

# UBIf Local Chapter Starter Kit

From first conversation to first community infrastructure pilot

**Version 1.1 - Practical organizing, recruitment, project selection, partnerships, governance, funding readiness, and replication.**

**Purpose:** Give a person in any community enough structure to organize a founding team, listen to residents, recruit participants, choose one achievable pilot, build partnerships, and document what works.

**Core rule:** A chapter is not successful because it holds meetings. It is successful when residents can see a useful, measurable community asset or service moving from idea toward reality.

# 1. Start With the Model

A UBIf local chapter is a community organizing and project-development group focused on practical infrastructure that improves local resilience and shared capacity.

## A chapter should

- Listen before prescribing solutions.
- Map what already exists and collaborate rather than duplicate.
- Select projects with a clear host, budget, decision point, operating plan, and measurable result.
- Keep proposed projects clearly distinguished from operational projects.
- Document lessons so another community can reuse the method.

## A chapter should not

- Claim partnerships, funding, legal status, membership numbers, or accomplishments that do not exist.
- Collect or pool money casually without an appropriate legal and financial structure.
- Create a large bureaucracy before there is enough activity to justify it.

**Organize people -> build one useful project -> measure it -> improve the method -> replicate.**

# 2. The First 30 Days

| Period     | Primary goal         | Minimum output                                                         |
|------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Days 1-7   | Build founding group | 3-8 committed people; contact list; first meeting                      |
| Days 8-14  | Map needs and assets | Needs map; 10+ local resources; resident input                         |
| Days 15-21 | Choose a pilot       | 3-5 ideas scored; first pilot + backup                                 |
| Days 22-30 | Make it executable   | Lead; preliminary budget; partner targets; decision point; action list |

## First meeting: 75 minutes

- 1 0-10: Introductions and reasons for coming.
- 2 10-20: Explain UBIf plainly; separate current work from long-term vision.
- 3 20-40: Identify systems that are hard to access, expensive, fragile, wasteful, or underused.
- 4 40-55: Map organizations/assets already addressing those needs.
- 5 55-65: Identify 3-5 possible pilots.
- 6 65-75: Assign one task per person and schedule the next meeting.

**Do not spend the first meeting writing bylaws. Leave with names, needs, tasks, and a next date.**

## 2A. How Many People Does a Chapter Need?

A UBIf chapter does **not** need hundreds of people before it can begin organizing or investigating a project. The recommended **3-8 people** are the **founding organizing team**: the small group that reliably meets, does research, contacts residents and institutions, builds the project plan, and follows through on assigned work. They are not automatically the project's total community support, and they should not claim to speak for the whole town.

**Key distinction: A small team can start the work. Broader community evidence should determine whether the project has enough demand, legitimacy, volunteers, users, partners, and institutional support to move forward.**

| Circle                           | Typical scale         | What it means                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Founding organizers              | 3-8                   | Reliable working team. Meets, researches, recruits, assigns tasks, contacts partners, and moves the pilot forward.                                  |
| Active participants / volunteers | 10-30+                | People who help with defined tasks, events, outreach, construction, gardening, food pickup, research, or other project work.                        |
| Demonstrated supporters / users  | 50-200+               | Residents who indicate real interest through surveys, signups, public meetings, letters of support, user interviews, or commitments to participate. |
| Beneficiaries                    | Potentially hundreds+ | People who may ultimately use or benefit from the infrastructure. They do not all need to become organizers or UBIf members.                        |

### Why a Small Core Team Is Enough to Begin

Most early project work does not require a mass membership. A handful of dependable people can map needs, interview residents, identify sites, request quotes, research approvals, build a preliminary budget, contact potential partners, and test whether an idea is feasible. Waiting for hundreds of people before doing any of this can create a trap: residents are often more willing to join a concrete project that is moving than an abstract organization that is waiting to become large.

**Start small without thinking small: 3-8 people can build the organizing machine. Their job is then to reach outward and accumulate evidence.**

### What the Founding Team May - and May Not - Claim

**Appropriate:** "Six residents are investigating whether a community garden could work here. We are gathering resident input, looking at possible sites, and seeking potential partners."

