



DIVINFOOD

Co-constructing interactive short and mid-tier food chains
to value agrobiodiversity in healthy plant-based food

Deliverable D6.10

*User guide/tutorial to use digital tools for open
governance/community management*

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Summary

This guide aims to facilitate community management and open governance within DIVINFOOD's Living Labs through the use of digital tools, as well as to create and sustain networks of actors around these Living Labs. To this end, it first seeks to provide an overview (not exhaustive) of the key digital tools available for community management support, highlighting their main features, strengths, and weaknesses, in order to enable each of the Living Labs to select the most suitable tools for their needs. The document then focuses on proposing practical tutorials for accomplishing essential tasks in community engagement (organizing discussion groups, creating mailing lists, voting on decisions, scheduling meetings, etc.). Beyond DIVINFOOD's members, it can be a resource for all actors involved in the facilitation of community management and open governance.

Introduction

As community management caters for a diverse set of needs, it may involve a wide array of digital tools, ranging from highly specialized to more general ones. Tools that can support in:

- Organizing discussions within the community, via working groups,
- Effectively disseminating information to a contact base, for instance through mailing lists,
- Conducting surveys or collecting data from the community,
- Managing day-to-day project operations and scheduling tasks,
- Etc.

Selecting one tool over another constitutes an important choice, which must be made with careful consideration, taking into account numerous factors: specific needs of the group, digital habits of community members, user competence levels, availability to invest time in implementing a new tool, willingness and ability to pay for advanced features, expected data security levels, size of the community, etc.

Thus, this document seeks to:

- 1) **Introduce several tools widely used worldwide to facilitate community management, detailing their functionalities as well as their strengths and weaknesses**, in order to enable communities to make informed decisions on the most suitable tool for their specific needs (note: Priority has been given to freeware, Open Source tools hosted in Europe, however other digital solutions have also been included despite not meeting fully these criteria as they have proven their usefulness in different practical cases),
- 2) **Provide practical information on the use of selected key tools**, chosen for their accessibility and relevance within the specific framework of DIVINFOOD.

Please note the DIVINFOOD project has already made an introduction to a broader list of software applications. The document containing this information is *the Framework for Living Lab facilitation and data production* (D5.1, pg. 40). It is recommended that you check [this document](#) as it might provide a complementary support to the work in a local/regional community.

1. Selecting the appropriate tools

1.1 Organizing discussions within the community

The tools presented in this section have several major advantages over emails: they enable instantaneous communication among community members; facilitate the organization of conversations by project, team, or topic; provide advanced document-sharing features; and can be integrated with other software (file storage platforms, calendars, etc.). Consequently, they significantly reduce the number of emails exchanged while offering a more straightforward, seamless, and transparent collaboration.

1.1.1 Slack

[Slack](#) is a collaborative communication platform that allows users to communicate in real-time (or asynchronously) with members of their community. It is generally considered to be both the most advanced and the easiest to use - which explains its great success worldwide.

It offers many features: it allows organizing discussions (individual or group) via thematic channels, enriching messages with images, files or links, and also allows making audio and video calls in groups directly from the platform's interface. For more advanced uses, Slack also allows the integration of third-party services such as Google Drive, Dropbox, GitHub, Trello, etc. - which allows users to work on their projects without having to juggle between several different tools.

Slack exists in both free and paid versions: the free version of Slack offers limited access to message history (only 90 days), restricts audio-video calling and third-party application integration capabilities. Conversely, paid versions offer advanced audio-video communication features, better data security guarantees, larger storage capacities, phone customer support, etc. ([click here to see plans and prices](#))

1.1.2 Microsoft Teams

[Microsoft Teams](#) is a communication and collaboration platform integrated within the Microsoft 365 suite. It aims to facilitate communication, collaboration, and project management within organizations. It generally includes the same types of features as Slack: it allows organizing conversations into work groups and channels (although its capabilities are reputedly more limited than Slack in this regard), allows integration with third-party services (Microsoft's office suite, of course, but also SharePoint, OneDrive, etc.), and offers a powerful calling and video conferencing tool (comparable to Zoom).

The free version offers a limited number of integrations and features. Paid versions, typically associated with a Microsoft 365 subscription, offer additional features, larger file storage, and advanced management tools. ([click here to see plans and prices](#))

1.1.3 Mattermost (and Framateam)

[Mattermost](#) is an open-source, free, and self-hosted alternative to the aforementioned solutions - meaning it can be deployed on the organization's servers, allowing for full control over the data.

This tool generally offers the same messaging features as Slack and Teams, namely the ability to communicate in real-time and organize conversations into thematic channels to facilitate searching and later consultation. Users can send text messages, images, files, and links. Mattermost also allows integration with third-party services (such as GitHub, Jira, Trello, etc.), and is known for its high security and significant customization possibilities.

