



Critical Friend

For getting advices and feedbacks

WHEN TO USE IT?

- * Peer-review
- * Study visit

WHAT IS NEEDED?

Time: 1 hour (short format) or 1 day (long format)

Participants: ~20 people (short format) or more (long format)

Material support: scoring sheet (see overleaf)

> Decide on the format

Short – a session aiming at getting feedback (e.g.: in meetings). With this format, multiple projects can be evaluated simultaneously.

Long – a whole day process aiming at promoting observation and feedback (e.g.: during a study visit). With this format, the focus remains on the host city.

> Distribute the preparation material

> **Match the cities** in advance, either by pairing or grouping them.

A critical friend is a person who is observing your actions, learning and finally providing you critical but yet friendly advices and feedback.

Having critical friends is useful especially in study visits and meetings for peer-review purposes.

WHAT FOR?

> **To encourage participants to engage** into a review and feedback process.

> **To encourage participants to ask (the right) questions** – All the visits, meetings, meals, etc. are opportunities to meet various partners and stakeholders. The Critical Friend method helps to get the most out of these events!

> **To get “fresh” recommendations** – There are no bad recommendations!

HOW TO USE IT?

Short format – A critical friend session is often organised after a presentation. Collective feedback and questions must be first formulated and collected during the presentations, for example by using a question wall. The critical friend will sit down with the presenter and based on received questions and feedbacks, the critical friend will give him/her recommendations.

Long format – All participants are asked to be critical friends during a study visit in a city. In addition to the general comments and questions, the host city will provide some specific questions to which they want answers. These will be formulated into guidelines to help the critical friends to focus on the important points during the day. At the end of the day, all participants will share their comments, ideas and recommendations to the host city.

> **Share the learnings with the rest of the team** by using different types of formats.

- > You can use the scoring sheet (see overleaf) that has been developed by one of the URBACT networks or create your own, according to your own needs.
- > Try this tool during a **Study Visit**.

Project	Aspect 1			Aspect 2			Aspect 3			Other comments
	Score 0-5	What is done well	What should be improved (and how)	Score 0-5	What is done well	What should be improved (how)	Score 0-5	What is done well	What should be improved (how)	
Project A										
Project B										
Project C										

Scoring: good or very good (5-4), neutral (3), requires more attention (2-1), not relevant to the project