

A decorative graphic consisting of seven small, solid-colored dots arranged in a circle. The dots are in shades of teal, red, yellow, purple, blue, and red, with the top-most dot being red.

Pollinator

Closing Session - Pilot 2025

Check-in

Please take a moment to look at, smell, or listen to something around you.

Please place in the chat:

- Where are you calling in from?
- What smell, sound, or sight did you notice?



**What is possible when we
connect with one another?**

“When Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast, almost everything lost its footing. Houses were detached from their foundations, trees and shrubbery were uprooted, sign posts and vehicles floated down the rivers that became of the Streets. But amidst the whipping winds and surging water, the oak tree held its ground. How? Instead of digging its roots deep and solitary into the earth, the oak tree grows its roots wide and interlocks with other oak trees in the surrounding area...

— Naima Penniman

...And you can't bring down a hundred oak trees bound beneath the soil! How do we survive the unnatural disasters of climate change, environmental injustice, over-policing, mass-imprisonment, militarization, economic inequality, corporate globalization, and displacement? We must connect in the underground, my people! In this way, we shall survive."

— Naima Penniman



Technology can be
made *by* and *for* artists
to weave relationships
of mutual support.

Pollinator.coop has three staff members. Our sister organization, Minima.nyc, builds our tech.



Caroline Woolard (she/her)
Co-Director



Or Zubalsky (they/them)
Co-Director



Isaiah Madison (he/they)
Outreach + Operations



Martin Pettis (he/they)
Repair + Mediation Contract



Todd Galloway (he/him)
Product at Minima.nyc



Mechu Rapela (she/her)
Special Projects Contract

Agenda

5 minutes

Welcome + Arrivals

5 minutes

Why did we run this pilot?

5 minutes

Who is behind Pollinator?

15 minutes

Participants Share: What worked? What could we shift?

15 minutes

What did we learn?

5 minutes

Where are we going?

10 minutes

Questions



**“I’m in a circle with a person I’ve
been trying to collaborate with
for two years!**

The magic is working. Thank you. 🙏”

-Musa Murchison, Pilot Participant



“Thanks so much for the gift of Pollinator. It is a dream to connect with other artists about our practice and the platform itself is beautiful and easeful to use.”

- Aisha 'Ish' Al-Hurra / Intelligent Mischief, Pilot Participant

Who wants to share?

Agenda

5 minutes

Welcome + Arrivals

5 minutes

Why did we run this pilot?

5 minutes

Who is behind Pollinator?

15 minutes

Participants Share: What worked? What can we shift?

15 minutes

What did we learn?

5 minutes

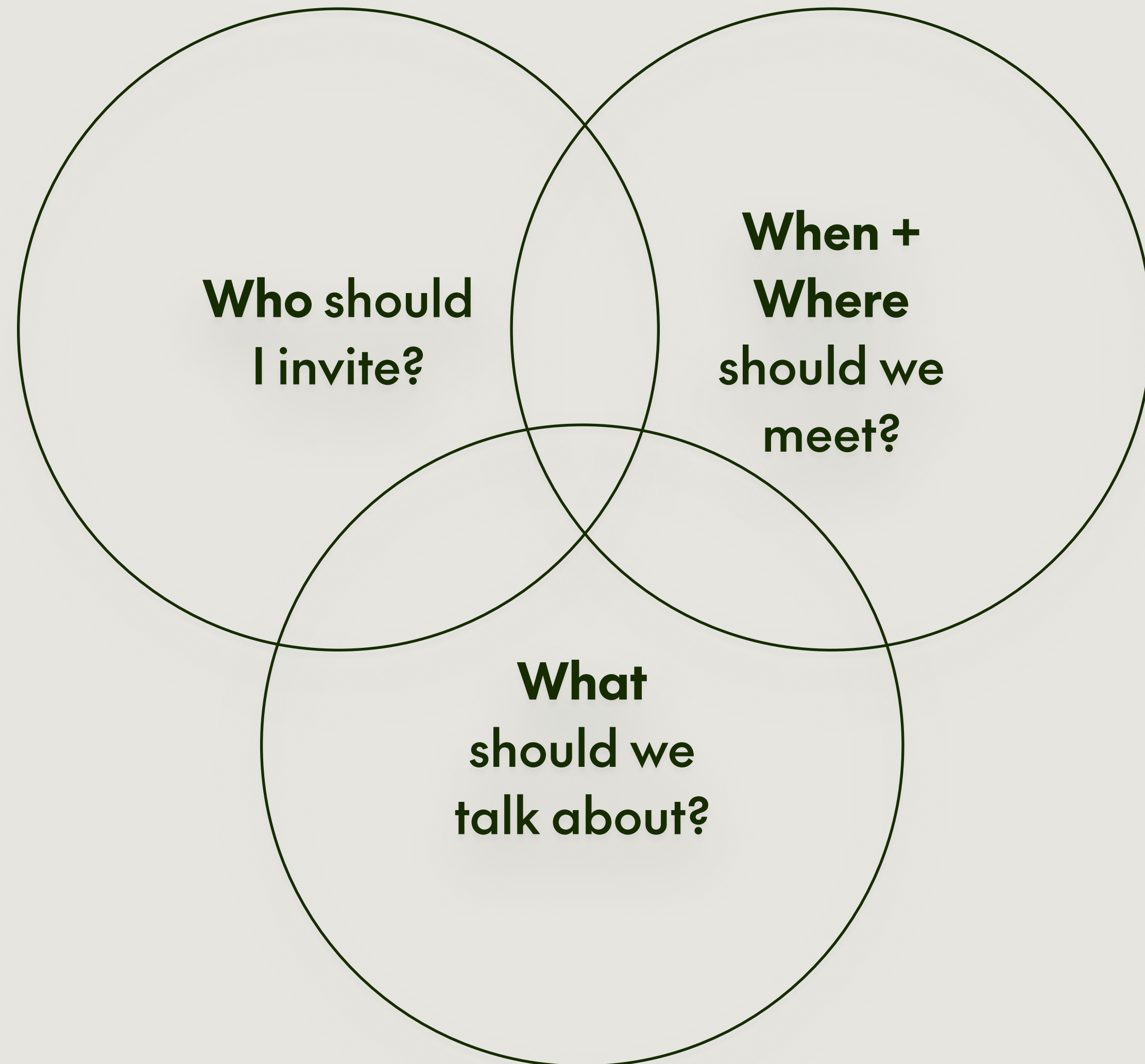
Where are we going?

10 minutes

Questions

Have you ever wanted to
gather a group of people?

You might wonder...



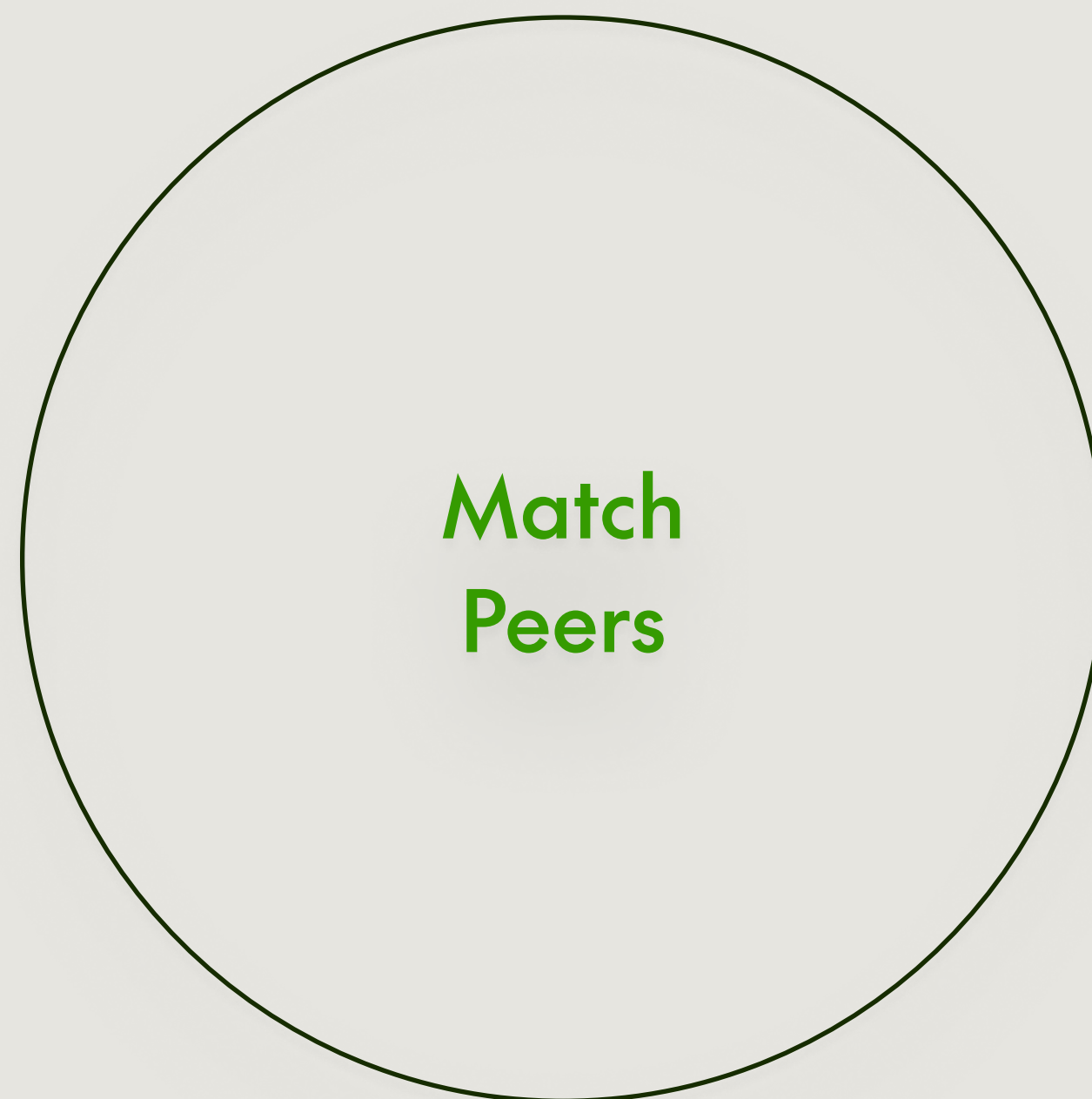
Pollinator Pilot asked...

How can we strengthen and deepen networks?

We tested...

**Engaging networks
across art, technology,
and social impact**

How can we strengthen and deepen networks?

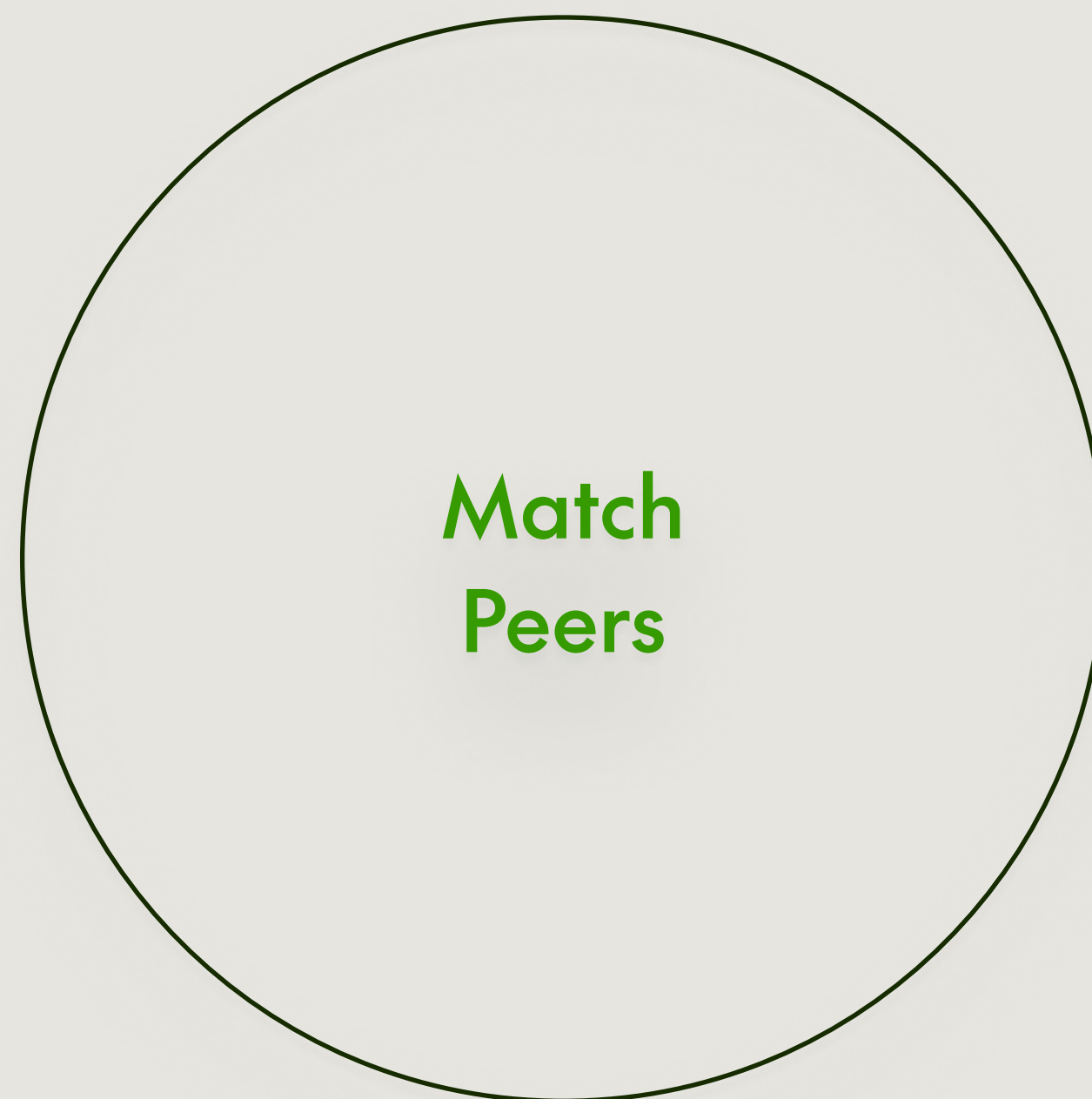


We tested...

Engaging networks across
art, technology, and social
impact

matching aligned
peers

How can we strengthen and deepen networks?



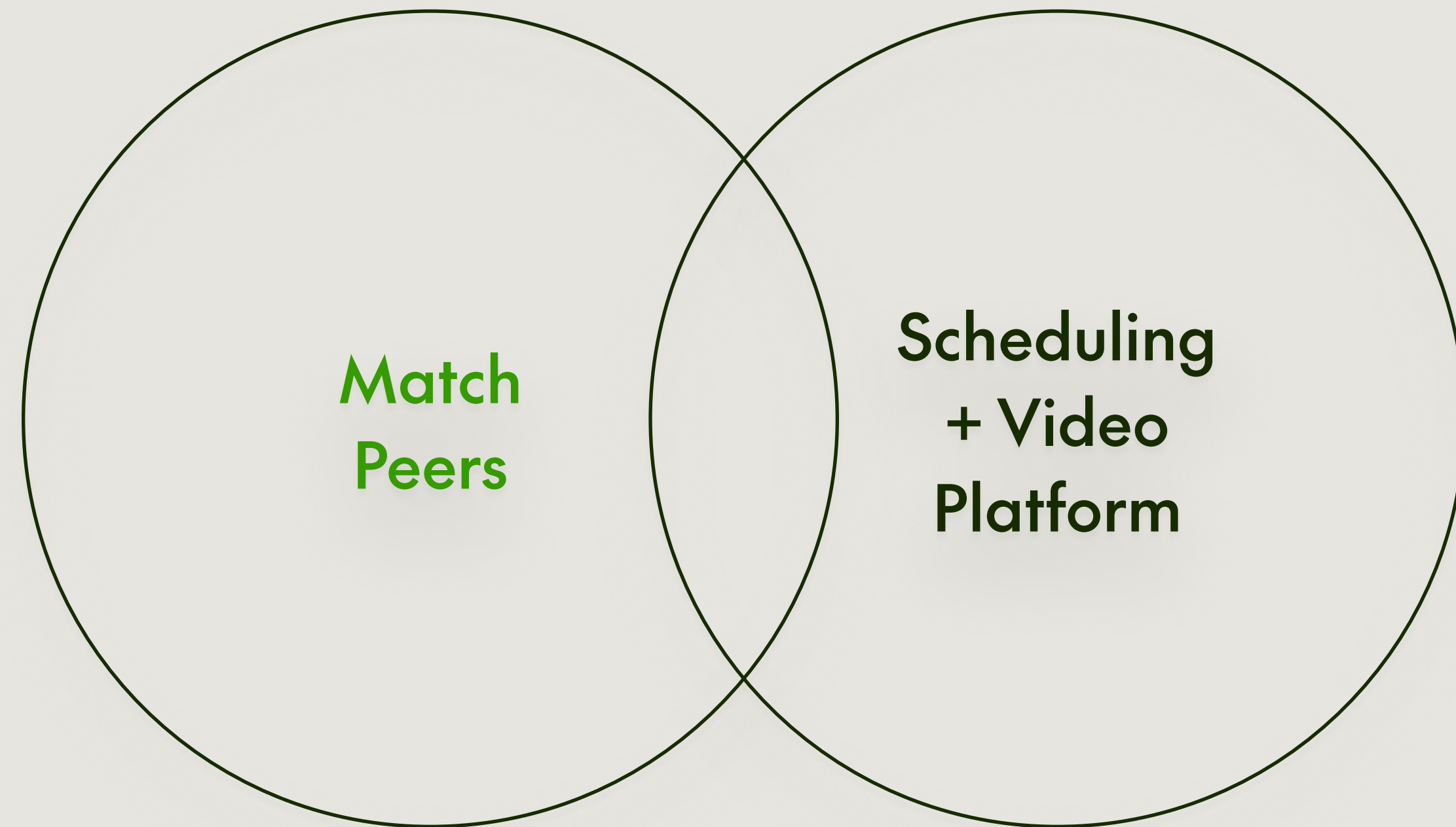
We tested...

