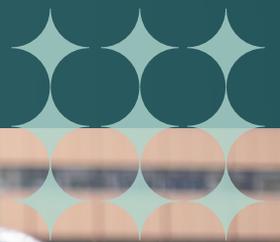




Running an Andela meet up

Organizers handbook, 2023



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Introduction

This handbook is designed for Andela Community Champions and other community members considering organising an in-person event for their local Andela community.

Please use this handbook as your event planning 101 documents and workbook. If you want to host an online event, please refer to our [Online Events Guide instead](#).

What an Andela meet-up looks like?

Andela meet-ups come in all shapes and sizes, and while each event will be unique to you and your local Andelan community, all Andela meet-ups strive to be EPIC and stay true to [Andela's values](#). Typically, Andela meet-ups include a host (you), a venue, and of course, a group of Andelans from around your local city or your country.

Andela meet-ups in the past have consisted of:

- A co-working day in a cafe or dedicated co-working space, with food and networking at lunch or dinner.
- Meeting for coffee in the afternoon or a bar in the evening (with casual conversation).
- Getting together over a buffet lunch or dinner.
- Activities like a picnic, bike ride, bowling, paintball, or boat ride.

Want to try something different? Get in touch with the Community Team and discuss your idea.

What is an Andela meet-up?

An Andela meet-up is an opportunity for you, and Andelans in your city to come together and celebrate being a member of our E.P.I.C Andela Community.



Deciding to run a meet-up

Before you commit to running an Andela meet-up, it is important to consider what that commitment looks like. We recommend that you can commit to approximately 4 hours of your time to bring your meet-up to life.

Do I need event experience in running events?

No, you do not need any professional events experience to organise an Andela meet-up. Once you have decided to organise a meet-up, the Community Team (and this handbook) will guide you every step of the way.



Andela meet-up: The essentials

Now that you have decided to run an Andela meet-up, what do you need to do to make your meet-up a reality?



Format and target audience

Before you begin planning, you should consider the following:

- **What is the purpose of the meet-up?**
Having a clear purpose aids you and the Community team in crafting an optimal event. However, don't overthink it. Simple intentions like 'catching up with local Andelans' are perfect. Other purposes can be milestone celebrations, skill sharing, marking an Andelaversary, holiday festivities, or year-end parties."
- **Who will attend this event?**
Primarily, your event should gather local Andelans. However, it could be exclusively for Andela Champions, mentors, or specific skills, include learning community members, or even invite prospective Andela network joiners.
- **What will people get out of your event?**
Once you know who will be attending your meet-up, it is important to think about what they will get out of your meet-up:
 - How should people feel after the event?
 - What should they learn, or who should they meet?
 - Will they want to attend another event?



Date and time

Confirming your date and time is an essential step of planning any event. When thinking of a date and time for your meet-up, consider local events in your city (avoid busy national holidays, religious days, big sporting events, etc.), as people may have other plans for these dates). Some Andelans prefer weekday events, others prefer weekends, so you may also want to poll potential attendees in your relevant #geo-channel on Andela Chat.

Venue

Once you have confirmed your date and time, it's time to find a venue for your meet-up. Your venue requirements will vary depending on the format or activity you wish to plan. We recommend considering the following before booking your venue:

- Conduct a web search for venues that match your activity. Use Google, Facebook or other platforms to search for your desired venue, e.g “Meet-up spaces in Nairobi”.
- Look at Google Maps, Trip Advisor, Yelp, or other platforms for photos and reviews of this venue. Does it meet your requirements? Does it open at your desired time? Does it suit your budget? etc.
- Reach out to more than one potential venue:
 - Email venues with details of your meet-up (date, time), how long you wish to book their space for, how many people you will be booking for, etc. and ask them for a quote.
 - Follow up with all quotes, and let the venue know if you will be proceeding with the booking or not.



