

How to facilitate a session

A step-by-step guide to running a Living Lab design session with the canvas — how to prepare, facilitate, and follow up afterwards.

1 Prepare

- Invite 5–15 people: your core team, plus a few students, staff and one or two external partners.
- Set aside 2–3 hours — or split it into two shorter sessions.
- Print the canvas at A3 (one per group) with markers and sticky notes — or open it on a shared online board.
- A day before, send participants a short note on the challenge and on what a Living Lab is.
- Agree roles: a facilitator to guide, a note-taker to capture, and a timekeeper.

2 Run the session

- 10 MIN** Welcome & purpose — why you are here, and simple ground rules: everyone contributes, no idea is wrong.
- 20 MIN** Focus & challenge — fill the top of the canvas together and agree the challenge in one sentence.
- 30 MIN** Team, objectives & target groups — who leads, 2–3 measurable goals, and who takes part.
- 25 MIN** Ecosystem map — brainstorm stakeholders on sticky notes, then cluster them and spot the gaps.
- 30 MIN** Activities, resources & ethics — what happens and when, what you need, and how you protect participants.
- 30 MIN** Solutions, sustainability & dissemination — first ideas to prototype, what should last, and how you will share it.
- 15 MIN** Wrap-up — agree owners and the date of your first activity, and photograph the canvas.

3 Follow up

- Within 48 hours, send participants the completed canvas, a short summary, and the agreed next steps and owners.
- Turn the canvas into your action plan.
- Schedule your first Living Lab activity and confirm who does what.
- Invite feedback so you can improve the next session.

4 Running it online

- Keep online sessions shorter (60–90 min), with more breaks and one idea per sticky note.
- Use a collaborative whiteboard with the canvas as a template, so everyone works on it visually at once.
- Use a video call with breakout rooms for small-group work, and quick polls or word clouds to gather input fast.
- Prefer privacy-respecting, GDPR-compliant tools, and share the board link so people can keep adding after the session.