Engaging networks across
art, technology, and social
impact

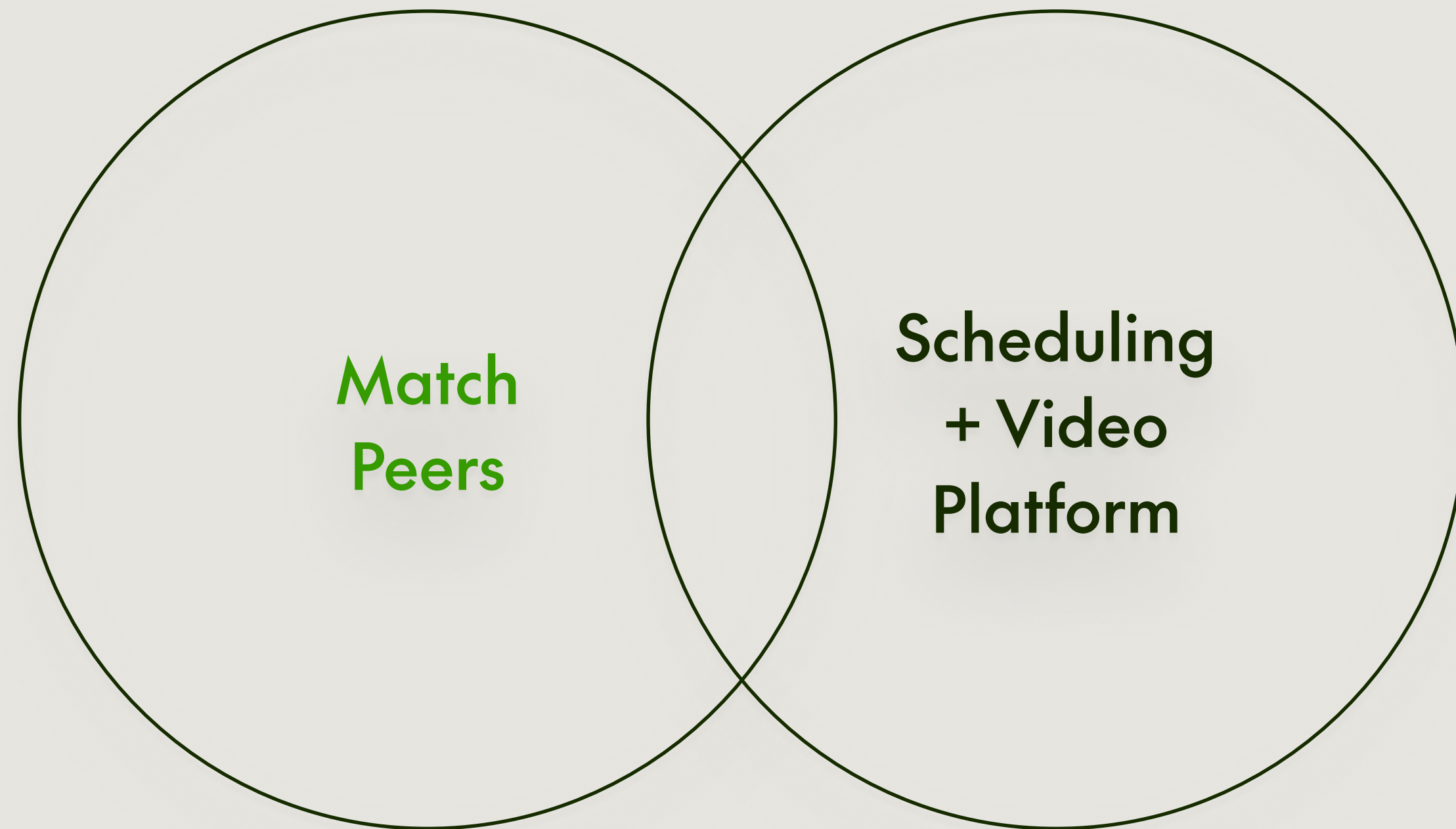
matching aligned
peers

scheduling groups in
advance

How can we strengthen and deepen networks?



How can we strengthen and deepen networks?



We tested...

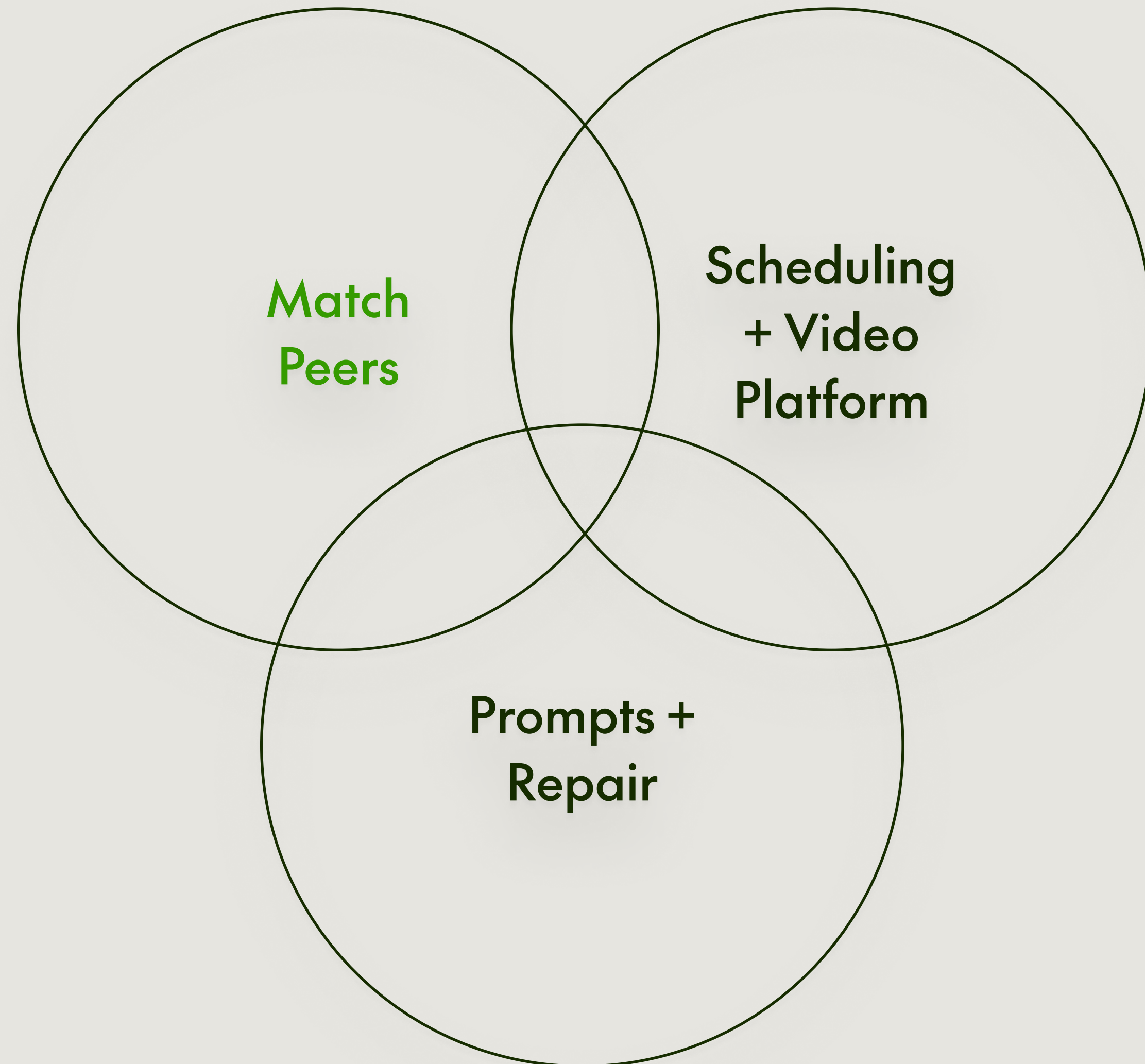
Engaging networks across
art, technology, and social
impact

matching aligned
peers

scheduling groups in
advance

and offering a secure,
custom video platform

How can we strengthen and deepen networks?



We tested...

Engaging networks across
art, technology, and social
impact

matching aligned
peers

scheduling groups in
advance

and offering a secure,
custom video platform

with clear prompts and a
space for repair.

We tested...

Engaging networks across
art, technology, and social
impact

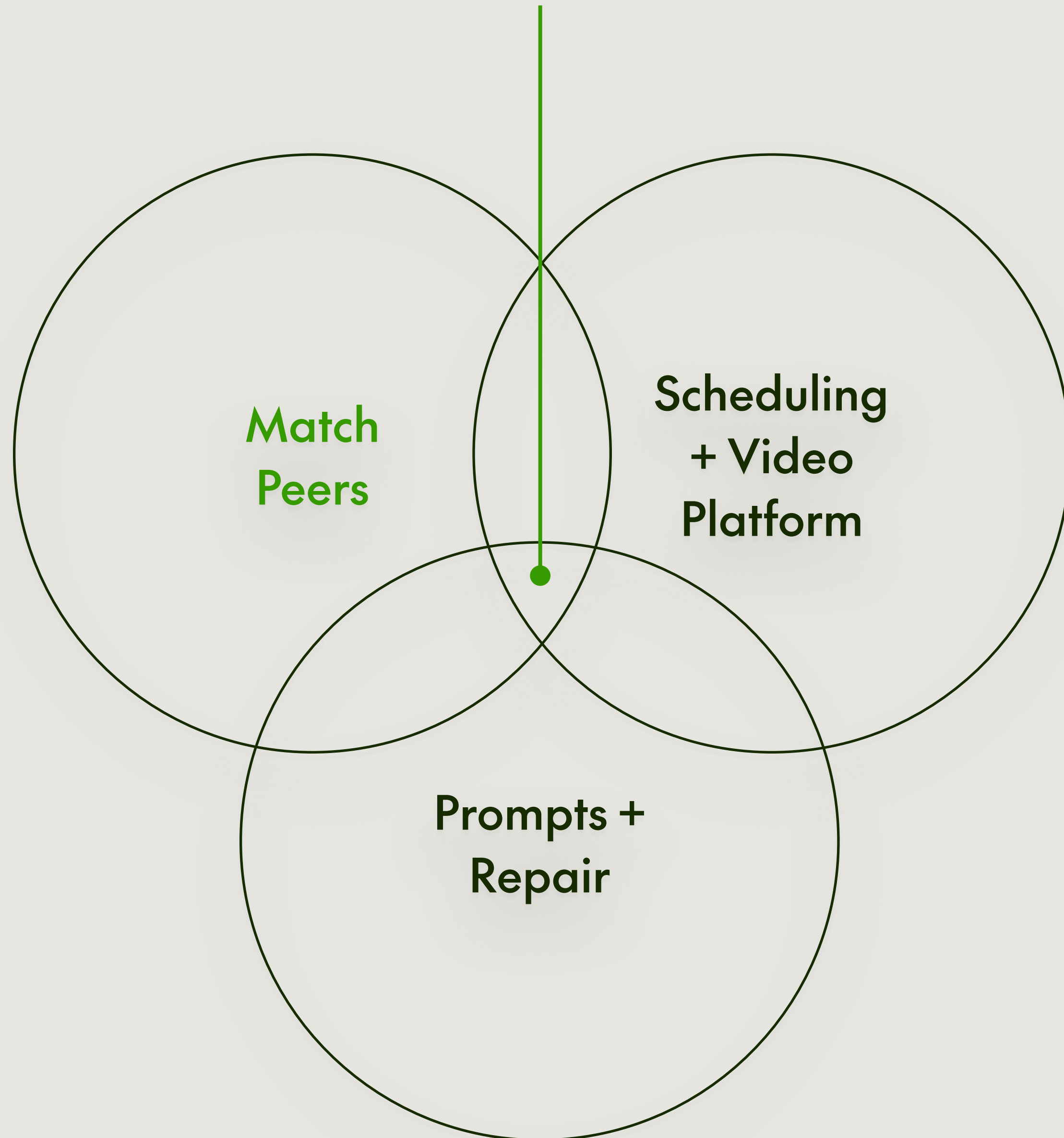
matching aligned
peers

scheduling groups in
advance

and offering a secure,
custom video

with clear prompts and a
space for repair.

Stronger Cultural Ecosystem



TL;DR - summary:

1.

Continue to match peers, with extra weight to affinity and career stage.

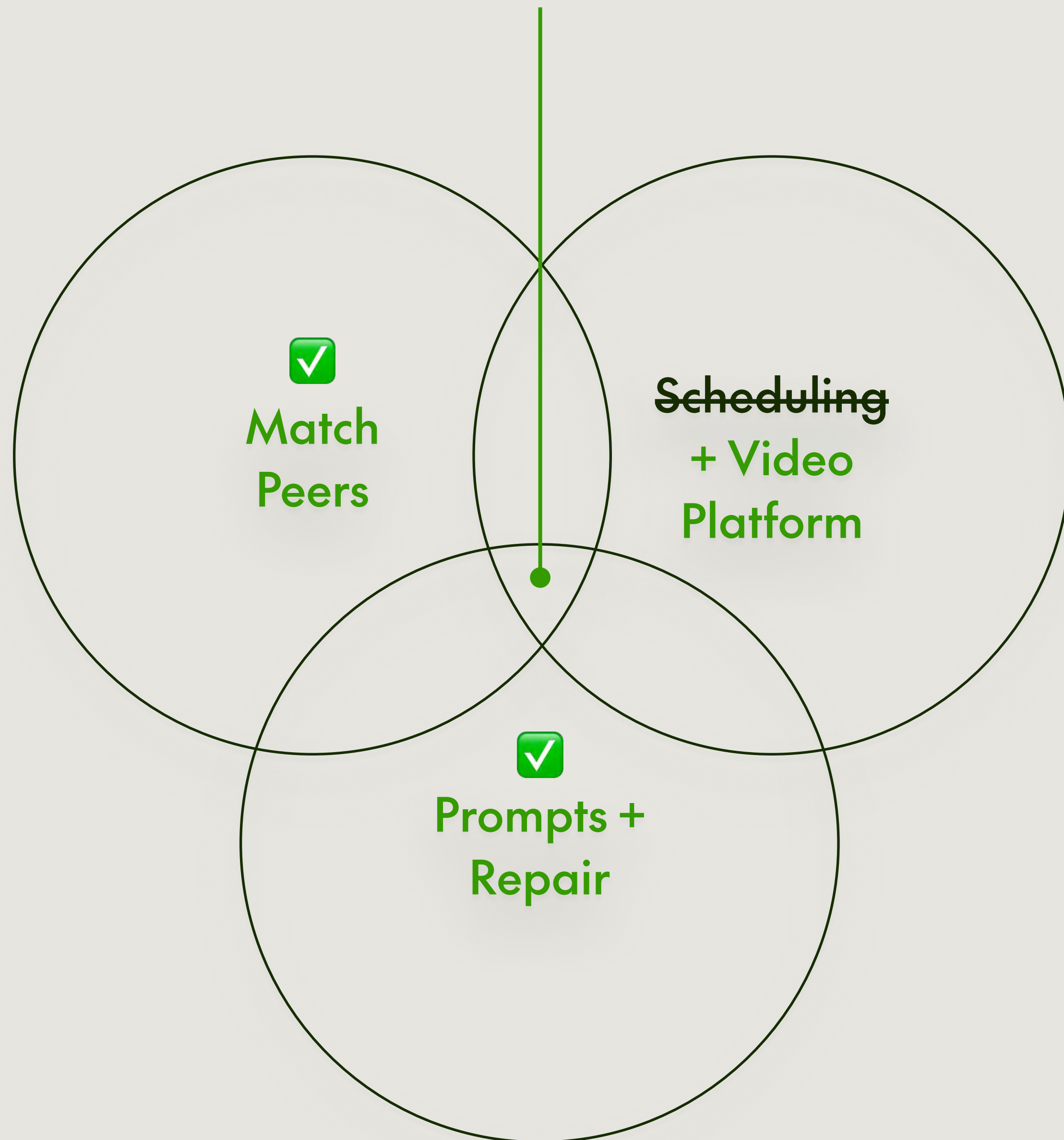
2.

Increase attendance by offering one-off meetings and make set times for the 5-week offering.

3.

Refine video, prompts, and simplify curriculum. Offer additional types of meetings.

