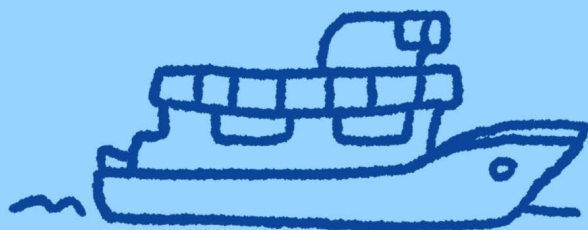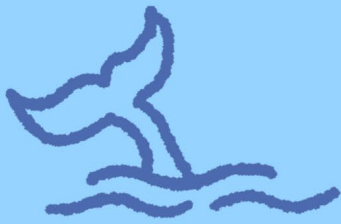# THE 4C TOOLBOX

Engaging Users to Transform Public Spaces and Services

A Guide to Participatory Innovation

The 4C Toolbox

Engaging Users to Transform Public Spaces and Services

A Guide to Participatory Innovation

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Introduction

Welcome aboard the Baltic Urban Knowledge Hubs project, where we are embarking on an exciting journey to reshape public spaces into dynamic, user-centered informational community hubs. Co-funded by the European Union under the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme, the Baltic Urban Knowledge Hubs project (BALTIC UKH) addresses the growing need for spaces and services that support access to and the exchange of reliable information across the Baltic Sea Region and beyond.

Today, many public spaces fall short of meeting user needs because the voices of users are often left out of the design process. While the value of user engagement is increasingly acknowledged, the absence of clear standards and best practices remains a major challenge.

To meet this need, BALTIC UKH partners have developed the 4C Toolbox for User Engagement and Participation—a research-based resource to guide the participatory design of hybrid, flexible informational spaces.

The 4C Toolbox offers a structured approach to creating Urban Knowledge Hubs (UKHs)—dynamic, multifunctional spaces that foster collaboration, learning, and innovation. While the concept of UKHs originated in the library sector and is rooted in the earlier Wissen Bauen 2025 project, it is designed to be transferable to a wide range of public service providers. UKHs aim to become adaptable community centers where citizens can connect, engage, and access both physical and digital resources, supporting diverse public services beyond libraries.

4C TOOLBOX ON PAGE 20

The BALTIC UKH project advances this vision through the introduction of the 4C Toolbox, where '4C' represents the Foresee principle—anchored in the four pillars of user engagement: co-creation, co-design, co-production, and co-evaluation. This principle emphasizes the importance of proactively planning for the future needs of public services in collaboration with those who will ultimately use them. By incorporating Foresee, the 4C Toolbox ensures that public spaces remain flexible, adaptable, and capable of evolving alongside societal changes, technological advancements, and shifting user needs.

Drawing on navigation and maritime imagery—such as lighthouses, compasses, and binoculars—the 4C Toolbox helps public service providers navigate the complexities of user-centered design. Just as a lighthouse guides ships through fog, the 4C Toolbox helps create spaces that meet user needs, ensuring they remain relevant and adaptable to changing circumstances.

Key Qualities of Urban Knowledge Hubs

UKHs are multifaceted spaces that operate on various levels to serve different needs. These levels include:

- **Macro Level:** UKHs serve as gateways to global knowledge, linking users to academic resources, digital networks, and societal innovations, supporting knowledge-based societies.
- **Meso Level:** As local hubs, UKHs foster networking and collaboration between academia, businesses, and citizens. They promote open exchanges and create interactive spaces to address local challenges and opportunities.
- **Institutional Level**: UKHs are designed for sustainability and adaptability, integrating tools that support efficient operations and long-term viability. They are equipped to evolve with changing work cultures and digital advancements.
- **Individual Level:** Offering personalized learning and working environments, UKHs support both independent study and collaborative engagement, catering to a wide range of activities from quiet study to group collaboration.

These aspects—flexibility, sustainability, and collaboration—are underpinned by principles such as accessibility, ensuring inclusivity for all users. Together, they transform libraries and public spaces into ongoing hubs for learning, innovation, and community engagement.

The BALTIC UKH pilot projects, which will be described in detail, aimed to explore all or selected aspects of the UKH concept.

Development of the Toolbox

The 4C Toolbox was developed based on insights through pilot projects at BALTIC UKH partner institutions: the State and University Library in Hamburg (Germany), the National Library of Latvia (Riga), and the Royal Danish Library (Copenhagen and Herning). OsloMet (Norway) provided initial conceptual insights into user engagement and participation and led the iterative development, which was informed by the pilot projects and continuous feedback.

The project officially launched in August 2023 with an onsite partner meeting in Hamburg, where the partners developed a joint work plan and discussed participation-centered concepts and frameworks.

Following this, each partner formulated individual work plans in close collaboration with their local Associated Organizations (AOs):

- Aarhus: Business and Social Sciences at the University of Aarhus
- Copenhagen: The Faculty of Social Science at the University of Copenhagen
- Hamburg: The Academy of Sciences and Humanities, the Association for Hamburg History, and the State Agency for Civic Education
- Riga: The Young Architects Club ATELPA

These AOs played a crucial role in identifying end-user groups, designing participatory formats, and selecting effective communication channels. Between November 2023 and January 2024, approximately 150 people participated in the pilot projects through focus groups, digital sessions, and onsite workshops, providing valuable feedback on the new spaces and services.

Following the ideation phase, the piloting partners from Germany, Latvia, and Denmark developed initial concepts, which were presented and discussed during an internal meeting and an international online feedback workshop in March 2024. Physical modifications began in Germany and Latvia, while additional engagement and feedback activities helped finalize the design processes in Denmark.

The Toolbox continued to evolve with feedback from key events in 2024 such as the German Library Congress, the Bibliotheca Baltica Symposium, and expert workshops. Internal meetings and focus group discussions also contributed to its development and finalization. Two additional AOs were involved in this process:

- Bibliotheca Baltica: A registered association for libraries in the Baltic Sea Region
- The Provincial and Municipal Public Library Joseph Conrad Korzeniowski in Gdańsk, Poland

Lastly, a committee of experts with extensive experience in participatory practices reviewed the preliminary draft to ensure alignment with best practices in the field, and a final conference with experts and experienced service providers was held for feedback and dissemination of the toolbox in summer 2025, right before all project activities were wrapped up.
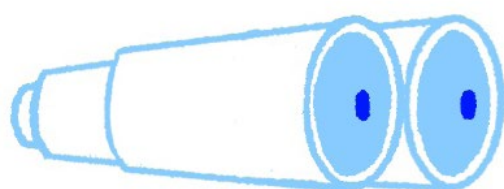
Pilot Projects

Shaping the Future of UKHs
through Pilot Projects

The pilot projects served as exploratory voyages through a vast, complex information landscape, helping to foresee and navigate the evolving needs of Urban Knowledge Hubs, with each project contributing to a deeper understanding of user engagement and participation in creating these dynamic, future-ready spaces.

Aarhus University Library

CONTEXT AND ROLE OF AARHUS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Aarhus University Library (AUL), part of the Royal Danish Library, serves the Business and Social Sciences (BSS) faculty across multiple locations, including Bartholins Allé and Fuglesangs Allé in Aarhus, as well as in Herning. The Herning campus, located an hour west of Aarhus, offers programs in engineering, business development, global management, economics, and administration. The Herning campus library plays a central role in supporting these disciplines, providing academic resources, study environments, and community engagement initiatives.

As part of a broader university initiative to enhance student engagement, the library in Herning underwent a major transformation. The relocation to a central, ground-floor location increased visibility, accessibility, and usability for students, faculty, and the public. Previously on the second floor, the library was difficult to locate, particularly for first-time visitors. The move aligned with the university's goal of fostering an attractive and dynamic learning environment, encouraging students to engage more with academic and social activities.

LIBRARY TRANSFORMATION: ENHANCING ACCESSIBILITY AND ENGAGEMENT

The new library space balances individual study and group work, incorporating quiet study areas and collaborative workstations. A silent study space doubles as a flexible area for workshops and teaching, including DataLab sessions. Natural materials, plants, and improved acoustics create a welcoming atmosphere. Proximity to the canteen allows students to transition between study and social activities, reinforcing the library's role as an integrated academic hub.

A defining feature of the transformation was student participation in the design process. Engagement initiatives such as Make a Wish, Cake for Ideas, and interactive workshops allowed students to shape the new space. During the Make a Wish initiative, students submitted anonymous suggestions for improvements, fostering creative input. The Cake for Ideas event provided an informal setting for discussion, where students exchanged ideas with library staff over coffee and cake. Using ground plans and 3D-printed models, students sketched and built their ideal study environment, offering insights into study habits, space preferences, and library services. These inputs were integrated into the final design, ensuring the library reflected user needs.

INNOVATIVE ADDITIONS: DATALAB AND MATERIALS LIBRARY

Alongside spatial redesign, the library introduced new functional elements to meet evolving academic needs. A key innovation introduced was the DataLab, supporting digital literacy, research methodologies, and computational learning. The DataLab provides workshops, seminars, and open lab sessions on data visualization, programming, and digital research tools. Designed as a hybrid concept, it offers in-person and online learning opportunities, ensuring accessibility and flexibility. Its integration within the library reinforces its role as a modern learning environment blending traditional and digital resources.

