

Innovation Communities:

Trust, Mutual Learning and Action



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Research Motivation and Scope

Nordic Innovation, supporter of this research¹, is a joint effort of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and the autonomous regions of Greenland, Åland and the Faroe Islands under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers. Nordic Innovation aims to create cross-border, cross-sector relationships among companies and other institutions in its member countries focused on innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable growth. It also promotes the Nordic region as a leading innovation hub for international partners in other parts of the world.

Jørn Bang Andersen, a Senior Advisor to Nordic Innovation, has been an active participant in the Kellogg Innovation Network² (KIN), founded and directed by Robert C. Wolcott. Though this experience together, we conceived this research project aimed at identifying and characterizing groups around the world that, like KIN and Nordic Innovation, are engaged in mutual learning about innovation and entrepreneurship management.

Initially, we were not certain what kinds of groups we would find. We were aware of a handful of groups with which we had been in contact in the course of creating and growing KIN and in the networks around Nordic Innovation. Much of the early work involved an iterative process of finding candidates through a combination of Internet searches and outreach to our professional networks, while at the same time defining and redefining what exactly we were trying to find. (As of this writing, a Google search for the phrase “innovation network” yields almost four million results.) As we discovered groups that seemed to exemplify what we consider to be special and different about KIN, we began to develop taxonomies and refine exactly what characteristics differentiate groups of interest.

Over time, although the formal title on the research contract with Nordic Innovation is “Mapping Global Innovation and Entrepreneurship Networks,” we came to use the term Innovation Communities (InnoComms) to emphasize groups that focus on relationships,

¹ Contract 10109, Mapping Global Innovation and Entrepreneurship Networks.

² www.kinglobal.org

common interests and experiences, and personal inspiration and support. We distinguish these from groups that focus on achieving specific business, macroeconomic or social results or on academic research. We will develop this distinction and others in depth in the body of the report.

For now, what is important is that doing so has narrowed the scope of our research considerably. We considered that advantageous, as it allowed us to focus on the emerging phenomenon of InnoComms and to eliminate organizations and networks that, while very important and valuable, have been studied extensively elsewhere. Examples of organizations that were mostly outside the scope of our research included technology transfer offices, IP brokers, start-up incubators, technology parks, industry lobbying groups, corporate supplier or user networks, funding agencies, investor groups, standards bodies and research consortia. That said, we do include certain of these kinds of groups, to the extent that they facilitate peer-to-peer learning that is directed at building general innovation-enabling skills, rather than at solving specific problems.

We have been publishing excerpts from our case studies online³ and maintain a project website⁴ where people can send us information about their groups. In the end, we found and collected basic information on more than one hundred InnoComms. From that set, we conducted interviews and wrote case studies on twenty-seven of them, in ten countries. Our database includes examples from every continent, though limitations in our connections and languages made it difficult to find and identify InnoComms in certain parts of the world. We also might not have recognized certain forms of organizations as InnoComms, and their leaders might likewise not have recognized themselves as exemplars of our framework. There are fundamental differences even within a given country or culture in how people perceive and articulate trust, community, relationships, change and innovation.

Although InnoComms generally do not focus on building actual businesses or fostering collaboration among participants on specific innovation and entrepreneurship challenges, we believe that they can support company and industry competitiveness, expansion into international markets and regional economic development. Of particular interest for Nordic Innovation—a group of small, highly-educated countries seeking ways to collaborate with others in order to remain competitive—is the relationship between InnoComms, where people come to learn from and support each other, and the phenomenon of “open innovation,” in which companies increase their reliance on external collaboration globally. We address these topics in various places in this report.

We expect our research will be useful to a wide range of innovation and entrepreneurship

³ www.innovationexcellence.com

⁴ www.inetnets.org

leaders. Our work can contribute to a better-informed discussion of the range of structures, programs and methods that InnoComms have so far developed. It also can help us begin to see the significance and evolution of InnoComms and their role for economic development, competitiveness and innovation partnerships in a global economy. The primary target groups are as follows:

- Policymakers seeking to support innovation, entrepreneurship and economic development
- Business practitioners and consultants involved in driving or enhancing innovation and entrepreneurship
- Researchers, teachers and students of innovation and entrepreneurship
- Leaders of established and nascent InnoComms

Project Team

**Michael J. Lippitz** (Project Leader)

Mike Lippitz is a Senior Research Fellow with the Center for Research in Technology and Innovation at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University; a Principal with Clareo Partners LLC and a consultant with the Institute for Defense Analyses. Lippitz received a bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from Brown University, a master's degree in Engineering-Economic Systems from Stanford University and a PhD in Management Science and Engineering from Stanford University, under former US Secretary of Defense William J. Perry.

**Robert C. Wolcott** (Project Oversight and Research)

Robert C. Wolcott is the Co-Founder & Executive Director of the Kellogg Innovation Network (KIN) and a Senior Lecturer in Innovation & Entrepreneurship at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University. He teaches corporate innovation and entrepreneurship for Kellogg in Evanston, Miami and Hong Kong (with HKUST). Wolcott also co-founded and serves as Managing Partner of Clareo Partners LLC, a corporate strategy and innovation management consultancy specializing in new business creation and growth. Wolcott received a BA in European and Chinese History and an MS and PhD in Industrial Engineering & Management Science from Northwestern University.

**Jørn Bang Andersen** (Nordic Research and Oversight)

Jørn Bang Andersen is Senior Advisor to Nordic Innovation on innovation and globalization. Prior government advisory engagements include deputy director to Invest in Denmark at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, special advisor to the Trade Council of Denmark and the European Commission. Andersen also consults for private businesses. He received an MA in political science from Aarhus University, Denmark, and an MA in Western European Politics and International Economics from University of Essex as part of an Erasmus scholarship.

**Bradley Hartfield** (Research)

Bradley Hartfield is an Innovation and Development consultant who has specialized in the facilitation of private- and public-sector innovation and in the opportunities for “creative peace” inherent in conflict settings in both corporate and international conflict environments. With Terry Winograd, he co-founded the Human-Computer Interaction program at Stanford University. Hartfield received a bachelor’s degree in Computer Science and a master’s degree in Linguistics from Brown University, as well as a master’s degree in Public Policy from Harvard University.

**Marmon Pine** (Research, Website and Database Creator)

Marmon Pine is an established entrepreneur and has assisted numerous high-tech companies in their start-up phase. He is an independent research analyst for Clareo Partners LLC, and acts as a Business Adviser to the Vice President of Engineering and Support Services for a national distributor of medical equipment. Pine received a BS in Electrical Engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology and an MS in Electrical Engineering from the University of Southern California.

**Talya Press** (Research)

Talya Press’s strengths lie in her multicultural background and her twenty years of experience as a CEO of international companies in sectors as diverse as airline security, defense and the IT industry. Today she coaches executives and their teams, focusing on leadership development capacities, multicultural environments and their challenges, potential optimization and change management. She has studied Law (University of Tel-Aviv) and Political Science/History (Hebrew University). She also holds a master’s degree in Business Coaching (International Mozaik).

**Jennifer Yee** (Research, Lead Case Study Writer and Database Management)

Jennifer Yee is a start-up entrepreneur and Principal at Clareo Partners LLC. She has worked with high-profile media companies such as National Geographic Society, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, Time Out, and Emphasis Media in the Asia-Pacific region. She received a bachelor’s degree from Williams College and her MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

Summary

Innovation Communities (InnoComms) are groups of people who meet regularly, typically with skilled facilitation, to learn and share insights about the challenges of managing innovation and entrepreneurship. Participants in InnoComms build management capabilities and professional networks through this mutual learning and support, tapping into the knowledge and experience of people outside their own organization, industry or country. Participants hope to adapt and apply what they learn to a variety of innovation and entrepreneurship challenges when they return to their organizations. “Inspiration to action” is an important part of the InnoComm experience.

InnoComms, as we define them, do not focus on building actual businesses or collaborating to solve specific innovation and entrepreneurship challenges. This generally distinguishes them from corporate supplier or user networks, incubators, research consortia and organizations that match entrepreneurs with investors. Business partnerships and other ancillary benefits may develop among InnoComm participants, but people are there primarily to learn from each other about innovation management, not to do business together.

InnoComms are an emerging phenomenon, so our work was exploratory. We define, characterize and provide examples in five categories of InnoComms:

- Government-sponsored agencies that foster collaboration among businesses and connect them to academia and government
- University-led groups where executives share case studies and research in innovation and entrepreneurship management and implementation
- Business executive groups that share best practices in innovation management
- Nonprofit organizations that promote sharing of business-building skills among independent entrepreneurs
- Groups of nonprofit organizations that share innovation best practices

Trust is more important in an InnoComm than in other fora where people gather to share experiences and learn from each other, such as conferences about innovation or Communities of Practice. Innovation and entrepreneurship are inherently about uncertainty, and missteps are the norm. A certain emotional safety is required for people to reveal what they do not know and share lessons from failure, and the diversity of participants requires skills in listening. Trust is built and maintained in an InnoComm through listening deeply to the interests and needs of participants, skillful facilitation and program design, and the gradual enculturation of participants to sharing and personal risk-taking. It is facilitated by shared mission, engagement, behavioral expectations, consistency and careful selection of members (exclusivity, curation).

InnoComms often create an online presence or social media platform where participants can share information, find people with common interests and interact. We reckon that those InnoComms leveraging social media will grow as today's young people advance professionally, and more sophisticated Internet-based collaboration tools may enrich the InnoComm experience online, better recreating in-person levels of trust. Additionally, we encountered some purely online communities that today tend to be diffused and organic, rather than orchestrated and deliberate like an InnoComm, but intend to foster in-person networks.

The relationship of Innovation Communities to regional development—especially the creation of innovation clusters or “hot spots”—is a story still being told. Governments, regional coalitions, universities, industry, consultants and the World Bank have all made significant efforts and investments aimed at creating clusters, with limited success. The skill enhancement, inspiration and international connection of innovation leaders in an InnoComm helps individual organizations develop distinctive innovation approaches. The trusted relationships engendered in an InnoComm could be expected to enhance the development of clusters.

Background

Every organization – not just business – needs one core competence: innovation.
– Peter F. Drucker

What Do We Mean By Innovation and Innovation Management?

Innovation is increasingly imperative for all types of organizations. Corporations must continually search for new competitive positions in the face of globalization, new market challengers and even the development of whole new markets and industries. Governments struggle to provide services efficiently and to create financial and regulatory environments that support private innovation in creating well-paying jobs. Nonprofits and NGOs strive to solve problems that often require adaptation to local conditions and complex sets of stakeholders while still proving effectiveness to donors.

In all of these contexts, the term “innovation” can refer to a wide variety of activities and results. Essential to the definition is contextual novelty. Novelty can refer either to the introduction of something “new and improved” or to an activity that requires a person or organization to do things differently. (Economist and innovation theory pioneer Joseph Schumpeter, in his book *The Theory of Economic Development*, identified the essence of innovation as the conception, refinement and realization of “new combinations ... something newly tried.”) Equally important is the creation of significant value, which distinguishes an invention (something new) from an innovation (something both new and valuable).

Novelty and value are, of course, matters of degree. For our purposes, we are interested in attempts by individuals and organizations to expand their capabilities or offerings into areas beyond their core competencies, where there is significant uncertainty. The literature refers to such innovations as “radical” or “disruptive” or “discontinuous,” as

distinct from innovations that are “incremental” or “sustaining.” Ordinary new product development, where there are only minimal changes to the form and function of an offering and very little development risk, represents a form of incremental innovation.⁵

There are also numerous innovation dimensions, such as product, process, organizational, brand and others. Business Model Innovation refers to a differentiating strategy across elements of a business beyond just product or services, including partnerships, channels to market, sales competencies, supply chain or manufacturing capabilities and so forth.

Regardless of the type or scope of an organization's innovation efforts, the innovation management process may be defined as follows:

Innovation Management is the discipline of guiding, discovering, refining and selecting concepts for development, and then resolving uncertainty from idea to implementation through a deliberative process that varies based on the level and type of risk at different stages⁶

The notion of innovation management—an oxymoron to some—is part of a movement that seeks to examine and define the foundations of how knowledge is created and transferred and how, in an organizational context, it might be “managed.” That movement can be traced back to Peter Drucker, who coined the term “knowledge worker” in his 1959 book *The Landmarks of Tomorrow*, and a chapter in his 1969 book *The Age of Discontinuity*, which popularized the term “knowledge economy.”

As usual, Drucker was prescient. Not until the 1990s did the concept of an “information society” and its transformative possibilities become widely recognized. Initial efforts to capture organization knowledge through information technology systems were not producing the expected results. Ikujiro Nonaka’s 1991 article in *Harvard Business Review*, “The Knowledge-Creating Company,” proposed that learning takes place through social interactions that combine explicit and tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is the know-how, judgment, reasoning process, creativity and wisdom embodied in the work of a

⁵ For an organization where leaders genuinely support innovation and provide teams with sufficient and appropriate resources and incentives, the absence of regular failures suggests that significant innovation is not occurring. But in a well-functioning innovation process, these failures should ideally occur early, when costs are relatively low.

⁶ There are a variety of methods, tools and frameworks for managing innovation programs and projects:

- Market research: Identify stakeholders and their connections, critical issues and unmet needs.
- Futures: Consider how the world might unfold and the implications of possible future states.
- Ideation: Generate preliminary thoughts about innovation opportunities (often aided by experiential immersion or creativity techniques).
- Options: Combine ideas into substantial innovation opportunities, backed up by evidence and insights, that could address critical issues and needs today or in the future.
- Portfolio management: Group options into long-term growth platforms that represent strategic alternatives, and set priorities among them.
- Concept development: Sketch or prototype an element of a growth platform, including the offering, target customer segments, value propositions for all stakeholders and requirements to deliver.
- Business model: Fully define the business model, the required support systems and a plan for learning.

master craftsman or an experienced scientist, designer or tool-builder. Peter Senge's 1990 book *The Fifth Discipline* developed the concept of a "learning organization" that is constantly evolving and adapting, based not only on increasing personal mastery but also constant challenging of mental models and development of shared vision. Arie de Geus, head of Shell Oil Company's Strategic Planning Group, showed how such practices could be instilled within a large corporation to help it become a "living company."

Open Innovation

At a conference in 1990, Bill Joy of Sun Microsystems is reputed to have quipped, "No matter who you are, most of the smartest people work for someone else." His statement presaged what would become a major change in mindset in the field of innovation. No longer could companies rely solely on internal development to

"No matter who you are, most of the smartest people work for someone else."

cover the range and diversity of innovation relevant to their markets. In 2003, Henry Chesbrough popularized the term "open innovation" to refer to "a paradigm that assumes the firms can and should use external ideas as well as internal ideas, and internal and external paths to market.... Open innovation combines internal and external ideas into architectures and systems whose requirements are defined by a business model."⁷

The pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries in the 1980s were among the first to approach business development based on external monitoring and collaboration. They partnered extensively with small biotechnology firms to access the tacit knowledge and intellectual property key to success in a domain characterized by high uncertainty and requiring a deep and wide range of scientific knowledge and specialized capabilities. Research suggests that large pharmaceutical companies that were more active external collaborators also performed better over the long term with respect to both total market return and relative valuations.⁸

Around the same time, Michael Porter's research highlighted the importance of geographic clusters of specialized companies and institutions that collectively generate better-than-average productivity gains. In clusters, people and companies form relationships across the professional, organizational, social and hierarchical boundaries of companies, universities and government entities involved in one or more related businesses (along with important support services and other resources). Many of the advantages of clusters stem from having the ingredients of innovation and

⁷ Henry Chesbrough, *Open Innovation* (Harvard Business School Press, Cambridge, 2003).

⁸ Robert C. Wolcott, *Network strategy, innovation and performance: A taxonomy of firm networks based on competencies, network economics and market structure, and its application to the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries* (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 2002).

entrepreneurship readily available: access to information on technologies and trends, allowing companies to perceive market needs early; sharing of tacit knowledge (even secrets) within trusted communities; intensive competition in the local market that keeps everyone on their toes, often through frequent job-hopping by key people; access to capital to start new businesses in newly invented markets; and tight supplier and user relationships for executing on new ideas at scale.⁹ The result, in successful clusters, is faster cycles of innovation and a strong entrepreneurial culture.

Note that malformed clusters can also retard innovation when companies adopt the same way of competing and suppress disruptive ideas. The Los Angeles entertainment cluster, for instance, seems in perpetual battle with new digital technologies. And governments' efforts to build clusters more often than not fail to meet expectations.¹⁰ Recent research suggests that international connections may be more important than local clusters for driving radical innovation.¹¹

Eric von Hippel described how suppliers and users—not manufacturers—drive innovation in some industries.¹² The rise of the Internet in the 1990s fostered an explosion in user-driven innovation in the form of open source software development, customer communities and the like. The Internet also made it easier to discover new technologies and product ideas globally, including organized electronic R&D markets. The concurrent rise in private venture capital in the 1990s encouraged talented knowledge workers to leave large corporate laboratories, undermining the internal, “closed” innovation model in industry after industry. As a result, more and more companies are adopting collaborative research models while improving their internal capabilities to search, refine and integrate into their innovation regimes external knowledge and opportunities.

Technology brokering is another form of corporate engagement, where some of the firm's R&D resources are reoriented to seek novel combinations of existing technologies from outside, seemingly unrelated industries. Andrew Hargadon writes, “Pursuing a strategy of technology brokering means recognizing that a key role of corporate R&D is bridging the many different industries and markets that exist, and building the necessary combinations of technologies and people to make potential breakthroughs possible.”¹³ Procter and Gamble has been a leader with its Connect+Develop program, which engages its R&D staff with outside inventors. Connect+Develop is now a magnet for entrepreneurs in the consumer packaged goods space.

⁹ Michael Porter, *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* (Free Press, New York, 1990).

¹⁰ Josh Lerner, *Boulevard of Broken Dreams* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2009).

¹¹ Rune Dahl Fitjar and Andrés Rodríguez-Pose, “When Local Interaction Does Not Suffice: Sources of Firm Innovation in Urban Norway,” (Institute IMDEA Social Sciences, working paper, February 2011).

¹² Eric von Hippel, *The Sources of Innovation* (Oxford University Press, London, 1988).

¹³ Andrew Hargadon, *How Breakthroughs Happen* (Harvard Business School Press, Cambridge, 2003).

Today, the challenge of innovation management has evolved from technology-based product and process management to network-based value creation across the full breadth of what a corporation does and how it interacts with its ecosystem of customers, suppliers, regulators, investors, media and other stakeholders. Satish Nambisan and Mohanbir Sawhney defined four models of open innovation based on external networks (which they term “network-centric innovation”). These models distinguished by whether network leadership is centralized or diffused and whether the space for innovation is defined or emergent:¹⁴

The challenge of innovation management has evolved from technology-based product and process management to network-based value creation.

- Orchestra (centralized leadership, defined innovation space): A diverse set of partners collaborate around a defined architecture, orchestrated by a lead firm.
Example: the Boeing 787 Dreamliner project
- Creative Bazaar (centralized leadership, emergent innovation space): A lead company controls commercialization of a broad set of innovations sourced from a diverse network, facilitated by intermediaries.
Example: a music label
- Jam Central (diffused leadership, emergent innovation space): Innovators network in an improvisational manner without clear leadership, toward evolving goals.
Example: a musical jam session
- Mod Station (diffused leadership, defined innovation space): Innovation is implemented by a diverse, unorganized community of users and experts around an existing, defined architecture.
Example: the computer gaming industry

In our experience, most practitioners and students of innovation use the terms “innovation network” and “innovation community” to refer to these and other types of business building. We use the term InnoComm to refer to the different but related phenomenon of mutual learning within a network or community, usually distinct from doing business or working on a project together. InnoComms are similar to (but not the same as) Communities of Practice.

¹⁴ Satish Nambisan and Mohanbir Sawhney, *The Global Brain: Your Roadmap for Innovating Faster and Smarter in a Networked World* (Wharton School Publishing, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2008).

Communities of Practice

In 1998, Etienne Wenger coined the phrase Community of Practice (CoP), defined as “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.”¹⁵ CoPs are closely related to InnoComms and share many characteristics. For instance, Wenger’s “seven actions to cultivate a successful Community of Practice”¹⁶ largely apply to InnoComms also:

1. Design the CoP to evolve with changes in members’ interests and goals.
2. Create opportunities for open dialog inside the CoP and with people outside.
3. Welcome and allow different levels of participation.
4. Develop both public and private community spaces.
5. Explicitly discuss the value and productivity of participation in the CoP.
6. Combine familiarity and excitement.
7. Create a rhythm for the CoP—vibrant but not overwhelming.

Communities of Practice can play an important role in innovation by providing liquidity in knowledge markets.

CoPs can play an important role in innovation by providing liquidity in knowledge markets. Innovative concepts can be generated anywhere within an organization. Unfortunately, they are often created in locations where they are unlikely to be acted on. An effective CoP helps move concepts to the right locus for action, bridging the perspectives and values

of disparate organizations. For instance, researchers in universities, agencies and corporations may share fundamental skill sets and explicit knowledge but may have tremendous gaps in tacit knowledge and motivation. The university researcher seeks insights that can be published, while the agency researcher is looking for ways to meet the agency mission, and the corporate researcher is seeking potentially profitable products and process improvements. Through a CoP, people with different motivations can define collectively beneficial partnerships.

An InnoComm could be considered to be a form of CoP. However, the nature of InnoComms sets them apart and gives them the potential to play an important role in innovation not routinely addressed by CoPs.

¹⁵ Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott, and William M. Snyder, *Cultivating Communities of Practice* (Harvard Business School Press, Cambridge, 2002).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

The Innovation Community (InnoComm) Phenomenon

The Emergence of InnoComms

Innovation and entrepreneurship are increasingly imperative for all types of organizations: corporations, governments and nonprofits. Over the past few decades, the management of innovation and entrepreneurship has evolved from a serendipitous, champion-led process to a managed, team-based process. In the 1980s, much attention focused on the so-called “fuzzy front end,” where initial ideas are formed. Over time, companies adapted phase-gate methods to provide a disciplined yet flexible management tool for the early stages of innovation projects. And there were increased efforts to improve the quality of ideas through better customer and market insights, using more sophisticated quantitative analysis, as well as non-quantitative tools such as ethnographic research and mapping of customers “problems to be solved.” Some companies created special spaces for creative ideation.

As early-stage innovation management came to be adopted by companies, the locus of innovation and entrepreneurship management moved to the problems of managing a portfolio of promising concepts and, more important, to transitioning successful ones into operating businesses for scaling. Turning a good idea or invention into a significant profitable business highlighted the need for innovation across all elements of a business, known today as business system or business model innovation. Related to this, starting around 2000, companies began creating Corporate Entrepreneurship organizations and processes for building new businesses in areas adjacent to the corporate core, requiring changes to several elements of their existing business systems and raising new issues in leadership and staffing.

As innovation and entrepreneurship strategies and practices have matured and diffused, enterprise leaders—be they corporate executives, managers of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), independent entrepreneurs, government officials or officers of nonprofit organizations—began to recognize that there are many people facing similar innovation and entrepreneurship challenges. As described in the previous section, the rise of open innovation and communities of practice (CoPs) meant that the environment was ripe for enterprises seeking knowledge about innovation and entrepreneurship

strategy and about management from peers outside of their home organizations.

We believe that there are at least four factors that have driven innovation and entrepreneurship leaders to seek more diverse sources of knowledge, beyond the value chain of their industries:

1. Companies within an industry tend to adopt undifferentiated innovation approaches.

Manufacturing firms tend to focus on new technology; chemical companies tend to focus on process improvements; consumer products firms tend to focus on distribution and branding innovations; financial firms tend to focus on developing new services and customer experiences.¹⁷ Innovation leaders seek lessons from other industries and other parts of the world to help them see things differently and develop distinctive approaches.

2. Many industries have not implemented modern innovation and entrepreneurship practices.

Certain industries have been able to maintain their competitiveness without having to rely on innovation and entrepreneurship. But the innovation imperative is reaching new industries all the time. For instance, companies in the mining industry are in the midst of the largest market expansion since World War II. In order to realize the full potential of this “super cycle,” companies need to make significant changes to their ways of doing business.¹⁸ But until recently, there were few companies in the mining industry that had developed innovative approaches. Leaders in these companies have much to learn from other industries as they begin their innovation and entrepreneurship journey.

3. Global expansion requires varied models of innovation to benchmark.

Related to factor 2, companies seeking growth through international expansion find that success often depends on creating new business models for different countries. As globalization touches more and more industries, the need to learn about doing business in foreign markets is increasing. Linking innovation and entrepreneurship leaders in foreign countries can provide insights into the creation of appropriate approaches.

4. Connecting with compatriots in other, noncompetitive industries allows for greater openness and sharing of innovation and entrepreneurship challenges.

Leaders may be reluctant to share their business challenges when there are competitors in the room. But openness about current weaknesses is critical to

¹⁷ Mohanbir Sawhney, Robert C. Wolcott and Inigo Arroniz, “The 12 Different Ways for Companies to Innovate” (*MIT Sloan Management Review*, Spring 2006, pp. 75–81).

¹⁸ Peter Bryant, “The Case for Innovation in the Mining Industry,” White Paper, Clareo Partners, LLC, 2011.

identifying and learning relevant innovation and entrepreneurship management capabilities. Innovation and entrepreneurship are inherently about uncertainty, and missteps are the norm. Greater emotional safety is required for people to reveal what they do not know and share lessons from failure.

Definition of InnoComms

InnoComms are closely related to but distinct from CoPs. Best practices are harder to define in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship management than in other domains of expertise. While skills and processes in a technology field or a standardized management field can be learned and applied across organizations, one can rarely transplant an innovation process or method from one organization to another without significant customization and adaption. Each organization's innovation and entrepreneurship approach must be tailored to its business context, strategic goals and organizational culture.

For instance, during the 1970s and 1980s, 3M was recognized as one of the most innovative companies in the United States. However, commenting on 3M's well-known practice of allowing people to self-allocate up to 15% of their time, pharmaceutical leader and innovator Dr. Nelson Levy quipped, "I might as well give my people 15 percent paid leave!"¹⁹ Google has implemented a version of the 3M practice, allowing employees to spend 20% of their time promoting their ideas to colleagues, assembling teams, exploring concepts and building prototypes. But Google's implementation bears little resemblance to practices at 3M. Rather, practices had to be substantially adapted to Google's business context and company culture.

InnoComms emphasize diversity. CoPs are frequently formed within a single company to facilitate information exchange and coordination across business units. InnoComm participants always come from multiple organizations. At base, innovation requires the ability to perceive, articulate and synthesize ideas across domains. Seeing things from a new angle improves problem solving and value creation. While participants in an InnoComm share an interest in or responsibility for driving innovation and entrepreneurship in their organizations, their particular contexts are likely to be quite different. Indeed, participants are attracted to an InnoComm in part for the ability to interact with people from industries and cultures that are different than those they ordinarily encounter. This diversity of mindsets creates a greater listening challenge for participants in an InnoComm than would be required for a CoP or conference focused on their particular industry or domain. They need to suspend critical judgment and reorganize their thinking in order to hear another person who may represent very different expertise and a very different perspective.

¹⁹ Comment to Robert C. Wolcott at a meeting of the Kellogg Innovation Network, 2004.

Another element of an InnoComm is “inspiration to action.” In many companies, innovation and entrepreneurship are not well integrated with corporate strategy, and executives in charge of driving innovation and entrepreneurship find they have a lonely and often contentious job. For many participants in an InnoComm, forming relationships with kindred spirits provides support and inspiration for taking on the uphill battle of fostering significant change, building their confidence to embark on new possibilities.

Participation in an InnoComm can provide a form of renewal.

Participation in an InnoComm can, therefore, provide a form of renewal and a place to build a personal network of supportive colleagues. In the most intensive InnoComm experiences, participants may come to view themselves differently through

the experience of trust and support in the community. Sometimes, artistic events are included among an InnoComm’s activities to better engage the transformative power of both hemispheres of the brain. In the best case, sharing the InnoComm experience with respected colleagues can make the achievement of innovation management acumen seem more personally attainable. In that sense, participants leave an InnoComm event as better, more creative innovators than when they started.

Successful InnoComms tend to evolve from informal meetings to purposeful engagement that is generally not available from alternative sources of innovation and entrepreneurship management skills, such as executive education or engagement of consultants. As such, they are not *ad hoc* or leaderless. In our definition of an InnoComm, there is structure and facilitation aimed at building trust and facilitating connections across boundaries of experience, age, culture, etc.

Critically, however, InnoComms generally do not focus on building actual businesses or collaborating to solve specific innovation and entrepreneurship challenges. Partnerships may form naturally among InnoComm participants, but people are there to learn from each other, not necessarily to do business together or solve specific problems. Etienne Wenger uses the Impressionists as an example of a CoP. They used to meet in cafes and studios to discuss the style of painting they were inventing together. But they usually painted alone. In that sense, they were like an InnoComm. However, the interactions that helped make them into a community of practice were largely leaderless. An InnoComm is more deliberate. It is not like a conference or networking event, where the connections are usually largely unguided and where the expectation is that people are seeking business connections.

InnoComms' focus on learning and relationships distinguishes them from many important and valuable networking organizations that focus on achieving specific business, macroeconomic or social results (e.g., technology transfer offices and IP brokers, incubators and technology parks, industry lobbying groups and supplier or user networks, funding agencies and investor groups, and standards bodies and research consortia).

On occasion, however, an organization such as an incubator or technology transfer office will host an InnoComm. Some of the InnoComms described in our case studies are hosted by organizations whose capability and community-building activities support their broader efforts to achieve particular results. And, as suggested a moment ago, participants in InnoComms (and the organizations that sponsor their participation) expect that some business or social value will arise as a result of the learning and connections formed. While forming partnerships is not the focus, it is common for business deals to occur among participants or for participating companies to engage the InnoComm leader or an expert speaker at an event to provide proprietary advice specific to their corporate innovation and entrepreneurship challenges.

InnoComms' focus on learning and relationships distinguishes them from many important and valuable networking organizations.

This is perhaps the most subtle aspect of an InnoComm, one that we will delve into in more depth later in this report, when discussing the importance of trust. The essential element is that the financial goals of the host, speakers and participants in an InnoComm should not interfere with the building of trust and openness critical to mutual learning. In particular, the organizations that host an InnoComm strive to be perceived as an "honest broker." Participants, particularly speakers, must avoid the perception that their contribution is more focused on "selling" or business development than on mutual learning. This is inevitably a matter of judgment.

In summary, InnoComms are orchestrated groups of people who:

- **Focus on learning and building capabilities** to manage innovation and entrepreneurship, versus seeking specific business, macroeconomic or social results
- **Emphasize sharing and mutual learning** among regularly involved participants from diverse organizations, industries and/or countries, toward building trust and relationships, as opposed to largely one-way instruction, as in training classes
- **Are orchestrated and managed by defined leaders** and usually include a core group of committed participants, versus unstructured networking events where interactions are *ad hoc* and there is little continuity
- **Are action-oriented** – not exclusively academic – but not aimed necessarily at forming partnerships among the host, speakers or participants

Types of InnoComms

Much of the early work in this research involved an iterative process of discovering candidates, while at the same time defining and redefining what an InnoComm is. We were interested in learning groups, but we quickly eliminated purely academic networks because we wanted to focus on practitioners of innovation. The learning focus also eliminated most networks whose goal is achieving specific business, macroeconomic or social results. Our interest in peer-to-peer sharing narrowed our scope further. Over time, we came to use the term Innovation Communities rather than Innovation Networks to emphasize that groups of interest focus on relationships, personal inspiration and support.

Once we had collected a few dozen candidates, we created a taxonomy that distinguished innovation and entrepreneurship groups based on what kind of organization served as the host or organizer, where the InnoComm received funding for its operations and what “customers” were the focus for the group. We reasoned that the nature of the host organization—government, university, business or nonprofit organization (NGO, foundation, etc.)—would shape the kinds of activities it would pursue. The source of funding would influence the mission and objectives of the InnoComm and, in cases where the funding comes from a different source than the target participants, highlight different kinds of institutional relationships.

These distinctions created sixty-four possible categories of InnoComms: three aspects (host, funding, focus) crossed with four organizational categories (government, university, nonprofit, business). We consolidated some of the categories, considered examples of each, and identified those that seemed to best fit our definition of an InnoComm. We were left with the five categories in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of InnoComms

Host: Govt. Funding: Govt. or business Focus: Business	Government-sponsored agencies that foster collaboration among businesses and connect them to academia and government
Host: University Funding: Govt., business or nonprofit Focus: Business	University-led groups where executives share case studies and lessons in innovation and entrepreneurship management and implementation
Host: Business Funding: Business Focus: Business	Business executive groups that share best practices in innovation management

Host: Nonprofit Funding: Govt., business or nonprofit Focus: Business	Nonprofit organizations that promote sharing of business-building skills among independent entrepreneurs
Host: Govt. or nonprofit Funding: Govt. or nonprofit Focus: Govt. or nonprofit	Groups of government or nonprofit organizations that share innovation best practices

In the remainder of this section, we describe each type in turn and provide examples. Many InnoComms do not fit neatly into these categories, however. For instance, some university-led groups and nonprofit organizations receive funding from local government and pursue a mission that overlaps with government-sponsored agencies. Many universities have programs focused on teaching students skills that will help them be independent entrepreneurs and link them with mentors, experts and investors. One of the InnoComms we profile has members that are nonprofit organizations that support entrepreneurs in developing countries. The membership of business executive groups is very similar to that of certain government-sponsored and university-led InnoComms, and they use largely the same methods of fostering peer-to-peer learning.

There are doubtless other taxonomies that could be used to categorize the InnoComms we have found to date, as well as dimensions of the InnoComm experience that we have yet to identify. In each category, we have included at least one unusual example that stretches the definition in particular ways.

Government-Supported Agencies

Governments have a clear interest in promoting business creation and development in their regions. In the Background section, we described the work of Michael Porter, which highlighted the importance of geographic clusters of specialized companies and institutions that, in many cases, are “hot spots” of innovation and entrepreneurship. We noted that efforts by governments to build clusters more often than not fail to meet expectations. Sometimes, these failures are due to bad design, such as failing to recognize that encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship is more complex than just redressing problems of insufficient funding for entrepreneurs or creating infrastructure. Innovation hot spots are ecosystems that include experienced lawyers and marketers, a pool of relevant talent, local customers willing to partner with small and medium-sized enterprises, universities actively involved in technology transfer and networking, and robust legal systems and capital markets.²⁰

Many, if not most, government-supported agencies are directly involved in supporting commercialization of technologies, incubation of new businesses, or fostering

²⁰ Josh Lerner, *Boulevard of Broken Dreams* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2009).

connections between entrepreneurs and investors. As such, they generally do not fit our definition of an InnoComm. However, we discovered several examples of such groups that also support the creation of peer-to-peer sharing, which is viewed as complimentary to their more direct efforts at building local business.

For instance, the **Innovation Network Corporation of Japan (INCJ)**, launched in 2009, is a public-private partnership between the Japanese government and major corporations. INCJ makes investments aimed at fostering “flow of technology and expertise beyond the boundaries of existing organizational structures”—be they start-up companies, medium-sized enterprises or large, established firms—and at building an ecosystem of innovation. In Japan, many industries retain “silo” mentalities, and many companies have a tradition of “going it alone.” To overcome this, INCJ created three distinct approaches to bringing people together. At one of these, “the Roman Market,” roughly sixty entrepreneurs, inventors, functional and operations experts and students meet monthly to share and discuss innovation and entrepreneurship challenges. About one third are regular, core members, including seasoned entrepreneurs and VCs. After the meeting, participants continue their discussion informally at a nearby restaurant.

Nordic Innovation (sponsor of this research project), a subsidiary of the intergovernmental Nordic Council of Ministers, stimulates innovation and promotes the Nordic region as an innovation hub in a number of ways: funding and publishing research, facilitating public-private partnerships and fostering learning and networking between companies. For instance, the Measured and Managed Innovation Programme (MMI) brings together 100 companies to learn about increasing the effectiveness of their innovation efforts. Participating companies (selected by the national innovation agencies of their home country) are diverse in industry, size and maturity. MMI has helped establish a common understanding and language that supports a shared perspective on the process and nature of innovation. It has also helped to build relationships across national boundaries toward the goal of collective improvement. In addition, Nordic Innovation has other programs to encourage sharing and relationship-building internationally, such as their Nordic Green Global Innovation Centers, which link executives in the cleantech industry in the Nordic region with their counterparts in China and Japan.

Kea New Zealand (formerly Kiwi Expat Association) has built a global network of expatriate New Zealanders and friends of New Zealand that aims to inspire and connect skilled and experienced expats with New Zealand-based businesses and social/cultural institutions. Originally started in 2003 by a small but influential group of successful New Zealanders, in 2005 it received significant funding from the NZ Ministry of Economic Development and in 2007 from the NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, allowing it to hire full-time paid Regional Managers in 23 chapters around the world. The World Class New Zealand program, one of Kea’s efforts, selects the most successful Kea

members to, among other things, work collectively with the New Zealand government to improve the country's innovation performance. A series of census campaigns has created a detailed database of tens of thousands of New Zealanders around the world.

The Colorado Innovation Network (COIN) was launched in November 2011 by Governor John Hickenlooper. COIN's mission is to stimulate local economic development by fostering collaboration among leaders from federally funded research labs, higher education institutions, government and community organizations, industry partners and growth companies, as well as high-growth entrepreneurs. The Innovation Summit, first held in August 2012, hosted more than 250 innovation leaders from around the state and world for a two-day summit in Denver. It culminated with a one-year action plan addressing how to enable innovation and new business creation, with progress reports due at the next summit. One COIN initiative, The Urban Innovation Coalition, brings together municipal, economic development and community leaders from the major metropolitan areas of Colorado to share best practices, devise programs, and bring consistency and efficiency to efforts aimed at early-stage businesses. The Colorado Innovation Index, released annually at the COIN Innovation Summit, measures Colorado's industry-driven and overall innovation progress.

Knowledge Transfer Networks (KTNs) aim to stimulate innovation and to improve the United Kingdom's innovation performance through peer-to-peer collaboration and knowledge transfer. KTNs are organized by technical fields (e.g., electronics) or application domains (e.g., transport), with membership made up of UK businesses, universities and finance and technology organizations. KTNs organize Special Interest Groups and provide online access to reports, newsletters, webinars/e-training, events diaries, e-conferencing and collaboration tools. Such groups prepare the ground for companies to collaborate, and KTN facilitates such collaboration by providing program and policy advice to UK science and technology agencies and other funding sources.

