

Hi All,

I wanted to add a quick summary of the meeting from my own perspective, to accompany Deb's excellent notes. There is a request for help at the end, so if you want to skip the blah, blah, blah, just jump down there, please!

It seems to me that we covered a lot of ground in this meeting. No one like to sit in meetings, but I feel like this one was very productive, and got us on the path to a good common understanding of the goals and roles of the ReSkilling Guild.

First of all, it seemed to me that we came to a broad consensus that the guild is primarily for sharing skills that are already found, in many cases, in our already-existing guilds. Part of what this means, is that we will be reaching out primarily to those outside of the guilds in question. The skills we are sharing need to be shared largely because they are fading in the general consciousness, as modern convenience and hyper-busy lifestyles combine to move people away from doing for yourself. It was proposed that by tapping the knowledge of our elders, we could expand our offerings, while supporting this population in much-needed ways.

Second, this guild will be a way for Sustainable NE Seattle to reach out to the community beyond its existing membership. As such, our job as teachers will be to connect the dots between our specific classes and skills and the mission, goals, and values of the group as a whole. Another aspect of this is that we will be doing outreach to the community at large regarding our offerings.

A third point that came up in our conversation was that there is no single model for a successful class. Some are better offered in a class-room setting, while others in the field, while others in people's homes. The format can also vary, though some form of participation would be best to maintain whenever possible. The question of a fee for classes was also raised, and it was pointed out that requiring payment could turn away folks of lesser means, which is a group we should be working hard to attract and retain. A suggested-donation model was proposed as a way to address this issue. Someone also raised the point that when we use community centers as sites for our classes, they may require a fee for participation, which is something to consider.

Some future directions proposed included reaching out to the elderly of our community as teachers, and also as a place they could donate their relevant materials as they downsize their lives. An implication here would be that we would need a space in which to store our donated bounty, as well as possibly for offering classes. Another interesting proposal was to use the course development sheets passed out to constitute a skill-share mechanism for people. It seems we might want to consider carefully how this would be distinct from existing programs in this area, but I don't see that as an impediment, only as a consideration. An assets mapping exercise was also proposed to identify both potential teachers and areas of interest, where we could work to develop targeted offerings.

Regarding the course offering sheets we passed out, we already have 40 classes either ready to go or in development! Areas include basic building maintenance, basic DIY, celebration, general crafts, fabric crafts, food prep, food storage, health, local economies, gardening and urban horticulture, and more. There's more to be done as we get ready to get these classes into a calendar, but we're well on our way!

Request For Help:

Based on our meeting, there are several things we need to ask for help with.

1. Our guild is the topic of the upcoming **Sustainable NE Seattle General Membership Meeting**

on April 18th. It would be great if, as part of that, we could offer two or three very informal, hands-on workshops at the meeting. A tool sharpening demo has been proposed, and it would be good if we have others as well. Ideally these would be things that people could drift among, picking up skills on the fly. I am planning to put together a brief discussion of what we're doing and a call for participation, but I don't plan to take all that much time.

2. We need volunteers to work support (note to self: next time, put the support check box at the top of the form, not the bottom). Things we need to be working on include: lining up venues, internal communications, course support and development, and outreach to students.
3. Our immediate future! When shall we meet again? I like the idea of monthly meetings, and feel like we got a lot out of this one. One thought that I have is to tie our meetings to our venues, and try to rotate them around NE Seattle, so we become more familiar with (and to) the places where we'll potentially be offering classes. This might mean that we can't always do a potluck format though. Thoughts?

Thanks!

Patrick