



AGENTS OF
FLOURISHING
— C O M M O N S —



COMMONS RESOURCE LIBRARY

THE COMMONS ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK



*A Practical Guide for Participating in
the Agents of Flourishing Commons*

CONNECT • DISCERN • COLLABORATE • MULTIPLY



STRONGER TOGETHER.
FLOURISHING COMMUNITIES FOR GENERATIONS.



Agents of Flourishing. Stewards of the Future.

Welcome

A Different Kind of Leadership Rhythm

If you have already read **The Ecology of Shared Stewardship**, you have explored the vision behind the Agents of Flourishing Commons—why shared stewardship matters, why trusted relationships become the foundation of lasting collaboration, and how God often transforms communities by cultivating an ecology where faithful relationships mature into faithful action.

This guide serves a different purpose. Rather than explaining **why** the Commons exists, it provides a practical overview of **how leaders participate** in this growing ecosystem of shared stewardship. It has been written for busy pastors, business owners, nonprofit executives, educators, and community leaders who want to understand what participation actually looks like and how the Commons has been intentionally designed to cultivate meaningful collaboration without adding unnecessary complexity to already demanding schedules.

The Commons is built around four intentional rhythms of engagement. Each serves a unique purpose, yet each also prepares the way for the next. Together, they create a framework that allows relationships to deepen, opportunities to emerge, collaborative initiatives to mature, and communities to flourish.

Throughout the year, **Monthly Commons Conversations** cultivate trusted relationships and keep leaders connected to one another's work. **Quarterly Commons Gatherings** bring partners together for deeper learning, shared discernment, and the discovery of emerging opportunities. From these gatherings, **Innovation Cohorts** naturally form as leaders choose to steward specific ideas or collaborative initiatives that align with their unique calling and capacity. The year culminates with the **Annual Agents of Flourishing Summit**, where the entire ecosystem gathers to celebrate stories of God's faithfulness, reflect on what has been learned, discern new opportunities, and commission one another for another season of shared stewardship.

Notice that participation is intentionally layered. Not every leader participates in every Innovation Cohort. Not every organization will steward every initiative. Healthy ecosystems flourish because every part contributes according to its unique design and season of stewardship. The Commons follows that same pattern, inviting each partner to invest at a level that is both meaningful and sustainable.

This intentional sequencing is one of the defining characteristics of the Commons. Rather than asking leaders to simply attend meetings, the Commons invites them into a rhythm where every conversation, every gathering, and every collaborative opportunity serves a distinct purpose within a much larger story. Relationships become stronger. Trust grows deeper. Holy imagination is cultivated. Faithful action emerges. Communities flourish.

The Commons is intentionally architected. Its rhythms are intentionally sequenced. And like every healthy ecosystem, it remains **faithfully unfinished**, leaving room for God to continually surprise us with opportunities that none of us could have imagined alone.

Monthly Commons Conversations

Stay Connected. Keep Learning.

Healthy ecosystems are sustained through consistent rhythms rather than occasional events. Relationships deepen over time. Trust grows through regular conversations. New opportunities often emerge not during formal planning sessions, but as leaders continue listening, learning, and discerning together.

Monthly Commons Conversations provide that rhythm. Hosted virtually through Zoom, these ninety-minute gatherings create a consistent space where leaders remain connected to one another's work while continuing to cultivate the relationships that make meaningful collaboration possible. Rather than functioning as another business meeting, these conversations are intentionally designed to encourage thoughtful dialogue, shared learning, and Kingdom-centered discernment across churches, businesses, nonprofits, education, and community leadership.

Every conversation includes opportunities to hear how God is at work through partner organizations, celebrate stories of community flourishing, explore emerging trends affecting the next generation, and engage topics that strengthen both individual leadership and shared stewardship. As leaders listen to one another, they often begin recognizing opportunities that no single organization could have identified alone.

Monthly Commons Conversations also serve another important purpose. They help maintain momentum between in-person gatherings. Questions that emerge throughout the quarter can be explored together. New relationships continue to develop. Emerging ideas begin taking shape. By remaining consistently connected, leaders arrive at each Quarterly Commons Gathering already informed, already engaged, and already prepared to discern what God may be inviting them to steward together.

Participation is intentionally simple. Leaders are invited to join from wherever they are. Some months they may actively contribute to the conversation. Other months they may simply listen, reflect, and learn. Both forms of participation have value because healthy ecosystems are strengthened not only by speaking, but also by attentive listening.

These conversations are not intended to add another obligation to an already busy calendar. They are designed to become one of the most encouraging ninety minutes of each month—a time when leaders step away from the demands of daily leadership to reconnect with trusted peers, gain fresh perspective, and remember that they are not carrying the work of community flourishing alone.

