



**WHAT IS KEY TO A BETTER COMMUNITY?
Conversation, Collaboration and Commitment**

The Philadelphia Foundation and The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation are continuing an initiative in the Greater Philadelphia region designed to engage residents in an open dialogue and inspire new solutions to strengthen communities.

When individuals come together to listen to and learn from each other, we have the power to impact both communities and lives. That's what ***On the Table Philly*** is all about.

ABOUT ON THE TABLE PHILLY

Thank you for hosting a mealtime conversation as part of ***On the Table Philly***. On Thursday, Oct. 17, 2019, you'll be part of an exciting, region-wide initiative to explore the ways in which we have the power to converse, collaborate and commit to making our communities stronger and more dynamic.

LET'S GET STARTED

Planning Your Event

The Day

Thursday, Oct. 17 2019. All ***On the Table Philly*** events will take place throughout the day during mealtime conversations — breakfast, coffee break, lunch, dinner, snacks. The time of day and food served is completely up to each host.

The Guests

The invite list is up to you. If you're unsure, start with people you know — friends, family, colleagues and neighbors of all ages and backgrounds. You may also want to expand your circle. Consider reaching out to a larger community by co-hosting your event with a local nonprofit or religious group. Ask your guests to bring a friend, or invite people from your network that don't already know each other well. We also encourage you to consider hosting a public table that anyone can sign up to attend in advance. Email onthetable@philafound.org for additional information on hosting a public table.

The Numbers

Eight-to-twelve guests per table is ideal. ***On the Table Philly*** is about giving everyone a chance to speak

Host Toolkit 2019



and be heard. If you want to host a larger gathering, consider breaking into smaller groups and allowing time for each to discuss and report out to the larger group.

Registration

Visit www.philafound.org/onthetable to register your event. This will provide you with access to resources and updates.

Spread the Word

What will you do to create a stronger, more engaged and connected community? How will you use your **On the Table Philly** conversation to bring your colleagues, friends, family and neighbors together to lead change in your organization, neighborhood or throughout the region? Philadelphia Foundation encourages you and your guests to share commitments and connections with us leading into, during and following your conversations using the hashtag #OnTheTablePHL or #LetsTalkPhilly. We want the action emerging from your conversations to inspire collaboration and action from others.

THE TABLE IS SET. NOW WHAT?

The Schedule

We suggest you plan for a 90-minute gathering. The first 20 minutes can be for introductions and the serving of food. The next hour can be for your conversation. Ten minutes should be set aside at the end for completion of the On the Table Philly survey.

Conversation Guidelines

First, our fundamental discussion question — **What is key to a better community?** — is intentionally left VERY open-ended in order to encourage **On the Table Philly** participants to think creatively and reflect on possibilities, in addition to talking about challenges.

Second, consider the conversation as a journey. Every guest's ideas and stories are important, and **On the Table Philly** conversations should provide an opportunity for all participants to reflect on what we value most, consider choices and tradeoffs, and invite all ideas.

Host Toolkit 2019



Third, focus on generating solutions. The Philadelphia Foundation wants to showcase suggestions and initiatives emerging from **On the Table Philly** conversations in order to inform and inspire collaborative action and drive progress across the region.

Dos and Don'ts

DO

- Encourage everyone to participate and engage each other respectfully.
- Invite guests to follow-up and expand on ideas.
- Collect any unanswered data or fact questions that come up and share them with On the Table Philly by emailing onthetable@philafound.org.
- Share your photos, videos and stories from Oct. 17 on social media, using # OnTheTablePHL and/or #LetsTalkPhilly on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram at @philafound.

DON'T

- Micromanage the conversation; let it flow freely.
- Be judgmental or dismissive of any person's comments or ideas.
- Promote argument or incivility among participants.
- Be afraid to ask if you have questions on or before Oct. 17—we have a team ready to help.

Sample Conversation Prompts

To help get your conversations started, we've compiled a list of sample conversation prompts. Here are a few examples to consider:

1. **What is key to a better community?** This is the fundamental question we are asking every gathering to address.
2. What does our community need? What can we do individually or collectively to address those needs?
3. How can we work together to improve the chances of more people doing well in our region? How do you define what "doing well" means?
4. Let's choose an issue affecting our community and talk more specifically about how we'd address it — first with unlimited resources and then, as a challenge, if we only had \$100 and one day to create change, or we had to give up something else to get it done.

