



Becoming part of the Dialogue Café Network

This document outlines the first steps to becoming part of the Dialogue Café Network. It sets out more information about the project, some of the technical and physical specifications for opening a Dialogue Café, as well as the costs associated with setting up and operating a Dialogue Café. We also outline the expectations we have of local partners in terms of hosting and managing a Dialogue Café and what the local partners can expect in terms of support from the Dialogue Café Association.

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1. Aims and Objectives of the Dialogue Café Network

Charter of the Dialogue Café Network

Dialogue café uses leading edge technology to enable face-to-face conversations between diverse groups of people from around the world so that they can share experiences, learn from each other and work together to make the world a better place.

Values

The Dialogue Café Network believes that people have many things in common and that, given the opportunity, people will explore their common interests, even across radical geopolitical divides.

We also believe that conversations of this kind are often the basis of new ways of thinking and doing: they can empower individuals and communities, break down prejudice and misconceptions, generate new ideas and spark collaborations on new ways of addressing some of today's most challenging social and environmental issues.

We believe in:

- Dialogue
- Diversity
- Collaboration
- Openness

Objectives

The Network's main objective is to enable conversations and collaborations between diverse groups of people to promote, develop and advance social, economic and environmental objectives on a global basis. In particular, Dialogue Café supports activities on the following four themes:

- Cross-cultural dialogue
- Civic participation
- Social innovation
- Arts, culture and creativity

The Dialogue Café Network will enable these conversations and collaborations by creating an international network of physical spaces – Dialogue Cafés – offering easy access to state of the art video conferencing technology. They will be connected through a global exchange that links cafés across the world. This will enable informal social exchange and conversation as well as a range of more structured multi-city projects and events, such as lectures, concerts, meetings, conferences and workshops. Each Dialogue Café will be managed locally by a partnership of community groups, local government and/or business.

2. Roles and responsibilities of the Local Partner and the Dialogue Café Association

We have created a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to be agreed between the Local Partner and the Dialogue Café Association, to set out the roles and responsibilities of the Local Partner and the Dialogue Café Association. When an organisation decides to become part of the Dialogue Café Network, it agrees to adhere to the values and objectives of the Network, as laid out in the Charter of the Dialogue Café Network and the terms and conditions of the MoU. In return, the Dialogue Café Association agrees to provide the Local Partner with the appropriate support to host and manage a Dialogue Café.

In summary, the Local Partner will:

Encourage CONVERSATIONS and COLLABORATIONS between diverse groups of people.

- OUTREACH to target audiences including schools, universities, social purpose organisations (e.g. community based organisations, youth led organisations, social enterprises, foundations, public sector agencies etc), cultural organisations and artists.
- PROGRAMMING of activities and events with other Dialogue Cafés to draw in a wide range of users to discuss and collaborate on a wide range of projects, workshops, seminars, brainstorming, lectures etc.
- Dialogue Café is a non-profit and not commercial endeavour and as such, the café s must be used to promote SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL and CULTURAL goals.
- PROMOTING social innovation and entrepreneurship, cross-cultural dialogue, civic participation and arts, creativity and culture.

Support the NETWORK by sharing insights and information

- Share information with other local partners and the Association to support the development of the Network.
- Support the Dialogue Café platform – www.dialoguecafe.org – by uploading resources and materials (such as podcasts of previous events), blogging and announcing forthcoming events.

Cover the COSTS associated with setting up and operating a Dialogue Café

- Cover the costs associated with installation and pay an annual membership fee* to the Association (*NB: this annual fee will be waived during the first year of operating)
- Cover the costs associated with the physical SPACE (i.e. rent, refurbishing space to make it fit for purpose and insurance).
- Cover costs of employing STAFF at the Dialogue Café
- Cover BANDWIDTH costs.

The Association will work closely with the local partner to identify and seek funding from third parties to cover installation and operating costs where appropriate).

The Local Partner will ensure the SUSTAINABILITY of the Dialogue Café

- The local partner has the freedom to charge users to ensure the sustainability of the Dialogue Café (as long as that money is reinvested into the project or used to cover costs incurred in connection with running the dialogue café).
- Has the freedom to enter into sponsorship arrangements in relation to the Dialogue Café they manage and/or charge corporate bodies for the use of the Dialogue Café.
- Has the freedom to explore alternative revenue streams in order to subsidise or cover the costs associated with managing a Dialogue Café.

