

TUMI SESSION GUIDE

A PRACTICAL TUMI GUIDE FOR
SUCCESSFUL LEARNING AND TRAINING
SESSIONS



Introduction

Developing capacity among practitioners and change makers is crucial for sustainable mobility. In this context, the term refers to the process of enabling individuals and organizations to develop capacities to act on and shape challenges arising in their professional field. With focus on knowledge as one of its three pillars, the Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI) promotes capacity development measures that achieve four main objectives:

- Increase **awareness** among individuals and organizations of the relevance of sustainable urban mobility
- Provide comprehensive **information, knowledge and technical expertise** on how to achieve sustainability in urban mobility
- **Create a community** of committed sustainable urban mobility practitioners who are equipped to make an effective and sustainable impact on cities and transport by renewing their institutions and their professional field
- Trigger action to transform urban mobility **through systematic and integrated support** on all scales needed

TUMI recommends trainings and learning sessions that build capacity to develop sustainable urban mobility interventions. In order to achieve this goal, TUMI sessions follow the quality standards outlined in the => [TUMI Capacity Development Charta](#). It is our goal that participants and target audiences recognize and distinguish TUMI trainings for their high quality and engaging format. This guideline serves as an accompanying step-by-step guideline for preparing and implementing these sessions.

Before the session

When you prepare a TUMI session, please consider the following aspects:

Determine what kind of session suits the purpose best

TUMI sessions can take different shapes: from conference-like, big scale forums to small-scale workshops for a limited audience to a series of informative and interactive webinars. An awareness-raising event for decision makers requires different features than a technical training for transport practitioners. So, when you start thinking about organizing a TUMI session, please think first what the **objectives** of your training are and which **target audience** you want to reach. According to your answers to these questions, determine the **scope and the length of your training**. Sessions with smaller participant numbers can quickly move to expert level discussions, therefore we suggest focusing the session on specific topics and holding them within a shorter timeframe.

Make sure that a national, regional, or local partner organisation will co-organize the event

Involving local partners has the advantage that topics are checked for their relevance to the requirements of the national and local entity. It also helps to publicize the event through their channels and will **increase your chances that the most relevant participants** will take part in the

event. Partnerships with local organisations can also include their support with in-kind contributions, such as offering the venue, providing supporting staff for registration and logistics, and office support. Keep in mind the partner organization's potential to later on act as local representatives and multipliers of your ideas.

Choose the appropriate number of participants

The size of the participating group has a substantial impact on the dynamics of the training. Smaller groups (of **max. 25 participants**) enable a more **intimate and productive learning atmosphere**; people get to know each other rapidly and interact more often. Bigger groups permit to reach a large number of people at once and potentially increase diversity of backgrounds and opinions. However, ensuring the active participation of all attendees becomes more challenging. **"The bigger the better" is certainly not the case.**

In these settings it can be helpful to narrow down your agenda to very concrete issues and avoid letting participants (or co-sponsors!) interlink too many diverging topics during discussions. Also keep in mind whether this training is more likely to be a one-time event – it may be your only chance to engage with the participants – or whether you hope to continue working with them.

Prepare an engaging agenda

When designing the agenda for a TUMI session, always keep your participants in mind. Think about what prior knowledge they possess and what additional knowledge would be useful to them. Consider their familiarity with each other and include activities based on their shared/diverging background that engage them with each other. When participants feel comfortable, they are more likely to engage strongly during the session. Based on their level of experience, participants might also be keen on sharing their story and examples from their work. Also make sure that the agenda has a **range of different activities and exercises** that will keep participants from settling in; beside more formal presentations, your agenda should therefore also include community building exercises or site visits.

Get to know your attendees, their background and expectations

When you invite people to your TUMI session, try to gather as much information as possible on them in order to develop a meaningful event for them.

If possible, get in touch with them sufficiently in time before the training and inquire:

- ➔ Their **professional background**
- ➔ **Level of knowledge** and exposure to the topic
- ➔ Wishes and **expectations** towards the training
- ➔ **Experience** they could contribute

Use this information to adjust and enrich the agenda. If you find out, for example, that some of your participants have substantial experience to share, include them in the programme and give them an active role to benefit from their knowledge. One way to find out about participants background is to have them fill out a questionnaire prior to the event or when applying.

Pay attention to underrepresented groups

You might have individuals in your invitation list that differ from the rest of the group. For example, in the case of transport events, it is quite common to have a large group of male and only a few individual female participants. In international events, you might also have such imbalances when it comes to origin or language. Be aware of these tendencies and try to **counterbalance** them. Make sure that there are **no isolated individuals** belonging to an underrepresented group among your participants.