Stronger Cultural Ecosystem



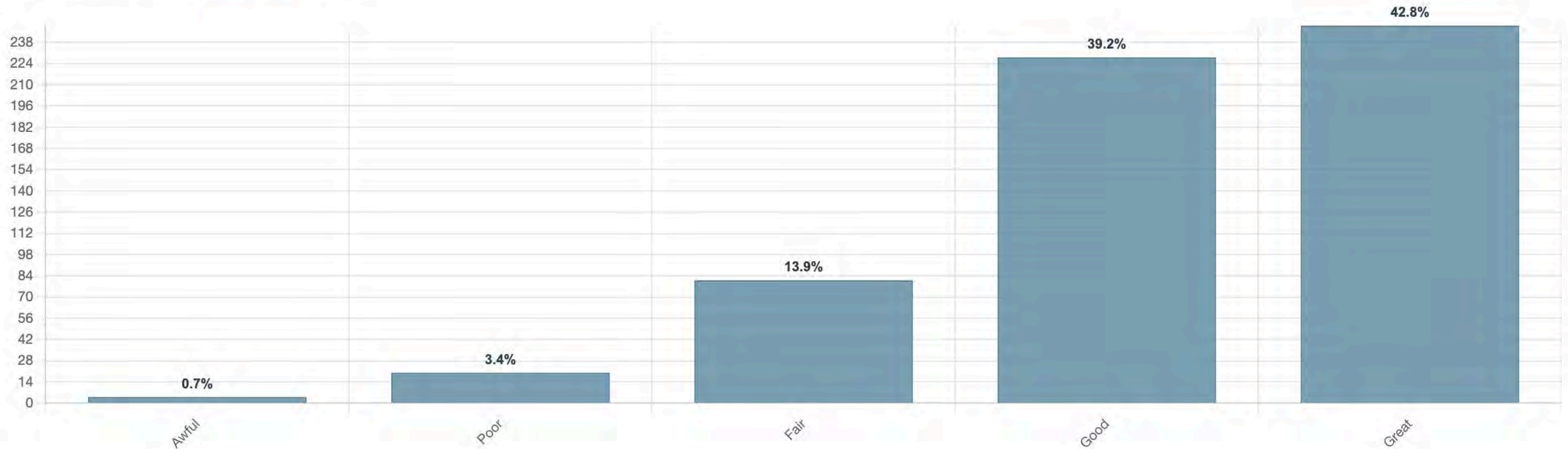
Here is what we found.

82% said Pollinator was good or great.

Multiple Choice Results

Overall, how would you rate your Pollinator experience?

Total Responses: 582 Average: 4.2 σ : 0.85



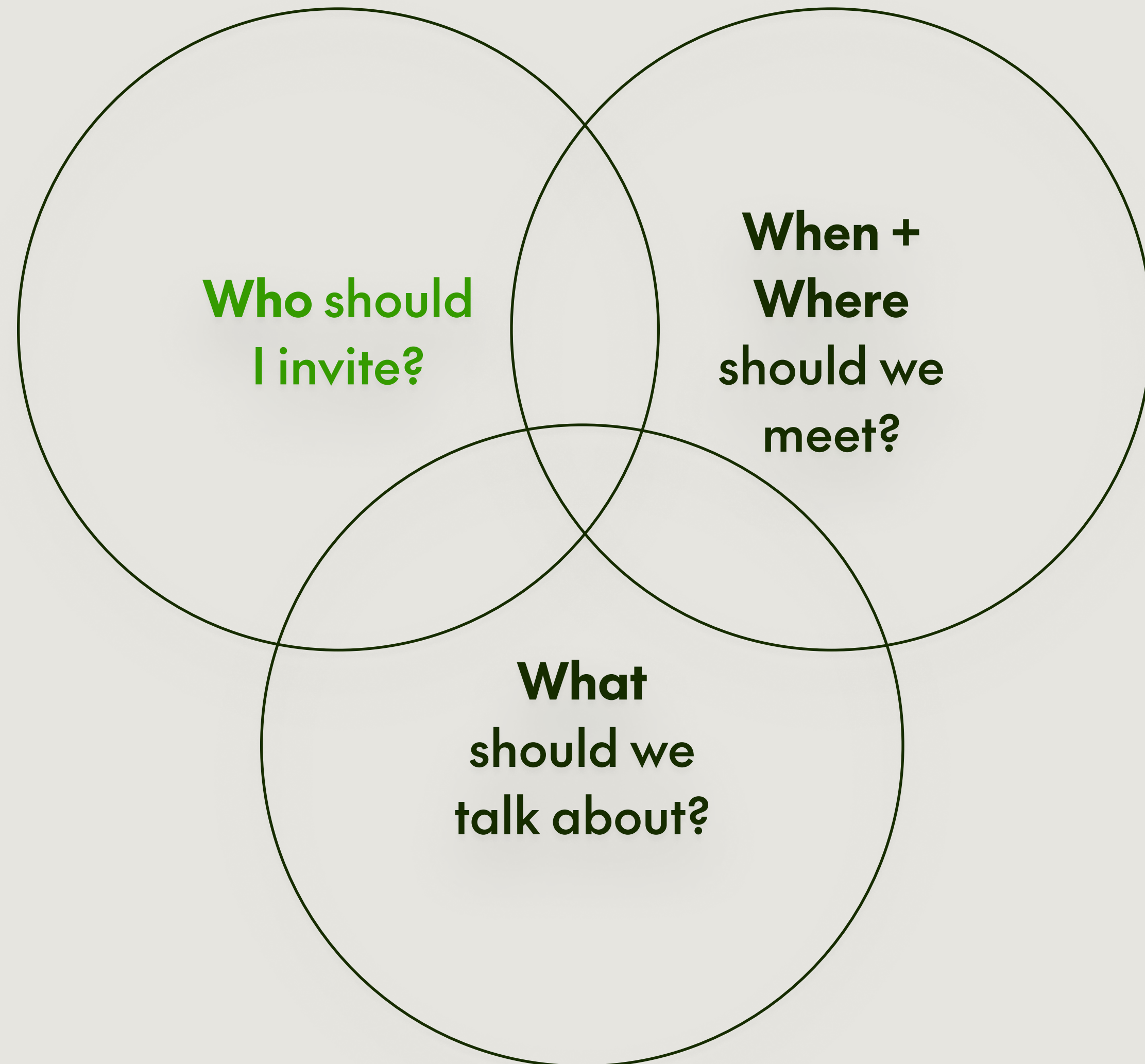


Question 1 of 3:

**Who should we
invite to gather?**

Have you ever wanted to gather a group of people?

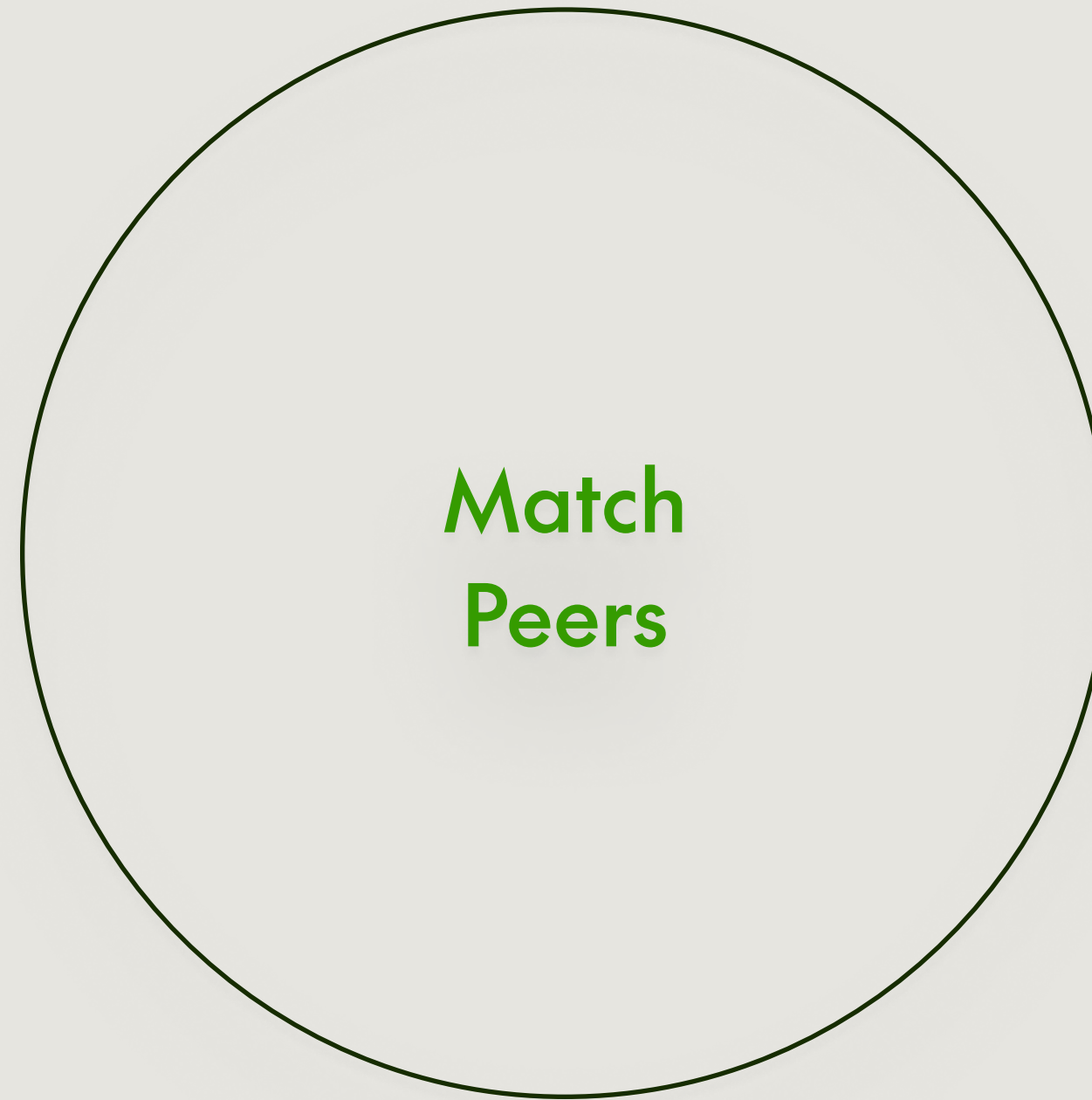
You might wonder...



Let's get into the details.

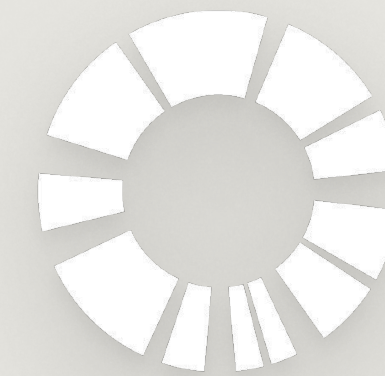
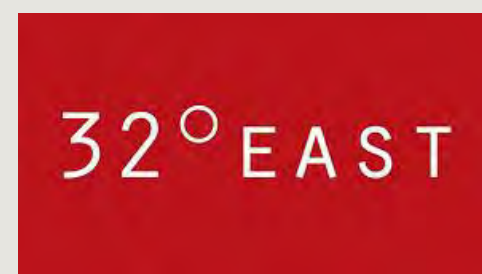
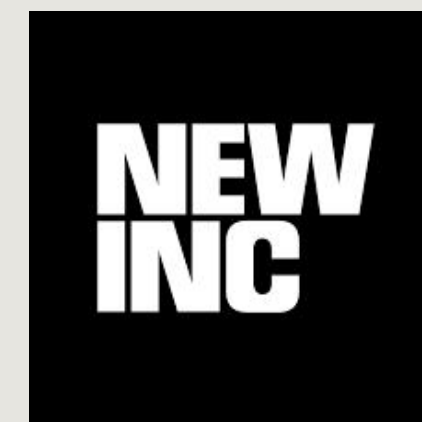
**Engaging networks
across art, technology,
and social impact**

How can we strengthen and deepen networks?



Engaging networks across art, technology, and social impact

We believe that people will show up when they are invited by institutions that they know and respect.



Engaging networks across art, technology, and social impact

KEEP

- Continue to invite people from vetted networks in 2026.
- Continue to allow participants to invite friends.
- Continue to keep Pollinator free for participants.

ADD

- Allow participants to invite *more than one person.*
- **What else? Email us if you would like to be considered for feedback sessions.**

Engaging networks across
art, technology, and social
impact

matching
aligned
peers

What is your top reason for participating in Pollinator's five-week program?*

- Complete a project
- Learn peer coaching
- Dedicate time to my practice
- Expand & deepen my network
- Apply for something (grant, program, etc)
- Develop a workshop (class, curriculum, etc.)
- Work on a business plan or long-term vision

1 of 7

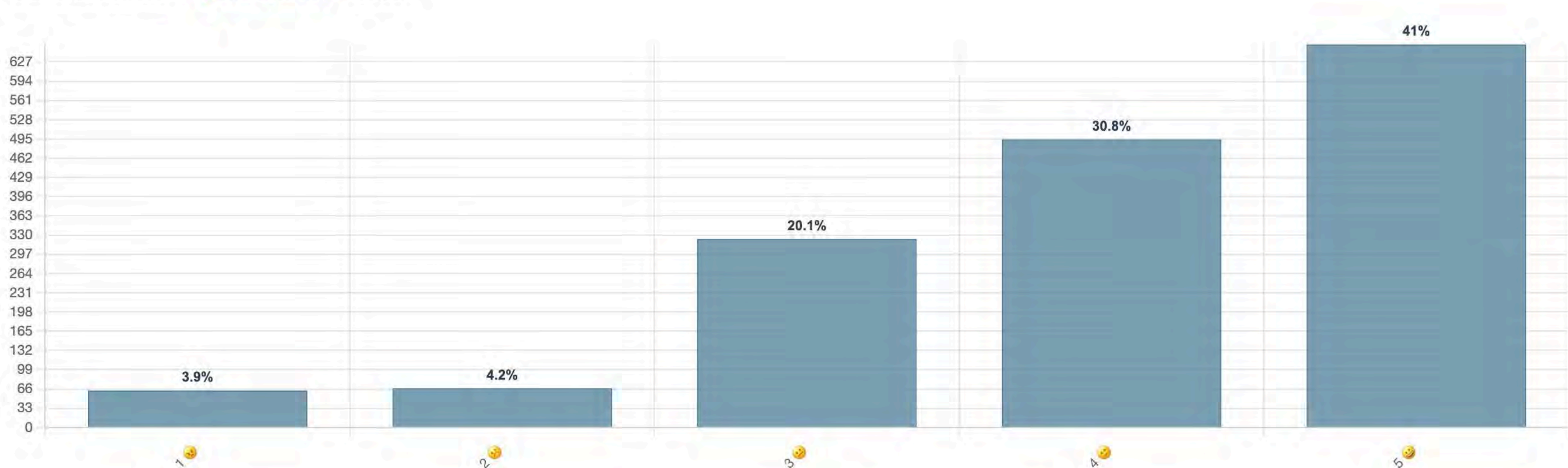
We believe that peers who are matched by organization type, career stage, and affinity will want to connect.

Here is what we found.

92% said: "Yes, I am expanding and deepening my network via my peer circle."

I am expanding and deepening my network via my peer circle.

Total Responses: 1604  Average: 4.01 σ : 1.06

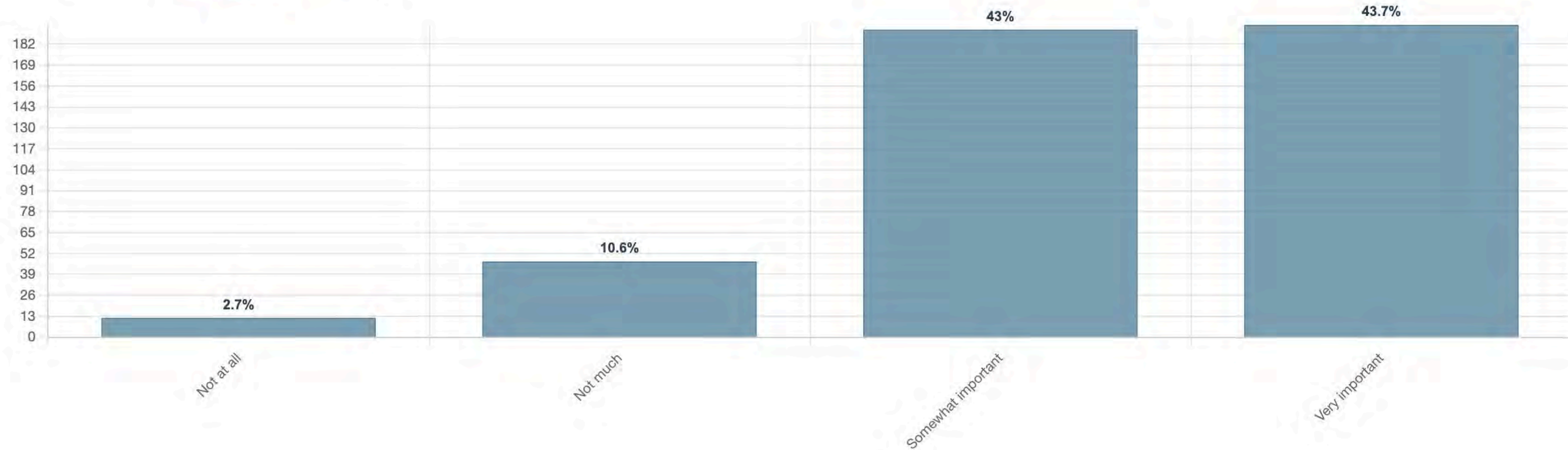


Here is what we found.

97% like to be matched with participants with similar ambition, prestige, or skill.

How important is meeting people with similar ambition, prestige, or skill to you?

