

Participant Guide



AEA SYSTEMS IN EVALUATION TIG
2nd ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL

2016 SYSTEMS (UN)CONFERENCE

June 21, 2016, 1 - 3 pm US EDT
June 23, 2016, 9 - 11 am Australian EST

<https://unhangout.media.mit.edu/event/systems-unconference>
systemsunconference@gmail.com

@SystemsUnConf
#systemsconf16

Before the (Un)Conference

1. Set up a [Google account](#) with G+ enabled (if you don't have one yet).
2. Install the Google Hangout plugin to your browser, if you're not using Chrome.
3. Test that your webcam and microphone work by [creating a test Google Hangout](#).
4. Watch a [short video](#) about how to use MIT's UnHangout.
5. Watch a [short video](#) about how to join or propose a new breakout group.
6. Review this [Participant guide](#).

During the (Un)Conference

Participants

1. **Enter the (Un)Conference:**
 - a. Click <https://unhangout.media.mit.edu/event/systems-unconference> to join the event.
 - b. Chat in the “lobby” with others and listen to the Opening Remarks.
2. **Join a breakout room**
 - a. When prompted, join a breakout room, or propose a new session, or vote them up or down.
 - b. If the room does not already have a facilitator, choose someone to facilitate the group.
3. **Engage in the Conversation**
 - a. Discuss your topic with others in your breakout room.
 - b. Use the chat window on the right side of your breakout room to share resources, links, and Aha! moments with your fellow discussants.
 - c. Make sure you have good lighting so we can see your beautiful face, and quiet surroundings so we can hear your beautiful voice!
 - d. If your internet is slow or unreliable, [adjust the bandwidth downward](#) in your breakout room.

Extra Instructions For Impromptu Facilitators

If you find yourself facilitating a new, impromptu breakout group, here are some steps for you.

1. **Facilitate the conversation**
 - a. Use your facilitator skills to “hold the space open” for the discussants to explore and learn. In this role, you are simply meant to be facilitator first, not a systems expert. See additional facilitator tips below.
2. **Summarize key learning from session and submit**
 - a. Take 5 minutes at end of session to engage your group in summarizing the following:
 - key **ideas** that emerged in the session
 - key **tools or resources** that emerged in the session to share with the learning network
 - key **questions** that emerged as a result of your conversation that could be explored in the learning network
 - b. At the end, send in your summary to systemsunconference@gmail.com

After the (Un)Conference

1. Sessions will be summarized into one document for future sharing. Watch your email for more information on how to access this document.
2. Follow up with your action steps to put your learning into action.

3. Get ready to re-connect and extend your learning at Evaluation 2016 in Atlanta!

Participant Tips for Getting the Most out of an Unconference

- Don't be hesitant to suggest your own topic. It's only for discussion; you do not have to be an expert in the area.
- Set yourself a goal for what you want to achieve from each session.
- As with all technology, be prepared for technical glitches and expect the unexpected.
- Feel free to come and go from a session to make sure you get the most from the experience: the Law of Two Feet!
- Remember the breakout facilitators are not formal presenters; they are simply there to "hold the space open" for you!

Facilitation Tips for "Holding the Space Open" in a Virtual Unconference

Feel free to add to this list (see how we are holding the space open?)

- Follow [the Open Space principles](#).
 - Whoever comes is the right people. Whatever happens is the only thing that could have. When it starts is the right time. When it's over it's over.
 - If you find yourself in a situation where you are neither learning nor contributing, move somewhere where you can.
- At the beginning, consider stating some simple ground rules (or reiterate what is mentioned in the Opening Remarks) so people aren't offended if/when you need to cut them off. You might need to remind people that the goal of the session is to explore, share, and hopefully identify take-aways.
- Don't spend too much time talking at the beginning or you will lose people. Go quickly to the first discussion question.
- There will always be introverts and extroverts, so be prepared to manage the extroverts and provide options for the introverts to contribute, e.g. "Feel free to add some comments using the Chat Function..."
- Keep an eye on the chat column. This can be tricky, but remember you are primarily a facilitator and not a participant. You can participate, of course, but remember to balance your roles.
- People will likely leave your room and join another; be okay with this Open Space "Law of Two Feet."
- Monopolizers are common but dangerous. Don't be afraid to intervene! e.g.,
 - "I wonder if anyone else has had a similar or different experience?"
 - "Let me just jump in here, what do others think?"

- Accept that the group may want to move in a new direction off-topic. If they do, this can be exciting, so go with it!
- Have a timer or something highly visible to you so you don't forget the time.
- Save 5-10 minutes at the end for wrapping up and summarizing. Document this in the survey monkey link we will send to every room.