FACILITATOR
TRAINING GUIDE

EV Community Preparedness Workshop

Welcome

Thank you for facilitating the Electric Vehicles Immersion Program provided by NFPA and the Clean Cities Coalition.

This Training Guide has been designed to help you prepare thoroughly and efficiently to facilitate your session of the EV Program as an instructor-led workshop held in person or via virtual delivery.

Workshop Structure

This workshop is designed to be an interactive, engaging experience for participants. Plan to involve them as much as possible by…

- Giving participants opportunities to explain concepts or answer questions.
- Inviting all participants to engage fully in activities such as breakout groups, chats, and polls.
- Encouraging more reluctant participants to share.
- Encouraging ongoing informal feedback from participants.

The workshop is designed to provide participants with an opportunity to…

- Ask and answer questions.
- Discuss concepts and case studies with peers and a facilitator.
- Practice skills gained throughout the workshop.
- Receive live feedback from the facilitator and peers.
- Plan future action.

Course Overview and Learning Objectives

Electric Vehicles are hitting the streets all across the nation and leading officials and decision makers are now realizing that EV infrastructure needs to be considered and implemented in their communities. This training is designed to help those who are involved in EV adoption efforts fully understand these types of vehicles and their chargers, create connections with others in their localities, and draft action plans that will lead to increased EV support at the local level.

The number of participants in your session is anticipated to be anywhere between 12 and 40 attendees, depending on the demand in your location.

Reference your Facilitator Guide often and consider how you can apply this Training Guide to the specific situations you will be facilitating. The training itself is divided into three sections (for a total of about 4 hours).

Section 1: Welcome and EV Basics

Time: 90 minutes

Learning Objectives: Participants establish a common understanding of EV basics, determine how they can support each community stakeholder in the session, then come together to prioritize session goals, creating initial connections to support EV adoption in their communities.

Section 2: Your Community EV Adoption Strategy

Time: 60 minutes

Learning Objectives: Based on their community needs and funding opportunities, participants discuss with each other (as community stakeholders) where to distribute potential funds and what needs should be prioritized first to craft a timeline to successfully support EV adoption in their community. Then they present their plans to the group and receive feedback.

Section 3: Action Steps in Your Community

Time: 90 minutes

Learning Objectives: After having developed an action plan for their community, participants choose the action steps they can take now to support EV adoption for the next year, leveraging newly created connections from the session and new knowledge provided by NFPA and Clean Cities experts.

Before the Workshop

Please read through this workshop materials carefully and become very familiar with them. (These include the web-based training, workshop Facilitator Guide and Participant Journal, etc.)

These materials will provide you with reference points for topics, timing, activities, and answers to common questions—all to help you facilitate an informative and engaging workshop. If you would like more general tips on facilitating a workshop, consider jumping to the Facilitating Discussions and Engaging Participants section before returning to this section.

Keep in mind: These resources are designed as guide, not directives! Your expertise, skills, and enthusiasm are crucial to providing a successful learner experience.

Know Your Co-Facilitators

In preparation for the workshop, each assigned CCC facilitator and NFPA SME should be in contact. Make time to meet (virtually or in person) to introduce yourselves, discuss plans for your workshop, and coordinate any details together.

> Assignments and contact info can be found on the program website: readyforevs.com/resources

Know Your Audience

As much as possible, become familiar with your workshop audience. Review any available information provided about attendees and the campus or community environment where they work.

If you would like more general tips, consider reviewing the Characteristics of Adult Learners section before returning to this section.

Know Your Content

In addition to this Facilitator Guide, please be sure to closely review the Participant Journal accompanying this course. Pay close attention to:

- Sections of content co-presented by NFPA experts
- Case studies and questions that participants will complete during the workshop

Know Your Media

- Technology, audio-visuals, videos and training workbooks boost training. Get familiar with the media you will be using. A variety of media are incorporated through the workshop activities and are noted in the Facilitator Guide.