Host Toolkit 2019



5. What data or information about my community would I like to have that I'm not getting?
6. What is one next step you plan to take, either individually or collectively, based on our conversation?

ENGAGING OUR FUTURE: Youth Tables

Young people are critical to our region's future. **On the Table Philly** strives to engage those voices and support creative and energetic ideas from our community's youth — at home, around the family dinner table or through school, church or community groups. We encourage you to think about ways you can engage the young people in your life in **On the Table Philly**. That could mean including some of them as guests at the event you are hosting, sharing your **On the Table Philly** experience with them, or asking them to share their thoughts and ideas with you.

WRAPPING UP

After Your Event

In today's world, this act of coming together has never been more important. **On the Table Philly** will connect individuals and communities of diverse perspectives and backgrounds. Talking — and listening — to our neighbors is an important first step toward creating a more engaged, interconnected and dynamic community.

Before your guests depart, help us record thoughts, stories, actions and ideas coming out of every conversation by having those 18 and older complete a short survey that is being conducted by Knight Foundation and Philadelphia Foundation. On Oct. 17, they can access the survey online at philafound.org/onthetable, by texting **OTTPHL** to 797979 or you can provide them with a printed version at the event.

**All those who complete the survey will be entered into a drawing
for a \$250 grant to a nonprofit selected by the winner.**

This data will not only help the Philadelphia Foundation as it enters its second century of service to our region, but will also be shared with the community and key leaders throughout the area in an effort to help them better understand and address the needs of our community.

Starting on Oct. 17th, TPF also encourages participants to share the commitments and connections

Host Toolkit 2019



coming out of ***On the Table Philly*** conversations. We want to showcase outcomes emerging from your tables to inspire collaboration and action from others, and drive progress across the region. ***On the Table Philly*** was created as a catalyst and a channel for these important conversations to take place. What happens next is up to each of us — share your success stories, challenges and ideas.

You can do this:

- Through social media ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#)) @philafounding #onthetablePHL or #LetsTalkPhilly.
- By leaving a message with us at 215-563-6417.
- By sending us a note via email at onthetable@philafound.org or writing to Philadelphia Foundation, ***On the Table Philly***, 1835 Market St., Suite 2410, Philadelphia, PA 19103-2968.

MAKING YOUR TALK TANGIBLE

Activate Mini-Grants

Again this year, ***On the Table Philly*** participants will have the opportunity to apply for Activate Mini Grants to fund ideas that spring from their conversations, with a focus on civic participation. The Philadelphia Foundation is making \$50,000 available for this initiative.

Registered hosts will receive information on how to apply for individual grants of up to \$1,000 in advance of their conversations.

2020 Census

Many of our previous ***On the Table Philly*** discussions concerned areas impacted by federal resources. From housing to childcare to public transportation, hosts talked about, devised solutions and actively engaged in addressing these areas for their community. The 2020 Census -- a once a decade national survey -- is critical in determining how the federal government disburses \$675 billion to state and community planning and services. We encourage you to make answering the 2020 census a priority and encourage those around your table to do the same. For more information, visit www.keystonecounts.org.

Host Toolkit 2019



A NOTE OF GRATITUDE

Thank you for coming to the table. We're excited to have you as part of this important conversation.

Be sure to follow us **@philafound** on TWITTER, FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM

For more information:

Visit www.philafound.org/onthetable or email us at onthetable@philafound.org

ABOUT ON THE TABLE

Philadelphia Foundation's *On the Table* conversations are part of [a national initiative funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](#). *On the Table* replicates an annual civic engagement initiative of the same name developed by The Chicago Community Trust in 2014. Support for *On the Table* advances Knight Foundation's work to help cities attract and keep talented people, expand economic opportunity and create a culture of civic engagement. Knight Foundation believes that successful communities are equitable, inclusive and participatory.

ABOUT THE PHILADELPHIA FOUNDATION

Founded in 1918, the Philadelphia Foundation strengthens the economic, social and civic vitality of Greater Philadelphia. The Philadelphia Foundation grows effective philanthropic investment, connects individuals and institutions across sectors and geography, and advances civic initiatives through partnerships and collaboration. A publicly supported foundation, the Philadelphia Foundation manages more than 900 charitable funds established by its donors and makes over 1,000 grants and scholarship awards each year. To learn more, visit philafound.org.

Host Toolkit 2019