Total Responses: 444  Average: 3.28 σ : 0.76

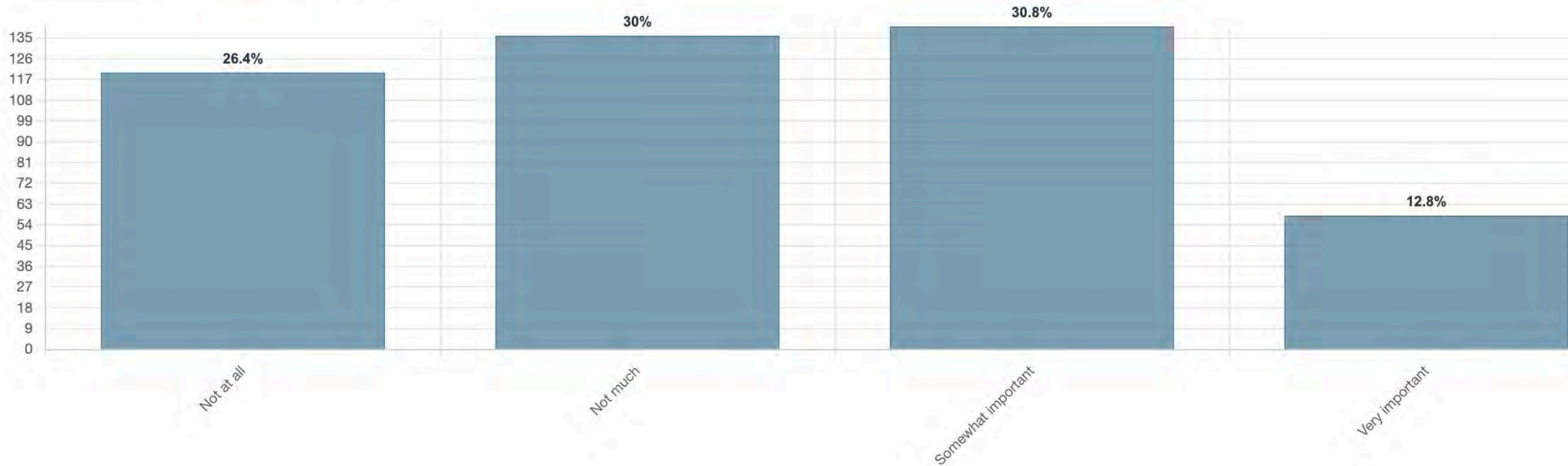


Here is what we found.

43% of respondents like to be matched based on affinity groups.

How important is meeting people with similar affinity (race, gender, disability, etc.) to you?

Total Responses: 454  Average: 2.3 σ : 1.0



Here is the network we started weaving.



ACRE Data

57 participants from **15** creative disciplines connected to alumni from the following organizations:

Foundation for Contemporary Arts

Map Fund

Art Omi

Fractured Atlas

NEW INC

Studios at MASS MoCA

Minneapolis College of Art and Design

Jerome Foundation

Ox-Bow School of Art & Artists' Residency

Artists Thrive

Making & Being

MacDowell

Concordia University

Assets for Artists

Core Residency Program

The Laundromat Project

Headlands Center for the Arts

The Oxbow School

Wassaic Project

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Lydian Stater

More Art

Franklin Furnace

Hunter College

Art in Odd Places

Skowhegan

Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University

AICAD

Gudskul

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Grand Central Art Center

University of North Carolina

Triangle Arts Association

Younger than Beyoncé

Artadia

Flux Factory

Loghaven Artist Residency

Engaging networks across
art, technology, and social
impact

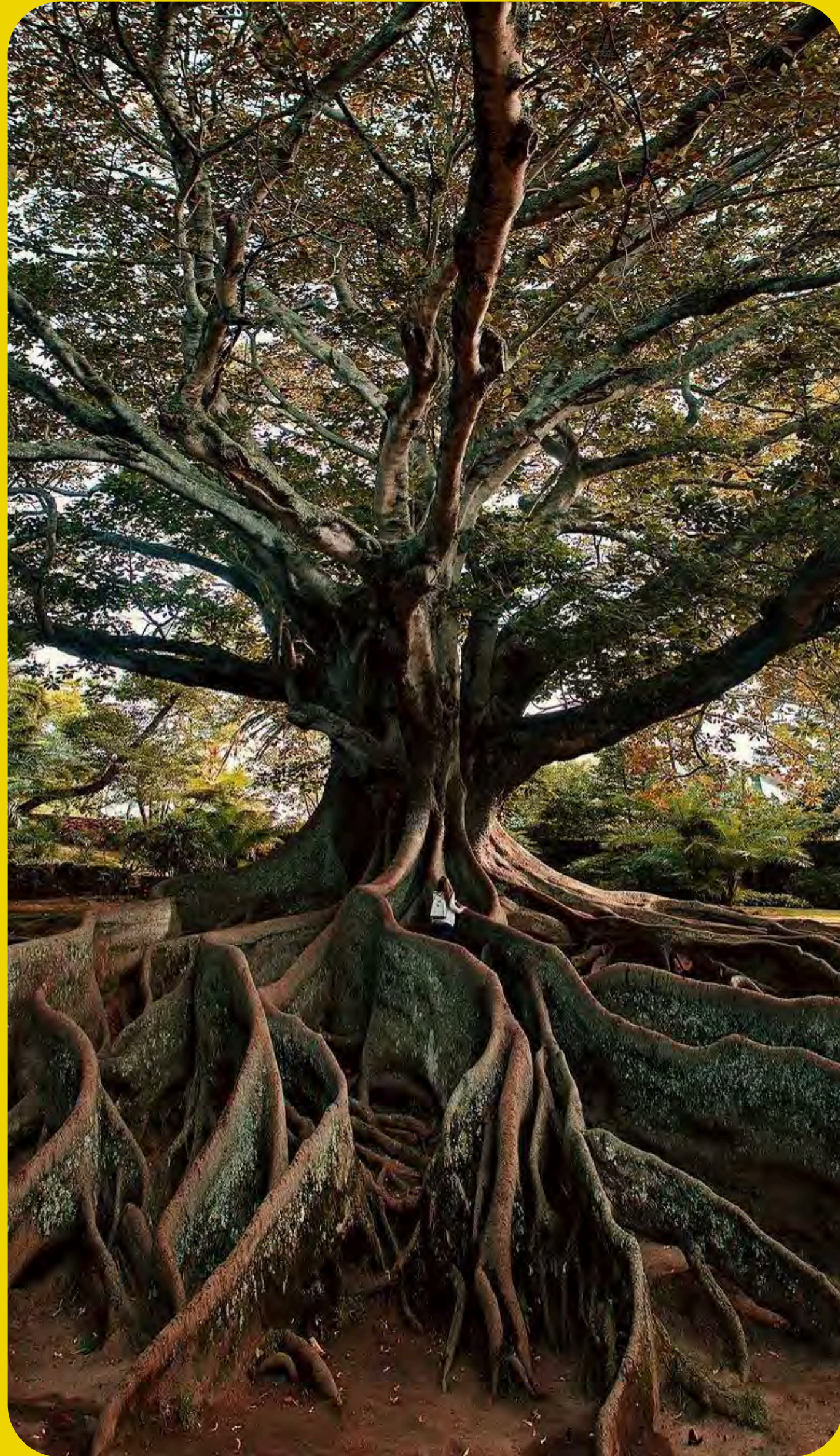
**matching
aligned
peers**

KEEP

- Matching works!

ADD

- Make career stage the strongest criterion for matching, followed by affinity?
- Allow participants to set their own preferences for matching in 2026 or 2027.
- What else? Email us if you would like to be considered for feedback sessions.



**Any questions or comments
about matching and the
network we are building?**



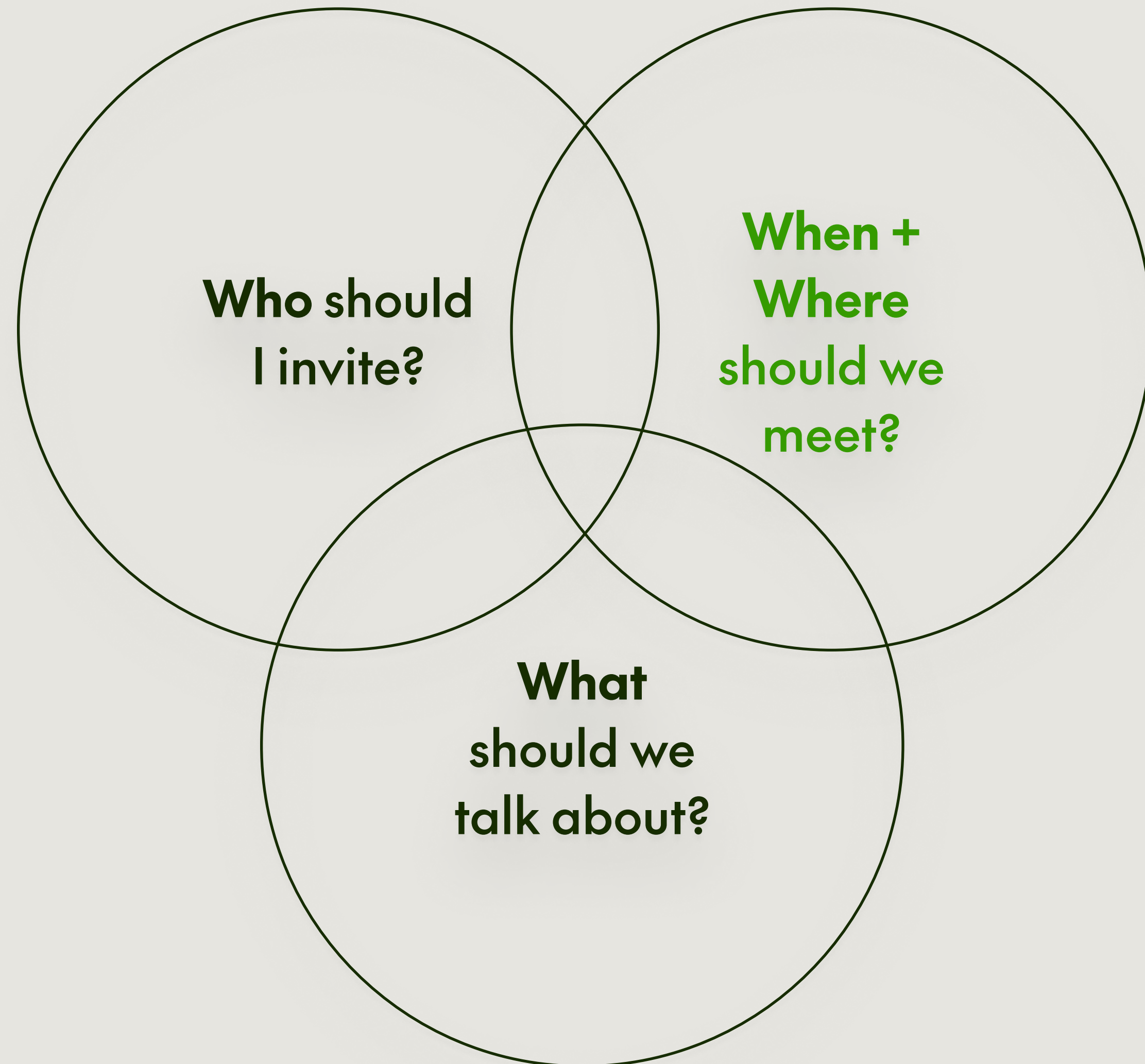
Question

2 of 3:

**When and where
should we meet?**

Have you ever wanted to
gather a group of people?

You might wonder...



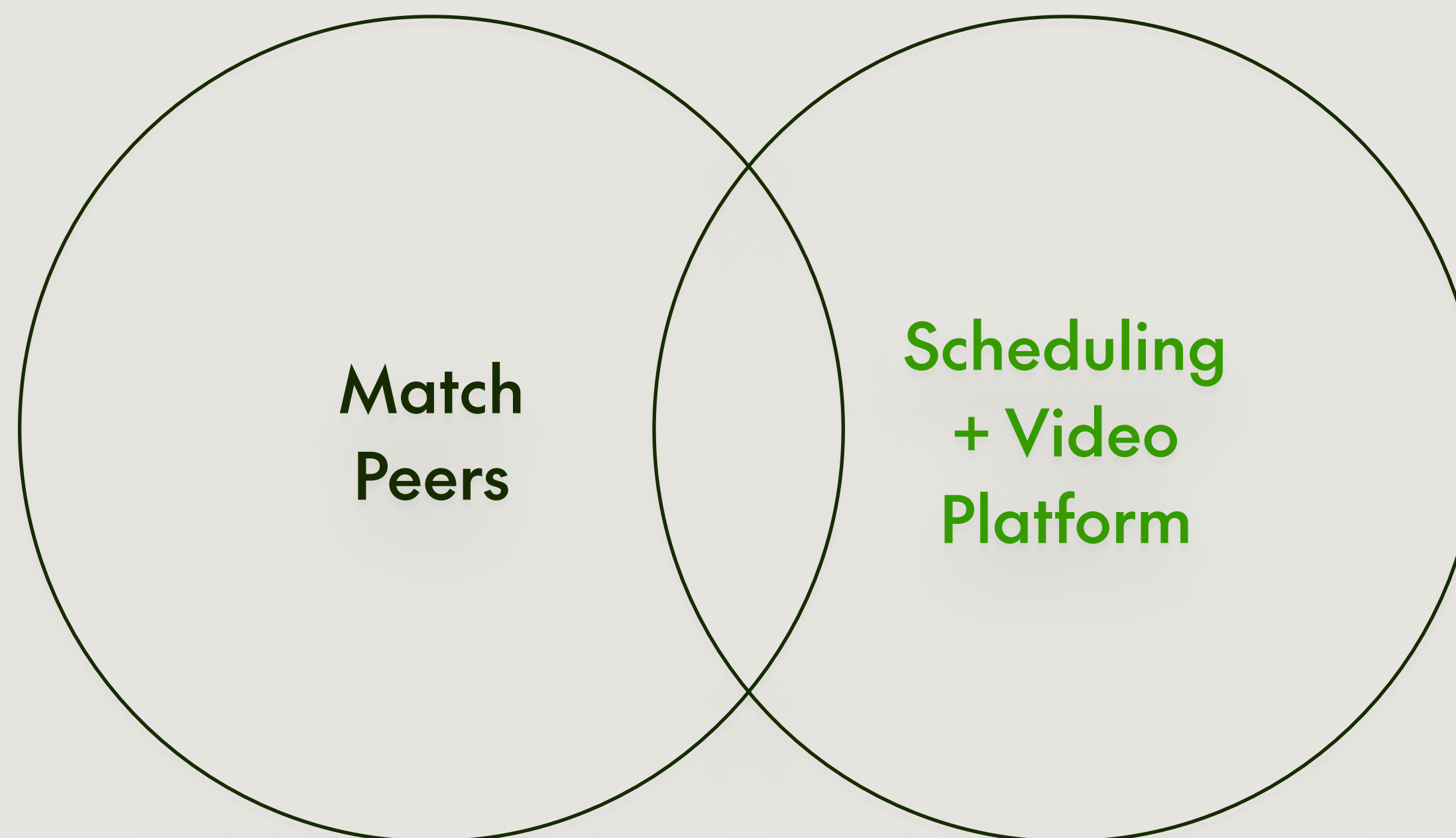
We tested...