Manufacturing Innovation Network (MIN)—created in 2009 by the Business Development Office of the City of Kitchener, Ontario—is an online network for manufacturers and their stakeholders in the Waterloo region of Ontario, Canada. The MIN's activities promote sharing of best practices within the industry through industry networking groups, where members from particular industries post presentations, articles, and other information of interest to (a subset of) their peers, and where interested members can find each other and connect in person to discuss common interests in more depth. Along the same lines, MIN maintains an events board for its members to post educational and networking events. MIN also seeks to encourage connections between the business community and local universities.

University-Led Groups

A variety of universities have explored hosting InnoComms. Sometimes a university will

partner with a government agency that perceives community building as supporting its regional economic development mission. In that respect, certain university-led InnoComms could be considered to be in the same category as the InnoComms profiled in the previous section, but with a more research-oriented flavor. We profile two university-led InnoComms that were launched with funding from government but evolved to be member-supported, and one that was launched by a university but later attracted government funding to expand its effort. As with other government-supported groups, they tend to focus on small and medium-sized enterprises, though they sometimes include large companies and local divisions of multinational corporations.

Other university-based InnoComms are driven by a professor or professors who wish to enhance their research in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship by connecting with practitioners. These professors are often in business schools; relationships with corporate executives provide them insight into unresolved management issues, while also exposing executives to the latest academic research. Unlike government-supported groups, which tend to focus on small and medium enterprises in a particular region, such university-led InnoComms engaged more with large, global corporations.

A third category of university-led groups are academic programs that also provide networking support with experienced entrepreneurs and potential investors. We decided to group these programs along with nonprofit groups and foundations in the next section, which describes groups that are focused specifically on independent entrepreneurs.

The **Cardiff University Innovation Network**, formed in 1996, is an example of the first form of university-led InnoComm. Housed within the university's Strategic Development Directorate and funded in part by the Welsh government, it serves as a noncompetitive, neutral space to solve problems and support cross-sector innovation among local businesses and between these businesses and the university. The network holds nine events per year (that are free to its members), covering both broad topics and specific industries. The presentation portion of the program often includes a case study of a local company, with learnings that may be beneficial to the community at-large. To facilitate networking, attendees are "color-badged" by themes related to the event topic so that they may more easily identify other attendees with similar interests. In addition to informal networking and presentations, these programs sometimes include smaller clinics and one-to-one meetings. The network maintains a hotline to address innovation challenges by connecting people within the community and is experimenting with social media, aimed in part at engaging groups underrepresented at events, such as young professionals and women.

The **Knowledge Center for Innovation (KCI)**, housed within the Faculty of Industrial Engineering and Management at the Technion, Israel, was founded in 2008, with

the goal of accelerating innovation by disseminating information and knowledge, fostering collaboration and establishing a network of researchers, businesspeople and policymakers. Three years of initial funding was provided by the Israeli Ministry of Science and Technology. KCI focuses on the interface between high-tech and “traditional” industries, with some work on service industries as well. The Managing Innovation Forum, started in 2010, brings together 40–45 companies for 8–10 meetings per year. A typical meeting begins with a lecture by a CEO or industry or academic expert. Then there is a break for dinner, and afterwards smaller groups sit around a table and engage in a “live case study” of a real company or industry issue. One goal of this less formal interaction is to begin building relationships between high-tech and low-tech companies, and some collaborations have already resulted.

Fundação Dom Cabral (FDC) characterizes itself as, “a development center for executives, entrepreneurs and public managers ... [that] has been committed to dialoguing and listening to organizations, and building integrated educational solutions alongside them.” In 2002, FDC formed an Innovation Center, and today the center manages three Reference Centers for Innovation, each with about 12–18 participating companies. The meetings are structured around an open discussion with an innovation expert; a benchmarking case study from a company that has experience with the relevant practice and a facilitated knowledge-sharing opportunity, where small groups of 5–6 companies meet around a roundtable to discuss issues, challenges and solutions related to the topic. Each meeting concludes with an open plenary session with the invited guests. The highlights from cases and presentations are recorded and made available on the FDC website and in elaborated case studies and working papers, which are later made available to the participating companies, to be used to build or develop new capabilities. (In 2008, federal and state government agencies began participating in and, later, funding some of the Innovation Center’s research, with a focus on breaking down barriers between companies.) To disseminate the knowledge generated, the center organizes a one-day conference every year for about 500 people, where each participating company in a Reference Center can invite up to ten guests.

Kellogg Innovation Network (KIN) at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, was created by a professor, Robert C. Wolcott, in 2003, in collaboration with Professor Mohanbir Sawhney. KIN is a meeting place for business executives and innovation leaders from across multiple domains and industries committed to ongoing collaboration around understanding global trends and market disruptors, leading-edge research and novel solutions to growth. KIN hosts three events per year (where participants pay a per-event fee, as for a conference): two “dialogues” for up to 60 people (one hosted at Kellogg and one at a member company), which focus on a specific topic in innovation and entrepreneurship management; and KIN Global, an annual event for about 200 people that addresses broader global issues in the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in creating prosperity. Through these events, regular

KIN participants create a meaningful professional network, and Kellogg researchers are better able to define relevant and timely research problems based on real challenges facing today's innovation and entrepreneurship leaders. KIN events balance expert presentations with panels and breakout groups that encourage give-and-take and mutual learning. Programs leave ample time for informal discussions and social settings to build community. Every event includes an artistic program to reinforce the links between innovation as a creative activity, hard work, analysis and practice, while also challenging participants to apply both sides of the brain.

Berkeley Innovation Forum at the Haas School of Business, University of California at Berkeley, was founded by Henry Chesbrough, author of the well-known 2003 book *Open Innovation*. After receiving a number of queries about concepts published in the book, Chesbrough decided that the most efficient way to share best practices was to convene a group of 10–12 companies in an idea-sharing forum. Membership in the Innovation Forum, which costs companies \$10,000 per year, includes two two-day Forums, two briefing sessions, and access to online materials, related workshops, new research from Chesbrough's Center for Open Innovation and other relevant innovation research at Berkeley. Companies that participate in the Innovation Forum cannot be direct competitors (unless the prior competing member assents to the inclusion of a competitor) and must be willing to openly engage and contribute to the group. Agendas are organized around specific topics, typically with a speaker from outside of Berkeley, and include time for companies to present their experiences directly to one another and for structured feedback from the group. Typical sessions run 45–75 minutes and may be presentations, panels, “press conferences” (where a presenter makes a short statement and then takes questions) or workshop challenges (where members work on a problem together and compete for prizes). The Forum has experimented with evening entertainment so that participants may share an experience together as an accent to the program or energizer before the program begins in earnest.

The Innovation Network at Cornell University is a program of The Leland C. and Mary M. Pillsbury Institute for Hospitality Entrepreneurship at the School of Hotel Administration. It was the brainchild of an alumnus, Lee Pillsbury, who wanted to bring together his hospitality peers—a group of the most senior leaders of hotel brands, management companies, and ownership groups—to focus on innovation. A core group of top leaders was recruited for the effort, and they served as a reference to bring in others. (Attendance is by invitation only, as the high caliber of meeting attendees would otherwise attract most of the industry.) The network meets for one day twice per year, each meeting coinciding with a major hospitality industry conference that most CEOs attend. The first meeting occurred in 2008, just as the Great Recession was hitting the United States and the world, so the original funding model (corporate subscriptions, like the Berkeley Innovation Forum) was changed to a sponsorship model by vendors and service providers to the industry, provided these companies could prove that they were

innovative. (More recently, participants have been required to make a minimum \$1,000 tax-deductible gift to the school.) The events always have roundtables, and almost half the time is set aside for participants to talk to and learn from each other. To help make the programs enjoyable and mind-expanding, some of the speakers come from completely different industries. Recent events have emphasized team-building exercises, where each table is equipped with Intellimeet technology that facilitates real-time sharing of notes and ideas around challenges presented to the group.

Business Executive Groups

There are a variety of InnoComms that cater to the same audiences as government or university-led InnoComms but are hosted and facilitated by private companies or nonprofit organizations or self-organize. This often gives these InnoComms the character of a club, adding notable rigor and regularity to participants' engagement.

The **Club de Paris des Directeurs de l'Innovation** was created in 2008 as a pan-European forum—the members are not just Parisian or French—for research, sharing of experience and networking on innovation and entrepreneurship management. Club de Paris is the core of a broader group that meets annually for two days, as well as an even broader group of about 5,000 innovation professionals. Full membership in the Club costs €8,500 per year for six half-day meetings, six breakfast meetings, two operational/thematic workshops and the annual meeting. (Part of the funding pays for collaborative research among member companies on agreed topics.) During events, members discuss case studies and hear from experts on selected subjects. There is no notion of best practices but, rather, of biodiversity and sharing experiences. The workshops are filmed so that members who cannot attend can see both the video record and the research papers presented. Unlike other fora, where competitors are not in the room together, the Club embraces competing companies (but no consultants or other innovation service providers). This requires the creation and maintenance of a climate of trust, which is a focus of the Club's organizers.

Society for Organizational Learning (SOL) is an intentional learning community composed of organizations, individuals and local SOL communities around the world. A not-for-profit, member-governed corporation, SOL is devoted to the interdependent development of people and their institutions. Humanism—meaning reinstating the individual at the center of organizations—is SOL's guiding principle, a philosophy that creates dialogue, openness, innovation and well-being. SOL France, for instance, was established in 1999. It hosts various peer-to-peer learning fora. There are three-day seminars 2–3 times per year for thirty people at a time. (Companies usually send 3–4 people, and Sol manages the seminars so as to avoid having competitors at the same seminar.) Each seminar focuses on a specific topic, on which the group works collaboratively. Companies can also directly invite other companies to work on topics of mutual interest, in what is known as a “Club des Entreprises.” SOL also organizes

8-10 events per year where “learning tables” of six to eight people learn from stories of innovation that cover the various stages of the process.

UK Innovation Forum was formed in 2010 to create a community of science and innovation among research institutions, start-up companies and established corporations. The organization was originally backed by the UK government’s Department for Business, Innovation and Skills but today is a self-funded entity that charges a small annual subscription fee to its members, ranging from individuals (£30) to large corporations (£1,000). UKIF organizes national and regional events on science and innovation on a particular theme or technology vertical, usually in conjunction with a Knowledge Transfer Network. (See section on government-supported agencies.) UKIF is distinct in having built a robust online meeting place for collaboration and discussion, where members can turn for help and advice. “Matchmaking” software connects members based on mutual interests and complementary expertise, and webinars feature a panel of experts from among the UKIF membership.

Intelligent Formulation is another UK-based InnoComm that brings together companies to exchange best practices about innovation management and discoveries related specifically to formulation science and technology. Intelligent Formulation was founded by a regional agency (Yorkshire Chemical Focus, Ltd.) and two universities (the Institute of Pharmaceutical Innovation at the University of Bradford and Particles CIC at the University of Leeds). In addition to open events and webinars, Intelligent Formulation holds Open Innovation Roadshows: invitation-only group gatherings of 4-5 noncompeting companies that wish to collaborate on technical innovation or innovation management. Roadshow format can include structured networking, outside subject matter experts, and opportunities for peer-to-peer discussion of business challenges, with Intelligent Formulation serving as a facilitator. (Roadshows are also intended to encourage scientists to become more entrepreneurial, building business as well as technical cases for innovation and networking outside of their R&D departments.) Interested companies take turns hosting gatherings, which include presentations of each company’s needs or challenges.

The i-Net Practitioners Alliance also employs a direct company-to-company motif, where members take turns hosting events. However, this InnoComm was organized by the companies themselves, without external facilitation or funding. It was started in 2011 by Whirlpool Global Director of Innovation Moisés Noreña, who reached out to other large, noncompeting companies from diverse industries: retail, manufacturing, healthcare and consumer packaged goods. What united these companies was that were they all using the Double Diamond Process created by the consulting firm Strategos and, hence, could “speak the same language” with respect to innovation management. Membership in the Alliance must be approved unanimously by the other participating companies. The companies may not be direct competitors of any other company

in the network, and no vendors or service providers are permitted to join this group. The Alliance's primary activity is meetings where innovation leaders and practitioners share strategies and experiences on particular innovation management topics. Leaders and practitioners largely meet separately, with leaders focusing on strategic issues and practitioners sharing toolkits and best practices and mutually training each other. Scattered throughout the program are guest speakers with a diverse perspective on innovation management and strategy.

Young Presidents' Organization (YPO) is a global network of chief executives who have achieved the title of President, CEO, Managing Director or their equivalent for an established company prior to the age of forty-five. Membership candidates must also demonstrate an interest in lifelong idea exchange and be willing to commit time to the organization's activities. YPO is organized into more than 400 local or regional chapters across 123 countries that are dedicated to organizing educational and networking opportunities for its membership. Members also participate in smaller YPO Forum groups, through which they can dig deeper into issues and concerns in a facilitated peer group. YPO chapters subdivide into Forums of 8-12 peer members from noncompeting businesses who come together to share successes, challenges and other common issues in a confidential idea exchange. YPO also offers virtual forum opportunities based on leadership, industry, social enterprise and personal interests of members around the world. These forums and virtual connections represent the foundation of YPO's global networking activities, engaging members in a community of trust with other peers. To create a replicable process to establish trust, YPO has created formal codes of conduct and communications protocols, as well as informal rules of engagement to facilitate an optimal environment for idea exchange. Governing these rules of engagement is the requirement that all forum members openly share their perspectives without the intention of being instructive, and that they in turn listen without judgment to what others may say.

Nonprofit Organizations Focused on Independent Entrepreneurs

Independent entrepreneurs can find support from organizations that connect them with mentors and help them network with sources of funding and expertise. Often, these organizations are housed in a university as part of a formal educational program. There are also a variety of nonprofit groups that provide such support. The focus of these programs tends to be on building actual businesses – and hence lies outside the definition of an InnoComm – but they often include some activities aimed at peer-to-peer mutual learning.

While there are many university programs that provide classes and networking support to students who aspire to become independent entrepreneurs, we expect that most of them would fail to meet our InnoComm definition. We did not create case studies of any of these programs, creating a gap in our research to date. Clearly much mutual learning

occurs within a school, but we do not include academic groups in our definition of an InnoComm. These programs tend to focus on creating actual businesses, and much of the learning is from experienced entrepreneurs teaching aspiring entrepreneurs, rather than peers learning from each other. However, we do profile two nonprofit groups associated with a university where peer-to-peer mutual learning is emphasized.

We also profile two nonprofit groups that support entrepreneurs in the city of Chicago in different ways. These groups are driven by successful local entrepreneurs and supported by local businesspeople. In addition to providing direct support to entrepreneurs, such organizations often seek to improve the general ecosystem for entrepreneurship, which includes facilitating mutual support among entrepreneurs.

Finally, we include an unusual group in India that collects and disseminates innovative ideas among the poor, rural population. It is a hint at the kind of InnoComms that likely exist in the developing world that are not yet well represented in this research.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Venture Mentoring Service (VMS) is an organization that provides a free matching service between entrepreneurs that have a MIT affiliation and volunteer mentors who have applicable start-up or functional expertise. Its mission is “to support entrepreneurial activity within the MIT community and thereby, to further the educational mission of MIT.” By prioritizing education over commercialization, VMS is distinct from traditional incubator or accelerator programs focused on funding and concept-to-commercialization processes. Toward that end, VMS has created and continues to refine a mentors-only forum for participants to share the progress of their ventures and learn from one another. This knowledge exchange and networking takes place during a half-day Monthly Review Session held on the fourth Tuesday of each month. The day begins with a 90-minute “business meeting” – a roundtable discussion of venture progress (e.g., funding news, positive media); open requests from mentors to their peers for expertise or connections to address an issue or challenge; and an introduction of new VMS mentors and ventures. VMS also organizes an annual networking reception for the entire VMS community. It works with economic development agencies that wish to start a similar mentor program. Today, there are twenty venture mentoring programs across the country that are closely modeled on VMS, and VMS plans to host an annual gathering for the operators of these programs to share best practices.

Aalto Entrepreneurship Society (Aaltoes) is a student- and post-graduate-led start-up entrepreneurship network loosely affiliated with Aalto University in Helsinki, Finland. Anxious to learn how the new university could spur more entrepreneurship activity, the students met with Bengt Holmström, a Finnish Professor of Economics at MIT, who suggested that the students create an entrepreneurship network. Aaltoes organizes 50–100 events per year, where successful Finnish entrepreneurs meet with students to talk

about start-up topics, and it sponsors student trips to entrepreneurship hubs around the world. Aaltoes also organizes and sponsors a ten-week summer training program for early-stage business ideas and entrepreneurs from around the world; a six-week accelerator program for more mature seed-stage companies from Russia and Baltic countries; three- to twelve-month internships with start-ups and SLUSH, the largest start-up conference in Northern Europe. It promotes collaboration and networking between entrepreneurs, mentors and peers by offering co-working space, the Aalto Venture Garage, to early-stage start-ups.

Built In Chicago (BIC) is a network that serves members of the web and mobile technology start-up community in Chicago. BIC's mission is to connect, educate and promote digital entrepreneurs in Chicago in order "to create a community that becomes both larger and smarter." Members are invited to contribute to a website by publishing blog posts or posting questions and challenges to the forum. The website facilitates members self-organizing into "Groups" based on company affiliation, industry, function and other topics of interest. Currently there are more than 100 of these groups, each with anywhere between 2 and 300+ members, that organize in-person meetups and networking activities. BIC also created a "Digital Leaders" group that includes 200 of the top CEO/Founders, venture capitalists and executives who lead eCommerce divisions for Chicago's largest corporations. BIC creates private events where these leaders can share experiences on common challenges. Finally, BIC coordinates a monthly meetup for the entire BIC community that is attended by 350-400 people.

The Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center (CEC) is a nonprofit organization focused on promoting and growing the start-up community in Chicago. Public events include the Momentum Awards, an annual dinner to honor successful early-stage growth entrepreneurs, and Start-up Forecast, a half-day conference that brings together prominent entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and other speakers to address trends and forecasts for Chicago-based start-ups for the following year. The CEC also organizes monthly dinners for small groups of carefully selected high-potential entrepreneurs to share ideas and build relationships. Held in the private room of a local restaurant and not publicized, these dinners are meant to generate new ideas, share challenges and opportunities and promote activities among the selected companies. (Investors, service providers and sponsors are not permitted at these dinners.) One output of these dinners was the establishment of the 1871 Center, a 50,000-square-foot start-up incubation center located in Chicago's Merchandise Mart. When at capacity, 1871 will host more than 100 dedicated early-stage companies on flexible lease terms, as well as university entrepreneurship centers, venture capital firms and other investors. The center houses classrooms to help start-ups with technical training (e.g., coding, programming), design, marketing, operations, financing and legal matters. It intends to foster a model through which companies that have graduated from 1871 come back to lead and teach classes to newer start-ups that are renting space in the center.

The Honey Bee Network is a global network of innovators, academics, policy makers, farmers, entrepreneurs and NGOs that discover, share, incubate and commercialize grassroots innovation across its seventy-five member countries. Members of the network in India, where it was founded, journey to different rural regions to hold community workshops and discover local innovations. To formalize technology transfers and build a knowledge center, the Honey Bee Network works in conjunction with other entities such as the National Innovation Foundation (to engage government stakeholders), the Society for Research and Initiatives for Sustainable Technologies and Institutions (to document discoveries and protect intellectual property) and Grassroots Innovation Augmentation Network (a venture fund and incubator). The core of the Honey Bee Network's innovation networking activities are small, regional discovery and educational gatherings and local and regional festivals. Shodh Yatras, meaning "journeys," are groups of Honey Bee Network members who continue to bring innovations to the surface and provide a forum for mutual learning between rural innovators, as well as an opportunity to promote learning among children. Members of the Honey Bee Network are also encouraged to share knowledge at local festivals. For instance, Sattvik is a two-day festival that brings together organic farmers to share and urban consumers to learn about the benefits of diverse crop varieties and the importance of organic farming. The Honey Bee Network has also leveraged technology to further its mission—for example, by enlisting students from the India Institute of Management to design a website portal, India Innovates²¹ that provides technology incubation, intellectual property and financial and marketing support to grassroots innovators. At the local level, the Honey Bee Networked has installed computerized networked kiosks, called Gyan Manthan Kendra (Knowledge Churning Centers), in different villages, allowing local people to browse for innovations in multiple languages.

Groups of Government or Nonprofit Organizations That Share Best Practices

We began this research searching for InnoComms that focus on learning among businesses across industry boundaries. But over time we became aware of groups of government and nonprofit leaders who gathered to discuss innovation within their domains. As per the definition of an InnoComm, these are typically not groups that work together on a specific philanthropic challenge, such as eradicating a disease or protecting the environment of a particular region. Such efforts are typically require innovative solutions, and some mutual learning will naturally occur in the process. However, the InnoComms in this category focus on sharing and improving best practices, which are then applied independently by participants.

The Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) is a global network of organizations that support small and growing businesses (SGBs) in more than 130 countries and markets. ANDE provides programs and services for its member

²¹ www.indiainnovates.com

organizations around common strategic challenges and opportunities. ANDE also identifies system-wide issues in building sustainable prosperity in the developing world, issues that can be addressed only through collective action. In 2010, ANDE launched regional chapters—Brazil, Central America & Mexico, South Africa, East Africa and India—which seek to promote collaboration and knowledge-sharing among local ANDE members, to serve as a conduit to global ANDE activities and to support local activities and advocacy efforts that support SBGs in each region. Regional chapter members meet regularly to provide peer support and professional development, work collectively on region-specific initiatives and partner with other like-minded regional organizations to promote a healthy ecosystem for SGBs. The ANDE Capacity Development Fund funds projects that seek to increase the productivity and effectiveness of ANDE members, but proposals must also demonstrate how building the capacity of individual members can be internalized and shared with other members. Through a strategic partnership with the Impact Reporting and Investment Standards (IRIS) initiative, ANDE members collectively benchmark performance and assess overall social and environmental impact. ANDE hosts a metrics and evaluation conference annually to discuss the challenges and best practices of collecting, reporting and disseminating impact.

Mistra Urban Futures is a research center based in Gothenburg, Sweden, that focuses on sustainable urban development. The center employs a nontraditional approach to research, creating reality-based, localized research and “Interaction Platforms” (IPs) that provide a foundation for local civic officials, businesspeople and academics to work together on solutions to problems of urban development and consumption, with a strong emphasis on knowledge-sharing. For instance, the International Pilot Project links five Local Interaction Platforms (Manchester, Shanghai, Kisumu, Cape Town and Gothenburg) in a global discourse about common challenges in their urban areas. Its aim is “to develop context-sensitive frameworks for action which enable cities to ask questions, develop processes and mobilize capacities and capabilities to address the challenges of urban sustainability.” Urban Futures is exploring the use of digital media, visualization tools and “games” that illustrate the complexity of city systems and allow participants to experiment with sustainable urban development ideas.

The ROI Community is a collaborative network of young Jewish adults who have demonstrated a commitment to positive social change underscored by Jewish values. The mission of the ROI Community is to increase the impact of young Jewish leaders on their global communities by encouraging local and global initiatives based on Jewish values. The keystone of the ROI Community’s innovation activities is its annual four-day global Summit held in Israel. The Summit has become known for its facilitated networking modalities that are aimed at having attendees share ideas and find collaborators and other types of strategic support for their respective initiatives. For instance, the summit offers peer-led skills training, as well as master classes by proven external trainers. The ROI Community has also hosted four regional gatherings in

Europe (Sweden, Lithuania) and Latin America (Argentina, Mexico) to foster continued collaboration between Summit attendees and Jewish community members in similar geographies. These gatherings were organized after the ROI Community observed that small listservs and Facebook groups were emerging from the annual Summit and that participants needed another local forum in which to exchange ideas. Finally, the ROI community issues micro-grants of US\$1,000 to individuals with the expectation that these individuals will share newfound skills with the community.

The Urban Sustainability Director's Network (USDN) is an engaged network of North American city and county sustainability directors dedicated to collaborative activities and knowledge-sharing that will advance the field of urban sustainability. USDN was formed in April 2009, when municipal sustainability leaders recognized that local governments were solving similar cross-cutting sustainability issues in geographic silos, without a forum to collaborate, to share best practices or to partner. Members must actively participate in a USDN committee, working group, user group or regional network and must honor USDN's policy of creating a safe space for exchange. Working groups of ten or more interested members generate tools to support sustainability work, such as a self-assessment tool, a supplier directory and a social networking guidebook. User groups are self-formed groups of USDN members that share operational questions and challenges for a particular field (e.g., instituting a citywide bike-sharing program). Groups are often virtual and are facilitated by the network coordinator or hired consultants via conference call. USDN staff members also organize and facilitate discussions on specific topics, such as responding to external sustainability rating organizations. In 2012, USDN launched a private social networking website for its members, organized around a series of tags that index documents, links, discussion topics and, most important, individuals who are related to each topic. The goal of the site "is not to create a best practices library, but to connect people in real time who can help each other solve problems."

The Importance of Trust in an InnoComm

Innovation is a mystery to a significant extent, as is its close relative, creativity. Groups form within and between corporate, government and nonprofit domains all over the world to seek innovative insights but many times return with failure, confusion and frustration. Success remains episodic and unpredictable, despite the many methods, processes and promises that have been developed. We do not maintain that InnoComms are the magic bullet, and there are no set structures or processes that will guarantee success. In this section, we explore why trust is important to making people better innovators. As we have emphasized throughout this report, trust is more important in the function of an InnoComm than it is in other fora where people gather to share experiences and learn from each other. We will also explore particular ways that trust can be encouraged in an InnoComm.

In a nutshell, trust is built and maintained in an InnoComm through listening deeply to the interests and needs of participants, skillful facilitation and program design, and the gradual enculturation of participants to sharing and personal risk-taking.

Exploring the multifaceted influences that dispose an individual to be open and able to form different levels of trusted relationships is well beyond the scope of this study. But in the course of examining the various ways that InnoComm leaders and participants can enhance the possibilities for trust through its structure and operations, we will touch on various aspects related to the disposition and personalities of host and participants.

For now, it is important to emphasize that two key aspects of building trust are the willingness of an individual to be wrong and the supportive response of the community to public viewing errors. These are not cultural characteristics of any society we know of, and, in our extensive experience as executives and consultants, they seem unnatural for the vast majority of individuals and corporations. So members of an InnoComm walk in the door with a challenge to be open about their weaknesses and gaps in their knowledge and experience. This can be a particularly difficult challenge for top executives and directors, in whatever domain they work. In most organizations, one reaches the top by being a “strong leader” who points the way with confidence. But for all people, the willingness to be wrong means having trust in oneself, such that “failure” is not a representation of one’s inadequacies but, rather, indicates willingness to explore the unknown—which, of course, is the heart of innovation.

Two key aspects of building trust are the willingness of an individual to be wrong and the supportive response of the community to public viewing of errors.

An InnoComm can build on the openness and knowledge of its participants to cultivate a trusted space where what might be perceived as failure in one’s home organization is welcomed and encouraged. We have identified five key elements of trust in the context of an InnoComm. We will address them in turn, though in reality (and ideally) they all interact and reinforce each other:

- Mission/purpose
- Consistency/cadence
- Exclusivity
- Engagement intensity
- Ground rules and expectations

Mission/Purpose

InnoComms, like Communities of Practice, are groups that form around concern and passion for a particular topic area, interest or set of problems. That shared purpose can engender trust, as it creates a natural forum for intensive, informed and meaningful conversations. Through the context created by shared purpose, members of the community come to understand and appreciate the knowledge each member brings to the community.²² They may begin to form a shared language and terms that make communication more efficient.

In some cases, having a shared language precedes and frames the creation of common missions and purposes. In the case of the i-Net Practitioners Alliance, for instance, membership in the community is determined in part by the use of a common innovation framework from the consulting firm Strategos (as well as more fundamental goals of making their organizations more innovative, growing their businesses and increasing the financial impact of innovation). Participants in the Berkeley Innovation Forum are all students and practitioners of the Open Innovation terminology and tools of Professor Henry Chesbrough.

Ideally, the mixing of ideas adds value mutually, and that added value helps members build relationships. As relationships are built, members of the community may come to align their learning goals, which reinforces a sense of trust, in that people believe that they are “pulling in the same direction.” This can be aided by urgency; that is, if there is a need for rapid response—like addressing an imminent threat—people may focus more on fundamental goals and set aside differences on issues that are less critical.

Consistency/Cadence

Regularity is a distinguishing feature of InnoComms. In order for members to form relationships, meetings cannot be *ad hoc*, as in a large conference. People have to interact on an ongoing basis.

The most common motif for the InnoComms we researched is to have a core group of “regulars” who attend almost all events. This core group may help run events, usually through facilitation or organizing panels (not staff work). Core members may also sit on an advisory board that helps formulate and implement strategy and future expansions of the InnoComm. A core group will usually comprise at least half the participants in an event, so that there is sufficient continuity. But the boundary is permeable, with some core members dropping off when they move to another company or country and new people volunteering to take a more active role.

²² Ryman, Hardham, Richardson and Joss, “Creating and Sustaining Online Learning Communities: Designing for Transformative Learning, *International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning* 5(3), 2009, 32–45.

In some InnoComms, the group of participants is well defined, and the exact same people meet over and over again, with only occasional substitutions or changes. This kind of commitment tends to engender greater familiarity and trust, in that everyone is in the core. But these groups also tend to be smaller, in order to maintain that level of personal commitment. For instance, the Reference Centers for Innovation at Fundação Dom Cabral (FDC) have between twenty and thirty attendees at events. Member Forums in the Young Presidents' Organization are typically 8-10 people. The Club de Paris des Directeurs de l'Innovation has a "hard core" of forty members. (Even in InnoComms that have larger attendances and more turnover, the use of small breakout groups of 6-10 people is a common method for engendering deeper and more meaningful conversations.)

Exclusivity

The opening discussion of individual dispositions toward openness and trust highlights the importance of curation for an InnoComm. By and large, InnoComms are membership organizations. Often, participation is by invitation only. In large part, this is due to the necessity of bringing to the table relevant expertise to share, as well as the type of personal openness necessary for building trust.

By and large, InnoComms are membership organizations, by invitation only.

It is common, for instance, for InnoComm leaders to make sure that people who work for companies that are direct competitors are not in the room together. People may be naturally reluctant to share detailed information about their company's innovation activities and plans with someone who could use that information to take market share or change their development strategies. In other cases, InnoComms are deliberately organized around particular industry verticals. Trust and openness can still be established in such a group, though it may tend to be restricted to agreed-upon topics where there is a common interest in coordination.

As concerns relevant experience, InnoComms may focus on certain levels in the organizational hierarchy. The Innovation Network at Cornell permits only the very top executives to attend, usually CEOs and presidents. This makes their meetings appealing for people who, as the chiefs of large companies, are very busy but who also appreciate the ability to interact with others who are similarly situated. The Cornell network has to be invitation-only in order to keep the total numbers manageable, since the appeal is so great for many smaller or less prominent companies to interact with the top executives of industry leaders.

Similarly, Young Presidents Organization, as the name suggests, is open only to people under the age of forty-five who serve as the chief operator (CEO, managing director, president, chairman or equivalent) of a company that has at least fifty full-time

employees and either at least eight million US dollars in gross annual sales or turnover or an annual enterprise value of at least ten million US dollars. They must also demonstrate an interest in lifelong idea exchange and an ability to contribute to the community.

For some InnoComms, there is an underlying affinity that creates a baseline of trust. Members of Kea New Zealand share a strong national identity. Members of the ROI Community are part of a small religious/ethnic group (Jews) with a tradition of reaching out to kin worldwide. University-based InnoComms often include a disproportionate number of alumni who feel passionate about the institution.

Engagement Intensity

All of the prior factors—shared purpose and goals, regularity and exclusivity/affinity—are important to help members of a community build relationships. But what makes those relationships truly trusting has to do with increasing focus, commitment and reciprocity. Over time, sharing may become intimate, and friendships may form.

InnoComms leaders must deliberately create environments where participants can listen and engage and feel comfortable making the commitment to take risks. Relationships formed within InnoComms often provide support and inspiration for taking on the uphill battle of fostering significant change, building participants' confidence to embark on new possibilities.

One way to increase participants' willingness to listen and commitment to participate is to curate excellent presenters and facilitators. The presenters at an InnoComm are often members themselves, not distant "experts" who present only the positive highlights of a given innovation experience. This makes the achievement of innovation management acumen seem more personally attainable and, therefore, increases listeners' confidence in their ability to carry the lessons forward.

Good facilitators and InnoComm leaders can do a lot to bring members along in this journey, making lessons more accessible and actionable than in other professional encounters. InnoComms thrive on diversity, but that same diversity can also create problems of communication beyond just shared language. People in a community will have different levels of skill and practice in how to listen. The kind of learning that matters in an InnoComm is not the accrual of information but the arising of a new perspective that comes from willingness to take the risk of not knowing.

Environments can transform the notion of failure into the excitement of surprise or the joy of new understanding.

Reciprocity of sharing failure is also paramount to an InnoComm. Facilitators are important in introducing new perspectives into the space created by open minds and a listening stance. Just encouraging the sharing of failures doesn't change the characterization of the

result; it's still listed as failure. Environments that can transform the notion of failure into the excitement of surprise or the joy of new understanding can elicit possibilities more successfully. The intimacy of InnoComms and their reliance on the insight, abilities and personality of facilitators makes them more able to invite/induce this shift in people's state of mind. This shift can be a key contributor to the value that participants gain from participating in an InnoComm.

Paradoxically, one's professional success can be the biggest inhibitor to continued innovation. It is profoundly appealing to stay within one's expertise, to continue success and to be right in many small ways, rather than put it aside, accept the liberating ignorance of not knowing and listen to the possibilities that arise outside one's professional categories.

Ground Rules and Expectations

Even for a skilled facilitator, creating a trusted space cannot always be done successfully in the moment. Explicitly reinforcing that every member, from the loftiest invited speaker to the most eccentric heretic, deserves respect, patience and encouragement can help to prepare the ground.

For example, Young Presidents Organization has created formal codes of conduct and communications protocols, as well as informal rules of engagement, to facilitate an optimal environment for idea exchange. Governing these rules of engagement is the requirement that all forum members openly share their perspectives without intention of being instructive and that they in turn listen without judgment about what others may say.

Other InnoComms work with what are called Chatham House Rules, which permit attendees to share what they hear outside of the event, but without attribution to a specific individual or company. Some of the InnoComms where the same people attend each time may execute formal nondisclosure agreements in order to free up conversation.

Another element of creating a trusted space is holding meetings at a location that is viewed as a "neutral space." A university or government site often plays this role. The key is that the host of the InnoComm be perceived as an "honest broker." Participants—particularly speakers—must avoid the perception that their contribution is more focused on "selling" or business development than on mutual learning.

This is inevitably a matter of judgment. For instance, university-led InnoComms will have varying degrees of engagement with university administration and alumni organizations. This can raise delicate management issues, as the university's interest in engaging alumni as donors or in finding employment for its students could interfere

with the openness and trust necessary for robust sharing in an InnoComm. For instance, the Cardiff University Innovation Network is housed within university's Strategic Development Directorate. But its leaders are very careful to stay at arm's length from the commercial activities of the university, as they believe that any perception of the Network as a marketing arm of the university would erode the spirit of collaboration. It also does not permit private funding or sponsorship.

Online Communities

The InnoComm cases in this report have varying degrees and types of online presence. And there are many other websites targeted to innovators and entrepreneurs that seek to foster learning and action communities. This section presents a framework for the role of websites and online platforms/tools in the operation and development of InnoComms. We place several of the case study InnoComms into this framework. We then discuss purely online communities that do not, in our judgment, meet the definition of an InnoComm today but aspire to do so in the future. We conclude with some analysis of InnoComm activities online.

Defining Online Engagement

We observed two main vehicles through which InnoComms have created an online presence:

1. Those that leverage social media platforms to engage members beyond their in-person networking events
2. Those that have created proprietary online networking platforms to support in-person networking activities

InnoComms that leverage social media use existing social networks such as LinkedIn and Facebook to continue conversations, relationships and initiatives begun during in-person innovation activities, as well as to expand the reach of the community. An InnoComm generally has a public page or a group on these networks and then determines the level of openness of that network (e.g., whether group members must be approved by an administrator or if membership is open to everyone). Depending on the technical capabilities of the platform, InnoComms can use these dedicated pages to provide news and related content, photos and forum areas where discussion questions may be posted and commented upon, as well as where in-person meetings or activities can be defined and arranged. The InnoComms that make use of these open social media platforms often lay claim to a younger membership base of already active social media users, providing a low barrier to engagement. An example among our cases is the ROI Community. However, established InnoComms with older membership groups, such as

the Cardiff University Innovation Network, are also leveraging social media to extend their reach and impact.

Proprietary online platforms are websites and platform software specifically created for an InnoComm for the purpose of supplementing or enabling discussion among members outside of in-person gatherings. These platforms offer similar features to their purely online counterparts, including member databases that enable social networking, discussion boards or “virtual” affinity groups, and news and event calendars. Proprietary platforms we encountered were focused on facilitating two activities: inter-member networking and connections, and knowledge-sharing or problem-solving.

InnoComms’ online vehicles may be further characterized by the type and level of engagement that they seek to foster. We define three types of engagement:

1. Sharing and propagating information
2. Helping members find and connect with other community members
3. Facilitating both online and offline interactions between members

Figure 1 depicts these types of engagement at different levels of intensity.²³ It also provides examples of InnoComms from our case studies, distinguished by both the type and intensity of engagement and the primary vehicle employed. The levels of engagement intensity are a matter of judgment on our part, based on our discussions with InnoComm leaders in the course of writing case studies, as well as our personal observations and experiences with various online platforms and tools.²⁴

In the sections that follow, we will describe how these various groups have implemented an online presence for each of the three types of engagement. We observed a desire from all of the communities to generate more trust and engagement, whatever their starting point. This included a move for online communities to create more in-person networking activities, as well as push from offline communities to create more online interaction after in-person networking activities had taken place, in order to continue a sustained relationship between members. Therefore, for certain InnoComms, we have included entries both for where they are today and where they intend to move in the future.

²³ Other frameworks exist for characterizing engagement in online communities. See, for instance, Ryman, Hardham, Richardson and Joss, *op cit*.

²⁴ Coauthor Jennifer Yee has created several online media and community platforms, such as mba-social.com. Coauthor Bradley Hartfield researched and created Internet-enabled communication and collaboration tools at Stanford University and Apple, Inc., including the foundational article “Computer Systems and the Design of Organizational Interaction” (ACM, 1998).

