existing relationships with some of the donors in your network – or develop new ones with donors or partners you have wanted to collaborate with, but were looking for the right space!

## WHAT KIND OF EVENTS COULD I ORGANISE FOR THE DONOR DIALOGUES?

# 4

Interactive conversations

Networking events

Twitter chats

Informal discussions

Practical workshops

Now it is time to start event-planning, beginning with thinking about the type of events and formats you want to coordinate. The Dialogues could include smaller, more interactive and informal discussions between donors in your network and CSOs; practical workshops for youth CSOs and/or donors to introduce helpful tools or approaches for addressing some of the challenges faced; twitter chats aimed at donors and CSOs structured around a specific theme and a set of key questions, networking events – the list goes on! Ultimately, think about what format will enable the most impactful and constructive participation and engagement. For example, to ensure conversations between participants are not ‘one-way’ you may want to combine different tools, like breakout rooms, live polling, or even crowdsourcing questions before the event to ensure different voices are heard. Some other things to consider in this step are accessibility, online vs offline event benefits, capacity available, among others.

## HOW SHOULD I PROMOTE OR ADVERTISE THE DONOR DIALOGUE EVENT?

# 5

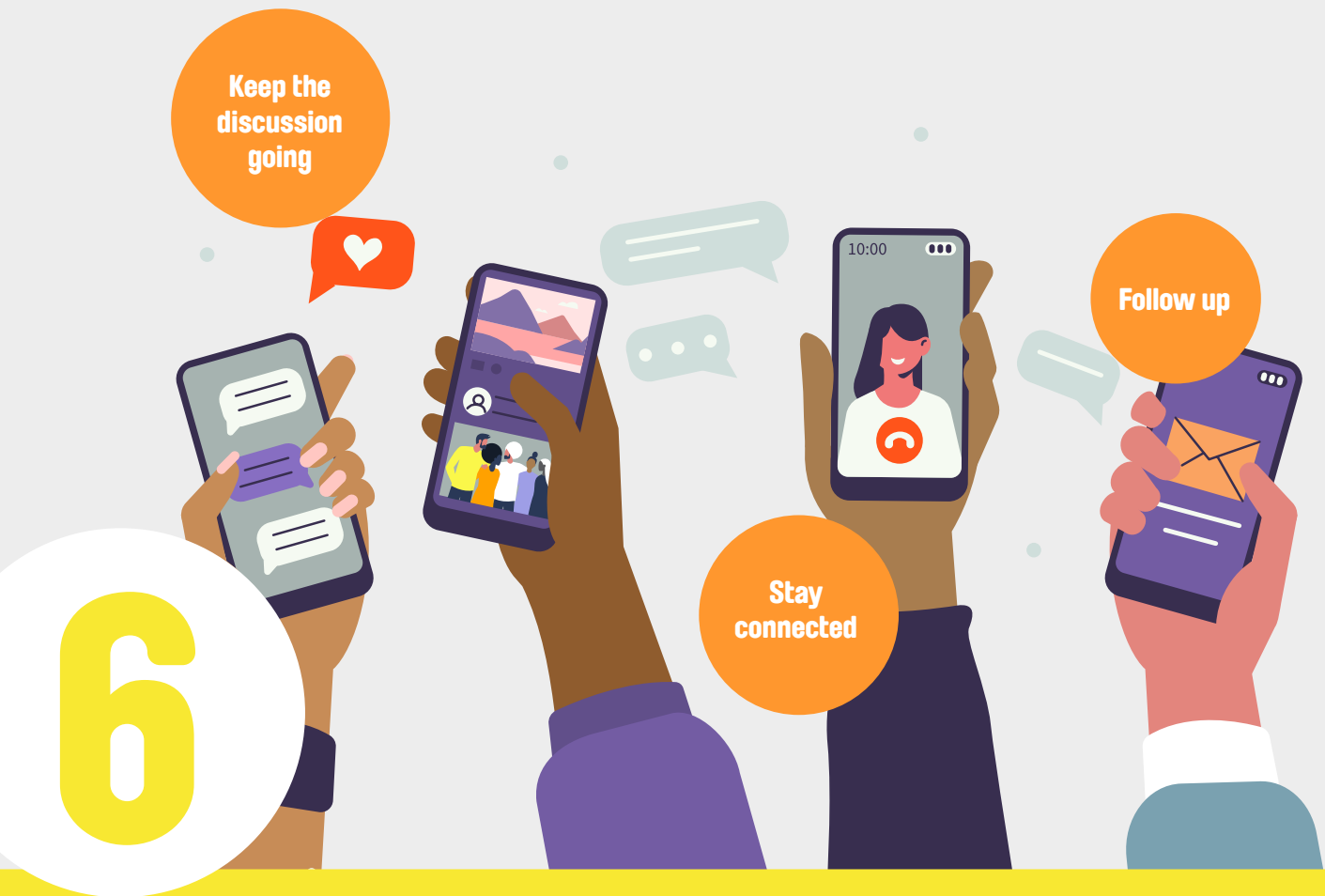


Consider messaging early on in your planning and make sure there is enough time to develop strong communications products to promote your event. Be clear what participants can expect from the Dialogues, how they can participate and where/when events will be hosted. Online sign up sheets can be useful to know how many people to expect at each event, or to ensure a manageable attendance if you are planning a smaller event. Managing participation through online sign ups also means you can email participants with any changes or requests, and practical information like event location or the joining link.

Think about some of the different platforms that could be leveraged for promoting your Dialogue, including social media posts, newsletter, email invitations, WhatsApp messages or any other means you use to regularly communicate with your networks. Sometimes donors respond better to more formal invitations, so think about these different audiences when deciding your messaging.

[Here some examples of communications materials and graphics for the Donor Dialogues that you could adapt and use.](#)

# WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE DONOR DIALOGUE HAS HAPPENED?



It is really important to follow up with participants and share the outcomes of the discussion to maximise learning and impact of your events, also to try and foster longer term collaboration. Think about how to keep the discussion going, instead of having a one-time event; for example asking the participants of your event how they would like to stay connected is a great way to identify possible next steps! You can also encourage your participants to exchange contacts or arrange follow up meetings to explore in greater depth some of the ideas or recommendations that came up during the event.

To make a Dialogue event more accessible, you might want to capture short insights or recommendations to share back with registered participants or via your social media platforms. Capturing quotes or comments from participants is another great way to share key takeaways and can even be used as a great communications tool for future events!

If you're looking to set up a set up a Dialogue and want to discuss your ideas or need any support we would love to hear from you! Get in touch with [freya@restlessdevelopment.org](mailto:freya@restlessdevelopment.org)