Budget

Andela event budgets vary depending on the region where you plan your event. In 2022, the average cost of running a bi-monthly meet-up was \$12 per attendee. For special events, Andela can provide you with an increased budget. When requesting your meet-up, you will need to provide some details on how you plan to break your budget down. Should you need a higher budget, you must request this in your budget breakdown. The Community team will make all budget adjustments on case-by-case bases.

Example budget breakdown:

Expected attendees	20
Venue rental	\$95
Food and drink	\$90
Total cost:	\$185 (\$9.25 per person)

Working with the Community Team

Working with Andela's Community team is paramount to creating the best possible meet-up in your city. The Community team are here to help you organise your event, and also act as the budget holders for all meet-ups.

If you are a Community Champion, you regularly work with the Community Team on various events and projects. You may integrate some of your meet-up planning into your check-in calls or regular communication with our Community Programs Manager, Feji.

For all recurring meet-ups, we have a dedicated meet-up planning channel for you in Andela Chat. These channels are private, for the Community team and you only. They provide the whole Community team with oversight on your meet-up and is the best place for you to ask any event-planning questions.

If you are planning a meet-up for the first time, please ask the Community team about setting up a dedicated channel in Andela Chat.



Planning your Meet-up

Request your meet-up

Once you have your event requirements, it's time to notify the Community Team of your meet-up plan. To formally request your meet-up (and be approved by the Community Team), please fill in [this form](#) at **least 21 working days** before your meet-up date.

The Community team will approve your meet-up within 3 working days. Should we request any changes, we will contact you via Andela Chat.

Once approved, your meet-up will be added to Andela's Eventbrite account within one working day of your meet-up approval and will then be ready to share with your community.

Eventbrite

In the interest of the Andela community's safety, all Andela meet-ups must be ticketed and will require attendee check-ins. The ticketing platform we use at Andela is [Eventbrite](#). Eventbrite allows us to advertise your meet-up to the community, and add you as an organiser to allow you to check your attendees in on the day.

Please follow our [guide to set up your meet-up](#) on Eventbrite, and the 'attendee management' guide below to learn more about checking attendees in.

Using Eventbrite also allows Andela to track attendance at your meet-up; this helps us to better plan our budget for your future meet-ups.

Check-in with your venue

Approximately two weeks before your meet-up, we recommend contacting your venue to confirm your reservation and ensure that they are prepared for your requests.

- Ask the venue if there may be any access requirements; this is particularly important if your meet-up is in a co-working space or similar event space.
- Triple-check the booking cost and discuss the expected number of attendees.
- Ask about accessibility at your venue.
- Ask if you can place pop-up banners or other Andela promotional material in the venue.
- Let them know if you have any questions or concerns; it is best to ask these as early as possible.



Checklist

One week before your meet-up, you should schedule a check-in with the Community team. In this check-in call, we will run you through a checklist to ensure you are ready for your meet-up, such as:

- Checking that your Eventbrite access is working. You can access the management section of your meet-up.
- Discuss the sales of tickets, and the expected number of attendees.
- Discuss your venue and cost in more detail.
- Go over any local health requirements or safety considerations.
- Prepare your meet-up reminder email; this email goes out the day before the meet-up to everyone who has registered. This email will remind them of the time, and venue; it should also contain safety guidelines/protocol and any valuable information about the event, such as parking, meet-up activities, meeting point and agenda.
- Discuss the plan for paying for this meet-up and check reimbursement requirements.
- Iron out any concerns you may have.



Paying for your event and reimbursement

There are many ways to manage the payment of your meet-up in collaboration with Andela. Here are your options:

- **Once-off venues:** If your venue does not have an existing relationship with Andela, you will be expected to pay for your meet-up in full and be reimbursed by Andela in your next payment cycle.

Once your meet-up is complete, please fill out this [reimbursement form](#), and you will be reimbursed for your meet-up on your next payment date. Please read our policy on acceptable receipts [here](#).

Note: Andela can only reimburse meet-ups where the Community team has approved the cost and meet-up, and tickets were managed via Andela's Eventbrite account.