Figure 1. Framework for distinguishing online InnoComm activities



TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	LEVEL OF INTENSITY	REPRESENTATIVE ONLINE ACTIVITIES	ONLINE VEHICLE	
			Existing social media platform	Proprietary platform
SHARE INFORMATION	LOW	Basic content (news, calendar, blog)	Aaltoes, ROI, BIC	KIN (today)
	HIGH	Documents and data archives		MIN, FDC, KTN
FIND PEOPLE	LOW	Shared member profiles (access to luminaries, mentors)	Kea (LinkedIn)	MIN
	HIGH	Active support for connecting; matchmaking	BIC	Kea (Matching Service), USDN, UKIF (future)
INTERACT	LOW	Invite-only discussion groups	Cardiff	YPO, KTN
	MEDIUM	Collaborative learning tools (webinar, meeting software...)	UK-IF	Mistra-UF
	HIGH	Organize in-person meetings	ROI (future)	ANDE (SBBN), KIN (future)

Information-Sharing

Many InnoComms that have an online presence maintain basic websites that provide information to the public about the InnoComm itself, as well as relevant content to its user base, including articles and expert blogs; an events calendar and, in some cases, a job board. A higher level of commitment to information-sharing may include InnoComms that keep a searchable archive of best practices, case studies and other educational information from which members may learn on an as-needed basis.

InnoComms with relatively low-level information sharing include the following groups:

- Aalto Entrepreneurship Society (Aaltoes) began informally as a Facebook group, and its first impact metric was the number of “Likes” the organization received on FB. The now-hidden original Facebook group boasted 4,000-5,000 “Likes,” and a new fan page has about 7,000 “Likes.” In the beginning, this was a concrete number Aaltoes was able to show investors to help raise money and support; today, the fan page is used to promote events hosted by the organization and to share entrepreneurship news.
- The ROI Community (ROI) maintains an active presence on Facebook, where it posts news, photos of events and content related to innovation and the Jewish community. It also has a robust system for facilitating and tracking interactions through social networking sites, which we will describe later in the section on “supporting interaction.”

- Built In Chicago (BIC) is an online network that serves members of the web and mobile technology start-up community in Chicago. It includes a platform for blog posts, videos and photos. It is more focused on helping people network, however, as we will describe in the next section.
- The Kellogg Innovation Network (KIN) maintains a public website with information about the organization, as well as upcoming events, testimonial videos and other news. It has also experimented with a members-only web portal for online discussions among past event participants, which may be expanded to include a library of event summaries and presentation/discussion videos (this would move it into the “high” information-sharing category in the future).

Among our case studies are many groups that have created more elaborate online platforms for information-sharing, some of which are covered later in this section. A few examples:

- The Manufacturing Innovation Network (MIN) is a free online network for manufacturers and their stakeholders in the Waterloo region of Ontario, Canada, which includes the cities of Kitchener, Cambridge and Waterloo. The site hosts five main features: a robust, searchable database of manufacturers and industry service providers; original content, including an expert blog and manufacturing-related videos; industry-specific networking groups; an events calendar and a job board.
- Fundação Dom Cabral (FDC) manages three Reference Centers for Innovation, each with about 12-18 companies participating. The highlights from cases and presentations are recorded and made available on the FDC website and in elaborated case studies and working papers that are later made available to the participating companies to be used to build or develop new capabilities.
- The Knowledge Transfer Network's (KTN's) _connect website hosts online platforms for each of the fifteen KTNs that provide, among other things, access to reports, newsletters, webinars/e-training, events diaries, e-conferencing and collaboration tools. (We will discuss the KTNs again in the “supporting interaction” section.

Finding and Connecting With People

Online InnoComms also aim to help members identify one another, connect and create partnerships. Members can either be part of databases maintained by the InnoComms' staff or self-create profiles on websites that index members by company, function or special interest areas. In some cases, sites allow proactive members to browse and reach out to one another; other sites with a more exclusive membership base and a higher commitment to connecting members have intentions to provide a “matchmaking” service that connects members with complementary capabilities and needs.

InnoComms with relatively low-level networking support include the following groups:

- The MIN (described above) aims to facilitate collaboration among manufacturing companies and service providers in the Waterloo region and strives to strengthen the local supply chain and create a more responsive and globally competitive manufacturing community. In designated groups for industry verticals such as solar and wind energy, members may post presentations, articles and other information of interest to their peers. Additionally, this group displays the names of other members interested or involved in the industry vertical and provides the ability for these individuals to connect with each other by sending a direct message over the network. These groups may also organize their own in-person gatherings to discuss issues of interest.
- The Colorado Innovation Network (COIN) built an event-specific iPod app for its first annual Summit that allowed the delegates to receive program details, speaker bios and attendee contact information easily. COIN plans to encourage use of the app after the Summit to stay in contact with delegates, receive Summit presentations and videos, and stay in touch with other pertinent information. In the future, COIN intends to move to a higher level of network support by build a fully integrated portal and app to facilitate the flow of ideas, talent and capital across Colorado's universities, industry and government agencies. For example, it might host university and lab research summaries and links to innovation incubators in the state.
- Kea New Zealand (formerly Kiwi Expat Association) has built a global network of expatriate New Zealanders and friends of New Zealand that aims to inspire and connect skilled and experienced expats with New Zealand-based businesses and social/cultural institutions. At a low level in the social media space, Kea has also formed specialized LinkedIn groups to foster sharing in particular industry segments. At a high level in the proprietary space, the Kea Matching Service helps members tap into a detailed database of tens of thousands of New Zealanders around the world in order to share advice, insights and business knowledge.

InnoComms with a higher level of networking support include the following groups:

- In 2012, the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) launched a private networking website for its members focused on relationship-building and sharing. Created with features proposed by USDN members, the site is organized around a series of tags that index documents, links, discussion topics and, most important, individuals who are related to that topic. The goal of the site "is not to create a best practices library, but to connect people in real time who can help each other solve problems. It is focused on reaching the right person, not the right document."

- The UKIF today hosts a dedicated job board for individuals who wish to work in emerging technology companies. The board lists management positions with UKIF member start-ups and other short-term opportunities for innovation-related work, mentoring and coaching. The UKIF plans to implement “matchmaking” software to connect members based on mutual interests and complementary expertise. The UKIF also envisions this forum as a way for members to connect about professional decisions such as transitioning from academic to business careers or corporate careers to entrepreneurship, or to seek advice on spinning out start-up companies from university research.
- Built In Chicago (BIC) is an online social network that serves members of the web and mobile technology start-up community in Chicago. BIC takes a multidimensional approach to building the burgeoning online and offline community by hosting member and company profiles, member forums and groups, an events calendar and a job board, as well as providing a platform for original content in the form of blog posts, video and photos. All members may provide content to the site and participate in online discussions. Built In Chicago requires users to create profiles that identify and index each member’s company, functional areas and industries of interest. In this way, members can join subgroups on the site and reach out to potential partners or new contacts through the site’s messaging system.

Supporting Interaction

In addition to providing members the ability to find one another and make initial contact, some InnoComms are promoting interaction and engagement online. Low levels of effort in this category include the creation of monitored discussion boards that address common special interests or industry challenges; higher levels of commitment include InnoComms that are creating and facilitating real-time webinars and other learning tools. At the extreme end of this spectrum are InnoComms that seek to use online connections to facilitate in-person InnoComms.

InnoComms with relatively low-level support for interaction include the following groups:

- The Cardiff University Innovation Network is making efforts to leverage social media to facilitate communication between members, as well as engage groups underrepresented at events, such as young professionals and women. This includes an Innovation Network Group on LinkedIn, which has had some success at generating discussions. Innovation Network staff have also noted that members are beginning to tweet from within events. While Linked In and Twitter are showing encouraging signs, Facebook interaction is not looking so promising, although it is still too early to tell how successful this social media strategy may be.

- The Young Presidents Organization (YPO) provides its members with on-demand online networking resources on its proprietary, members-only websites, MyYPO (social networking site) and M2Mx member exchange (online forum for questions and idea exchange). Members can create profiles on MyYPO and join more than 650 business, social enterprise and personal interest networks. A feature of this social networking site is the M2Mx member exchange, where members are encouraged to publish personal and professional challenges and crowdsource a solution or to solicit others' experiences with the matter. This type of resource may lead to business collaborations, but its primary function is to get challenges solved quickly and efficiently by leveraging the network's combined experience and knowledge.
- The Knowledge Transfer Network's (KTN) _connect website (discussed above) hosts online platforms for each of the fifteen KTNs, and the Electronics, Sensors, Photonics (ESP) KTN has been heavily involved in engaging its membership in a number of different discussion forums clustered around industry challenges or themes such as "quality of life," "security" and "Electricity for the Future." Other discussion forums serve as virtual affinity groups. For example, the "Innovation Champions" group is composed of active members from member organizations who have a disposition toward networking and learning. The ESP tries to identify such champions to serve as a point of contact for the company for those from the outside who might be interested in exploring a relationship. One such example is within the photonics community, where smaller companies are often purchased by larger companies before having a chance to collaborate with their peers. By identifying an "innovation champion" within their organizations, these photonics companies have a facilitated opportunity to communicate and innovate together.

InnoComms with what we categorize as a medium level of support for interaction online include the following groups:

- The UK Innovation Forum (UKIF) operates an online social networking forum where it hosts educational webinars. Webinars are held on an ad hoc basis and feature expert panelists from the ranks of the UKIF membership. These panelists may have expertise in broad areas such as sales and marketing for start-up companies or may have specialized expertise in areas such as novel technologies in medical devices. Members may dial in to these webinars for discussion and Q&A. The UKIF plans to keep these educational events online, and they are supplemented by a free weekly newsletter and ways for members to contact each other directly on issues of common interest.
- Mistra Urban Futures, a research center that creates global "Interaction Platforms" (IPs) for cross-sector collaboration on problems of urban development, has plans to create a robust website platform through which it can disseminate best practices

throughout its seven global platforms and also communicate with its constituents and facilitate communication between them.

Finally, there are some InnoComms that are seeking to use their online presence to facilitate members connecting and learning together in person:

- The ROI Community (see previous section) leverages Facebook to provide a barometer for offline gatherings that emerged in Europe (Sweden, Lithuania) and Latin America (Argentina, Mexico) that the organization now officially helps to coordinate. These gatherings were organized after the ROI Community observed that small listservs and Facebook groups were emerging from the annual Summit and that participants needed another local forum in which to exchange ideas.
- The Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs funded a project—the Small Banking Business Network (SBBN)—that is a first-of-its-kind, industry-wide community for small business banking institutions. An initiative of member CapitalPlus Exchange, the SBBN provides a collaborative web platform for shared resources and communication among 50+ small business finance institutions in developing countries. The SBBN Portal serves as a knowledge networking platform where small business bankers serving emerging markets can exchange tools, approaches and ideas. Besides using this platform to connect people around the world, the SBBN will hold in-person annual roundtables to discuss relevant issues and continue to extend its reach.
- KIN (see “information-sharing” section) has plans to use its members-only portal to facilitate gatherings of members in their local area between KIN events for which they have to travel.

Purely Online Communities: InnoComms of the Future?

There are many websites devoted to innovation and entrepreneurship. Some of these are simply outlets for individuals and companies to extoll their insights and capabilities. Others are fairly large portals with significant traffic where multiple experts share insights and host robust discussions or webinars. Still others are networks built to encourage and facilitate collaboration in problem solving or business building, such as user networks around certain products or companies.

In general, online communities are composed of like-minded professionals unified around a specific geography, industry, topic of interest such as entrepreneurship or innovation, or a combination of these. Typically, these communities share a number of features that create value for its membership or subscriber base, including original content (thought

Purely online groups fail to meet our criteria for an InnoComm, as they tend to be diffused and organic, rather than orchestrated and deliberate.

leadership, expert blogs and videos); news and industry updates; a database of member organizations (in the form of either self-managed profiles or simple listings); a job board; an events calendar and discussion boards or interest group forums. These online communities are managed by a small staff of content and/or community managers (usually one or two full-time employees) but are largely driven by the activity and participation of the user base.

Today, such purely online groups fail to meet our criteria for an InnoComm, as they tend to be diffused and organic, rather than orchestrated and deliberate. Therefore, they rarely engender the kind of trusted relationships that distinguish a true “community” from an “interest group.” Some of the InnoComms in our cases, such as Manufacturing Innovation Network or Built In Chicago, have only minimal in-person elements to date, but it will be easier for them to expand because they are targeted to a specific geography.

Other online portals aspire to in-person community building. For instance, InnovationExcellence.com is an online network where practitioners and students of innovation can share insights and push the overall understanding of the field of innovation forward. The website's origin was an innovation blog by Braden Kelley. Over time, as the number of followers grew, Braden invited other voices to contribute to the conversation. The group then migrated to LinkedIn, where it grew to thousands of members. Today InnovationExcellence.com has almost 200 contributors and thousands of unique daily visitors. It provides original content, including thought leadership, best practices and metrics research, as well as articles from practitioners and entrepreneurs within large organizations. The site aims to build applications and platforms around specific domains of innovation—for example, innovation and financial services, and innovation and nonprofits. Ultimately, InnovationExcellence.com aims to become a place where innovation practitioners can come to answer their questions about innovation and get their jobs done. It recently created membership profiles to facilitate connections. With its growing audience, it is considering how to create more formal professional educational offerings, as well as InnoComms as we define them.

Analysis of Online InnoComms

The rise of InnoComms in the age of the Internet raises intriguing questions. On one hand, we believe that a purely online experience, however rich, does not (today) replicate in-person, face-to-face interaction in building trusted relationships. And with growing digital clutter, how does an online presence hold the attention and commitment of participants?

On the other hand, online venues offer new modes of interaction that have certain advantages over interactions in the real world. For some people, online interactions feel safer than interacting in person. One of our case studies, the Cardiff University Innovation Network, explicitly seeks to augment its in-person events with online social

networks in order to open the space of interaction to those who otherwise might not be comfortable participating. Younger people, in particular, network in a different way, and their ability to form electronically mediated relationships differs from their elders.

Online networks can also offer a more robust way to establish reputation—and hence trust. When we purchase something from an eBay seller with more than a thousand positive references and few negatives, in some ways we know more about them than we do about the retailer down the street. Online branding is an important part of any serious professional's development. Related to this, it is also often possible to engage with experts online with whom one would have difficulty arranging a face-to-face meeting. Online, one can easily make reference to and provide access to a wealth of educational content, though separating the wheat from the chaff can be difficult. Finally, online communications allow participants a level of freedom to opt in at will, adjusting their level of participation to the value of the venue, versus committing to an in-person presence.

For InnoComms that have established in-person venues, a sophisticated online presence can offer a powerful form of augmentation. People can continue conversations online with people globally, expanding the effective geographic footprint of an InnoComm. For those InnoComms that are not regionally anchored, this can be a very powerful tool. Modern Internet tools allow InnoComm leaders to measure user engagement, but InnoComms with online presence are still in the early stages of understanding how to use these metrics to show progress and transform the data into strategies for growth. For many of the InnoComm leaders contacted by this study, the ability to maintain fresh content (to hold attention) and facilitate real connections remains a challenge. Online InnoComm platforms still have difficulty gaining traction and “stickiness” in a domain where people are free to come and go as they please.

There are certain other elements of online presence that we have observed but not fully analyzed. For instance, as discussed in the section on Trust, the underlying affinity of an InnoComm group seems to influence the effectiveness of its online activities. For instance, members of Kea New Zealand share a strong national identity that makes it easier for them to establish trust based on online interactions.

Another dimension to be analyzed is the use of personal profiles. At the minimum, all InnoComm platforms in our cases required membership or registration. Some then use profile information to index members into professional and personal interest groups, industries or geographies. In this way, the sites created commonalities from which groups could organically arise and individuals could identify one another for further interaction. Taken a step further, websites are also evolving online tools to encourage like-minded individuals to connect, including messaging systems, publishing and posting capabilities, and webinars, to foster deeper, more active levels of interaction.

There may be great potential for more sophisticated Internet-based collaboration tools to enrich the InnoComm experience online. Future online video conversation and collaboration technology may enable interactions that better recreate in-person levels of trust.

We reckon that those InnoComms leveraging social media will grow as today's young people advance professionally. But controlling security, privacy and confidentiality can be a challenge with social media platforms, and they tend to provide only rudimentary tools for deeper interactions. Hence, InnoComms would likely benefit from making online interactions fluid between social media and proprietary platforms.²⁵

²⁵ Steve Akins, e-mail correspondence with Michael J. Lippitz.

Observations and Open Questions about InnoComms

InnoComms and Regional Development

We began this report with the widely held observation that “innovation is increasingly imperative for all types of organizations.” For private corporations facing increasing global competition and disruptive threats from all directions, the necessity is clear. Nonprofits, whose structure and operations frequently appear to be moving toward a “social enterprise” model, are facing similar challenges to increase their effectiveness and support. To leaders in these communities, the value of InnoComms is also fairly clear (even if the process by which learning and capability improvement occur is not).

For governments, the connection is less clear. There are a handful of examples of government agencies applying InnoComm principals to provide services more effectively. But the predominant interest of government participants in InnoComms is to support private innovation and regional development. The dream is to foster the development of a local “Silicon Valley,” chock-full of high-margin businesses and high-paying, skilled employment.

Alas, as we suggested in the Background section, “efforts by governments to build clusters more often than not fail to meet expectations,”²⁶ to the great frustration of planners, economists and governments. The organic quality of a thriving cluster makes it difficult to create through intent and effort. We believe that part of the problem is the difficulty of truly reaping the potential of “Institutions of Collaboration.” It may be that InnoComms, through the relationships, connections and openness they can foster, could have a role in addressing this deficiency.

The functional essence of a cluster is founded in the relationships across organizational, social and hierarchical boundaries of co-located companies, universities and government

²⁶ Lerner, *op. cit.*

entities involved in one or more related businesses (along with important support services and other resources). Clusters facilitate efficient sharing of and acting on information, ideas, unforeseen product or market opportunities and even secrets. The churning set of people who are focused on the broad set of problems and possibilities within a domain can generate a degree of creativity, competitiveness and urgency that leads to a pace of innovation like no other.

InnoComms seek to build “relationships across boundaries,” but they represent a subset of the full range of relationships that can exist within a cluster. Most of the InnoComms described in our case studies are not regionally based and, hence, have little direct relationship to clusters, which by definition are located in a relatively small geographic entity. Furthermore, clusters are based around a clear set of technological or service sectors: Bhutan seeks to develop a tourism cluster; Chile, a wine cluster. InnoComms do not usually operate this way; diversity of companies and professional experiences is generally desired. Clusters include institutional, many-to-many relationships—that is, company-to-company, company-to-government, and so forth—whereas InnoComms are, for the most part, a set of one-to-one relationships.

As such, InnoComms tend to foster growth by improving the innovation performance of individual firms. InnoComms help innovation leaders think differently and conceive innovation approaches that are differentiated from their industry peers. Often, these insights come from exposure to innovation thinking and business models in other countries. As globalization touches more and more industries, the need to learn about doing business in foreign markets is increasing. Recent research suggests that international connections—“global pipelines”—are more important than local clusters for driving radical innovation.²⁷

According to Michael Porter, however, the globalization of world commerce makes local clusters even more important:

Geographic, cultural, and institutional proximity provides companies with special access, closer relationships, better information, powerful incentives, and other advantages that are difficult to tap from a distance. The more complex, knowledge-based and dynamic the world economy becomes, the more this is true. Competitive advantage lies increasingly in local things—knowledge, relationships, and motivation—that distant rivals cannot replicate.²⁸

It is beyond our scope to resolve the relationship between local and global connections. We note, however, that to the extent that an InnoComm is locally focused (or is based

²⁷ Fitjar and Rodríguez-Pose, *Op. Cit.*

²⁸ Michael Porter, “Clusters and the New Economics of Competition,” *Harvard Business Review*, November 1, 1998.

in a small country or region), there is the possibility of building relationships among local innovation managers and improving the skills of innovation managers in the local community. Examples from among our case studies would include:

- Built In Chicago and the Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center
- Cardiff University Innovation Network, Intelligent Formulation, Knowledge Transfer Networks, and UK Innovation Forum (United Kingdom)
- Colorado Innovation Network
- Knowledge Center for Innovation (Israel)
- Innovation Network Corporation of Japan
- Manufacturing Innovation Network (Kitchener, Ontario)

and, to some extent,

- FDC Reference Center for Innovation (Brazil)
- Nordic Innovation

Our Chicago-area case studies showed that the community of entrepreneurs, supporting investors and government officials has many cross linkages. Chicago appears to be reaching a critical mass of start-up activity in the local ecosystem, particularly of experienced entrepreneurs who can serve as mentors. The success of Groupon has also created a public perception of Chicago as a player in the Internet start-up space, which may burnish the city's reputation and credibility as an innovation hotspot.

Similarly, the InnoComms based on the United Kingdom routinely cross-fertilize and directly or indirectly support each other's efforts. There is a remarkable fluidity and ease of coordination in the relationships there among government, universities and businesses.

In Israel, the entire country could be considered an Innovation Community in the domain of supporting start-up companies, as was recently explored in the book *Start-up Nation*.²⁹ There is a lot of collaboration in Israel, as well as close personal and working relationships among government agencies, universities and businesses. There are also prominent consultants who disseminate innovation management best practices. (Note: almost all of this effort is directed as building businesses, not sharing management knowledge. Also, much of the technology community hails from the former Soviet Union, which was not a place characterized by high levels of trust in commercial or government dealings.)

²⁹ Dan Senor and Saul Singer, *Start-up Nation: The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle* (Twelve, New York, 2009).

For the Innovation Network Corporation of Japan (and other national efforts), an explicit goal is to break down barriers between companies that tend to view each other more as competitors than compatriots. To the extent that they are successful in doing this—and that this sense of camaraderie flows down from the executives involved in an InnoComm and the broader community—the formation of cluster-style relationships would be enhanced. Trust is a common currency in both InnoComms and clusters.

Regional Differences

The process of innovation is one of the mysteries of how people think, form relationships, express themselves, learn and take risks. As such, the best means to support it and to develop expertise in it vary in different corporate, economic and human cultures. We can observe that the nature of innovation, how it is perceived and pursued, is different in different societies around the world.

The emergence of more cultures and perspectives on the world scene represents a tremendous opportunity for the practice of innovation, and InnoComms could be an effective way to tap into this potential. But several challenging issues must be taken into account for them to succeed. The underlying psychological or emotional experiences of trust, familiarity, risk, change, etc., may be similar in different places, but the way they happen and the experiences that elicit them vary in different geographic (and professional) cultures. Facilitators will need to listen and learn to a degree they may find unfamiliar. Participants may be transformed through their experience, but they may also reject it out of hand before that transformation becomes possible. Clearly, there is not a single operational “formula” for creating InnoComms that will be successful worldwide. For instance, we experienced some difficulty in finding good exemplars of InnoComms in many parts of the world, or those we did contact did not respond to our outreach. Although it could simply be that we have less access to or familiarity with parts of Asia and Africa—we lacked a pre-existing relationship or prestige and authority, which are important in many of these cultures—we surmise that there may be more to it. We consider the following possibilities to be germane:

- Our targets may not recognize our framework. There may be fundamental differences in how people perceive and articulate issues surrounding trust, community, relationships, change and innovation that have made it more difficult to reach groups that, upon direct observation, we would conclude as operating squarely within the domain we’ve identified.
- The concept of an InnoComm may be unfamiliar. For example, from a pragmatic Korean perspective, thinking about innovation on a meta-level (a defining feature of InnoComms) might be perceived as an “indulgent,” Western mode of thinking. In

Korea, you don't dance around innovation; you just go do it. If it doesn't work, you fix it. Or work more. "Fixing it" could well involve creating and learning through a forum like an InnoComm, but it would not be labeled or perhaps recognized as such.

- Related to this, we believe that there are groups in Asia that do undertake InnoComm activities, but in a more spontaneous and less self-conscious way. The ability to innovate seems interestingly related to the sense of optimism and opportunity in a prevailing culture. In the United States after World War II, Japan through the 1980s and China today, a sense of unbounded possibility seems to have inspired people across the nation and made them more open to innovation. There are many conferences and other venues in Asia that, through expansive conversations and mutual support, help to spread and sustain that sense of growing possibilities. The deliberate element of how we define InnoComms may be missing, but the results are similar.
- In Africa, most ex-colonies still maintain stronger economic, cultural, social and trade relations with their former colonial master than with other African countries. This is critical, as it reduces the size of potential markets, expertise, access to capital and opportunities for collaboration and innovation. Competition is usually so scarce that a single company can readily dominate its market; hence, intense innovation seems not to be necessary. There is a concomitant lack of trust between companies and lack of government support. Too many governments in Africa are still made up of people who see a zero-sum game and are looking for what's in it for them. Kenya, Liberia and others have made efforts towards developing National Innovation Systems, but outside of places like Rwanda, there have been few significant results.
- In China, the government's dominant role and control of all aspects of society is generally not conducive to peer-to-peer information exchange. However, government mandates on industry require that they maintain a training budget, much of which is spent on innovation-related personnel development. A recent effort by the Ministry of Education to create a "Professional Masters" degree aims, among other things, to provide students with education in new product development, entrepreneurship, technology management and other innovation-related topics. Universities often host business-oriented conferences that serve not only to disseminate current research but also to facilitate connections. Several foreign governments have also sponsored networking centers focused on China, and consulting companies in China serve as innovation networks by disseminating best practices in identifying new business approaches and setting strategic priorities.³⁰

³⁰ Interview with Dr. Yonggui Wang, Professor of Marketing & Strategy, University of International Business and Economics, Beijing, China, 29 July 2011.

- The Honey Bee Network in India represents an interesting InnoComm that is adapted to the particular structure of Indian society. Its focus on the mass of rural poor is inspiring and could be a model for other developing countries. We also expect to find InnoComms among the privileged class of top universities and large technology companies that have been emerging in India.
- In Japan, the effort by the Innovation Network Corporation of Japan to create trust among industry competitors may bear fruit, but it may not translate into greater innovativeness as we think of it. In the Western world, greater trust can promote risk taking by giving people a license to “fail.” In Japan, there is a great premium on being part of the broader community by not standing out; hence, greater trust often means trusting someone *not* to take risks that invite unwelcome attention.

Conclusion

This report represents a first look at the phenomenon of InnoComms. We hope to build on through better geographic coverage in the case studies and site visits to see InnoComms in action. Through these activities and interaction among InnoComm leaders, we envision a “community of communities” could arise that will collectively learn how people, ideas, trust and innovative disposition evolve and what particular activities seem to be most effective in different contexts; that is, we could apply InnoComm practices to the development and improvement of InnoComms themselves.

We considered earlier how InnoComms might contribute to the formation of clusters and economic development. Additionally, we reckon that InnoComms could support the mission of multilateral organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank in developing countries.

On the following pages are more detailed case studies of the InnoComms that agreed to be part of this research. To those participants, thank you again for your help and sharing. With hope, you will find in this report insights and perspectives that you can bring home to your InnoComm.

Case Studies

Government-supported agencies

Innovation Network Corporation of Japan (INCJ)

Nordic Innovation

Kea New Zealand

Colorado Innovation Network (COIN)

Knowledge Transfer Networks (KTNs)

Manufacturing Innovation Network (MIN)

University-based groups

Berkeley Innovation Forum

Cardiff University Innovation Network

Cornell School of Hospitality Innovation Network

Reference Center for Innovation, Fundação Dom Cabral (FDC)

Kellogg Innovation Network (KIN)

Knowledge Center for Innovation (KCI), Technion

Business executive groups

i-Net Practitioners Alliance

Intelligent Formulation

Club de Paris des Directeurs de l'Innovation (CP)

Society for Organizational Learning (SOL) France

UK Innovation Forum (UKIF)

Young Presidents' Organization (YPO)

Nonprofit organizations focused on independent entrepreneurs

Aalto Entrepreneurship Society (Aaltoes)

Built in Chicago (BIC)

Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center (CEC)

Honey Bee Network

MIT Venture Mentoring Service (VMS)

Groups of government or nonprofits sharing best practices

Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE)

Mistra Centre for Urban Futures

Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN)

ROI Community

Innovation Network Corporation of Japan (INCJ)³¹

Michael J. Lippitz and Bradley Hartfield

Background and History

The Innovation Network Corporation of Japan (INCJ) was launched in 2009 as a public-private partnership between the Japanese government and major corporations.³² INCJ makes investments aimed at fostering a “flow of technology and expertise beyond the boundaries of existing organizational structures”—be they start-up companies; medium-sized enterprises; or large, established firms—and at building an ecosystem of innovation.

The INCJ is capitalized at 92 billion yen, with the Japanese government providing 82 billion yen and nineteen private corporations providing 10 billion yen.³³ The government also provides guarantees up to a total of 800 billion yen for INCJ investments, giving it an investment capability of approximately 900 billion yen (US\$10 billion). This funding is used in several ways. It serves as a combination of venture capital and a “buy-out fund” to provide risk money to support the growth strategies of small and mid-size companies. It is also used to facilitate consolidation among established companies for the purpose of helping them become global leaders. It can be invested directly in new ventures, as well. This may include acquisition of foreign firms jointly with a Japanese company. Major categories of investment interest are environment and energy, electronics and IT, biotech, and infrastructure.

In addition to being a patient investor in new ventures and fostering industry consolidation, INCJ seeks to serve as an active broker—an “honest catalyst”—for networking among technologists, functional/operational experts and business builders.

Innovation Networking Activities

In Japan, many industries retain “silo” mentalities, and many companies have a tradition

LEADERSHIP

Kimikazu Noumi, Chief Executive Officer
Haruyasu Asakura, Chief Operating Officer
Hiroyuki Yoshikawa, Chairman (Director-General, Center for Research and Development Strategy)

³¹ www.incj.co.jp/english

³² The INCJ was created under the Act on Special Measures for Industrial Revitalization and Other Laws to Foster Innovation in Industrial Activities in Japan. It was established for a period of 15 years.

³³ The following companies have contributed 500 million yen each, with the exception of the Development Bank of Japan, which has contributed 1 billion yen: Asahi Kasei Corporation, Osaka Gas Co., Ltd., Sharp Corporation, The Shoko Chukin Bank, Ltd., Sumitomo Chemical Co., Ltd., Sumitomo Corporation, Sumitomo Electric Industries, Ltd., Takeda Pharma-ceutical Company Limited, Tokyo Electric Power Company, Inc., Toshiba Corporation, JGC Corporation, Development Bank of Japan Inc., Panasonic Corporation, East Japan Railway Company, Hitachi, Ltd., Mizuho Corporate Bank, Ltd., The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, Ltd., General Electric Company, Japan, JX Nippon Oil & Energy Corporation.

of “going it alone.” Not-invented-here mentality is a psychological barrier to fostering innovation across boundaries, and INCJ undertakes a variety of activities to actively counter these tendencies in order to facilitate/generate successful innovations and partnerships.

Toward that end, INCJ has created three Open Innovation Platforms independent from its investment activities. One forum, “Roman Market,” is functioning as a platform for participants to present and listen to business ideas and to network with other businesspersons and professionals. This forum meets monthly and involves roughly sixty entrepreneurs, inventors, functional and operations experts and students. About one third are regular, core members, including seasoned entrepreneurs and VCs. These members are well connected; others are less so. After the meeting, participants continue their discussion informally at a nearby restaurant.

Lessons Learned

INCJ was formed to respond to the pace of innovation around the world and to help Japanese companies create new global businesses. The plan was to do this through a) bringing together technological innovation and expertise in building and running a business, and b) judicious investments. However, INCJ discovered that there were many more technical innovations than the pool of those who had the capacity to build a business could accommodate. In other words, invention (innovation), as conventionally construed, wasn't the bottleneck. Rather, what was needed was the ability to bridge the gap between invention and innovation. INCJ is currently developing strategies to increase the available pool of this critical ability. As a result of the shortage of real business builders, only two INCJ investments to date have been in start-up ventures.

There are also few corporate executives with “innovation” in their title. INCJ is working closely with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) on establishing a Policy Research Committee to come up with tangible recommendations on how to “grow innovators” and how to spread an innovative management style among traditional corporations. Many Japanese leaders have come to believe that the country has many inventors and functional professionals but fewer true innovators and “business builders” who can come up with a business model based on participatory market observation. The committee, composed of innovative business executives and leading scholars, started in November 2011 and will provide its recommendations in March 2012.

Nordic Innovation³⁴

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

Nordic Innovation is a nonprofit organization that aims to create cross-border trade and cross-sector partnerships focused on innovation and sustainable growth in the Nordic region, including Denmark; Finland; Iceland; Norway; Sweden; and the autonomous regions of Greenland, Åland and the Faroe Islands. The organization also seeks to promote the Nordic region as a leading innovation hub by generating thought leadership and fostering relationships between the Nordic region and international partners.

In 2009, the Nordic Council of Ministers was presented with the Nordic Innovation Monitor, which includes both a comprehensive evaluation of the Nordic region's innovation capacity and recommendations for policymaking focus areas. Three main trends identified in this report have paved the path for innovation initiatives led by Nordic Innovation: the emergence of user-driven innovation, the globalization of knowledge and skills, and the rising importance of global issues such as climate change as drivers of innovation.

This report shall focus on three of Nordic Innovation's various initiatives that engage stakeholders in peer-to-peer, in-person collaborative environments:

- **Measured and Managed Innovation Programme (MMI):** A two-year program, from 2010 to 2012, focused on a strategic approach to innovation management, helping Nordic companies to measure and focus their innovation efforts to increase their return on innovation and to become more competitive. The program was developed by Nordic Innovation in cooperation with other national innovation agencies such as TEKES; Vinnova; the Danish Enterprise and Construction Authority; the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation; Trade Council Denmark; Innovation Center Iceland; Innovation Norway and the Norwegian Research Council.
- **Nordic Cleantech Open:** An entrepreneurship program for clean technology start-ups that provides mentorship and guidance on business plan development, access to financing and connections to relevant European networks.
- **Global Innovation Centers / Nordic Green:** Innovation community pilot projects jointly launched with governments in Asia for the following purposes:
 - » To create a meeting arena for companies, research institutions and policymakers

³⁴ www.nordicinnovation.org

- » To facilitate the exchange of new ideas and concepts in select technological areas
- » To enhance the reputation of the Nordic region in green technology and policies
- » To facilitate business development opportunities and stimulate foreign investment interest

These centers are part of a larger initiative launched by the Nordic Prime Ministers in 2007 to create common Nordic globalization initiatives.

The most established of these programs is Nordic Green, a conference aimed at combining Nordic resources within the clean tech industry to achieve higher impact and visibility for Nordic companies in the Asia region. To date, Nordic Innovation has assisted in planning a Nordic Green in China (Shanghai), in Japan (Tokyo) and in California. Nordic Innovation plans to develop other Nordic Green initiatives in the North America and Latin America regions, as well as Global Innovation Center pilots on open innovation.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

Nordic Innovation operates under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers, an intergovernmental forum for collaboration between the countries of Denmark; Finland; Iceland; Norway; Sweden; and the autonomous regions of Greenland, Åland and the Faroe Islands. Funding for the program is provided by the five Nordic governments, and the organization employs ten individuals to run its inter-country initiatives.

Specific innovation network programs are funded as follows.

Measured and Managed Innovation Programme (MMI): The program cost is partly covered by Nordic Innovation, as well as by the innovation agencies of the five Nordic countries and the 100 companies participating in the program. The gatherings are free of charge to invited companies completing the program. Participants cover only their own travel costs to seminars and work hours.

Global Innovation Centers/Nordic Green: Nordic Innovation funds a maximum of 50% of these efforts abroad (300,000–700,000 Norwegian Kroner in the first phase, or approximately US\$50,000–120,000), with the requirement that at least three Nordic countries are involved with the project through companies, government agencies or other institutions.

Governance and Leadership

International initiatives generally require a steering committee with participation from at least three of the Nordic countries. Steering committees' roles vary; in some cases they act as an advisory board in the formulation phase of new initiatives and step back in the implementation phase (e.g., Global Innovation Centers). Steering committees guarantee

that pan-Nordic initiatives are anchored and supported by the national stakeholders within the five countries.

The leadership of Nordic initiatives is determined in two- to four-year strategy documents for business development and innovation that are compiled by the Ministries of Business and Industry and an intergovernmental committee. The presidency of Nordic cooperation rotates between the Nordic countries each year, and it is the task of the President country to implement the overall agreed-on strategy plan, as well as to come up with a few nationally prioritized initiatives. For example, Denmark served as President in 2011 and chose to focus on entrepreneurship and green growth.

Innovation Networking Activities

Nordic Innovation stimulates innovation and promotes the Nordic region as an innovation hub in a number of ways, such as publishing thought leadership and funding research and facilitating public-private partnerships, as well as convening in-person gatherings that provide opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and networking. The following activities are related directly to the programs mentioned above: MMI, E-Nets and Nordic Green (Asia).

Measured and Managed Innovation Programme (MMI)

The Measured and Managed Innovation Programme (MMI) brings together 800 business managers from more than 100 companies from the Nordic region to learn about increasing the effectiveness and overall profitability of their businesses' innovation efforts. The purpose of MMI is twofold: to build a competence platform around different topics of innovation management, and to build relationships and a network in the Nordic region.

Companies, innovation agencies and individuals engaged with innovation have leveraged the competence platform to establish a common understanding and language regarding innovation. One of the challenges for "innovation" has been that it has historically been seen as a subtext to research and predominantly the territory of R&D departments. The MMI program has been instrumental in building up a more distinct profile for the innovation agenda in the Nordic region. This process has also been supported by communication activities and ongoing stories provided to the press.

Participating companies hail from a variety of sectors, including both service and product providers, and are diverse in size and maturity. The companies are selected by their national innovation agencies and must meet certain criteria to participate in the two-year program:

- Nordic (domiciled) company with operations in a Nordic country

- Ambitious and motivated to innovate and grow
- At least two years of age
- Has launched its first product or service in the market
- Ten or more employees
- Good English-language skills

The program consists of three phases, which include expert presentations on innovation management, as well as opportunities for evaluation and networking:

Phase I: A one-day national workshop that introduces MMI and the Innovation Radar, a tool developed at the Kellogg School of Management to understand a company's innovation focus and current strategic positioning. This workshop will also provide individual company innovation tests and profiles, as well as a deep-dive analysis of the company's innovation strategy and portfolio.

Phase II: A mid-term Nordic innovation seminar that includes presentations by Nordic and international innovation experts, a second company innovation test and profile, competitive benchmarking at national and Nordic levels and an opportunity to network with other participating companies.

Phase III: A second deep-dive workshop within each company by MMI-trained consultants. This workshop follows the company's second and third Innovation Radar survey and aims to establish final input for the companies' future innovation strategy.

Phase IV: A final Nordic seminar that includes more innovation education from experts and cross-fertilization of innovation management practices across participating companies, a final innovation test and profile, and benchmarking and networking opportunities. An important element of the final seminar is a discussion about what movements the MMI companies have made on their radar profiles during the two years. This will include benchmarking the profiles on several levels: international, national, industry and company. A final outcome of the program will be a collection of lessons learned in relation to innovation policies in the Nordic region. There are clear indications that the MMI program has been instrumental in moving the signposts from a focus on supporting technology development and research toward a more profound market and business model innovation direction.

