

Community Meetups Playbook

Hosting community meetups	2
Why community meetups matter	2
Suggested timeline and planning checklist	3
Venue, food and drinks	4
Finding a venue	4
Activity ideas	4
Merchandise	4
Setting up your Luma page	5
Event page checklist	5
Photography and attendee privacy	6
After the event	6
Host reimbursement guidelines	7
Costs we will reimburse and their maximum values:	8
Venue rental	8
Merchandise	8
Locally produced merchandise	8
Host-only reimbursements	9
Travel	9
Meals and restaurants	9

Hosting community meetups

Thank you for organizing a community meetup! Whether you're bringing together local enthusiasts or coordinating a gathering for Community Day (November 7, 2026), this guide covers everything you need to know to plan and run a great one. For details on what costs the Open Home Foundation can cover, please refer to the Community Meetup [Host Reimbursement Guidelines](#).

Why community meetups matter

These are a powerful way for you to connect with other community members. Whether they are project users, contributors, partners, or just curious about open source tech, everyone has a chance to join in and share their views and ideas. Meetups are informal, local, and led by you, for you; and that's exactly what makes them special.

As a host, you're helping people in your area:

- Meet others who share their passion for open, private, and sustainable smart homes
- Share automations, dashboards, hardware, and ideas in person
- Build a local network that keeps in touch long after the event
- Feel part of a global community that values the same things they do

You don't need to be an expert or follow a rigid format, since every meetup reflects its local community and their interests. This guide gives you the tools to make it happen.

Suggested timeline and planning checklist

This can help you keep things on track – feel free to adjust it to fit your situation (smaller gatherings with a free venue usually move faster).

8 weeks before: Discovery

- ★ Confirm your date and time.
For Community Day 2026, the date is fixed: Saturday, November 7.
- ★ Start venue scouting.
- ★ Register on Luma and create your event page – use [this asset generator](#) to create your event's image.
For Community Day, use this [asset generator](#).
- ★ Join the Home Assistant Discord server and share your event in the [#events-and-meetups](#) channel. For Community Day, share it in the [#community-day](#) channel to receive a special role dedicated to Community Day Hosts.
 - In your event's description, tell your guests to join the server as well so you can have a thread dedicated to your meetup to chat outside of Luma.

6 weeks before: Confirmed venue

- ★ Lock in your venue (check out the Reimbursement Guidelines to see how we help with this).
- ★ Confirm any co-hosts.
- ★ Open registrations on Luma.
- ★ Spread the word! Start promoting:
- ★ Share it on Discord
For regular meetups, you can use the [#events-and-meetups](#) channel.
For Community Day, share it in the [#community-day](#) channel.
 - Reach out to your local or regional community – you can find the ones we're aware of on [our Community page](#) in the FAQ, if yours is missing please let us know!

5 weeks before: Logistics

- ★ Submit your merchandise request
For Community Day 2026, the request deadline is October 5.
- ★ If you'd like, you can order some name tags for your attendees.
- ★ Plan your activity or agenda, even loosely (see Activity ideas below).

2 weeks before: Final checks

- ★ Confirm any catering or drink arrangements with your venue.
- ★ Send a reminder Blast on Luma asking attendees to update their RSVP if their plans changed (often needed to give venues accurate headcount).
- ★ Brief any co-hosts on the plan (like if you will use Luma's check-in feature or what time you'll meet at your venue).

Event day

- ★ Bring your merchandise and name tags!
- ★ Enjoy bonding with local enthusiasts like yourself. 😊

After the event

- ★ Collect photos taken by yourself or your guests and add them to our [shared Drive folder](#). Please create a folder with your meetup location and date.
- ★ Complete our post-event feedback form.
- ★ For Community Day 2026, submit any reimbursement requests by December 7, 2026 (we cannot reimburse any requests after this date for Community Day 2026).

Venue, food and drinks

Finding a venue

Start venue scouting early (ideally eight weeks out). Here's a suggested priority order, though local context always wins:

1. Casual venues (preferred)

- Bars, cafés, and breweries tend to work well: relaxed atmosphere, low or no rental cost, and easy for guests to find.
- Good for groups of up to 20 people.

2. Coworking spaces, libraries, or community spaces

- A good option if your group is larger, or wants a setup better suited to demos, presentations, or projectors.