- Make sure that all your technology and equipment is in working order. Are the slides, videos, and workbooks handy? Have a back-up plan in case your equipment fails.

Get Set Up

Make any arrangements you need to be prepared with the correct materials and technology, which may include…

- Facilitator Guide

- PowerPoint Presentation

- Participant Journal

- Clock, watch, timer app, etc.

- Laptop with a camera*

- Zoom room link*

- Internet connectivity*

Needed for virtual delivery of the workshop.

Using the Facilitator Guide

The Facilitator Guide acts as a master reference document to help you prepare for and deliver this workshop. The Facilitator Guide contains:

- Checklists of necessary materials and equipment

- Preparation needs for in-person and virtual instruction-lead training (VILT)

- Training delivery sequence and key points to cover

- Instructions for managing exercises and other instructional activities

Review the Facilitator Guide with its accompanying PowerPoint presentation, Participant Journal, and any additional activity needs to become familiar with the content before leading the training.

Presenting with a Co-Facilitator

Facilitators from both sponsoring organization—the Clean Cities Coalition and NFPA—will be invited to present and comment throughout the workshop. In preparation, follow these suggestions to help things run smoothly:

- Plan to coordinate with your co-facilitator(s) early and communicate often throughout the preparation process.
- Review the course materials and workshop materials well in advance (including the web-based training, workshop Facilitator Guide and Participant Journal, etc.) so each of you are familiar with the content.
- Discuss the timing and responsibilities of each facilitator as outlined in the Facilitator Guide. Discuss any additional ways you can work together as a team to present the workshop material and facilitate discussion among participants.
- Hold a virtual rehearsal to practice your delivery of the workshop. Remember that NFPA facilitators will be joining the workshops virtually (via Zoom), so make sure you are all familiar with the technology.

During the Workshop

This workshop includes opportunities for instructor-led learning, large group discussion, small group activities, and individual reflection. You will be responsible for managing participants and timing.

Encourage Feedback

Invite participant feedback throughout the workshop to help you measure how well learners are processing the information presented. Requests for feedback can be informal, frequent, or infrequent, and encouraged in the context of large group or small group discussion.

Manage Timing

Keep track of time throughout the workshop. The time estimates provided are suggestions. If you find that you can or need to shorten or lengthen sections of a module, feel free to do so. Just ensure that you are adjusting the pace according to learner needs and that you don't go significantly over the planned total workshop time (4 hours of instruction).

Take Breaks

Plan to take breaks as scheduled throughout the workshop, as indicated in the Facilitator Guide (5–10 minutes). Remind participants they may also take breaks as needed throughout the workshop.

Best Practices for Facilitation

Whether you're an experienced facilitator or you're leading a workshop for the first time, there are some general principles to be aware of that set apart excellent facilitators from the rest.

Confidence, enthusiasm, and flexibility are important traits in an effective facilitator.

Confidence

Effective facilitators demonstrate confidence in their knowledge of the content and in their ability to successfully facilitate a training session. As you become familiar with the content of this guide, strive to adopt a comfortable, conversational presentation style. This will encourage participation from learners while still allowing you to maintain control of the training session.

Enthusiasm

Excellent facilitators show enthusiasm for the material being presented. Your level of enthusiasm and energy will influence the tone of the training and how the participants feel about the information. Show enthusiasm in a way that is in harmony with your own style.

Flexibility

Unexpected issues often arise during even the best-planned training sessions. Flexibility enables the facilitator to smoothly manage interruptions. How can you develop this flexibility? The key to flexibility is to anticipate potential challenges that may occur and to plan in advance how you will respond. Ask yourself, "What could go wrong during this session?" and, "How will I respond if this happens?" Some examples of the issues you may have to deal with are:

Technology problems: The most important step in preparing to deal with technology misfires is to have a backup plan. If there are issues such as a lost

network connection or a system application that isn't working properly, you will need to have a plan to resolve the issue and continue the training session.