Another major addition was the Materials Library, supporting hands-on learning for business and engineering students. This resource provides access to physical materials, including metals, sustainable materials, wood, ceramics, plastics, and composites. Engineering components such as ball bearings, formworks, and molds allow students to explore material properties firsthand. Faculty members can borrow sets of materials for lectures and workshops, enhancing practical applications.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ACADEMIC RESOURCES

Beyond serving students and faculty, AUL Herning Campus Library is among the few sites outside Denmark's major cities with public access to Royal Danish Library's digitized collections. This ensures equal access to cultural heritage materials and resources across urban and rural communities. The library provides Danish newspaper archives dating back to the 17th century, widely used for research, genealogy, and business history. Additionally, digitized TV and radio archives preserve Danish cultural heritage, while a collection of Danish cinema and television commercials documents changes in advertising, consumer behavior, and media history. While students and faculty remain the primary users, the library's service model and design consider public access needs, ensuring an inclusive environment.

AUL HERNING CAMPUS LIBRARY AS AN URBAN KNOWLEDGE HUB

The transformation of the Herning Campus Library illustrates how a university library can function as an Urban Knowledge Hub. At a macro level, it connects local users to global knowledge through digital literacy initiatives and access to cultural heritage resources. On a meso level, it strengthens networks of collaboration by involving students in the design process and supporting partnerships with faculty and the wider community. Institutionally, the redesign aligns with Aarhus University's broader goals of innovation, accessibility, and cross-disciplinary learning. At the individual level, spaces like the DataLab and Materials Library reflect student input and are tailored to support personal academic growth, digital competencies, and professional development.

Copenhagen University Library

CONTEXT AND ROLE OF COPENHAGEN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

The Copenhagen University Library, part of the Royal Danish Library, serves as the faculty library for Social Sciences at the University of Copenhagen. Centrally located in Denmark's capital, the library supports 6.600 students, faculty, and researchers, offering comprehensive academic resources, diverse study spaces, and integrated course offerings. Its role extends beyond providing access to books and databases; it plays an active part in teaching information literacy, supporting digital competencies, and fostering student success. As a library committed to adaptability, it continuously evolves to meet the changing needs of students, faculty, and university leadership.

STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION TO STRENGTHEN DIGITAL LITERACY

To better support student success in a rapidly changing academic environment, the Copenhagen University Library expanded its role beyond that of a traditional academic space. It transformed into a participatory knowledge environment focused on reducing barriers to information access and strengthening digital literacy. In collaboration with the university's Learning Center, the library developed user-driven initiatives to help students overcome common challenges—particularly "library anxiety," where students feel overwhelmed or unsure about navigating academic resources.

Recognizing that many students, especially first-year and international students, struggle to access and evaluate information effectively, the library introduced low-threshold, interactive solutions aimed at building confidence and core digital skills. The guiding metaphor of "building bridges" shaped the approach—just as Denmark's infrastructure connects separated regions, the library aimed to bridge the gap between students and the knowledge, services, and competencies they need to thrive academically.

INNOVATIVE TOOLS AND CO-CREATION: TWINE GAME AND BIBTIPS

To address challenges in digital navigation and information literacy, the library developed Murder on the Boolean Express, an interactive Twine game. This choose-your-own-adventure experience was designed to teach Boolean logic for literature searching in an engaging, gamified format. The tool leveraged Twine, an open-source platform for nonlinear storytelling, to guide users through a mystery narrative that taught academic search techniques along the way.

The game's development followed a collaborative process informed by extensive student interviews. In December 2024, an early version of the game was playtested during a student workshop at the library. Over a three-hour session, students provided feedback on usability, storyline, and overall experience. Their suggestions—such as enabling players to revisit previous choices or creating alternate story paths—were incorporated into the final design. The overwhelmingly positive response confirmed that the tool offered a fun, effective, and approachable introduction to core digital skills.

Alongside the Twine game, the project introduced BibTips (or LibTips in English)—brief, focused information literacy sessions aimed at small groups. These talks were designed to require minimal time commitment, making them accessible even for students under academic pressure. BibTips were delivered both in the physical library and online, allowing flexibility while tailoring content to each student's needs. Like the game, the BibTips learning materials were shaped by student feedback by way of a follow-up survey, ensuring relevance and reinforcing the UKH model's emphasis on user-driven design.

COPENHAGEN LIBRARY AS AN URBAN KNOWLEDGE HUB

Copenhagen University Library illustrates how a university library can serve as an Urban Knowledge Hub by integrating global research access with local academic support. At a macro level, it connects students to global knowledge networks through digital and information literacy initiatives, including innovative tools like the Twine game. On a meso level, it fosters collaboration with partners such as the Learning Center to co-create tailored services that address student needs, including efforts to reduce library anxiety. Institutionally, the library supports the university's goals of creating modern, flexible learning environments by expanding beyond traditional support and embracing digital tools. At the individual level, students benefit from personalized learning experiences—such as interactive resources and short talks—that enhance digital literacy and build confidence in navigating academic systems.

Hamburg State and University Library

CONTEXT AND ROLE OF HAMBURG STATE AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

The Carl von Ossietzky State and University Library Hamburg (SUB Hamburg) is the largest academic library in Hamburg, serving as a central resource for the University of Hamburg, local public universities, public institutions, and the general public. As a state-run institution under the Department of Science, Research, and Gender Equality, the library provides access to extensive research materials, archives, and literature while playing a crucial role in preserving historical knowledge. As Hamburg's legal deposit library, it ensures the city's intellectual and cultural output is archived for future generations.

A NEW ROLE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

As part of the BALTIC UKH project, SUB Hamburg explored ways to foster democratic engagement, knowledge sharing, and historical-political discourse within a participatory public space. The UKH model, a concept originally developed at the library, guided this transformation beyond traditional archiving and research into an active forum for discussion, education, and civic participation. Central to this effort was the redesign of a former reading room into the Carl von Ossietzky Forum, a multifunctional space dedicated to active memory culture, named after the Nobel Peace Prize-winning anti-militarist journalist and anti-fascist Carl von Ossietzky. This transformation aligned with the broader objectives of UKHs by positioning the library as a bridge between academia and society, promoting interdisciplinary exchange and public dialogue.

The Carl von Ossietzky Forum's development was marked by a participatory design process involving key organizations, including SUB Hamburg, the Academy of Sciences, the State Agency for Civic Education, and the Association for Hamburg History. These collaborators helped shape the Forum as an interdisciplinary hub for knowledge transfer and democratic discourse through workshops and discussions that defined its themes, programming, and layout.

Youth participation was central, with 11th-grade students using Design Thinking to prototype their vision for the Forum. Their input emphasized the need for a flexible, welcoming space that highlighted historical and political events while encouraging both study and social interaction. In addition, experts from museums, foundations, and academic institutions contributed to the design through workshops focused on democratic engagement, historical reflection, and civic discourse, helping to shape the Forum's interactive formats and exhibits.

Public engagement sessions further refined the design, ensuring the space remained responsive to community needs. While some participants wanted to retain elements of the old reading room, others favored more interactive formats.

The final design of the Forum offers modular furniture for flexible use and plug-and-play technology for easy event setup, balancing structured programming—debates, exhibitions, workshops—with informal, spontaneous gatherings. By combining interactive features with historical themes, the Forum provides an accessible space to explore topics like democracy, antifascism, freedom of the press, and digital literacy.

FORUM LAUNCH AND IMPACT

In October 2024, the Forum was inaugurated, marking its transition from concept to reality. The launch event featured short speeches, musical performances, and world-café-style discussions, emphasizing the Forum's role in fostering historical awareness, democracy, and collaborative learning. The event showcased to the Associated Organizations, students and local community how the collaborative design process shaped the space, with contributions from partner organizations, workshop participants, and the community visible in its final form.

HAMBURG STATE AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY AS AN URBAN KNOWLEDGE HUB

SUB Hamburg exemplifies how a library can function as an Urban Knowledge Hub by bridging global historical-political discourse with local community engagement. At the macro level, it promotes democratic dialogue on topics like democracy, freedom, and history through the Carl von Ossietzky Forum, engaging a broad audience beyond academia. On the meso level, the library fosters interdisciplinary collaboration with partners like the Academy of Sciences and local civic education organizations, strengthening ties to regional networks. Institutionally, the Forum's transformation enhances civic engagement and aligns with the library's goals of knowledge dissemination. At the individual level, the participatory design and flexible, interactive formats provide personalized learning experiences that encourage reflection on societal issues and promote individual engagement with history and democratic discourse.

National Library of Latvia

CONTEXT AND ROLE OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF LATVIA

Founded in 1919, the National Library of Latvia (NLL) is the country's leading cultural hub, providing access to books, manuscripts, and digital resources. It plays a vital role in research, education, and community engagement, ensuring widespread access to knowledge. The library's mission is to facilitate continuous education and growth of the Latvian society, strengthening independence and democracy in Latvia. As part of the BALTIC UKH project, NLL reimagined its role, focusing on youth engagement, digital literacy, and collaborative learning.