The Open Home Foundation will reimburse venue costs up to 10 CHF per registered guest attending your Luma event. For larger or more expensive venues, please email community@openhomefoundation.org before booking. See the [Reimbursement Guidelines](#) for full details.

Activity ideas

You don't need a formal agenda, but having at least one activity helps break the ice and gives people something to rally around. Some ideas:

- Trivia → a smart home quiz works great and gets people talking
- Demo showcase → invite attendees to show off their set ups
- Hardware trade or show-and-tell → people bring devices to share or swap
- Open discussion → a loose theme or question to kick off conversation (e.g., "what's the one automation you couldn't live without?")

Mix and match based on your group size, vibes, and venue! Feel free to use and adapt whatever's useful – we've also put together a [folder with more ideas and templates here](#).

Merchandise

The Open Home Foundation can provide official merch for your meetup. Here's how it works:

- **Requesting merch from the Open Home Foundation Store**

Fill out the merchandise request form at least two to three weeks before your event. The request form for regular meetups will be added to this doc at a future date.

For Community Day 2026, hosts must submit their requests by October 5, using [this merch request form](#).

- **Printing locally**

If you'd prefer to print stickers or shirts locally, that's fine too. Email

community@openhomefoundation.org to discuss reimbursement before placing your order.

Setting up your Luma page

Luma is the platform we use for event registration. Here's how to list your event:

1. Create a Luma account at luma.com if you don't have one
2. Navigate to the [Home Assistant Community](#) page
 - a. For Community Day, navigate to the [Open Home Foundation Community Day](#) page
3. Select Submit Event > Create New Event
4. Fill in your event details (see checklist below)
5. Once live, you can share it in the [Home Assistant Discord server](#) or in the [Social section of the Community forum](#)!
 - a. For regular meetups, you can use the [#events-and-meetups](#) channel
 - b. For Community Day, you can share it in the [#community-day](#) channel

Event page checklist

1. **Title**
 - Format: [City Name] Meetup. E.g.: "Amsterdam Meetup."
2. **Date, time & location**
 - Include city/country, and full venue address.
 - Make sure your timezone is properly set.
 - Standard duration is three to four hours.
3. **Luma graphic**
 - You can use [this asset generator](#) to create invite graphics for regular meetups to help publicize your event.
 - For Community Day, you can use [this asset generator](#).
4. **Event description**
 - We suggest a short, friendly opening line.
 - Brief context paragraph: why this meetup is happening and who it's for.
 - When and where, clearly stated.
 - Add any practical notes: parking, venue access, capacity limit, RSVP requirement, or photography and attendee privacy.
 - *Set a realistic capacity on Luma before publishing. This helps manage expectations and makes headcount easier for you and the venue.*

Photography and attendee privacy

Taking photos and/or video is a great way to celebrate your meetup and inspire other communities – but it's the host's responsibility to make sure attendees are comfortable with this before sharing any footage that includes people's faces.

Here are a few things you can do to make this easy:

1. **Before the event**, add a note to your Luma description letting attendees know photos or video may be taken. Here's a boilerplate you can copy and adapt:

"We may take photos/video during this event to share on social media and the Open Home Foundation community channels. If you'd prefer not to appear in photos, let us know at check-in and we'll make sure you're not included; or just look out for the opt-out identifiers on the day."

2. **On the day**, give attendees who don't want to be photographed an easy, visible way to signal that. For example, red name tags or red lanyards are a quick visual cue to know at a glance who to keep out of frame or blur in post.
3. **When in doubt**: if you're not sure whether someone in a photo has given you permission, or if you didn't manage to gather consent for any reason, a well placed smiley face emoji (😊) over their face works fine as a fallback before sharing.

After the event

Once your event wraps up, a few quick steps help keep everything organized and ensure you get reimbursed:

- If you or your attendees took any photos and would like to share them with us, feel free to upload them to the [shared Drive folder](#).
- Please, feel free to share any feedback with us – it really helps us improve every year! 😊
- Submit your expenses within 30 days using the reimbursement form. See more information in the Host Reimbursement Guidelines section below.

That's it. Thank you again for organizing! Every meetup makes the Open Home Foundation community stronger ❤️

Host reimbursement guidelines

We want to support you by reimbursing certain expenses you incur. We've set up these guidelines so you know what's possible!