**Not appropriate:** "Warrensburg wants a community garden" merely because six organizers want one.

The organizing team's authority comes from doing transparent work. The project's broader legitimacy comes from evidence: resident input, potential users, volunteers, partner interest, public discussion, and any approvals required from the institutions that control land, money, or policy.

## 2B. Build Support in Layers

Do not treat "support" as a single number. Different kinds of support answer different questions. A project can have a small working team but strong public demand, or many social-media likes but nobody willing to do the work. Track the layers separately.

| Evidence           | Question it answers                      | Examples                                                                                     |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Organizer capacity | Can somebody actually move this forward? | 3-8 reliable organizers; named project lead; recurring work sessions; completed assignments. |

| Evidence                 | Question it answers                     | Examples                                                                                               |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Resident demand          | Do people actually want or need it?     | Door conversations; surveys; website signups; potential-user interviews; meeting attendance.           |
| Volunteer capacity       | Will people help deliver it?            | Specific volunteer commitments tied to tasks, dates, skills, or project roles.                         |
| Partner validation       | Will existing institutions participate? | Emails or letters of interest; site conversations; in-kind offers; referrals; technical assistance.    |
| Institutional permission | Can it legally and practically happen?  | Site permission; town/school/landowner approval; permits; insurance; fiscal host; required agreements. |
| Resource capacity        | Can it be paid for and maintained?      | Preliminary budget; quotes; in-kind commitments; funding requests; operating plan.                     |

## Example: A Community Garden

A credible early-stage garden effort might have **5 organizers, 15 people willing to volunteer, 50 residents or potential users expressing interest, one food pantry interested in produce, two businesses considering in-kind materials, one viable site under discussion**, and a preliminary budget. That is enough to justify serious conversations with a town, school, church, landowner, nonprofit, or funder even though hundreds of people are not organizing.

## When Do You Need Hundreds?

Large numbers become more important when a project requires broad political authorization, substantial public spending, major land-use decisions, a large user base, or proof that a service will be widely used. Even then, the goal is usually not to turn hundreds of residents into organizers. The core team remains small while the evidence of community demand grows.

## A Better Sequence

**3-8 organizers -> resident listening -> 10-30 active participants -> evidence of broader demand -> partner commitments -> permissions and funding -> implementation -> measurable public benefit.**

## Minimum Gate Before Calling a Pilot Community-Backed

There is no universal magic number. Before using language such as "community-backed," the chapter should be able to show multiple forms of evidence appropriate to the project's scale: meaningful resident input, identifiable potential users, volunteers or participants, relevant partner conversations, and a transparent record of what support has actually been confirmed. Report the numbers rather than exaggerating them.

### 3. Recruit People and Convert Interest Into Action

Recruitment should learn what residents need and invite interested people into one concrete next step. Lead with the community and listen.

**Recruitment ladder: Resident reached -> Conversation -> Website visit -> Signup -> Orientation -> Participant -> Volunteer -> Project team -> Organizer**

#### Where to recruit

- Door-to-door canvassing where appropriate.
- Town meetings and public hearings.
- Libraries, farmers markets, community events, schools and colleges where permitted.
- Food pantries, churches, civic associations, neighborhood groups, and nonprofits.
- Local businesses willing to display a flyer or QR card.
- Local online community groups.

#### Door-knocking workflow

- 1 Choose a defined turf.
- 2 Work in pairs when practical; respect posted signs, private property, and local rules.
- 3 Carry one simple handout with a one-sentence description, 2-4 project examples, QR code, and short URL.
- 4 Ask a question early and listen before explaining every project.
- 5 Ask for one next step: scan, signup, meeting, volunteer, or updates.
- 6 Record only appropriate information people knowingly provide.
- 7 Follow up quickly with a useful next action.

