LEARNING COHORTS

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THREAD STL

Background of the Learning Cohorts

The beginnings of the learning cohorts can be traced back to the summer 2017 Roundtable on Community Engagement, where Thread STL members articulated the need for additional programming that would bolster their work. Consequently, from November 2017 through January 2018 Thread STL's Steering Committee members and staff engaged in planning to identify unmet needs of Thread STL's membership and determine the optimal methods and structure to address those needs. Simultaneously, Thread STL staff gathered data informally and formally through the annual member survey, 1:1 meetings, and from feedback at Member Meetings. From the collected data, staff and the steering committee distilled three different categories of need:

1) **Problem-Solving**
2) **Skill-Building**
3) **On-going Support**

After identifying the three main areas in which Thread STL membership needed supplementary assistance, Thread staff identified models and strategies to meet these needs. These structures took the form of:

1) **Roundtables,** which were designed to help members address current practice problems through a structured peer feedback process.
2) **Learning Cohorts,** which would bolster skill-building efforts among peers.
3) **Peer-coaching Circles,** which were intended to provide ongoing support around current priorities.

| Summer 2017 Community Roundtable | → | November 2017 Thread STL Steering Committee and staff begin planning new programming | → | January 2018 Thread STL Steering Committee and staff finishes planning phase and distills 3 areas of need and what programming can address these needs | → | February 2018 Thread STL Steering Committee and staff finishes planning phase and distills 3 areas of need | → | April 2018 Evaluation Learning Cohort has its first meeting |

Background of the Learning Cohorts

Thread STL staff presented these three programs to membership at the February 2018 Member Meeting through a "Choose Your Own Adventure" activity. This framed the purpose, timeframe, and objectives of each of the models, and allowed for members to decide which type of structure would be most useful to their work. Below is the description of the Learning Cohorts:

If you need…	Then you should be a part of…	This will be a good fit if…
Skill-Building	*Learning Cohorts* • Get together regularly with other Thread members who are interested in building similar skills for shared learning opportunities curated by Thread staff • Meet for 1 hour a month for 3-6 months; specifics to be determined by the group • Skill building opportunities will be captured, shared, and archived for the Thread member community	• There are skills you know you need to improve upon that are important for your work • You are routinely nervous about a certain topic related to your work • You're eager to tap into knowledge and insight from outside of your peer networks

Following the presentation of the three new program models, Thread STL members were then surveyed on which topics would be of particular use to their coalitions or partnerships. Thread STL professional staff pre-populated this list of topics based on previous feedback from Thread membership. From this discussion, Data, Facilitation, and Evaluation were identified as being areas of particular interest.

The Evaluation and Facilitation Learning Cohorts (ELC & FLC) met from April 2018 through July 2018. To see what topics and activities were covered in the meetings, as well as key insights from the groups, please see the knowledge briefs linked below:

ELC Knowledge Brief

FLC Knowledge Brief