However, the fact that Mattermost is free does come with some constraints: the tool requires more complex technical configuration, the need to set up an internal or external server (which can represent a "hidden cost"), and its user support remains limited.

Framateam, an interesting tool based on Mattermost

[Framateam](#) is an Open-Source messaging platform based on Mattermost. This online tool is managed by a French non-profit association (Framasoft), funded by donations, and committed to protecting and respecting personal data. It allows for simplified use of Mattermost and can be an interesting alternative to paid tools. (learn how to use in 2.1)

1.1.4 Rocket.Chat

[Rocket.chat](#) is also an interesting alternative to the previous tools: an Open Source software, allowing for self-hosting (data stored on one's own server), it offers relatively similar features to the previous tools. As with other tools, Rocket.Chat allows for real-time communication via instant messaging: users can send text messages, images, files, and links - and organize their discussions by channels to facilitate communication on specific topics.

Rocket.Chat also offers audio and video communication features for individual and group calls, as well as screen sharing features. The tool also allows for integration with third-party services (GitHub, Trello, Zapier, etc.), which can facilitate project management and collaborative work.

Rocket.Chat has the advantage of offering fairly wide-ranging features in its free version (self-hosted), but in return requires some configuration time, some technical skills, and may also entail hidden costs (hosting fees). ([click here to see prices](#))

Conclusion and recommendations

For groups with little experience in digital tools and looking for a performant and easy-to-install solution, Slack is certainly the solution to be favored. Framateam offers a very interesting alternative which, although less sophisticated and user-friendly, has the merit of being free and Open Source.

For communities more sensitized to the use of new technologies and/or having among their members a good knowledge of these issues, Mattermost and Rocket.Chat can be preferred for their low cost, ethical commitment, and level of security.

Microsoft Teams can be an alternative for groups wishing to stay in the Microsoft environment and/or having specific video conferencing needs.

Criteria	Slack	Microsoft Teams	Mattermost	Framateam	Rocket.Chat
Difficulty of installation and use	Easy	Easy	Moderate	Easy	Moderate
Security and Privacy	**	**	***	***	***
Cost	Free or paid (free version often insufficient for professional use)	Free or paid (free version often insufficient for professional use)	Free or paid (free version often insufficient for professional use)	Free	Free or paid (free version often insufficient for professional use)
Data storage location	In the United States by default (possibility to request hosting in Europe for pro customers)	Depends on versions	Determined by user	Europe	Determined by user
Open Source	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

And what about social media?

Sometimes, the best solution is the one that is already most widely used by community members.

Thus, the social network LinkedIn, while not strictly speaking a community management tool, can nevertheless be used for this purpose.

It should be noted that LinkedIn, being a subsidiary of Microsoft, has strong security measures (data encryption, two-factor authentication, and regulatory compliance). However, as a social network - whose business model includes valuing its users' personal data - precautions must be taken when sharing sensitive information.

1.2 Effectively communicating information to a list of contacts

The tools presented in this section optimize the sending of e-mails to large lists of contacts, by offering several useful functionalities: they allow for the management of sometimes complex mailing lists, for example, by importing them from an Excel file; provide attractive email design tools, thanks to numerous customizable templates; optimize email deliverability by avoiding being considered as spam; and include analytics and reporting tools that enable tracking the performance of your email campaigns (open rates, click rates, unsubscribe rates, and conversion rates).

1.2.1 Mailchimp

[Mailchimp](#) is a mailing tool that allows you to create mailing lists, design and send email campaigns, and track the results of these campaigns (open rates, click-through rates, conversion rates, etc.).

It is widely considered the most complete tool in this field and offers many features: customizable email and newsletter templates, sign-up forms, email automation, and detailed reports on the performance of your campaigns. Mailchimp also integrates social media marketing tools and features for creating ads on Facebook, Instagram, and Google.

Additionally, Mailchimp has the advantage of being an easy-to-use tool while offering advanced features for creating and managing mailing lists - in compliance with GDPR regulations.

Its usage is free for limited use both in terms of quantity (1000 emails sent per month in total) and quality (limited statistics on the success or failure of the campaign, absence of scheduling systems for sending, limited customization, etc.). ([click here to see prices](#))

1.2.2 Sendinblue

[Sendinblue](#) is a French based company and the main competitor to Mailchimp, sharing most of its features, although it is considered slightly less powerful for advanced use: it allows you to create mailing lists/manage contact lists, create email and newsletter campaigns, and obtain detailed statistics on open rates, etc. - while ensuring compliance with GDPR regulations.

The Sendinblue interface is also very user-friendly and easy to use, even for people with little experience in mailing tools.