- **Partner with a venue:** If you wish to partner with a venue in your city to provide a regular monthly or bi-monthly meeting spot for your meet-ups, please contact the community team. Andela can build a relationship with the venue or brand, and should a relationship exist, Andela can add the venue to our vendor list. In this instance, Andela will pay any invoices from the venue directly.

- **Additional options for Andelans in Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Ghana, or Rwanda:** For meet-ups based in countries where Andela has an entity, and the venue can provide an invoice in advance of the meet-up. Andela can pay invoices directly to the venue, where the total cost is less than \$350. If your meet-up matches these requirements, please ask the Community team about Andela paying for the meet-up directly.
- **Hosts, who are not on engagement:** If you are not currently on an Andela client engagement, Andela will not be able to reimburse you for any costs relating to a meet-up. If you wish to host a meet-up whilst you are not on engagement, please talk to the community team about partnering with a venue or another local champion to manage costs.





Promoting your meet-up

Once your event has been published on Eventbrite, it's time to start promoting it to Andelans in your area. There's no perfect formula for promoting meet-ups, but we have created one to make promoting easy.

Promotion task	Who	When
Include the meet-up in Monday's #announcements post	Community team	2 weeks before
Invite all Andelan in the city to sign up via their Google Calendar	Community team	2 weeks before
Post the Eventbrite link in your #geo-channel	Host (you)	2 weeks before
Post the Eventbrite in #events	Community team	1 week before
Build excitement for your meet-up in your #geo-channel	Host (you)	1 weeks before
Event reminder to everyone who has signed up	Community team	24 hours before
Post the Eventbrite #geo-channel	Host (you)	24 hours before
Post in all event details and your contact info in your #geo-channel	Host (you)	Morning of the event

If you are having trouble writing posts for your geo-channel, please refer to this [template](#).



Health and safety at your meet-up

COVID-19 and public health guidelines: Should any COVID-19 or other public health outbreaks be present in your area, and your local government has issued guidelines for reducing the spread, please follow those guidelines and instruct your attendees to do so.

In response to managing the ongoing spread of COVID-19, we ask your attendees to:

- Wear masks properly when/if required, over both the nose and mouth.
- Allow for social distancing when possible; this should be 2 meters.
- Exercising good hygiene, such as frequently washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or sanitising your hands.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Practise appropriate respiratory etiquette when masks are not required, which includes covering mouth/nose when coughing or sneezing, and averting face from others.
- Notifying Andela's contact trace team immediately via **community@andela.com** if they experience symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 at any time during the event or within 14 days after participating in the meet-up. Please note, that this information will be held strictly confidential. It will only be used to inform other event attendees of the possibility of exposure (and such notice will not include your name) and for Andela to meet its administrative obligations.



Communicating with your venue and Andela

If there are any public health outbreaks in your area, and local guidance has been issued, please contact your venue to discuss your options. This is particularly important if you have pre-paid for any part of your meet-up and the guidance restricts the movement of people on the date of your meet-up.

Once you've spoken with your venue, reach out to the Community team and fill us in. Andela must be aware of any risks to public health in your region; this will help us conduct a risk assessment with you and decide the best actions.

The Andela Code of Conduct

All activities in the Andela community must abide by Andela's code of conduct, which includes in-person meet-ups. Any breaches of the code of conduct must be reported to conduct@Andela.com. Breaches of the code of conduct by any community member may result in being disbanded from the Andela community and talent network.



Communicating with your attendees

In the event of public health measures being published, or the cancellation of your event, the Community team will work with you to communicate any changes with your attendees. The Community team will draft emails with you and send them out via the correct channels. We may ask you to post a message in your #geo-channel also.



Safety and risk assessments

The safety of the Andela community is paramount to Andela. Therefore there are times when we will need to run a risk assessment with you to decide if your proposed meet-up can be approved or in other instances, still go ahead.