LIBRARY TRANSFORMATION: YOUTH SPACE REVITALIZATION

The project revitalized the underused Youth Space on the Mezzanine (M) level, improving its functionality and visibility. In collaboration with the Young Architects' Club ATELPA, the space was redesigned with modular furniture and flexible layouts, supporting individual and group study. Transformable workspaces, sound-absorbing solutions, and ergonomic seating encouraged diverse working styles. A participatory approach ensured that both young people and library staff co-created the space through workshops.

In late 2023, two workshops guided the design process. The first, attended by 37 library professionals, addressed challenges in serving young users and improving the Mezzanine level's interactivity. The second workshop, involving 24 young participants, focused on their expectations for the space. They prototyped ideas for adaptable furniture and distinct study zones, ensuring the design met user needs.

INNOVATIVE ADDITIONS: DIGITAL TOOLS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A key aspect of the Youth Space transformation was integrating digital tools, enhancing creative exploration and technological literacy. The introduction of 3D printers enabled hands-on learning and digital modeling skills. These tools promoted innovation, problem-solving, and accessibility for students from various disciplines.

The Youth Space also fosters informal education and cultural engagement, offering areas for board games, presentation rehearsals, and group discussions. It links to curated library collections, providing free access resources for young audiences. This combination of study and socialization aligns with the library's goal to support lifelong learning.

Even before the project, the Youth Space was a vibrant hub for events and activities, thanks to the dedication of library staff. It was home to programs such as language clubs, board game evenings, speed jigsaw puzzling, improvisational theater, career events, and reading groups. Teachers frequently used it for field trips and extracurricular activities. However, unlike other reading rooms, the space was underutilized outside scheduled events.

The Youth Space's inauguration on November 5, 2024, highlighted its new features, including custom furniture, digital tools, and a reimagined layout. Over 50 visitors attended, celebrating the success of the public-private partnership and the collaborative effort to create a user-driven space.

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF LATVIA AS AN URBAN KNOWLEDGE HUB

The National Library of Latvia serves as an Urban Knowledge Hub, connecting local communities with global knowledge through digital resources and cultural exchange. At the macro level, its extensive digitized collections strengthen international intellectual connections and promote access to global knowledge. On a meso level, the library fosters youth engagement through participatory design, encouraging collaboration and empowering young people to shape their surroundings. At the institutional level, the recent renovation aligns with NLL's strategic goals to enhance digital literacy, creativity, and lifelong learning through adaptive and future-ready design. At the individual level, the Youth Space offers tailored experiences that support skill-building, creativity, and self-directed learning, positioning the library as a modern environment for personal growth and innovation.

WELCOME
TO THE NEXT
PHASE OF OUR
JOURNEY!

4C User Engagement and Participation Toolbox

Foreseeing Future Spaces and Services

The 4C User Engagement and Participation Toolbox is a hands-on workbook designed to help public service providers navigate the path toward creating meaningful, user-centered spaces and services. Developed for use across the Baltic Sea Region and beyond, this toolbox supports the process of foreseeing, creating, and cultivating environments that empower citizens and promote informed decision-making.

Like a compass guiding through uncharted waters, the toolbox draws on insights from four pilot projects in library contexts. It offers a foundation for designing flexible, hybrid spaces that can adapt to both urban and rural settings. By fostering digital literacy, social innovation, and active participation, the toolbox supports efforts to encourage engagement and connect communities.

Phases of the Toolbox

As we embark on this journey together, the 4C User Engagement and Participation Toolbox is designed to guide us through five clear and actionable phases:

1. AIMS AND GOALS

The process begins by defining the context, motivations, and aspirations that drive the collaboration. At this stage, primary goals and expected outcomes are identified, and a course is set for how success will be measured.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Next, the roles and timelines for each collaborator's participation are mapped out, ensuring that the process remains organized, inclusive, and effective.

3. CONTRIBUTIONS

In this phase, the resources, skills, and expertise each participant brings to the table are identified, building a strong foundation for collective efforts.

4. ACCOUNTABILITIES

Here, the roles and responsibilities of each participant are clearly defined—specifying who is in charge of which tasks and who holds decision-making authority—to ensure every crew member knows their role on board and how they contribute.

5. EVALUATION

Lastly, progress is assessed, meaningful change is anchored, and the way forward is charted in dialogue with collaborators and other stakeholders.

How Each Phase Works

Each phase of the toolbox is crafted to be practical, actionable, and supportive of our journey, and includes the following:

- Guiding Questions to help define the purpose of the phase.
- Conceptual Tools such as frameworks, methods, and techniques that will support work.
- Examples drawn from pilot studies, offering real-world applications that demonstrate the journey.

By combining structured guidance, actionable tools, and lived examples, the 4C Toolbox equips public service providers to move from understanding community needs to delivering impactful, user-centered services. Whether in urban or rural settings, this resource empowers the creation of spaces and services that make a lasting difference in the communities served, steering efforts toward the shared goal of stronger, more connected public spaces.
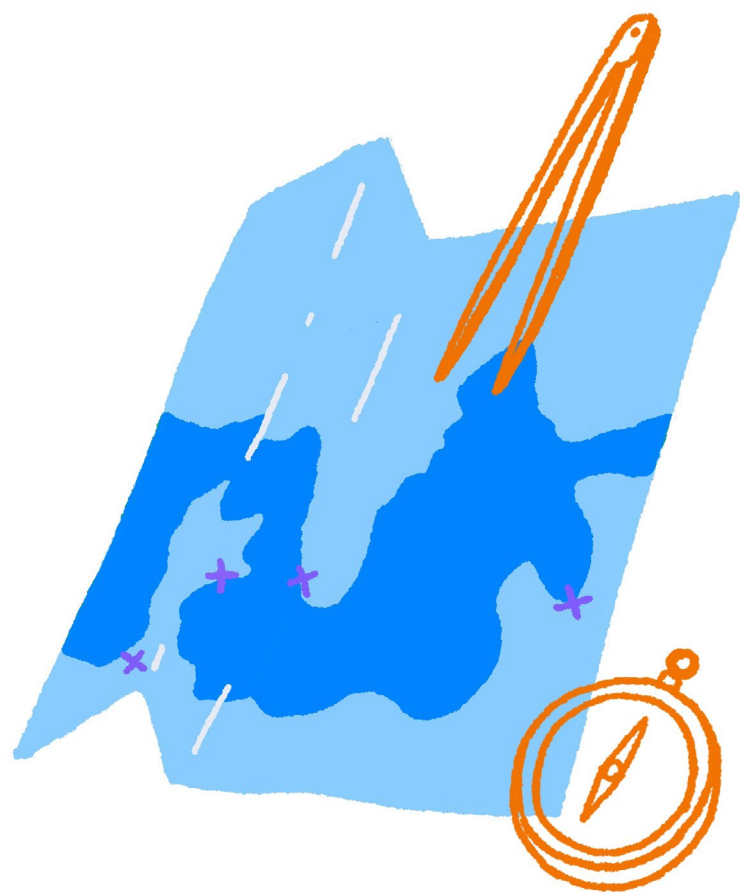
Aims and Goals

GUIDING QUESTION

What shared destination are we sailing toward?
What goals guide our course, and where do our
individual journeys align?

Introduction

Before setting sail on any collaborative journey, it is essential to chart a clear course. Defining shared aims and goals anchors the process, ensuring all collaborators—whether institutions, communities, or individuals—move in the same direction. It is not only about identifying the needs of diverse user groups, but also about articulating broader aspirations: creating flexible, participatory, and user-driven public spaces and services that adapt to changing realities.

Tool: Outcome Mapping Chart

The Outcome Mapping Chart serves as a navigational tool for this phase. Like plotting coordinates on a maritime map, it helps teams set intentions, connect them to institutional missions, and identify measurable outcomes. In pilot projects, it functioned as a compass to align goals with both local community needs and broader institutional visions, guiding early collaboration and maintaining a focus on inclusive, user-centered design.

Each collaborator fills out the chart individually; the results are then discussed collectively to identify where goals converge, diverge, or require adjustment. This open, reflective approach helps build strong foundations for effective co-creation.

The chart guides teams in identifying:

- **Missions/Policies** – The institutional or organizational mandates that anchor the collaboration.
- **Goals/Aims** – The overarching objectives that steer the effort.
- **Specific Outcomes** – Tangible results expected from the collaboration.
- **Beneficiaries** – The individuals or groups who will benefit from the project, ensuring a win-win for all involved.
- **Measurement Criteria** – Clear markers to track progress and assess success along the way.

OUTCOME MAPPING CHART

MISSION/ POLICIES	GOALS/AIMS	SPECIFIC OUTCOMES	BENEFICIARIES	MEASUREMENT CRITERIA
Connect the project to organizational missions, such as improving access to knowledge or fostering digital skills.	*Define specific, actionable goals (e.g., empower students, promote collaboration, enhance accessibility).*	*Identify measurable results, like increased engagement, improved resources, or better user satisfaction.*	*Specify target groups, including students, staff, and community members.*	*Develop quantifiable metrics, such as resource utilization rates or feedback on usability.*

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Pilot Project Aims and Insights

The following reflections highlight how the Outcome Mapping Chart guided the pilot projects, helping to align goals, engage collaborators, and shape participatory design processes in each location.