Sendinblue is generally considered to be cheaper than Mailchimp and offers a very performant free version (allows sending of 3000 emails/day, customizable email templates, a drag & drop email editor, etc.) - often sufficient for small communities. ([click here to see prices](#))

1.2.3 Mautic

[Mautic](#) is an Open-Source equivalent of Mailchimp and Sendinblue: it offers basic contact management, automated email sending, performance monitoring – and is considered more customizable and particularly efficient on certain email functions, like campaign automation. On the other hand, Mautic has less extensive integration features with third-party software.

If Mautic is free, its implementation and management nevertheless represent an investment of time and may require technical skills: it is therefore a bad choice for a community with occasional needs or little experience in digital tools.

Conclusion and recommendations

Ultimately, Sendinblue and Mailchimp are the two solutions to consider for occasional use: Mailchimp allows for more sophisticated usage in its paid version, and is thus a relevant solution for complex tasks; Sendinblue offers a free version that meets most basic needs, and data is hosted in Europe.

Mautic may be preferred for recurring needs and/or if certain people within the community have more developed computer skills.

Criteria	Mailchimp	Sendinblue	Mautic
Difficulty of installation and use	Easy	Easy	Moderate to Difficult
Security and Privacy	***	***	***
Cost	Limited free version, high performance paid version	Free version sufficient for simple use	Free, but requires an investment of time and skills
Data storage location	USA	Europe	Determined by user
Open Source	No	No	Yes

1.3 Making collective decisions and organizing votes

The tools presented in this section aim to facilitate collective decision-making, by allowing participants to propose ideas, discuss options and vote for the preferred solutions. They thus promote the inclusion and commitment of all members of a group and foster transparency in deliberations.

1.3.1 Loomio

[Loomio](#) is a collaborative decision-making platform aimed at facilitating democratic discussion and decision-making within groups and organizations. Its goal is to make decision-making

processes more inclusive, transparent, and effective. Loomio offers discussion, polling, and voting tools to enable participants to share their opinions, deliberate, and reach consensus. Users can create groups, add members, initiate discussions, create proposals, and vote. Loomio sends email notifications for new discussions and proposals so that group members can stay informed in real-time. Integration with other services such as Slack and Dropbox can also be done to facilitate collaboration and file sharing.

Loomio is known for its user-friendly interface, ease of use, and ability to produce transparent collaboration.

Loomio is only available in a paid version, but the starting prices remain affordable (starting at \$10 per month for a non-profit community). ([click here to see plans and prices](#))

1.3.2 Decidim

[Decidim](#) is an open-source platform for "participatory democracy", originally developed by the city of Barcelona, which aims to facilitate collective decision-making and collaboration among local actors (citizens and institutions, for example). Its original goal is to enable communities of citizens, local organizations, and institutions to collaborate online to make decisions, co-create public policies, and propose projects for funding.

It places at the center of its *raison d'être* the ideas of citizen participation and transparency, as well as multiculturalism (Decidim is available in several languages¹ to encourage the participation of people from different countries and cultures).

Decidim is a completely free open-source project: users can download, install, and customize the software at no cost. As with previous mentioned tools, the trade-off is that it may require some technical skills for installation and customization, and its interface is reputed to be less user-friendly than some other tools (such as Loomio).

1.3.3 Discourse

[Discourse](#) is also an open-source platform for group discussion and collaboration that can be used to facilitate collective decision-making and voting processes.

Discourse enables the creation of discussion categories and topics to structure conversations and facilitate the navigation and search for relevant information. It also provides the ability to integrate polls and votes within discussions, enabling group members to make collective decisions in a transparent manner.

¹ English; French; German; Castilian; Catalan; Czech; Romanian; Suomi and Japanese.

Discourse is renowned for its simplicity and aims to make participation appealing by offering a badge system that rewards significant contributions to the community (allocated based on the level of personal investment in the discussions/voting). This tool also allows users to receive notifications to track responses to questions asked, mentions, and new topics, enabling them to stay informed about ongoing discussions and participate in relevant debates.

It is worth noting that Discourse is only available as a paid version, starting at \$50 per month for fewer than 100 users. ([click here to see plans and prices](#))

What about online survey tools (SurveyMonkey, Typeform, Framadate, etc.)?

Although not strictly speaking tools for deliberation, online survey platforms can also be useful for gathering information from its community and/or making a decision collectively.