Engaging networks across art, technology, and social impact

matching aligned peers

scheduling groups in advance and offering custom, secure video

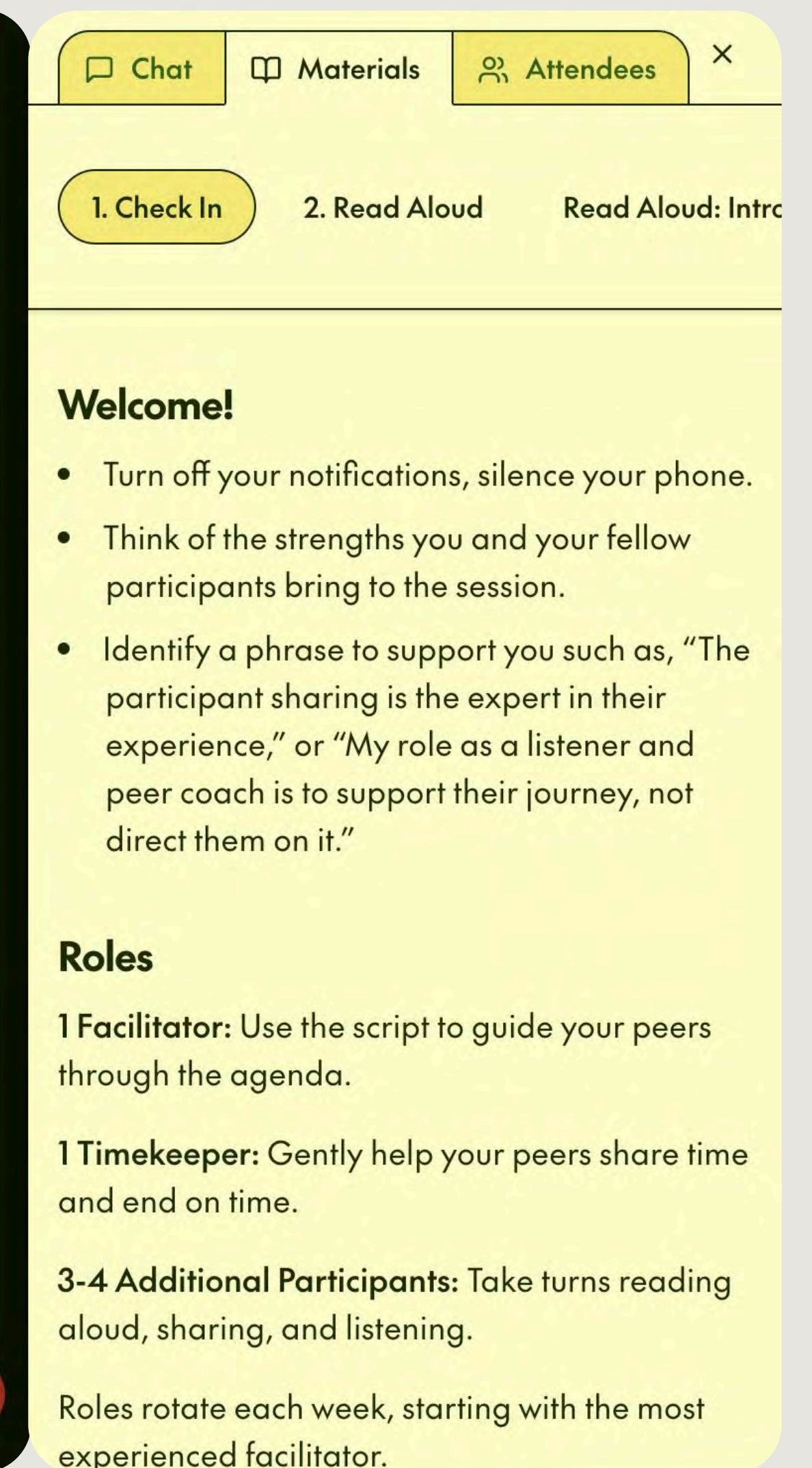
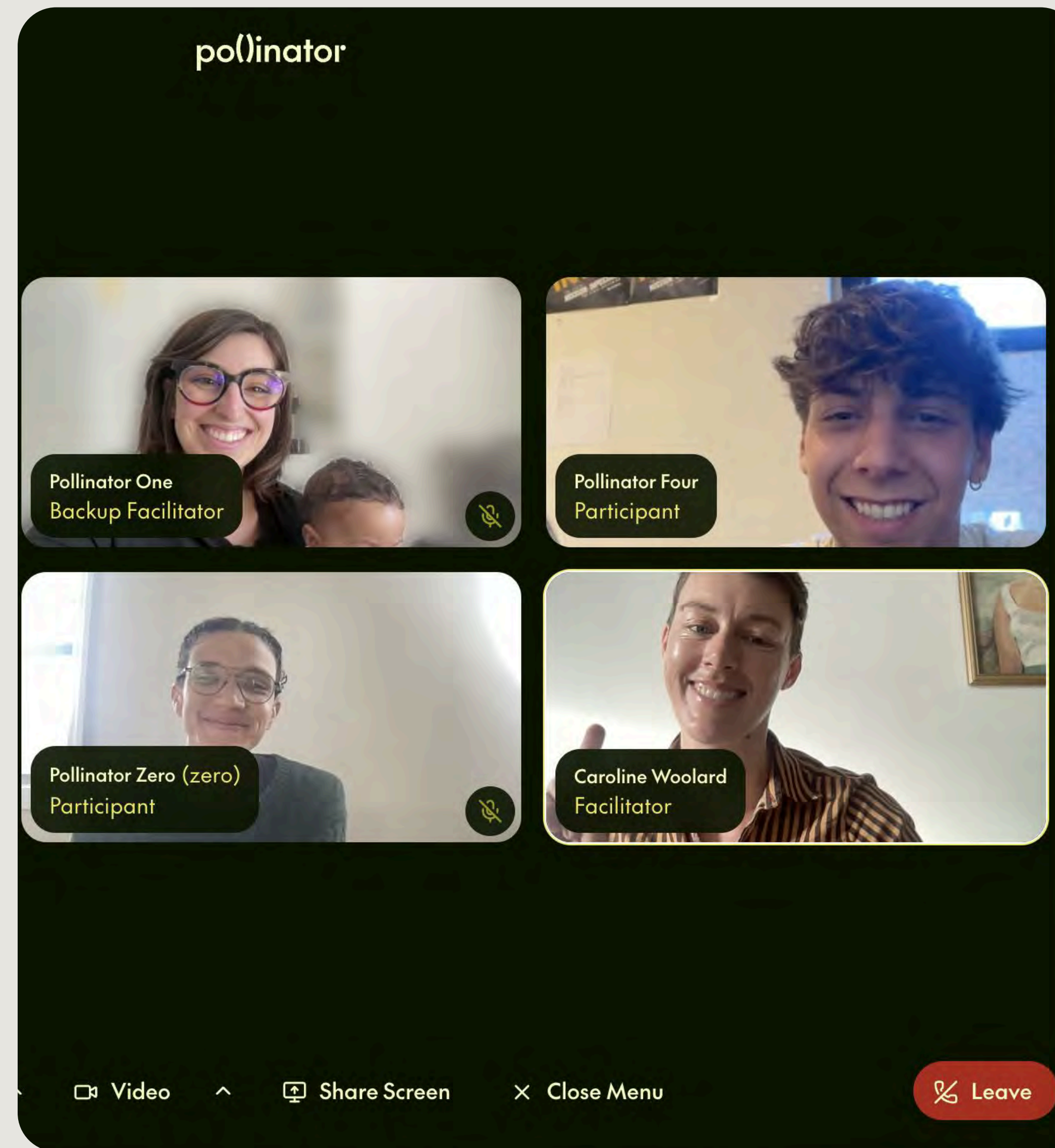
How can we strengthen and deepen networks?



Engaging networks across
art, technology, and social
impact

matching aligned
peers

scheduling
groups in
advance with
custom video



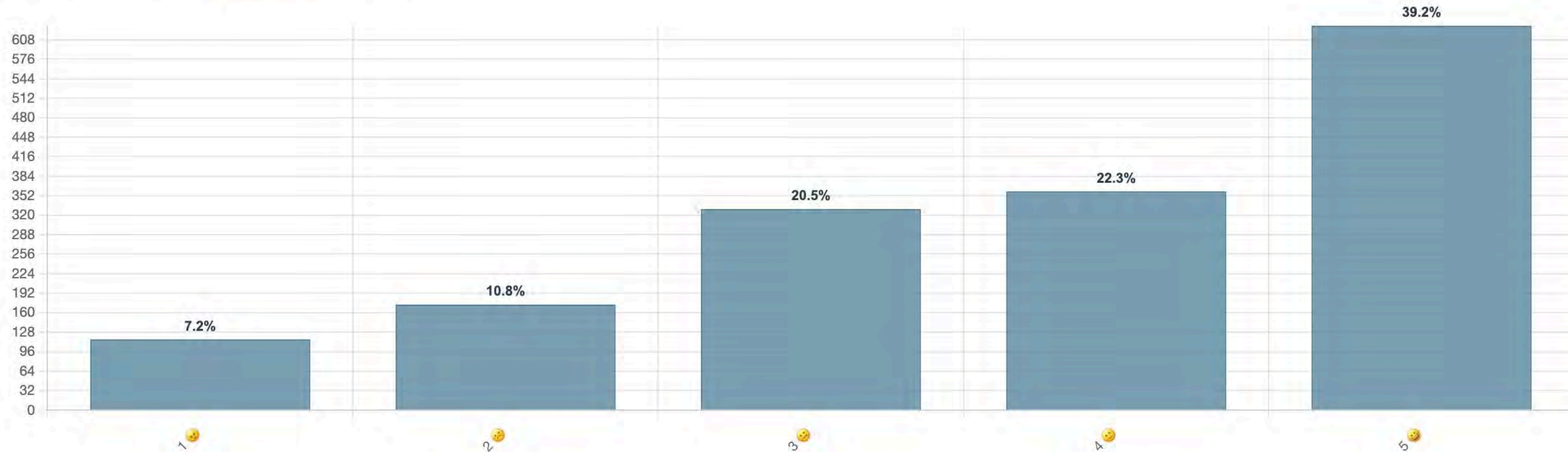
We believe that people want secure video to connect today.

Here is what we found.

82% of respondents (1,609 participants) said the tech worked well for them.

The Pollinator tech worked well for me.

Total Responses: 1609 Average: 3.76 σ : 1.27



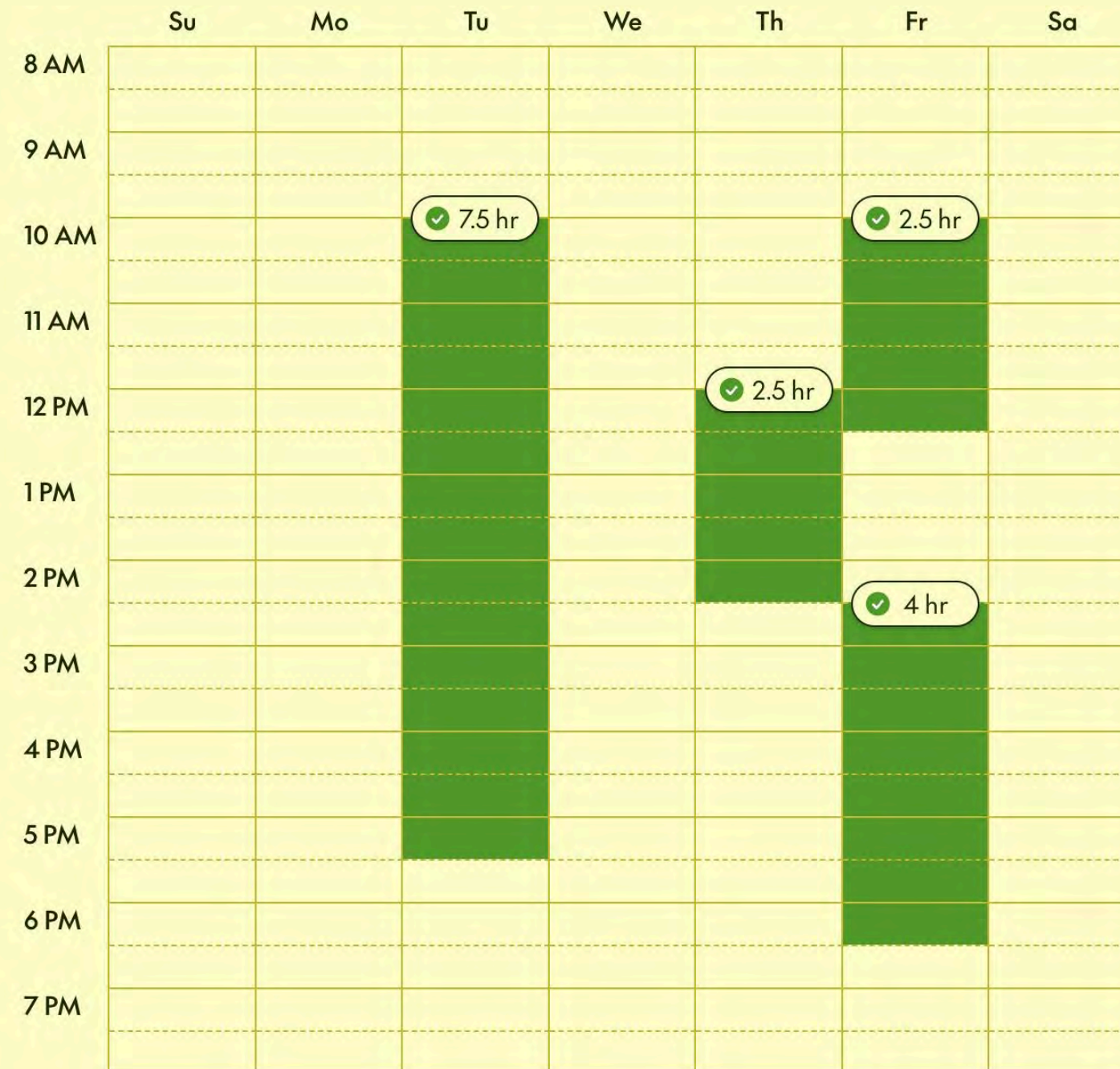
Engaging networks across art, technology, and social impact

matching aligned peers

scheduling groups in advance

Select Your Availability

Your participation in Pollinator is not confirmed until you choose at least 10 hours' worth of time slots when you will be available to meet with your peer circle this fall. To ensure you're successfully matched, we recommend choosing as many time slots as possible.



Timezone

(UTC-04:00) America/New_York

Instructions

Choose at least 10 hours over the week (in 2+ hour slots). For best matching results, select 14+ hours.

In the calendar grid, tap on a cell to indicate your availability. Tap and drag to select multiple slots. Slots are only valid when they are 2 hours or more.

You can add to or edit these selections up until September 9.

Requirements

- ✓ Select at least 10 hours when you'll be available.
- ✓ Get a better match: Add another 4 hours of availability (14 hours total).
- ✓ Get the best match possible: Select 14+ hours of availability.

Cancel

Save

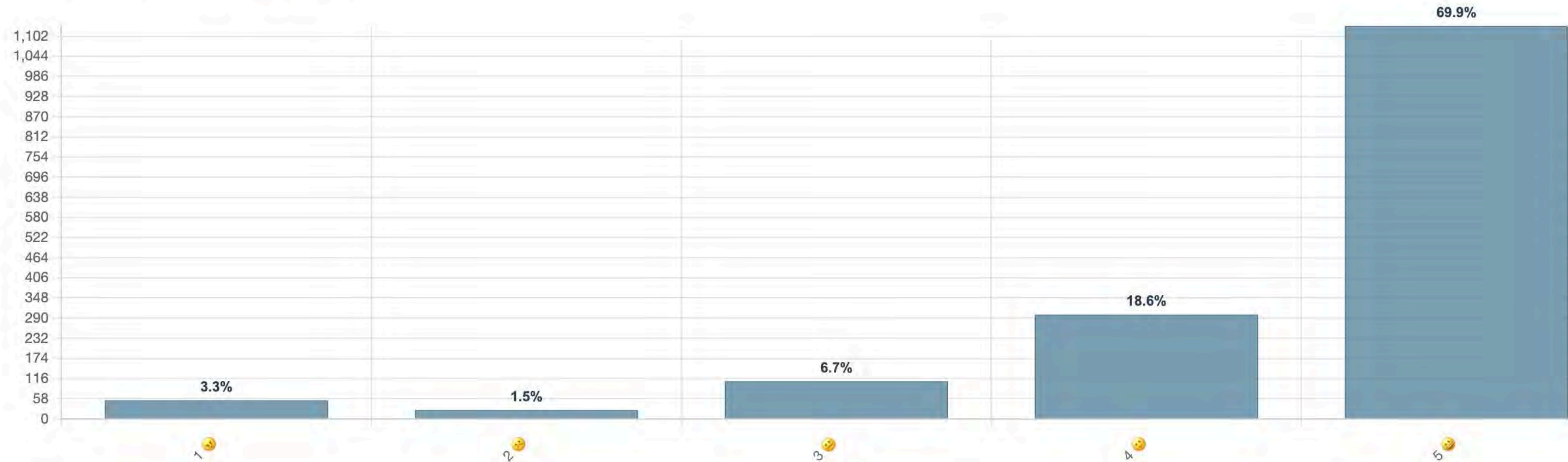
We believe that people can tell us when they are available and then show up.

Here is what we found.

1,617 participants agreed that “despite our busy lives, my group was engaged.”

Despite our busy lives, my group was engaged.

Total Responses: 1617 Average: 4.5 σ : 0.93



Here is what we found.

3,697 people applied and joined in *May*.

2,771 people shared their availability in *September*.

2,733 joined a peer circle in *October*.

33% completed the free, pilot program.

3 people showed up each week, on average, across all **450** peer circles.

