



Community

Table

Host Handbook

du.edu/ACommunityTable

#DUGrandChallenges

#DUDialogues



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WHAT IS A (VIRTUAL) COMMUNITY TABLE?



Some information to start...

The University of Denver launched its DU Grand Challenges Initiative (DUGC) in 2017 to bring faculty, staff, students, and community members together to collaboratively identify and solve complex public problems and build thriving communities. DUGC created A Community Table as a way to promote civic and civil dialogue and engage the community in shaping the agenda for DU Grand Challenges' work. A Community Table is the cornerstone for everything we do. It's a space for ALL of our community members to share their voices (staff, faculty, students, alumni, broader community) so that we can co-create programs that address real needs and make real impact.

DUGC believes that, as COVID-19 sweeps the globe, community connection is paramount to combatting the stress and uncertainty we face and the effects of social isolation. To that end, we have moved A Community Table, traditionally an in-person event, online.

In the face of fear and uncertainty, there is power in imagining the future we want to build together. We hope that A Community Table offers you space to share experiences, build community, and chart paths forward not just for DUGC, but for our broader society as we navigate a new age.

All of our materials are free and available to download at any time. Thanks for being a part of A Community Table!

We are ever grateful to the Chicago Community Trust and their On The Table event after which A Community Table is modeled.

LET'S BEGIN!

Table Host Resources

Throughout this guide, you will find links to a number of resources that are designed to help you plan and facilitate your conversation. You can find a full list of these resources with links on page 11. All resources are free to download.

The Guest List

We encourage hosts to invite friends, family, colleagues, and/or neighbors to their conversation. Sharing a conversation with community members and new acquaintances is great too! To diversify participation, you might ask guests to “bring” a friend or share your invitation on a community list serve to which you subscribe, your local neighborhood association, etc. Be creative!

Planning Your Conversation

Most A Community Table conversations last 1-2 hours. We find that groups of 5-10 people allow for easier facilitation and rich discussion. You can bring your guests together using whatever web meeting platform you prefer—it might even be the phone. The priority is to create an atmosphere conducive to meaningful conversation.

Preparing Your Guests

You can find templates for participant invitations and reminders in the Virtual Host Resources section on [our website](#). Make sure to let your participants know the time, date, and platform for your conversation. We recommend that you also share information about how to use the meeting platform. You can also find resources for possible conversation topics on the website. If you plan to discuss one of these topics, you might share the infographic in advance to help orient your participants to the conversation.

SETTING THE TABLE...



Choosing a Web Platform

You may use any meeting platform that you like. If you're unsure of what platform to use, we offer the following suggestions:

- [Zoom](#): If you're a DU faculty member, student, or staff member, you have a professional Zoom account. Zoom allows for multiple participants, document sharing, unlimited time, and more.
- [Google Hangouts](#): This free platform allows you to connect with up to 9 other people for an unlimited amount of time. You and your participants will need Gmail accounts in order to use this platform.
- [WebEx](#): This free platform allows you to connect to an unlimited number of people for as much time as you want. You will need to create an account, but your guests can join without one.

Please visit our [website](#) for resources and tutorials on how to use these platforms.

Again, we know these aren't the only platforms out there. Please use the platform that you know and love. It might even be the phone!

Choosing an Issue

- You are welcome to talk about whatever issue matters most to you. Torn between multiple topics? You can host a conversation on each!
- Need help deciding? We have Denver/Colorado specific infographics on several general issue areas available in the Virtual Host Resources section on the [A Community Table website](#). Take a look and see what resonates with you. You can choose between, Education Access, Employment, Food Security, Housing, Gentrification, Healthcare Access, Immigration, Resource Conservation and more. You can also share these resources with your participants to help orient the conversation.

LET'S TALK!



Starting Things Off

First, welcome everyone and introduce yourself and the event.

- Share your name, background, and why you decided to be an A Community Table host.
- Share a bit about DU Grand Challenges. Information is available at grandchallenges.du.edu and in this handbook.
- Remind everyone of today's goal: Explore the issue you've selected, and generate ideas to increase local civic life (involvement) around it. If you want to share the conversation prompts with your guests, do that now.

Second, invite your participants to introduce themselves and briefly share what brought them to A Community Table. If you decided on a virtual icebreaker, do that here!

Third, set out some conversation guidelines to support *everyone's* participation. We suggest:

- One speaker at a time
- Share to increase understanding and invite others in
- Listen to understand. Listen harder when you disagree
- Speak from own *personal experience* ("I" statements) and avoid generalizations
- Be attentive to what space you're taking up
- What's said in the group stays; what's learned, leaves (confidentiality)
- Decide on a way to signal (hand gesture, raise hand feature on Zoom, etc.) for jargon or words you might not know



FACILITATION TIPS



General Guidelines

- Support everyone's focus on goals, roles, and rules (guidelines above)
- Encourage everyone to participate, making space for all to do so.
- Invite guests to follow-up and expand on ideas. (open-ended questions)
- It's okay to model sharing if folks seem stuck on a question, or if you need to redirect the conversation. But don't share to just fill the silence.
- A little silence is OK!
- You've got this!! You're hosting a conversation that matters--take time to enjoy the process as well.