#### 20-second doorstep opening

**"Hi, I'm helping organize a local community group focused on practical projects like food access, shared tools, energy improvements, and other community infrastructure. We're asking residents what would actually be useful here. What's one thing you think this community could do better?"**

#### If they are interested

**"We're organizing the local chapter now. There's no obligation to participate. This QR code shows the projects and lets you sign up to help, attend a meeting, or just receive updates."**

#### Common questions

| Question                  | Useful response                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Are you asking for money? | Not through this conversation. We're recruiting participants, partners, skills, project ideas, and appropriate funding pathways.                                                                               |
| Is this political?        | The chapter works on practical community infrastructure and may engage public institutions when a project requires it. People do not need to agree on every political issue to work on a useful local project. |
| Who runs this?            | The local group is being organized by residents and project volunteers. Governance should become more formal only as real responsibilities require it.                                                         |
| I don't have time.        | Participation can range from updates to a one-time task, professional advice, an event, or a recurring project role.                                                                                           |

| Question             | Useful response                                                                        |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| What have you built? | Describe only what is operational, what is in development, and what is still proposed. |

## Website conversion funnel

| Step          | What the person should see or do                                              |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Scan       | QR code or short URL opens a mobile-first Join page.                          |
| 2. Understand | One sentence on UBIf; one sentence on what the local chapter is doing now.    |
| 3. Choose     | Stay informed / attend / volunteer / offer skills / partner / help a project. |
| 4. Interests  | Optional project and skill interests; avoid unnecessary personal data.        |
| 5. Commit     | Pick one concrete next action.                                                |
| 6. Follow-up  | Immediate confirmation plus meeting, orientation, task, or project contact.   |

## Recruitment dashboard

| Metric                        | W1 | W2 | W3 | W4 |
|-------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| People reached                |    |    |    |    |
| Meaningful conversations      |    |    |    |    |
| QR / landing-page visits      |    |    |    |    |
| Signups                       |    |    |    |    |
| Meeting/orientation attendees |    |    |    |    |
| One-time volunteers           |    |    |    |    |
| Recurring participants        |    |    |    |    |
| New organizers/recruiters     |    |    |    |    |

**Conversations but few scans = weak handoff. Scans but few signups = weak landing page. Signups but few attendees = weak follow-up. Attendees but few volunteers = unclear roles or projects.**

## 4. Map Needs and Existing Assets

| Need           | Existing resources | Gap | Possible pilot | Partners |
|----------------|--------------------|-----|----------------|----------|
| Food           |                    |     |                |          |
| Tools / repair |                    |     |                |          |
| Energy         |                    |     |                |          |
| Digital access |                    |     |                |          |
| Water          |                    |     |                |          |
| Other          |                    |     |                |          |

### Listening questions

- What is harder or more expensive here than it should be?
- What useful resource exists but is difficult to access?
- What gets wasted locally - food, buildings, tools, skills, land, energy, time?
- Which existing organization is already closest to solving this?
- What could a small pilot prove in 30-90 days?
- Who would have to say yes?

## 5. Choose the First Pilot

The first project should usually optimize for a credible, measurable win - not maximum ideological importance.

| Criterion                  | Weight | Score 1-5 | Weighted |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------|----------|
| Community need             | x2     |           |          |
| Feasible in 3-6 months     | x2     |           |          |
| Affordable first milestone | x2     |           |          |
| Partner potential          | x2     |           |          |
| Volunteer capacity         | x1     |           |          |
| Clear host/owner path      | x2     |           |          |
| Measurable result          | x2     |           |          |
| Funding/in-kind potential  | x1     |           |          |
| Replication value          | x1     |           |          |

### 7-Day Proof

Before committing months of work, run a seven-day test that reduces one important uncertainty: identify three possible sites, obtain two material quotes, interview ten potential users, meet one host institution, verify an approval pathway, or recruit five relevant volunteers.

## 6. Turn the Idea Into a Project

| Project charter field             | Answer                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Project name                      |                                                                                                 |
| Problem                           |                                                                                                 |
| Current status                    | Concept / research / organizing / seeking site / seeking funding / implementation / operational |
| First measurable outcome          |                                                                                                 |
| Who benefits                      |                                                                                                 |
| Project lead                      |                                                                                                 |
| Host / owner / responsible entity |                                                                                                 |
| Current decision point            |                                                                                                 |
| Startup need                      |                                                                                                 |
| Annual operating need             |                                                                                                 |
| Funding secured                   |                                                                                                 |
| In-kind resources                 |                                                                                                 |
| Potential partners                |                                                                                                 |
| Approvals / legal questions       |                                                                                                 |
| Next 30-day milestone             |                                                                                                 |

### Partner outreach formula

**Problem -> Pilot -> What the chapter contributes -> What you are asking from the partner -> Cost/resources -> Next decision.**

### Municipal engagement

- Ask for a specific decision, introduction, site discussion, data source, permit pathway, or staff contact.
- Show what the Town is and is not being asked to contribute.
- Bring a one-page summary with budget, status, decision point, and responsible parties.
- Never imply municipal endorsement before it exists.
- Treat public meetings as part of a longer relationship, not a one-shot pitch.