HERNING   **ALIGNING LIBRARY SPACES WITH INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY**

Herning's pilot project focused on rethinking library services and spatial design to align with broader university strategies. The project aimed to create a student-centered and engaging environment that met both academic and local community needs. The Outcome Mapping Chart played a key role in structuring this process by ensuring that participatory design was integrated into university strategies. It helped identify the importance of involving faculty, students, and library staff from the outset, allowing the project to systematically address user needs while strengthening connections between learning spaces and campus life.

COPENHAGEN   **REDUCING BARRIERS AND SUPPORTING DIGITAL LITERACY**

Copenhagen's pilot project sought to engage a broader and more diverse group of students, particularly those at risk of disengagement or academic struggles. The library aimed to create accessible resources to reduce "library anxiety" and promote digital literacy. The Outcome Mapping Chart was instrumental in maintaining focus during organizational changes, ensuring that measurable outcomes—such as improved digital skills and reduced barriers to resource access—remained at the center of the project. By mapping these goals at the outset, the project team was able to adjust strategies and ensure that interventions, including participatory learning formats, were directly aligned with student needs.

HAMBURG **STRENGTHENING CO-CREATION ACROSS ACADEMIC AND CIVIC COMMUNITIES**

In Hamburg, the goal was to foster deeper collaboration between the academic world and the wider public. The challenge was the absence of existing co-creation frameworks within the library context. The Outcome Mapping Chart helped establish a shared vision between library staff, students, and civic partners, enabling them to define common goals around interaction, shared learning, and public engagement—laying the groundwork for new participatory models.

RIGA **CREATING A FLEXIBLE, YOUTH-CENTERED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Riga focused on transforming its Youth Space into a vibrant, multifunctional hub for creativity and learning. With features like 3D printers and flexible furniture, the project aimed to empower young people to explore, experiment, and take ownership of their space. The Outcome Mapping Chart structured brainstorming and co-creation sessions, helping the team define priorities and map the transformation in practical terms—linking spatial design directly to the aspirations of its young users.
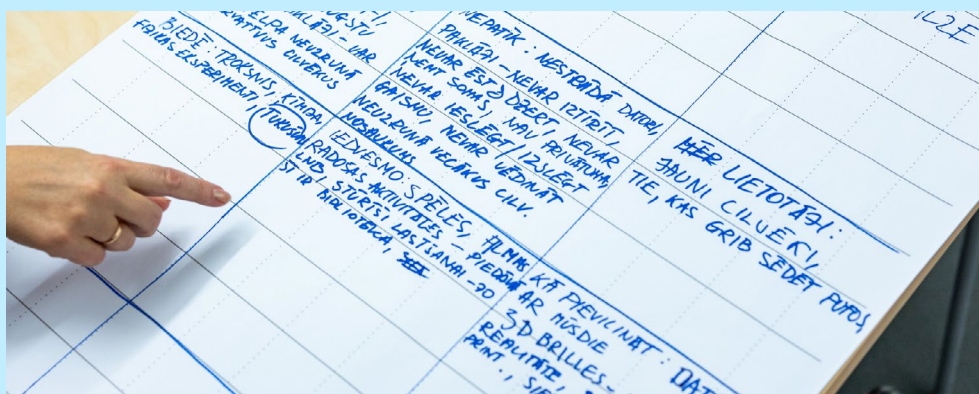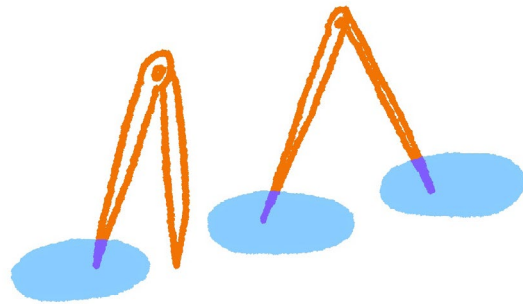
Conclusion

As the first phase of the toolbox, Aims and Goals sets a shared direction for each collaborative voyage—establishing purpose before the sails are raised. In all pilot projects, the Outcome Mapping Chart served as a guiding tool: clarifying intent, aligning collaborators, and ensuring a common understanding of the destination.

Whether aligning with institutional strategies in Herning, supporting vulnerable students in Copenhagen, bridging civic and academic spheres in Hamburg, or designing youth-centered spaces in Riga, this tool anchored each initiative in clearly defined objectives while allowing flexibility as new insights surfaced.

Much like a compass provides steady guidance through shifting winds, the Outcome Mapping Chart balanced structure with adaptability—helping teams navigate complexity without losing sight of their purpose. It launched each project with intention while leaving space for exploration, setting the rhythm for meaningful and transformative collaboration.
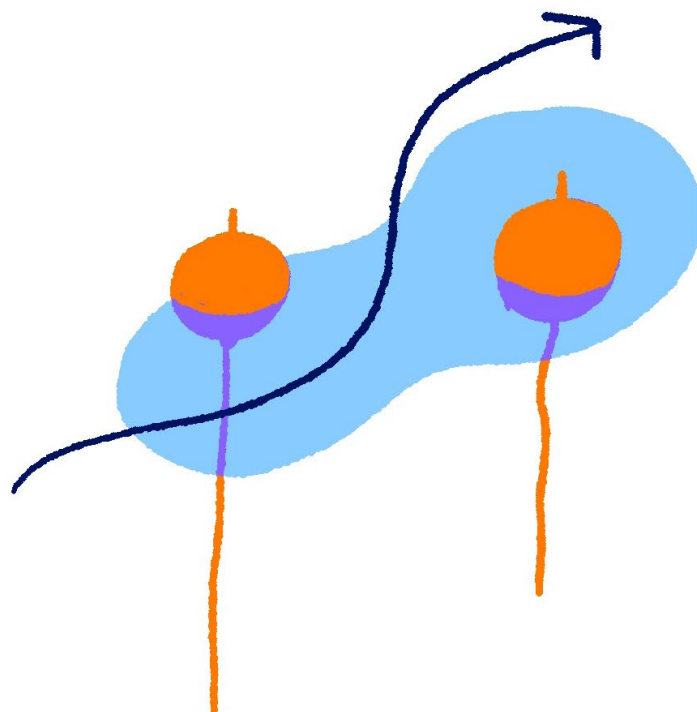
Engagement

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GUIDING QUESTION

How is the voyage planned together, and when are fellow crew members brought on board?

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Introduction

Setting sail on a collaborative journey means knowing when and how to bring others aboard. Effective engagement is the wind in the sails of participatory design—driving momentum, shaping direction, and anchoring the project in real user needs.

Tool: Engagement Typology

Thoughtful, phased engagement ensures that collaborators are meaningfully involved at the right times. In the BALTIC UKH pilot projects, collaborators were engaged at various stages, from early planning to final evaluation. This flexible approach allowed each project to adapt to its unique context while keeping users actively involved throughout.

To help structure this process, the Engagement Typology offers a clear framework divided into four distinct phases:

- **Co-Create:** Collaborators are involved in the initial planning and conceptualization of the project, exploring possibilities and strategies.
- **Co-Design:** End-users engage in ideation, prototyping, and testing during the design phase.
- **Co-Production:** Collaborators contribute to the implementation phase, refining services or projects based on feedback.
- **Co-Evaluation**: Participants assess the outcomes and provide feedback for future improvements.

This typology can be tailored to any collaboration—some projects may focus on just one or two phases, while others may involve users across all four. The aim is to chart an engagement strategy that matches both the goals of the project and the capacities of those involved.

ENGAGEMENT TYPOLOGY

CO-CREATE	*Invite collaborators to help set the course during the planning phase. Use workshops or interviews to identify needs, spark ideas, and shape the project's strategic vision.*
CO-DESIGN	*Engage users in generating and testing ideas. Prototype services, spaces, or tools together and refine based on their input.*
CO-PRODUCTION	*Provide opportunities for collaborators to take part in delivering and adjusting the project as it unfolds.*
CO-EVALUATE	*Create feedback loops through surveys, focus groups, or open forums. Use the insights gathered to reflect, iterate, and strengthen outcomes.*
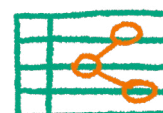
Pilot Project Engagement Strategies

The following reflections illustrate how each pilot project applied co-creation methodologies to actively involve users in shaping library spaces and services.

HERNING **ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION THROUGH DIVERSE FEEDBACK CHANNELS**

Herning's engagement strategy was structured across co-creation and co-evaluation phases, ensuring that students played an active role throughout the transformation process. A variety of engagement methods—including focus group interviews, a Cake for Ideas event, and „wish-boxes"—encouraged students to share their ideas and preferences. This input directly informed the architects' designs, shaping a student-centered library environment. The co-evaluation phase included surveys, in-person consultations, and workshops to assess the functionality of the DataLab and other new spaces. Allocating ample time for iterative feedback proved essential, reinforcing the importance of diverse engagement methods in fostering meaningful user input.