Some of the main tools include:

- [SurveyMonkey](#), certainly the most popular, which offers a free version (often good enough for small consultations), allowing users to create surveys from a variety of ready-to-use templates, or create a custom survey based on of their specific needs. It is certainly the “general public” tool offering the greatest possibilities for customizing surveys – and is therefore to be preferred for consultations that are complex or require advanced processing of the results.
- [Typeform](#), which basically offers the same functionality but is often considered to have a friendlier and more visually appealing user interface than SurveyMonkey. Surveys created with Typeform are designed to be interactive and intuitive for respondents, which can improve user experience and increase response rates.
- [Framadate](#) is the open-source polling tool of the French association Framasoft (already mentioned for its “discussion tool”, Framateam), making it easy to create polls and plan online events. If it does not offer the same “user experience” as the previous solutions, this tool has the merit of being completely free, easy to use, and very respectful of data confidentiality

Conclusion and recommendations

For ad hoc consultation or decision-making needs, online survey tools are often sufficient. We can recommend Framadate for the simplest uses, SurveyMonkey or Typeform for more complicated

consultations and EU Survey for more data sensitive consultations (or projects) as well as for community groups with more specific language needs.

If the community wishes to put in place solid tools of internal democracy and intends to actively involve all or part of the members in decision-making (as voters or simply as observers), then solutions like Loomio or Discourse (the simplest, but also expensive) or Decidim (if the community has technical skills or agrees to pay for a developer) can be recommended.

Criteria	Loomio	Decidim	Discourse	SurveyMonkey	Typeform	Framadate
Difficulty of installation and use	Easy	Moderate to difficult	Easy	Easy	Easy	Easy
Security and Privacy	***	***	**	**	**	***
Cost	Paid (from \$10 per month)	Free	Paid (from \$50 per month)	Free version sufficient for simple uses	Free version often insufficient	Free
Data storage location	United States (a private server can be installed by Loomio in Europe for \$490 per month)	Determined by user	United States, Canada, Europe	United States (except for Enterprise subscribers, who can choose European hosting)	USA	Europe
Open Source	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes

1.4 Managing a project and scheduling tasks

The tools presented in this section enable collaborative planning of complex projects by listing tasks, assigning missions, and tracking their progress.

1.4.1 Trello

[Trello](#) is a project management tool based on the [Kanban method](#) that allows users to manage their tasks and projects collaboratively. The Trello interface is based on boards, lists, and cards, which enable users to track and visualize their progress in a project and the tasks to be completed.

One advantage of Trello is that users can collaborate easily on projects by adding members to their board. Members can add comments, attachments, checklists, and due dates for tasks.

Trello is known for being particularly user-friendly and offers an interface recognized for its visual and intuitive nature.

Trello offers a free version that provides sufficient capabilities for simple use, but also includes paid versions with more advanced features. ([click here to see prices](#))

1.4.2 Asana

[Asana](#), like Trello, is an online project management tool that allows teams to collaborate and track tasks. The interface of Asana is based on projects, tasks, and subtasks. Projects are containers for organizing tasks and subtasks according to different objectives or themes. Tasks are individual work items that can be assigned to a team member, have a due date, and be tracked based on their status (in progress, completed, etc.). Subtasks are smaller items that can be used to break down a task into simpler steps.

Asana is known to be a little less accessible and intuitive than Trello, but it offers additional very useful features for managing complex projects (advanced project planning and collaboration systems, customized dashboards, etc.)

Asana offers a free version that is often sufficient for ongoing projects, but also sells a paid version with advanced features. ([click here to see prices](#))

Conclusion and recommendations

For Living Labs wishing to manage tasks or a schedule in a collaborative way, the tools described in this topic can be interesting. We recommend, however, to reserve them (in particular Asana) for projects of a certain size, complexity or duration, so as not to unnecessarily multiply the platforms used.

Criteria	Trello	Asana
Difficulty of installation and use	Easy	Easy
Security and Privacy	**	**
Cost	Free version sufficient for simple uses	Free version sufficient for simple uses
Data storage location	United States (except for paid subscribers, who can choose European hosting)	United States (except for Enterprise subscribers, who can choose European hosting)
Open Source	No	No

1.5 Working together on documents

These tools presented here are some open-source alternatives to Google Drive/Google Doc and Microsoft OneDrive: they allow people to share a text document, a spreadsheet or a Powerpoint-type presentation online and to manage the possibilities of viewing, commenting or modifying according to the different publics / contributors.

1.5.1 Nextcloud

[Nextcloud](#), is an open-source collaboration platform which offers a file storage solution (shared or not), messaging, calendars, as well as the possibility of teamwork on documents, presentations and spreadsheets. Most documents can be shared with people outside your organization's accounts, with possibility for not only reading but also editing such documents.

Do note that Nextcloud does not offer a hosting solution: everything is stored on your own server - which allows you to keep full control over your data, but requires configuration time and some technical knowledge.

This tool has to be paid but is relatively inexpensive ([click here to see plans and prices](#)).

1.5.2 Liiib.re

[Liiib.re \(from Indiehosters\)](#) is based on the Nextcloud system but also offers a hosting solution (based in Germany). It allows online file storage, an office suite supporting real-time collaboration on Word, Excel, or Powerpoint files, as well as other optional features (videoconferencing via Jitsi, Trello-type project tracking system , etc.).