Disruptive learners: There are some techniques you should use to deal with uncooperative learners and keep the training session in control. It will be up to you, the facilitator, to help these learners and make sure that they do not keep the rest of the class from benefitting from the training. When you are dealing with these learners, be sure that you treat them respectfully. Being rude or responding abruptly could disengage the entire class from the training session. Other techniques include:

- Remind the group how important it is for the training to stay on track.

- Frequently encourage balanced participation from all learners.

- If necessary, you should take the disruptive learner aside during a break and politely speak to him or her about the behavior required for the training to be successful.

The schedule: In the Facilitator Guide, each section is given an estimated time frame. One of your key responsibilities as a facilitator is to pace your presentation accordingly to fit into the allotted time. Familiarize yourself with the time estimates for each section, identify, and make note of any topics that may require more or less time than allotted, and prepare summaries of the most important points of each section in case you don't have time to finish a topic. Additional discussion questions or practice activities may be useful if you have extra time.

Facilitating Discussions and Engaging Participants

While the presentation of information is very important, your role in the training session is first and foremost to facilitate learning. Group discussion is a vital part of this process, and it is your responsibility to lead these discussions in the most productive direction possible. There are four ways a facilitator can guide a discussion and engage participants:

Ask the right questions

The Facilitator Guide includes suggested discussion questions when appropriate, but you will need to customize the conversation to the needs of your group. As you ask discussion questions, keep the following principles in mind:

- Don't ask "yes or no" questions. Keep questioning open-ended to promote dialogue with participants.
- Use "what if" scenarios or situations as well as direct questions.
- Start with broad questions. As the discussion continues, ask follow-up questions to focus the conversation.
- Be clear and on-topic with your questions.

Respond to comments and questions

When a learner makes a comment or asks a question, answer respectfully and directly. Give the participant your full attention rather than looking at notes or planning what you will say next.

If a learner asks a question you don't know the answer to, be honest in your response. Make a note of the inquiry and create a plan to obtain an answer and communicate it to participants after the session.

Be careful not to shut down a participant who gives an incorrect or irrelevant answer to a question. Acknowledge their contribution, then redirect by repeating the question to the group as a whole, or by suggesting an answer based on your own experience.

A few engaging responses to comments include:

- "Thanks for your thoughts."
- "I understand what you are saying about…"
- "That's helpful. Do you have anything else to add?"

Listen and include all participants equally

Try not to let one or two participants dominate the conversation. If a participant appears to be controlling the conversation or you are having difficulties getting responses to your questions, consider the following possible approaches to open the discussion to everyone:

- "How do the rest of you feel about this comment?"

- "We haven't heard from the folks in the _____ segment. How do you react to this suggestion?"

- "Who else can comment on this?"

- "What other reactions do you have to this insight/proposal/suggestion?"

Characteristics of Adult Learners

Teaching adult learners carries its own specific challenges. Here are a few characteristics of adult learners for you to keep in mind as you prepare for the workshop and facilitate the discussions.

In general, adult learners…

- Must see the purpose and benefits of what they're learning (aka, the "What's in it for me?" principle.)

- Require clear expectations about their assignments and responsibilities.

- Draw on their lived experience and learn by associating new skills or information with those experiences.

- Need practical experience—e.g., successful application of tasks, with practice exercises, etc.—to retain information.

- Are problem-centered rather than content-oriented, and therefore respond better to facilitated discussion rather than a lecture format.

Conclusion

Enjoy this opportunity to meet with interested adult learners! Remember that your workshop attendees will be influenced by your enthusiasm, your interest in the topics and discussions, and your attention to their contributions and needs as individuals.

The more committed you are to providing useful content and a healthy discussion space, the more your attendees will be engaged in their learning and their commitment to apply their new knowledge to the benefit of their communities.

Notes

Use this space to make notes that will help you prepare for your workshop, e.g., contact information for you co-facilitator(s), information about the workshop attendees, etc.