In summary, the Dialogue Café Association will:

Maintain the GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM

- This includes covering the costs associated with developing and maintaining the global Dialogue Café TelePresence Exchange.
- This includes covering the costs associated with the maintenance, repair and replacement of the Dialogue Café pods. The Association will subcontract a certified integrator in the local area to maintain and repair the technology.

Expand the GLOBAL NETWORK

- The Dialogue Café Association will develop the global network, opening new Dialogue Cafés in cities across the world. The growth of the network aims to create a global reach and include the world's most influential cities. By the end of 2011 we aim to have 10-15 Dialogue Cafés open.

Support Local Partners in INSTALLING the Dialogue Café pods

- Install the appropriate equipment and technology, including the co-ordination of the service provider, integrator and pod installer, linking up the Local Partner to the rest of the Network.
- Liaise with local TP and pod manufacturers to provide the local partner with the Dialogue Café equipment and technology.

Oversee GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS

- The Association will cover all the costs associated with communications and marketing.
- The Association will cover the costs of maintaining the online platform – www.dialoguecafe.org – including the development of the online booking facilities. The booking system for the teleconferencing technologies will be designed and operated to be easy to use and provide equal and fair access to all local partners and users.

Provide ONGOING support to the local partners

- Provide a concierge style system to support local partners – this includes overseeing maintenance of the pods; support in the development of the programme for activities and events and enabling the collaboration between the various Dialogue Café.

3. Finding the Space

General criteria for the Dialogue Café

- The site must be open to the general public
- It should be in an accessible part of the city
- The site must have an existing function (e.g. educational programmes with schools, co-housing for social entrepreneurs etc)
- The site should have long opening hours in order to maximise the number of hours the Dialogue Café is open.
- Ideally, the site includes a café

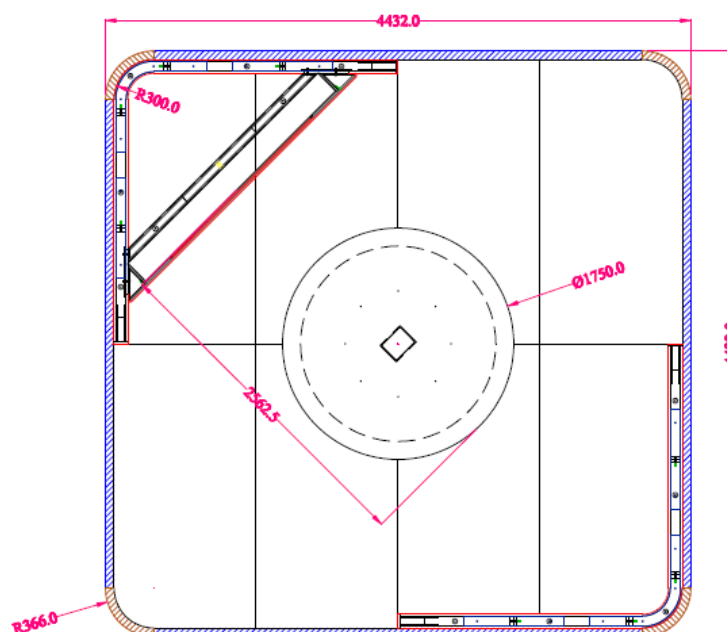
Physical specifications

The pods are 4.5m x 4.5m (approx 14.5 ft x 14.5ft) and 2m in height. The ideal room size for the pods is approx. 60-80m².