This more "ethical" alternative to Google Drive or OneDrive is nevertheless always chargeable – the price depends on several criteria (number of users, storage capacity, services requested, etc.). There is no price displayed on the site: you must always ask for a quote

As with Nextcloud, most documents can be shared with people outside your organization's accounts, with possibility for not only reading but also editing such documents (this can dramatically reduce your initial needs forecast and therefore reduce costs).

1.5.3 CryptPad

[CryptPad](#) is also an open-source alternative to Google Drive that offers file storage, document creation and collaboration features. All documents are end-to-end encrypted, ensuring data privacy. A free version is offered with a storage capacity limited to 1GB ([click here to see plans and prices](#))

Conclusion and recommendations

Liib.re seems to be the easiest, complete and safest alternative to Google drive / One Drive for Living Labs, even if the subscription may represent a certain cost. Nextcloud can be an interesting alternative if some people have digital skills within the community or if you are ready to invest some time in setting up the tool.

CryptPad should be reserved for small needs or those wanting to have a fully encrypted system.

Criteria	Nextcloud	Liib.re	Cryptpad
Difficulty of installation and use	Moderate	Easy	Easy
Security and Privacy	***	***	***
Cost	Paid	Paid	Free version limited to 1Go
Data storage location	Determined by user	Germany	Decentralized
Open Source	Yes	Yes	Yes

Nota Bene: Divinfood is using SharePoint for internal use

Note that for internal use, Divinfood uses the SharePoint solution offered by Microsoft, hosted by INRAE. This tool can be used for communications/collaborative work relevant to the project but only between consortium partners.

1.6 Fostering participation and creativity in online meetings

The tools presented in this section allow real-time collaboration in a visual and interactive way and offer many features: interactive whiteboard for drawing, writing, adding diagrams; real-time voting, etc. They are particularly interesting for energizing participation and stimulating creativity during online meetings.

1.6.1 Klaxoon

[Klaxoon](#) is an online brainstorming tool, allowing you to collect ideas and opinions, to carry out online quizzes and surveys, and offers a “wall of expression” where messages or images can be written. It aims to facilitate collective reflection and strengthen the involvement of participants during meetings.

Klaxoon offers a free version but limited to 15 simultaneous participants and a videoconference time of 30 minutes – beyond that, the service becomes chargeable (24.90 euros per user and per month – [click here to see plans and prices](#)).

1.6.2 Miro

[Miro](#) basically meets the same needs as Klaxoon, but is more focused on visual collaboration: it offers an endless "Whiteboard" to mark ideas, sketches, diagrams or schedules - and offers many basic templates to start the work.

Miro can be connected directly to certain applications such as Slack or Zoom.

Miro offers a free version sufficient for most basic uses – but also exists in a paid version for more advanced functions. ([click here to see plans and prices](#))

Conclusion and recommendations

Miro may be preferred for online activities requiring visual representation; Klaxoon, for its part, offers a greater diversity of possible tools for the general facilitation of online meetings, but may involve the use of a paid version.

Criteria	Klaxoon	Miro
Difficulty of installation and use	Easy	Easy
Security and Privacy	**	**
Cost	Free version can be sufficient but paid version often requested	Free version sufficient for simple uses
Data storage location	USA or Europe depending on the subscription	Europe
Open Source	No	No

1.7 Expanding your community and communicating via social networks

Each social network has its advantages and disadvantages for expanding or communicating to a community around Living Labs. Below is a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each of them in the specific context of DIVINFOOD.

1.7.1 Facebook

Strengths:

- **Large user base:** Facebook has the largest user base among social networks, which means that it is the most suitable platform if the objective is to raise awareness and/or engage citizens present on the territory to your activities.
- **A system of “groups” and “pages”,** which allow you to create communities around your Living Lab and encourage discussions between members.
- **The easy possibility to organize events** online or to publicize your events offline

Weaknesses:

- **“Organic reach” (i.e., the number of people who naturally see your publication appear in their news feed) is limited:** Facebook making the purchase of advertising a condition of visibility – especially with audiences far removed from your subject
- **Strong competition** between groups and pages that requires standing out to attract or retain attention.

1.7.2 Twitter

Strengths:

- **A real-time news tool:** Twitter is designed to share quick, real-time news, which can be useful for delivering news or updates about your activities.
- **Hashtags help organize content and make it easier to reach an audience** interested in your Living Lab topic(s)

Twitter makes it easy to interact with other users, which can help build relationships and expand your community.

Weaknesses:

- **The 280-character limit** can make it difficult to convey detailed information about your research and will require a concise effort - not always easy - to attract attention (NB: it is now possible to publish tweets of up to 4000 characters, but only for “Twitter Blue” subscribers)
- **Tweets have a relatively short lifespan,** which means that your message can quickly get lost in the news flow.