A risk assessment should be carried out, but is not exclusive to the following situations:

- A COVID-19 outbreak/other public health outbreak in your city/region/country
- A natural disaster in a nearby area
- Political tensions rising in your city or surrounding area
- A request to partake in certain activities or sports which may increase the risk of injury to attendees.



Responsibilities

Who is responsible for what? When organising any event, it is important to consider your responsibilities and who is responsible for what. This is especially important when hosting the meet-up in a rented venue, paid for by Andela, promoted by Andela, and attended by many Andelans.

Your responsibility

It is your responsibility to work with a venue/vendor/ local business, Andela, and Andelans to create a safe and nourishing environment for your meet-up. You are responsible for asking questions of your venue and Andela when you need clarification, seeking and providing the correct receipts and invoices from the venue/vendors, and answering the questions/concerns of your attendees at your meet-up.

Your venue's responsibility

Your venue is responsible for:

- Ensuring your event space is safe
- Meets local health and safety guidelines
- Ensuring that they are operating with the correct permits

Andela's responsibility

It is Andela's responsibility to ensure that we have informed you of any relevant policies regarding the running of meet-ups, and it is the responsibility of our Community team to communicate, support and guide you through the process of planning, hosting, and wrapping up your meet-up. All meet-up hosts should review [Andela's Code of Conduct](#) before their event to ensure they are familiar with the expected behaviours of all Andelans.

Your attendee's responsibility

It is your attendee's responsibility to be mindful of their own safety and actions at your meet-up. They are also responsible for any belongings they bring with them, including technical equipment and vehicles.



Attendance disclaimer

When your attendees sign up for your meet-up, they will be asked to agree to our attendee disclaimer on Eventbrite, this statement reads as follows:

“I understand that I am fully and personally responsible for my own safety and actions during the this Andela meetup. With full knowledge of the risks, I hereby release, discharge and indemnify Andela, (including its board, subsidiaries, officers, affiliates, employees, representatives, successors, and assigns) from any and all liabilities, claims, demands, actions, and causes of action whatsoever, directly or indirectly arising from activities I may undertake during the Andela meetup.”

Should anything happen to an attendee or their belongings at your meet-up, please remind them of their agreement to this statement.

What if something goes wrong?

In the unfortunate event of an incident occurring at your meet-up, please contact Feji or Nicola in your dedicated meet-up channel, and let us know in detail what has happened and who was involved. If the incident is an emergency, contact local first responders immediately. Andela bears no liability for any negative outcome or injury that occurs in connection with a meetup event.

What to do in the event of;

- **Someone breaking Andela's [code of conduct](#):**
Try to diffuse the situation, and if talking to those involved doesn't work, ask the venue to remove the individual from the venue. Please report the incident to conduct@Andela.com as soon as possible.
- **A health emergency:** Should anyone fall ill at your meet-up, please work closely with them and the venue to ensure they are safe. If required, please don't hesitate to contact emergency services.



On the day: everything you need



Arriving at your venue and set-up

- If you have a specific person of contact at your venue, you should meet your contact when you arrive at the venue.
- If you have brought banners, posters, or even printouts with Andela's name or branding, set them up.
- Once you have set up, send a message to your attendees on your #geo-channel and/or a WhatsApp group (if you have once set up for Andelans in your city).
- 20 minutes before the start time, position yourself in a visible place to ensure attendees can find you.



Attendee management

Before the event, the community team will add you as a co-organiser of your meet-up on Eventbrite to allow you check in attendees. Please visit the [App Store](#) or [Play Store](#) to download the Eventbrite Organizer app and log in with your Eventbrite account ahead of the event. Then, select your event and tap "Check in". You can now check attendees in manually or by scanning their tickets. If an attendee arrives without a ticket, ask them to take a moment to sign up/manually add a ticket for them using the Eventbrite Organizer app.

Please refer to this [article](#) for detailed instructions on how to check in attendees.