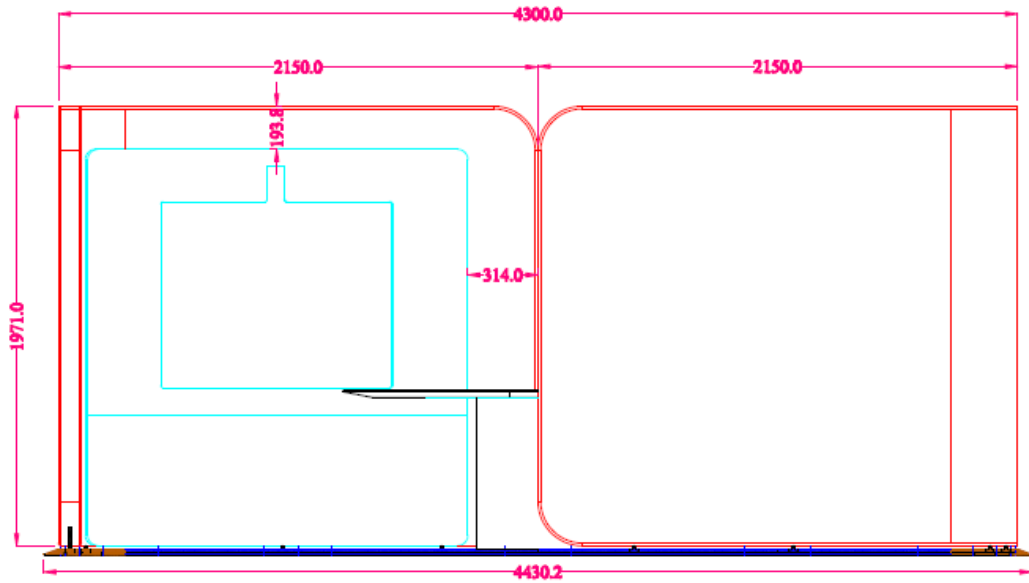
The pods have been designed to provide flexibility – from small, intimate conversations to larger group activities. The back wall can be removed in order to allow for large group activities (i.e. with schools, lectures and so on). The larger the room, the greater the flexibility to have different kinds of activities and events.

The pod is a self-contained unit. The TelePresence screen, microphones, speakers, cameras and cables are integrated into the design of the pod. The pod includes the floor (under which are placed the cables), the table (into which the microphones and plug points are placed), the back walls (which can be removed) and the front wall (which supports the frame for the TelePresence screen and the speakers). The rest of the technical equipment is hidden between the screen and the back wall.

Aerial view:



Side view:



Technology/technical specifications

Dialogue Café will be using NRENs (National Research and Education Networks) to communicate between every site. These NRENs are global and worldwide high bandwidth and speed networks that are already interconnected.

Each Dialogue Café just needs a local connection to the nearest NREN and agreement/qualification to be connect to it. The specifications of the connection are the following:

- Dedicated connection for the pods
- 4-5 Mbps per Pod (upload/download)
- Symmetric Broadband connection. Ethernet connection preferred
- Quality of Service Connection (voice + video prioritization on all networks)

To be able to do conferencing (more than two Dialogue Cafés at the same time) Dialogue Café is using a central infrastructure based in the US at NLR (National Lambda Rail Networks). Whenever available, Dialogue Café prefers to use local NRENs . This provides direct global connectivity to all other Dialogue Cafés. In some cases, a local connection between Dialogue Café Location and local NREN organizations might be needed.

4. Installing and opening the Dialogue Café

The installation itself takes about 1-2 days for putting the pod together and 2-3 days for testing. However, before the pod can be installed and connected, various steps need to be taken. In summary, these steps are as follows:

1. Site visit

From Dialogue Café staff to determine the suitability of the location.

2. Refurbishment

In some cases, alterations to the space will need to be done to make the space fit for purpose for the Dialogue Café.

3. Manufacture of the pods

Depending on the location, the pod will have to be manufactured locally. The local partner and our manufacturer (Modus) will work together to identify and subcontract a furniture manufacturer locally. Modus staff will on hand to provide support, ensure continuity and help with the installation.

4. Connectivity

If the location is suitable, it needs to be connected to the local NREN network. Dialogue Café Association will establish costs for connecting location to NREN. In some cases, the local partner will need to be certified to be connected to the Dialogue Café Network.

5. Integration

Cisco technology needs to be installed by a certified party – known as an integrator. Dialogue Café Association will identify and approach a locally certified Cisco technology integrator.

6. PR and communications

The Local Partner need to develop a communications strategy for the launch and the first few weeks that the Dialogue Café is open.

7. Programme and Launch

With the Dialogue Café Association, and other Dialogue Cafés, develop a programme for the launch and the first month the Dialogue Café is open. An operations manual is being drafted now and will provide more information about managing the Dialogue Café on a day to day basis.

5. Next Steps

If you think you're the right partner for Dialogue Café, or would like to be involved in bringing Dialogue Café to your city, get in touch with our Programme Manager Julie Caulier-Grice at Julie@dialoguecafe.org