Establish ground rules

- **DISCUSS PRINCIPLES** at the start for how the group wants to interact. For example, if part of your goal is for people to step out of their organizational roles, you could state explicitly that you would like people to speak from their personal perspective. Or, if part of your goal is open brainstorming, you might propose a ban on saying “that’s impossible!”

- **ESTABLISH** how the conversation will be captured and communicated beyond the room. That begins with an agreement of how participants will share what is said, whether in real-time, via social media, or afterwards. It should also include a discussion of any organized method of capturing and harvesting the group’s insights. If the conversation is sensitive, you may want to adopt the Chatham House Rule (nothing said can be attributed without permission) or declare certain segments of the agenda to be off the record.

- **SET NORMS** with participants about when and where to use computers and mobile phones during the convening. Make sure to provide adequate breaks for people to make phone calls and catch up on email.

"YOU HAVE TO PAY ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT YOU’RE INITIATING PEOPLE INTO A NEW BELONGING, AND MAKING THAT BELONGING FEEL GOOD.”

—CONVENING DESIGNER