At a Glance

Format: Virtual (Zoom)

Frequency: Monthly

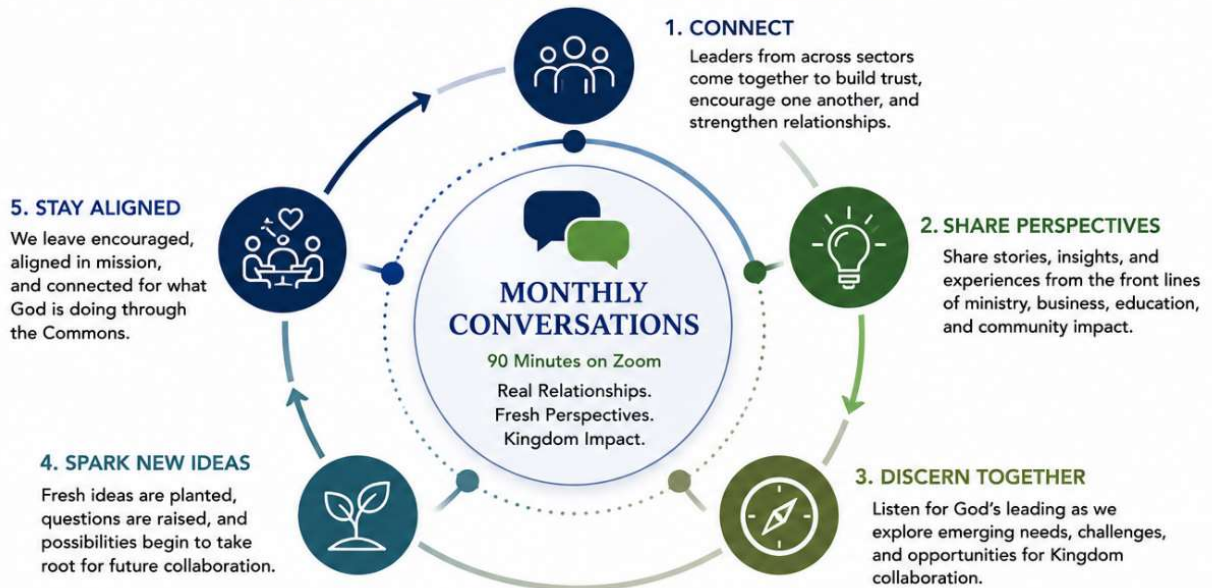
Length: Approximately 90 Minutes

Primary Purpose: Cultivate relationships, shared learning, and ongoing discernment.

Monthly Commons Conversations

Stay Connected. Share Ideas. Discern Together.

A consistent monthly rhythm of connection that strengthens relationships, sparks fresh ideas, and keeps our shared mission at the center.



A SIMPLE, POWERFUL RHYTHM

Small, consistent conversations create the relational foundation that makes greater collaboration possible.



PREPARES THE WAY

These conversations cultivate trust and clarity that lead to deeper discernment and Kingdom opportunities in the months ahead.

Quarterly Commons Gatherings

Connect More Deeply. Discern Together.

While Monthly Commons Conversations help leaders remain connected throughout the year, Quarterly Commons Gatherings create the space for relationships to deepen, ideas to mature, and collaborative opportunities to become more clearly visible. Meeting primarily in person three times each year, these gatherings provide a rhythm that simply cannot be replicated through virtual conversations alone.

Every Quarterly Gathering is intentionally designed around shared learning, thoughtful dialogue, prayerful discernment, and relationship building. Leaders come together from churches, businesses, nonprofits, education, and community organizations, bringing with them fresh experiences, new questions, emerging challenges, and stories of God's faithfulness within their own sphere of influence. As those perspectives are shared around the table, leaders begin seeing opportunities that would often remain invisible if viewed through the lens of a single organization.

One of the unique characteristics of the Quarterly Gathering is its emphasis on discernment before action. Rather than arriving with predetermined agendas or immediate solutions, leaders are invited to listen carefully to one another, explore common burdens, and prayerfully consider where God may already be opening new doors for collaborative Kingdom impact. Over time, this shared discernment begins revealing opportunities that are larger than any one organization could steward alone.

For many leaders, the Quarterly Gathering also becomes the natural gateway into deeper collaboration. As emerging opportunities become clearer, participants who sense a particular alignment with their own experience, calling, or organizational mission are invited to continue the conversation through an Innovation Cohort. These optional sessions are held immediately following the Quarterly Gathering, allowing leaders to explore specific initiatives without requiring additional trips or unnecessary meetings. Those who are not participating in a cohort simply conclude their morning knowing they have already invested meaningfully in the life of the Commons.