1.7.3 Instagram

Strengths:

- **Instagram is focused on visual content**, which is great for sharing engaging images and videos related to your Living Lab topic.
- **Instagram is particularly popular with young adults**, which can be an advantage if you're looking to reach this demographic.

Weaknesses:

- **Not or not very suitable for text discussions**, which can limit exchanges between members of the community.
- **Requires producing high quality visual content to get noticed**, which can take time and resources to produce consistently.

1.7.4 LinkedIn

Strengths:

- **LinkedIn is focused on professional networks**, which can be useful if you are looking to target professionals in agriculture, value chains or institutional actors.
- **Posts are generally more informative and serious** - which is fine if you want to share detailed information and resources about your research.
- **The tool is particularly suitable for creating partnerships or collaborations with other groups or organizations** related to your topics.

Weaknesses:

- **LinkedIn is less suitable for general public** communities and will not allow, or little, to reach communities of citizens in a “non-professional” setting.
- **Posts on LinkedIn generally get less engagement** (likes, comments, shares) than on other social networks, which can make it harder to grow your community.

Conclusion and recommendations

To sum up, Facebook and Instagram are probably the best choices for reaching large audiences and sharing engaging visual content. Twitter is more suitable for disseminating information in real time or targeting journalists or industry experts. LinkedIn, finally, is interesting for targeting professionals and creating partnerships or collaborations with other projects, organizations or companies.

As Divinfood emphasizes broad dissemination and citizen involvement, Instagram can also be of interest - especially when it comes to announcing or reporting on participatory activities (tastings, focus groups, etc.).

In any case, it is important that you systematically think about the most suitable social network for the message you want to convey and the audience you want to reach. And don't forget that for all social networks (especially LinkedIn and Facebook), algorithms favor content that sparks conversations and generates engagement, so it's essential to create content that encourages comments and shares - and start by sharing as much as possible within the community.

2. Use cases

These use cases were chosen as they correspond to concrete situations in which Living Labs are foreseen to operate. The choice of the tools taken as an example was done mainly with regard to their technical and financial accessibility (all the tools presented here are free for basic use).

2.1 Use Framateam to communicate in working groups

Framateam is an open-source online messaging service based on Mattermost, which enables real-time collaboration and communication within a team. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to set up a workspace on Framateam:

1. Access Framateam's website at <https://framateam.org/>

2. Create an account

- Click on the "Create an account" button or the "Register" link on the homepage.
- Enter your email address, choose a username and password, then click "Create Account."
- You will receive a confirmation email. Open it and click on the link to confirm your email address and activate your account.
- Return to the Framateam website and log in using your newly created credentials.

3. Create a new team

- Once logged in, click on the "Create a new team" button.
- Enter a name for your team (this will be used as the display name) and a unique team URL (this will be used for accessing the team's workspace).
- Click "Next" to proceed.

4. Invite team members

- To invite members to your team, enter their email addresses in the provided field. You can add multiple email addresses separated by commas.
- Click the "Invite Members" button to send email invitations to the specified addresses.

- Alternatively, you can skip this step and invite members later by clicking the "Skip" button.

5. Set up channels

- By default, your team will have two channels: "Town Square" and "Off-Topic." You can use these channels for general discussions or create new ones for specific topics.
- To create a new channel, click on the "+" icon next to the "Channels" heading in the left sidebar.
- Enter a name and a purpose for your new channel, and choose whether it should be public or private.
- Click "Create New Channel" to confirm.

6. Start collaborating

- Use the channels to discuss topics, share files, and collaborate with your team members.
- You can mention team members by typing "@" followed by their username to notify them of a specific message.
- Use the search bar at the top of the page to search for messages, files, or channels.

7. Customize your workspace

- To modify your account settings, click on your username in the top left corner of the screen, then select "Account Settings" from the drop-down menu.
- In the Account Settings window, you can customize your display name, profile picture, language, notifications, and other preferences.

2.2 Create a mailing list on MailChimp and send bulk messages

Here's how to sign up, create a list, and send a group message with Mailchimp:

1. Sign up for Mailchimp

- Visit the Mailchimp website at <https://mailchimp.com/>
- Click on the "Sign Up Free" button in the top right corner of the page.
- Enter your email address, a username, and a password, then click "Get Started."
- You will receive a confirmation email. Open it and click on the link to confirm your email address and activate your account.

2. Set up your account

- Once logged in, follow the prompts to complete your account setup by providing information about yourself and the Living Lab.
- Choose the free plan (with basic features) or a paid version if you need advanced functionalities

3. Create a list (called "Audience" in Mailchimp)

- In the main menu, click on "Audience"
- Click the "Create Audience" button.