## 7. Funding Readiness

| Status             | Meaning                                                                             |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SECURED            | Awarded or formally committed.                                                      |
| REQUESTED          | A real request/application has been submitted.                                      |
| ACTIVE OPPORTUNITY | A current solicitation appears relevant; eligibility still must be confirmed.       |
| POTENTIAL PROGRAM  | A real program may fit, but current availability or eligibility is not established. |
| IN-KIND            | Non-cash contribution; distinguish confirmed from potential.                        |
| TO BE DETERMINED   | Information is not yet known.                                                       |



## Before seeking or receiving money

- Define the project and responsible entity.
- Build a preliminary line-item budget and operating estimate.
- Determine who can legally receive, hold, spend, and report funds.
- Verify eligibility and match requirements.
- Establish appropriate approval, recordkeeping, purchasing, and conflict procedures.
- Do not claim tax deductibility or nonprofit status unless established.
- Use official funding sources and record verification dates.

## 8. Lightweight Governance

### Starter roles

- Facilitator/coordinator: meetings and follow-through.
- Project lead: accountable for one project's next milestone.
- Outreach/partnership lead: recruitment and institutional relationships.
- Funding/records lead: budget and research; financial authority only when an appropriate structure exists.
- Members/volunteers: defined tasks, skills, and project participation.

### Minimum decision rules

- Record major decisions and owners.
- Disclose relevant conflicts of interest.
- Do not spend or commit funds without proper authority.
- Define who votes and the threshold for consequential decisions.
- Publish honest project status: proposed, developing, funded, implementing, operational, paused, or completed.

## 9. Monthly Operating Rhythm

| Week   | Focus                                             |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1 | Resident outreach + recruitment + needs listening |
| Week 2 | Project work + partner meetings                   |
| Week 3 | Funding / technical / site / approval work        |
| Week 4 | Public update + metrics + next-month commitments  |

Avoid meeting for the sake of meeting. Every recurring meeting should connect to a decision, task, relationship, or measurable milestone.

## 10. Measure, Learn, Replicate

| Category      | Track                                                              |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| People        | Signups, attendees, recurring participants, volunteers, organizers |
| Relationships | Partners contacted, meetings held, commitments made                |
| Projects      | Stage, decision point, next milestone, blockers                    |
| Resources     | Capital need, secured, requested, in-kind confirmed                |
| Delivery      | Outputs: sites, pounds, checkouts, households, trainings, etc.     |
| Outcomes      | Measured changes; distinguish estimates from actuals               |

### Post-pilot case study

- 1 What problem did the community identify?
- 2 What did the chapter try?
- 3 Who participated and partnered?

- 4** What did it cost, including in-kind resources?
- 5** What was actually delivered?
- 6** What measurable result occurred?
- 7** What failed or took longer than expected?
- 8** What would you change?
- 9** What should another community copy?
- 10** What should another community avoid?

## Appendix A - 7-Day Chapter Launch Checklist

- ☐ Identify 2-4 other organizers.
- ☐ Create a shared contact/task list.
- ☐ Schedule the first meeting.
- ☐ Write a one-sentence local chapter description.
- ☐ Identify 10 existing local institutions/resources.
- ☐ Have at least 10 resident conversations.
- ☐ List 3-5 possible projects.
- ☐ Choose one question for a 7-day proof.
- ☐ Create a simple website/QR conversion path.
- ☐ Schedule the second meeting.