“Minorities” should represent at least **30%** of the total to feel like a group

Take into account language differences

Effective communication is essential to reach the audience and make a TUMI session a success. Even though English is the predominant language in international cooperation, its mastery should not be taken for granted in the context of developing countries and emerging economies. So if you plan to hold a TUMI session in English, verify if **all** participants have sufficient language skills to follow and actively participate in the whole training. If not, please provide **high-quality simultaneous translation** and **translate the written training material** (agenda, presentations, handouts etc.) in advance. Also consider using methods for that allow participation despite language differences (e.g. visual inputs, text-based input, work in small groups). Even though translation is of great help, listening to translation over several days is tiring. If you have a large group of participants who do not speak your language, try to get a **trainer speaking their native tongue**. If this is impossible, at least enrich your programme with contributions in that language.

During the training

Help building connections and enable equal participation

For most participants of TUMI sessions, exchanging with and learning from other participants is as important as the provision of expert knowledge. However, meaningful interaction between participants does not always come on its own. You, as an organizer, have an active role in setting the framework and creating an atmosphere of trustful exchange.

Here are some tips that can support your objective:

- **Encourage participants to get to know each other even before the session** (e.g. by requesting a joint group presentation from people coming from the same country// creating a group on social media where people present themselves// hosting a small reception the evening before etc.)
- Chose a **seating arrangement** that is suitable to participants’ interaction (e.g. group tables), mix participants often

Ways of introducing participants:

- **Personal introduction** (every participant introduces her/himself)
- **Mutual introduction** (two participants discuss for 5 minutes and introduce each other to the group)
- **Line-ups + interviews** (ask a set of questions, participants have to move around and line up in the room according to their answers)

- Provide enough time for **participants, trainers and organizers to introduce themselves** (or each other) in the beginning of the training
- **Do not sacrifice lunch or coffee breaks** when time gets short, these are important moments of informal exchange

Tips for interpreter-friendly training settings:

- **Send documents, notes or presentations beforehand** or make sure the interpreters can have a look at them before the training starts
 - Consider distributing **headsets for translation to everybody**, including those speaking the majority language
 - Invite the **minority language speakers to ask questions** and participate evenly
 - Ask speakers and participants to **always use the microphone** for their contributions
 - **Speak loud and clearly**, especially when mentioning numbers, names, enumerations
 - **Encourage speakers to speak freely**, rather than reading out pre-written texts
 - **Arrange the room** such that **speakers and interpreters can keep eye contact** and see signals and gestures
 - **Explain abbreviations, names and complicated terms**, use expressions understandable to all
 - If possible, **speak in short and complete sentences** – avoid complicated phrasing
- **Overcome language barriers** and make sure **everyone feels comfortable to participate**, especially people speaking a minority language
 - **Deemphasize hierarchy**: reduce the distinction between the active (and distinguished) presenters and the “passive audience” by giving **active roles** and short **speaking slots** (e.g. time keeper, people doing summaries of group works, round table presentations) to a large number of participants

Adapt your agenda to suit the participants’ needs

The agenda of a TUMI session is usually produced in advance. Priorities are defined, sessions determined and speaking slots attributed mostly without consultation of the participants. The agenda thus represents the organizers’ best guess what is relevant and interesting for the audience. When the training starts, agendas go through a reality check: some sessions take longer than previewed, other do not spark the expected interest. Agendas are almost never 100% respected. This can lead to stress and anxiety among the organizers. In order to prevent this:

Paternalism leads to passivity!

- **Do not see your agenda as a rigid timetable** but as an offer that will be shaped in a collective process by the interaction of trainers and participants
- Ideally **present the agenda at the beginning of your sessions and ask for comments**: if you find out that many participants have converging interests, take these into account for your training
- **Be flexible**: try to find a balance between **rigorous time keeping and adapting the agenda** in accordance with the participants interests
- **Do not overload your agenda**: presentations, exercises and discussions usually take longer than previewed. Do not put more in your agenda than what you can **realistically deal with**

during the limited time of your training. Try to anticipate delays and integrate buffers and margins into your agenda, instead of assuming an unrealistically smooth course of action.

- **Use local knowledge – give room for exchange:** “ordinary” participants carry a lot of relevant experience and knowledge. Try to avoid completely filling the time of the training with “expert” inputs without giving enough room for local knowledge and experience to be shared.

Diversify your program to keep people on board

As trainings can take up to several days, it is important that the programme is diversified and engaging in order to maintain the participants’ attention and interest over the whole period. Passive listening is not enough! Furthermore, as trainings aim at empowering and enabling people to take action afterwards, it is crucial that participants have the opportunity to apply and test the knowledge they acquire at the training.

