



THE NEW SCHOOL OF
PARTICIPATORY CHANGE

PARTICIPATORY FACILITATION

Cohort Experience
2024

ABOUT THE COURSE

“It is not enough to make sure everyone has a seat at the table. A facilitator plays the important role of inviting every individual's wisdom into the conversation so that more equitable and effective work can happen.”

— Molly Sowash, 2022 participant

“When I think about what is needed to grow my facilitation, listening, and changemaking skills, the PF School checked all the boxes and then some! It has been inspiring and impactful to learn from peers and established leaders in the field that make me feel at home and encourage me to stand firm in my own competencies too.”

— Kelsey Abad, 2023 participant

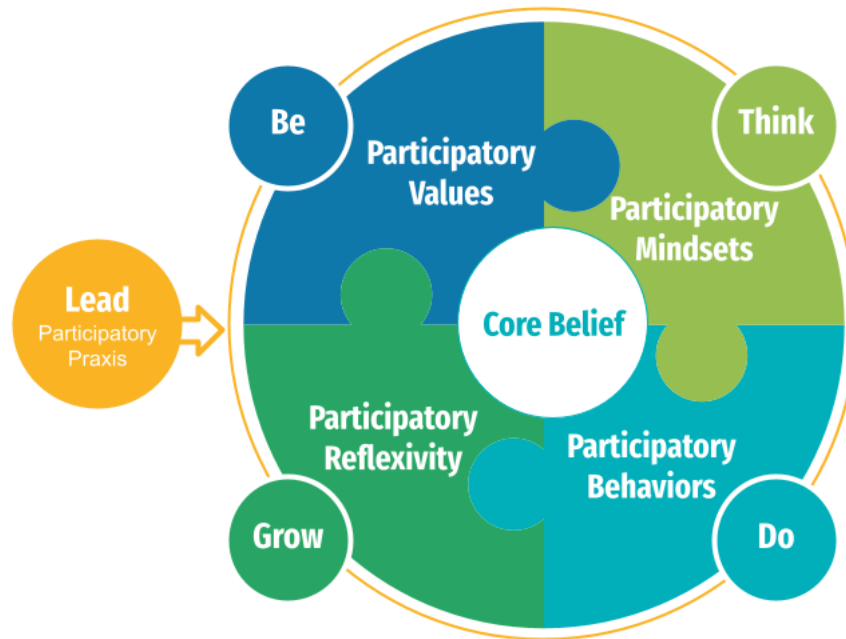
Sharing over 40 years of combined facilitation experience, [Atlas Charles](#) and [Thomas Watson](#) equip participants in the cohort with the practices, skills, and tools they need to truly include and welcome group participants.

Facilitation is a core practice of leadership and throughout the 14 years that Rural Support Partners has partnered with communities and organizations, we've learned that good, participatory facilitation is the key to getting work done that betters the lives of people and improves the places they love.

Join us to begin or deepen your journey into participatory leadership by developing your participatory facilitation skills.

APPROACH

Participatory Facilitation as Leadership



This course is grounded in our **Participatory Changemaking Framework**. In every offering of the New School, participant experiences are grounded in the core elements of participatory leadership:

- Core Belief: “Participation is Power. Power is Participation.”
- Be: Participatory Values
- Think: Participatory Mindsets
- Do: Participatory Behaviors
- Grow: Participatory Reflexivity
- Lead: Participatory Praxis

Because we believe changemakers already possess the wisdom, relationships, and drive to create conditions for transformative change, we guide participants to apply these core elements to their own contexts to build a customized practice of participatory facilitation that works for them.

SYLLABUS

Module 1: What is participatory facilitation, and why would I use it?

- Apply participatory values to your current work.
- Understand the core philosophy, mindsets, and behaviors of a participatory facilitator and how they show up in your life.
- Define and examine the role of a participatory facilitator.
- Reflect on your strengths and challenges that will show up on your path to grow as a participatory facilitator.

Module 2: What is collaboration and how do I help groups do it better?

- Apply participatory philosophy to your current work.
- Understand the core values and mindsets of a participatory facilitator and where they show up in your life.
- Explore the core behaviors of a participatory practice and reflect on how you live these out.
- Define and examine the role of a participatory facilitator.
- Reflect on your strengths and challenges that will show up on your path to grow as a participatory facilitator.

Module 3: What goes in my participatory facilitator toolbox and how do I use it?

- Explore and learn techniques and tools for participatory facilitation including the popular education spiral
- Use techniques and tools to cultivate brave spaces for open dialogue and creating inclusive solutions
- Identify group dynamics, such as unequal power dynamics that prevent successful, equitable collaborations

Module 4: What do participatory agendas look like and accomplish?

- Design clear, participant-centered outcomes for agendas that create welcoming, inclusive spaces
- Design agendas that anticipate participant needs and self-interest
- Match tools, processes, and methods to ideal outcomes

Module 5: Why are virtual meetings more difficult and what tools do I have to make them better?

- Develop an understanding of barriers in virtual meetings
- Learn techniques and tools to address those barriers
- Employ virtual tools and visuals to engage participants in collective learning, reflection, planning, and action

Module 6: What does my participatory facilitation practice look like?

- Demonstrate new participatory facilitation skills and receive feedback from your peers and instructors.

COURSE RHYTHM

LIVE COHORT SESSION

1.5 hour meetings, Tuesdays at 12:00 pm EST

Throughout the course, participants will be able to experience live cohort sessions. These sessions combine brief lectures that provide the core frameworks for facilitation practice with reflective small-group dialogue. Participants will build relationships with their peers, discuss their unique contexts and strengths, ask questions of one another, and learn from and alongside one another.

REFLECTION & PRACTICE LAB

1.5 hour meetings, Thursdays at 12:00 pm EST

Reflection and Practice Labs provide the space and support for participants to integrate their learning into their practice of participatory changemaking. Labs combine guided practice with peer-and-instructor feedback to give participants a safe, constructive space for learning and deepening their skills.

COHORT COMMUNITY

We know “the community is the curriculum” (John Fullerton, 2022). That’s why we offer participants the opportunity to hold additional cohort meetings to build lasting friendships and support networks.

OTHER BENEFITS

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The benefit of growing your practice with the New School

As a participant in the Participatory Facilitation course, you will get a year of free access to the New School's Community of Practice (CoP). The CoP provides participants with monthly calls where they can network with peers, learn from others, continue to develop skills, and more. The CoP also provides exclusive access to tools and resources from RSP and the New School that will aid you in your participatory leadership and changemaking.

Ready to deepen your practice as a participatory changemaker? [Sign up](#) for our newsletter to be notified when enrollment for the next session begins.

Want to learn more about the New School and this course? [Watch](#) our informational webinar recording.