Conversation Don'ts & Reminders

- Don't micromanage the conversation; let it flow freely, helping with the 3 Os:
 - On Topic, On Time, Opportunity for All to Participate
- Don't promote or allow argument or unproductive debate.
- Don't judge or dismiss any person's comments or ideas; redirect if off-goal/rules.
- Don't be afraid to *not* know something, or to ask if you have questions.
- Name the fact that you aren't meant to be the content expert but are here to guide the process.
 - Even if you are a content expert, the role of a host is to guide the process. Don't omit your voice from the conversation altogether, but do not center it either

Email CCESL.ACommunityTable@du.edu or call us at 303-871-3706 (in advance of your session) with questions or for support.



Conversation Prompts

You've introduced the format for your conversation and the issue on which you will focus. Guests have introduced themselves. You've set ground rules. It's time to dig in!

Each Edition of A Community Table has its own set of prompts, you can find the prompts for your conversation by visiting the "[Host Materials](#)" section of the website.

Closing the Conversation and Next Steps

Offer a quick summary of the actions that the group identified, and check to make sure what you've heard is accurate. If you have identified next steps as a group, share a recap of those.

Please also share the link to the participant survey, http://bit.ly/EN_ACommunityTableParticipant, with your guests, and let them know that it will take less than five minutes to complete. You can share the link in the chat function of your web platform and follow up by sending the link in an email. Make sure to thank your guests for their participation and encourage them to host their own conversation.

After the conversation closes, please complete the host survey. You can find it at http://bit.ly/EN_ACommunityTableHost.

And you're done! Congratulations on facilitating A Community Table!



SHARE YOUR IDEAS!



Social Media

Tell us (and the world!) about your A Community Table conversation! There are a lots of ways to share your ideas, insights, and experiences.

Hashtags! Use the hashtags #ACommunityTable and #DUGrandChallenges when you post on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, whatever platform you use!

Send us a message! Tweet us at @CCESL or send us a Facebook message at facebook.com/DUCCESL or facebook.com/IEedDU

Tag us in your photos! We would love to see the faces of A Community Table 2020 so tag @du_ccesl and @du_dialogues in your posts.

Give us a follow! Find out what others are talking about in their A Community Table conversations.

Here's how you can find us:

Facebook	Facebook.com/DUCCESL → The Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning Facebook.com/IEedDU → Inclusion & Equity Education at DU
Twitter	@CCESL
Instagram	@du_ccesl @du_dialogues
Websites	du.edu/ACommunityTable du.edu/studentlife/ie-education

A COMMUNITY TABLE HOST RESOURCES



We have tons of free resources available on the [A Community Table website](#) to help you plan and facilitate your conversation.

Training Webinars

- [Intro to A Community Table](#)
- [Table Host Facilitation Overview](#)
- [Facilitating the Content](#)
- [Logistics and Resources](#)

Visit the "[Participant Recruitment Resources](#)" section of our website for the following resources:

- Participant Invitation Template
- Participant Reminder Template

Web Platform Resources

- [Zoom](#)
- [Google Hangouts](#)
- [WebEx](#)

Overview of Select Topics

- Explore the "Issue Resources" section of the [A Community Table website](#) to find infographics and reports that can be used as conversation tools

Visit the "[Conversation Tools](#)" section of our website for the following resources:

- Social Media
- Host Survey
- Participant Survey

ABOUT US



The DU Grand Challenges initiative is a family of programs that will bring together university and community changemakers to address the most difficult far-reaching issues facing our society today.

DU Grand Challenges addresses three inter-related issues in our communities: improving daily living, increasing economic opportunity and advancing deliberation and action for the public good. For each, we co-create Aspirations, Actions, and Achievement with community partners. For more information, visit grandchallenges.du.edu.



DU DialogUes is a program of DU Inclusion & Equity Education. One of IEE's focal areas is building skills and providing opportunities for positive interaction across difference—i.e., dialogue. With campus and community partners, DU DialogUes is piloting a range of events, programs and other resources in support of Campus Life & Inclusive Excellence and the University of Denver's public good mission. For more information, please visit www.du.edu/studentlife/ie-education.

STAY CONNECTED

Follow us on social media for updates on A Community Table and other DU Grand Challenges Programs.



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@CCESL



facebook.com/uofdenver
facebook.com/DUCCESL



Instagram.com/uofdenver
Instagram.com/du_ccesl

FOR MORE INFO

Visit du.edu/ACommunityTable, email us at CCESL.ACommunityTable@du.edu or call us at 303.871.3706



While this year A Community Table conversations will occur online, and given restrictions on in-person convening due to COVID-19, it is important for hosts who will be hosting from their private residence to know:

Unfortunately, because we have no control over your home or property, the University cannot indemnify you for any unforeseen injuries that might occur during A Community Table. By agreeing to host A Community Table in your home, you agree to accept and assume full responsibility and liability for any injury, theft, or loss to host or your property, your guests, agents and/or employees at any time and from any cause related to the event, or in transit to or from said event. This means that you expressly agree to release the University of Denver (Colorado Seminary) and/or any of its agents and/or employees from any and all liability for any injury, theft or loss, and you agree to provide and pay for your own insurance.