COPENHAGEN **ITERATIVE COLLABORATION TO DEVELOP LEARNING TOOLS**

In Copenhagen, engagement spanned all four phases of the typology. The Learning Center played a key role in understanding students' research workflows and gathering insights through a series of productive inter-organizational meetings. During the co-creation phase, students collaborated in the development of learning materials and tested interactive tools. In the co-design phase, library staff worked alongside student employees to create and refine the Twine-based game Murder on the Boolean Express, providing feedback on its usability and interactivity. Co-production enabled students to actively engage with the game, shaping its ongoing development. The co-evaluation phase included focus groups and surveys aimed at refining the interface and enhancing the overall learning experience. While the use of anonymized findings limited opportunities for direct follow-up, recurring feedback loops helped ensure the project remained responsive to student needs.

HAMBURG   EXPANDING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATIONS

Hamburg's engagement strategy spanned all four phases of the co-creation framework, with a strong emphasis on collaboration with Associated Organizations to broaden public participation. During the co-creation phase, the project team and partners jointly defined goals and identified target groups through workshops and brainstorming sessions. The co-design phase featured participatory workshops grounded in a Design Thinking approach, where participants visualized ideas on blueprints and built prototypes using materials such as LEGO, styrofoam, and cardboard. In the co-production phase, users engaged with the space, though limited opening hours posed some challenges. The co-evaluation phase generated feedback through open sessions and a centrally placed suggestion box. While separate workshops for different target groups worked well initially, they later created challenges in managing diverse expectations, highlighting the need for a broader perspective in the early planning phases.

RIGA   CO-DESIGNING A YOUTH SPACE WITH STUDENTS AND ARCHITECTS

In Riga, the National Library of Latvia adopted a co-design approach, ensuring that students and young people remained actively involved throughout the project. Initial consultations gathered user preferences and expectations, which guided the design process. Students participated in creative workshops led by architects from ATELPA, co-developing the layout and features of the Youth Space. Their feedback on modular furniture, 3D printing options, and other design elements was incorporated iteratively, reinforcing a sense of ownership over the space. Qualitative input from focus groups and creative workshops led to user-driven interior modifications, demonstrating the value of participatory engagement in shaping functional and inclusive learning environments. The effectiveness of the redesign was assessed during the co-evaluation phase through surveys and workshops held after implementation.
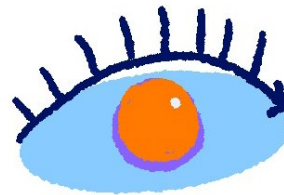
Conclusion

As the Aims and Goals phase set the course, the Engagement phase brought the crew—users, collaborators, and stakeholders—on board to navigate together. Across all pilot projects, co-creation turned design into a shared voyage, ensuring spaces and services were built with users, not just for them.

From open-ended ideation in Herning to hands-on co-design in Riga and continuous evaluation in Hamburg and Copenhagen, engagement was the wind in the sails—keeping projects aligned with real needs and adaptable to change. The Engagement Typology served as a navigational tool, helping teams involve the right people at the right time and stay on course.

Through this collaborative process, each initiative forged lasting partnerships and ensured that outcomes remained relevant, resilient, and ready to meet new horizons.

Contributions

GUIDING QUESTION

Who brings what aboard—and how do their skills, knowledge, and resources help move the project forward?

Introduction

Every successful co-creative voyage relies on a well-equipped crew. Projects sail smoothly when the different collaborators bring their unique expertise, skills, and resources to the table.

Tool: Contribution Checklist

Serving as a navigation tool, the checklist helps teams chart their capacities, clarify responsibilities, and ensure their vessel is well-provisioned for the journey ahead. Just as every crew member contributes to the voyage, it maps out the essential skills, resources, and commitments needed for a successful expedition.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- *Administrative Navigation: Who steers the ship through legal, logistical, and project management waters?*
- *Financial Provisions: What funding streams keep the voyage afloat? Who oversees the purse and ensures equitable distribution?*

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TECHNOLOGY

- *Onboard Facilities:* What physical infrastructure, tools, or spaces are available to support collaboration?
- *Digital Navigation Tools:* What software, platforms, or tech expertise keep the crew connected and on course?

PERSONNEL AND EXPERTISE

- *Crew and Specialists:* Who's on board—staff, faculty, students, volunteers? What roles do they play?
- *Knowledge Keepers:* What expertise do contributors bring? How will subject-matter experts guide the journey?

TIME AND COMMITMENT

- *Wind in the Sails:* What level of energy, time, and regular input is expected from each collaborator?

UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS

- *Hidden Treasures:* Are there additional assets—networks, access, materials—that could offer extra wind in the sails?

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Pilot Project Contributions

Each pilot project was supported by a combination of institutional leadership, financial backing, and interdisciplinary expertise. These contributions ensured that projects were effectively implemented while also highlighting areas for improvement in long-term collaboration.

HERNING **INTEGRATING ARCHITECTURAL EXPERTISE AND UNIVERSITY SUPPORT**

The project in Herning was a collaborative effort between the library, faculty, and external partners, drawing on financial and logistical support from the university. Administrative support was provided by the library, while an architect from the Faculty of Business and Social Sciences contributed expertise in spatial design. The library staff played a key role in securing funds for workshops and travel, with the university supplying infrastructure and equipment. Personnel contributions included close collaboration between library staff, faculty, and student volunteers, ensuring a participatory approach to design. The involvement of both library professionals and architects helped align spatial planning with student needs, demonstrating the value of interdisciplinary expertise in shaping learning environments.

COPENHAGEN **LEVERAGING DIGITAL LITERACY AND OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

In Copenhagen, the project benefited from a broad network of collaborators with the library taking the lead in coordination and implementation. Key support came from student counsellors and faculty members, who provided insights into student needs and helped promote the initiative. The library secured funding and infrastructure while also utilizing open-source tools such as Twine and an Open Educational Resources (OER) platform to create and host digital learning materials. Library staff contributed expertise in addressing library anxiety, digital literacy, and information-seeking behavior, facilitating workshops and providing ongoing student support. Collaboration with the Learning Center, by way of exploratory meetings to sketch a profile of the target group further strengthened the project by integrating professional insights into student workflows.
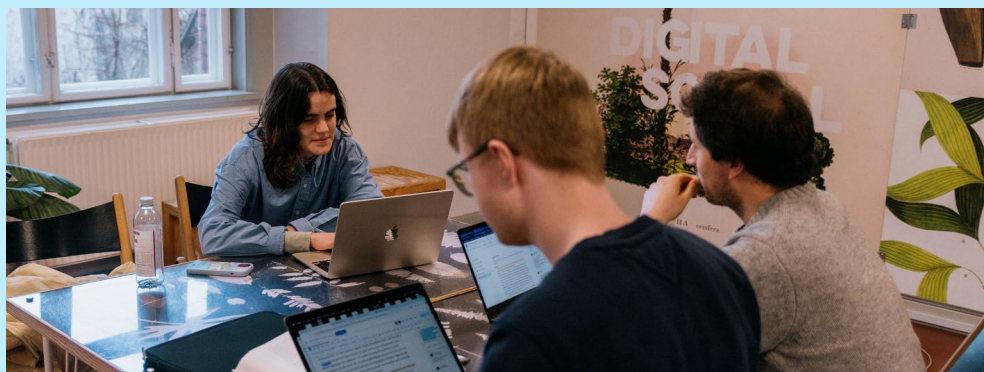
HAMBURG   MULTIDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION AND MEMORY CULTURE EXPERTISE

Hamburg's pilot project was anchored by the library, which provided infrastructure, financial support, and expertise in participatory space design. AOs brought specialized knowledge in civic engagement, memory culture, and historical knowledge transfer, ensuring that the project aligned with broader societal themes, while students and other users contributed ideas through workshops and initial engagement. Collaboration extended across multiple departments of the library, including design, technology, and communication, with the project team playing a central role in organization and project management. Technological expertise was critical in establishing digital tools for hybrid events, allowing for interactive and flexible programming. The short project timeline and competing commitments of AOs and end users underscored the importance of longer-term engagement but working with a structured project plan including clear milestones proved to be crucial in the process.

RIGA   ARCHITECTURAL INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

The project in Riga was driven by the National Library of Latvia, which provided leadership, funding, and infrastructure to support the transformation of the Youth Space. Architects from ATELPA played a central role in shaping the space, developing modular and adaptable design solutions that reflected students' evolving needs. Throughout the co-design process, students and library staff members actively contributed ideas for example, transformable tables, acoustic furniture, dividing curtains, and space enlargement, making the space both functional and inviting. External partners played a crucial role in technical aspects, particularly in 3D printing and interactive learning elements. To ensure long-term sustainability, external trainers will equip staff with the necessary skills to manage the new technologies effectively. This approach highlights the importance of combining internal expertise with specialized external support to create user-driven, future-ready library environments.
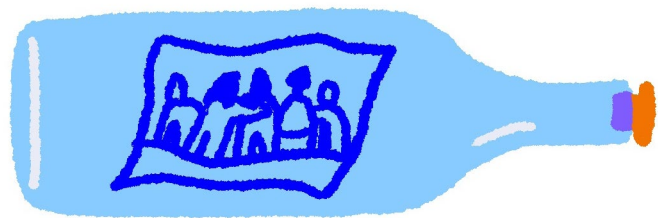
Conclusion

As the Aims and Goals phase set the course and the Engagement phase brought the crew together, the Contributions phase ensured the right resources, expertise, and leadership were aboard to navigate the journey. Across the pilot projects, the diverse contributions of internal teams and external partners acted as the wind in the sails, driving each initiative forward.

