The Virtual Roundtable Toolkit

For Community Conversations

Introduction

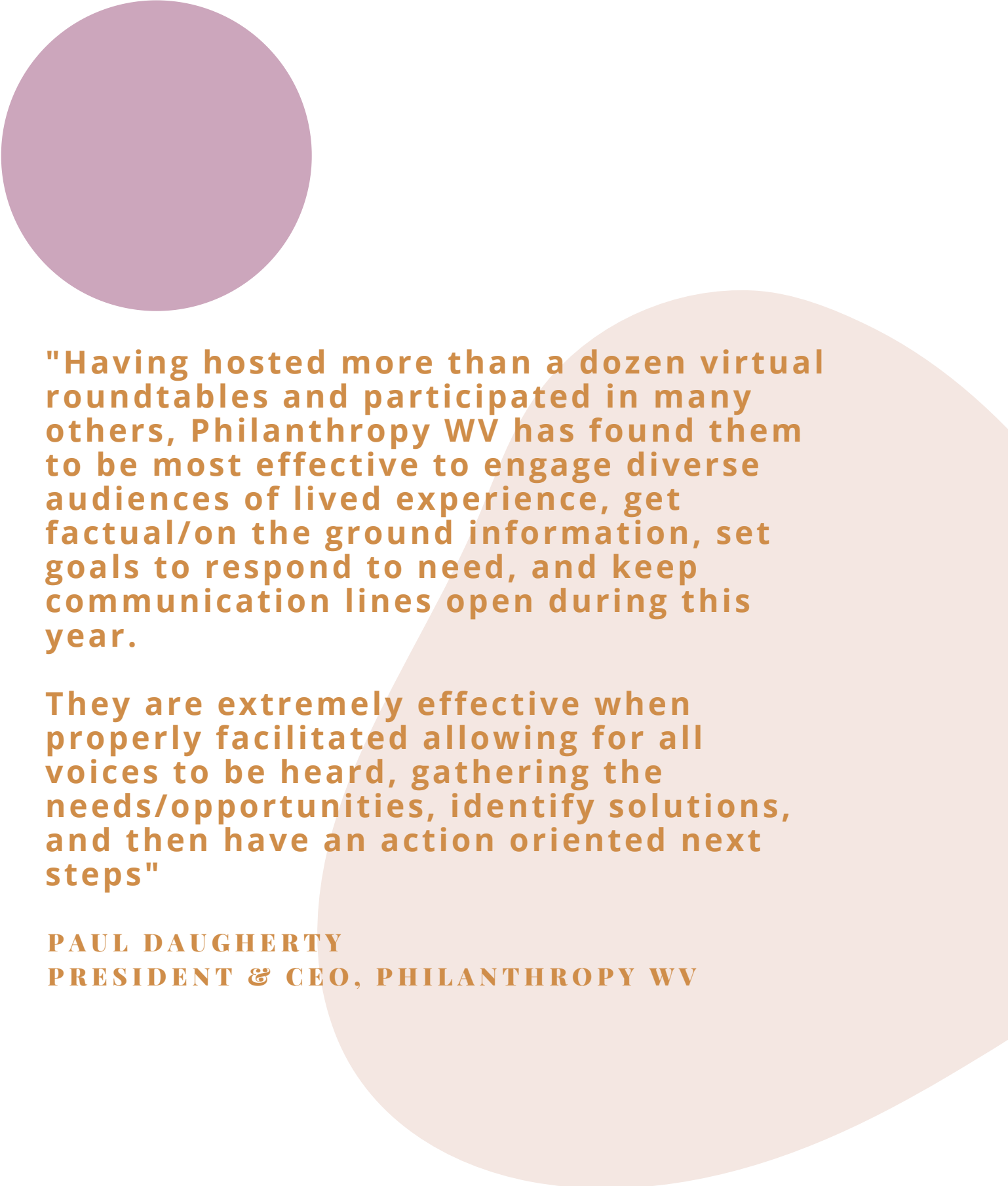## In May 2020, the Community Collaborative Network met to discuss the state's urgent needs.

At that meeting, three urgent needs were identified. One of them being "Connecting People & Building Community". An action team was formed to address this need and identified a solution that could be distributed within the next 90 days.

The team recognized that in our changing environment, there were a number of new realities communities were dealing with, yet there was a desire to continue to have meaningful conversations, to gather feedback from all members of the community and to spread positive news.

With goal of creating a device that would allow communities to effectively connect people and build community, the team has created a compilation of tools and resources to assist leaders and facilitators in conducting meaningful conversations in a productive way.

Leaders across the state have been facilitating these roundtable-esque conversations with the intention of collecting data & feedback, distributing positive messaging, coordinating ideas, identifying challenges and creating solutions. The majority of our members have not only participated in these events, but have also acted as hosts and facilitators themselves. The responses have been overwhelmingly positive and we are already seeing the effect these conversations have had on their communities.

These tools were compiled from the thoughts and experiences of our team members and from other organization that have effectively used similar models. Outside resources are linked in the table of contents and those that were created by our team are in these pages. We hope you'll find them useful!

