



Swarm: Swarm is rather like an in-depth systemic version of a hackathon in that it is a collaborative way of working on complex problems in order to rapidly prototype potential solutions while involving a variety of diverse stakeholders to capture a systemic view. As a formal process it has been originated and developed by a small group of creative social entrepreneurs, through a company called Swarm, to help multiple stakeholders co-create solutions with potential to make a more beautiful world. (Note 18)

Before the actual swarm takes place, a significant amount of effort is undertaken in a 'shaping phase' to explore and articulate the challenge-based problems requiring attention. This can be honed through a series of interviews with a diverse variety of stakeholders, through on-line questionnaires, informal chats, walks, meets and other information gathered.

A group of people who can participate in person for the two to three day swarm are then recruited, ensuring a good balance of dynamics, a range of skills and perspectives, including a number of people with specific prototyping skills useful for the problem being explored, for instance: web coding, service design, business modelling, etc.

Then participants of the swarm receive and digest well-honed briefs on the challenge-based problem along with relevant associated information a few days before the swarm, so they can hit-the-ground-running once the swarm starts.

The swarm is ideally hosted in a place conducive for co-creativity with access to nature where possible. The swarm itself blends creative collaboration, experiential learning and collective intelligence in an open, playful yet vibrant and intensive space.

Participants self-organize into small sub-groups quickly immersing with the problem, accelerating into a 'prototyping phase' with the support of people who can construct, design and shape-up prototypes.

The two to three days are also inter-dispersed with plenty of reflection time, feedback, sharing and inspiration through talks, films and energizers, with emphasis on deep listening, play and fun, as well as time in nature. Wholesome food eaten together and music make up the mix.

The whole swarm experience is often at once uncomfortable, testing and exhilarating as we all embark on our own personal and collective learning journey over this intensive couple of days.

After the swarm, is a 'sense-making phase', where the insights and solutions are gathered and reflected on, fed-back to the attendees and stakeholders, allowing opportunity for further insights, sharing, reflections and builds.

Overall, clients and participants of Swarm have found this process an immensely rich way to solve complex problems rapidly, to gain a wider lens on the issues they are exploring while developing stronger and more autonomous teams and stakeholder relations through the process.