Max. attention span of concentrated listening to a single lecturer: **20 minutes**

In order to prevent trainings from becoming boring monologues try to:

- **Use a mixture of different training methods:** a training cannot only consist of frontal presentations, otherwise participants will not be able to pay attention nor to remember what was taught. Use a variety of formats with different levels of interactivity.
- If you do use traditional **frontal presentations**, try to make them as varied and engaging as possible:
 - **Do not provide all concepts and definitions yourself**, ask participants to contribute
 - **Ask questions** and check if participants understand your points
 - **Keep presentations short**, as people will not be able to follow over a long-time span
 - If presentations are long, interrupt or **change the dynamics every 20 minutes** (show a short video, ask participants to stand up, do a short quiz etc.)
 - **Use humour - make jokes:** Laughing helps to stay tuned
- **Use different visualizations during your training:** short and meaningful PowerPoint presentations are helpful tools, but often predetermined slides tend to (1) be overloaded, (2) distract from the speaking content, (3) lead to inflexible and lengthy presentations. Instead of only relying on PPTs, try to complement your training with other tools such as **cards, posters, flipcharts** etc.

People remember:

- 20% of what they hear
- 40% of what they hear and see
- **80% of what they do themselves**

Increase interactivity:

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- Frontal lecture (listen, see)
 - Group discussion (listen, speak)
 - Field trip (see, listen, move)
 - Interactive exercise (do it yourself)

- **Include at least one interactive exercise** in your training: for your event to have a long-term effect on participants, it is crucial that during the course of the session participants ***get from the point where they (passively)***
- ***acquire new knowledge to the point where they (actively) apply this new knowledge.*** Prepare the exercise in advance, distribute roles and provide clear instruction to the participants. Support the groups with moderation and facilitation.
- **Develop first steps and get peer review:** more often than not, participants will afterwards return to work with many tasks and little time to continue with learning, so make sure they can utilize the “safe space” of the training for first steps relevant for their work. Let them draft realistic action items which reflect the input received, then review with the colleagues present. At the end, you can ask the participants to commit to a chosen number of tasks and let their peers support them in monitoring progress.
- **Organize a field trip:** If there is a relevant site or an actor that complements your training and can be visited outside of the training venue (at reasonable costs) use this opportunity. Local partners can be a great source for inspiration on where to visit and are likely to support in the facilitation of a field trip:
 - **You increase the attention span of your participants** by making them leave the training venue and change the setting
 - Participants have new possibilities to mix and socialise and have a **joint experience => community building**
 - You can use the field trip to compare theory and practice and demonstrate features that were referred to during the theoretical part

Encourage feedback at different stages

It is very important to get feedback from the participants in order to know if the training is reaching its goals. Doing feedback rounds or distributing feedback forms at the end of trainings is very common. However, you do not have to wait until the training is over to ask for feedback:

- **“Flashlight feedback”- oral feedback at the end of the day:** The end of the first day is a suitable moment to get a quick feedback about the course of events. You can e.g. ask participants to say one sentence about their state of mind and degree of satisfaction. You can also ask their opinion on what should have been dealt with more in detail and less in detail during the first day. Use these insights to get back to the trainers/organizers and review the planned activities for the next day(s).
- **Written feedback at the end of the event:** Make sure that every participant provides written feedback at the end of the event. Ask relevant quantitative and qualitative questions that will help you improve future trainings in a systematic manner.

After the training

Follow up with participants

Once the TUMI session is over, participants should receive all materials (presentations, handouts, pictures etc.) that were used and produced during the training. The faster this follow-up information package reaches them, the more likely they are to make use of it. If available, also share material like reports, group pictures or press coverage quickly - participants can use them to highlight the relevance of the received training within and outside of their organizations and promote the session.

Evaluate participants' feedback

Analyse the responses of your participants to get an understanding of how they perceived and evaluated the TUMI session. Extract lessons learned from negative comments and use them to improve future sessions. Gather comments as well as relevant participant indicators in a central document and share it with colleagues.

Identify career opportunities for best performers

Keep in mind that capacity development goes beyond a single event. Identify career opportunities for individuals that appear highly active and motivated during the session and **guide them to further opportunities**. Make sure to speak to them about their goals and ambitions and offer support for the way forward. This could also include short one-on-one coaching sessions online or offline. The same applies to relevant projects, cases and activities going on in cities that could be entry points for future activities.

The TUMI Capacity Development Catalogue and the website calendar provide good resources for further opportunities.

Share with TUMI partners

TUMI lives through its partners and their joint and individual activities. In order to ensure effective joint communication and mutual learning, **share communication material, your experience, insights and lessons learned with other TUMI partners**. Decide if you prefer to do this on an ad-hoc base, at regular meetings and reviews, or by coordinating with the TUMI Partner contacts or the TUMI Management Team.

About TUMI: Many Partners, One Goal

TUMI is an alliance of the world's leading organizations in sustainable transport. We build a community of actors to transform polices and business and advance science and society. Here lies the people power to leverage sustainable mobility worldwide!

www.transformative-mobility.org