Topics at MMI programs include how to move from product and process innovations to look at business model innovations, building an innovation strategy and developing a portfolio approach to innovation management.

Nordic Cleantech Open

Nordic Innovation, in collaboration with twelve other founding companies, government agencies, research and innovation centers and investors, facilitates an entrepreneurship program to accelerate the growth of clean technology start-up companies and facilitate connections to the global clean tech industry and funders. Nordic Innovation selects five to ten start-ups with promising ideas or technologies and helps these companies develop their business plans and value proposition, exposing them to venture capital funds and other relevant European companies. Throughout the program, entrepreneurs work with mentors to learn basic presentation skills, fundraising tips and how to scale/grow a business.

This program culminates in the Nordic Cleantech Open, a competition to find the best clean tech start-ups in the Nordic region. Finalists present to a panel of investors in the clean tech industry, as well as a larger audience; winners receive recognition and access to the networks of the panel judges and other industry professionals invited to the event.

Nordic Green Global Innovation Centers

Two-day Nordic Green conferences took place in Q4 2011 in Shanghai, China, and Tokyo, Japan, with the participation of local companies, research institutions, universities and government officials to promote knowledge- and technology-sharing within the clean tech industry in both regions.

Attended by more than 200 companies (for the two events), plus universities and Nordic and Chinese/Japanese institutions and government agencies, the two-day events were held at the Royal Danish Embassy in Shanghai and the Miraikan Science Museum in Tokyo. Agendas included keynote speakers, plenary sessions and panels that served as introductions to various forms of clean technology in China and Japan (e.g., geothermal, wind, tidal, osmotic, bio), as well as energy policy, urban development, energy markets and transportation. These sessions were interspersed with networking opportunities for the individual participants.

For Nordic Green Japan, presentations given at the conference were made available for download from the conference website.

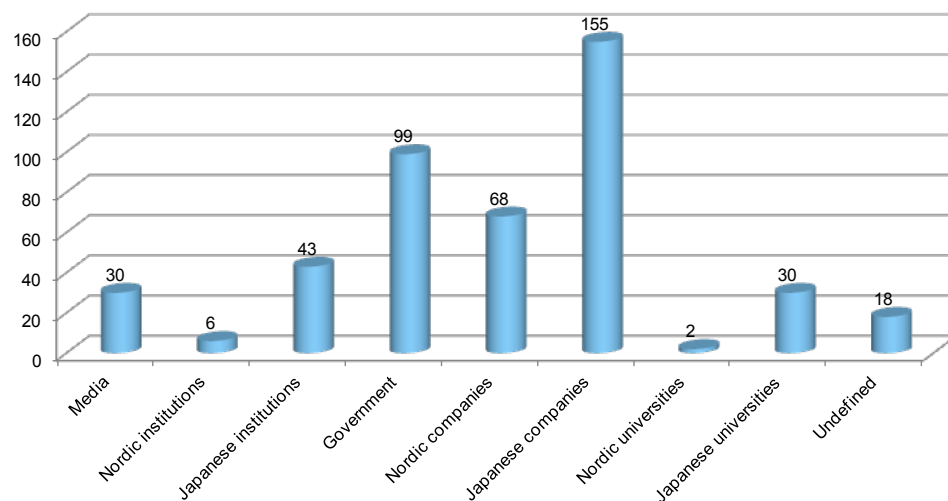
Metrics and Impacts

Nordic Innovation collects feedback, creates reports and vigorously manages success metrics.

- **MMI:** The success criteria of the MMI program have been defined in terms of how the participating companies (800 managers) evaluate the usefulness of the Innovation Radar tool, the deep-dive workshops and the change of innovation strategy. Companies gave an overwhelmingly positive evaluation of an event held

at Kronborg Castle, Denmark, with 70% of all companies enthusiastic about their participation. A large majority will change or establish their innovation strategy as a result of the MMI.

- **E-Nets:** The program has seen a high rate of launching start-ups, but it is too early to gauge the success of these businesses as high-growth clean tech companies. The program has been running for approximately two years, and Nordic Innovation intends to do another comprehensive evaluation in 2013–2014.
- **Nordic Green:** The Nordic Green event in Shanghai measured its success by the attendance of more than 70 representatives from companies, government and universities. It also received press mention in more than 35 journals and websites. The Nordic Green event held in Tokyo measured both quantitative and qualitative results from its first event. The event had 451 attendees (a 79% show-up rate), with 50% of the attendees representing companies (100 Japanese companies and 41 Nordic/non-Japanese companies). A further breakdown of attendees is represented on the next page, showing major interest from government, as well as private-sector organizations:



The event garnered 30 media representatives and received whole-page coverage in *The Japan Times*, the country's largest English-language newspaper. The Japan event also made attempts to quantify business development-related activity resulting from the event. This activity included business meetings held in VIP rooms at the venue space (seven), as well as other cross-sector meetings held during the conference period.

- Nordic Innovation seeks to survey for additional data from Nordic companies and innovation agencies in the Asia region to evaluate whether or not these organizations see a clear benefit to cooperation and business development as a Nordic region brand or as an individual country.

Lessons Learned

Many of the lessons learned about the globalization of the Nordic region's innovation efforts have come from the Nordic Green events. The Nordic Green events may have created seeds of trust between the Nordic embassies and initiated what could evolve into a more full-fledged Global Innovation Center as originally envisioned. Nordic Greens around the world have been instrumental in breaking down some of the entrenched positions of guarding national Nordic interests and building a more plus-sum perspective between national and Nordic interests in working together. Here are two specific examples of collaboration and inspiration: 1) The Nordic Green event in Japan has inspired the Embassies and Nordic Food Industry to replicate the Nordic Green Japan with a new focus on New Nordic Food and its promotion in Japan. 2) Under the new globally oriented version of the program, the first project will likely be Norden-Panama, where the group will establish a Nordic bridgehead for Latin America, with a focus on transport, logistics, finance, trade and agriculture. The ultimate goal will be to build a Nordic business community in Panama.

Some of the broader lessons from Nordic Innovation around the world include these:

- While the original idea to establish physical Global Innovation Centers in Asia and other regions has not materialized, **pilot projects such as Nordic Green have been very successful at providing access to information** for Nordic companies seeking to do business in China and Japan.
- **Objectives for the event should be clarified at the outset.** Planning for the Japanese event became complicated when the five Nordic embassies in Japan had differing views on the focus for Nordic Green: some were more business-oriented, while others were more focused on diplomacy, branding and reputation.
- **Combining Nordic countries in these global initiatives has strengthened the “Nordic brand,”** rather than the brands of individual countries on offer to larger energy and clean tech companies in Asia.
- Creating a platform around clean tech, “**...not only gave rise to cooperation between Chinese and Nordic wind energy businesses,** but also to **collaboration and knowledge-sharing internally** between Nordic stakeholders.”
- **Venue selection matters.** Holding the Chinese event at the Danish Embassy added prestige to the Nordic Green gathering but also created confusion on branding.

Chinese participants were confused as to whether this was a Danish event or a “Nordic” event.

- **Event organizers should engage speakers more around the content of the presentations prior to the event.** Some speakers may have presented an aggressive bias in their presentations that could be mitigated by increased communication with speakers on topics before the event.
- **Communications should be bilingual as often as possible.** Where financially feasible, all sessions should be simultaneously translated in English and the appropriate Asian language, and all literature and invitations should be streamlined with both languages to facilitate better understanding/communication.

Kea New Zealand³⁵

Michael J. Lippitz, Susan Cresswell, Anna Gestro and Nikitin Sallee

Background and History

Kea New Zealand (legally, the Kiwi Expat Association Inc.) is a non-profit organization based in Auckland, New Zealand, that has built a global network of expatriate New Zealanders and friends of New Zealand in order to “increase their contribution to New Zealand, thereby turning them into a strategic national asset.”

LEADERSHIP

Kea headquarters

Dr. Sue Watson, Global CEO

Sarah Abdel-Aal, Program Manager,
Leaders for New Zealand

Stephen Dee, Program Manager, World
Class New Zealand

Tim Huston, Commercial Director

Sam Mickell, Communications Director

Global board

Chair Phil Veal (financier)

Nicky Bell (CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi New
Zealand)

Rob Cameron (investment banker)

Craig Donaldson (banker)

John Lumsden (chair of the New Zealand
Standards Council)

Kea was conceived during the Government-sponsored Knowledge Wave Conference in August 2001. Sir Stephen Tindall and Professor David Teece were the principal founders and were its main funders in the early years, with some seed funding also from the New Zealand Government. By the end of 2003, Kea had established chapters in North America, the United Kingdom, Amsterdam and Australia.

In 2005 Kea received significant funding from New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE), an agency of the Ministry of Economic Development (MED), to build its website and organizational infrastructure. Beginning in 2007, with a multi-year commitment of financial support from MED, Kea began hiring paid Regional Managers. Today, there are Regional Managers in Australia, Shanghai, London and North America. The Regional Managers actively build connections between New Zealand and their regions, and organize New Zealand-related events. Each Regional Manager is

represented on the global board, and each region also has its own board and advisory group.

Today, the organization is funded by a combination of central government, local government and private-sector sponsors. Now in its eleventh year, and having built a global network of well over 30,000 members and subscribers, Kea New Zealand is focusing on increasing its reach and its influence:

- **Reach:** Kea is upgrading its social-media presence in order to build an on-line community among the approximately one million New Zealanders living overseas,

³⁵ www.keanewzealand.com

making New Zealand the most globally connected nation in the world.³⁶

- **Influence:** In addition to strengthening the World Class New Zealand network (see below), Kea is creating a by-invitation-only Leaders for New Zealand tier of 1000 influential people who are willing and able to help New Zealand business succeed globally.

Innovation Networking Activities

Over the years Kea has supported a variety of networking activities that focus on building members' and New Zealand's innovation and entrepreneurship.

World Class New Zealand Awards, Presentation Days and Summit

Since 2003 Kea has partnered with NZTE for the high-profile annual **World Class New Zealand (WCNZ)** Awards, honoring highly successful people who enhance New Zealand's reputation and connections around the world. WCNZ has also been built into a network of prominent, successful, and connected New Zealanders that produces tangible results for New Zealand. Today there are about 200 members of the World Class New Zealand network who:

- Provide insight into sectors, technologies and global trends relevant
- Create foreign market opportunities for New Zealand-based companies by enabling and promoting strategic alliances, international investment, knowledge and skill transfer (including the return of migrants) and assistance with projects
- Provide strategic development advice to high-level New Zealand government officials and Ministers.

During the week of the annual WCNZ Awards event, the winners share their insights with entrepreneurs, students, managers and business owners at World Class New Zealand Presentation Days. A WCNZ summit is also held, where business leaders, government departments and other key stakeholders address guests and participate in a workshop to share their views and ideas on key issues.

Global Campaigns

Kea's 2006 global "census" **Every One Counts**, reached 18,000 New Zealanders living overseas, each of whom filled in a detailed questionnaire about their citizenship, education, family status, income and migration intentions. This provided the largest dataset ever compiled on expatriate New Zealanders – more than triple the size of Kea's membership database – and was the basis for follow-up academic research. In 2008,

³⁶ See, for instance, <https://www.facebook.com/keanewzealand>

Kea's **Every Vote Counts** campaign facilitated New Zealanders around the world voting in the 2008 General Election and contributed to the highest number of overseas votes ever cast in any peacetime General Election.

Kea's second global "census", **Every Kiwi Counts**, was held in 2011 and yielded 15,000 respondents, who completed an even more detailed survey than in 2006. The dataset is being used by various researchers within and outside government to better understand the demographics and economic potential of the New Zealand diaspora. The Every Kiwi Counts data provided freshly validated contacts for a **Kea Matching Service** pilot project in partnership with NZTE and Telecom. This paid service connected aspiring New Zealand-based exporters (clients of a regional development agency) with potential advisers in target markets around the world.³⁷ The Kea Matching Service continued on a limited basis after the pilot, but will not be further developed as it is now seen as outside Kea's core business and also lacks a robust business model.

The Every Kiwi Counts data also made possible detailed consideration of a proposed **Kea Investment Network**. Over 500 investment-ready New Zealanders living overseas were surveyed, and the findings revealed considerable opportunity for investment from tens of thousands of well educated, connected and savvy offshore New Zealanders.³⁸ Nevertheless, a Kea-branded investment network was not developed beyond the pilot, for similar reasons as the Matching Service.

In early 2010, Kea launched **Pass It On**, a campaign to help connect New Zealand SMEs with the international business community using a viral campaign shared amongst the Kiwi expat community. Expats were asked to circulate videos from innovative NZ businesses and were rewarded with Kiwi prizes for doing so. Videos were passed on 35,000 times.

For several years Kea North America has held an annual event called **NEW York : NEW Zealand : NEW Thinking**, where a number of influential US-based New Zealanders share their expertise and knowledge on innovation and how to contribute to New Zealand's success for the future.³⁹

Lessons Learned

- The future growth and reach of the network requires maximum use of social-networking communities. Events are limited in their reach and impact, as are traditional marketing and communication methods (including direct marketing via email).

³⁷ See case study: <http://vimeo.com/29756741>.

³⁸ See the report: http://www.keanewzealand.com/sites/default/files/kea-investment-report-final-7nov_0.pdf

³⁹ See <http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=b615f211a86f17b7b194b5708&id=0a25cde130>

- In addition to these mass communications, Kea New Zealand's contribution and influence is enhanced by promoting one-to-one connections with and among select New Zealanders and "friends of New Zealand." This was a primary rationale for the World Class New Zealand program and the forthcoming Leaders for New Zealand network.
- Through its experience of various initiatives (including the abandoned matching service and proposed investment network), Kea has learned that it should stay focused on its core function as a global network, collaborating as necessary with other specialist organizations or government departments that provide business services.

The Colorado Innovation Network (COIN)⁴⁰

Kelly Underell

Background and History

The Colorado Innovation Network (COIN) was launched in November 2011 by Governor

LEADERSHIP

Advisory board (appointed by the Governor):

Adam Lerner, Director, Museum of Contemporary Art Denver

Ajay Menon, Chief Innovation Officer, State of Colorado; Dean of Business, Colorado State University

Charles Corfield, CEO and President, nVoq

David Allen, Associated Vice President of Technology Transfer, University of Colorado

Kent Thiry, CEO, DaVita

Kristen Russell, Chief Information Officer and Secretary of Technology, State of Colorado (Board Chair)

Larissa Herda, Chairman and CEO, tw telecom

Mark Sirangelo, Corporate Vice President and Chairman, Sierra Nevada Corporation's Space Systems

Matt Taylor, CEO, Mercury Payment Systems

Monisha Merchant, Senior Advisor, US Senator Michael Bennet's Office

Peter Bryant, Senior Fellow, Kellogg Innovation Network

Steve Foster, CEO, Business Controls; President, Colorado Technology Association

Vic Ahmed, CEO, Innovation Pavilions

Arjun Gupta, Founder and Managing Partners, Telesoft Partners

John Hickenlooper, as a division of the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade. His vision is to make Colorado the most innovative state in the nation in order to create new jobs and make the state's economy more competitive, dynamic and resilient. To those ends, COIN's mission is to stimulate economic prosperity by convening industry, academia and the public sector to foster collaboration. By aligning members' ideas, talent and capital, COIN aims to be a catalyst for businesses and entrepreneurs across the state.

In 2011, US Senator Michael Bennet convened industry executives in the aerospace, bioscience and clean energy industries in an effort to examine how innovation can drive economic growth across Colorado. Also in 2011, the Office of Economic Development and International Trade, along with other partners, produced the *Colorado Blueprint*, a set of three-year strategic plans for Colorado that aim to create a more competitive state economy. COIN is building upon these efforts, consistent with Governor Hickenlooper's emphasis on a bottom-up approach to economic development. One of the core objectives of the Blueprint is to "Cultivate Innovation and Technology." The design and implantation of COIN supports this core objective.

Governance

The members of COIN's advisory board serve one-year terms. Ajay Menon is the state's Chief Innovation Officer and leads COIN from a strategy perspective. As a public-private partnership, COIN is privately funded through corporate and academic sponsorship dollars, which fund one full-time employee, Deputy Program Director Kelly Underell, and support the Executive Director, Catherine Grassman, who is on loan from

⁴⁰ coloradoinnovationnetwork.com

PricewaterhouseCoopers to lead COIN for the coming year. This partnership is a great advantage to COIN in its start-up phase. COIN also employs unpaid interns on an as-needed basis to help with event coordination and communications.

Innovation Networking Activities

COIN's participants include leaders from federally funded research labs (of which Colorado has twenty-four), higher education institutions, government and community organizations, industry partners and growth companies, as well as high-growth entrepreneurs. These groups make up the innovation ecosystem in our state, and it is COIN's goal to engage these leaders; break down silos between these core groups; and bring these leaders together to discuss innovation challenges and opportunities in the state, share organizational innovation practices and build consensus on solutions.

COIN launched three initiatives in its first year: the Urban Innovation Coalition, the Colorado Innovation Index and an inaugural Innovation Summit.

The Urban Innovation Coalition is a collaborative effort with the Downtown Denver Partnership, a nonprofit business organization that plans, manages and develops Downtown Denver as the urban core of the Rocky Mountain region. The Coalition brings together municipal, economic development and community leaders from the major metropolitan areas of Colorado—Denver, Boulder, Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Durango, Grand Junction and the Eastern Plains—to share best practices, devise programs and provide tools and resources to support both start-ups and growth for established companies, bring consistency and efficiency to efforts aimed at early-stage business and identify core elements in each ecosystem that will support and attract innovation in Colorado's city centers.

The metro-area Urban Innovation delegates have also been charged with compiling an "Innovation Ecosystem Map," a qualitative analysis of innovation data in their own community, and to host a start-up event in their city within the next year, which would be designed to highlight the resources and success stories related to start-up businesses and innovation in that community. In addition, the Coalition is coordinating innovation-oriented field trips where small groups of 15-20 people from each community travel to another city to meet with their counterparts to garner a better understanding of what is transpiring in those communities. The contingent traveling to another city would include a mixed group of stakeholders, such as business leaders, nonprofit leaders, City Council members, mayoral cabinet representatives and higher education leaders, to help build the innovation network across the state.

The Colorado Innovation Index is an annual report that measures Colorado's industry-driven and overall innovation progress. It is released annually at the COIN Innovation Summit and shared with the media on a national level. COIN partnered with Colorado

State University to develop criteria to measure Colorado's performance relative to strategic innovation goals and, where the state has invested heavily in innovation policies, improve coordination of those policies to optimize the benefits the state receives from its investments.

The Innovation Summit, first held in August 2012, hosted more than 250 innovation leaders from around the state and world for a two-day summit in Denver. At the Summit the results of the COIN initiatives were shared, world business and innovation network leaders led discussions on innovation best practices and delegates built upon existing networks in the state. Day two of the Summit focused on turning innovation into action, as the delegation participated in facilitated groups to brainstorm objectives to make Colorado the most innovative state in the country. For each objective, the groups identified enablers and barriers and developed a one-year action plan addressing how to engage enablers and overcome barriers. The network members were called upon to commit to these solutions in the coming year and will be held accountable by report-outs at the next annual event. Having just concluded the inaugural Summit at the time of this writing, COIN is still evaluating exactly what programs and action items will take place in the year to come.

A key part of the Summit was the building of an event-specific app that allowed the delegates to receive program details, speaker bios and attendee contact information easily. COIN plans to encourage use of the app after the Summit to stay in contact with delegates, receive Summit presentations and videos, and stay in touch with other pertinent information. In the future, COIN intends to build a fully integrated portal and app to facilitate the flow of ideas, talent and capital across Colorado's universities, industry and government agencies. For example, it might host university and lab research summaries and links to innovation incubators in the state.

Metrics and Impacts

It is too early to tell what impact COIN may have. Immediate measures of success will evaluate the success of engaging senior leaders to the COIN Summit delegation (as these leaders will have the most impact on change after the Summit) and the number of relationships they formed at the event, as well as the number of press mentions of the event. These criteria are specifically correlated to COIN's ability to cultivate trust of and credibility in its brand and organization, as well as the brand of Colorado as an innovative place to do business. Because COIN is a new organization, much is uncertain about the real impact the innovation network can have on the state. Engaging leaders and turning ideas and goals into real action that will impact our state, and sharing messages of success, will allow COIN to build the trust and credibility needed to move forward and contribute to meaningful change. Without this trust, it will not be possible to connect the key leaders from the innovation ecosystem with a real commitment to change.

Lessons Learned

Funding—Securing a consistent stream of funding will be important for COIN to grow. Sponsorships for our inaugural summit were well received, but additional opportunities will need to be evaluated to support future operational needs. It is important not to duplicate the work or funding models of existing organizations, such as local associations or chambers of commerce. Denver is a small, tight-knit community with somewhat limited funding pools, and it will be important to be aware of what the competition might be and find ways to complement existing structures. COIN will explore possible partnerships and innovative revenue opportunities in year two.

Partnerships—Partnerships for key programs will be essential to the success of COIN programs. It is important to be clear about expectations, action items, timeline and ownership up front in the process, so that the work can move forward effectively and be published and updated without dispute.

Network Members—Network members are the key to a successful network, and taking the time to ensure a broad representation of leaders from a variety of geographic locations, diverse organizations and a broad cross section of industries participate in events and dialogue will ensure that new ideas and solutions are brought forward and enable a broad commitment to meaningful change. The members involved must also be leaders in their own right, holding executive-level positions or being rising stars in their organization, so that they have the ability to drive change on behalf of their organization. Building a diverse network of high-level leaders must not be underestimated in building a coalition for the cause.

Government Affiliation—The relationship with the Governor and Office of Economic Development resources has leveraged COIN in ways that likely would not have been possible otherwise for COIN's inaugural year. The relationship with the Governor brought credibility to COIN's cause, and it was able to engage key leaders and organizations early on. However, there is ongoing discussion about whether government is the right home for an innovation network, and the opportunity to shed this association with and dependence on government will need to be explored in the coming months. This possibility will be especially important to withstand any future executive leadership changes in the state.

Knowledge Transfer Networks (KTNs)⁴¹

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

Knowledge Transfer Networks (KTNs) aim to stimulate innovation and to improve the UK's innovation performance through peer-to-peer collaboration and knowledge transfer. Distinct KTNs are organized by technical fields (e.g., electronics) or application domains (e.g., transport), with membership from UK businesses, universities and finance and technology organizations. KTNs seek to

- Deliver improved industrial performance through innovation by fostering collaboration and the flow of knowledge and experience among businesses and across sectors
- Facilitate knowledge transfer between the supply and demand sides of technology-enabled markets through a high-quality, easy-to-use service
- Provide UK businesses with the opportunity to meet and network with individuals and organizations both in the UK and internationally
- Inform government about technology needs and issues, such as regulation, that are enhancing or inhibiting innovation in the UK

This case study addresses two such KTNs: the Electronics, Sensors, Photonics (ESP) KTN, and the Transport KTN.

Electronics, Sensors, Photonics (ESP)

The Electronics, Sensors, Photonics (ESP) KTN reaches more than 10,000 members from ESP corporations and early-stage companies, from related fields such as systems engineering and embedded software and from the academic community. It focuses on knowledge-sharing between diverse industry players, cross-industry problem-solving and innovation and creating supportive environments for corporate entrepreneurs. A primary goal for ESP is to bring together people who would not otherwise have occasion to meet and network.

Transport

The Transport KTN aims to foster innovation and value-added activities that identify common challenges that cut across the road, rail and marine industries. The KTN is focused on the development of integrated and efficient transport systems and has

⁴¹ www.innovateuk.org/deliveringinnovation/knowledgetransfERNETWORKS.ashx

broken down its activities into three key areas of cross-sector collaboration: end-to-end journey, technology innovation and funding awareness.

In order to obtain buy-in from the membership sectors (e.g., road, rail and marine), one of the first activities of the newly consolidated KTN (in January 2011) was to aggregate “technology roadmaps” that had been developed by each of the participating sectors. By analyzing these strategic plans, the KTN was able to identify technological issues that were affecting all three sectors: energy efficiency, intelligent mobility and lightweighting.

In addition to educational and awareness-building activities, the Transport KTN conducts analysis and research around supply chain best practices and their application to different transportation sectors. For example, the marine industry is currently seeking to understand how automotive and aerospace best practices might improve the efficiency of marine industry supply chains.

Finally, the Transport KTN is committed to forwarding a national agenda for an integrated transport system in the UK by convening varied stakeholders in the transport industry, consumer population and government and educating them about the need for such systems.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

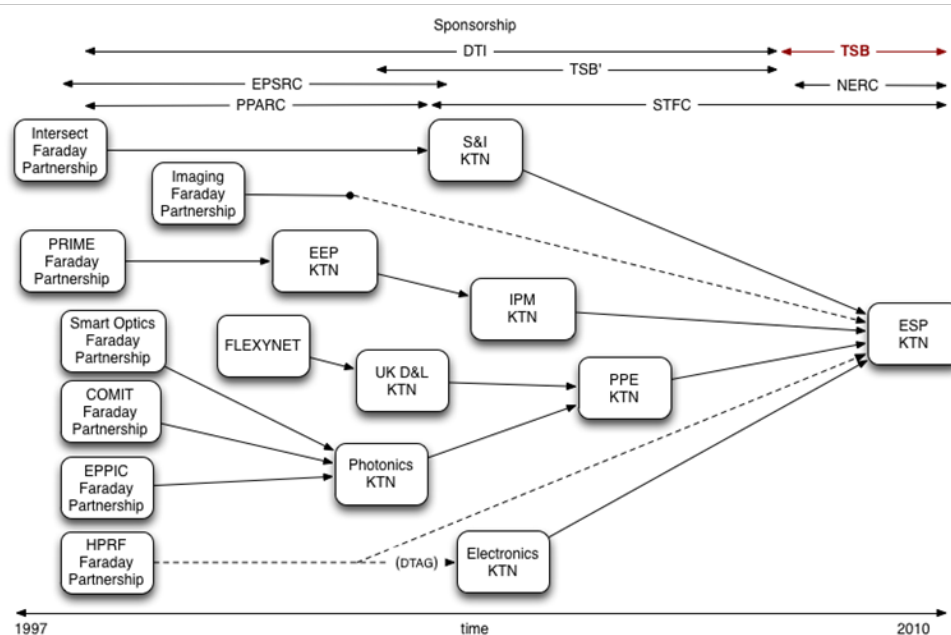
KTNs are currently sponsored in large part by *the Technology Strategy Board (TSB), an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB) established by the Government in 2007 and sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS); government and regional development agencies; and research councils.*

There are 15 KTNs categorized by industry or business application in the TSB innovation portfolio, in some cases consolidated from existing KTNs of smaller industries. These include

- Aerospace, Aviation and Defense
- Biosciences
- Chemistry Innovation
- Creative Industries
- Electronics, Sensors, Photonics
- Energy Generation and Supply
- Environmental Sustainability
- Financial Services
- HealthTech and Medicines
- ICT
- Industrial Mathematics
- Materials
- Modern Built Environment
- Nanotechnology
- Transport

The Electronics, Sensors, Photonics (ESP) KTN resulted from a July 2010 integration of five smaller, technical KTNs (Sensors and Instrumentation, Photonics, Displays and Lighting, Integrated Product Manufacturing and Electronics). The diagram below

illustrates the complex network of historical partnerships and KTNS that became the ESP KTN, as well as its current sponsorship from the Technology Strategy Board, the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC).



Owing to the lengthy history of some of the KTNs, there are a variety of hosting models for them. Both ESP and Transport KTNs are run by “special purpose vehicle” companies set up specifically to hold the grants for these organizations. The directors of these KTNs are therefore employees of the separate companies and, although TSB was involved in the recruitment process, otherwise independent. The companies have their own advisory boards and are free to grow their activities as they see fit, though with due caution about competing with existing trade associations or other privately funded organizations.

The Transport KTN was created in May 2010 as an integration of the “Intelligent Transport Systems” KTN and the “Low-Carbon Systems” KTN, but with a wider remit. The KTN is funded by the Technology Strategy Board (TSB). As with ESP, the Transport KTN’s Director is not an employee of the TSB, but the Chief Executive at an independent company, Surtrans Ltd., which holds the contract to manage the Transport KTN.

As transportation is a key sector for the UK government, there is a strong linkage between the TSB sector lead and the leadership team of the Transport KTN. The TSB leverages this KTN as a barometer of industry attitudes toward the strategic direction of the TSB as it pursues global opportunities for UK businesses in the transport industry.

Innovation Networking Activities

KTNs at-large support peer-to-peer learning, access to funding and opportunities to shape policy strategy in a variety of ways:

- **Networking:** Frequent opportunities to network with other businesses and academics through targeted events, meetings and Special Interest Groups organized by the KTN.
- **Information and news:** Free access to online services such as reports, newsletters, webinars/e-training, events diaries, e-conferencing and collaboration tools and specific general sector/application information.
- **Funding opportunities:** Advice on Technology Strategy Board Collaborative R&D calls, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and other sources of funding for innovation such as Framework Program 7, Eureka and Venture Capital.
- **Policy and regulation:** A communications route between a community, the Government and the EU that gives members the opportunity to influence policies and regulation in the UK and abroad.

Electronics, Sensors and Photonics (ESP)

The ESP KTN is focused on a range of innovation activities that leverage in-person and online networking technologies. These activities include (1) discussion forums on the _connect website, specifically “Innovation Champions”; (2) “challenge-led” cross-industry collaborations and (3) regional, after-work networking opportunities for ESP professionals.

The _connect website hosts online platforms for each of the 15 KTNs, and the ESP KTN has been heavily involved in engaging its membership in a number of different discussion forums clustered around industry challenges or themes such as “quality of life,” “security” and “Electricity for the Future.”

Other discussion forums serve as virtual affinity groups. For example, the “Innovation Champions” group comprises active members from member organizations who have a disposition toward networking and learning. The ESP KTN tries to identify such champions to serve as a point of contact for the company for those from the outside who might be interested in exploring a relationship. One such example is within the photonics community, where smaller companies are often purchased by larger companies before having a chance to collaborate with their peers. By identifying an “innovation champion” within an organization, photonics companies create a facilitated opportunity to communicate and innovate together.

The ESP KTN has also promoted events and collaboration around “challenge-led agendas” that gather ESP professionals with companies in a less tech-savvy industry to address systemic problems or challenges. The theme of one such “challenge-led” gathering was “electronic agriculture.” At this gathering, farmers, electricians, scientists and engineers came together to examine the agricultural supply chain in the UK. The KTN acts as a convener for such events, which promote diversity and highlight the need for a facilitator of a common language between all participants.

The ESP KTN also gathers local business people for shorter, half-day sessions at more informal “coffee-and-donut” events that happen in regional locations at convenient post-work or lunch hours, to reduce barriers to attendance. These events help build awareness of the KTN, with hopes of spurring additional activity between attendees both in person and on the _connect website.

Transport KTN

To raise awareness and drive forward the identified cross-sector issues, the Transport KTN creates and runs activities that are adjunct to larger industry gatherings or independent events. These activities typically involve 15-200 people, and participants hail from industries both within and outside of the transport industry. One of the key challenges to the development of integrated transport systems is that this integration brings together a very broad range of stakeholders, but the KTN's reach provides the ability to connect with industries such as ICT, Materials, Infrastructure and Energy, as well as public and private organizations.

One larger event revolved around providing information and testimonials about a funding competition, followed by several facilitated networking opportunities. Organizers set up four different rooms along a corridor called “Marketplaces,” and during the event participants placed business cards and one-pagers on large sheets of themed paper hung on the walls to express interest or expertise in industry topics such as infrastructure, energy strategy game changers, shared industry platforms and business model innovation.

Smaller gatherings often emerge from these larger community events. For example, the Transport KTN organized an open workshop for professionals from the bus and coach industry to learn about and discuss the latest issues in lightweighting technology from experts and potential suppliers. KTN leadership ensured the relevance of the event by surveying its participants in advance; in this case, there was great interest in technologies from other industries that could be applied rapidly to the bus and coach industry, rather than cutting-edge technologies that were still in a R&D phase.

The Transport KTN is experimenting with a variety of approaches to solving cross-cutting industry challenges. While some events are designed to raise awareness of issues by bringing together a diverse group to talk about a challenge, in some cases individuals also bring a solution or find the right application to a challenge in the transport industry.

Metrics and Impacts

Owing to ESP KTN's recent consolidation of many smaller KTNs, it is perhaps too early to tell how effective the cross-industry, challenge-led initiatives will be, but the KTNs are proud of the fact that they are delivering an exactly equal volume of activity (measured in terms of numbers of events, number of attendees, etc.) as the previous five separate KTNs—but at half the cost.

Lessons Learned

Both the ESP KTN and the Transport KTN have learned a variety of lessons in three main categories: in-person versus online networking, the importance of diverse industry perspectives, and building trust and fostering collaboration.

A variety of lessons have been learned from in-person and online networking events:

- The ESP KTN has found the most success by employing “impedance-low” methods of engagement, including scheduling convenient in-person meetups during the lunch hour or after work, so as not to interrupt the daily work routine.
- The ESP KTN has also found that online networking activities happen most effectively if the connection between two members of _connect is made in person first; the KTN has not found a substitute for the value of face-to-face meetings and introductions.
- The Transport KTN has found varying levels of engagement by its members with the _connect online community. It still employs traditional communication methods such as the telephone, as well as pushing information and event marketing efforts through influential member organizations.

Some lessons learned concern the importance of diverse industry perspectives:

- The ESP KTN is actively seeking opportunities to bring perspectives and expertise from outside a particular industry to cross-pollinate ideas for solving problems. This concept emerged from the director's prior work using such collaborative methods—for example, applying real-time software techniques from a spacecraft application to a rail-signaling system.

Some lessons focus on building trust and fostering collaboration:

- Early education of sector leadership was paramount to the Transport KTN's initial successes. The KTN engaged its members by taking existing material ("technology roadmaps") and identifying common innovation challenges between sectors in order to educate and win buy-in about cross-sector collaboration.
- One of the Transport KTN's continuing challenges is building trust between its members; it is difficult to demonstrate the network's value-add if individuals are not yet willing to share in an open innovation space. However, the network is hindered from demonstrating benefits by members' unwillingness to share and collaborate.

Manufacturing Innovation Network (MIN)⁴²

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

The Manufacturing Innovation Network (MIN) is a free online network for manufacturers and their stakeholders in the Waterloo region of Ontario, Canada, which includes the cities of Kitchener, Cambridge and Waterloo. The MIN aims to facilitate collaboration among manufacturing companies and service providers in the region, where one in five residents still earn their living in manufacturing-related jobs. It also strives to strengthen the local supply chain and create a more responsive and globally competitive manufacturing community. The site hosts five main features: a robust, searchable database of manufacturers and industry service providers; original content, including an expert blog and manufacturing-related videos; industry-specific networking groups; an events calendar and a job board.

LEADERSHIP

The MIN is guided by an Advisory Board that comprises individuals from four different types of groups related to the manufacturing industry: manufacturing professionals, industry association and consortium experts, government officials, and academics and researchers.

Valerie Machado, Chair, MIN Advisory Board

Andrew Halsall, MIN Community Facilitator

The MIN was created in 2009 as a response to feedback given by automotive and general manufacturing companies during Corporate Visitation Programs conducted in 2006 and 2007 by the City of Kitchener's Business Development office. The surveyed companies reported that they found it difficult to collaborate, network and create supply chain relationships within the local manufacturing community. As a telling example, some companies were sourcing parts from China that they did not know were available locally. The City of Kitchener teamed up with IGLOO Software, a local firm with expertise building collaborative software for educational institutions and government agencies, to create an online social network, which has evolved into the Manufacturing Innovation Network of today.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

To date, the MIN hosts around 850 individual representatives from manufacturing companies in the Waterloo region; membership includes employees of manufacturers, service providers, members of local government, etc. Anyone can sign up to join, free of charge, and can hold any position within a manufacturing company, from production worker to the executive office.

The MIN's activities are funded in part by a sponsorship program that invites manufacturing companies and service providers to partner with the network to support

⁴² wrmin.com

and promote innovation in the manufacturing sector. Companies may participate annually at the Gold (\$9,500), Silver (\$5,500) or Bronze (\$3,500) level. The Advisory Board consists of representatives from eight local organizations, each of which pays \$5,000 to sit on the Board and guide the direction of MIN.

Innovation Networking Activities

The MIN's activities promote sharing of best practices within the industry. There are two primary ways that members learn from each other:

- 1. Industry networking groups:** In designated groups for industry verticals such as solar and wind energy, members may post presentations, articles and other information of interest to their peers. Additionally, this group displays the names of other members interested or involved in the industry vertical and allows these individuals to connect with each other by sending a direct message over the network. These groups may also organize their own in-person gatherings to discuss issues of interest.
- 2. Events board:** The MIN maintains an events board for its members to post educational and networking events related to manufacturing. These events provide an opportunity for members to connect with each other to learn more about a specific functional area or for business purposes.

The MIN also maintains a strong relationship with the academic community, encouraging co-creation and research collaboration between local universities and manufacturing businesses in the Waterloo region. Universities may conduct applied research on behalf of local companies; for example, Conestoga College invites companies to participate in a project with fourth-year students in its Integrated Advanced Manufacturing Technologies (IAMT) program to use an applied process to design, engineer and commercialize products. These partnerships are encouraged by public grant funding that is available to support and complete such projects.

Metrics and Impact

In its three years of existence, the MIN has cited a number of anecdotal successes and use cases for its online network. First, the network has resulted in greater communication between manufacturers that may use the network to share work or sublet excess capacity. Second, the MIN database has been used by the Waterloo economic development agency as a tool for encouraging foreign investment in the region, permitting easy access to names and information for existing companies operating in the area. Finally, manufacturing companies have been very active on the job board, where local residents have had success locating jobs in the recent difficult economic environment.

Lessons Learned

The MIN was created primarily as an online network but faces challenges facilitating interactions that are not created in person first, especially in an industry that is rooted in more traditional forms of relationship-building. Such challenges include the following:

- As an industry that has historically built competitive advantage by protecting patents and developing capabilities in-house, **manufacturing professionals are still wary of collaboration** as a tool to innovate and stay competitive.
- **Manufacturing professionals are slow to adopt online social networking** as a method of sharing best practices or collaborating with other similar organizations.
- Even when given the opportunity to respond to postings, users of the **MIN social network are more likely to exhibit “voyeur” or “lurker” behavior** around content posted by subject matter experts.
- Universities in the Waterloo region have seen success commercializing academic research; the creation of the **MIN could accelerate such cross-sector collaboration by making it easier to identify individuals at academic institutions** who are dedicated to working with the private sector and, more specifically, the manufacturing industry.