Engaging networks across
art, technology, and social
impact

matching aligned
peers

scheduling
groups in
advance with
custom video

KEEP

- Custom, secure video that is made by and for us.
- **Nothing about scheduling! Sorry folks, scheduling in advance didn't work. This is the area that needs the most work.**



ADD

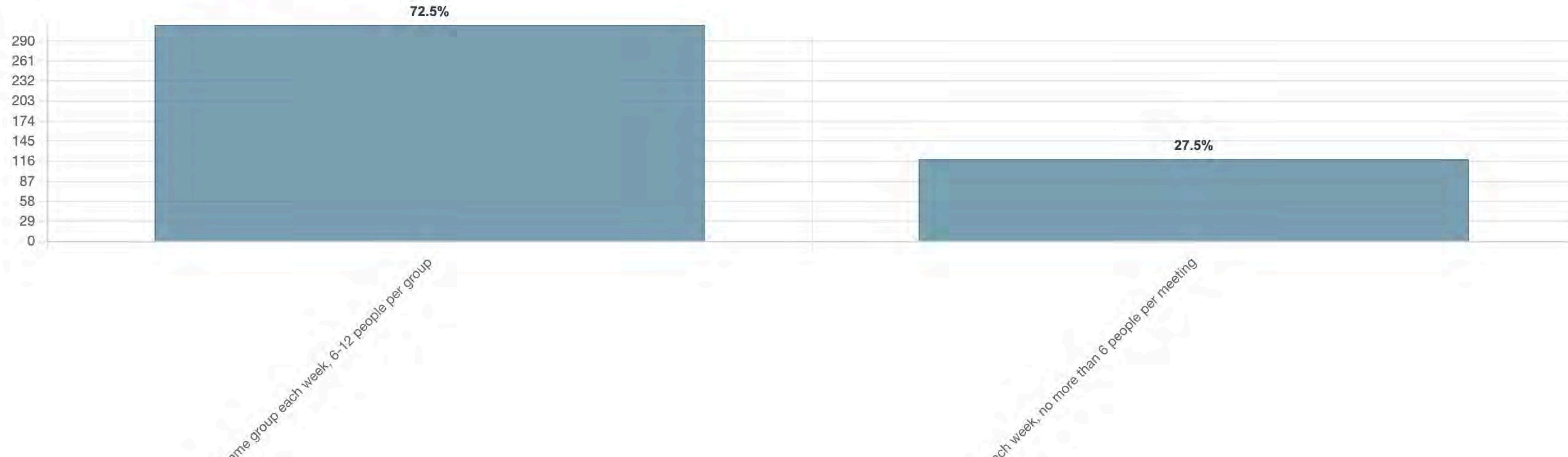
- Match people who show up with people who show up.
- Refine the video tool and permissions.
- Close the gap between enrollment and the program (May-October is too long).
- Set the days and times of meetings and people commit.
- **What else?**

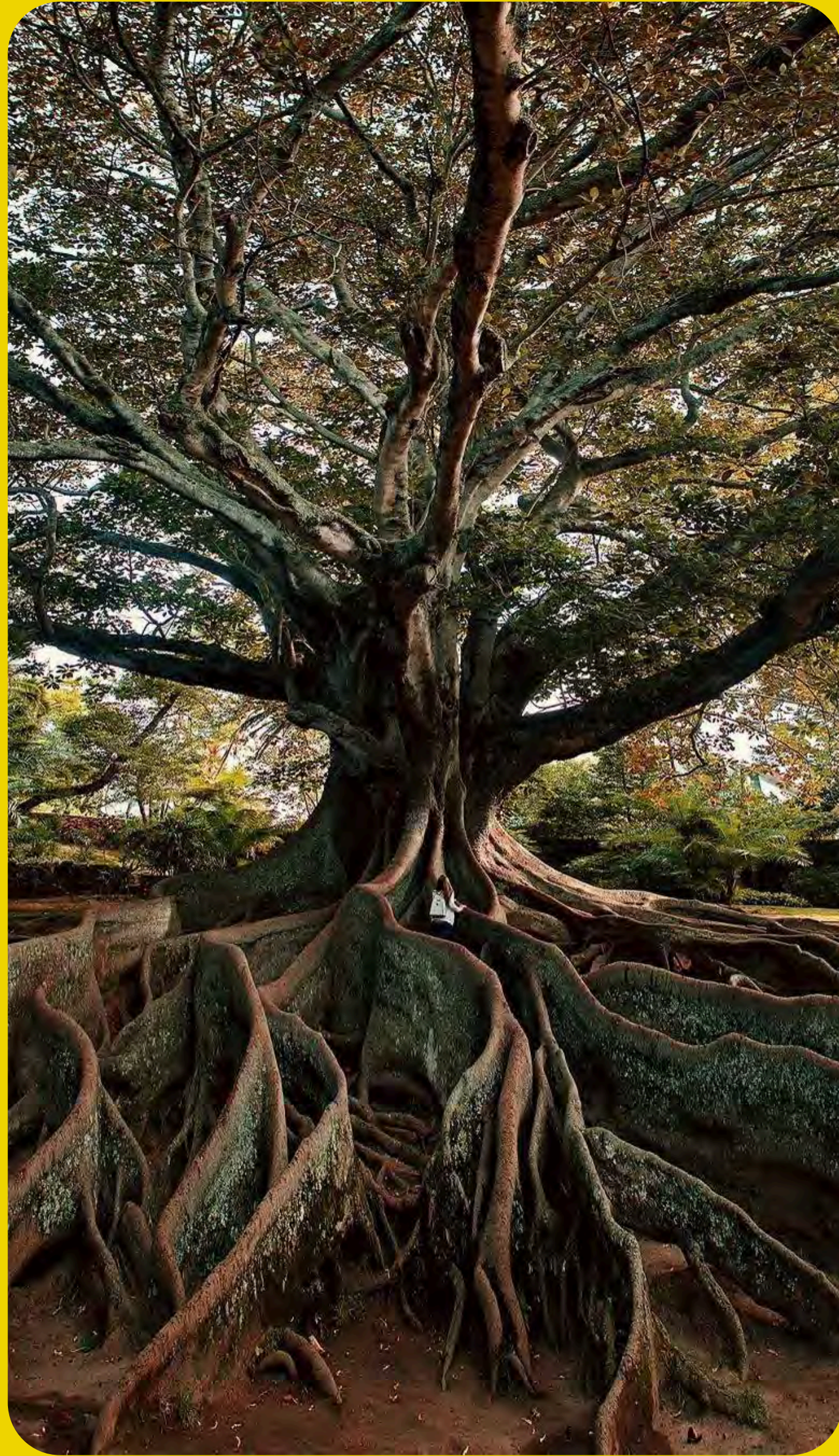
Here is what we found.

Should we do one-off networking events or five-week cycles? We will keep asking.

In order to ensure each peer circle has enough people each week, we are considering making the groups larger, or keeping the groups smaller, but matching you with a new mix of peers each time. Which do you prefer?

Total Responses: 432 Average: 1.28 σ : 0.45





**Any questions or comments
about the video platform or
scheduling?**

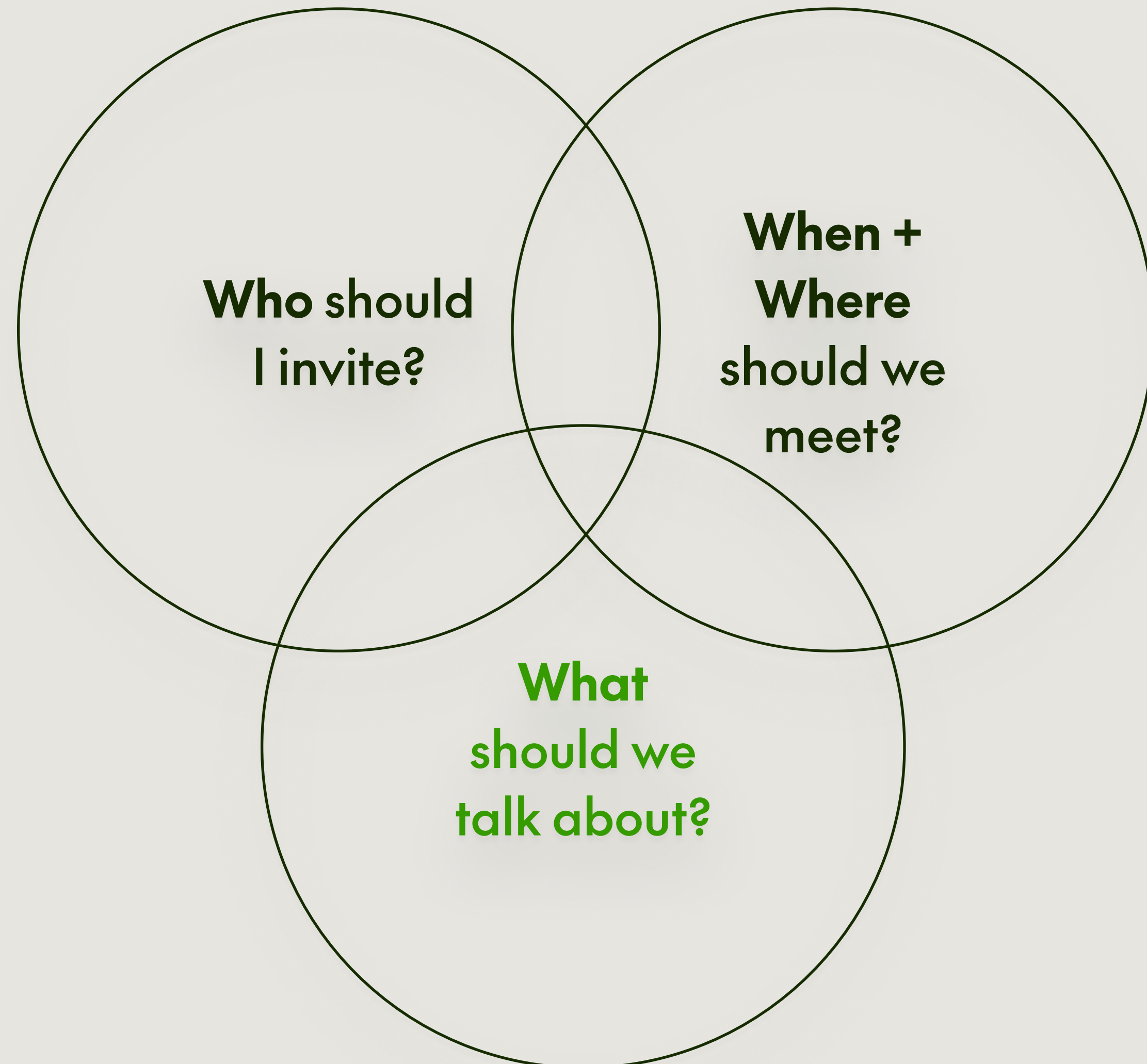


Question 3 of 3:

**What should we
talk about?**

Have you ever wanted to
gather a group of people?

You might wonder...



We tested...

Engaging networks across
art, technology, and social
impact

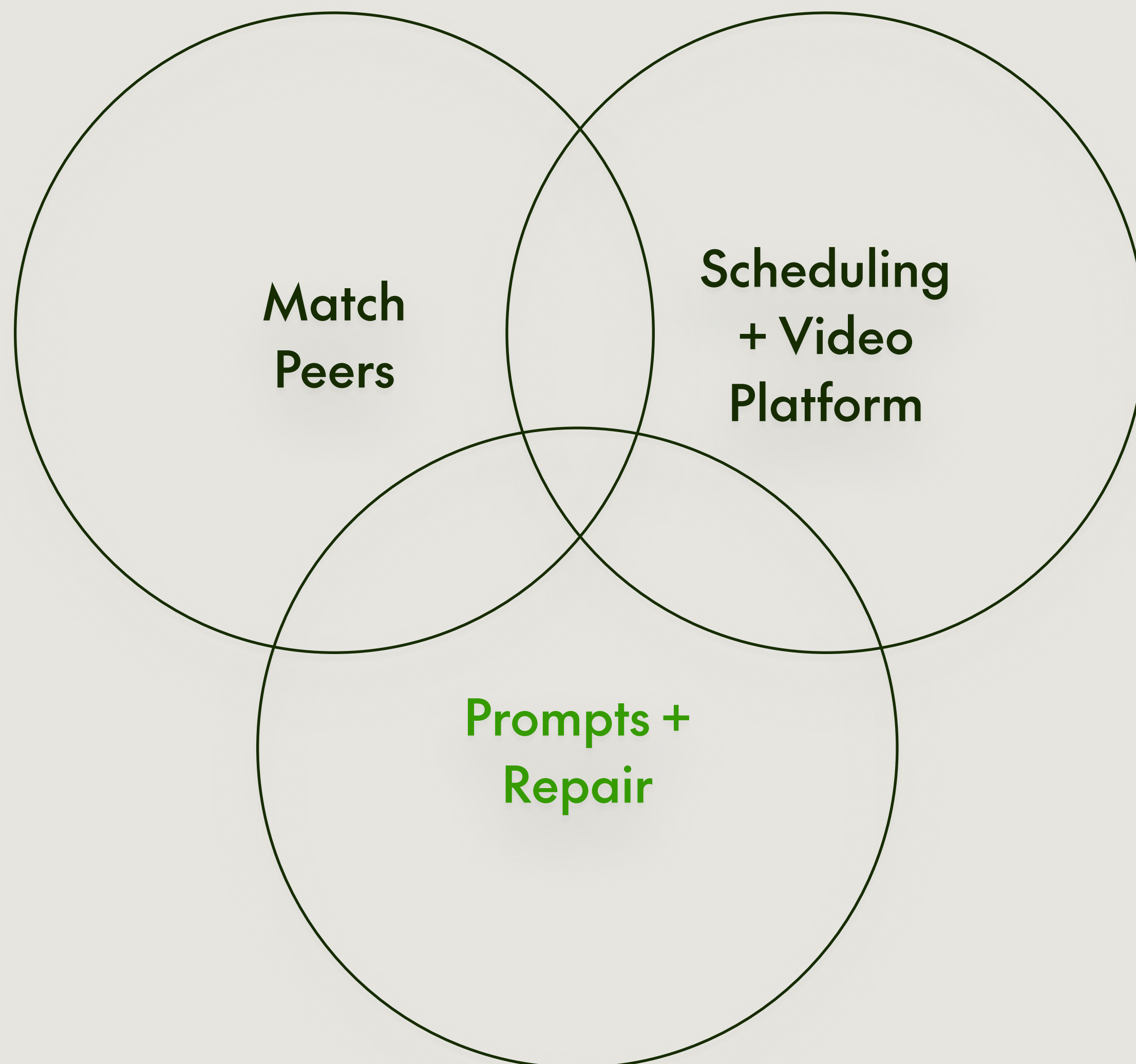
matching aligned
peers

scheduling groups in
advance

and offering a secure,
custom video

**with clear prompts and a
space for repair.**

How can we strengthen and deepen networks?

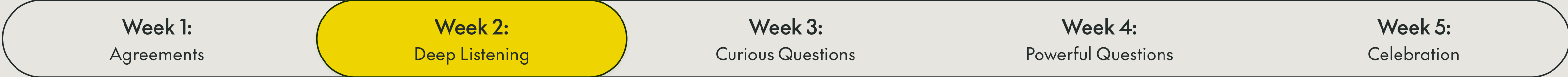


Engaging networks across art, technology, and social impact

matching aligned peers

scheduling groups in advance

with clear prompts and a space for repair.



Welcome!

- Turn off your notifications, silence your phone.
- Think of the strengths you and your fellow participants bring to the session.
- Identify a phrase to support you such as, "The participant sharing is the expert in their experience," or "My role as a listener and peer coach is to support their journey, not direct them on it."

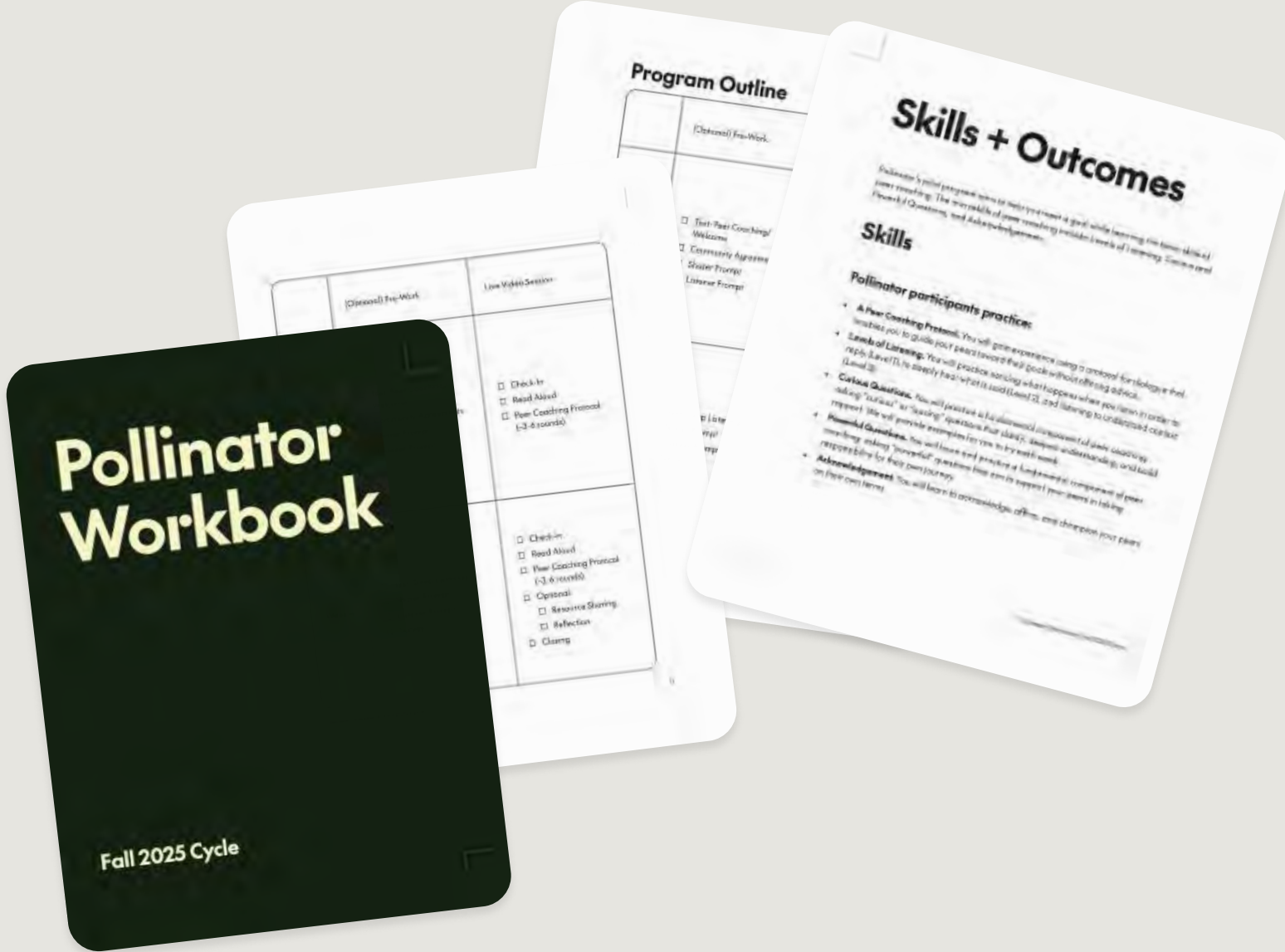
Roles

1 Facilitator: Use the script to guide your peers through the agenda.

1 Timekeeper: Gently help your peers share time and end on time.

3-4 Additional Participants: Take turns reading aloud, sharing, and listening.

Roles rotate each week, starting with the most experienced facilitator.



We believe that participants want to take 5-weeks to develop relationships and expand networks with a peer circle.