For the purpose of these guidelines, we define the following:

- **Hosts:** The people officially registered to organize your meetup event on [Luma](#), up to three in total.
- **Guests:** The people registered on Luma to come to your meetup.

As the Open Home Foundation is a Swiss foundation, all values given here are in the currency of Swiss Francs (CHF). To get reimbursed, you will need to fill out [the reimbursement form](#) we have publicly available. Hosts should download and complete this, then send it to community@openhomefoundation.org.

When submitting your request, please include:

- A link to your meetup event from Luma (and other meetup platforms if you crossposted your event)
- The completed reimbursement form, including:
 - Date each item was purchased
 - A generic description of the item
 - The total amount paid (in your local currency, if you prefer)
 - Your banking information or Wise account
- PDFs, JPEGs, or PNGs of the receipts, or attachments of any invoices

If you fill out the form in your local currency instead of CHF, we will use the exchange rate as it was listed on the date of your purchase, and not the date you submit your reimbursement request. We ask that if you convert your local currency to CHF on the form, please also do it on the day of purchase and not the day you submit it. [Xe Currency Exchange Rate](#) can help you determine the rate on a specific date.

Please note that as a non-profit foundation, we cannot reimburse you unless we have invoices/receipts. In exceptional cases, the Open Home Foundation Leadership Committee may approve requests for reimbursement not described here. However, these must be well justified. Please email community@openhomefoundation.org with the details of your request.

All reimbursement requests must be submitted within 30 days of the expense date. Any requests received after that will not be reimbursed. Reimbursement requests take roughly five business days to process. Once approved, how quickly you receive the funds depends on your payment method – some are instant, while others can take up to three additional business days.

Costs we will reimburse and their maximum values:

Venue rental

The Open Home Foundation wants to help support you in renting a suitable venue. In general, we suggest finding the venue for your meetup prior to publishing it on Luma so you can set your capacity expectations up front.

If you expect a smaller meetup (~10 guests) we recommend cafés, bars, makerspaces, or other locations that may be willing to host your meetup for free. Alternatively, if you find a venue or a company willing to co-organize or sponsor their venue space, this is a great way to secure a suitable location. However, if your meetup becomes popular (20+ guests for example), it can become difficult to find a venue willing to accommodate you.

As a guideline for venue rental budget, the Open Home Foundation will pay for a maximum of 10 CHF per registered guest on Luma. As the costs involved can escalate quickly, please email community@openhomefoundation.org to align on the size of your meetup and the total support we can provide prior to booking a venue.

Merchandise

We have a merchandise request form for hosts to request items from our [official Open Home Foundation Store](#). To ensure you receive your items in time, we require hosts to submit a request at least two (preferably three) weeks prior to the event. Hosts will be able to request stickers, a T-shirt for each registered host, and any special items we have available in the store at the time of your event.

In the case of our annual Community Day, hosts should fill out [the request form](#) for specially designed merch, as found on the Community Day website, no later than the date stated on the form's description.

Locally produced merchandise

If you prefer to print stickers or T-shirts locally, or order from a production company of your choice, please email community@openhomefoundation.org to discuss reimbursement options.

Host-only reimbursements

The following are only available for meetup hosts.

Travel

While organizing a community meetup as a host, the Open Home Foundation will pay for your travel costs to and from the venue. Sustainability is one of our fundamental values, so we strongly recommend using public transportation, such as bus or trains, when traveling to your venue. As we want to support local community meetups, the Open Home Foundation will only reimburse tickets for trips under four hours.

For train trips, the Open Home Foundation will only pay for economy seats, up to 90 CHF (round-trip).

It is possible to be reimbursed for car mileage, but only if the time difference between arriving by public transport and private car is more than 30 minutes. If this is the case for you, please email community@openhomefoundation.org to discuss further.

Meals and restaurants

While hosting a community meetup, the Open Home Foundation will pay for your meal if the timing of the event means you will need to have lunch or dinner prior to the meetup. The foundation will only cover meals with two drinks up to 35 CHF per host. During meals, we can only pay for non-alcoholic beverages, beer, and wine – not hard liquor or cocktails, or other drinks outside of the meals.

Your privacy is important to us; please review our [Privacy Policy](#) for more information on how we handle data in relation to volunteer reimbursements.