Berkeley Innovation Forum⁴³

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

The Berkeley Innovation Forum is a membership organization composed of corporate directors responsible for managing innovation. The network began after Henry William Chesbrough received a number of queries about concepts in his 2003 book

Open Innovation: The New Imperative for Creating and Profiting from Technology. Because of increasing interest from corporations in implementing open innovation, Chesbrough decided that the most efficient way to share best practices was to convene a group of 10–12 of these companies in an idea-sharing forum. To select and organize the first group of attendees, Chesbrough invited companies who had made inquiries to him about topics of innovation.

LEADERSHIP

Henry Chesbrough, Faculty Director,
Garwood Center for Corporate Innovation;
Executive Director, Program in Open
Innovation

Solomon Darwin, Associate Director,
Program in Open Innovation

Unlike other conferences and gatherings, the Innovation Forum emphasizes the “how-to”s of managing corporate innovation, rather than benchmarking. Membership in the Innovation Forum includes

- An invitation to BIF Forums (two annual two-day sessions)
- Two briefing sessions
- Access to online materials and related workshops
- Access to new research out of the Center for Open Innovation
- Access to other relevant innovation research coming out of Berkeley

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

Companies that participate in the Innovation Forum cannot be direct competitors (unless the prior competing member assents to their inclusion) and must be willing to openly engage and contribute to the group. Over the years, the Forum has grown to include roughly thirty companies from around the world. Current members of the Forum include technology companies such as Hewlett-Packard, Cisco Systems, SAP and General Electric, as well as representatives from retail and CPG sectors such as Dupont, Best Buy, Coca Cola, Johnson & Johnson, Nike, Kraft and Weyerhaeuser. Membership has international reach and includes firms from Japan, India, Europe and the Middle East. Each company may send up to three representatives to the Forum events; this is encouraged, to increase the company’s knowledge transfer and engagement with the

⁴³ openinnovation.berkeley.edu/BIFpublic.html

Forum in the long term. Chesbrough estimates that about one-half to two-thirds of the annual participants have attended prior meetings.

The network charges annual membership dues of \$10,000 per participating organization, which support ongoing research and the activities of the Program in Open Innovation at the University of California Berkeley Haas School of Business. The dues are tax-deductible for members.

Governance

The Program reports to the Garwood Center for Corporate Innovation, within the Haas School's Institute for Business Innovation. Chesbrough and his colleague at the Program in Open Innovation, Associate Director Solomon Darwin, are responsible for strategic and programming decisions for the Forum. This decision-making agency is made possible by the Open Innovation center's financial self-sufficiency.

Innovation Networking Activities

The network convenes two annual, two-day sessions for its members around innovation management topics. Participants must complete some advance prep work, including sending materials on which they receive feedback during the sessions. These materials include advance copies of presentation materials, vetted so that corporate presentations have, "a minimum of PR material and a maximum of substance."

Event programming has evolved over time. Chesbrough recalls that the first meeting was infused with the "greatest hits of Berkeley"—a packed schedule full of knowledgeable and esteemed speakers from the various schools around the university—but not enough structured time for participants to network with one another.

Currently, agendas are organized around specific topics (e.g., "open innovation in China, working with universities, managing IP, using innovation intermediaries, metrics for managing innovation") and include time for companies to present their experiences directly to one another, with time for structured feedback from the group. The Innovation Forum typically invites an outside speaker, who may be from outside the Berkeley community.

Each agenda is different, but typical sessions have run 45–75 minutes and have taken many different formats: typical PowerPoint presentations; panels; "press conferences," where a presenter makes a short statement and then takes questions; and workshop challenges, where members work on a problem together and compete for prizes. Agendas also include many scheduled breaks to promote informal networking opportunities, and the Forum has observed that these are times when deeper connections are forged between participants. Finally, the Forum has experimented with evening entertainment so that participants may share an experience together as an accent or energizer before the program begins in earnest.

Metrics and Impacts

The Forum conducts an evaluation at the end of every meeting, and Chesbrough reviews these carefully to make improvements for the next meeting. He cites a more informal measure of success for the events as well, by observing whether or not there is a palpable sense that participants are enjoying themselves, and if there is a “good energy” in the group.

Lessons Learned

In the seven years since its inception, the Berkeley Innovation Forum has learned lessons about recruitment and setting expectations for its participants:

- **Inviting up to three participants per company increases organizational engagement, knowledge transfer and retention.** At the beginning, the Forum only permitted one participant per company, on the premise that members would more likely mingle with representatives from other companies at the event if colleagues from their own company were not present. However, when an attending member was promoted or transferred within their organization, or moved to another company, the relationship of the Innovation Forum with that company stopped. Now, up to three people may attend each of the meetings, which creates a better mechanism for sharing ideas once the participants leave the forum and also helps the organization build and retain knowledge. Notably, the Forum's retention has gone up as a result of allowing the additional participants.
- **While exit interviews are not conducted with departing members, the Forum observes that companies leave the group** when there is an economic downturn and/or when an organization's innovation champion moves positions or leaves the company.
- To create a safe and trusting environment for idea-sharing, **the Forum attempts to keep direct competitors out of the membership.** As Chesbrough's work on open innovation has evolved, **companies have become more forthright in what they share**, moving from corporate relations material to more in-depth, substantive material about management challenges during projects. Fostering more openness is a process that requires constant attention. The Forum does not take detailed notes on the presentations, so that no individual's comments are recorded on a specific topic. The Forum does virtually no promotion, so invitations are almost exclusively by word of mouth. Finally, all materials from the Forum are behind a password-protected firewall, so that the Web crawlers from Google, et al., do not find them. These actions reduce the chance that members will find sensitive or confidential comments attributed to them later on (perhaps taken out of context).

Cardiff University Innovation Network⁴⁴

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

The Cardiff University Innovation Network was formed in 1996 as a noncompetitive, neutral space to solve problems and support cross-sector innovation by creating better connectivity among local businesses and between these businesses and the university. The Network was founded by the University's then Vice-Chancellor, Sir Brian Smith, who modeled it on a network successfully created for technology and innovation collaboration among universities and large companies within the "Golden Triangle" of Cambridge, London and Oxford. It includes approximately 1,000 members from private sector companies within about a fifty-mile radius of Cardiff.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

The Network's administration is housed within the business support team of Cardiff University's Strategic Development Directorate. This directorate serves multiple purposes, including research and commercial support, communications and international relations, alumni relations, planning and student recruitment.

The business team supports the University's Innovation and Engagement Strategy, encouraging university and business collaboration. Importantly, the Cardiff University Innovation Network is not a commercial extension of the University, as the Network does not seek to provide a direct platform for University offerings to industry.

LEADERSHIP

Michael Wright, Business Manager,
Strategic Development Directorate

Sian Conti, Business Development Officer,
Strategic Development Directorate

The Cardiff University Innovation Network's activities are guided by two groups: a steering group composed of senior members of the University, including the Vice-Chancellor, and chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor of Engagement, and an industry advisory group that includes members from businesses in the South Wales region—mostly small- to medium-sized companies, but also manufacturing arms of large multinational companies. The latter group's main function is to ensure that the Network's activities address relevant needs within the business community.

The Network is resourced by the University and supported by supplementary funds from the Innovation and Engagement Fund (Higher Education Funding Council) of the Welsh Government. No private funding or sponsorship is accepted for core activities, thereby ensuring independence from any specific agenda.

⁴⁴ www.innovation-network.org.uk/

Innovation Networking Activities

To raise awareness for innovation, and to support business-to-business as well as business-to-academic collaboration, the Cardiff University Innovation Network provides four main services: 1) organizing events, 2) operating a network hotline service, 3) facilitating online social networking and 4) providing relevant news, education and information for its members.

Events

The Network holds approximately nine events per year that are free to its members. The focus of these events ranges from very broad topics to specific industry verticals. Examples from past events include

- *Support for Innovative Business:* Welsh Government Business Innovation representatives talked about changes in regional government policies toward innovation and ways in which the government supports businesses.
- *Creating a Sustainable Economy:* Growing New Business Skills in Wales: Speakers from the Sustainable Places Research Institute and Business in the Community were featured.
- *Realizing Business Opportunities from Medical Research:* Speakers from Cardiff University's School of Medicine and the managing director of a local healthcare company discussed healthcare innovation.

The format of these events includes thirty minutes of networking, followed by presentations with a Q&A session and another concluding networking session with a light buffet. The presentation portion of the program often includes a case study of a local company, with learnings that may be beneficial to the community at large.

To facilitate networking, attendees are "color-badged" by themes related to the event topic so that they may more easily identify other attendees with similar interests. In addition to informal networking and presentations, these programs include activities such as smaller clinics, as well as confidential "One-2-One" sessions (likened to "speed dating").

Larger events can be attended by about 100 delegates from the Cardiff University Innovation Network, and smaller gatherings may invite 20–30 attendees. Program themes for future events are often identified based on feedback forms given to attendees and returned to the Innovation Network staff after these larger events.

Leveraging Technology

The Cardiff University Innovation Network is exploring ways to use technology to keep its members connected, employing both new and old forms of communication.

When the network was founded in the mid-1990s, a free hotline was set up for members to call at any time with an innovation challenge. Innovation Network staff operate this hotline and address these challenges or questions either by themselves or by identifying members of the community or other agencies/universities with resources or subject matter expertise and connecting them to the member who phoned the hotline.

The Cardiff University Innovation Network is also making efforts to leverage social media to facilitate communication between members and engage underrepresented groups, such as young professionals and women, at events. This effort includes an Innovation Network Group on LinkedIn, which has had some success generating discussions. Innovation Network staff have also noted that members are beginning to tweet from within events. While LinkedIn and Twitter are showing encouraging signs, Facebook interaction is not looking so promising, although it is still too early to tell how successful this social media strategy may be.

Screencasts and podcasts of events are made available on the website/the Network's YouTube channel post-event, enabling non-attendees to view presentations.

The Network is also experimenting with technologies and products that can create more interactive environments during events themselves. For instance, past events have featured an innovative new rowing machine and an award-winning lightweight portable lift. In addition, the Network has used electronic voting technology in a *Question Time*-style event in order to get audiences engaged and inform the direction of discussion.

Metrics and Impacts

Although the Network is not asked to measure the financial impact of its activities, it looks at qualitative measures of success and reports those to the Steering Group and University Board. These measures may include anecdotal feedback from member companies provided in network-wide surveys and event feedback forms, as well as any success stories or partnerships that resulted from a connection or introduction that the Network facilitated.

Quantitative feedback is provided after each event and supplemented by occasional member surveys. It is the Network's belief that recording and reporting financial results, contracts won and so on may change the collaborative dynamic of the Network.

Lessons Learned

Several lessons have been learned in the Cardiff University Innovation Network spanning a variety of topics including university affiliation, building trust within the network and the importance of feedback.

These lessons include the following:

- **Careful positioning of university affiliation keeps the collaborative spirit alive.** The Cardiff University Innovation Network is very careful to be at arm's length from the commercial activities of the University. It believes that any perception of the Network as a marketing arm of the University could erode the spirit of collaboration.
- **"No selling" principles increase openness.** All attendees must agree to terms and conditions that create an open forum where sharing and collaboration, not marketing and selling of services, is paramount.
- **Informal networking can be powerful.** The Innovation Network tries to promote informal networking because individuals tend to share and build more trust in one-to-one scenarios, versus open discussion among a hundred event attendees. Although some of the participants may be competitors, this has not been found to inhibit initial exploratory discussion in most circumstances. In fact, finding areas of mutual benefit can occur between companies with overlapping, as well as entirely remote, business interests.
- **Feedback is critical.** The Innovation Network emphasizes feedback from events, as well as on informal surveys of its membership. These forms identify topics and themes of interest, keeping programming relevant and members engaged.

The Innovation Network (Cornell)⁴⁵

Michael J. Lippitz and Jill Hellman

Background and History

The Innovation Network (IN) is a program of The Leland C. and Mary M. Pillsbury Institute for Hospitality Entrepreneurship (PIHE) at the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration (SHA). Lee Pillsbury, Chairman and CEO of the Thayer Lodging Group, believes passionately in entrepreneurship and innovation in the hospitality industry. In 2006, Lee and his wife Mary pledged \$15 million to the SHA. (Lee is a Cornell alumnus from the class of 1969.) This established the Leland C. and Mary M. Pillsbury Institute of Hospitality Entrepreneurship. The mission of PIHE is to support “aspiring entrepreneurs and innovators” through events and curriculum development aimed primarily at SHA students.

In addition to establishing PIHE, Pillsbury has been active in striving for innovation in the industry itself. In 2008, Pillsbury decided that he wanted to bring together his hospitality peers—a group of the most senior leaders of hotel brands, management companies and ownership groups—to focus on innovation. He was originally going to do this “on his own.” However, he realized that an innovation network for industry leaders could also benefit SHA in terms of fundraising, student jobs and the like. The dean approved of the idea, but it was unclear how to set up such a network within PIHE.

At a Kellogg School of Management (Northwestern University) event in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, that same year, Jill Hellman attended a talk by Pillsbury, also a Kellogg alum. She approached him afterwards to request a meeting to discuss her career. He agreed, and she sent him a resume. He saw that she had a background in designing peer groups and in innovation, among other things, and asked her to design the model for the IN. After a strategy session in the spring of 2008 with industry experts and Joe Strodel and Tom Ward from SHA, SHA agreed to develop the IN. The School offered a consulting role to Jill to join the IN team for one year as a secondee from the Thayer Lodging Group, which had hired her in the meantime.

The IN team believed that there were two ways such a network could succeed in inspiring innovation in the industry: First, it could teach leaders new skills and values that they could implement at their companies. Second, it could create a forum for leaders to work together on industry issues. One example of the latter model is the Business Innovation

LEADERSHIP

Neil Tarallo, Director (Academic Director, PIHE)

Joe Strodel, IN Advisory Board (Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs, Office of the Associate Dean for External Affairs, School for Hotel Administration)

Jill Hellman, IN Advisory Board

⁴⁵ www.hotelschool.cornell.edu/industry/events/innovations

Factory at the Rhode Island School of Design. Companies come to the Factory with a problem, and the school assembles a diverse and innovative group to work on it. Another idea was to have companies nominate a special projects person to work with his or her counterparts on designated industry problems.

The IN Team decided on the first model, which required a core group of top leaders or their representatives who would have the credibility and leverage to diffuse ideas and practices. The IN Team focused on “getting the right people in the room, and then leveraging them to get other people.” Jill, Tom and Joe considered having many “other people” from completely different industries to spur nonlinear thinking, but they ultimately decided to stay mostly within the hospitality industry.

The SHA name was the key calling card, as it enjoys a respected global position as the preeminent brand in hospitality education and research, and many top executives are alums. The team was therefore able to connect with CEOs and presidents at Cornell meetings and industry events or on campus and dialogue about their top concerns, rather than just sending a letter or e-mail. The team was able to enroll five top executives right away and then use their references to enroll others, eventually building a core team of eight.

The first meeting of the IN was held in New York in June 2008 and was funded by PIHE and Cornell. The leaders considered establishing ongoing IN funding following the corporate subscription model of the school's Center for Hospitality Research, where companies pay an annual fee to be on the board and attend roundtable discussions about the cutting edge of research. With the financial crisis of 2008 looming, however, and with a still unproven network, a new model had to be devised.

IN leaders reasoned that vendors and service providers to the industry would sponsor events. Companies would have to be invited to sponsor, though, given the high caliber of the attendees. It would not be open to everyone. The team required that IN sponsors provide evidence that they were innovative, be it through an award, a well-known product or something else. Selected sponsors would be allowed to attend the meeting.

The model covered program costs. Speakers were never paid, and Hellman negotiated heavily with venues, but the approach needed to be reconciled with the ways a university ordinarily does business. Some of the executives the team recruited were Cornell alums, so the university's development office could be in charge and coordinate contacts. The speakers Hellman recruited were usually not academics. However, the Innovation Network was building relationships with people and companies that had never previously contributed to or recruited from SHA, as well as strengthening existing relationships. It was understood that Hellman's position was intended to be short-term, to build the network, and then it would be managed inside SHA.

Indeed, in September 2009, Hellman began reporting to Joe Strodel, Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs in the Office of the Associate Dean for External Affairs, as well as to the PIHE. When in March 2010 she was asked to go to China with Thayer Lodging Group, Strodel took over management of the IN.

To further entrench IN, Strodel created an advisory board of thirty people: twenty-four executives (including Hellman) and six representatives from SHA. One goal in creating the board was to have a forum for advancing discussions at IN events throughout the year. (IN meetings are now being held twice per year—in New York in the fall and in Los Angeles in the spring—as opposed to the original three times per year, due to feedback from participants.) The board also broadens the pool of top executives, engaging speakers and interesting venues that are available for IN events. (Using an unusual venue, such as the United Nations for the fourth IN event and an antique car museum for the eighth, or Google's New York office for the ninth, is now the norm.)

Beginning with the seventh IN meeting in November 2010, attendees were also asked to make a “suggested donation” of \$1,000, in the form of a tax-deductible gift to SHA. (Pillsbury had made such appeals verbally at the end of IN meetings going back to the third event.) The numbers of people making such a donation has increased steadily, with about 40% of attendees at the November 2011 event making a contribution. At the tenth IN, in Los Angeles in January 2012, 85% of the attendees paid to attend. Today, a contribution is required for attendance.

This additional funding is designed, in part, to pay for greater student participation. Starting in the fall of 2010, SHA held a competition from which thirteen students are selected to receive an expense-paid trip to the next IN meeting, as well as attend the major industry conference around which IN events are scheduled. The IN student ambassador program has grown to fourteen students per meeting and has become a highly sought-after industry opportunity for upperclassman. Some IN student ambassadors have stated that it was the best industry experience of their four years at Cornell. Others have stated that they received three job offers from attending one IN.

Innovation Networking Activities

There are three conferences in the hospitality industry that most CEOs attend, two in New York City and one in southern California. IN meetings are planned around those events, so that executives need only extend their trips a day, rather than make a separate trip. Two events have been held at Cornell, the second of which occurred after the IN Team had assembled the core group. At that event, participants spent a day and a half in a smaller, more intimate setting and had time to interact with students (some of whom received job offers).

Based on the conversations Hellman had while building the core group, she tailored programs to their interests. She came to know them well and could bounce ideas off of them. This helped make the programs valuable so that attendees would want to come back. Then she began asking core team members to facilitate at meetings, as participants would respond better to having “one of their own” in front of the room.

The events always have round tables, and almost half the time is set aside for participants to talk to and learn from each other. Every attendee must be invited; indeed, Hellman shunned publicity, as anyone in the industry who saw the invitation list would want to attend! No media is permitted, so that conversations can be more open and candid. Attendees are assigned to tables, with each person hand-picked.

To make the programs enjoyable and mind-expanding, some of the speakers are from completely different industries. At the January 2009 event, Carlos Dominguez from Cisco presented on Telepresence and other emerging technologies. Another event had top military personnel present, including officers involved with the first election in Iraq and top commanders in Afghanistan. Other presentations included a session on Second Life and experts and academics discussing diverse topics such as nanotechnology and the psychology of witness testimony. These were people that a hospitality industry CEO would not generally think of engaging. Recent IN speakers have included Peter Diamondis, Founder, XPrize Foundation; Bonita Stewart, Vice President, Google; Simon Bray, Culture and Capability Director, ?WhatIF!; Rajeev Kulkarni, Vice President and General Manager, Consumer Solutions, 3-D Systems Corporation; Paul Brown, President, Hilton Worldwide; Kathleen Matthews, Executive Vice President, Marriott International; Hod Lipson Ph.D., Associate Professor, College of Engineering, Cornell; Lee Stein, Founder CEO, Prize Capital; George Joblove, Former Executive Vice President Advanced Technology, SONY Pictures; Jim Butler, Senior Vice President, American Airlines; and Nancy Novogrod, Senior Vice President, American Express Publishing.

Recent IN meetings have emphasized team-building exercises. Each table is equipped with Intellimeet technology that facilitates real-time sharing of notes and ideas around challenges presented to the group. At the ninth IN meeting in November 2011, *New Yorker* cartoonist Drew Dernavich captured some of the ideas in real time as groups shared their thinking.

Because of the success of the Innovation Network and its connectivity to senior-level innovators and entrepreneurs in the hospitality and travel industry, the IN was re-incorporated in Feb 2012 into the Leland and Mary Pillsbury Institute for Hospitality Entrepreneurship (PIHE), where it was originally created and launched.

Lessons Learned

- The success of the IN depended initially on having the IN team applying its expertise in training, development, innovation and connection to industry leaders from the Cornell alumni network as a full-time effort. By recruiting top executives and tailoring sessions to common interests, IN inspired these leaders to not only innovate in their companies but also return and build a true network. Providing ample time for participants to network, which has evolved into facilitated team exercises, has reinforced the building of relationships. Careful screening of presenters to exclude sales pitches also helps build trust and new connections.
- While there might have been a group of loyal SHA alums willing to sponsor IN, in retrospect it was important to build the value proposition first. The initial programming evolved from being exclusively futurist, “out-of-the-box” presenters to having industry people on the program, which has helped bring relevant lessons from sessions back to the concerns of the audience. After a few years of soliciting voluntary donations, IN began to charge all participants for attendance.
- IN is seen by SHA leadership as benefiting the school in a variety of ways: enhancing brand identity, building its network beyond alumni and supporting recruiting and career placement. IN tracks students who receive jobs, sponsors who book business based on the connections made at events, deals among IN participants and presenters who have been hired by a participant. (For a period, every presenter reported receiving a future project from a participant.) The number of CEOs in attendance is also tracked. To date, however, strong connections between participants and SHA faculty have not occurred.
- Increased student participation has also created a new kind of bond, where industry leaders of today feel they are giving back to the leaders of tomorrow as they work together during team exercises. In the future, IN participants may work on specific projects together as part of their expanding mission. Future IN meetings may involve “homework” for participants so that innovative ideas and practices may be published.

Reference Center for Innovation, Fundação Dom Cabral (FDC)⁴⁶

Jennifer L. Yee and Michael J. Lippitz

Background and History

FDC (Fundação Dom Cabral) was established as an autonomous, nonprofit institution in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, in 1976. Much of FDC's early focus was training the Brazilian business community and diffusing management knowledge. FDC characterizes itself as "a development center for executives, entrepreneurs and public managers ... [that] has been committed to dialoguing and listening to organizations, and building integrated educational solutions alongside them."

LEADERSHIP

Carlos Arruda, Coordinator of the Bradesco Innovation Center

Anderson Rossi, Coordinator of the CRI São Paulo

Fabian Salum, Coordinator of the CRI Minas

Erika Barcellos, Coordinator of the CRI Multinationals

In addition to a Coordinator, each CRI has a team of research assistants and student interns who conduct research projects on the topics to be discussed, as well as identifying the benchmarking cases that are presented at each meeting.

For instance, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as the Brazilian economy opened more to the world, large companies sought to learn how to operate in the new environment. A network of twenty-five such multinationals formed in order to foster learning, such as how to implement management practices from their US and EU businesses into the evolving Brazilian context. Today, FDC maintains several "knowledge development centers" focused on different aspects of management relevant to the Brazilian context: Sustainability, Corporate Governance, Development and Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Managerial Strategy and Management, International Business, Innovation, Infrastructure and Logistics, Business-to-Business Marketing and Health Management Center.

In 2002, the Innovation Center (IC) was formed. IC efforts undertake surveys to build knowledge about new concepts and practices of local and international companies and produced academic research. Current research projects include Environmental Innovations; Corporate Venturing in Brazil; Innovation Culture; Open Innovation in Brazil; Innovation in the Finance Sector; Strategy of Innovation and Innovation in Small, Mid- and Large Size Companies; Management of Foreign R&D Center in Brazil; and Innovation by Design. The FDC Innovation Center is also responsible for the data gathering and for support to the IMD and the World Economic Forum Competitiveness Reports in Brazil.

⁴⁶ www.fdc.org.br/en

In 2011 the Innovation Center received a grant from a Brazilian bank—Bradesco—and was renamed the Bradesco Innovation Center (BIC). As part of its strategy to develop global partnership, it has formed strategic alliances with leading academics from IMD (World Competitiveness Center), INSEAD (ELab@INSEAD) and the Kellogg School of Management (Kellogg Innovation Network 2010) that facilitate cooperative research projects and faculty exchanges.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

One of the first activities of BIC was the creation of a community of practice known as the Group of Technology Exchange (GIT), which included traditionally innovative companies such as Siemens, Fiat and Vale, as well as companies that were not known for being innovative.

In 2008, the GIT group was narrowed, by invitation, to companies that could teach innovation and named the Reference Center for Innovation (CRI). Today there are three different groups that include a total of 45 companies (the original group became the CRI São Paulo, and a new group was later founded in the State of Minas Gerais—CRI Minas). In 2012, a new group was formed including exclusively managers of R&D centers from multinational corporations. This group will support research projects on management of foreign R&D centers in Brazil.

Since 2008, government agencies at the federal and state level have begun participating at the CRIs, initially as observers. In 2009, the Department of Science, Technology and Higher Education of the State of Minas Gerais funded a study aimed at assessing the innovativeness of local companies and diagnosing barriers to innovation. The study found that companies did not interact; they were insulated within narrow networks.

FDC received a two-year grant from the Department of Science, Technology and Higher Education of the State of Minas Gerais to overcome the lack of connections. (Today there are eighteen companies involved.) In 2010, CRI Minas Gerais was formed from ten noncompeting companies. It met every two months, covering a specific innovation topic at each meeting. Topics covered to date include Knowledge Management for Innovation, Metrics and Indicators of Innovation, Culture of Innovation and Competitive Intelligence.

In 2012, two new groups were under development: CRI Interior in the industrialized countryside of São Paulo and CRI South, to include companies from the three southern states of Brazil (Rio Grande do Sul, Paraná and Santa Catarina). The goal is to include up to fifteen companies in each of the new CRIs, creating a community of about eighty innovative companies in Brazil.

Innovation Networking Activities

The goal of the CRIs is not only to share experience but also to develop new knowledge on how to better manage innovation. Based on the methodology of knowledge creation proposed by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995, *The Knowledge Creating Company*), at each meeting the participants learn not only from each other's experiences but also from leading experts and other organizations considered references (experts) on the specific practice discussed. Each participating company is invited to bring three representatives to the meeting, at least one of whom is a subject matter expert, or reference, on the innovation topic. The meetings are structured around an open discussion with an innovation expert; a benchmarking case study from a company that has experience with the relevant practice and a facilitated knowledge-sharing opportunity, where small groups of 5-6 companies meet around a roundtable to discuss issues, challenges and solutions related to the topic. The meetings conclude with an open plenary session with the invited guests.

The cases and presentations are recorded in a short seven-minute video available on the CRI website and in elaborated case studies and working papers, which are later made available to the participating companies, to be used to build or develop new capabilities.

Topics covered since the formation of CRI include Collaborative Innovation, Open Innovation, Government Incentives for Innovation, Design and Innovation, Innovation and Supply Chain management, Ideation, Leadership and Innovation, Innovation for the Base of the Pyramid, Talent Development for Innovation and Management of Innovation Projects. Topics are determined annually in August, when the BIC administers a survey to participating companies around innovation topics and challenges. These topics are highlighted in a half-day meeting at which participants vote for the next year's focus topics. One upcoming topic is "developing capabilities and preparing your organization for innovation and innovation in service."

Company interest in the CRI program is generated and maintained by BIC Coordinator Carlos Arruda. Arruda and his team visit participating companies during the year to follow up on innovation progress being made internally. BIC hopes to diversify participating companies and industries and seeks to include multinational groups that may constitute a supply chain along a similar industry vertical.

To disseminate the knowledge developed in each annual cycle, BIC organizes a one-day conference in Sao Paulo to discuss "Routes of Innovation in the Brazilian Context." The conference, designed to attract up to 500 participants, focuses on a specific aspect of innovation in Brazil each year. In 2012, for the Fourth Annual Conference, the topic is "anticipating the future, the basis for radical innovation in Brazil." Each participating company can invite up to ten guests, internal or external to the company, to the annual conference.

Metrics and Impacts

CRI evaluates the value it is providing to company participants, as well as the value it is receiving as a research institution.

Every year it conducts a formal evaluation of its cycle of events. CRI does not evaluate each session. It asks companies about the utility of the meetings, and the materials received, as well as how much these materials were used internally once CRI participants returned to their companies. At the end of the 2010–2011 cycle, CRI programs were assessed by 73% of participants with a grade of at least 4 (out of 5), or very good, and 82% considered the companies of the group members as very good. In addition, 73% evaluated the dynamics of meetings with a grade of 4 or 5, 82% found the content very well developed, and 58% rated the business cases presented with a grade of 4 or higher. Companies' continuing interest can also be measured by whether they opt to stay part of the network, as membership dues are set at 25,000 Brazilian reais for six meetings annually, an amount that discourages companies that do not feel they are extracting value from the meetings.

As mentioned above, the CRI Coordinator and his team visit each company to assess how their innovation efforts are progressing and to keep track of companies' changing priorities and innovation challenges. The organization also pays close attention to companies that may not be sharing or collaborating as much as other participating companies.

CRI also takes stock of the value of these programs to the university, including through articles and case studies published, as well as academic and media recognition.

Lessons Learned

FDC/BIC has learned several lessons over the years about facilitating open innovation and corporate knowledge-sharing from its CRIs in several areas:

Group composition:

- **Membership matters.** In the group surveys from the 2010–2011 cycle, members of one group commented that it did not believe it had the right mix to give the broader group good, diverse perspectives on innovation management. Selection and combination of companies must be carefully considered as CRI forms more groups.
- **It is more difficult to accommodate competitor companies without continuing to add new CRI groups.** Some industries are very cautious about sharing innovation challenges with competitors. As CRI grows, it is faced with situations where two companies in similar industries must find ways to participate without limiting how much they trust or share with the group.

- **The optimal corporate group size is about twenty companies.** When the FDC/BIC initiated the network, it invited around twenty-five companies but realized quickly that some were neither innovative nor able or willing to share learnings with the group. After a few meeting cycles, the organization has decided that the optimal group number is about twenty companies, with three representatives from each company attending the meetings.

Meeting venue and facilitation:

- **On-site company visits are not effective venues for open innovation and knowledge-sharing.** When past meetings were hosted by one of the member companies, at the request of joining participants, trust-building and open sharing became more difficult, as the host company often wanted to demonstrate its best innovations and facilities rather than to address some of the challenges and issues at hand.
- **Facilitating a flat learning environment enables more sharing.** FDC/CRI seeks to create a multilateral learning environment, rather than a unilateral teaching environment, by engaging participants in dialogue and idea sharing. This is aided by the physical environment of CRIs, where all activities are in flat rooms and at roundtables (rather than in lecture rooms and amphitheaters).

Tools and technology:

- **Disseminating learnings to a broader audience requires different methodologies and tools.** Three years ago, the FDC began to consider sharing the lessons and best practices from CRIs with a broader audience. It now hosts an annual national event with outside companies. The format is similar to the CRIs, but tools and technology for participation must be leveraged for larger groups. FDC/BIC needs to learn more about facilitating dialogue with groups of 400–500 individuals, which necessarily differ from those used with 50–60 individuals.
- **LinkedIn and other social networking sites have not yet yielded meaningful or dynamic discourse between participating companies.**

Other:

- **FDC/BIC must work to find differentiated ways to include the public sector and government officials in its work.** FDC/BIC has met with challenges as it tries to identify the best way to include key government officials in corporate dialogues on innovation. Currently, federal and state officials from areas such as the Department of Industry and Commerce are invited to and attend large meetings.

Kellogg Innovation Network (KIN)⁴⁷

Michael Collins and Michael J. Lippitz

Background and History

In February of 2003, fifteen business leaders and two Kellogg School of Management faculty members, Mohan Sawhney and Robert C. Wolcott, came together to form the Kellogg Innovation Network (KIN). A range of companies, including five that remain active today—DuPont, Motorola, Chamberlain, Linde and Herman Miller—provided seed capital to build the organization. KIN is a meeting place for business executives and innovation leaders from across multiple domains and industries, committed to ongoing collaboration around understanding global trends and market disruptors, leading-edge research and novel solutions to growth.

Through regular interactions, KIN participants create a meaningful professional network around the practice of innovation and growth. Most program time is devoted to executives and thought leaders who present and discuss their insights on innovation challenges and open questions, with participants and Kellogg faculty acting as facilitators and synthesizers. That role helps Kellogg researchers better define relevant and timely research problems based on real challenges facing today's innovation leaders. Kellogg and Northwestern University students have opportunities to participate in competitions judged and supported by KIN participants.

KIN aims to reframe the mission and role of a business school to be an independent convening platform for accelerating innovation dialogue and action. According to Professor Wolcott, "Through events like KIN Global, we are building a network of thought leaders who have the collective ability to advance the global prosperity agenda." The founding objectives of KIN include:

LEADERSHIP

Robert C. Wolcott, Founder and Executive Director

Stephanie Wolcott, Associate Director

Jeffrey Ernstoff, Creative Director

Peter Bryant, Senior Fellow

Ari L. Garber, Operations

Jennifer Andrade, Events Coordinator

Veronica Beckman, Events Coordinator

Kristen DaRosa, Public Relations Manager

KIN Advisory Board

Jørn Bang Andersen, Senior Advisor, Executive Director, Global Programs, Nordic Innovation

Carlos Arruda, Fundação Dom Cabral

Anna Catalano, Board of Mead Johnson & Willis Group

Mark Cutifani, CEO, AngloGold Ashanti

Betsy Holden, Senior Advisor, McKinsey & Company

Marc Holtzman, Vice Chairman, Barclays Capital

Matt McCall, Managing Partner, New World Ventures

Blythe McGarvie, Harvard Business School

Toby Redshaw, Global CIO, American Express

Mohan Sawhney, Co-Founder and Professor, Kellogg School of Management

Wally Scott, Professor, Kellogg School of Management

Lee Shapiro, President, Allscripts

Steve Wilson, CEO, CF Industries

⁴⁷ www.kinglobal.org

- Understanding our KIN member firms' innovation challenges
- Surveying and synthesizing solutions across industries
- Sharing and helping to motivate positive change for KIN member firms
- Creating a vital, meaningful professional network

Innovation Networking Activities

KIN holds two regional dialogues (limited to 50 people) and one Kin Global conference (limited to 200 people) every year. The dialogues focus on specific innovation strategy and management issues, while KIN Global takes a broader view of issues inhibiting prosperity around the world. KIN Global and one of the dialogues are held at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, and the other dialogue is hosted by a corporation. Past corporate venues have included Cargill, Herman Miller, IBM, Cisco Systems, U.S. Southern Command, Gallo Wineries and Harrah's Entertainment. In 2012, KIN held its first KIN Catalyst event, and in 2013 it will convene the first KIN Expedition.

Participants pay about \$2,000 each to participate in a regional dialogue and \$3,500 to participate in KIN Global. KIN also receives sponsorships and in-kind contributions from various companies and other organizations. Participation is by invitation only, and no more than four employees of the same organization may attend. KIN is not limited to innovation champions and leaders from businesses. Participants include entrepreneurs, technology experts, government and military leaders, nonprofit leaders, consultants, artists, actors and academics. Participating companies to date include Boeing, Kraft, Baxter, Abbott, 3M, Illinois Tool Works, Amway, John Deere, SAP, McKinsey & Co, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Allscripts, Clorox, Leo Burnett, FedEx, Microsoft, Nissan, Mead Johnson, St. Jude Medical, SC Johnson, Sony, Chamberlain Group, Motorola, BP and BP Castrol, Siemens, DuPont, PepsiCo, AT&T, ABN Amro Bank, Alcoa, GE, Walt Disney, American Express, Raytheon and Aviva.

KIN events are structured around a variety of interactions: individual contributions of domain experts as presenters, panel discussions, break-out sessions and summaries by Professor Wolcott. The goal at all times is to engage all participants in a give-and-take that stimulates the mind and brings out the best thinking of each participant's experience for the benefit of all. There are numerous breaks and meals together for one-on-one and small group conversations.

Every KIN event includes an evening artistic performance, called "Etudes for Innovation," coordinated and produced by KIN Creative Director Jeffrey Ernstoff. Etudes seek to enrich and reinforce event themes while engaging both the left and right hemispheres of the brain, conveying the message that innovation and innovative thinking are impossible without creativity and the processes of creative output, blended with hard work and practice.

KIN Regional Dialogues

KIN regional dialogues start with lunch and conclude at 4 P.M. the following day. Presentations, panels and breakout sessions are used to delve into internal and industry-wide challenges, risks, trends, potential market disruptors and successful innovation management strategies. Most content is provided by the participants themselves, from their own experiences, with occasional presentations by faculty on current research.

There is productive feedback between companies and faculty. For instance, at an event in 2004, several companies expressed an interest in the emerging phenomenon of Corporate Entrepreneurship. Three companies agreed to fund research on the topic, which ultimately resulted in the book *Grow from Within: Mastering Corporate Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, by Professor Wolcott and Michael Lippitz.

KIN Global

KIN Global takes a broader view. It brings together leaders from across the world community to delve into what “prosperity” means in various contexts and how we can all work together to achieve it. KIN Global has been embraced by the Dean of the Kellogg School of Management as a way to better understand what roles the school can play as a global business school in helping humanity achieve its potential. Every year, one or two countries are selected for special attention—Colombia in 2009, Turkey in 2010, Brazil in 2011, Finland and Indonesia in 2012—with a focus on what the country’s role has been and could be in shaping the future of its region and the world. (In 2009, Colombia was represented by, among others, then-Minister of Defense Juan Manuel Santos, who is currently the President of Colombia.)

In general, the following topics are at the center of KIN Global:

- How do we spark interest in broad innovation that leads to global prosperity?
- How are companies innovating to meet global resource challenges? How are they creating new businesses from the growing demand?
- What are people doing around the world that is working, and how might we transfer and adapt those programs to other geographies and contexts?
- How can media contribute to the public good?
- How can large companies deliver innovation healthcare solutions to emerging markets?
- What role do women play in emerging economies? How can we empower them to do more?

In 2011, KIN began sponsoring a competition for MBA-student teams to propose new business models and solutions that not only serve untapped markets but also propose affordable and environmentally sustainable solutions to improve the quality of life for very poor consumers. Three teams present their concepts, and each participant votes by allocating a total of \$500 to up to two of the teams from a \$50,000 prize fund. The winning team in 2011 also spontaneously received tens of thousands of dollars in additional funding from various venture fund managers and philanthropists in attendance. (In 2009, attendees spontaneously raised \$50,000 for Youth Action International the day after a deeply moving presentation by its founder, Kimmie Weeks, at Etudes for Innovation the night before.)