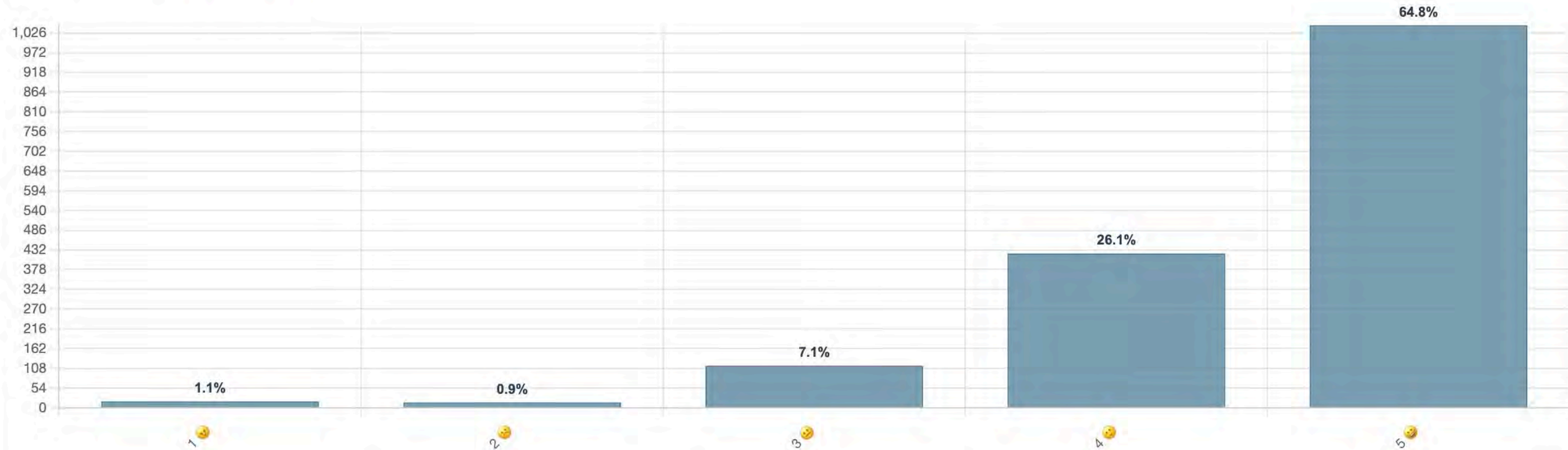
Here is what we found.

“Yes, peer coaching is a valuable skill.”

1,615 participants agree that the ability to guide peers is valuable.

Peer coaching — the ability to guide peers without offering advice — is a valuable skill.

Total Responses: 1615 Average: 4.53 σ : 0.76



Here is what we found.

2,733 joined a peer circle in October.

1216 people reflected on our community agreements in the weekly survey.

422 people emailed us directly with a technical question, concern or comment.

6 people emailed us with concerns that led us to ask if they wanted a mediator.

0 people engaged our mediator.

Engaging networks across
art, technology, and social
impact

matching aligned
peers

scheduling groups in
advance

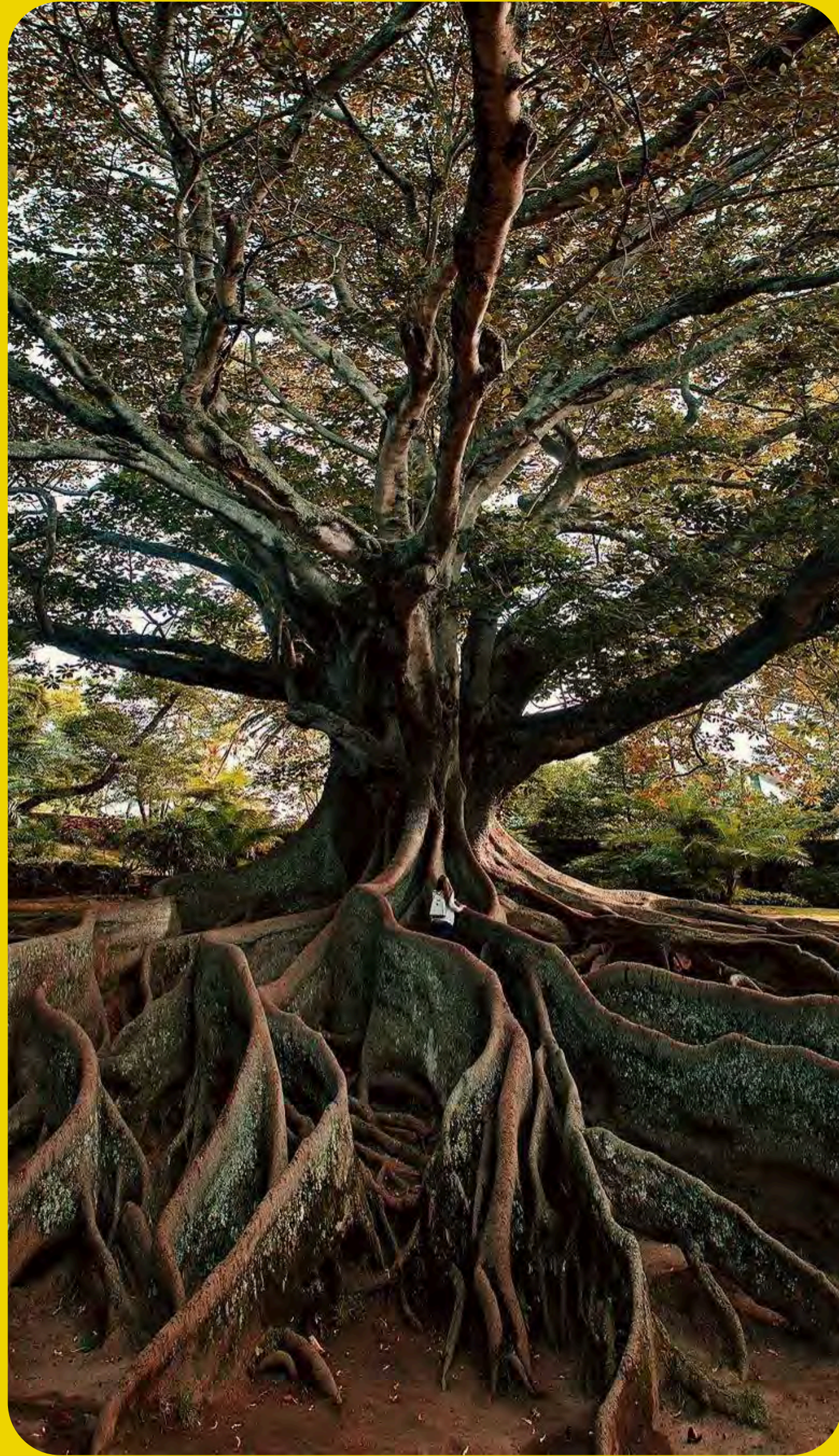
with clear
prompts and a
space for repair.

KEEP

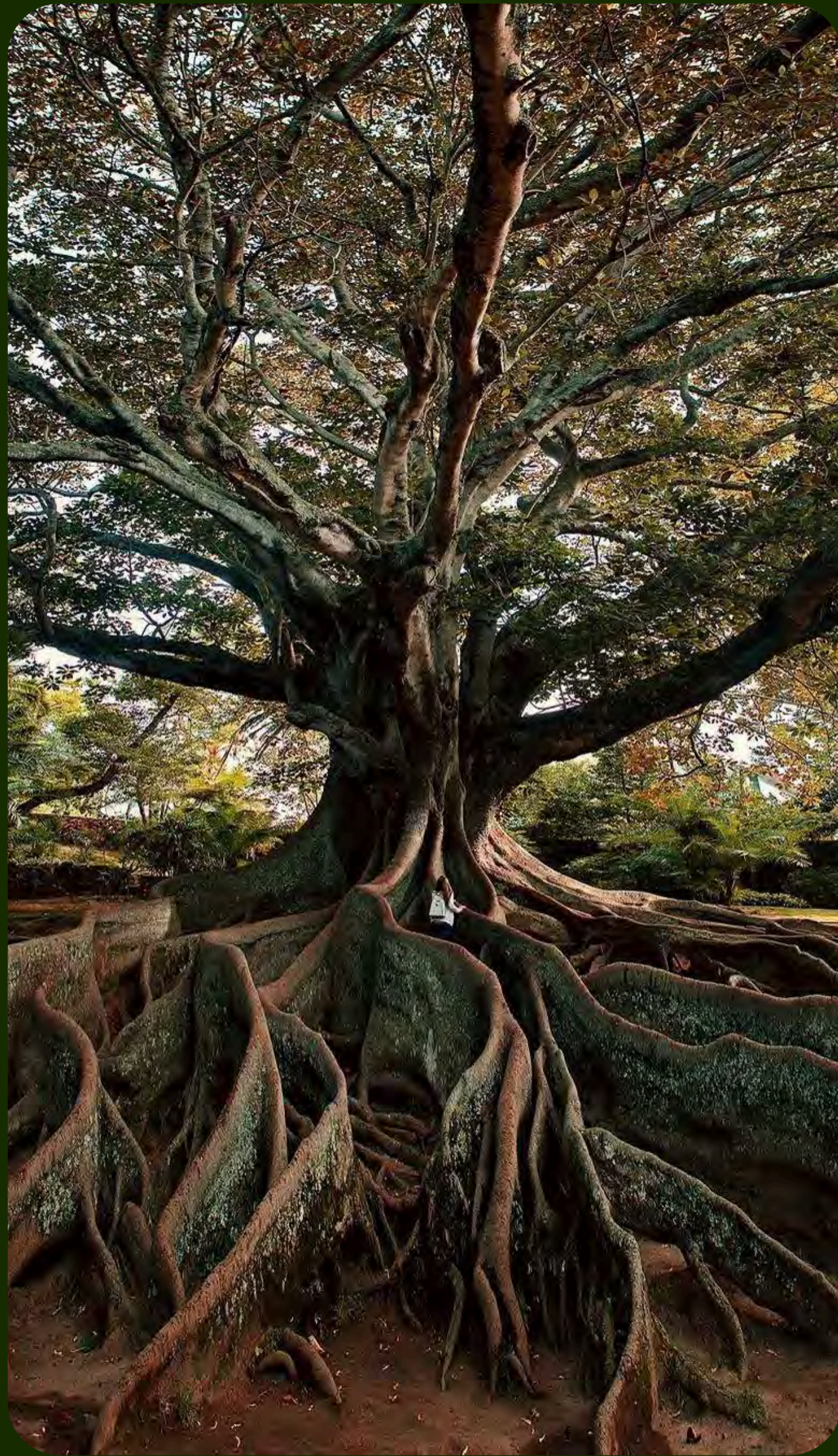
- Peer-coaching prompts.
- Professional support for repair.

ADD

- Offer one-off meetings for those who want to try it out.
- Make groups of 12 people; if half of the group cannot make it, there is still a good group size.
- Simplify the prompts! Consider “one-hour, one-question” as a simple prompt for dialog.
- What else?



**Any questions or comments
about the curriculum, the
prompts, or repair?**



**To repeat our
approach...**

Have you ever wanted to
gather a group of people?

You might wonder...



Here is what we found:

1.

Continue to match peers, with extra weight to affinity and career stage.

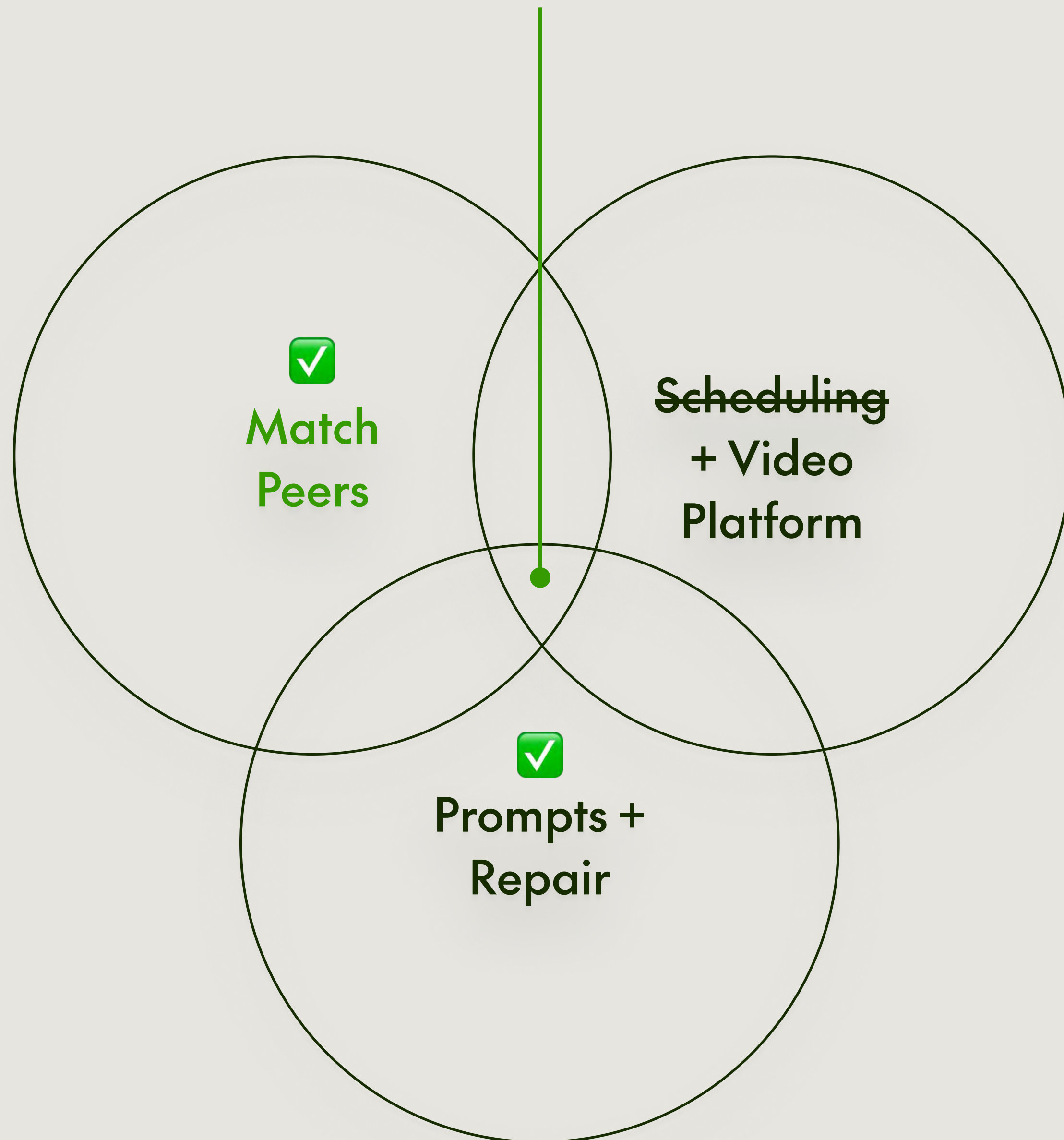
2.

Increase attendance by offering one-off meetings and make set times for the 5-week offering.

3.

Refine video, prompts, and simplify curriculum. Offer additional types of meetings.

Stronger Cultural Ecosystem



Agenda

5 minutes

Welcome + Arrivals

5 minutes

Why did we run this pilot?

5 minutes

Who is behind Pollinator?

15 minutes

What did we learn?

15 minutes

Share Back + Storytelling

5 minutes

Where are we going?

10 minutes

Questions

Reflect

Rest

Refine

Relaunch

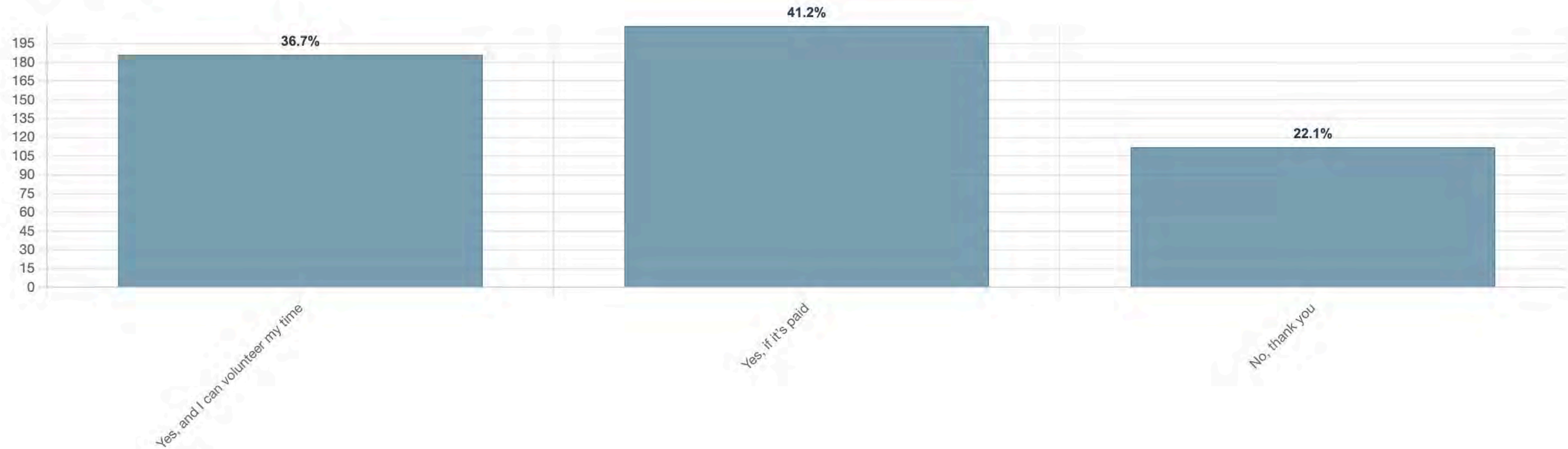


Here is what we found.

