After the event

After the event, communal infrastructure plays a crucial role in sustaining connections, fostering networking, and enabling ongoing knowledge sharing. It can be leveraged to organize future events, support network building and advocacy efforts.

Potential of infrastructure as a way of continuing the convening, networking, sharing

For sustainability and future applications of the current infrastructure we can consider two separate scenarios in terms of how it has been used in the past two CommsLabs and what potential applications the infrastructure can support in the future.

Current application and configuration

In the last two CommsLabs events, the infrastructure has been used primarily for coordinating the engagement that goes into organising the event. So, the Coordination Team along with Activist Advisory Board, MCs, Facilitators have operationalised remote working and collaboration via Chat, Files, Meetings and the website. In addition, the participants (community folks) have access to all logistics, program, agenda and session files; they are able to upload and download material, for example photos/ videos or presentations during and after the event. Given this context, the infrastructure has hosted and is accessible and useful for all people involved which means the infrastructure has realised its purpose of coordination, planning and information sharing.

However, there is immense potential for the existing infrastructure to support other similar events and projects as well as to continue to build on and advocate for the principles and values of a digital infrastructure based on free and open-source practices, rooted in the philosophy and transfeminist understandings of safety and security, and consider care as an exercise of active listening and contextual responses.

Future potential applications

Efforts such as CommsLabs connects activists and community members shaping the future of LGBTQI human rights advocacy and CommsLabs is not the only such effort, there can be grantee programs, research programs or projects that are online (one time webinars or workshops), offline or a mix of both. All such efforts require a set of different tools that would cater to different needs

and context. However the key that holds all this together lies in the decision making processes and workflows that embody the principles of communal infrastructure.

Success of the current infrastructure itself speaks to the fundamental ingredient of “co-responsibility” and collaboration (between Astraea, RAD, APC among other organisations and community members) - users should be encouraged to participate, but not overwhelmed. This approach shifts from profit-driven models to shared responsibility and care for the environment.

All this to suggest and recommend that for the future application of this infrastructure in the larger context of network building and advocacy efforts – whatever shape or form that may take – the ownership of the infrastructure must sit with the community. Astraea may decide to continue to host and play the role of “convenor” while other roles of operationalising and maintaining can be shared among community members.

For example, if the infrastructure is used for an event with similar structure as CommsLabs, the shared responsibilities and decision making will extend to the Activist Advisory Board, MCs, Facilitators and Community folks. There is a substantial amount of human power and monetary efforts required to maintain, operationalise and host the infrastructure, so there can be periodic reviews of deciding how long the infrastructure remains, in what configuration, which tools to be maintained and for which purposes.

Considering the human power, another critical recommendation here is to include specific clauses in contracts and scope of work for all roles (e.g. Activist Advisory Board and facilitators) that may be involved in collective decision-making for future application of the infrastructure. The conversation about the work that may be involved in continued application of the infrastructure should be embedded since the beginning. This also helps immensely with promoting community ownership.

Resources

For more context on Communal Infrastructure and how it can be used for organising various kinds of events, APC recommends the following additional resources:

- Communal internet infrastructure
- Hybrid events guide 101
- APC guidelines on planning and designing online events
- Compilation of articles and resources on feminist infrastructure

---

Revision #3
Created 2025-05-12 16:06:42 UTC by Maja Kraljic
Updated 2025-05-14 13:18:04 UTC by Maja Kraljic