This layered approach reflects one of the defining principles of healthy ecosystems. Every partner contributes. Not every partner contributes in exactly the same way. Some leaders will find great value in remaining connected through Monthly Conversations and Quarterly Gatherings. Others will sense God inviting them to invest more deeply in a particular collaborative initiative through an Innovation Cohort. Both forms of participation are equally valued because shared stewardship is never measured by activity alone, but by faithfully stewarding the unique gifts, relationships, and opportunities God has entrusted to each leader.

By the end of each Quarterly Gathering, leaders leave with something more valuable than another meeting summary.

They leave with trusted relationships that have grown stronger, a clearer understanding of emerging opportunities, and a renewed confidence that faithful collaboration can accomplish far more than isolated effort ever could.

At a Glance

Format: Primarily In-Person

Frequency: Three Times Per Year

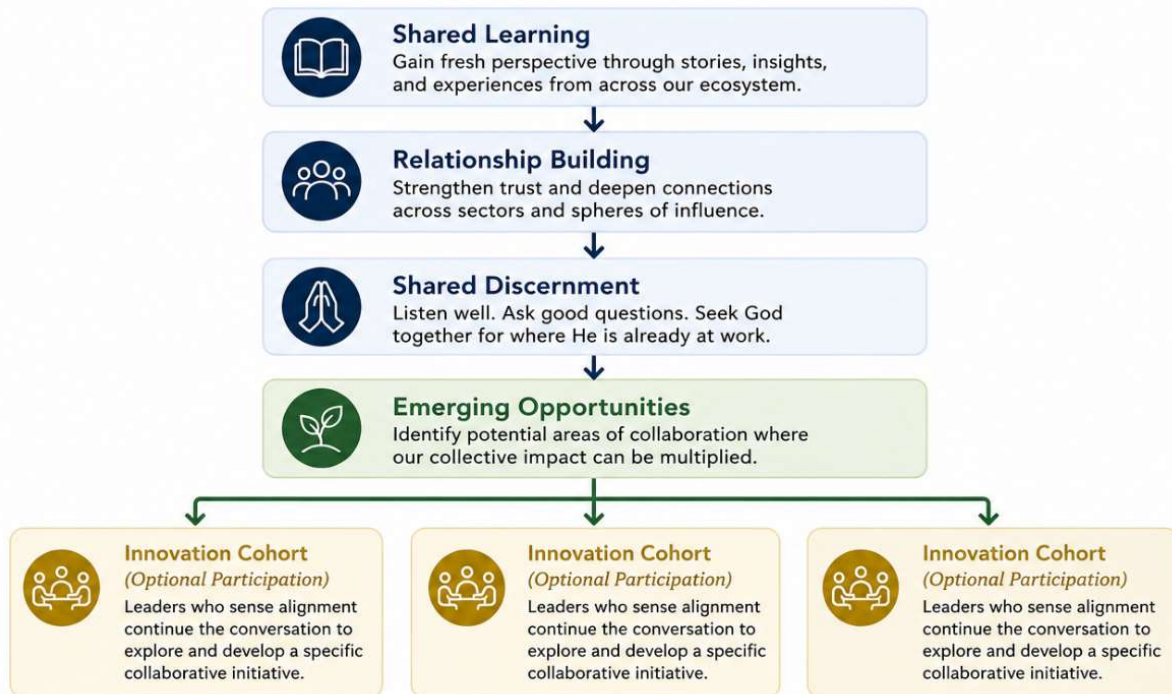
Length: Approximately Half Day

Innovation Cohorts: Optional sessions immediately following the Quarterly Gathering

Primary Focus: Collaboration • Discernment • Opportunity Discovery

Quarterly Commons Gathering

Connect More Deeply. Discern Together.



*Every Quarterly Gathering strengthens relationships.
Innovation Cohorts provide an opportunity for leaders to steward
specific collaborative initiatives that emerge from those relationships.*

Innovation Cohorts

From Shared Discernment to Shared Action

One of the unique strengths of the Agents of Flourishing Commons is that collaboration does not end when a Quarterly Gathering concludes. Instead, as relationships deepen and opportunities become clearer, leaders who sense a shared calling around a particular opportunity are invited to continue the conversation through an Innovation Cohort.

Innovation Cohorts are not permanent committees or additional layers of organizational structure. They are temporary, purpose-driven collaborative teams formed around a specific opportunity, challenge, or emerging vision. Their purpose is simple: to explore what God may be inviting a group of leaders to steward together that no single organization could accomplish alone.

