Governance Process Cheat Sheet

1) **Check-In:** One at a time. No discussion.
2) **Admin Concerns:** Address any logistical concerns.
3) **Build Agenda:** Capture one or two words per item.
4) **Process Agenda:** Process items one at a time.
5) **Closing Round:** Share reflections on the meeting one at a time. No discussion.

1. Present Proposal

Proposer (nobody else speaks)

⊘ share tension and initial proposal and make them visible

💬 *Who brought this agenda item and from which role? Tell us about the tension you would like to process and how it showed up for you. Finish the sentence „I propose…".*

☛ Proposer shares the underlying tension and his initial proposal.

☛ If proposer asks for a discussion to craft an initial proposal others are allowed to help, but not to improve it or to seek consensus. Facilitator ends the discussion as soon as a viable proposal emerges.

✎Secretary: capture the tension and the proposal word-for-word

💡 Move on to Clarifying Questions as soon as proposer affirms the following:
- *Have we captured your **tension** and your **proposal** correctly?*
- *Would the proposal solve your tension?*

2. Clarifying Questions

Anyone can ask (only the proposer responds)

⊘ everybody understands the tension and the proposal

💬 *Now we all have the opportunity to ask clarifying questions with the goal of better understanding the proposal or the tension. As proposer you are free to answer the questions or to simply respond „not specified in the proposal".*

☛ Anyone can ask the proposer a question to better understand, but not influence; no reactions or discussions allowed. Proposer can respond „not specified" to any question.

💡 After each answer, towards the space: *Other clarifying questions?*

👁 Watch for reactions instead of questions,

… to questioner: *This sounds more like a reaction. Can you reformulate your question?*

… to proposer: *You can always respond „not specied". No pressure on you to answer every question.*

👁 Watch for answers / help by others, only proposer may answer

👁 Watch for attempts to optimize the proposal. Don't do it here, wait for step 4.

3. Reaction Round

Everyone, except the proposer

⊘ share unfiltered opinions about the proposal

💬 *Next, we have the Reaction Round. Everyone speaks, one person at a time. No discussion. You have the opportunity to share your reaction to the proposal. Anything goes: from intellectual criticism, ideas for improvement, even emotional outbursts are ok.*

☛ Everyone speaks, one at a time, except proposer. No discussion. Reactions are directed to the space, not to individuals.

4. Amend & Clarify

Proposer (nobody else speaks, not even to help)

⊘ clarify intention; optionally amend the proposal

💬 *Now you as proposer have the opportunity to respond, answer questions or make smaller amendments to your proposal if you find it helpful to better solve your tension. No pressure whatsoever to integrate anyone else's tension at this point.*

☛ Proposer may clarify intent or amend proposal, but only if it helps him/her. No one else may speak, not even to help.

✎Secretary: capture potential amendments word-for-word

💡 Proposer hesitates, explain
- *It doesn't have to be perfect at this point. We are only looking for an initial proposal that would solve your tension.*
- *Only focus on what would help you to solve your tension. The others can raise their safety concerns in the next step where they make your proposal safe.*

5. Safety-Check of the Proposal

Everyone (no discussion)

⊘ share concerns towards proposal and collect harms for Integration

💬 *Now we focus on making the proposal safe, so it doesn't cause harm for the circle. I will ask each one of you if you feel any tension about the proposal. If yes, please voice your concerns. My job as facilitator is to explore with you whether the tension needs to be integrated immediately or should better be solved somewhere else.*

☛ start round next to proposer and ask proposer last
☛ test concerns immediately **(see back side for test instructions)**
☛ test each concern on its own, a person can have more than one
☛ move on to the next person if no additional concern is raised

Is there any harm that needs integration? → no → ✓ **Accept Proposal**

↓ yes

6. Integration

Everyone, with a focus on harm-sensor and proposer as sensors (support is welcome)

⊘ an amended proposal that would not cause the concretely captured harm(s) and would still address the proposer's tension

💬 *We integrate one harm at a time. Integration is an open discussion where anyone can speak. We focus on solving the tensions of the harm-sensor and the proposer.*

How can we amend the proposal, so that it does not create the [concrete harm], while still solving the original tension of the proposer?

As Facilitator

1) Integrate **formal errors** first and then the **other captured harms**, one at a time. You determine the order of items for integration.

2) For each harm start with harm-sensor, but allow contributions from others. Ask, *„What can be added or changed to remove that harm?"*
   No over-optimization or consensus-seeking. As soon as a potential solution emerges, stop and check out each idea by **asking the sensors**:
   - to harm-sensor: *„Would that remove the [concrete harm]?"*
   - to proposer: *„Would this still address your tension?"*

3) As soon as you hear **„yes"** to both questions, integrate the next harm on the list.

✎Secretary: Änderungen am Vorschlag im Wortlaut erfassen

4) After all harms have been integrated **repeat the Safety-Check of the Proposal.**

💡 Resistance against integration

…via harm-sensor: warn the harm-sensor that you will have to *dismiss the harm* if he/she makes no credible effort of finding a potential amendment (everybody can help in an open discussion).