- Fill in the required information for your list, such as audience name, sender's email address, sender's name, and contact information.
- Set up notification settings and double opt-in options, if necessary.
- Click "Save" to create your list.

4. Add contacts to your list

- Go to the "Audience" page and click on the name of the audience you just created.
- Click the "Add Contacts" button and choose "Import Contacts" if you already have a list of contacts, or "Add a Contact" to manually add contacts.
- Follow the instructions to import your contacts or manually add contact information, such as email address, first name, and last name.

5. Create an email campaign

- Click on "Campaigns" or "Campaigns" in the main menu.
- Click "Create Campaign" and choose "Email" as the campaign type.
- Give your campaign a name and click "Begin."
- In the "To" section, choose the audience you previously created.
- Fill in the "From" and "Subject" information for your email.
- Click "Design Email" to create the content of your email.
- Choose a template or create your own layout using Mailchimp's drag-and-drop editor.
- Add and customize text, image, and formatting elements as desired.
- When satisfied with the email content, click "Save & Close" to return to the campaign screen.

6. Review and send the email campaign

- Review your campaign information on the campaign summary page. Make sure everything is correct, including audience, subject, and content.
- If you'd like, you can send a test email to yourself or others by clicking "Send a Test Email" and entering the desired email addresses.
- If everything looks good, click "Send" to send the email campaign immediately, or click "Schedule" to send the campaign at a specific date and time.

2.3 Manage a project and plan tasks on Trello

As already explained, Trello is a visual project management tool that uses boards, lists, and cards to organize tasks and collaborate with team members. Here's a guide on how to set up a Trello workspace, invite members, and plan a project:

1. Sign up or log in to Trello at <https://trello.com/>

2. Create a new board

- Once logged in, click on the "+" icon in the top right corner or select "Create" from the left sidebar.

- Choose "Create Board" from the menu.
- Give your board a name, and select a team if you want to associate the board with a specific team (optional).
- Choose a background color or image for your board (optional).
- Click "Create Board" to confirm.

3. Organize your board with lists

- On your new board, you will see a default list named "To Do." You can edit the list name by clicking on it and typing a new title.
- To create additional lists, click the "+ Add another list" button on the right side of the board. Typical list titles include "Doing," "Done," or any other categories relevant to your project.

4. Add cards to your lists

- Click the "+ Add a card" button at the bottom of a list to create a new card.
- Give your card a title that represents a specific task or item, and press Enter.
- Continue adding cards to your lists as needed to represent tasks, ideas, or milestones in your project.

5. Customize cards

- Click on a card to open it.
- Inside the card, you can add a description, labels, due dates, attachments, and checklists.
- You can also add comments and collaborate with team members on specific tasks within the card.

6. Invite members to your board

- Click on the "Invite" button at the top of the board, next to the board's name.
- Enter the email addresses of the people you'd like to invite or select them from your Trello contacts.
- Click "Send Invitation" to invite them to join your board.
- Once they have accepted the invitation, you can assign them to cards by opening a card, clicking "Members," and selecting their name.

7. Plan your project

- Organize your tasks into different lists that represent the stages of your project.
- Set due dates on cards to ensure tasks are completed on time.
- Assign team members to specific cards to delegate responsibilities.
- Use labels to categorize tasks by priority, type, or any other relevant criteria.
- Track the progress of tasks by moving cards from one list to another as they advance through the project stages.

8. Monitor and adjust

- Regularly review your board to ensure that tasks are progressing as planned.
- Make adjustments to card assignments, due dates, or priorities as needed.
- Communicate with team members through card comments or Trello's built-in messaging features to address any issues or concerns.

2.4 Schedule a meeting via Lettucemeet

LettuceMeet is an online scheduling tool that helps organize meetings and events by finding the most suitable time slots for all participants. Here's how to plan a meeting step-by-step with LettuceMeet:

1. Access the LettuceMeet website: <https://lettucemeet.com/>

2. Create an account or sign in

3. Create a new event : once logged in, click on the "Create a new event" or "New Event" button at the top of the page. You can also select "My Events" from the menu to view existing events and create a new one.

4. Enter event details: fill in the following fields with the meeting information:

- Title: Give your meeting a title (e.g., "Living Lab Committee")
- Description: Add a detailed description of the event (optional)
- Location: Specify the meeting location (e.g., online meeting URL)

5. Select dates and times: click on the calendar to select the dates you'd like to propose for the meeting. Then, choose time slots for each date by clicking on the appropriate hours. You can add multiple time slots for each date.

6. Customize settings: In the event settings, you can customize the following options:

- Time Zone: Select the time zone for the meeting
- Meeting Duration: Indicate the expected duration of the meeting (e.g., 1 hour)
- Allow participants to add options: Check this box if you want to allow participants to suggest other time slots
- Show participants' names: Check this box for participants to see the names of other people who have responded

7. Invite participants: in the "Invite people" section, add the email addresses of participants you'd like to invite to the meeting. You can also copy the event link and share it directly with participants.