78% want to be part of a session with us to share feedback and ideas.

Do you want to be part of a session to share feedback on Pollinator's pilot program, curriculum, and ideas for future offerings?

Total Responses: 507



We want to match peers for live meetings in other sectors.

Imagine any community, gathering, or network using Pollinator to deepen and expand connection.

social impact investors

academics

conferences

entrepreneurs

membership

TL;DR - summary:

1.

Continue to match peers, with extra weight to affinity and career stage.

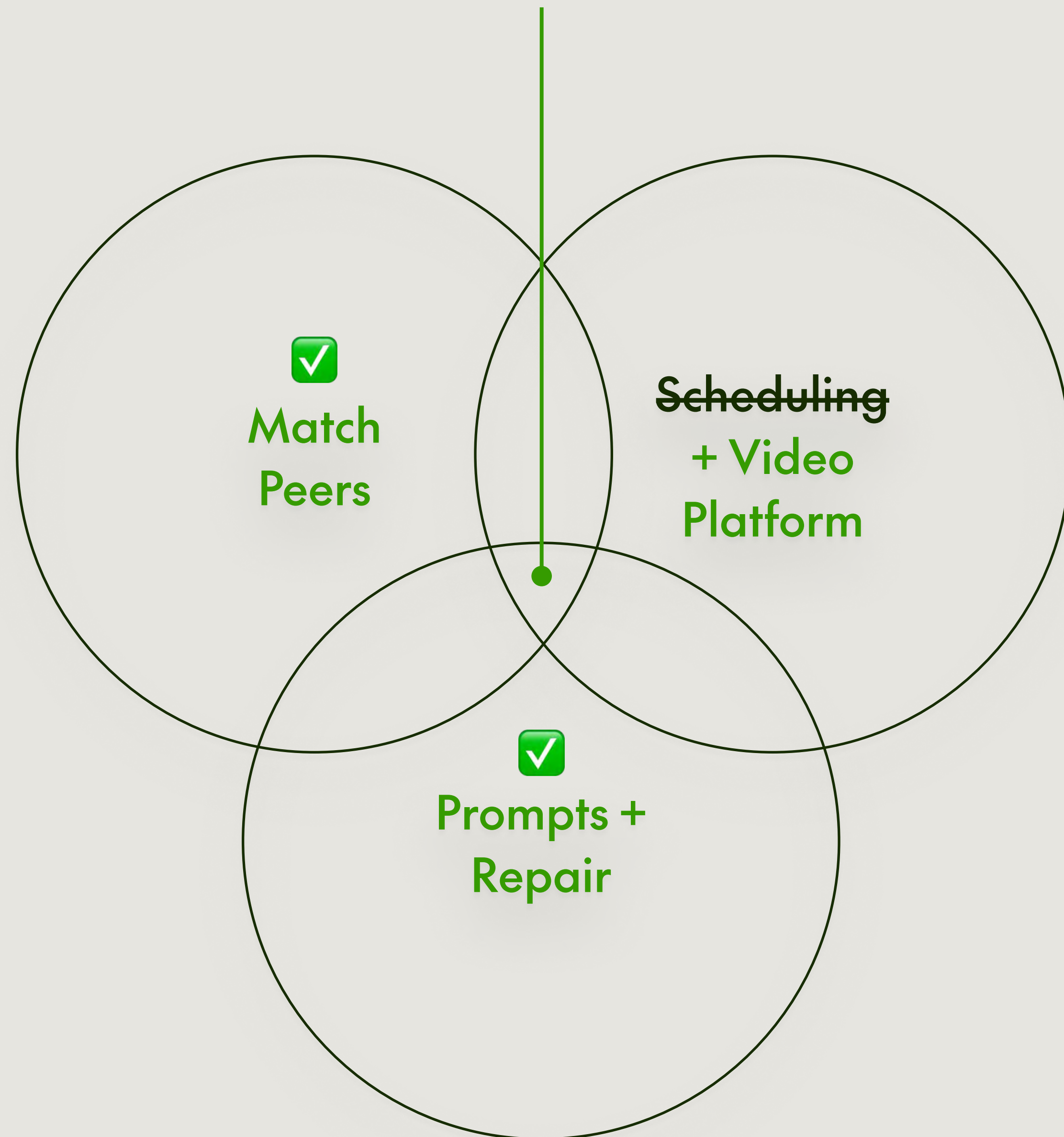
2.

Increase attendance by offering one-off meetings and make set times for the 5-week offering.

3.

Refine video, prompts, and simplify curriculum. Offer additional types of meetings.

Stronger Cultural Ecosystem



2026 Tentative Dates (cycles in *May* and *November*, plus possible new offering, pending capacity)

March

Enrollment - get ready!

April

Enrollment closes

May

Pollinator spring cycle runs

June

Feedback + Insights

July + August

Refine Platform + Offering

October

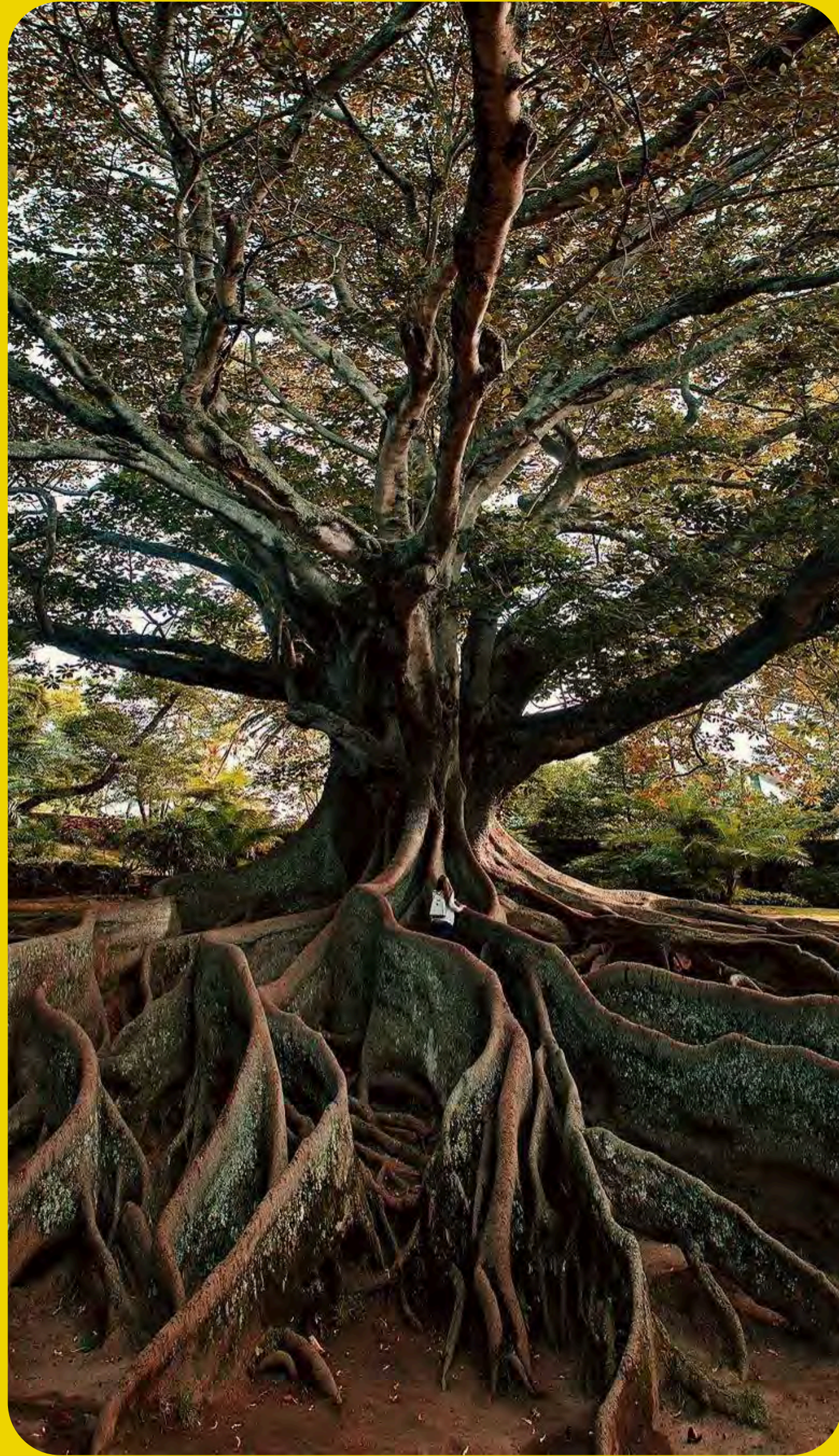
Enrollment - get ready!

November

Pollinator winter cycle runs

December

Feedback + Insights

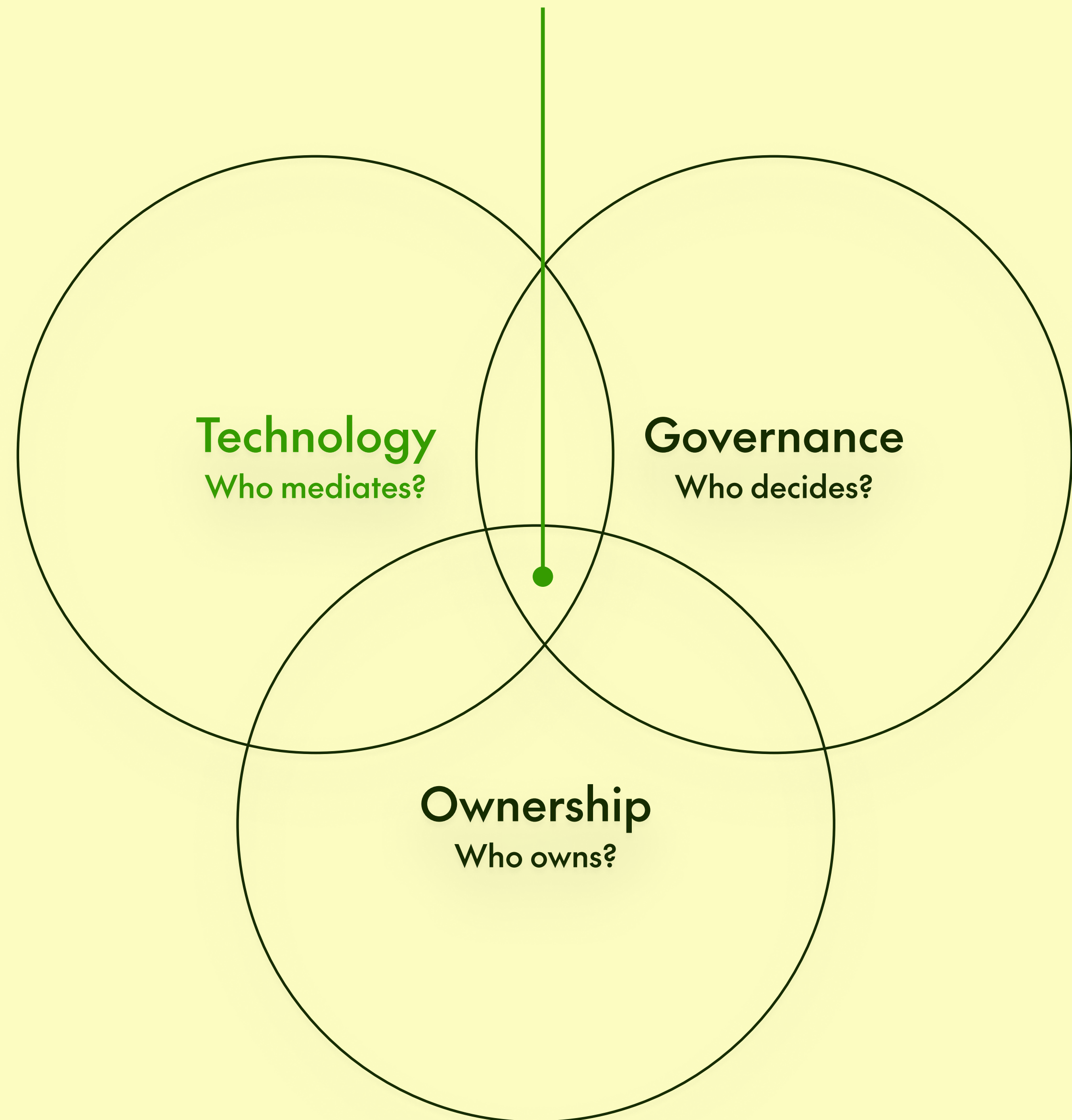


**Any questions or comments
about the ideas we have
shared, for the future?**

Technology can
foster cultures of
cooperative
governance and
ownership.

We can shape our data
and connections.

Cultures of Solidarity



Agenda

5 minutes

Welcome + Arrivals

5 minutes

Why did we run this pilot?

5 minutes

Who is behind Pollinator?

15 minutes

What did we learn?

15 minutes

Share Back + Storytelling

5 minutes

Where are we going?

10 minutes

Questions + Comments

Agenda

5 minutes

Welcome + Arrivals

5 minutes

Why did we run this pilot?

5 minutes

Who is behind Pollinator?

15 minutes

Participants Share: What worked? What could we shift?

15 minutes

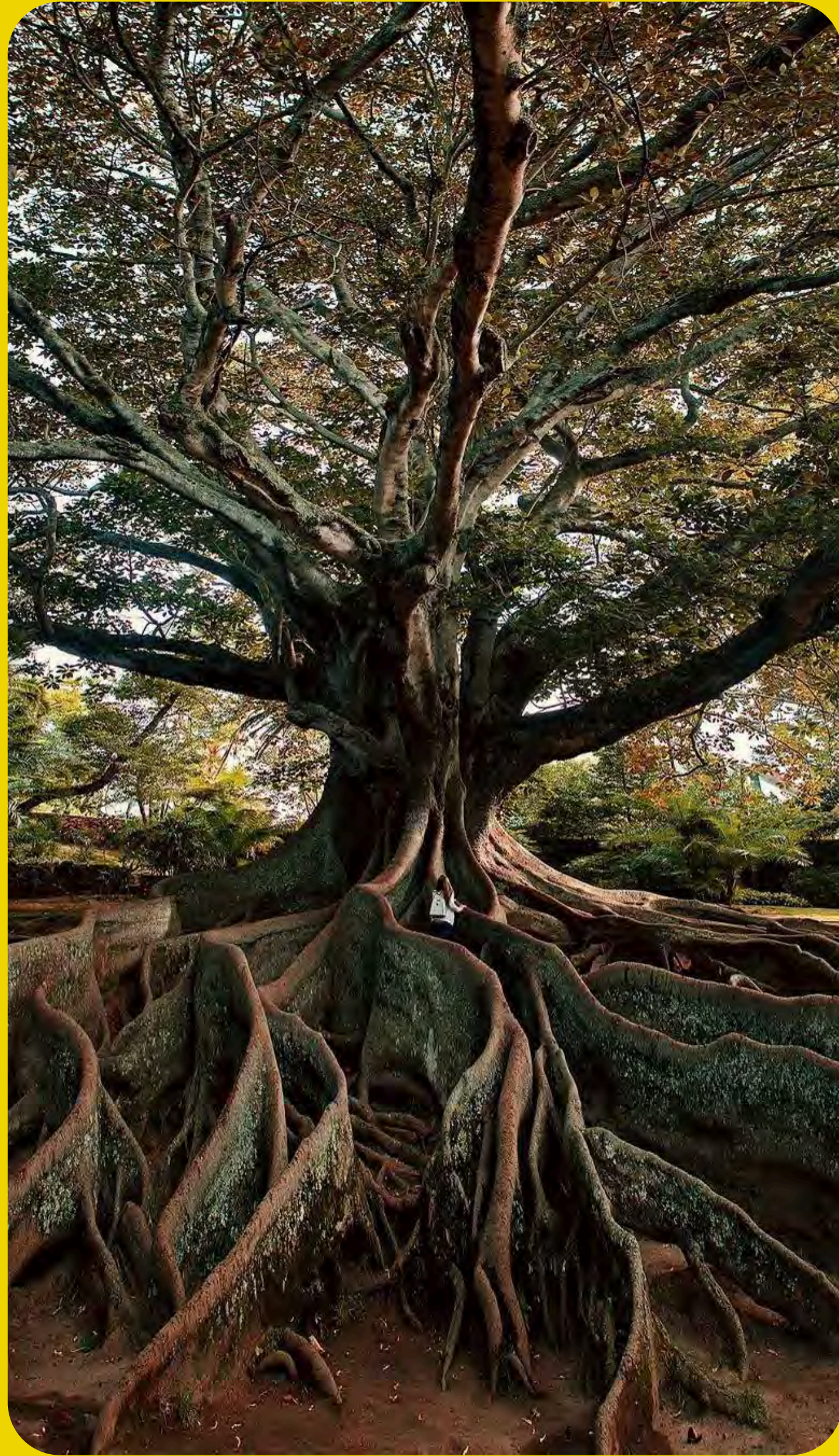
What did we learn?

5 minutes

Where are we going?

10 minutes

Questions + Gratitude



**Any questions
or comments?**



Enroll in **March** for the **May** cycle.

Email us if you want to be in a feedback session.
Send us any networks, institutions, organizations that are aligned.

Caroline, Or, and Isaiah
admin@pollinator.coop