In Herning, architectural expertise and university support aligned spaces with institutional goals. Copenhagen's collaborative network leveraged digital literacy and open resources, while Hamburg's multidisciplinary approach navigated complex public engagement. Riga's cross-functional team combined architectural innovation, student co-design, and technical expertise to create a modular, future-ready learning space.

Each project shows that a successful voyage needs not only vision and participation, but also the right mix of skills, resources, and collaboration. Whether financial backing, interdisciplinary expertise, or external contributions, these elements were key in ensuring projects adapted to changing tides and reached their destinations.

Accountabilities

GUIDING QUESTION

Who is responsible for each part of the journey, and what decisions are they empowered to make?

Introduction

Every successful voyage depends not just on knowing who's at the helm, who's navigating, and who's charting the course — but on a shared understanding of how power and responsibility are distributed among the crew. Projects that aim to be inclusive and participatory must embrace power-sharing, where all contributors have clarity around their roles, influence, and authority. When this structure is established early and upheld through open communication, collaboration becomes more effective, trust grows, and the ship stays steady on course toward shared horizons.

Tool: Accountabilities Matrix

The Accountabilities Matrix serves as the ship's log—mapping responsibilities, relationships, and decision-making boundaries to ensure every contributor knows their bearings. Like a clear chain of command, it provides structure for shared action, helping the voyage proceed smoothly and with purpose.

To make best use of this navigational chart:

1. **Identify the Crew:** List everyone involved and the role they play.
2. **Define Responsibilities:** Specify what duties each crew member is expected to fulfill.
3. **Clarify Authority:** Determine who holds decision-making power, and in what contexts.
4. **Map Relationships**: Outline how communication flows and how collaborators interact.

ACCOUNTABLILITIES MATRIX

PARTICIPANT	ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES	DECISION-MAKIND AUTHORITY	RELATIONSHIPS
Project Responsible	*Coordinator*	*Oversee processes, manage timelines and resources, reporting.*	*Based on stake-holder input and budget limitations - final authority on project decisions.*	*Reports to the Library Director and collaborates with all team members.*
Library Staff	*Facilitator*	*Organize workshops, engage users, and provide support.*	*Authority to make decisions on work-shop logistics.*	*Works with the Project Manager; Engages with collaborators/ participants as a client.*
Collaborators (e.g., community members)	*Participants*	*Provide input, feedback, skills, and resources for the project.*	*No decision-ma-king authority; influence through feedback.*	*Engages with Library Staff as a consultant.*
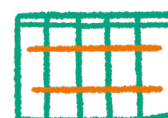
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Pilot Project Accountability Structures

Each pilot set sail with different structures in place, reflecting local governance models, collaboration styles, and degrees of hierarchy. While some operated with shared responsibility across a flatter deck, others relied on a more centralized command to stay on course. Across the fleet, clarity and transparency helped maintain trust, ensure meaningful engagement, and prevent miscommunication—even when navigating rough waters.

HERNING **UNIVERSITY-LED DECISION-MAKING WITH TRANSPARENT STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

In Herning, ultimate decision-making authority rested with the university, ensuring that institutional priorities were upheld throughout the project. However, the library played a central role in shaping the design process, ensuring that the space reflected user needs and service requirements. A flat hierarchy fostered open communication and encouraged knowledge-sharing, allowing contributors to take ownership of their respective areas while maintaining alignment with broader institutional objectives. Transparency was a core principle of the engagement process—feedback was gathered through structured activities such as Cakes for Ideas and „wish-boxes“, ensuring that student input was visible and incorporated into the final designs. Clear communication of decisions and rationale helped manage expectations and strengthened trust between those collaborating.

COPENHAGEN **LIBRARY-LED DECISION-MAKING WITH STUDENT INPUT**

In Copenhagen, the library took on primary responsibility for project coordination, supported by the Learning Center, who provided critical insights into student learning habits and challenges. Decision-making was structured around concise, actionable tasks, particularly in the development of interactive learning materials and game content. Student feedback was actively integrated through facilitated discussions, helping refine the project's direction. The library managed the project timeline, ensuring that participant input translated into concrete deliverables.

HAMBURG   UNIVERSITY AND LIBRARY OVERSIGHT WITH PARTICIPATORY INPUT

In Hamburg, the library had ultimate decision-making authority, balancing institutional oversight with participatory engagement. While the library was responsible for facilitating the design and management of the space, AOs and end users played a crucial role in shaping the project through co-design and feedback mechanisms. Decision-making was iterative, incorporating stakeholder perspectives at various stages. However, as in Herning, transparency was key to ensuring that contributors understood how their input influenced final decisions. Regular meetings, interactive feedback panels, and digital updates provided clear insights into the decision-making process. While tight timelines occasionally required swift administrative decisions, structured communication channels helped maintain trust and alignment among all participants.

RIGA   CENTRALIZED OVERSIGHT WITH DISTRIBUTED PARTICIPATION

In Riga, the National Library of Latvia served as the primary coordinator, overseeing logistics, funding, and resource allocation while working closely with ATELPA architects to guide the design process. Students played a direct role in shaping the project, engaging in design workshops and providing feedback on the space's usability. Volunteers and technical partners contributed specialized support, including prototyping and technology integration, ensuring that innovative elements were incorporated effectively. Decision-making remained largely centralized within the library to maintain efficiency, but regular consultations ensured that user perspectives were actively considered. Assigning roles based on team members' strengths and implementing backup plans for potential challenges helped maintain steady progress. Regular group meetings and public updates improved transparency, ensuring that both internal and external collaborators remained informed and engaged.
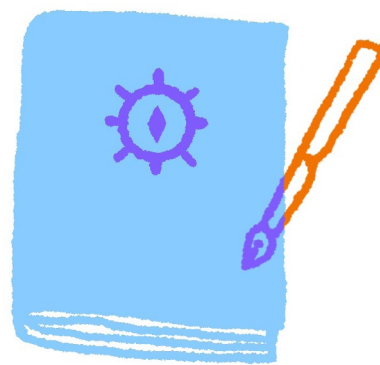
Conclusion

As the Aims and Goals phase set the course, the Engagement phase rallied the crew, and the Contributions phase ensured the right resources were aboard, the Accountabilities phase ensured clear roles and steady navigation. Whether through centralized or shared decision-making, transparency and clear communication acted as the compass, keeping the project on course and the crew aligned.

In Herning and Hamburg, centralized decision-making served as the ship's rudder, guiding the team while maintaining transparency to ensure that every crew member knew how their input shaped the journey. In Copenhagen and Riga, streamlined oversight and participatory input provided the flexibility needed to adapt to changing winds, while still ensuring that progress stayed true to the shared destination. Across all ports, clear roles, and regular feedback acted as the steady keel, helping maintain momentum and direction, even when navigating rough seas.

Evaluation

What have we learned from the journey, and how will it shape the course ahead?

Introduction

As every seasoned sailor knows, a successful journey does not end at the final port—it anchors its learnings, records its course, and prepares for the next tide. Evaluation is the compass that enables this process: helping teams understand how far they have come, what conditions shaped the voyage, and where the winds might carry them next.

Evaluation Tools

The final phase unfolds in two steps: first, teams complete the Voyage Log, an evaluation framework that uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to chart progress, reflect on goals, and track the project's journey. This is followed by the Anchoring Change workshop, where teams collaboratively make sense of the findings, determine what to keep, adapt, or evolve, and identify next steps to translate insights into lasting impact.

Tool: Voyage Log – Evaluation Framework

STEP 1: GATHERING INSIGHTS TOGETHER

Use the Voyage Log Worksheet to work with your users and team to gather what you have learned along the way. This includes both the numbers (such as how often people use the space or access services) and the stories and experiences (what people say they liked, struggled with, or want more of). To get a full picture, it helps to look at things from a few angles. For example:

- How often the space is used (When and how do people spend time there?)
- Which services or tools are most used (Are some areas more active than others?)
- User comments and stories (What do people say about their experience?)
- Observations (What did you and your team notice about how people interact with the space or each other?)
- Quick feedback tools such as a wall, sticky notes, or a digital form (What ideas and suggestions came up throughout the project?)

This mix of insights helps you see both the overall journey and the small moments that matter.

VOYAGE LOG WORKSHEET

GOAL / OBJECTIVE	WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?	TOOLS USED	QUANTITATIVE MEASURES (STARS)	QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS (WEATHER REPORT)
Foster collaborative learning	*Students use the space for group work weekly*	*Surveys, Observations*	*Weekly usage stats, group bookings*	*Users describe increased sense of connection*

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STEP 2: MAKING SENSE OF IT TOGETHER

ANCHORING CHANGE WORKSHOP

1. Welcome & Purpose (15 minutes)
Frame the session as the 'mooring line' between the project and its future. Acknowledge the journey so far and set the tone for open reflection.