## Appendix B - Canvassing Shift Sheet

| Field                          | Record |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| Date / time                    |        |
| Area / event                   |        |
| Organizers                     |        |
| People/doors reached           |        |
| Meaningful conversations       |        |
| QR/URL handoffs                |        |
| Signups reported               |        |
| Top 3 issues heard             |        |
| Potential volunteers/partners  |        |
| Follow-up required             |        |
| What should change next shift? |        |

## Appendix C - Weekly Action Board

| Task | Owner | Due | Status / blocker |
|------|-------|-----|------------------|
|      |       |     |                  |
|      |       |     |                  |
|      |       |     |                  |
|      |       |     |                  |

## Appendix D - First Pilot Gate

- ☐ What exact problem are we solving?
- ☐ Who is responsible?
- ☐ Where will it happen?

- ☐ Who owns or hosts it?
- ☐ What approval is required?
- ☐ What does startup cost?
- ☐ What does operation cost?
- ☐ What funding is actually secured?
- ☐ What partners have actually agreed?
- ☐ What result will we measure?
- ☐ What happens if funding stops?
- ☐ What is the next decision?

**Starter Kit v1.1**

Verify legal, financial, permitting, canvassing, fundraising, and regulatory requirements applicable to your jurisdiction and project.

# Appendix E - The One-Page Recruitment Handout

Use one simple handout during door knocking, community events, meetings, and partner outreach. Its job is not to explain the entire UBIf model. Its job is to start a conversation and give an interested person one easy next step.

**Keep it to one page: one-sentence explanation + 2-4 examples + one clear call to action + QR code + short URL.**

## What the handout should accomplish

- **Recognizable:** A resident should understand the basic idea in about 10 seconds.
- **Local:** Use the chapter/community name rather than making the flyer feel like a national advertisement.
- **Honest:** Label projects as proposed, developing, or operational. Do not imply funding, approval, or partnerships that do not exist.
- **Actionable:** Give one primary action - scan the QR code or visit the short URL to learn more and join.
- **Conversational:** The organizer should still ask the resident what the community needs instead of simply handing them a flyer.

## Recommended structure

| Top    | UBIf name + local chapter + a short question or promise.                   |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Middle | One-sentence explanation and 2-4 concrete project examples.                |
| Action | Join / share an idea / volunteer / offer skills.                           |
| Bottom | QR code + short URL + a note that joining does not require donating money. |

## Suggested organizer handoff

**"This gives you the basic idea and a link to the projects. We're still organizing, so I'm more interested in hearing what you think the community actually needs. If any of it interests you, the QR code lets you join, volunteer, offer a skill, or just follow the work."**

**Printing:** The next page is a ready-to-print example. Print it as a single-sided US Letter page. Before public distribution, replace the QR placeholder with a real QR code that points to the current UBIf join/orientation flow and verify it with a phone.

# UNIVERSAL BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE

## Warrensburg - Founding Community

### What could we build, share, rescue, or organize locally to make life easier?

UBIf is an emerging community effort that helps residents identify practical needs, organize local resources, develop projects, build partnerships, and measure what works.

|                     |                                                                                                          |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| LOCAL FOOD          | Community gardens, food rescue, local growing, and food-access projects.                                 |
| SHARED TOOLS        | Tool libraries, repair resources, and shared equipment that can reduce unnecessary individual costs.     |
| ENERGY + RESILIENCE | Energy-efficiency, renewable-energy, water, and other practical resilience projects.                     |
| COMMUNITY CAPACITY  | Skills, education, digital access, community kitchens, cooperatives, and other locally identified needs. |

#### WE'RE ORGANIZING - NOT CLAIMING THESE PROJECTS ARE ALREADY BUILT

The Warrensburg effort is in an early organizing and project-development stage. We want residents to help decide what should be investigated and built first.

### How can you participate?

Share an idea • Join UBIf • Volunteer • Offer a skill • Help organize • Connect an organization

PLACE VERIFIED  
JOIN QR CODE HERE

Test before printing.

### Learn more and get involved

[UniversalBasicInfrastructure.org](https://UniversalBasicInfrastructure.org)

Look through the projects and choose **Join UBIf** to share your interests, skills, and level of involvement.

**No monetary donation is required to participate.**

### One question for you: What is one resource, service, or piece of infrastructure that would make life better in your community?

This is a sample recruitment handout from the UBIf Local Chapter Starter Kit. Update local details and verify all links before distribution.