…via proposer: warn the proposer that you will have to *dismiss the proposal* if he/she does not accept the amendment and offers no reasoning as to why the amended proposal does not work.

Testing Safety Concerns

Could this proposal cause any harm? If yes: **What harm?**

Concrete harm is being described
(category a, b, or c)

a) time-related (inefficiency), material or nonmaterial damage

b) certain pieces of the proposal are unclear or incomprehensible

c) proposal degrades the capacity of the circle to fulfill its purpose

or

If **no concrete harm** is being described, explain: *I need to hear the harm.*
[offer the definition of "harm" (a-c)].
ask again: *What is the concrete harm?*

If – **again** – **no concrete harm** is being described, ask:
- *Do you simply have a better idea?*
- *Do you find the proposal unnecessary?*

✗ **independent tension**
(bring your own agenda item)

✎ **Secretary:** capture the [concrete harm] in the scratchpad.

Would the proposal limit one of your roles… *or* *… are you trying to **help another role** or the **circle** in general?*

✗ **outside your role's authority**
(pitch tension to respective roles)

Which of your roles would be limited in expressing their *purpose or accountabilities* **and how?**

*Is [the harm] created **by this proposal**, …* *or* *… is the harm **already a problem**, even if the proposal were dropped?*

✗ **independent tension**
(bring your own agenda item)

How will [the harm] be created **by the proposal?**

*Do you conclude from your **own experience** that [the harm] will occur, …* *or* *… are you **anticipating** the harm will likely occur?*

What is your experience?
Harm-sensor has to be able to name concrete situations or examples. Otherwise he / she is merely anticipating.

*Are you concerned that **significant harm** could occur before we can adapt, …* *or* *… is it **safe enough to try**, knowing we can revisit it anytime?*

✗ **concern can be ignored**
(collect more data, revisit if needed)

✓ **A concrete harm that must be integrated**
(Ask the same person for further safety concerns and complete the round. Only move on to Integration after you have collected all concrete harms that need to be integrated.)

Formal Error (**always** needs to be integrated)
An explanation about how the **form** of the proposal **breaks the rules** of the constitution, e.g.:
operational output was captured; outside the circle's authority; attempt to govern the people; accountability which is not a recurring activity, etc.

- For potentially resource related concerns offer the following framing:
  When we add roles or accountabilities via governance, it does not necessarily mean more work or that the prioritization changes. Each rolefiller still has to decide how much time and attention he or she wants to spend on it and when. With that understanding in mind, does your concern still persist?
  If the concern still persists, continue testing.
- Argument about harm is enough:
  Only ask yourself *whether* the harm-sensor has presented a reasonable argument that falls under one of the three categories of harm (a-c), not *how* harmful you find it.
- If the harm is unclear, ask:
  - *Which part of the proposal creates a tension for you? What exactly causes harm?*
  - *If you had to express the harm with only two or three words what would be your placeholder?*
- ✓ Check back with the harm sensor:
  Did we capture the harm correctly?

- Lead Link may 'help' the circle:
  The Lead Link holds the purpose of the whole circle. That's why he may „help the circle" in his role at this step.

Golden Rule - when in doubt whether a tension needs to be integrated:
Rather *accept* a tension that should have better been solved elsewhere (in order to prevent harm), instead of *dismissing* a tension that in reality needed to be integrated (and thereby introducing harm).

- Minimal worsening is enough:
  If *more* material or nonmaterial damage ensues (e.g. "we lose even more money"), then it is caused by the proposal and needs to be integrated. "Equally bad" is not enough.
- Unclarity / proposal incomprehensible is always "caused by the proposal".

- Own experiences are e.g. concrete situations from this or another context that can be described with an example.
- Unclarity / proposal incomprehensible *always* constitutes an „own experience".

- Significant harm:
  When the harm-sensor claims that „significant harm" may occur, always accept it - even if you don't feel it. You are not the sensor, the harm-sensor is.

Check for & capture Formal Errors, e.g.
- proposal is still in the *scratchpad*, not yet captured in the entry mask
- the captured outcome is *operational*, e.g. project, action, prioritization, decision, strategic decision, role assignment, etc.
- *outside* the purpose or accountabilities of the circle
- contains references to *people* (names)
- does not match the *constitutionally required form* (see below)

Admissible outputs for governance:
- Amend roles or circle:
  - creating, changing or deleting of role(s) or circle(s) – only in the own circle
  - a role/circle contains at least one of these elements: purpose, domain or accountability
  - an accountability must be a recurring activity
  - a role/circle always has a name
- Restructuring:
  move role/circle down into sub-circle or move it up from sub-circle
- Policy:
  - grants or limits access to a domain (material or immaterial)
  - never forces actions unconditionally (always conditional, e.g. „if…, then…")
  - must not govern people, only roles
  - is always connected to a domain (either to the general domain of the circle or to a domain previously defined by the circle)