

Learning

Community

Map – Users

Relationship diagrams

- 🕒 Time required: 30 - 90 min
- ✂️ Material required: flipchart, pens, post its
- 👤 Facilitators: 1 facilitator
- 👥 Group size: max. 8

Learning Community Map – Users will help you to identify various users and partners for your project or the space – level of their importance, their needs and their interconnectedness.

Combined with **User Cards**, it broadens participants' perspectives in considering users and partners that are usually forgotten (e.g. minorities, disadvantaged).

Facilitated discussion and visualisation enhance thinking about various connections and **complex learning processes, community and identity building.**

The **User Map** helps participants to see their own needs as interconnected with the needs of other users or partners.



USERS



PARTNERS

Preparation

- 1 Prepare a flipchart with a blank User Map. The map should be visible and inclusive for all participants. If necessary, let everyone work with their own map as well.
- 2 Distribute post-its and pen for each participant (ideally two colours).
- 3 Prepare the first post-its with a user card of your choice as an example, and put them on the User Map.

Execution

TIME ALONE – SELF

As a starter, let participants get together their thoughts by allowing them to work quietly and alone.

“Think alone and write down all potential users of... each on the separate post-it. Be concrete and specific!”



Who utilises the space/service ...?

What do they bring with them?

What are their competencies?”



Provide a concrete example to set up the right expectation, e.g., post-grad architecture student eager to open his own studio, experienced in teaching and software development.

» GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Ask participants to read aloud what they have on the post-its and place their users on the User Map.



- **Inner circle** – users in the centre of our interest
- **Middle circle** – users we are interested in, but they are not our primary targets
- **Outer circle** – users we usually forget about, users that can surprise us.

Let them discuss their choice and initialise thinking and discussion in the group through open-ended questions. Look for concrete examples. Summarise regularly, verbalise common and different perspectives.



“Why do you consider them to be our primary target? What makes them so?”

*Are there any exceptions in this group?
Why yes, why not?*

*What are their competencies?
What do they bring in?*

*Can you provide a specific example of this user?
What is your experience with them?”*

2. If you are interested in broadening group perspectives, you can use User Cards.



Steps one and two help the facilitator to feel the room and participants' perspectives on the project. This is more of a brainstorming activity. The focus is more on the following steps and the participants' needs.

“We were not discussing the involvement of a group... I will place them on the circle, for now. What do you think, in which circle do they belong?”



What specifications can we provide to place them closer to the circle?



What are their needs? What are the commonalities/differences with other stated groups?”

3. Ask participants to identify themselves and place themselves on the User Map. Discuss and map their needs in connection to the project.





*“Where would you space/service yourselves?
Why? What are your needs that space/service
should provide you?”*

- *processes & organisation*
- *communication*
- *relations*
- *space, materiality**

*How can the space/service... help you
directly?*

*How can the space/service... help you
indirectly?*

*What needs do you have in common with other
users on the User Map? What are different?”*



**focus depends on the goal of the
meeting and project. Be sure you
focus on one area at the same time
and go deep.*

4. Ask participants to map and describe their relation to other users. Focus on mapping potential for learning community building.



Visualise connection between users – one-way, two-way, strong, weak, offer, potential, already established etc. If needed, create a map legend with map symbols. Identify certain groups that have no connection and ask the group for an explanation.

“How do you perceive your relationship with specific users on the map in the space/ service...? What is your experience?”



How could you benefit from cooperation with...?

What is that you can offer...?

Where do you see a connection?

What can you learn from? What is your experience? How can it happen?”



5. Ask participants to identify ideal functions, processes, space qualities that can enhance mentioned relations.



“How can the space/service enhance the relationship...? What is your experience?”



Where can the space/service fill in?

What does a relationship need to start/sustain?

*What can hurt this relationship?
What should be avoided?”*



6. Summarise and identify points that need more discussion later.



Evaluation

After the activity. Look at the results and identify weak points:

- Groups that were mentioned but you haven't covered discussion on their needs and relations.
- Identify groups you would like to highlight and discuss more on the other occasion.
- Reflect directly on potentially biased views and highlight them.
- Follow up individually if needed with specific user groups.

Tips and tricks

- Control if participants are focused primarily on describing their own experience and needs. It's alright if they “speak on behalf of” another user group. Be sure that you always double-check these assumptions with a concrete example or logical reasoning.
- If you work with more groups consecutively, with different participants, keep the post-its and information on the User Map. Sum them up for the group at the beginning of the discussion and push to fill in the gaps they see. You will spare time for a deeper analysis of needs and relations (steps 3 and 4).
- Be concrete and specific!
- Don't use post-its if you want to save money and the environment. Use cut scrap paper and paper tape instead.



Tips and tricks

- Don't be afraid of messing up the paper. Visualising is helping people on the spot realise and quickly reflect, connect and make ideas tangible. Order and design are important, but they should not go over the content and ideation.
- You can divide the circle into sections according to your project focus. E.g. the upper half will be users, the lower part partners. It helps to organise thoughts.
- Facilitators should use the tool during the focus groups, but with lower expectations on data quality, it can be used during Open Space workshops or as unfacilitated activity/workshop for the broader public or team meetings.



References

Inspiration:

- » **Burst your filter bubble**
- » **Bull's Eye Diagramming**

CHILD

TEENAGER

SENIOR

ADULT

**ETHNIC
MINORITY**

WHEELCHAIR

PRISONERS

UNEMPLOYED

HOMELESS

**LEARNING
DIFFICULTIES**

SINGLE PARENT

PREGNANT

**INTELLECTUAL
DISSABILITY**

**HEARING
IMPAIRMENT**

**SPECTRUM
DISSABILITY**

LGBTQI+

MIGRANT