KIN Catalyst and KIN Expedition

In 2012, the first KIN Catalyst event, “Mining Company of the Future,” was held in Brazil. KIN Catalyst events focus on industries or issues that have a major impact on global prosperity, with the aim of facilitating transformative innovation. “Mining Company of the Future” assembled fifty leaders from the ecosystem of natural resource companies: suppliers, communities, government, investors and NGOs. The four-day event resulted in several initiatives that are now being taken forward, including a new, multi-stakeholder model for mining companies and their ecosystem; a definition and new focus on total lifecycle value; a commitment to reinvigorated R&D and a recalibration of workforce development, with a focus on new educational approaches.

In 2013, the first KIN Expedition will travel to Israel to take an in-depth look at the innovation ecosystem there, as well as to probe emerging issues and concerns.

Being a KINian

These spontaneous shows of generosity reflect the growing sense of community among KIN participants, as well as the character of those invited to events. Events aim to engender a sense of mission beyond KIN, an understanding that more can be accomplished in the world by proactive cross-pollination of people and ideas with the practical application of innovation thinking.

For instance, during a presentation by Mike White, then Vice Chairman of PepsiCo and now CEO of DirectTV, a participant from a nonprofit involved in disease prevention learned how soft drinks delivered to the port in Dar-as-Salem are distributed to the far reaches of the country in only four days. Currently it can take four months to distribute life-saving malaria medicine from the same port. Stephanie Pace Marshall, Founding President and President Emerita, Illinois Math and Science Academy, inspired participants with the innovation imperative for the education of our children. The nature and quality of how and about what our children think is the new “currency” for innovation: for critical and creative thinking, collaboration and human-centered design.

Professor Wolcott has coined a phrase, KINian, for those who attend multiple KIN events. KINian is a term of endearment, but also one that sets forth a standard and expectation of behavior from participants that builds on their natural curiosity and hard-earned professional accomplishments. KINians are not satisfied with gleaning incremental insights from current trends and research. They collectively engage one another to get beyond the known boundaries of their domain expertise, comfort zones and ecosystems. They are keenly motivated to absorb different perspectives and reverse-engineer different approaches to innovation problem solving, and they are committed to bringing insights back to their primary professional interests.

Beyond this, many KINians see “renewal”—letting their mind and heart breathe—as a purpose for attending KIN events and engaging with the KIN community. For many, their active KIN membership results in enriching the faculty for intuition in decision making, problem solving and value creation. Wolcott calls this “synchronicity” and advises, “Never leave serendipity to chance.” He concludes each salutation and meeting with the words “to the future” and seeks to inspire KINians, individually and collectively, to change the world for the better.

Lessons Learned

- **Curation is important.** KIN events are strictly invitation-only. In order to create the kinds of dialogue that are both informative and inspiring, you need to have the right kind of people in the room. Making sure that attendees meet the description of KINians in the last section is critical to creating a trusted and thoughtful environment.
- **Diversity works.** At the beginning of KIN, it was not clear that bringing together companies from different industries would yield productive conversations. What would, say, a program manager at a defense contractor have in common with a marketing executive at a financial services company or the innovation leader of a consumer packaged goods company? It turned out that it is precisely that diversity of viewpoints, combined with rigor and openness, that makes for truly new insights that would rarely occur at events attended primarily by industry insiders.
- **Facilitation is helpful.** Absorbing insights from a variety of different perspectives is not easy to do. KIN events benefit from the expert facilitation of Professor Wolcott and other leaders who help guide discussions and provide in-the-moment summaries of key points.
- **Online interaction takes work.** KIN has experimented with creating a proprietary website for registered KIN members to create greater dialogue during the time between in-person events. To date, that has been difficult to accomplish. Active facilitation may also be required in this domain for it to reach its potential.

Knowledge Center for Innovation (KCI), Technion⁴⁸

Michael J. Lippitz and Marmon Pine

Background and History

The Knowledge Center for Innovation (KCI) at the Technion, Israel, was founded in 2008. KCI aims to accelerate innovation by disseminating information and knowledge, fostering collaboration, and establishing a network of researchers, business people and policymakers. KCI activities are mostly “bottom up,” focusing on organizations—particularly small and medium enterprises—but they also support the Israeli Government in “top-down” policymaking and resource allocation, providing information to improve decision-making on how to best enhance innovation in different industry sectors.

LEADERSHIP

Dr. Miriam Erez, Director
Dr. Iris Arbel, Manager
Yaara Ben Nahum

Three years of initial funding was provided by the Israeli Ministry of Science and Technology as part of a regular program of supporting the creation of “Infrastructural Knowledge Centers” in a variety of fields, primarily high-tech and medicine. Knowledge centers serve as a hub for research papers and resources, as well as

coordinating activities among participants in different fields.

Unlike other knowledge centers, which tend to focus on high-tech industries, KCI focuses on the interface between high-tech and “traditional industries,” with some additional work on service industries. Traditional industries are sectors in which raw materials are created and transformed into finished goods such as plastic, machinery, food, textiles and mining on a large scale through manufacturing and construction. Service industries include banking, communications, distribution, professional services and government. In general, neither traditional nor service industries in Israel are considered innovative. They do not invest a lot in R&D—only about 1%, versus 11% for high-tech industries—and exports have been flat in recent years.

KCI is housed within the Technion's Faculty of Industrial Engineering and Management (IE&M) and is self-managed. KCI activities are publicized in the IE&M newsletter, and sometimes Behavioral Sciences and Management faculty and students come to events. In addition to building a top collection of standard research resources such as journals, case studies and databases, KCI is creating its own advanced research tools. KCI coordinates fourth-year students' projects on innovation in traditional industry, to enhance their level of innovation. It is independent of the Bronica Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center—also housed within IE&M—which focuses on assisting entrepreneurs in building a start-up. Once a start-up is founded, Bronica bows out.

⁴⁸ innovation.technion.ac.il

KCI is now self-funded through its programs. Primary activities today include:

- **Industry-academia R&D collaboration:** For example., as part of the MAGNET program in the Office of the Chief Scientist in the Ministry of Industry and Trade, KCI initiated and helped build a consortium of seven industries and four academic research centers aimed at innovation for smart plastic packaging, which will consist of sensors and new material to protect the lifespan and quality of the products. This was different than the typical MAGNET program, which focuses on high-tech. KCI now serves as the Knowledge Center for the consortium.
- **Exposing students to innovation challenges in industry and defining projects around them, directly with the companies:** The Ministry of Industry and Trade provides partial support of the program that student teams undertake during their fourth year. The program has now expanded to three other universities in Israel.
- **A “Managing for Innovation” forum where both high-tech and low-tech companies build their skills through expert input and sharing best practices:** More on this below.
- **“Moving-up,” a seven-month educational program in managing the innovation process, with “hands on” projects in the participating industries.** Participants are seven top management teams of seven industries who attend a half-day meeting once a month for seven months and implement the course knowledge in projects under the guidance of industrial mentors.
- **Executive education programs and consulting engagements with companies.** KCI maintains research relationships with a variety of private consulting firms with expertise in particular aspects of innovation management. Many of these firms focus on idea generation, while KCI covers the full business creation cycle. Sometimes, I&EM students do internships with these consulting firms.

Innovation Networking Activities

Networking occurs at KCI in a variety of ways, including multi-disciplinary conferences, meetings on innovation policy, a social network around innovation, and forums aimed at stimulating knowledge exchange among academia, traditional industries, and high-tech industries, leading to wider implementation of “best practices.”

The Managing Innovation Forum (MIF) is a new KCI activity, started in 2010 that aims to help business leaders learn from each other about improving innovation management. Forty to forty-five companies, representing both high-tech and low-tech, large and small firms, are involved in MIF. They pay an annual fee of about US\$1,000 to send up to three employees to meetings, so a typical meeting will have about a hundred participants.

In general, the same people come to the meetings from the companies, so there is continuity of interactions.

Many of the original companies came to join MIF because an executive was a Technion alum or knew someone in the I&EM faculty. Then it grew by word of mouth. In the second year, about 20% of the companies were new. Some companies are competitors, but MIF does not shy away from that. KCI leadership wishes to promote the idea that competitors can also be collaborators. Only industrial companies are allowed to attend, not consulting firms.

There are 8–10 MIF meetings per year: monthly except during the summer and semester breaks. A typical meeting begins with a lecture by a CEO or industry or academic expert. Then there is a break for dinner, and afterwards smaller groups sitting around a table engage in a “live case study” of a real company or industry issue. One goal of this less formal interaction is to begin building relationships between high-tech and low-tech companies, perhaps fostering some cross-fertilization of best practices in innovation.

MIF is linked informally to other networks in Israel, such as the Israel Innovation Forum in Tel Aviv, which is run in association with the Executive Education program at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya. A similar activity at Ben Gurion University in the Negev is focused on economics. KCI was approached by the Business School at Hong Kong Polytechnic about setting up a knowledge center and actively supported the opening conference in March 2012.

Lessons Learned

The MIF is still young, but there has still been evolution. With the end of funding from the Israeli government, the original steering committee—which by law had to include government representatives—has been disbanded. MIF leadership intends to build a new steering committee that is more oriented toward participating businesses interested in broadening innovation performance in Israel.

In the past, company participants tended to cluster together. There have been some informal collaborations between high-tech and low-tech companies already. Moving forward, to better mix high-tech and low-tech companies, the case study groups will explicitly be mixed.

To date, MIF has not been used as a vehicle for IE&M faculty research. The orientation has been for the benefit of the participating companies. As the community builds, though, there may be feedback into the research community based on the interests of participants.

One topic for future work may be improving management in general in Israel. The Israeli ecosystem is well suited for building new businesses—as highlighted in the popular book *Start-Up Nation*—but not as well for managing large enterprises. This may be changing, however, as international companies locate in Israel and bring in management talent that begins to mix with Israeli managers.

One possible KCI expansion would be to establish industry clusters in the north part of Israel. Even though Israel is small, Tel Aviv is the center, and other parts are considered periphery and sometimes have difficulty growing. KCI may seek to set up a center to foster cooperation, knowledge exchange and resource sharing among the small and medium-sized firms in the region.

i-Net Practitioners Alliance

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

The i-Net Practitioner Alliance is a network of companies from diverse industries working together to develop innovation capabilities and tools in large corporate environments. The Alliance was created in early 2011 by Whirlpool's Global Director of Innovation, Moisés Noreña, after he observed an increased demand from divisions within the Whirlpool Corporation for innovation management, strategy and implementation expertise.

At the time, Whirlpool had a well-developed global training regimen in the Strategos Double Diamond Innovation Process but did not possess the internal expertise to scale innovation management globally. Instead, Whirlpool was contracting with subject-matter experts to drive and support key innovation projects, including

- **New Business Model Experts:** These individuals understand corporate innovation and opportunity identification and have strong cross-industry experience and experience building new lines of businesses. They are capable of successfully challenging and advising leaders within the corporation.
- **Innovation Consultants:** These individuals help innovation teams stay focused on important unmet needs. They can extract insights from market information, synthesize these insights into a strategy and plan, and assist in constructing a team to implement this plan.
- **Implementation Experts:** These individuals have the experience and skills to implement business plans but are not directly involved with creating or driving strategy.

In an effort to supplement these contractors, Noreña reached out to other large, noncompeting companies from diverse industries—retail, manufacturing, healthcare and consumer packaged goods—that were also using the double-diamond process and hence could “speak the same language” with respect to innovation management. Many in the initial group were also former Whirlpool employees. The goal was to leverage each other's capabilities to address innovation management problems of common interest.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

Attendance at Alliance meetings is by invitation only. Companies to date are not direct competitors, and no vendors or service providers have been permitted to join. There is no third-party facilitator for the Alliance; companies will host future meetings at

their own facilities or headquarters. Noreña and innovation leaders from the other participating companies plan to have in-person gatherings 2–3 times per year.

Innovation Networking Activities

The Alliance's primary activities to date have been two meetings of participating company innovation leaders. The inaugural three-and-a-half-day meeting was held in October 2011 at Whirlpool's Brandywine Creek Performance Center in Covert, Michigan. Of the companies that expressed interest in participating in the network, about twenty-five people from four alliance members were able to attend. The agenda was set along two tracks, one for Leaders (e.g., Vice Presidents and Directors of Innovation) and the other for Practitioners (e.g., those with tactical project execution tools).

The Leaders spent a half day discussing the background and history of innovation in their respective companies—how innovation is structured, who drives and funds innovation, and how innovation fits with strategy. The following day, each group was also expected to present one “big win” and its success factors, and one “failure or frustration” and ways to overcome it. The rest of the program was dedicated to discussing common challenges—for example, innovation pilots and experimentation—and potential solutions.

The Practitioners track was intended to help innovation practitioners share toolkits, successful facilitation techniques and project management best practices. They also discussed sharing talent across companies and offering mutual trainings. The first half day was spent in background- and challenge-sharing; the second day, each company was responsible for providing an interactive experience to the group introducing a new tool used at their organization. The final day, Practitioners were asked to engage in an Innovation Challenge/Brainstorm and present the results of their findings to the Leadership group. Scattered throughout the three-day program were guest speakers with a diverse perspective on innovation, such as Jorge Zavala from Tech BA, a lean start-up expert, who discussed web tools for experimentation.

Metrics and Impacts

It is too early to tell what impact such a network may have. Moisés Noreña hopes that, in three years, it will have established a group where members know each other well, work together well, and are recognized within each member's company as being valuable.

Lessons Learned

- **Knowledge-sharing tools:** During this first meeting, participating companies agreed that there was value to creating a social networking or online forum to share documents, as well as to discuss challenges and solutions. The group also agreed that creating a common innovation toolkit was of interest.

- **Confidentiality:** One of the planning elements that consumed the most time was drafting and signing confidentiality agreements. The final version included acknowledgement that anything shared within the group—including common challenges and solutions for innovation, but also any content specific to a member company—would be public within the group; however, none of this information would be shared outside of the network. The network did lose one or two companies that were not able to get approval for the confidentiality agreement.
- **Specialized meeting “tracks”:** It was important to have both the Leaders and the Facilitators tracks at the inaugural meeting, so that one group could focus on innovation management, while the other was able to collaborate on the more tactical elements of innovation.
- **Commonalities between companies:** Participating companies must have some similar language and innovation methodology and training regimen, as well as facing similar challenges. Noreña felt that this would help the network achieve more by addressing common issues.

Intelligent Formulation⁴⁹

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

Intelligent Formulation is a nonprofit organization in the UK that brings together companies from diverse industries to exchange best practices about innovation management and discoveries related to formulation science and technology.

A pilot project was originally funded in 2007 as a regional development initiative related to the promising formulation technology industry in the West Yorkshire area of the country. However, in 2009, Intelligent Formulation Limited was formally founded and launched by three founder organizations (Yorkshire Chemical Focus Ltd., The Institute of Pharmaceutical Innovation at the University of Bradford and ParticlesCIC at the University of Leeds) following a successful bid for regional development funding to run an innovation network to support companies in this area. This cross-sector trio perceived an opportunity for collaboration and open innovation between disparate industries utilizing similar technology platforms.

LEADERSHIP

Jim Bullock, CEO

Steve Bennett, Chairman of the Board and Acting Chair of Yorkshire Chemical Focus Ltd.

Roger Hyde, Director, Intelligent Formulation Ltd., and Director, Yorkshire Chemical Focus Ltd.

Simon Lawson, Director of Engineering Knowledge Transfer, University of Leeds

Paul Thorning, Director of Pharmaceutical Innovation CIC, University of Bradford

While Intelligent Formulation today co-operates closely with the UK's national innovation agency, the Technology Strategy Board and industry-specific Knowledge Transfer Networks (especially the Chemistry KTN), it is formally and practically independent of these agencies. It now has a national and international focus, as opposed to its regional origins, and its primary responsibility is to coordinate innovation activities and provide R&D and innovation services specifically around formulation technology, spanning sub-categories such as chemistry, materials and so on.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

The organization is a nonprofit organization that receives subscriptions and other revenue for services from private sector companies and reinvests any revenue into network activities.

Revenues are derived from partner companies that subscribe in a tiered-pricing system based on the size of the company (e.g., number of employees). Companies that participated in the steering group activities will become part of a "Platinum Partner

⁴⁹ www.intelligentformulation.org

Group,” as will other invited guests that add value to the network, including other companies, trade associations and universities/academics.

Supplementary income is generated by consulting and project work with partner companies, as well as general open events for Intelligent Formulation membership and others. The organization is currently exploring alternative revenue streams, including: establishing a physical collaborative R&D center for laboratory and scale-up activities, as well as Intellectual Property investment and brokerage (e.g., matching investors with start-up prospects and working with university tech-transfer groups to spin out companies).

Intelligent Formulation’s CEO reports to a Board that includes members from its three founding organizations—Yorkshire Chemical Focus Ltd., the Institute of Pharmaceutical Innovation at the University of Bradford and ParticlesCIC at the University of Leeds—as well as two Board observers: the CEO of the Chemistry Innovation KTN and the Chair of the Industry Steering Group. Intelligent Formulation is also closely advised and guided by an “Industry Steering Group” consisting of representatives from leading companies in the sector.

Innovation Networking Activities

In addition to open events and webinars with a specifically technical or more general Open Innovation focus, Intelligent Formulation is piloting “Open Innovation Roadshows,” which are invitation-only group gatherings of 4–5 noncompeting companies that wish to collaborate on both specific technical innovations and general innovation management practices. Roadshow format might include structured networking, outside subject matter experts, and opportunities for peer-to-peer discussion of business challenges and issues with Intelligent Formulation serving as a facilitator. The format will evolve based on feedback from the pilot groups, and Intelligent Formulation will refine technical and nontechnical themes of the gatherings based on companies’ needs.

These small-group meetings emerged from an interest expressed at the Innovation Steering group and in other forums by industrial companies to learn lessons from their peers on topics such as consumer insight-driven innovation, as well as a desire to exchange information and collaborate on common technical challenges. Partner companies also wished to encourage their scientists to become more entrepreneurial, building business as well as technical cases for innovation, networking outside of their R&D departments and leveraging external resources to be more successful.

Interested companies, which hail from a diverse set of industries such as pharmaceuticals, food, household products and personal care, take turns hosting gatherings, which include a visit to the host company’s laboratory and a presentation about the company and its R&D and innovation management.

This is followed by several technical sessions, where representatives from participating companies can present needs or challenges in open forum, and ideas and solutions are discussed. The group is also expected to engage in more general innovation management discussions on topics such as open innovation practices, communications and how to foster a common understanding of innovation across the organization, portfolio management, benchmarking, etc.

Finally, the host company will invite external guest speakers to address the group. These speakers may include academics or businesspeople speaking on both technical and nontechnical aspects of innovation.

Metrics and Impacts

Intelligent Formulation employs conventional success metrics to determine its impact in the industry, including new leads generated, new projects and new income streams. It also takes some qualitative measure of its performance, soliciting feedback from key contacts in its Industry Steering Group and Platinum member companies.

Lessons Learned

Meetings with the steering group led to some insights about the general appetite for innovation activities among partner companies, as well as cross-sector learnings about innovation management:

- Even though previous innovation networking activities promoted by region were more generic in topic and therefore lacked traction, **Intelligent Formulation partner companies still expressed a strong desire to educate their scientists about general innovation best practices**—networking within and outside the corporation, building business cases for technologies, etc.—in addition to convening forums around more specific technical topics.
- **Generating interest among companies to participate in the smaller, closed groups required buy-in from more than one innovation champion** at a company, as it involved devoting resources (e.g., subscription fees), as well as time.
- **Industrial companies are interested in the lessons they can learn from more consumer-driven companies** that have gleaned a reputation for innovating based on consumer needs and insights. These industrial companies have innovated in a more traditional way—incrementally and based on feedback from their own sales force, developments from competitors and some comments from larger customers—by improving technical specifications or a defined price-performance benefit. Through Intelligent Formulation, they were interested in exploring other key drivers of product improvement, including feedback from the end-use of their products.

Club de Paris des Directeurs de l'Innovation (CP)⁵⁰

Talya Press

Background and History

The Club de Paris des Directeurs de l'Innovation (CP) was created in 2008 as a forum in which its members could share knowledge, keep up-to-date and learn about the latest strategies and practices of innovation management through

- Research and studies on all aspects of innovation
- Exchanging and sharing experiences and learning amongst members
- A European and international network and networking based in Paris

The Club's aim is to facilitate the sharing of information and experience by offering several venues, as these events give members the opportunity to be in contact and to network.

LEADERSHIP

Marc Giget, founder and President.

A Conseil des Sages (Wisemen's Board) and a Scientific Board are being put in place.

The Club has made a deliberate choice to be open to all sectors of activity and to be both inter-organizational and international to promote meetings between peers. The variety and constant renewal of the events tends to promote inspiration, analogy and mutual enrichment beyond the usual industry benchmarks. This openness is a key factor to answer the challenges of innovation, going beyond specific local or sector-related issues and allowing members not only to learn and share on a wide range of subjects but also to widen their network.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

The Club de Paris network/organization is larger than just the CP. It is named "Paris" because of the city's proximity to the center of Europe; however, the members of the network are not Parisian or French. The CP constitutes the "hard core" of the network. The hard core attends the Rencontre National des Directeurs de l'Innovation—an event that takes place annually over two full days and that, in fact, gave rise to the CP.

The much larger network, "Les Mardis de l'Innovation," is an open intercompany network with more than 5,000 innovation professionals. The "Mardis" are well known, as the CP circulates the contents free of charge all over the world via videos and podcasts. The three networks can be compared to three stars: the CP acting as the core, with the annual Rencontre and the Mardis as the other components.

⁵⁰ directeur-innovation.com

The annual meeting gathers approximately 350 people, and the CP boasts forty members from tier 1 industries, companies, and organizations from the banking, insurance, industrial, luxury, etc. sectors. These three networks are very interlinked with each other, some with more implications for the global network. The website of each organization also links to the other two. These networks are also linked to L'Institut Européen de Stratégies Créatives et d'Innovation.

Anyone may apply for membership, and applications are reviewed by the CP. Full membership fees are 8500€ per year and give access to six half-day meetings (centered around a chosen theme), research papers and supporting documents on the chosen theme, six breakfast meetings, two operational/thematic workshops and the annual meeting. Concerning membership fees, the CP breaks even, as the goal is not to be profitable but to be able to continue offering findings to students.

CP's founder does not believe that there is another similar structure in France; while there are other clubs/groups, their goals are product and sales promotion. The CP forbids sales of any kind. The goal is sharing of knowledge and offering state of the art research; this is the only way the community can operate. The Club could have been called a community of experiences or a community of practices. The word "Club" is not ideal, as it gives the impression that members gather to drink champagne and eat cake. However, research and sharing of personal experiences occur with the insistence that there is no right "model," and that just because something works for Company X does not necessarily mean that Company Y needs to adopt said model. Diversity of models is essential; no one is seeking to convince or impose—just to learn. "We choose our influences" is often heard at the CP. The goal is to be exposed to ideas and people and then be influenced by some.

Innovation Networking Activities

The goal of the community is to share knowledge, to transmit a culture of innovation and to share practices. Over the past six years, the CP has researched innovation in India, Brazil and China and invited 150 of the most innovative companies in the world. Other research/studies on great geographical areas of innovation and major "moments/periods" of innovation in history have been carried out as well.

Meetings are a venue for sharing experiences and facilitating exchanges. During these events, members discuss case studies, as well as direct testimonials of people with expertise in their area. The subjects vary and include how to train people, how to foster innovation and other related topics.

Members of the CP, considered the "premium" venue, as it is made up of members from leading corporations, meet on a more frequent basis to learn together. Research is carried out together on an agreed-on, pertinent subject. Theme meetings are organized

by the CP every other month. Their research subjects are selected based on the responses to a questionnaire sent to members. Subjects are often chosen from requests from the members.

A typical meeting takes place over half a day. A short presentation of the subject is given, and two or three lecturers may be invited. Once the presentations have been delivered, members will have an open discussion to share learnings. There is no notion of best practices, but rather of bio-diversity and sharing experiences. These workshops are filmed, as members cannot usually attend all sessions, and thus they receive both the video and research papers if they were unable to attend.

For the Annual Rencontre, which is the largest meeting of innovation managers worldwide, the CP brings in international experts, ensuring that the most relevant speakers will present the subjects that interest members. Some themes include “The Mastery of Ecosystems Focused on Organizations/Business” (2011), “The Challenge to Conceive: How to Combine Talent and Knowledge” (2010) and “How Innovation Can Help the World Overcome the Global Financial Crisis” (2009). In 2012, the theme was “For All: Innovation as a Social Pact.”

The CP brings in lecturers who have succeeded in their fields from all over the world. People share, exchange knowledge and talk to one another. The Rencontre is also intergenerational—attendees include university graduate students, as well as professionals, and the CP creates particular “formats” such as lunches where people may mix and talk.

Contrary to many communities, the CP does not have a “sector” problem, and relationships between members are ones of trust. Members are world-class leaders—some have portfolios of more than 80,000 patents—but they do not come to the Club to discuss business. Many companies are competitors, and this does not represent a problem for them. The CP has three banks, different insurance groups and at least four competing companies in the luxury sector. All of these companies do find that they have a lot to share.

The goal and underlying philosophy is that members have not joined the CP to “steal” from each other. Members are reassured by having peers come from the same or similar industries. Giget states that the Club de Paris believes that one can (and should) learn from peers in both like and not-like industries. The network has no merchant/commercial purpose and is not trying to sell the “tools” of a consultant, which is why the CP accepts no consultants as members. Giget believes that otherwise it would be flooded by consultant requests and the CP community would no longer function. Members can share a “tool” or a method, but there is no commercial/sales aspect.

To attend, members of the core network (CP) pay a membership fee, because the CP must finance research projects. These projects are then shared within the different venues. “Mardis” events are free for everyone (including universities and students). The CP is committed to organizations and companies and is not primarily state- or government-oriented. Giget emphasizes the fact that most of the CP’s audience and members are to be found in the private sector. The exceptions are a few large organizations and associations such as the Red Cross (about 500,000 people worldwide), for which innovation management is essential. Again, however, the focus is on organizations, not government.

Metrics and Impact

Overall, the CP measures quantity through participation and quality through the value of the research publications and speakers. It measures its impact by the number of conferences attendees, views of video recordings and downloaded podcasts. The CP produces several research papers every year and for two years has produced a radio show on the subject of the culture of innovation. It also measures the number of listeners to this show. Live events later reach a wider public of 6,000–8,000 people who watch the videos and about 100,000 who listen to the podcasts.

Increasingly, the CP’s popularity is confirmed by high and growing membership and by increasing downloads and listenership for its various media.

A large amount of CP material is disseminated. The CP tends to focus its work on European subjects to counter the myth of the “old and aging Europe” attitude. The CP dynamic is pan-European but also considers itself to have global impact. Two-thirds of the research originates from outside of Europe, including India, Brazil, China, the United Arab Emirates and South Africa.

The CP works with more than fifty universities worldwide, and the Club’s research is made available to them free of charge. Students come from all areas—medicine, design, fashion, law, engineering—and from schools as diverse as Wharton and the University of Cairo. The goal is to connect two groups that normally do not interact or have no relationship. Thus, students are exposed to what industry leaders are thinking and researching, and vice-versa. The same philosophy applies to enabling peers to share, talk and break the isolation. This global spirit is very much aligned with the KIN spirit.

Giget indicated that similar structures exist in India and Brazil, as well as in the Northern European states and in Milan. There is less collaboration with US institutions, not out of choice, but because of circumstances.

Lessons Learned

- The CP has found that being in Paris is very practical—indeed, more practical than Brussels, where the EU Headquarters is located.
- The CP faces some difficulty from the heterogeneity of its members. Management of such diversity is difficult, more so because the CP has a large turnover of its members (about one-third of the members change each year because of management changes and high job turnover). However, it is recognized that it is this diversity that creates the CP's value.
- Members face time constraints and find it difficult to attend all of the meetings, due to their schedules. This is the reason the CP decided to film its events.
- Many companies wonder whether to create an Innovation Center. The CP carried out benchmarking research on about forty such corporate centers (e.g., Lenovo, DHL, Siemens) and found that occasionally these innovation centers were “fancy showrooms,” rather than true research centers. However, the CP narrowed results and pinpointed the centers that were doing the most interesting work. These companies were then invited to lecture and share their experience. For those in the CP considering the development of an Innovation center, the goals were to hear what others had to say, to create an exchange among peers and to learn from others' experience. The goal is certainly not for someone to “steal” ideas for an innovation center but, rather, to learn together.

Society for Organizational Learning (SOL) France⁵¹

Talya Press

Background and History

The website for the Society for Organizational Learning (SOL) describes it as “an intentional learning community composed of organizations, individuals, and local SOL communities around the world that focuses concepts, tools, and methodologies that create the capacity for profound innovation and change. A not-for-profit, member-governed corporation, SOL is devoted to the interdependent development of people and their institutions in service of inspired performance and meaningful results. SOL serves as a space in which individuals and institutions can create together that which they cannot create alone.” Humanism is SOL's guiding principle, meaning reinstating the individual in the center of organizations—a philosophy that creates dialogue, openness, innovation and well-being.

Enterprises live increasingly in a constantly changing environment and need to adapt proactively. Past experience has shown that companies that have remained in existence over the longest periods of time have been those able to anticipate change in their environment, develop new ideas and manage their resources with care. The business enterprise, with keen awareness of its identity, grows according to its own biological cycles, which are linked to processes of knowledge and experience exchange. The ability to “learn together” is therefore one of the cornerstones of modern management and creates most favorable conditions for sharing experiences and best practices.

A little history: The first movement toward learning organizations took place in the 1970s when Royal Dutch Shell decided to innovate in its strategy formulation by creating think tanks. Peter Wack was at the heart of a Planning Group, which had the responsibility of developing scenarios allowing the Group, in the midst of the oil crisis, to develop the visionary and forward-thinking capabilities of its managers. In the early 1980s, Arie de Geus took the leadership of Group Planning. He reached out a few years later to MIT, where he met Peter Senge. Together, they created the Center for Organizational Learning, a laboratory for research in management.

This laid the seeds for Peter Senge's *The Fifth Discipline*, followed a few years later by Arie de Geus's book *The Living Company*. The concept of the “learning organization” was born, and Peter Senge described its five disciplines:

- Building Shared Vision
- Personal Mastery

⁵¹ www.solonline.org

- Team Learning
- Mental Models
- Systems Thinking

A global applied learning community, SOL was founded in 1997 at MIT (Boston) by Peter Senge and Arie de Geus. It developed through the launch of sister organizations in thirty-some countries, including Australia, Brazil, most countries in Europe and others. Sol International offers its members the chance to share practice experience and results of action research programs and to attend international conferences.

SOL France (Société pour l'Organisation Apprenante) is a nonprofit organization legally established in January 1999 (but active as early as 1998) and a member of the international Society for Organizational Learning.

Its aim is to encourage profound and sustainable change within organizations through exchanges of experience and the realization of intra- and inter-company projects bringing together operational managers, consultants and researchers. Such “learning together” creates the conditions for the interdependent development of organizations, networks and the people within them.

Governance and Membership

SOL is housed within France Solvay's headquarters (Solvay Pharmaceutical) and is self-managed. The organization votes on a Board of Directors and an operational Executive Committee (Bureau) with a President, several Vice Presidents, a Treasurer and a Secretary. Mme Irène Dupoux-Couturier is the current President of SOL France.

Its members include the following organizations: Google, Lilly, RFF, EDF, Bertrandt, Multivest, Talents Innovations & Cie, L'Oréal Professionnel, RATP, SNCF, Solvay, GARF, International Mozaik and twenty independent consultants. The members of SOL France (and of Sol International) place learning within their core competencies and believe that sharing learning with other ventures increases their capacity to accomplish the profound changes necessary for their long-term viability.

There are three types of membership, with tiered membership fees: Partner Companies, Member Companies and Individual Members. Partner Companies are large companies and pay the highest fees. Individual members are usually consultants. Membership fees represent the engagement of all to allow the association to survive and prosper.

General Activities

The originality of SOL France's approach resides in the creation of a genuine learning community among its members. Several streams of activity help to shape and form this community:

- Exchanges of experience and perspectives on the methods used in France and in other countries for developing capabilities in learning and knowledge management through bimonthly (Company Circles) and quarterly (Exchange Groups) meetings, online communication and document sharing
- Running pilot projects to facilitate learning through experimentation within each organization and the sharing of experiences among members in a spirit of openness and transparency. The involvement of SOL France's consultant researchers promotes the transfer of knowledge from one project, and one organization, to another.
- Training pilot project and field managers in the practices of the key learning disciplines in two three-day seminars, "The Fundamentals of Organizational Learning" and "Team Learning for Success," which develop a common language, fine-tune actual change projects and promote the common and direct understanding of the questions raised and the resources offered by each of the participating members
- Participation in intercompany action research projects such as the "10-Year Action Research Program," launched in 2008 under the leadership of social anthropologist Alain de Vulpian
- Participation in conferences and seminars of SOL International, such as the Global Forums
- Privileged access to research results and to methods and tools in development within the SOL international network, which the American journal *Reflections* and the French *Cahiers de SOL France* help to publish

Member organizations most benefit from their involvement in SOL France when they have at once the long-term support of senior management and of one or two internal change champions (change agents) who play an active role in the exchanges with other members, and when they choose to launch one or two pilot projects key for their future facilitated by managers who commit personally to a learning approach. SOL France Team Academy coordinates activities in France and organizes learning trips to Team Academy in Finland.

Innovation Networking Activities

SOL France's various initiatives engage stakeholders in peer-to-peer, in-person collaborative environments. Unlike other knowledge centers, which tend to focus on high-technology industries, SOL focuses on promoting the notion of organizational learning to foster innovation communities within any type of industry. SOL France has four main types of action:

1. A formal FOA seminar (Les Fondamentaux de l'Organisation Apprenante):

This kind of three-day seminar takes place 2–3 times a year with thirty people at a time. Companies usually send 3–4 people from their organization, and SOL avoids having two competing industries at the same time. Each group comes with a specific project to work on (all related to learning/innovation communities within group members' companies). The attendees all work together on their projects within the context of SOL's five disciplines. Everyone exchanges ideas on each project; they dialogue, give insights and share experiences. It is very enriching and very open.

2. The Club des Entreprises: A company invites other companies from the SOL community (as well as SOL consultants) to an "open day" to work on a specific issue, project, vision, etc. One company was able to unite unions, management and the field on a common vision that came out of a SOL workshop.

3. The organization of approximately 8–10 events per year, usually with a guest speaker and then facilitated on the model of "table apprenante" (learning table): The aim of the exercise is to "learn together," from stories in other organizations, the key elements that enabled the success of a project (or have been identified as causes of failure). To this end, the meeting participants sit with 6–8 people at a table. In parallel, several stories are presented in the manner described below. At the end of the meeting, the teachings are collected in a large group. This is a "bottom-up" approach that allows the emergence of collective intelligence. To achieve this goal, the one with "learning history" at a table should describe the various stages of the process and take the learning from this experience. The group then reflects as a team on the story, with various insights. The story is important and should highlight

- » The reason behind the project and its issues, reality and vision
- » How it worked: its processes, challenges and successes
- » The steps detailed in one way or another, according to the paths proposed by Peter Senge, Arie de Geus, Pierre Wack, Nonaka and others (mental models, teamwork, shared vision, systems thinking, scenarios, tacit and explicit knowledge, etc.)

4. Working specifically for an organization that requests SOL's expertise on specific projects or strategies: For example, the French division of a global pharmaceutical company received a request from the US headquarters to work on its leadership (because of a harsh competitive situation). The French division hired a number of consultants that did not work out. Then it turned to SOL and started by changing the word leadership to learning (a big shift in mentality). The reason the company stayed with SOL is that SOL offered it the notion of a dynamic innovation

network/community where not everything fits into a tidy box. The interaction with SOL, SOL's consultants and the SOL community has been a major shift for the company.

Furthermore, SOL is strongly engaged in partnerships with various other learning organizations, often partnering with them (Club des Vigilants, Génération Présence, GRAF) to include a strong social science aspect in its research.⁵² It partners with other European and US SOL entities in co-animation, sponsoring and creation of events (such as the Stockholm European Summit and Team Academy Finland).

What makes the network stay very vibrant and not disintegrate? Mme Dupoux-Couturier states that it resides in those who lead new projects. Companies and consultants bring to SOL new projects, questions and visions that they want to explore, and this is very dynamic and creates a sense of engagement. These projects also generate additional revenues (aside from membership fees) and allow SOL to carry out research and events, thus creating a virtuous circle.

Lessons Learned

- It is difficult to establish operational metrics. Of course, there are membership figures, attendance and so on. SOL France is self-sufficient, breaks even and manages to fund research projects and events. SOL is not that well known, and even though it has partnerships with other associations/organizations, its exposure is limited. The current economy does not favor learning/innovation communities/networks.
- SOL France doesn't have enough companies as members. It has thirteen and should have fifty if indeed we are witnessing a change in civilization. Some leave SOL, for example, when a change of management occurs, because working as a network is not so easy. Some want "power" that they will not get in an organization such as SOL. Also, adopting a new method of "thinking organizations" is not easy. New companies feel that they "must" join, because if they don't they will "miss" something, and that there is indeed a new current of thought and it is important for them to be innovative. It is difficult to convey SOL's message, especially in times like these, when everything is dictated by an economy based on short-term finance. Mme Dupoux-Couturier thinks that, had SOL been founded in the 1970s or 1980s, it would have been easier.
- Another difficulty is finding the right mix between companies and consultants. Action must come from the needs of companies, not the marketing needs of the consultants. Yet the consultants are very dynamic and bring a lot of added value in terms of projects and know-how. Mme Dupoux-Couturier explained that SOL rests on three pillars: active corporate practitioners, researchers and consultants. The

⁵² Alain de Vulpain—http://www.triarchypress.com/pages/articles/Sustainable_Leadership.pdf

consultants carry a great deal of innovation potential. They make things happen and are the link between the researchers and companies. There is an Ethics Code (charter) that everyone signs, and the consultants understand and respect the rules of the game.

- SOL France believes that it should formalize what today is an informal entrepreneurial network, and there seems to be a request to develop this inter-company. If SOL could work on these inter-company networks, it could facilitate connections between researchers and consultants. It could also involve more people—for example, engineers, who may be more open to and interested in the concept of learning communities than the HR population.
- SOL should partner with a university, to be able to involve students in research. SOL is also deficient in its relationships with government/political bodies. It has approached them, and they have heard SOL, but connecting with national politicians has been difficult. SOL's strategy is now to try with local government.

UK Innovation Forum (UKIF)⁵³

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

The UK Innovation Forum (UKIF) was started in 2010 to better connect science and engineering research centers with business executives who possess the resources, experience and skills to support the commercialization of novel new technologies emerging from these centers. The UKIF aims to achieve this by creating a community of interest and support for science and innovation that includes leading research institutions, start-up companies and established corporations.