Capturing the moment

Capturing photographs or video at your meet-up can provide you with the opportunity to share your meet-up highlights throughout the day, or after the event, in Andela Chat, LinkedIn or social network. Sharing your meet-up allows attendees to look back at their favourite moments and creates a sense of FOMO (fear of missing out) for those who couldn't make it this time. This second category of people is perfect for potential attendees for future meet-ups.

Don't forget to use the hashtag **#ThisIsAndela** in your posts.



Photography tips:

Here are some tips to make sure that the photos you take show off the best bits of your event:

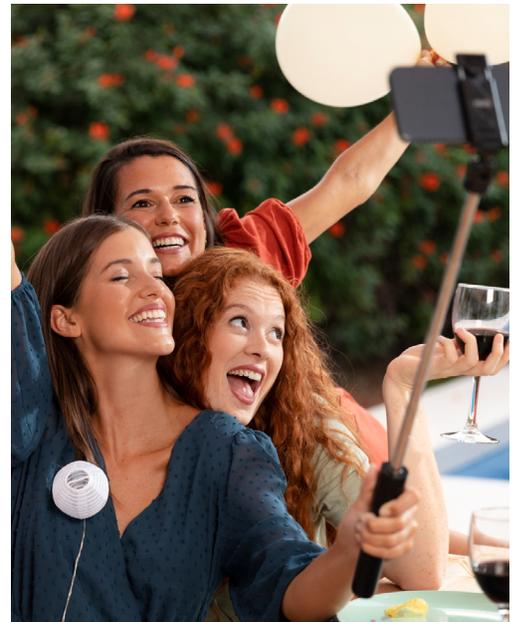
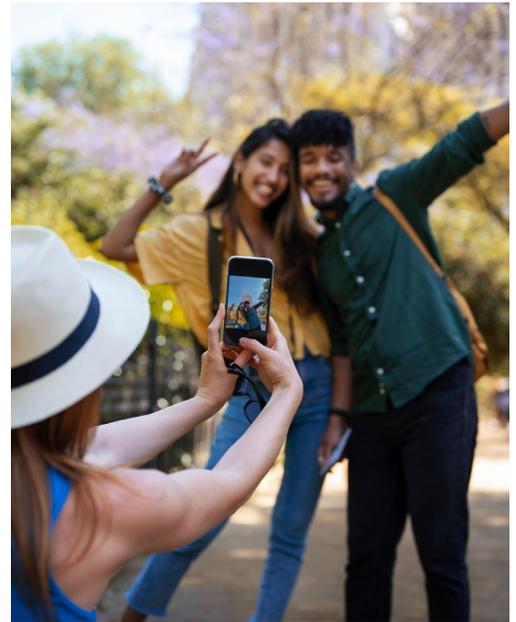
- Take one or more high-resolution photographs (300dpi).
- If you have one, use a tripod to ensure the photograph is sharp and in focus.
- Your subject should be well-lit. Without light, you can't get beautiful, well-exposed photos. Beware of shadows! They can create unflattering photos.
- Use a neutral background, white background preferably.

Videography tips:

- For videos, capture footage of the community individually and together as a team, enjoying time together and collaborating.
- Consider collecting some vox pops, or one on one questions and answers from our technologists for the following questions:
 - How long have you worked with Andela?
 - What appealed to you most about joining Andela?
 - What is the best thing about working with Andela?

A note about posting meet-up photos or videos to social media:

Please check with your attendees before posting any photos or videos, as not everyone may be comfortable with their image being shared. Attendees will be asked when signing up for your meet-up if they are comfortable with having their image shared.



