

THE COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE CANVAS

Map the journey a person actually moves through inside your community. Read the prompt for your kind of community.

Community: PyBridge Rotterdam
My Role: Co-organiser
Date: July2026

01. Arrival

- IN-PERSON

How do people hear about you before they walk in?
- REPO

What does the README say in the first five seconds?
- ONLINE

Do people know what they're walking into?

Meetup.com + word of mouth works – ~10 new faces every event

No idea how people who AREN'T on Meetup.com would ever find us

05. Recognition

- IN-PERSON

Are volunteers thanked by name?
- REPO

What's waiting for someone's second contribution?
- ONLINE

Does a returner get recognised as one?

Volunteers helped packed up 3 times. Nobody thanked them by name

First-time speakers get applause, then... nothing. No follow-up

02. Welcome

- IN-PERSON

Who greets people at the door?
- REPO

What greets a first issue or PR — and who replies, how fast?
- ONLINE

Are people named as they join?

Lisa greets everyone at the door – first-timers get a hello

...but when Lisa is away, nobody does it. It's a person, not a practice

06. Growth

- IN-PERSON

How does an attendee become an organiser?
- REPO

How does a contributor become a maintainer?
- ONLINE

How does a participant become next cohort's mentor?

How did WE become organisers? Someone asked. No path ... just luck

Two people probably wanted to help more. But we didn't ask them.

03. Participation

- IN-PERSON

What can a newcomer do besides listen?
- REPO

Is there a real issue behind the good-first-issue label?
- ONLINE

Can a newcomer do something in their first session?

Lightning talks open to anyone: low bar, works well

Same 6 people give all the full talks. New speakers don't come forward

07. Safety

- IN-PERSON

What happens when someone's uncomfortable?
- REPO

A heated thread: repaired, or left to fester?
- ONLINE

Who's holding the room on a call?

CoC exists, linked on every event page

Has anyone ever actually reported anything? Would they know how?

04. Connection

- IN-PERSON

Where do people talk who aren't already friends?
- REPO

Do contributors meet each other, or only you?
- ONLINE

Is there a backchannel where relationships form?

Pizza break is long on purpose : real conversations happen

Regulars cluster together. Newcomers stand alone by the wall.

08. Return

- IN-PERSON

Why come to the next one, not just this one?
- REPO

Why would a contributor open a second PR?
- ONLINE

What carries between sessions?

Core group of ~25 returns every month like clockwork

Of ~10 new faces, maybe 2 come back. We lose about 8/month and never ask why

Where's the gap? Which stage is weakest? where are you losing people? Start there.

Recognition. And it leaks into Return. People help, nobody notices, they quietly stop coming. The 8-of-10 newcomers we lose were probably standing alone at pizza too (Connection).

One change to test One small change you can start this month and how you'll know it worked.

Thank every volunteer and first-time speaker by name from the mic at the end of each event. Costs 2 minutes. Owner: me. Review after 3 events: did any of them come back?

Works

Breaks

Open Question

THE COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE CANVAS

Map the journey a person actually moves through inside your community. Read the prompt for your kind of community.

Community: *ClariPy*,
My Role: *single main maintainer*,
Date: *July2026*

open source Python library that helps write error messages

01. Arrival

- IN-PERSON How do people hear about you before they walk in?
- REPO What does the README say in the first five seconds?
- ONLINE Do people know what they're walking into?

Ranks well for "python error messages". 60% of new contributors say Google

People who arrive from social posts don't stick around. No idea why

05. Recognition

- IN-PERSON Are volunteers thanked by name?
- REPO What's waiting for someone's second contribution?
- ONLINE Does a returner get recognised as one?

CHANGELOG credits everyone by handle, always

Second PRs get less attention than firsts. Reviewed the data — of 40 first-time contributors last year, 6 opened a second PR. Six.

Nobody has ever been thanked outside the changelog. No emails, no shout-outs

02. Welcome

- IN-PERSON Who greets people at the door?
- REPO What greets a first issue or PR — and who replies, how fast?
- ONLINE Are people named as they join?

We have a welcome bot on first PR — but do people actually read the auto-message? No data

First-issue response time is 5-7 days when I'm busy. First-timers usually don't come back after week two of silence

06. Growth

- IN-PERSON How does an attendee become an organiser?
- REPO How does a contributor become a maintainer?
- ONLINE How does a participant become next cohort's mentor?

Undefined. I've been "planning to add a co-maintainer" for a year

Two contributors have done 10+ PRs. I've never asked either of them

03. Participation P

- IN-PERSON What can a newcomer do besides listen?
- REPO Is there a real issue behind the good-first-issue label?
- ONLINE Can a newcomer do something in their first session?

good-first-issue label has 8 real issues, curated monthly

Docs contributions are hard — no writing guide, formatting quirks, PRs sit while I figure out the right template

07. Safety

- IN-PERSON What happens when someone's uncomfortable?
- REPO A heated thread: repaired, or left to fester?
- ONLINE Who's holding the room on a call?

CoC in the repo, contact email works

Had a heated issue thread last month. Locked it, moved on, never repaired. Original reporter hasn't been back

04. Connection C

- IN-PERSON Where do people talk who aren't already friends?
- REPO Do contributors meet each other, or only you?
- ONLINE Is there a backchannel where relationships form?

Should there be a Discord? Would anyone come?

No. Everyone talks to me. Contributors have never talked to each other

08. Return

- IN-PERSON Why come to the next one, not just this one?
- REPO Why would a contributor open a second PR?
- ONLINE What carries between sessions?

6 of 40 (15%) is the number that hurts

The 15% who do return — what did they have in common? Haven't looked

Where's the gap? Which stage is weakest? where are you losing people? Start there.

Recognition + Growth are the same problem: people contribute once, get a changelog line, and there's nothing structured waiting for them — no personal reply, no invitation to take on more, no path visible. The 15% return rate is the symptom; second-PR silence is the cause.

One change to test One small change you can start this month and how you'll know it worked.

Reply personally to every second PR within 48 hours, and name the contributor in the release notes (not just the changelog) as "returning contributor: @handle." Costs 10 minutes per release. Owner: me. Review after two releases — did any of those returning contributors open a third PR?

Works

Breaks

Open Question