8. Send invitations: click the "Send Invitations" button to send email invitations to participants. Participants will receive an email containing the meeting details and a link to indicate their availability.

9. Track responses and choose a time slot: once participants have indicated their availability, you can view the responses on the event page. Choose the time slot that best suits the majority of participants.

10. Confirm the chosen time slot and inform participants: after choosing the ideal time slot, click on the "Confirm Time Slot" button to lock in the date and time of the meeting. Once you have confirmed the time slot, participants will no longer be able to modify their availabilities. Once the time slot is confirmed, you can send a follow-up email to participants to inform them of the final date and time of the meeting. You can also add a personalized message if you wish.

LettuceMeet allows you to export the confirmed event to your personal calendar, such as Google Calendar, Outlook, or Apple Calendar. Click on the "Add to Calendar" option and follow the instructions to sync the event with your preferred calendar.

2.5 Some basics for communicating on social networks

This part only aims to give some basic principles of communication on social networks: for more information, you can refer to the three Social Media training webinars carried out as part of DIVINFOOD in the first quarter of 2023 – which will be available on the project's SharePoint.

2.5.1 Basic tips for communicating on Facebook

To create Facebook posts that capture attention and engage users, here are some basic tips to follow:

- **Understand your audience:** Before creating a post, it's important to know your target audience. Determine their interests, preferences, and needs to create relevant and engaging content.
- **Craft a catchy text:** Write a short, clear, and concise text for your post. Use a tone that is appropriate for your audience and try to incorporate a call-to-action if necessary (for example, "Click here to learn more" or "Please Share").
- **Use visual media:** Images, videos, and GIFs usually attract more attention than text alone. Choose high-quality visual media that are relevant to your message and that evoke the emotion or curiosity of your audience.
- **Incorporate hashtags and mentions:** Use relevant hashtags to make your post more visible in searches and include mentions (@) to identify other users or brands related to your content.
- **Schedule the best time to post:** The timing of the post can influence its engagement. Generally, the best times to post on Facebook are on weekdays between 9 am and 3 pm. However, it's important to monitor the performance of your posts to determine specific times that work best for your audience.

- **Encourage interaction:** Stimulate conversation and engagement by asking questions, conducting polls, or soliciting the opinions of your audience. Respond to comments to show that you're attentive and to maintain engagement.
- **Vary the type of content:** Alternate between different content formats, such as blog articles, videos, images, and live updates, to maintain your audience's interest and avoid monotony.
- **Promote your posts:** If you want to reach a wider audience, consider using Facebook's promotion options to highlight your posts and reach more interested people.

2.5.2 Basic tips for communicating on LinkedIn

Much of the previous tips can also be applied to LinkedIn. However, two additional information about this social network can be useful:

- LinkedIn allows you to publish long articles via the “Article” function. You can take the opportunity to share in-depth analyzes related to your Living Lab, case studies, reflections, etc.
- On LinkedIn, the best times to post are generally on weekdays, especially between 7am and 9am, during the lunch break (12pm-2pm) and late afternoon (5pm-6pm). However, these times may vary depending on your audience. Test different moments to find the ones that generate the most engagement

2.5.3 Basic tips for communicating on Twitter

When it comes to Twitter, several specific tips can be given:

- As Twitter limits messages to 280 characters, it is important to focus on the essentials and convey your message clearly and concisely. If necessary, refer the visitor to an external link.
- Hashtags play a crucial role on this platform and are therefore strongly recommended to make your content known to users who do not follow you yet.

3. Conclusion

This document describes generic characteristics of a diverse list of digital tools that have proven track record for facilitating and improving some key areas for Open Governance and Community Management in local and regional communities.

Six key areas were chosen for listing the different aspects where the digital tools can be of support (Organizing Discussions; Effective communication with mailing lists; Collective decision-making and voting; Project Management and Task Scheduling; Expanding and Communicating through Social Media; Fostering participation and creativity). Each of the areas is then finalized with a summary criteria table of the tools together with “pre-conclusion” and general recommendations depending on the needs and the skills available within each of the Living Labs and local/regional Community Groups.

To further describe how the tools can be applied, a set of use cases is included with some of the initial steps that can be followed by more inexperienced users. These use cases describe mainly open source and freeware tools.

As a result, the document creates an introduction of how each tool can be used, nevertheless and very importantly, ensuring that each community leader/team will know and understand their context is unique and that an appropriate trial (both with time and with volunteers) is recommended.



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Co-constructing interactive short and mid-tier food chains
to value agrobio**DIVersity** IN healthy plant-based **FOOD**

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