What happens after your meet-up

Tips for highlighting the meet-up afterwards

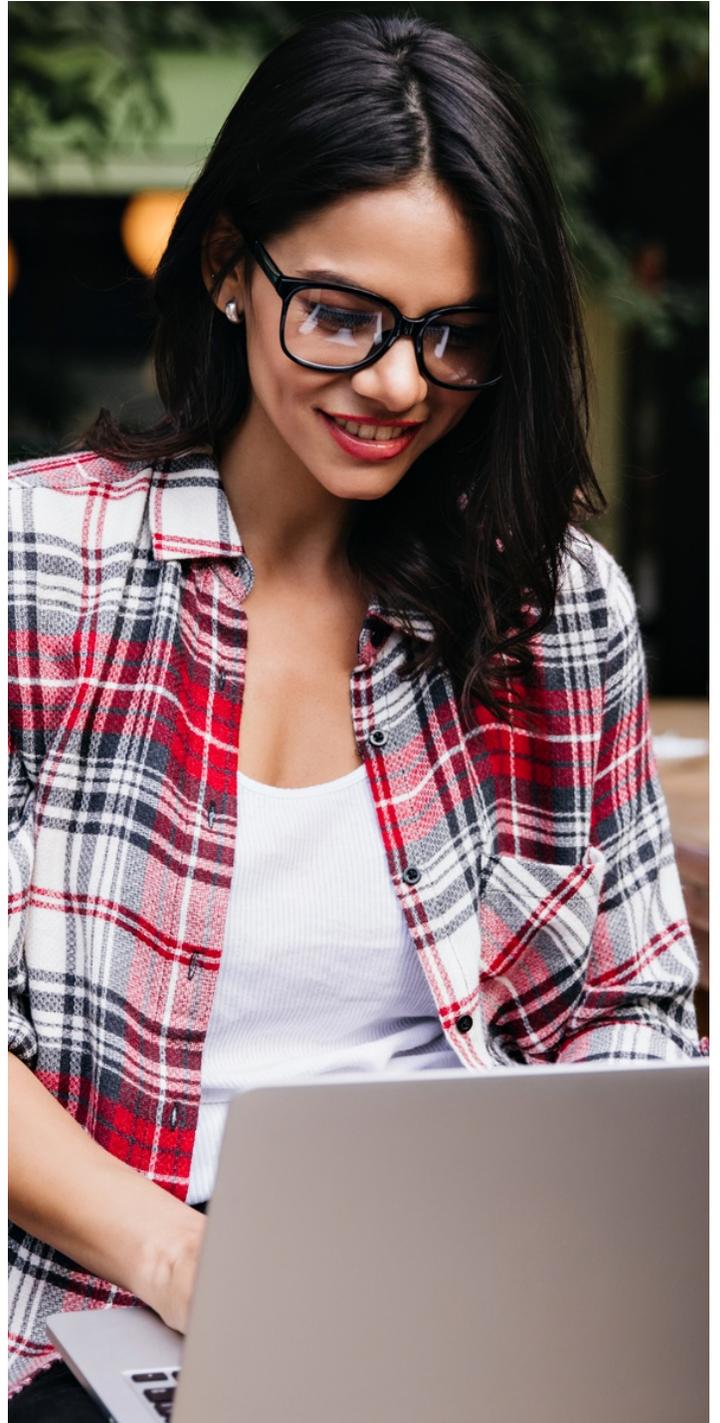
We recommend thanking your attendees in your #geo-channel within 2 days of your event, this encourages attendees to comment and reconnect with new Andelans they met at your meet-up. Encourage people to share their highlights over the week after the meet-up and share their photos or video highlights in Andela Chat.

Your event photos may even make it into our newsletter, social media, or Community Town Hall.

Reporting on your event

Reporting is an important task for the Community Team, and as a meet-up host, you can help us with this process. Some of the key aspects you can help us with are:

- Checking attendees in, and providing an accurate number of attendees when filling in your reimbursement form.
- Provide your meet-up receipts, see the reimbursement process above.
- Share any photos or videos you took with the community team.
- Fill in our post-meet-up [feedback form](#) (you will receive this in an email after your meet-up).
- Encourage your attendees to check their email for an attendee feedback form.





Handbook

feedback

We greatly appreciate your constant feedback, as your feedback helps us to grow and adapt to our community's needs. If you have any feedback on this handbook or our event processes, please email community@andela.com with your feedback.