Every cohort begins with curiosity rather than certainty. Rather than arriving with a fully developed plan, participants gather around thoughtful questions, diverse perspectives, and a shared desire to discern what could become possible through collaboration. Some ideas may remain conversations. Others may mature into pilot initiatives, strategic partnerships, shared resources, or entirely new expressions of Kingdom service. The Commons intentionally creates space for both outcomes because healthy innovation always begins with faithful exploration before measurable execution.

Because every opportunity is different, every Innovation Cohort will naturally take on its own rhythm. Some cohorts may meet only a handful of times before accomplishing their purpose. Others may continue working together over several months as a new initiative develops. The goal is never to create ongoing meetings for their own sake, but to provide just enough structure for meaningful collaboration to flourish.

This flexibility reflects one of the defining characteristics of the Commons itself. The framework is intentionally architected, yet faithfully unfinished. While Kingdom Vision Alliance Group provides the relational infrastructure, facilitation, and stewardship needed to help collaborative ideas mature, the future of the Commons is not fully scripted. Every participating leader brings unique experience, wisdom, relationships, and holy imagination that may help shape initiatives none of us can yet fully envision. Some Innovation Cohorts may strengthen an existing pathway already being stewarded within the Commons. Others may uncover opportunities significant enough to become entirely new pathways for future generations of leaders.

Perhaps most importantly, Innovation Cohorts remind us that the goal is never simply innovation. The goal is faithful stewardship. Innovation is valuable only when it serves people, strengthens communities, advances God's Kingdom, and creates lasting pathways for human flourishing.

At a Glance

Participation: Optional

Who Participates: Leaders sensing alignment with a specific opportunity

Meeting Rhythm: Determined by the Cohort itself

Typical Duration: Several weeks to several months

Primary Focus: Exploration • Collaboration • Pilot Development • Shared Stewardship

Innovation Cohorts

From Shared Discernment to Shared Action.



POSSIBLE OUTCOMES



Innovation Cohorts are incubators for Kingdom imagination expressed through shared stewardship—always exploring, always learning, always aiming toward flourishing communities.

The Annual Agents of Flourishing Summit

Celebrate. Learn. Imagine What's Next.

Every meaningful movement benefits from moments when its people pause, celebrate what has been accomplished, learn from one another, and renew their shared sense of purpose. The Annual Agents of Flourishing Summit serves as that moment within the Commons.

Held once each year—currently envisioned in beautiful Colorado Springs—the Summit brings together leaders from every part of the ecosystem for two days of reflection, encouragement, celebration, and collaborative imagination. While Monthly Conversations strengthen relationships throughout the year, Quarterly Gatherings deepen collaboration, and Innovation Cohorts steward specific initiatives, the Summit allows the entire Commons to see the larger story that is unfolding together.

The Summit is intentionally designed to celebrate learning rather than simply celebrate success. Not every innovative idea becomes a lasting initiative, and not every pilot achieves exactly what was originally envisioned. Yet every thoughtful effort teaches us something valuable about serving people more faithfully, collaborating more effectively, and stewarding God's Kingdom with greater wisdom. The Commons believes that healthy learning accelerates flourishing just as much as measurable success.

Throughout the Summit, leaders will hear stories from organizations that have strengthened partnerships, launched collaborative initiatives, addressed community challenges, invested in the next generation, or discovered entirely new opportunities through shared stewardship. These stories are not presented to impress one another, but to encourage one another. They remind every participant that faithful collaboration, even when it begins with a simple conversation, can produce outcomes no single organization could accomplish alone.

The Summit also creates intentional space to look ahead. As leaders reflect on what has emerged throughout the previous year, they begin asking new questions, recognizing emerging needs, and imagining new possibilities for the future. Some conversations may lead to entirely new Innovation Cohorts. Others may strengthen existing initiatives or even reveal opportunities for additional stewardship pathways within the Commons. Because the Commons is intentionally architected, yet faithfully unfinished, every Summit becomes both a celebration of what God has already accomplished and an invitation to participate in what He may be preparing next.

For many leaders, these two days become the most valuable investment they make all year—not because of the schedule itself, but because of the relationships strengthened, perspectives expanded, and vision renewed. Leaders return home encouraged, connected, and better equipped to steward both their own organizations and the broader flourishing of the communities they serve.

At a Glance

Format: In Person

Frequency: Once Each Year

Location: Colorado Springs, Colorado (*anticipated*)

Length: Two Days

Primary Focus: Celebration • Learning • Vision Renewal • Future Collaboration

THE ANNUAL AGENTS OF FLOURISHING SUMMIT

• *A Rhythm of Celebration, Learning, and Renewal* •



ANOTHER YEAR OF SHARED STEWARDSHIP BEGINS

Together we cultivate flourishing communities for generations to come.