"Having hosted more than a dozen virtual roundtables and participated in many others, Philanthropy WV has found them to be most effective to engage diverse audiences of lived experience, get factual/on the ground information, set goals to respond to need, and keep communication lines open during this year.

They are extremely effective when properly facilitated allowing for all voices to be heard, gathering the needs/opportunities, identify solutions, and then have an action oriented next steps"

PAUL DAUGHERTY
PRESIDENT & CEO, PHILANTHROPY WV

Why Host a Roundtable?

Share the "Good News"

Even when times are tough, there are always good things happening. Use this event to increase awareness for the positive things that are happening in your community.

Problem & Solution Identification

Not sure where to start? A virtual conversation can be a great way to get all the voices together to identify the issues, prioritize and then create & implement solutions.

Connecting People & Pooling Resources

Two brains are better than one! Virtual conversations are a great way to work together.

Strategic Planning

Group conversations are essential to creating an effective strengths and opportunities analysis and identifying next steps.

Collective Learning

Learning a new skill or increasing knowledge about a new idea is better with a group of like-minded colleagues.

Policy Solutions

Virtual conversations can be used to discuss desired policy change, working with local leaders and organizing group efforts.

Who Should Be Involved?

☐ **01. Those with Specific Interests.**
Focus on groups that have a specific interest in the reason for your roundtable.

☐ **02. Interested Parties.**
What types of orgs exist in your area related to things you might want to be talking about?

☐ **03. Referred Participants.**
Consult organizations you frequently work with for suggestions and referrals.

☐ **04. Government Entities.**
Local Government, Municipalities, County Commission, State Organizations, etc.

☐ **05. Local Businesses.**
Include those that are relevant to the focus of the virtual conversation.

☐ **06. The Outsiders.**
Don't forget to invite those that don't normally get asked. Smaller organizations and those with a quiet profile often add great value.

☐ **07. Other Suggestions.**
United Way, Chamber of Commerce, EDA, CVB, WVNPA, SBDC, Community Colleges, Universities, etc.

How to Advertise

Suggestions for increasing attendance and creating maximum impact.

Create a Timeline

- Do this far enough in advance to get word out and create whatever promotional materials are necessary.

Who to involve?

- *Public & Private Radio stations* - Be sure to prepare this well in advance
- *Local newspaper* - Establish a relationship in advance, and give advance notice
  - If paid advertising - You could ask if this can be donated
  - They may run a story before &/or after your event

Methods To Use

- Go old-school! Invite people by word-of-mouth
- Hang flyers at frequented establishments (Take-out lines, grocery stores, gas stations, etc.)
- Use Social Media - post in local groups, Create a Facebook Event, Share on various organizations pages
- Cross-promote with all entities that are involved - promote among their circle of influences
- Use communication methods that are already in place like newsletters or email lists

What Happens After?

Facilitating the conversation is only half the battle. The most important part is in the follow up. Use these prompts to assist your team in creating a strong follow-up plan that will allow your organization to maximize your results. Many of these follow-up options are negotiable. Some will fit your conversation and some won't.

☐ **01. Thank You Notes.**
We believe ALL participants deserve a thank you email!

☐ **02. The Recording.**
Will there be a recording? How will the recording be distributed? We have found a simple link in a follow-up email works well.

☐ **03. Continued Promotion.**
Would it be helpful for people that weren't a part of the conversation to have access to the recording? How will you get the word out?

☐ **04. Post-Event Survey.**
Feedback is always important. Were there any topics you'd like your participants to expand on? Give confidential feedback? How will this be distributed? We have found that Google Forms and Survey Monkey are good options.

☐ **05. Simple Recap.**
Not all conversations need a survey. Maybe a simple recap with the planning team or via a conversation with some attendees would suffice.

Tech Tools

ARTISTS THR!VE

ZOOM

Artists Thrive Zoom Tips: A comprehensive list of all you need to know to manage and make the most of your paid Zoom account.

CLICK HERE

How-To Geek

Best Apps

How-To Geek's Guide to the six best, free video conferencing apps. Keep in mind that some require paid versions for larger audiences.

CLICK HERE

suitebriar

Google Meet Guide for Beginners

Suitebriar introduces you to everything there is to know about Google Meet including pricing, features, and how to use this video calling app.

CLICK HERE

contentsparks

Streamyard Tutorial

A complete how-to guide and video tutorial that explains how to use Streamyard to live-stream to Facebook and Youtube.

CLICK HERE

Other Great Resources

Toolkit: A Virtual Community Engagement Event

Bring your community an hour of good news! Access the toolkit for orchestrating a virtual community engagement "Good News" event in your community, including lessons learned. We are confident your first event will lead to another, building momentum for many more engagement activities in your community.

TOOLKIT

Toolkit: Leading Impactful Conversations

The Community Development Hub has put together a toolkit dedicated to helping facilitators lead conversations. In this toolkit, you will find tips, templates, checklists, and more to help you plan and lead your own impactful conversations.

TOOLKIT

Other Great Resources

Agenda Templates

Philanthropy WV has provided editable PowerPoint templates to use as agendas. How to use: Make a copy, remove Philanthropy WV branding, edit to your purpose!

TEMPLATES