# Building Your Superhero Team

Security training is a challenging and humbling experience. The more you learn about what it takes to conduct a good security training, the more worried you might be that you don't have all the skills. You might feel like you aren't technical enough to teach digital security subjects, but you do understand the risks faced by your audience. Or you might have a tech background, but not feel certain about which tools or practices are best for a specific population. You might be nervous about talking to a particular audience, and want to work more closely with someone who has their own experts and advisors. Or, you might be from the community you're working with *and* have technical expertise, but you quickly realize that facilitation is a fine art that's easier seen than done.

The good news is that you don't have to do security training all by yourself! Superheroes are powerful on their own, but they're even more powerful when they team up and combine their skills. For this reason, EFF recommends conducting security trainings in teams. These are often pairs, but may be more. You should assemble the superhero team that works best for your participants and you.

The best part about pairing up for security trainings is that you can choose partners whose skills complement yours, and you can learn from each other. If you are comfortable with technical questions, but don't know a lot about the community you're about to train, you might want to seek out someone who is from that community or familiar with your participants. If you are teaching a community that you understand well, but you aren't that confident in your technical skills, you can partner with a more technical colleague. Or, if you are new to leading an event and teaching a group, you can powerfully amplify your event by collaborating with an experienced facilitator or teacher.

Technical know-how and understanding of your students aren't the only two skill sets that benefit from teaming up. If you're an experienced trainer, you can pair up with someone who is just getting started and show them the ropes. Perhaps you feel you're better working one-on-one with learners, or can't stand on your feet comfortably for very long, or maybe you're still not comfortable leading a session yet. In these situations, you can work with individuals in the audience who need additional assistance while someone else leads the longer presentations.  There will also be scenarios where you are merging other types of expertise related to security and activism. You might have someone joining you who is an expert in physical and operational security. Or you may be collaborating with someone who focuses on self-care and well being. The more experience you gain from working with other superheroes, the more opportunities you have to learn from them, improve your craft, and strengthen your shared powers. There are a number of superhero teams who have been helping activists stay safe around the world. The longer teams have worked together, the better they become both individually and collectively.

## Where Do You Find These People?

You may already know some potential trainers whose skills complement your own, but if you don't, here are some places you might look.

If you are looking for people with more technical experience, you might want to seek out whomever activists and civil society groups already work with—they may not formally lead trainings, but they're probably already very familiar with the threats, challenges, and needs that your audiences have. They might be IT support staff, self-taught techies that have been providing informal support for their communities, or simply relatives and friends. You can also check out local hackerspaces or [contact members in the Electronic Frontier Alliance (EFA) in your area](#).

If you are invited to train in a community that is not your own, it's a good idea to make sure that there isn't already someone from that community who is better suited to providing the training. If there isn't, you should ask for the organization that invites you to suggest a guide and co-facilitator. If you're teaching a population whose native language is not one you know fluently, the same thing applies—work with the conveners to find a suitable trainer who speaks the language first. If you can't identify anyone, be sure to work with someone who can translate fluently in that language, and be prepared to cut the amount of content you cover in half in order to accommodate the time needed for translation.

## How Do You Work Together?

This is up to you! Learn what each other is good at, what you're both comfortable doing, and what you'd like to get better at. You might want to co-train sessions, or take turns. You can collaborate on your lesson plan and training materials, and a more diverse range of skills means that you can create materials for people with different kinds of learning styles. For example, one trainer might be better at making graphics, while another trainer might be better at delivering and outlining a lecture, or coming up with an appropriate activity. One of you might be better at facilitating and getting people engaged, so perhaps they'd be best at beginning an event and leading activities throughout the agenda. There's an infinite number of ways you can collaborate.

**It's always good to limit the amount of time anyone in your training spends on [monologues](#).**Take turns taking center stage: you don't have to do all of the talking yourself, and listening to the same person go on and on can cause your audience to tune out. Taking turns with lecturing means that one person can keep an eye on audience engagement and signal to the speaker to make adjustments. Presenting only half of the material also means that you can take the time to make sure you've really mastered it, or that you're only talking about the subjects you feel that you understand best.

**Tag team software installations/configuration.** Walking large groups of students through software installation on their devices by yourself can be difficult, frustrating, and slow. With two or more teachers, you can divide your students up into groups and answer their questions in parallel.

**Tag group activities/breakout discussions.** Having a co-teacher means that there is one more person to lead group activities or breakout discussions. Having someone in the room with complementary skills means that there is someone who can potentially answer questions to which you don't know the answer.

## Learn From Each Other

The more you train in collaboration with other people whose strengths are different from your own, the more you will learn from them and the broader your skillset will become. And once you are a confident and experienced trainer, you can start co-teaching with trainers who are just getting started. Sharing your hard-earned knowledge is fun!