Is the Commons Right for Your Organization?

Every Leader Participates Differently. Every Contribution Matters.

One of the most common questions leaders ask is whether they have the capacity to participate meaningfully in the Commons. It is an understandable question. Churches, businesses, nonprofits, schools, and community organizations are already carrying significant responsibilities, and most leaders are careful about making new commitments.

The Commons was designed with that reality in mind. Participation is not measured by how many meetings you attend or how many initiatives you join. Instead, participation is measured by faithful stewardship. Every organization enters the Commons with different strengths, different capacities, and different opportunities to contribute. Some leaders may find tremendous value simply by participating in the Monthly Commons Conversations and building trusted relationships across sectors. Others may choose to invest more deeply through Quarterly Gatherings, Innovation Cohorts, or by helping steward a collaborative initiative that aligns closely with their own mission.

There is no expectation that every partner participates in every opportunity. Instead, each organization is invited to engage at the level that best reflects its season, capacity, and calling. Some years may involve deeper investment. Other years may simply be a season of listening, learning, and strengthening relationships. Both are valuable because healthy ecosystems depend upon many different kinds of contributions.

Likewise, financial participation is designed to reflect shared stewardship rather than organizational size. Each Shared Stewardship Partner makes an annual investment that helps sustain the collaborative infrastructure of the Commons, including facilitation, resource development, gatherings, and the ongoing support needed to cultivate meaningful partnerships. More importantly, that investment reflects a shared commitment to the flourishing of communities rather than a transactional membership model.

The Commons is not asking organizations to add another program. It is inviting leaders into a different way of thinking about Kingdom collaboration. When relationships are intentionally cultivated, trust grows. When trust grows, opportunities become visible. When opportunities become visible, communities begin to flourish in ways that isolated organizations rarely experience alone.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who should participate?

Lead pastors, executive directors, nonprofit leaders, business owners, educators, civic leaders, and others who desire to steward their influence collaboratively for the flourishing of their communities.

What if I can't attend every gathering?

The Commons is intentionally designed with flexibility. Organizations participate according to their own capacity and season of leadership.

How are Innovation Cohorts selected?

Innovation Cohorts emerge naturally from opportunities identified through Quarterly Gatherings. Participation is always optional and based on interest, experience, and alignment.

Is there an annual partnership investment?

Yes. Shared Stewardship Partners make an annual investment that helps sustain the relational infrastructure, gatherings, facilitation, and collaborative work of the Commons. Details are discussed during the Discovery Conversation because every partnership begins with discernment rather than a transaction.

Shared stewardship is not about doing more. It is about doing better—together.

Begin the Conversation

Every Flourishing Community Begins with Leaders Willing to Explore Together.

Every meaningful partnership begins with a conversation. Perhaps as you've read this guide you have recognized opportunities already present within your own organization. Perhaps you have begun imagining new partnerships, new initiatives, or new ways your community could flourish through deeper collaboration. Or perhaps your greatest takeaway has simply been the realization that you don't have to steward the future alone.

Whatever brought you to this point, we invite you to take the next step. The Discovery Conversation is not a presentation or a sales meeting. It is an opportunity to listen, learn about your organization, understand the unique strengths and challenges you are stewarding, and explore whether the Agents of Flourishing Commons is a good fit for your mission and your leadership team. Together, we will consider where opportunities for collaboration may already be emerging and whether shared stewardship could help strengthen the work God has already entrusted to your care.

If the timing is right, wonderful. If it is not, we hope this guide has still encouraged you to pursue courageous collaboration wherever God has placed you. Every movement begins with leaders who are willing to ask a simple question: **"What might become possible if we stewarded the future together?"**

Your Next Step

Option 1 — Schedule a Discovery Conversation

Meet personally with Duane Smith to explore your organization's vision, opportunities, and potential place within the Commons.

Option 2 — Complete the Community Flourishing Assessment

Receive a structured conversation tool that helps clarify strengths, readiness, opportunities, and potential areas for future collaboration.

Option 3 — Stay Connected

Join a Monthly Commons Conversation and experience the collaborative rhythm of the Commons before making a larger commitment.

Closing Thought

The future is rarely transformed by one remarkable organization. More often, it is shaped by ordinary leaders who choose to trust one another, steward their gifts together, and faithfully respond to what God is already bringing to life. The Agents of Flourishing Commons is simply an invitation to begin that journey—together.

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