LEADERSHIP

Gerald Law, Chief Executive Officer

Board includes senior figures from the Technology Strategy Board and the UK Tech Investment community, as well as a Director from the STFC Innovations team.

The organization was originally backed by the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC), a division of the UK government's Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The STFC operates the large Rutherford Appleton Laboratory in Harwell, and at the time of the UKIF's founding, the organization was struggling to identify and contact executives with

management expertise who could commercialize and spin out companies from the lab's technologies.

The STFC saw an adjacent need for support for individuals and entrepreneurs to promote their businesses or seek business expertise or collaboration to commercialize their technologies. The solution was to build a community of potential partners that bridged gaps between academia and traditional technology transfer offices (TTOs), corporations, small companies and government.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

The UKIF was originally sponsored by the STFC, one of seven national research councils, including the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Engineering Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), that grant money to academics and graduate students pursuing science, engineering and technology research in the UK.

Today, the UKIF is a self-funded entity that charges a small annual subscription fee to its members, ranging from individuals (£30) to large corporations (£1,000). Discounts are offered to individuals who wish to join and are affiliated or employed by a group member (such as a corporation). The organization does not charge fees or commissions on technologies that are successfully commercialized or sold by members leveraging connections made through the network. In 2012, the UKIF won an award from the

⁵³ uk-if.org

Intellectual Property Office that will fund a full-time staff member for one year to help the organization further develop its activities.

The UKIF's nearly 3,000 members primarily belong to two groups: (1) British university knowledge/technology transfer offices and (2) business individuals or groups that wish to leverage research for business applications. The UKIF website notes that industry areas include "aerospace, particle physics, medicine and life sciences, clean energy, physical sciences, advanced IT, the natural environment, and astrophysics."

The broader UKIF community additionally consists of angel investors and seed funds, subject matter experts in areas such as innovation and commercialization, students and some professional services suppliers that cover "relevant fields such as patent law and technology licensing."

Innovation Networking Activities

To create a supportive cross-sector environment for early-stage emerging technologies and their commercialization, the UKIF organizes national and regional events on science and innovation. It also has a robust website, where it hosts an online meeting place for collaboration, discussion and a growing community of experts (such as the controller of the Royal Navy for Defence) to whom members can turn for help and advice. The website also boasts the largest listing of licensable technologies from the UK and provides a comprehensive news service and job board that lists opportunities with member organization spin-out companies, as well as other innovation-related work.

Events

The UKIF organizes events to gather universities and large corporations that are interested in a particular theme or technology vertical. Recent event themes include electronics and non-pharmaceutical medical devices and materials. These events are typically one-day affairs at which six or more universities present their research and capabilities to up to fifty businesses exploring related opportunities. This is followed by an informal networking session.

These events are usually run in conjunction with one of twelve of the UK government's Knowledge Transfer Networks (KTNs), national networks devoted to specific fields of technology or business applications. Because of the broad and wide-reaching nature of the UKIF membership, there is not much attendee overlap at the events, though the UKIF hopes to increase efforts to engage its members more frequently, on an 18-24 month cycle.

Social Networking and Communications

The UKIF also operates an online social networking forum, where it hosts educational webinars and plans to implement "matchmaking" software to connect members based

on mutual interests and complementary expertise. These main website functionalities are supported by a free weekly newsletter and other ways for members to contact each other directly on issues of common interest.

Webinars are held on an ad hoc basis and feature a panel of expert panelists from the ranks of the UKIF membership. These panelists may have expertise in broad areas such as sales and marketing for start-up companies, or they may specialize in areas such as novel technologies in medical devices. Members may dial in to these webinars for discussion and Q&A. The UKIF plans to keep these educational events online.

The UKIF also envisions its forum as a way for members to connect about professional decisions, such as transitioning from academic to business careers or corporate careers to entrepreneurship, or advice on spinning out start-up companies from university research.

Finally, the UKIF also hosts a dedicated job board for individuals who wish to work in emerging technology companies. The board lists management positions with UKIF member start-ups and other short-term opportunities for innovation-related work, mentoring and coaching. The job board is promoted by partner organizations, especially the UK Science Park Association, KTNs and the Faculty of the Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS) at the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). EPSRC, one of the national research councils, covers engineering and physical sciences and funds 25,000 academics, research staff and students across the UK.

Metrics and Impacts

The UKIF collects feedback from its members through surveys and e-mails, and it is currently in the process of collecting data points about website usage since the site's launch in March 2010. Results so far show that more than 90% of respondents believe that the UKIF's work is valuable, wish to remain involved and would recommend the organization to colleagues and friends.

The UKIF also hopes to collect data about venture capital and other types of funds raised for the commercialization of technologies as a result of connections made through the Forum.

Lessons Learned

Because the UKIF website is still in the nascent stages of online member engagement, it is too early to tell what does and does not work. However, the Forum knows that it needs to make great efforts to engage its 3,000 members beyond attending regional events and reading the weekly newsletter.

Young Presidents' Organization (YPO)⁵⁴

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

Young Presidents' Organization (YPO) is a nonprofit global network of chief executives who have achieved the title of President, CEO, Managing Director or the equivalent at an established company before the age of forty-five. Founded in 1950 by Ray Hickock, himself a young President who became the head of his family's 300-employee company at age twenty-seven, YPO began as a group of like-minded business owners and executives who had achieved success at a young age and faced similar business and personal challenges. This group of peers proved to be invaluable and has grown to more than 20,000 members worldwide. It operates under the founding mission, "Better leaders through education and idea exchange."™

LEADERSHIP

Robert Frances, (YPO Quebec)
International Chairman (2011–12)

Charles Davis, (YPO Los Angeles)
International Chairman (2012–13)

Scott Mordell, (YPO Chicago) CEO

YPO is organized into more than 400 local or regional chapters across 123 countries, with its largest presence in the United States. These chapters are dedicated to organizing educational and networking opportunities for the YPO membership, and they are where members may identify smaller YPO Forum groups based on professional, personal or regional interests. Through

these Forum groups, members can dig deeper into issues and concerns in a facilitated peer group.

In 2007, YPO merged with its graduate organization, World Presidents' Organization (WPO), which allows YPO members over age 50 to continue the dialogue.

Organization and Sponsorship Structure

YPO employs a full time management team of more than 200 people. Its headquarters are in Dallas, Texas, and it has staff members located in twenty-four countries serving its membership.

YPO maintains stringent membership criteria for admission into the network. New members must be under the age of forty-five and the chief executive (CEO, managing director, president, chairman or equivalent) of a company that fits minimum size and complexity criteria, including

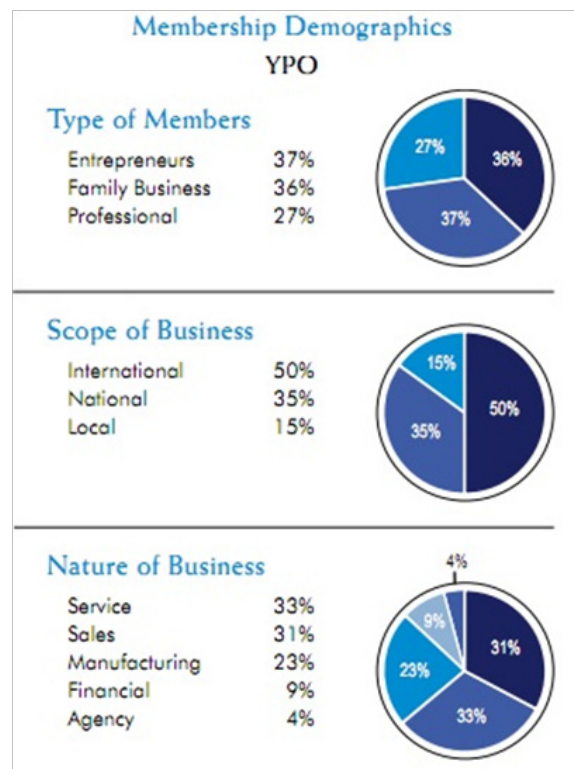
- Companies must have at least fifty full-time employees, or the total compensation of employees, excluding the candidate, must exceed one million US dollars.

⁵⁴ www.ypo.org

- Companies must have at least eight million US dollars in gross annual sales or turnover, or an annual enterprise value of ten million US dollars.

These candidates are also evaluated with qualitative criteria to assess their operating role at the company. YPO seeks to admit members who have dealings with the everyday operations and strategies of their companies and who are more than legacy leaders or figureheads. YPO's commitment to leadership development means that candidates must also demonstrate an interest in lifelong idea exchange and an ability to contribute to the community. Members must graduate to the WPO upon turning fifty years of age.

YPO's membership demographics are detailed on its website:



(Source: YPO Fact Sheet)

YPO is predominantly supported by membership dues paid at both the chapter and international levels. Total dues vary according to chapters but are typically between five to ten thousand US dollars. Most large events coordinated by YPO are sustained through event fees and paid registrations.

Governance

YPO is governed by a board of directors made up solely of members. The Board's twenty-three representatives are chosen from among the leadership officers selected in fifteen

defined regions, functional committees and WPO. A member of the board is elected International Chairman to serve a one-year term.

Innovation Networking Activities

In addition to educational universities, seminars, experiences and smaller roundtable events, YPO offers opportunities for members to network and share ideas through small-group forums at the chapter and through online networking at the global level using a proprietary web platform.

Events

YPO hosts nearly 5,000 educational events each year through its global chapters, networks and international offerings. Local and regional chapters host events that address topics of specific interest to members (e.g., “Doing Business in Brazil”) or more general topics (e.g., innovation management), at which YPO invites civic officials, business leaders and other specialized resources to speak and engage in a dialogue with the group. These may become recurring events at the discretion of the local or regional YPO leadership. YPO also hosts international events in conjunction with partner universities, to offer an opportunity for members to build their global network and learn about resources available to them on a certain business topic or issues.

Small-Group Forums

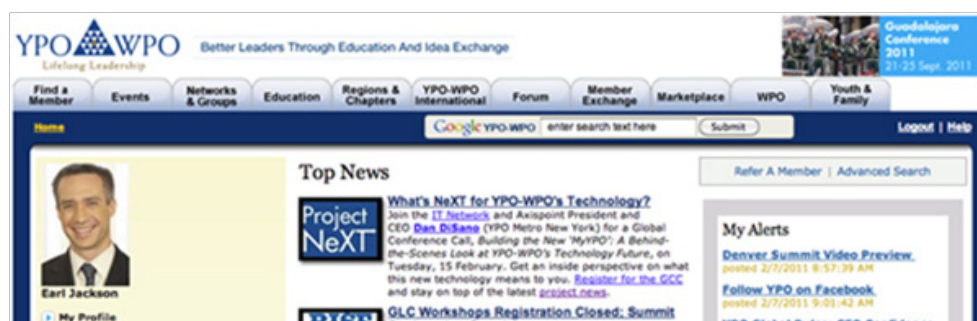
YPO chapters subdivide into small Forums of 8-12 members from noncompeting businesses who come together to share successes, challenges and other common issues. These comprise the foundation of YPO’s networking activities, engaging members in a community of trust with other practitioners, and have been copied by other organizations over the years. To create a replicable process to create trust and facilitate an optimal environment for idea exchange, YPO has created formal codes of conduct and communications protocols, as well as informal rules of engagement. Governing these rules of engagement is the requirement that all forum members openly share their perspectives without intention of being instructive and that they in turn listen without judgment to what others may say. YPO takes pains to clarify a common vocabulary for its global members, including the definition of “confidential” at a global network level, as well as at a forum level, where the standard is higher. Needless to say, YPO expects its members to hold in the strictest confidence any ideas and information shared at the meetings. In addition to chapter-based member Forums, YPO also offers

- **Chapter-based Spouse/Partner Forums:** Forums devoted to spouses and partners of YPO members provide an opportunity to connect in a confidential environment.
- **Couples Forums:** Couples Forums provide members the opportunity to develop a deeper relationship with their spouse or partner.

- **Regional and International Forums:** Nearly 30 International and Regional Forums offer an alternative to members and spouses or partners seeking a Forum experience that is culturally diverse, expands their network and exists outside of their local chapter.
- **Young Adult and Youth Forums:** Young Adult Forums (for ages 23–39) and Youth Forums (ages 18–22) connect children of members in a global peer network. There are more than seventy Young Adult Forums and Youth Forums, reaching nearly 600 young adults worldwide.
- **Network-based Forums:** Many online networks (see below) have created Forums that are similar in structure to International and Regional Forums but are based on a common professional focus or personal interest.

Networks

YPO provides its members with on-demand online networking resources on its proprietary, members-only websites, MyYPO (social networking site) and M2Mx member exchange (online forum for questions and idea exchange).



Members can create profiles on MyYPO and join several types of networks that cater to their interests:

- **Business networks** focus on 20+ industry verticals and topics including family business, real estate, “doing business in China,” women’s international network, etc.
- **Personal networks** connect members globally on 20+ topics of personal interest such as wine, golf, photography, personal investing and art, as well as ethnic and other affiliation groups.
- **Social enterprise networks** address community, philanthropic and humanitarian efforts on nearly ten issues including economic development, education and the environment.

A feature of this social networking site is the M2Mx member exchange, where members are encouraged to post personal and professional challenges and crowdsource a solution or solicit others' experiences with the matter. This type of resource may lead to business collaborations, but its primary function is to get challenges solved quickly and efficiently by leveraging the network's combined experience and knowledge.

Metrics and Impacts

The network seeks to measure engagement and the value it provides to its members. It maintains data about attendance and participation rates for events at every level of the organization (e.g., local, regional, international), as well as standard web traffic metrics for its online networking sites. YPO also tracks annual renewal rates by membership type and region. Recent retention rates are well above ninety percent, indicating a high sense of loyalty and satisfaction.

Through periodic surveys that score events and resources, it seeks to measure the value it is providing its members. It also takes inventory of topics of interest to membership over time. YPO has found that members value most that the network is dynamic and adapts to address challenges and issues as these change for the members. Members also desire growth and leadership development opportunities.

Lessons Learned

YPO strives first and foremost to create communities of trust between its members and has learned lessons about how to conduct events that facilitate idea-sharing between high-level executives. These include

- **Creating ground rules of understanding and expectation.** Because groups can consist of executives with different levels of experience, it is important to create a level playing field for all involved. YPO asks its participants to subscribe to certain principles of equality and to reserve judgment for the duration of events or meetings. This diffuses an individual's guarded or defensive approach to the groups. YPO reinforces these ground rules as part of registration materials and group facilitation.
- **Structuring all events so there is member-to-member engagement.** Too often, events can be overloaded with unilateral education, where executives are being talked at, rather than engaging with each other. YPO has learned to organize events so there are small breakout groups after panels/speakers for members to talk about how business issues relate to their experience. This approach requires engagement with small groups and a report-out from groups before moving on to next topic.

Aalto Entrepreneurship Society (Aaltoes)⁵⁵

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

Aalto Entrepreneurship Society (Aaltoes) is a student- and post-graduate-led start-up entrepreneurship network loosely affiliated with Aalto University in Helsinki, Finland. The network began around January 2010, when three universities—the Helsinki School of Economics, Helsinki University of Technology and Helsinki University of Arts & Design—combined into one institution of higher education, Aalto University. In early 2009, when this merger seemed likely, a group of students found a professor who sponsored a trip for them to visit Cambridge, Massachusetts (in the United States) to research how universities such as Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) supported entrepreneurship.

At the time, entrepreneurship was a difficult subject in Finland. Many small businesses had suffered badly during the mid-1990s and early 2000s, and the subject of entrepreneurship had become taboo. When an Aaltoes mentor was asked about the absence of a start-up community during this period, he said, “Back then, ‘start-up scene’ meant that I knew this one other guy who had started a company.”

LEADERSHIP

Nils Paajanen, Aaltoes 2012 President
Miki Kuusi, Aaltoes 2011 President
Ville Simola, Head, Start-up Sauna

Anxious to learn how the new university could spur more entrepreneurship activity, given the effects of a difficult economic climate, the students met with Bengt Holmström, a Finnish Professor of Economics at MIT (and a current Aalto University Board member). Holmström strongly suggested that the students break the mold of conducting research and instead take their funding to create an entrepreneurship network. The students never wrote the report and instead started the Aalto Entrepreneurship Society (Aaltoes). Aaltoes events are focused on high-growth, high-tech entrepreneurship that will appeal to Aalto University students as a prestigious career option. In the early days, the events gathered successful Finnish entrepreneurs (who had orchestrated a successful exit or IPO) with young or aspiring entrepreneurs associated with the university to talk about start-up topics. This group of seasoned entrepreneurs made suggestions and now forms the foundation of many of Aaltoes’ current mentorship, incubator and internship programs.

⁵⁵ www.aaltoes.com

Today, Aaltoes runs several large programs to spur entrepreneurship. These include:

- **Summer of Start-ups** (<http://aaltoes.com/summer-of-start-ups/>): A ten-week start-up incubator program for students and researchers with an early-stage business idea
- **Start-up Sauna** (<http://start-upsauna.com/>): A six-week start-up accelerator for fifteen more mature seed-stage companies (typically with 2–5 years of operations) from Russia and Northern Europe
- **Start-up Life** (<http://start-uplife.in/>): A 3–12-month internship program for undergraduates, post-graduates and researchers to work within a global start-up
- **SLUSH.fi** (<http://www.slush.fi/>): The largest start-up conference in Northern Europe

To coordinate these events and more, Aaltoes has five full-time employees, who are hired by Aalto University. However, it is a student-run organization that depends on undergraduate and post-graduate volunteers for governance and decision-making.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

The events and programs offered by Aaltoes are open to all students and researchers affiliated with Aalto University.

Aaltoes received its initial funding and sponsorship in early 2010 after writing a proposal to the Vice President of Knowledge Networks at Aalto University, Hannu Seristö. Later, Aaltoes's budget was housed under the newly formed Aalto Center for Entrepreneurship. Aaltoes activities are currently supported by several large Finnish foundations (Technology Industries of Finland Centennial Foundation, KAUTE Foundation, Wihuri Foundation); by the national public investment vehicle TEKES; by Aalto University-affiliated programs such as the Aalto Center for Entrepreneurship; by project-specific sponsors and by numerous other individuals, organizations, fellow start-ups and mature companies.

Governance

Aaltoes operates independently of Aalto University, though it reports to the President and the Vice President. All decisions are made by student Board Members, who are appointed to Board positions after one year of involvement coordinating and promoting events and programs. After serving on the Board, members may choose to run for President of Aaltoes or become a part of the university-hired full-time staff.

Innovation Networking Activities

Aaltoes has its roots in organizing educational events for entrepreneurs, bringing seasoned entrepreneurs before young entrepreneurs to share best practices for building

a start-up. Aaltoes organizes 50–100 such talks per year and also sponsors visits by 100 start-up founders to global entrepreneurship hubs such as London, Tel Aviv, Silicon Valley and Shanghai to learn similar lessons from early-stage start-up entrepreneurs and, where appropriate, to raise funds. Aaltoes also organizes more formal programs for local and regional entrepreneurs. These include:

- **Summer of Start-ups:** A ten-week incubator program for early-stage business ideas and entrepreneurs from around the world. Each business idea receives €5,000 of seed funding; co-working space at the Aaltoes Venture Garage and a training program that focuses on the basics of entrepreneurship, product development, product prototyping and starting a company. The program is based heavily on the teachings of Steve Blank, a technology entrepreneur and professor of entrepreneurship at Stanford University. In addition to mentorship, start-ups are exposed to international speakers, including the Founder and President of Trulia, the CEO of MySQL and the leaders of other companies that have seen massive growth or successfully exited or had an initial public offering.
- **Start-up Sauna:** A six-week accelerator program for more mature seed-stage companies from Russia and Baltic countries. Participating companies have usually been in operation for 2–5 years, and the mentorship and training program includes refinement of business model, technology and its applications and new market entry strategies. The program culminates, if applicable, in a meeting between investors and the companies. Since 2010, this program has been run four times, with 59 graduate companies that have raised €8.2 million in funding.
- **Start-up Life:** A 3–12-month internship program for undergraduates, post-graduates and researchers to work within a global start-up. These start-ups may be located in the Baltic region but also include companies located in Silicon Valley.
- **SLUSH.fi:** SLUSH, organized by Aaltoes, is the largest start-up conference in Northern Europe. A two-day event, SLUSH includes “company snapshot” presentations, panel discussions, a pitching competition and networking opportunities. In 2011, SLUSH boasted 1,200 attendees, 25 speakers, 50 international VCs and 150 start-ups.

Aaltoes also participates in the coordination of local regional events in Finland dedicated to entrepreneurship, as well as start-up weekend “hackathons” and other workshops/pitching sessions. In addition, the organization promotes collaboration and networking between entrepreneurs, mentors and peers by offering a co-working space, the Aalto Venture Garage, to early-stage start-ups.

Metrics and Impacts

Aaltoes has made a significant impact on the way entrepreneurship is perceived among the Aalto University community, where it has become a core subject of study. It also measures its impact in a number of qualitative and quantitative ways:

- **Social media:** Because Aaltoes began informally as a Facebook group, its first impact metric was the number of “Likes” the organization received on Facebook. The now-hidden original Facebook group boasted 4,000–5,000 “Likes” and a new fan page with around 6,500 “Likes.” In the beginning, this was a concrete number Aaltoes was able to show investors to raise money and support.
- **Cultural impact:** Reach and amplification is paramount to Aaltoes. To measure this, Aaltoes keeps track of attendees (about 10,000 to date) to all programs (listed above), number of visitors to the webpages, money raised and start-ups/interns graduated from its programs.
- **Program-specific metrics:** Metrics for particular programs are as follows:
 - » *Start-up Life:* Based on the premise that successful start-ups are founded by those who have prior experience working at start-ups, Aaltoes measures: how many people are accepted for start-up internships, how many people have learned about start-ups through this program and how many graduates of the program continue to work at start-ups after completing a Start-up Life Internship.
 - » *Summer of Start-ups:* Aaltoes tracks how many people participate in the training program and the feedback they give about it.
 - » *Start-up Sauna:* Aaltoes measures how many start-ups have received coaching, how these start-ups performed at pitching events, and whether these start-ups have received funding 16–18 months after graduating from the program.
- **Press and media mentions:** Aaltoes has been covered in most major media outlets in Finland, for reasons ranging from visits from corporate executives (e.g., from Nokia) and the Prime Minister of Finland to coverage of start-ups that have raised institutional capital.

Lessons Learned

As a very young network, Aaltoes operates with the mindset of a lean start-up itself, and it has learned many lessons through trial and error about what does and does not work when programming events and education for young entrepreneurs.

- **Leveraging the network to improve programming:** Aaltoes coordinates many events to solicit feedback from its community of mentors and coaches about improvements to programs and events. In this way, mentors stay engaged, and Aaltoes is able to benefit from the combined expertise of successful entrepreneurs.

- **Single pool of mentors/coaches:** Aaltoes maintains a single pool of successful entrepreneur coaches to attend and present at workshops and educational programs. The organization has a staff member who is responsible for maintaining these contacts and making sure that Aaltoes does not overuse their goodwill. This person is also responsible for identifying relevant entrepreneurs to mentor companies that are accepted into the various programs, based on industry and function.
- **Lessons to learn about international programming:** Aaltoes has made several unsuccessful attempts to build relationships with other countries and is still searching for the correct role for Finland in the international start-up landscape. These lessons will be important as Aaltoes begins to help start-ups with international market entry and fundraising strategies.

Built In Chicago (BIC)⁵⁶

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

Built In Chicago (BIC) is an online social network that serves members of the web and mobile technology start-up community in Chicago. BIC takes a multi-dimensional approach to building the burgeoning online and offline community by hosting member and company profiles, member forums and groups, an events calendar and a job board, as well as providing a platform for original content in the form of blog posts, video and photos. All members may provide content to the site and participate in online discussions.

LEADERSHIP

Matt Moog, Founder & Chairman
Maria Katris, Director

BIC was launched in by digital technology entrepreneur Matt Moog. In August 2010, Moog had hosted one of several informal “pizza and beer” meetings of about twenty-five other Chicago-area tech entrepreneurs; the group discussed using social platforms to build online communities and suggested launching one for

their community. He purchased the URL for BIC; created the website that night using a platform called Ning and asked the other members of the group to invite any of their colleagues in the digital tech community.

BIC’s mission is to connect, educate and promote digital entrepreneurs in Chicago and, as Moog put it, “to create a community that becomes both larger and smarter.” BIC sees an opportunity to achieve these goals by increasing the statistical probability that entrepreneurs will meet and providing a platform for them to stay current on news, best practices and technology developments in the space. Members are invited to contribute to the site by publishing blog posts or posting questions and challenges to the forum. Content can educate users through sharing lessons learned by the writer and, when an individual chooses to blog about an event that allowed only limited attendance or access, may also serve to amplify information to a wider arena.

BIC currently has 7,200+ registered members and receives more than 45,000 visits per month to the site, a figure that has doubled every six months. The site is focused on growing its user base, as well as solidifying connections between stakeholders in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including corporate partners, academics, investors, government, civic organizations, nonprofits and the entrepreneurs. Plans to more deeply involve large academic institutions in the Chicagoland area, the Mayor’s office, corporations and investors from outside of the region are underway.

⁵⁶ www.builtinchicago.org

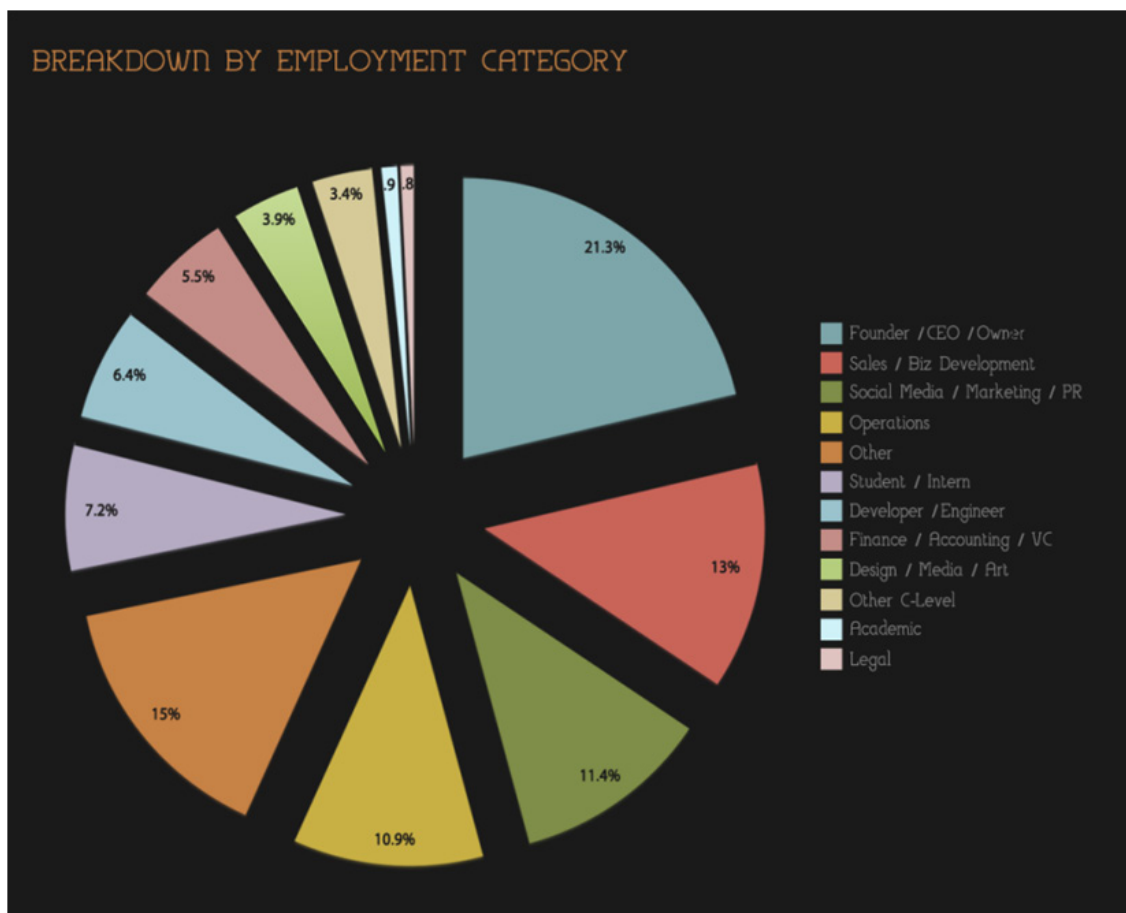
The site hired its first full-time employee, Maria Katris, in May 2011 and employs one additional full-time staff member, as well as multiple interns and freelancers, to manage data collection, content creation, community/site management and event production.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

BIC was created to support members of the digital (Internet and mobile) technology innovation community who share common interests and challenges and are distinct from technology professionals in other industries.

Registration on BIC is free, and anyone who has an interest in the start-up community is permitted to join. A breakdown of community users by employment category yielded that more than 20% of members were Founders of a company (or their equivalent), while the next largest group belonged to the Sales/Business Development function. Further breakdown is illustrated by the graphic on next page.

BIC received \$100,000 from four Founding Sponsors: J.B. Pritzker (New World Ventures), Eric Lefkofksy (Lightbank/Groupon), Joe Mansueto (Morningstar) and Bob Fealy (The Duchossois Group).



Innovation Networking Activities

Built in Chicago's online networking activities result in self-organized interest-specific events, as well as general BIC-coordinated in-person networking activities. BIC is also making efforts to further segment its user base in order to provide the most value to its members; its first experiment with this is the "Digital Leaders" group it has curated.

Groups and Bic Monthly Meetup

Members may self-organize into "Groups" based on company affiliation, industry, function and other topics of interest. Currently there are more than 100 of these groups, with anywhere between 2 and 300+ members each, which may organize in-person meetups and networking activities. Group topics include mobile, social media, alumni of certain companies/schools and functions such as the "Start-up Founders" group, which lays claim to 230 members. Affiliation with these groups helps members stay current on developments in their specialty and interest areas and provides a forum to ask for resources or knowledge from the group.

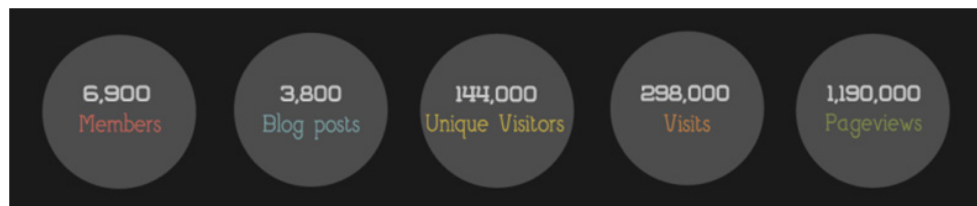
BIC also coordinates a monthly meetup for the entire BIC community, which is attended by 350-400 people. The event is structured to include pitches from start-ups that launched the previous month and are members of the community, with the remaining 2-3 hours dedicated to networking in an informal cocktail setting.

Digital Leaders Lunch

BIC has made efforts to actively create micro-communities within the BIC membership. It has created a "Digital Leaders" group that includes 200 of the top CEO/Founders, venture capitalists and executives who lead eCommerce divisions for Chicago's largest corporations, many of whom work in similar industries and in close geographic proximity but still do not know each other due to Chicago's dispersed entrepreneurship community. BIC has so far convened this group on three occasions and intends to continue the events quarterly. BIC is also creating educational programs for these leaders. For example, it organized a panel of the top e-commerce executives to speak to the group about lessons learned and invited the founder of Siri to telling the story of how he commercialized university research and later sold it to Apple. These events offer like-minded entrepreneurs an informal and private forum to speak with each other about similar challenges rather than attending a unilateral conference or educational opportunity with individuals who may not relate to their experiences.

Metrics and Impacts

In an attempt to define the community better, BIC has collected data about users of the site. In February 2012, BIC posted this infographic to illustrate its current size:



(Source: Built in Chicago [excerpted])

BIC has also tracked more than 100 events linked to activity on the website.

It also attempts to measure the growth of start-ups in Chicago using success metrics such as the number of start-up launches in the Chicagoland area, capital raised, number of exits and IPOs, total employees, etc. to illustrate the growth of Chicago's entrepreneurship ecosystem. By tracking these metrics, in addition to BIC's traffic metrics, over time, the site will be able to see its impact on the community.

Lessons Learned

BIC has learned several lessons in this niche community about the value proposition of an online social network and why it is more "sticky" than other communities that may begin offline.

- **Collaboration can only happen after individuals get to know one another.** BIC's value proposition is to facilitate introductions and educate entrepreneurs, but it does not require a time commitment or any effort beyond a member's own motivations. The site therefore places an emphasis on like-minded, passionate entrepreneurs and their similarities and affinities. Although collaboration may happen as a result of these connections, it is not a branding/marketing point for the online network.
- **BIC's focus on promoting the community and individuals within the community has helped attract members.** Members have the opportunity to promote news, announce new product launches and build their company/personal brand to an engaged audience that cares deeply about this content. This "self-serving" motivation helps with the site's success, its growth and the regularity of visits from members.
- **Access to mentors and industry luminaries and other exposure provides additional incentive for members to join.** BIC enjoys regular posts from successful and seasoned entrepreneurs and venture capitalists to whom young entrepreneurs did not previously have access. These same young entrepreneurs also have the ability to promote their companies and products to press, investors, and other important stakeholders in the group on the BIC site, providing additional incentive to join and participate in the community.

Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center (CEC)⁵⁷

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

The Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center (CEC) is a nonprofit organization focused on promoting and growing the start-up community in Chicago. The CEC works with high-potential entrepreneurs and offers them business advisory services and educational programming, organizes events that facilitate relationship development and networking, and in 2012 launched “1871,” a physical center and co-working space for start-ups.

LEADERSHIP

Kevin Willer, CEO

James O'Connor Jr., Co-Chair of the Board (and Managing Director, MVC Capital)

Bryant Keil, Co-Chair of the Board (Chairman of the Board, Potbelly Sandwich Works)

Board is composed of the founders, CEOs and executives at large corporations, service firms and other Chicagoland companies, as well as members of the investor and academic community.

The CEC was founded in 2000 after a study by A. T. Kearney highlighted that the start-up community needed support from the civic community to thrive. At the time, the center worked with the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce to offer business advisory services, provide mentor matching and develop strategies to connect with partners and customers. In 2011, Kevin Willer, co-founder of Google's Chicago office and a successful start-up entrepreneur, joined the organization as CEO. Under Willer, the CEC began to highlight Chicago's recent successes as a digital entrepreneurship hub. Beyond the well-known success of Groupon, Chicago is home to at least forty companies

that achieved exit or IPO valuations of more than \$100 million in the last ten years.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

The CEC follows a lean philosophy and employs a staff of four full-time employees to handle marketing, operations, programming and business development/client services. The CEC's model is based on high engagement of cross-sector organizations. While it identifies and seeks to serve promising entrepreneur clients, the CEC also partners and works with large corporations and service firms, the investor community, civic organizations, nonprofits and academic institutions.

Originally funded by government grant money, the CEC was funded in part by the U.S. Economic Development Administration until September 2011 and is now supported by private foundations, corporations and service firms. The driving force behind the CEC's financial support is J. B. Pritzker, a well-known venture capitalist, private investor and philanthropist in Chicago.

⁵⁷ www.chicagolandec.org

Innovation Networking Activities

To promote the Chicago start-up community and facilitate connections among its many stakeholders, the CEC organizes large-scale, public events, as well as invitation-only, private networking events. This year the CEC will also launch a new center for start-ups called 1871 (the year of the great Chicago Fire).

Large-Scale Events

Among its public events, the CEC hosts the Momentum Awards, an annual dinner launched in 2008 to honor early-stage growth entrepreneurs who have demonstrated success and who have businesses in industry verticals similar to those of CEC's existing constituency, including alternative energy, consumer products and services, information technology, financial services and healthcare. The event also honors a prominent member of the Chicago business and entrepreneurial community each year as an "Entrepreneurial Champion."

In December 2011, the CEC introduced Start-up Forecast, a half-day conference that brings prominent entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and other speakers to address trends and forecasts for Chicago-based start-ups for the following year.

Founders Dinners

The CEC organizes informal monthly dinners for small groups of high-potential entrepreneurs to share ideas and build relationships. The CEC carefully curates a group of early-stage entrepreneurs who have complementary services or skillsets or may benefit from partnerships. Held in the private room of a local restaurant and not publicized, these dinners are meant to generate new ideas, share challenges and opportunities, and promote activities among the selected companies. In order to facilitate more open sharing and networking, the CEC does not permit outside investors, service providers or sponsors to partake in these dinners. One output of these dinners was the establishment of the 1871 Center (described below), which arose from several discussions about the need for a co-working space in Chicago and the kind of programming it should offer.

1871 Center

In 2012, the CEC established "1871," a 50,000 square-foot start-up incubation center located in Chicago's Merchandise Mart. The center hosts 100 dedicated co-working seats for early-stage companies on flexible lease terms. There are an additional 200 shared co-working seats throughout the center. The center also houses classrooms to help start-ups with technical training (e.g., coding, programming), design, marketing, operations, financing and legal issues.

The 1871 center aims to facilitate idea-sharing and collaboration among the resident companies, university entrepreneurship centers, venture capital firms and other investors who will also have an opportunity to rent space. It intends to foster a model

through which companies that have graduated from 1871 come back to lead and teach classes to newer start-ups that are renting space in the center. (The CEC believes that successful businesses will spend only the first 6–12 months in the co-working space and will then move on as they grow or abandon the effort.)

Metrics and Impacts

The CEC measures its impact in terms of the revenues achieved by its client companies, as well as external capital raised. Most important, it makes efforts to measure its social and economic impact on the City of Chicago. According to its website, since 2003, the CEC has helped client entrepreneurs secure \$268.5 million in revenue, raise \$160 million in financing and create or retain 6,350 jobs. The CEC also emphasizes the number of entrepreneurs it has engaged through various programming, including 300+ attendees at the Start-up Forecast event in December; the number of entrepreneurs attending one-to-one mentoring sessions during regular Office Hours and the number of entrepreneurs who have attended a “Founders Dinner” (50+ entrepreneurs in the last half of 2011 and beginning of 2012).

