# NEEDS, FEARS AND EXPECTATIONS
## Inclusive kick-off of collaborative processes

The Needs, Fears, and Expectations method is an effective approach utilized by facilitators at the beginning of group processes, to gain valuable insights into participants' concerns and aspirations in a learning or collaborative setting. By actively acknowledging and addressing these needs, fears, and expectations, facilitators can create an inclusive and supportive environment that promotes engagement and fosters meaningful learning experiences.

## USE THIS METHOD TO:

- Create a safe space for participants to contribute;
- Understand participants' perspectives as they are entering your session or workshop;
- Create opportunities to tailor your sessions in the moment to the needs of your participants, if needed;
- Create an environment that fosters trust and rapport and increases motivation.

**Purpose:** Online Socialisation, Access and Motivation

**Group size:** < 20

**Duration:** 30 min

**Multilanguage fit:** No

**Level of interaction:** Medium

## STEPS TO APPLY THE METHOD: ────────

### Preparation

1. Define the purpose of the learning activity and the topic. For instance, introducing participants to each other, to a topic, or both.
2. Prepare a virtual whiteboard or collaboration tool with three separate areas, with the headers "Needs, fears and expectations" to allow anonymous responses. Alternatively you can modify one of the templates shared under the Tooltips section.

### Delivery

1. Introduce the Activity:
   - Begin by explaining the purpose of the activity: to understand the needs, fears, and expectations of the participants.
   - Emphasise that this activity aims to create a safe and inclusive space for everyone to openly express themselves.
   - You may need to explain what the three categories mean. Expectations and needs are easy to confuse. To create clarity you may say: expectations primarily focus on the desired outcomes and experiences, while needs delve deeper into the underlying requirements and desires that participants aim to fulfil through their engagement in the workshop.
2. Needs Exploration:
   - Ask participants to individually reflect on and document their personal needs regarding the learning or collaborative experience.
   - Encourage participants to consider both practical and emotional needs.
   - Examples: Practical skills development, breaks, ending on time, tech support, collaboration, non-judgment, honesty, etc.
3. Fears Identification:
   - Ask participants to reflect on and note down any fears or concerns they may have about the learning or collaborative process.

○ Create a non-judgmental environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their apprehensions.
○ Example: Fear of judgement, being misunderstood, change, lack of safety, etc.

**4.** Expectations Sharing:
○ Ask participants to note down and share their expectations for the learning or collaborative experience.
○ Examples: Participants may expect practical activities, time for networking, reaching certain objectives, etc.

**5.** Group Discussion and Synthesis:
○ Summarise insights that have emerged from the sharing. Look for commonalities and patterns in the shared responses to identify overarching themes.
○ Address how you are planning to address the expressed needs, fears and expectations as well as manage expectations where necessary.
○ For longer group processes you may want to share the responsibility of addressing identified needs, alleviate fears and meet expectations by creating shared goals, rules and roles to ensure clear accountability.

**6.** Regular Check-ins:
○ Throughout the learning or collaborative process, periodically revisit the initial needs, fears, and expectations shared by participants.
○ Use these check-ins to assess progress, address emerging concerns, and make necessary adjustments to the action plan.

## TOOL TIPS:

https://www.mural.co/templates/hopes-and-fears

Sample community agreements for safe and inclusive meetings chrome-extension: https://portal-media.cca.edu/documents/Sample_Community_Agreements.pdf

Team agreements template Mural https://www.mural.co/templates/team-agreements

Team contract template Miro https://miro.com/miroverse/the-team-contract/