2. Storytelling from the Log (30 minutes)
Invite participants to share what stood out from the Voyage Log:
 - *What outcomes were surprising?*
 - *What feedback felt most meaningful?*
 - *Where did expectations meet reality, or miss?*

3. Group Sensemaking (45 minutes)
Small group discussions or mapping exercises to explore:
 - *What should become part of regular practice?*
 - *What still needs testing, adjusting, or rethinking?*
 - *Are there ripple effects we did not expect?*

4. Anchoring & Evolving (30 minutes)
Facilitated activity (e.g., ‚Drop Anchor or Set Sail') where participants sort insights into:
 - *Anchor It: What should we embed permanently?*
 - *Adjust Course: What needs to change or support?*
 - *New Horizons: What new opportunities or needs have emerged?*

5. Commitments & Communication (30 minutes)
Close the workshop by identifying:
 - *What decisions can be made today?*
 - *What needs more input or approval?*
 - *How will results be shared (with staff, stakeholders, community)?*
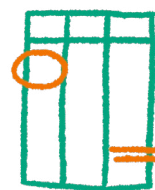
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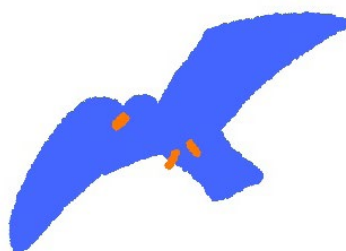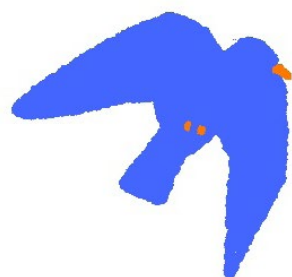
Pilot Project Evaluation Approaches

Each pilot project implemented tailored evaluation strategies to assess the effectiveness of newly designed spaces and services. These approaches combined quantitative metrics (e.g., visitor numbers, space utilization, and participation levels) with qualitative insights (e.g., user feedback, interviews, and workshops) to ensure continuous improvements based on stakeholder needs.

HERNING **ASSESSING ENGAGEMENT WITH THE URBAN KNOWLEDGE HUB**

Evaluation in Herning has focused on student interaction with the transformed space as an Urban Knowledge Hub. Key metrics include visitor numbers, space utilization patterns, and participation levels in DataLab activities. Long-term feedback will be collected through surveys and in-person consultations, ensuring that user insights guide ongoing improvements. A central focus was evaluating how well the new environment supports student learning, engagement, and collaboration over time.

COPENHAGEN **MEASURING ACCESSIBILITY AND STUDENT SUPPORT**

In Copenhagen, the evaluation framework was structured to assess the project's effectiveness in improving resource accessibility and supporting struggling students. Metrics include engagement levels (e.g., workshop attendance and digital resource interaction), resource utilization rates, and the retention of at-risk students. User surveys, interviews, and workshops provided qualitative feedback on how well the new initiatives addressed student needs. Ongoing collaboration with the student counselor office ensured that the evaluation process remained responsive to user challenges.

HAMBURG **EVALUATING SPACE FUNCTIONALITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Evaluation focused on how well the Carl von Ossietzky Forum fostered collaboration, interdisciplinary exchange, and flexible use. Metrics included the number and diversity of hosted events, engagement levels across different user groups, and the adaptability of the space for various activities. User feedback was gathered through interactive feedback walls, surveys, and participatory workshops, helping assess whether the space successfully met its goals. Long-term community impact will be evaluated through repeat participation, sustained partnerships, and observations of informal collaboration in the space beyond the project duration.

RIGA **TRACKING TECHNOLOGICAL INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL INTERACTION**

In Riga, the evaluation process assessed how the revitalized Youth Space functioned as a multifunctional learning environment, integrating technology and social engagement. Success metrics included networking opportunities, collaboration, event frequency and target group diversity. Flexibility and functionality—its ability to support various events with adaptable furniture and layouts—were also key indicators. The ongoing evaluation used a multi-method approach, combining observations, participant feedback through an interactive wall, and QR code-linked surveys for quantitative insights. Input from event organizers and informal collaboration patterns further shaped improvements, ensuring the space evolved into a dynamic and inclusive hub for learning and interaction.
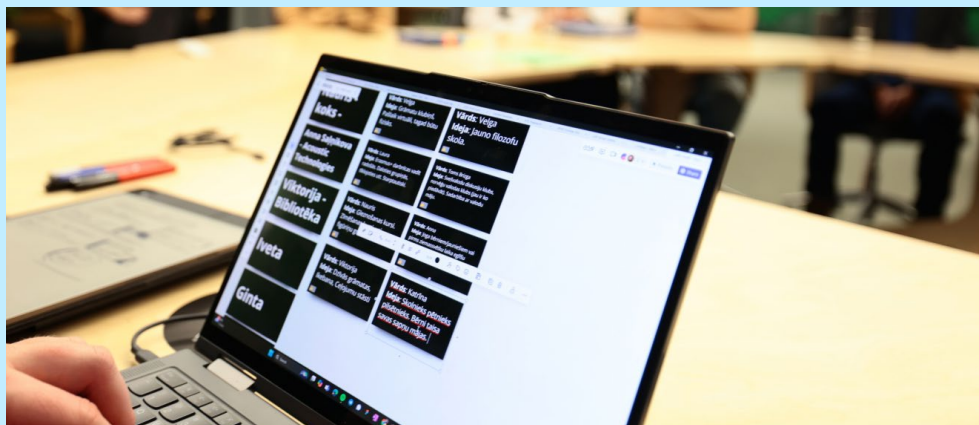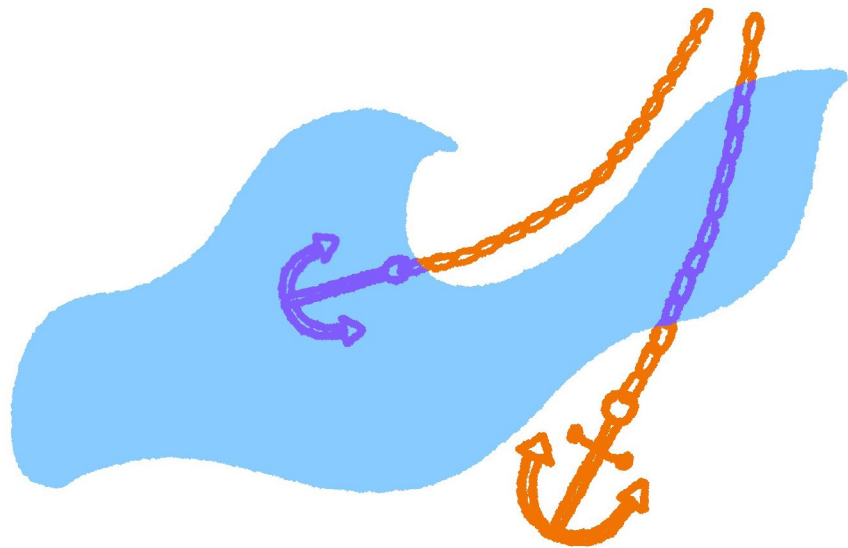
Conclusion

Evaluation, like navigation, is an ongoing practice—it does not end when a destination is reached but loops back to guide future journeys. Across all pilot projects, the combination of metrics and user insights created an adaptable feedback system to keep efforts aligned with real-world needs.

In Herning, user participation anchored the design in meaningful engagement. In Copenhagen, responsive evaluation supported student retention and access. In Hamburg, collaborative input shaped a truly multifunctional space. In Riga, technological innovation was tied to social interaction and evolving youth interests.

Just as every voyage requires checking the stars, adjusting the sails, and reading the seas, continuous evaluation ensures that projects remain dynamic, inclusive, and future-ready. And as one phase ends, the compass turns again—inviting teams to return to earlier questions, refine their course, and set sail toward new horizons.

Cross-Cutting Lessons

The 4C User Engagement and Participation Toolbox offers a navigational chart of key principles for steering successful, user-driven projects. These lessons guide future voyages by emphasizing collaboration, adaptability, and lasting impact.

1. USER ENGAGEMENT SETS THE COURSE
Bringing users aboard from the beginning ensures that spaces and services are shaped by real needs. Whether through formal workshops or informal touchpoints, listening to diverse voices fosters inclusive design and a stronger collective voyage.

2. FLEXIBILITY KEEPS THE SHIP AFLOAT
Like a vessel adjusting its sails to shifting winds, successful projects remain responsive to change. Being open to feedback and unexpected turns allows teams to adapt and remain on course.

3. CLEAR ROLES KEEP THE CREW ALIGNED
Defining responsibilities ensures smoother sailing. When each crew member understands their role, collaboration strengthens and confusion is avoided—even in stormy seas.

4. HYBRID MODELS EXPAND THE HORIZON
Combining physical and digital spaces broadens the reach and brings new ways to engage with diverse or distant users, much like navigating by both maps and satellites.

5. IMPACT IS MEASURED IN MANY CURRENTS
Community impact flows through many channels—event attendance, return visits, diverse participation, and personal stories. A mix of numbers and narratives offers the clearest picture of how far the tide has carried your efforts.

6. STRONG RELATIONSHIPS ARE THE WIND IN YOUR SAILS
Trust and collaboration between partners fuel innovation. The stronger the ties among your crew, the more resilient your journey becomes.

7. SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALABILITY KEEP THE VOYAGE GOING
Charting a course for long-term use ensures your project remains relevant. Designs that adapt and scale can inspire future expeditions in new harbors.

8. THE JOURNEY ITSELF IS TRANSFORMATIVE
Often, the voyage brings just as much value as the destination. Along the way, new bonds are forged, trust is deepened, and lessons emerge that can guide future explorations.

Voyaging Onwards: Reflections and Final Insights

As every seasoned sailor knows, the close of one voyage is merely the tide pulling toward the next. The BALTIC UKH project has not only charted new waters but also demonstrated how public service providers can become steady vessels for innovation, connection, and community-led transformation.

This journey has shown that true progress lies not only in reaching a destination but in how the course was set, who helped steer the ship, and what was learned along the way. When users are brought on board from the beginning—as co-navigators rather than passengers—spaces and services reflect real needs and deeper connections are forged.

The value of flexibility has been a constant current. As with changing weather at sea, public initiatives benefit from the ability to adjust sails in response to shifting conditions. Timelines, partnerships, and even goals may shift, but by keeping a shared vision in sight, teams remain resilient and responsive.

Hybrid approaches have expanded the horizon. By blending physical and digital environments, public service providers opened new channels of engagement—creating harbors for those near and far, and redefining what shared space can mean in a connected world.

Sustainability and scalability keep the voyage alive long after the initial expedition. By embedding adaptability into both design and relationships, the tools and spaces created during this initiative are equipped to evolve alongside user needs and new challenges. What began as a pilot now serves as a beacon for future endeavors—flexible enough to guide other crews, strong enough to weather change.

And perhaps the most lasting insight is this: the act of voyaging together—of building trust, listening deeply, and creating side by side—is transformative in itself. It reminds us that public services are not fixed ports, but dynamic vessels shaped by the people they serve.

By sharing what was learned in Herning, Copenhagen, Hamburg, and Riga, the BALTIC UKH partners aim to pass the wheel to new hands. With tools to support user-engagement, templates to structure collaboration, and stories that illuminate the course, this work invites others to embark on their own journeys.

The sails are set. The compass is steady. The horizon is wide open.

LET THE VOYAGE CONTINUE!
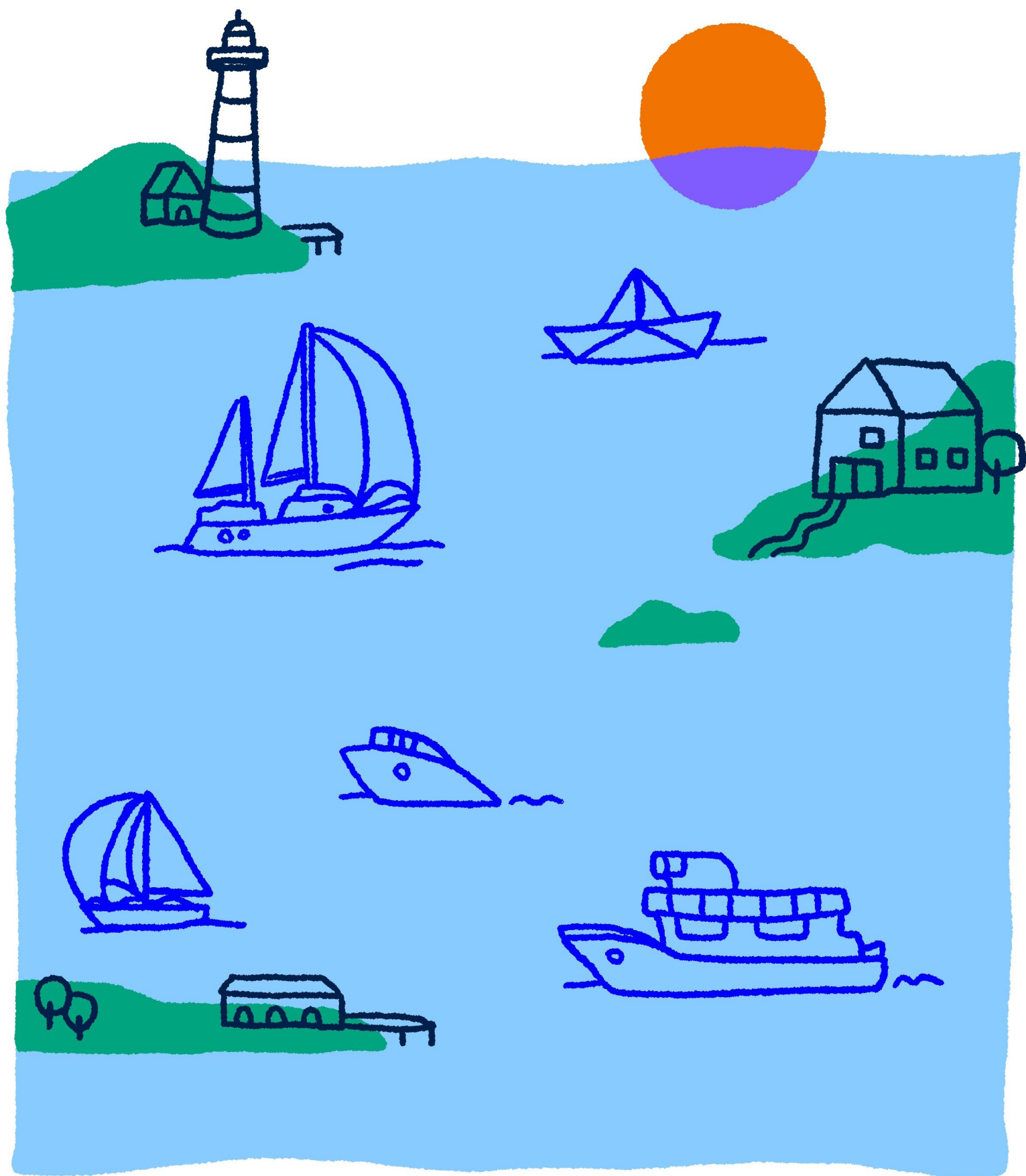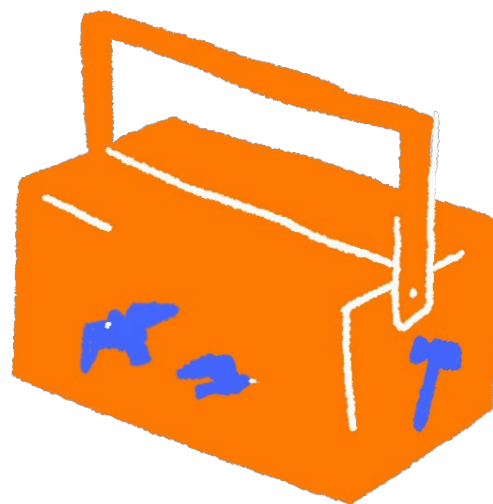
Tools

The following pages provide the tools that can be used for navigating future voyages in user engagement and participation.

Outcome Mapping Chart

MISSION/POLICIES	GOALS/AIMS	SPECIFIC OUTCOMES	BENEFICIARIES	MEASUREMENT CRITERIA

Engagement Typology

CO-CREATE	CO-DESIGN	CO-PRODUCTION	CO-EVALUATE

Contribution Checklist

ORGANIZATIONAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- [ ] Legal, administrative, and management assistance allocated
- [ ] Source(s) of funding secured
- [ ] Assistance in budget allocations and financial oversight allocated

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TECHNOLOGY

- [ ] Facilities and equipment for meetings/workshops
- [ ] Specific physical spaces or tools (if needed)
- [ ] Software and hardware resources
- [ ] Specific digital platforms or online collaboration tools (if needed)

PERSONNEL AND EXPERTISE

- [ ] Staffing plan and/or plan for involving volunteers set up
- [ ] Definition of roles, responsibilities and contributions (see Accountabilities Matrix)
- [ ] Definition of knowledge, information and know-how
- [ ] Definition of experts and their involvement

TIME AND COMMITMENT

- [ ] Defined timeframe in place
- [ ] Deadlines and milestones defined
- [ ] Regular meeting times set up (if necessary)

ADDITIONAL AND UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS (IF NEEDED)

- [ ] Unique contributions (e. g. access to networks, special materials) defined
- [ ] Additional resources defined

Accountabilities Matrix

PARTICIPANT	ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES	DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY	RELATIONSHIPS

Voyage Log Worksheet

GOAL / OBJECTIVE	WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?	TOOLS USED	QUANTITATIVE MEASURES	QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS	REFLECTIONS & NEXT STEPS

Anchoring Change Worksheet

ANCHOR IT What should we embed or keep doing?	ADJUST COURSE What needs more support or change?	NEW HORIZONS What new opportunities have emerged?

Additional Resources

**THESE WORKS HAVE INFORMED AND INSPIRED
THE CREATION OF THE TOOLBOX:**

Bartholomew, T., & Irwin, J. (2020). Library as client and business students as consultants: A collaborative effort in experiential learning. New Review of Academic Librarianship, 26(2), 353–364. https://doi.org/10.1080/13614533.2020.1773877

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