Lessons Learned

- **The CEC decides and directs its initiatives so that they are not duplicative of work already happening in the Chicago entrepreneurial community.** Willer noted that an “explosion” of activity has occurred in the last couple of years to foster a closer-knit community (e.g., the BuiltinChicago.org social networking site for entrepreneurs). The CEC’s small group dinners and 1871 Center are designed to build on the value being created by other local efforts.
- **To design the programming for the 1871 Center, the CEC did benchmarking with other entrepreneurship centers around the country.** The CEC looked at centers such as the Cambridge Innovation Center, HUB Ventures in San Francisco and General Assembly in New York. With the understanding that these were more mature entrepreneurial ecosystems, the CEC attempted to understand how these centers addressed the needs of their local markets. From these centers, the CEC learned that having a central co-working space with access to incredible educational programming on start-up topics was important to entrepreneurs. The Center also learned that, even in this digital age, proximity to other entrepreneurs is very important, as being able to share ideas and challenges in the same geographic space is very helpful.
- **Cross-sector collaboration driven by leading private-sector organizations has accelerated progress in some of the CEC’s initiatives.** The CEC found that private sector involvement—in addition to public sector commitment, such as the Mayor’s office and a \$2.3-million-dollar grant from the state of Illinois—was critical to the rapid launch of 1871 (less than one year after its conception). It adds that public institutions

can best support the CEC's efforts by attending events and engaging with the start-up community—listening to its challenges and helping where possible to create the economic conditions for companies to be successful.

Honey Bee Network⁵⁸

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

The Honey Bee Network is a global network of innovators, academics, policy makers, farmers, entrepreneurs and NGOs that discover, share, incubate and commercialize grassroots innovation across its seventy-five member countries. Launched by Anil Gupta in 1988, the Honey Bee Network began as a small newsletter distributed to a subscriber group of forty-four individuals (including scientists, public aid workers, financiers, farmers and craftsmen) highlighting the ingenuity and inventions of the rural poor in India. Over the years, Gupta and other members of the network continued outreach by journeying to different rural regions of India, holding community workshops and distributing publications; in this way, Honeybee caught the attention of scientists, researchers and government officials.

LEADERSHIP

Anil K. Gupta, Founder, Honey Bee Network; Executive Vice Chair, National Innovation Foundation; Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad

To formalize technology transfers and build a knowledge center, the Honey Bee Network works in conjunction with other entities such as the National Innovation Foundation (NIF), the Grassroots Innovation Augmentation Network (GIAN) and the Society for Research and Initiatives for Sustainable

Technologies and Institutions (SRISTI), all of which emerged as formal institutions to further the mission of the Honey Bee Network (more below).

The Honey Bee Network is based on new models of “reverse innovation” or “grassroots to Global innovation” that suggest “that innovations developed in resource starved conditions in developing countries may find applications and market in developed countries as well.” It is committed to linking the formal and informal field of science, protecting the intellectual property rights of grassroots innovators, and disseminating knowledge through multiple language platforms in a fair and just way that acknowledges and rewards the knowledge holders. The network’s activities are underpinned by the following principles:

1. People must be given credit for whatever knowledge they share with the network; they should not become anonymous.
2. Shared knowledge should be used only after the inventor has given his or her Prior Informed Consent.

⁵⁸ www.sristi.org/hbnew

3. Inventors should be able to dip into the network's shared knowledge through their own language; we should not require inventors to learn English in order to participate actively in the network.
4. If any income accrues from intellectual property, including a consultancy or award, through exchanging or disseminating the knowledge, some reasonable share of that income should go back to the source.

Organizational Structure

The Honey Bee Network's parent institution is the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad, where Gupta is a Professor. The university provides editorial and logistical support for the newsletter, which remains today the main communications channel for the organization.

Since its founding, the Honey Bee Network has given rise to a number of additional organizations that perform various functions toward its goal of discovering and disseminating grassroots innovation:

- **Society for Research & Initiatives for Sustainable Technologies (SRISTI):** Founded in 1993 as the institutional extension of the Honey Bee Network, SRISTI has the responsibility of discovering and documenting technologies; validating, adding value and providing resources to local innovations; protecting the intellectual property rights of grassroots innovators and producing monetary and nonmonetary incentive models for rewarding grassroots creativity.
- **National Innovation Foundation (NIF):** Founded in February 2000 as vehicle for the Honey Bee Network to formally engage government stakeholders and receive dedicated public funding, the NIF formally came into existence with a budget of approximately US\$5 million. The NIF is predominantly responsible for scouting, documentation and benchmarking of ideas, innovations and traditional knowledge practices from the informal sector as well as from universities; business development, market research, micro-venture finance and joint ventures; intellectual property rights protection (including patent filing) and communications and technology/database development.
- **Grassroots Innovation Augmentation Network (GIAN):** A venture fund and incubator established by the Gujarat state government to support work discovered, developed and advanced by SRISTI and the NIF, the network serves three primary functions: (1) to incubate promising grassroots ideas and knowledge into marketable technologies, (2) to protect the intellectual property of inventors and (3) to help innovators take their ideas to market.

Other institutional collaborators of the Honey Bee Network include SEVA (Madurai), Pritvi, PEDES (Kerala), the Innovation Club of Orissa and the Network of Gram Vidyapeethas.

Sponsorship and Funding

While the network does not receive outside funding, in the past SRISTI has received limited funds from the International Development Research Centre of Canada, the World Bank, the Global Environmental Facility, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, India's Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, and the Government of India.

Innovation Networking Activities

The core of the Honey Bee Network's innovation networking activities includes small regional discovery and educational gatherings, local and regional festivals, the formation of a nascent global GIAN of innovators and efforts to bring the network together using online and kiosk technology.

Shodh Yatras

Shodh Yatras, meaning "journeys," are groups of Honey Bee Network members who continue to surface innovations and provide a forum for mutual learning between rural innovations. Says Gupta, "Shodh Yatras have become a Honey Bee tradition now. They typically follow a route away from any regular roads or transport lanes, making the yatra more challenging. Shodh Yattris meet the villagers, farmers and artisans individually; collectively, they prepare a report on their experiences in both Gujarati and English. The Yattris look for the oddball—anybody doing something differently—and try to understand the logic behind it."

The network also uses Shodh Yatras as an opportunity to engage the community through evening meetings with villagers to share organic farming methods and nutritional cooking techniques, as well as to promote learning among children. For instance, the Honey Bee Network stages bio-diversity contests where the younger population can display knowledge of local plants and their medicinal and nutritional applications. These contests also help to promote knowledge transfer through the generations.

Local Festivals

Members of the Honey Bee Network are encouraged to share knowledge at local festivals. Sattvik, a festival focusing on traditional and organic food, "has proven to be a unique and successful way to encourage people-to-people learning." The two-day festival brings together organic farmers to share and urban consumers to learn about the benefits of diverse crop varieties and the importance of organic farming.

At a Sattvik held in December 2004 and attended by 18,000 people from nine Indian states, the Honey Bee Network held a meeting to discuss organic certification and marketing. Attendees came to a consensus that all involved should pool their knowledge and expertise through a website or helpline to provide information about organic produce. The network organized an even larger Sattvik in December 2005. Farmers were able to sell produce, but more important, they could connect with urban consumers and other farmers and learn about the market potential for their products.

To further facilitate knowledge-sharing for organic farming, the Honey Bee Network has set up on-farm experiments and formed local innovators' clubs.

Global GIAN

In 2006, several countries with developing economies—including Brazil, China, South Africa and several countries in Southeast Asia—made contact with the Honey Bee Network and SRISTI to explore extending such networks into their countries to evolve a global incubator for grassroots innovations. In research papers from around this time, the Honey Bee Network suggested that large corporations and R&D institutions might be able to source technology and tools from such a network and that an opportunity for peer-to-peer networking at the corporate level might arise.

Technology for Knowledge Sharing

The Honey Bee Network has leveraged technology to further its mission of education and knowledge sharing on a global and local level. It enlisted students from the India Institute of Management to design a website portal, India Innovates (www.indiainnovates.com) that provides technology incubation, intellectual property, financial and marketing support to grassroots innovators.

Additionally, SRISTI created an online platform, Techpedia.in, to pool engineering projects by students and young innovators from more than 500 institutions around the country.

At the local level, the Honey Bee Network has installed computerized networked kiosks, called Gyan Manthan Kendra (Knowledge Churning Centers), in different villages, allowing local people to browse for innovations in multiple languages.

Metrics and Impacts

The network has diligently measured the impact of its programs through the number of innovations, volume of diverse geographic regions and number of stakeholders and amount of capital mobilized throughout the process. Some recent metrics include the following:

- The National Innovation Foundation (NIF), at last count, had pooled more than 160,000 ideas, innovations and traditional knowledge practices from more than 545 districts of India.
- [Techpedia.in](#) has aggregated 104,000 engineering projects by 350,000 students from more than 500 institutions.
- A large number of innovations were mobilized from many Asian, African and Latin American countries and from China by SRISTI. In a recent year, the NIF fielded 150+ inquiries from thirty-three countries for more than fifty technologies documented by the network.
- A micro-venture innovation fund was set up in 2003 with the help of the Small-scale Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) to provide risk capital to innovators intending to become entrepreneurs.

Lessons Learned

In its nearly twenty-five years of existence, the Honey Bee Network has learned much about facilitating knowledge-sharing and innovation among underserved communities. These lessons, drawn from its various publications, include:

- “Creation of platforms that can pool the minds on the margin [which are not marginal minds] along with the modern R&D youth can provide the most effective way of tackling the unsolved problems of society where local innovations may not yet be there or may need further value addition.”
- “Innovators need to know other innovators [just as the honey bees do cross pollination] through local language networks. This is a very important because language, culture and innovation get linked in this policy goal.”
- “Most grassroots innovators are very generous in sharing their knowledge and innovations. But their generosity should not become a reason for their poverty. There is a need to develop further the concept of Technology Commons evolved by Honey Bee Network so that people to people learning is not affected by the intellectual property rights at all. At the same time, firms cannot usurp the rights of local communities and innovators without proper attribution and reciprocity. Policies that enable fair engagement between formal and informal sector to harness the full potential of grassroots innovations have to be put in place. One such policy is establishment of Technology Acquisition Fund through which individual innovators can be rewarded and compensated so that innovation can be disseminated as a public good. This can meet the twin goals of incentivizing creativity and at the same time creating public goods.”

MIT Venture Mentoring Service (VMS)⁵⁹

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Venture Mentoring Service (VMS) is an organization that provides a free matching service between entrepreneurs who have an MIT affiliation and volunteer mentors who have applicable start-up or functional expertise.

MIT VMS employs a small full-time staff for program operations and management. VMS provides coordinative services and technology platforms to facilitate both in-person meetings and online interactions between these mentors and their assigned ventures, as well as between the mentors themselves. Because of the in-person, hands-on nature of VMS's activities, the network currently operates only in the New England area.

LEADERSHIP

Alec Dingee, Chairman and Co-Founder
Sherwin Greenblatt, Director
Roberta McCarthy, Operations Manager
Michael Foster, Co-Director
Peter Miller, Co-Director
Jerome Smith, Co-Director

The current organization began as a pilot program in 2000, conceived by Alec Dingee and MIT professor David Staelin, both alumni of the school, who believed that combining aspiring entrepreneurs with volunteer seasoned business leaders increased the likelihood of start-up success. By the end of the first year, the self-funded pilot included twenty ventures and a group of mentors recruited from Dingee's personal network. By December 2011, MIT VMS had grown to 140 ventures and around 150 mentors who take part in active mentoring activities.

Mission and Vision

Importantly, VMS is an "educational undertaking" whose mission is "to support entrepreneurial activity within the MIT community and thereby, to further the educational mission of MIT. VMS believes that the active support of entrepreneurial activities improves the education of MIT students and alumni, strengthens MIT's role as a world leader in innovation, and broadens MIT's base of potential financial support."

By prioritizing education over commercialization, VMS is distinct from traditional incubator or accelerator programs focused on funding and the concept-to-commercialization processes. Additionally, VMS includes in its operating principles that mentors are not to take a financial interest in or compensation in any form from ventures that they advise. This is viewed as a protection of a venture's best interest;

⁵⁹ mit.edu/vms

without financial incentives or profit motives, mentors can offer unbiased advice to their mentee ventures.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

The organization is composed of two distinct groups: ventures (entrepreneurs) and mentors.

Ventures most often fall into technology-related industries (including but not limited to software, biotechnology, medical devices, manufacturing and cyber-security). Eligible ventures must have the involvement of at least one MIT-affiliated individual (e.g., a student, alumnus/a, faculty, staff member) connected to the venture as a Founder, Principal or Executive.

Mentors are drawn from corporate, start-up and academic backgrounds; around 60% of the members of the mentor corps are MIT alumni. Mentors most often come through direct referrals, but VMS welcomes outside queries from interested potential mentors. All mentors must undergo a rigorous interview process to ascertain expertise, disposition and mentoring capability, as well as overall value-add to the network. Once mentors are accepted into the network, they undergo a short training session and are then assigned two or three ventures to advise as part of a mentoring team, according to the needs of the start-ups. Mentors are monitored informally by the VMS Chairman, Director, Co-Directors and staff.

Funded by its co-founders in an amount in excess of US\$1 million prior to January 2000, VMS subsists on contributions from VMS mentors and friends. VMS is an educational initiative housed under the Office of the Provost at MIT.

Governance

VMS's Operating Committee meets annually to receive reports on behalf of the Provost about VMS programs and needs. Its members include the VMS Chairman, the VMS Director, the MIT Associate Provost, the MIT Vice President for Research, the MIT Treasurer and the Deans of the Schools of Science and Engineering and the Sloan School of Management.

Additionally, VMS has an Executive Committee that meets periodically to evaluate current status, goals and financials for the organization. It is composed of the Chairman, the Director and certain Co-Directors of VMS (all volunteer positions), as well as the full-time Operations Manager.

Innovation Networking Activities

While VMS mainly functions as a service to match mentors with ventures from the MIT community, it also operates peer-to-peer networking activities to attract high-quality mentors to the program and create a sustainable network over time.

Mindful of the unilateral flow of information in traditional mentoring programs from mentor to mentee, VMS created and continues to refine a mentors-only forum for participants to share the progress of their ventures and learn from one another. This knowledge exchange and networking takes place during a Monthly Review Session held on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

Started as an informal gathering of 10–20 mentors to share their experiences with mentee ventures, the now half-day meeting has a loose agenda that gives the nearly 100 attendees a chance to participate. The day begins with a ninety-minute “business meeting”—a roundtable discussion of venture progress (e.g., funding news, positive media); open requests from mentors to their peers for expertise or connections to address an issue or challenge; and an introduction of new VMS mentors and ventures. These meetings also provide an opportunity for other programs around MIT to recruit speakers and judges for their events from the VMS mentor corps. The business meeting is preceded by a period of informal open networking and followed by a luncheon, which includes a VMS venture presentation.

VMS also organizes and participates in other innovation- and networking-related programs around the MIT community, notably

- **The Entrepreneurial Edge:** An annual networking reception hosted each fall by VMS for the entire VMS community, including entrepreneurs, mentors and others from the entrepreneurial community at large.
- **The v2m link:** A semi-annual networking event begun in 2006 by VMS to allow 15–20 invited ventures to present to and connect with the mentor corps to build more meaningful mentor-venture relationships. The event supplements the “matchmaking” that VMS staff performs based on an initial evaluation of ventures’ needs and mentor skill sets and experience.
- **Establishing “daughter” programs:** Workshops and active training (with technology focus) for universities and economic development agencies that wish to start a similar mentor program. Staffed by volunteers, the VMS Outreach Project provides training, collateral and outreach services to interested parties on a fee-for-service basis. There are twenty such venture mentoring programs operational across and outside the country. While not officially affiliated with each other or with MIT, these programs are closely modeled on that of VMS. VMS plans to host an annual gathering for the operators of these programs to share best practices.

Metrics and Impacts

VMS states that its goal is primarily education, with commercialization second. However, there has been much commercial success to date.

- In its eleven years of existence, VMS has worked with 1,850 entrepreneurs and more than 1,080 ventures.
- In total, these ventures have raised more than \$960 million from sources including grants and public investment funds.
- Of these 1,080 ventures, 150 developed into operating businesses.
- Seventeen ventures have had a liquidity event (no IPOs), totaling more than \$914 million.

The VMS director emphasized, however, that the social and economic impact that start-up companies can have on the local economy is also a valuable outcome from the network's mentoring activities.

Lessons Learned

VMS has created a stable network of mentors in the Boston-New England region based on a number of principles and practices it has refined over the years:

- **Sustainable mentor programs** offer the participant a community of like-minded individuals, as well as the opportunity to share expertise with start-ups for the "greater good." VMS emphasizes the importance of gathering mentors in a Monthly Review Session—a dynamic forum where mentors are extracting new knowledge, value and network connections—to keep mentors engaged.
- **Trust between mentors** starts with quality. VMS has created a high-quality network through its rigorous screening process, and this has resulted in a "safe environment" where mentors are volunteering their time to work toward spurring entrepreneurial activity.
- **Group mentoring** help builds camaraderie amongst mentors. Because there is no formal training for mentors, some of the less experienced mentors can learn from other mentors in their group, building camaraderie and trust among the mentor corps.
- Mentors also see **value in the network as a social activity**. They reap personal and professional networking benefits, in addition to the satisfaction of passing knowledge to their assigned ventures.
- After a decade in operation, VMS is still primarily a word-of-mouth organization, recruiting new mentors almost exclusively through current members of its mentor corps. The organization's reputation has also placed it in the fabric of other MIT

entrepreneurship activities, organizations and competitions, and the majority of MIT-affiliated ventures do at some point in time approach VMS for mentor relationships.

Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE)⁶⁰

Michael J. Lippitz

Background and History

The Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) is a global network of organizations that support small and growing businesses (SGBs) in emerging markets. ANDE's goal is to dramatically increase the amount and effectiveness of capital and capacity development services for entrepreneurs in developing countries. To do so, ANDE provides programs and services for its member organizations around common strategic challenges and opportunities. ANDE also identifies system-wide issues in building sustainable prosperity in the developing world that can only be addressed through collective action.

LEADERSHIP

Randall Kempner, Executive Director
Jenny Everett, Associate Director

ANDE's membership includes investment funds, non-governmental organizations, research institutions and private philanthropic foundations that invest money and expertise to help entrepreneurs develop and grow small businesses in emerging markets. Members operate in more than 130 countries.

Officially launched in 2009 (after a 2008 conference), ANDE is housed within the Aspen Institute, an international nonprofit that promotes enlightened leadership. ANDE aspires to be the leading convener and conduit for organizations and individuals committed to building SGBs in the developing world. ANDE also acts as a trusted advocate for the SGB sector, educating investors and policy makers about the extraordinary opportunity the sector represents.

In 2010, ANDE launched regional chapters, which seek to promote collaboration and knowledge sharing among local ANDE members, to serve as a conduit to global ANDE activities and to support local activities and advocacy efforts that support SGBs in each region. ANDE currently has five active regional chapters: Brazil, Central America and Mexico, South Africa, and East Africa and India. Regional chapter members meet regularly to provide peer support and professional development, work collectively on region-specific initiatives and partner with other like-minded regional organizations to promote a healthy ecosystem for SGBs.

A summary of ANDE's mission and approach is captured in the following two graphics:

⁶⁰ www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/aspen-network-development-entrepreneurs

ANDE mission statement and guiding principles

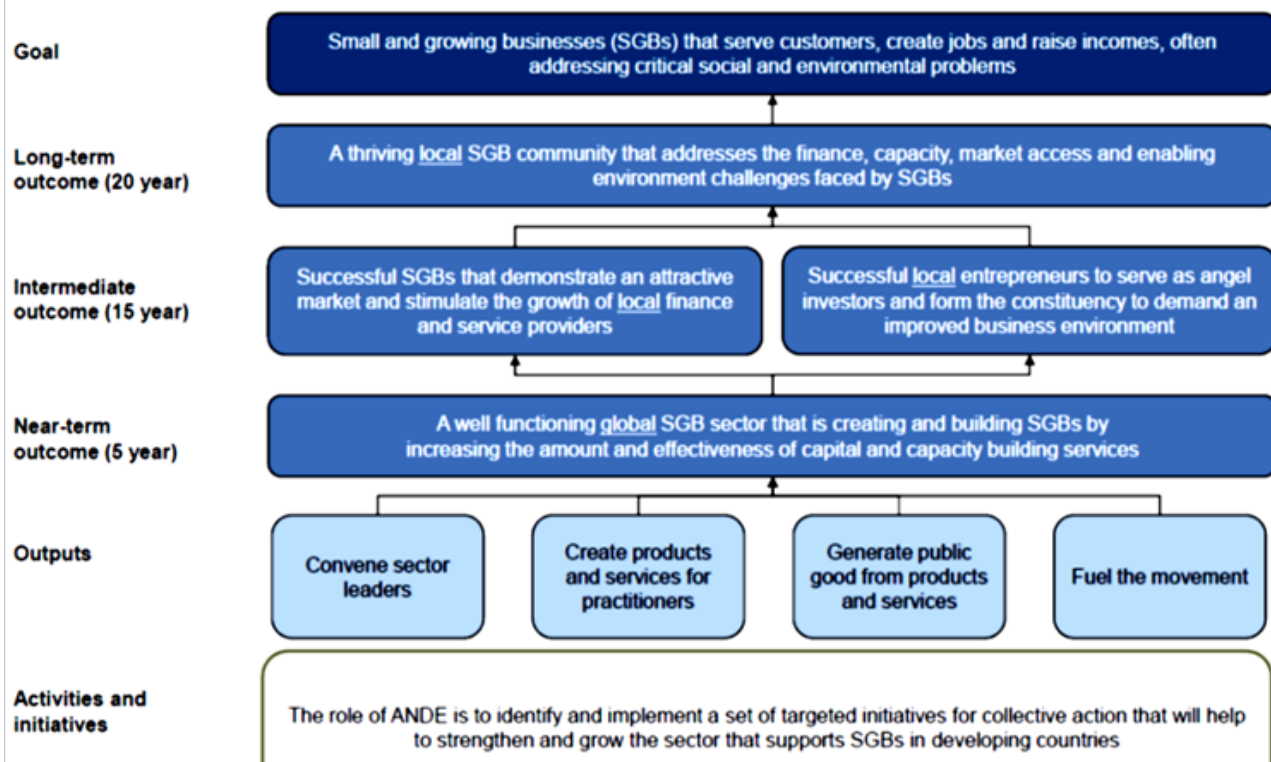
Mission statement

The goal of ANDE is to strengthen and grow the sector of organizations that are working to alleviate poverty and improve lives through supporting and investing in small and growing businesses (SGBs) in developing countries

Guiding Principles

- Small and growing businesses in developing countries have enormous potential to help alleviate poverty in their communities through creating jobs, wealth and additional social benefits
- In order to flourish, small and growing businesses require access to finance, technical assistance to develop managerial capacity, access to markets and supportive business environments
- In the long run, healthy economies need strong, local communities of investors and technical assistance providers to cultivate small and growing businesses
- Global efforts to support SGBs in developing countries are a necessary first step to address the local market failures by innovating new models, demonstrating success and stimulating local demand
- Through collaboration and sharing lessons learned, the investors and intermediaries in this sector can better identify and replicate the more scalable, effective models

ANDE theory of change



Innovation Networking Activities

ANDE supports peer-to-peer learning and capability development through a variety of member services. Three mechanisms for this are (1) a fund that makes grants to ANDE members or teams to create tools and research that support the sector, (2) support for measuring the impact of members' programs and (3) regional chapters that facilitate and coordinate networking events.

The Capacity Development Fund

The ANDE Capacity Development Fund (CDF) fuels initiatives aimed at inter-organizational collaboration and capacity building. The goal of the CDF is to increase the productivity and effectiveness of ANDE members while creating tools and insights that can help the SGB sector as a whole. Proposals must demonstrate how building the capacity of individual members can be internalized (essential) and shared with other members (strongly encouraged). The latter criteria aim to break down silos between development organizations to promote learning and greater collective effectiveness.

CDF grants of no more than US\$75,000 may be awarded to programs lasting up to eighteen months. In August 2009, the CDF awarded US\$522,000 to fund eight proposals involving fifteen ANDE member organizations. In March 2010, the CDF made seven grants, for a total of US\$460,000 across thirteen members, and in September 2011, nine proposals were funded, totaling US\$349,000. Projects spanned the categories of Networking, Tools/Platforms, Research and Training. For 2011, a particular emphasis was placed on human capital-focused grants supporting training programs, opportunities for shared learning and creative partnerships. Six of the nine proposals funded focus on alleviating human capital challenges across the SGB and intermediary ecosystem.

Since funded projects are still mostly nascent, the full impact of the grants is difficult to measure. However, many of the grants have proven to provide innovative approaches to networking and increasing efficiency. For example, ANDE member Root Change received a grant to develop a collaborative platform and field network for identifying high-impact SGB investment opportunities. This program trained a global network of capacity development providers, named Innovation Scouts, to identify new investment opportunities and lead opportunity screening workshops. Once identified, these promising enterprises were posted on a public web platform and invited to an open marketplace with in-country capacity development providers. To date, this program has resulted in more than 70 signed agreements with capacity development providers, 98 trained Innovation Scouts in Vietnam and Tanzania and more than 400 Innovation Scout platform members.⁶¹

Another CDF funded project—the Small Banking Business Network (SBBN)—created

⁶¹ www.rootchangescouts.org

the first of its kind, industry-wide community for small business banking institutions. An initiative of member CapitalPlus Exchange, the SBBN provides a collaborative web platform for shared resources and communication among 50+ small-business finance institutions in developing countries. The SBBN Portal serves as a knowledge networking platform where small business bankers serving emerging markets can exchange tools, approaches and ideas. The SBBN will hold in-person annual roundtables to discuss relevant issues and continue to extend its reach.

To advance the SGB movement in Colombia, the Universidad de los Andes, World Resources Institute and Fundacion Bavaria came together to run an SGB Acceleration Program. After initially identifying eighty-five emerging enterprises, of which twenty-two participated in an intensive training program, a jury selected thirteen companies to take part in the August 2009 Investment Forum. The Investment Forum resulted in four companies embarking on investment negotiations with funders and two case studies developed for training purposes.

Other CDF grants have funded innovative research that touches on the power of networking, such as a project by Santa Clara University's Global Social Benefit Incubator that aims to enhance ANDE member cooperation across diverse funding classes. The report "Coordinating Impact Capital," published in July 2011, suggested terms for broader cooperation among different types of impact investors and is being disseminated across the ANDE membership.

Metrics and Impacts

ANDE's efforts to measure the impact of members' work is core to the organization, and significant learning occurs around it. One of the ANDE governing principles is for all members to participate in reporting common social and financial indicators to help the sector build understanding of the work that is happening. By doing so, ANDE can provide aggregated data to benchmark individual performance and measure the sector as a whole.

Through a strategic partnership with the Impact Reporting and Investment Standards (IRIS) initiative, ANDE members collectively benchmark performance and assess overall social and environmental impact. ANDE members also have the opportunity to work with ANDE's Impact Assessment Manager on their metrics and evaluations efforts. Finally, ANDE hosts a metrics and evaluation conference annually to discuss the challenges and best practices of collecting, reporting and disseminating data on the impacts of their work. This annual conference convenes leading experts on metrics and evaluation and produces dialogue that spurs action.

Regional Chapter Networking

Much of the learning about innovative methods for programs and management occurs

at the regional level, where groups of 10–20 organizations meet regularly to share experiences and insights and, more importantly, to build trust and collaboration.

Members of the Brazil Chapter undertake collaborative learning in several ways, creating and systemizing high-quality knowledge based on practical experience and exchange of ideas. One chapter initiative seeks to identify all of the key actors and understand the current reality of the Brazilian SGB sector, in partnership with AVINA Foundation and Potencia Ventures. The mapping identified 140 social or inclusive businesses in a range of sectors, including financial services, health, education, energy and agriculture. Social businesses are a relatively new phenomenon in Brazil, and this mapping represents an important step in understanding the characteristics of the sector. Regular working group meetings create a safe space for current and potential Chapter members to discuss common challenges, share opportunities and learning, and forge new solutions. The chapter publishes a monthly newsletter that includes opportunities and needs from the Chapter members and ANDE's global network. Finally, the chapter sponsors networking events for current and potential Chapter members to get to know each other and discuss topics of common interest. The current Chapter Leader is Rob Parkinson from Artemisia Social Business. The Steering Committee has representatives from the AVINA Foundation, VOX Capital, ANDE, Endeavor Brazil, Artemisia Social Business and Potencia Ventures.

The ANDE Central America and Mexico Chapter holds quarterly collaboration and information-sharing teleconferences with members in the region. Teleconferences usually include presentation of an initiative from one ANDE member, followed by a participant discussion on the topic. These teleconferences provide a platform for ANDE member organizations to build relationships and identify potential areas for synergy and complementary work in the region. Other Chapter activities include carrying out a regional ANDE member-organization mapping, which will provide a conceptual view of the value-chain links of services provided by ANDE members to SGBs in the region. The Chapter is planning to have periodic regional events where ANDE members can meet face-to-face and network. The Chapter Leader is Tim Chambers from Oxfam. The Steering Committee has representatives from Agora Partnerships, PymeCapital, E+Co, Root Capital, AVINA and RTI International.

The goal for the ANDE India Chapter is to create a platform that supports all stakeholders in the SGB ecosystem through training, knowledge dissemination and collaborative events. It is mapping intermediaries of the social entrepreneurship sector in India, to better identify gaps and opportunities within the sector, and creating a platform for sharing best practices and better enabling collaboration and knowledge transfer between members. Chapter Leaders are Michelle Abraham and Sucharita Kamath from the Villgro Innovations Foundation. The Steering Committee has representatives from the Acumen Fund, Grassroots Business Fund, Shorebank International, Technoserve

and Dalberg Global Advisors.

The South Africa and East Africa Chapters currently each meet once a quarter for a series of presentations and discussions from members who are active in the region.

Lessons Learned

The ANDE Capacity Development Fund has facilitated a collaborative approach to solving many of the common challenges faced by the SGB sector. The majority of CDF awardees are joint proposals by two or more ANDE members and focus on addressing challenges that are common to the sector, such as developing more effective strategies for capacity development and investment.

- It is clear that the carrot of additional funding is successful in spurring collaborative proposal development. Close to ninety proposals have been submitted, with more than two-thirds coming from a team of ANDE members.
- The CDF process has been helpful in building collaborations beyond just the CDF process. In some cases, the relationships forged or strengthened between ANDE organizations have led to work in other areas.
- There have been some CDF-funded programs, including a leadership training program designed and delivered by the Center for Creative Leadership and the Financial Literacy Train the Trainer Program designed by Technoserve and other partners, that have convened ANDE members to experience shared learning.

HOWEVER, it really is too early to make any significant claims about the success of these training programs or the CDF.

Mistra Centre for Urban Futures⁶²

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

Mistra Urban Futures is a research center based in Gothenburg, Sweden, that focuses on sustainable urban development. The center employs a nontraditional approach to research, creating reality-based, localized research and “Interaction Platforms” (IPs) that provide a foundation for local civic officials, businesspeople and academics to work together on solutions to problems of urban development and consumption, with a strong emphasis on training and education.

LEADERSHIP

Lars Reuterswärd, Director

Board is composed of representatives from leading universities in urban planning, Swedish sustainability and development organizations, key business interests and the Director of Mistra Urban Futures.

In December 2007, the Board of the Swedish Foundation for Strategic Environmental Research, Mistra, invited Swedish universities to form consortia with non-university partners to develop proposals for a center for urban futures. A requirement of the call was that these consortia should be founded upon the principle of matching funds, where the consortia and Mistra contribute equal parts. In August 2009, the Mistra Board awarded the bid to the Gothenburg Consortium, which

partnered with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) to develop and establish a physical center between 2010 and 2012. The center has since received an additional four-year commitment to become a self-sustaining organization and has created a strategic plan for this period. Urban Futures presently employs twelve core staff members at its headquarters in Gothenburg and fifty additional IP managers around the world.

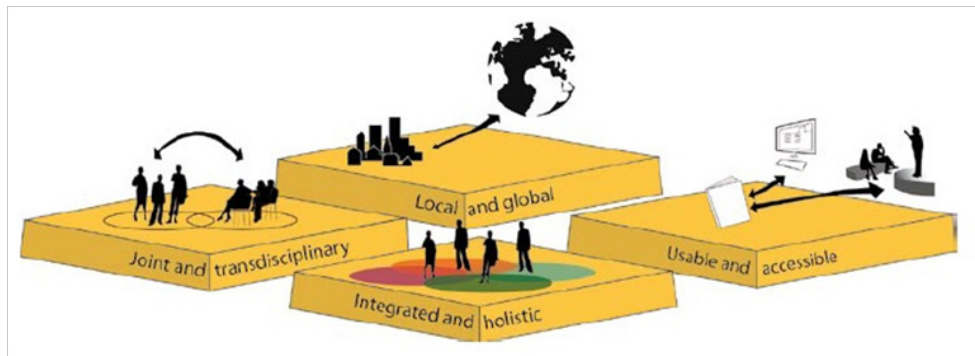
Urban Futures’ mission is to “increase the capacity among individuals and institutions to deliver new knowledge, approaches, tools and arenas” to positively impact the social, environmental and economic health of cities by achieving urban communities that are

- **Fair** – Socially inclusive with a focus on access, rights and opportunities
- **Green** – Committed to responding to climate change by managing resource constraints and otherwise reducing the environmental load
- **Dense** – Open to urban densification, with an emphasis on livability and equitable access to workplaces, culture and commerce

⁶² www.mistraurbanfutures.se/english

To achieve this, Urban Futures has created an approach that rests on four cornerstones (see figure below):

1. An integrated and holistic approach toward sustainable urban development
2. Locally specific and globally generic urban knowledge
3. Transdisciplinary knowledge production and promoting the production of socially robust knowledge in urban areas
4. Promoting knowledge usability and accessibility for urban areas



Importantly, the Center emphasizes knowledge-sharing as the foundation of all of its activities. A strategic plan for 2012–2015 states that Urban Futures views all stakeholders as:

...potential users, producers and bearers of knowledge. This view permeates the types of knowledge that are produced and utilized at the Center, the partnerships and organization for the local and global collaboration, and the methods used for learning, capacity building, and communication of results.... The Center's goals and ambitions concerning the importance of involving different types of stakeholders in knowledge production and practice, govern the strategy, decision-making processes, and choice of leadership as well as form the foundation of the Center structure.

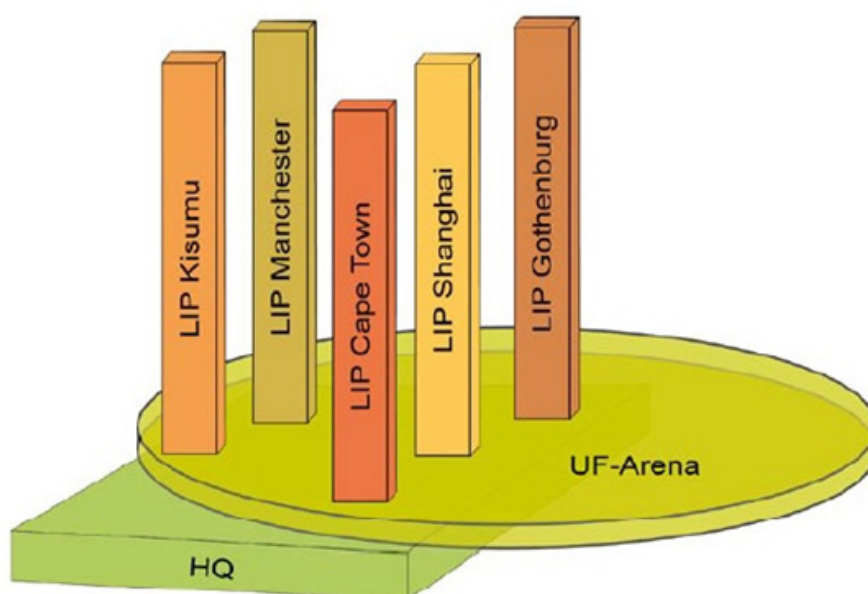
Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

The Urban Futures network is centered around Headquarters, which is responsible for the general management of the Center, including administration and communication, fundraising, managing internal capacity-building, quality management and evaluation, and the International Collaboration and Learning Arena (UF-ARENA), which facilitates interactions between Local Interaction Platforms (LIPs) and other partners and supports knowledge sharing and learning between the platforms (see figure below).

The network also comprises local Swedish consortium members in or related to Gothenburg, Sweden, as well as international partners in the United Kingdom (Manchester), Kenya (Kisumu), China (Shanghai) and South Africa (Cape Town). In each of these localities, organizations from the public, business and academic sectors have come together to sponsor and coordinate Local Interaction Platform (IP) activities. These include:

- Manchester, UK: SURF, Center for Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures, Salford University
- Kisumu, Kenya: Maseno University, Bondo University College, Kisumu Action Team (KAT)
- Shanghai, China: College of Architecture and Urban Planning (CAUP), Tongji University
- Cape Town, South Africa: ACC, African Center for Cities
- Gothenburg, Sweden: (Consortium members listed below.)

These organizations were identified because of their fit with the transdisciplinary aims of Urban Futures, strong urban planning programs or research capabilities and/or connections through Chalmers University networks. LIPs will be semi-independent operationally and manage their own budgets. Each LIP will be responsible for its own management and governance structures.



The bulk of the center's activities are funded by Mistra and SIDA, together with LIP partners and members of a supporting consortium: Chalmers University of Technology (CTH), the University of Gothenburg (GU), the City of Gothenburg, the Göteborg Region Association of Local Authorities (GR), IVL Swedish Environmental Research Institute, the County Administrative Board of Västra Götaland (lst) and Region Västra Götaland (VGR). UF is also being used to establish an international network linking operations in Manchester, UK; Kisumu, Kenya; Shanghai, China and Cape Town, South Africa, as well as in Gothenburg. The center itself is hosted by Chalmers University of Technology.

Innovation Networking Activities

The center's innovation networking activities aim to promote greater cooperation between urban stakeholders. They include ongoing Local Interaction Platform (LIP) projects, digital media and online platforms, and events. In each of these categories, Urban Futures is driven by a desire to showcase the practical use of research and to create platforms for knowledge exchange.

Local Interaction Platform (LIP) Projects

In 2010–2012, the Center's core activity was generated by seven projects—one international project that engages all of Urban Futures' global Interaction Platform partners, and five others based in Gothenburg.

The International Pilot Project is a three-year project that links the five Local Interaction Platforms in Manchester, Shanghai, Kisumu, Cape Town and Gothenburg. The project links each of these IPs in a global discourse about common challenges in their urban areas, and its aim is “to develop context-sensitive frameworks for action which enable cities to ask questions, develop processes and mobilize capacities and capabilities to address the challenges of urban sustainability.”

Urban Futures has recently completed five pilot projects in the Gothenburg region, on the topics of

- **Multi-level governance:** Research on the effectiveness of collaboration between different sectors and across multiple levels of governance
- **A city structure adapted to climate change:** Scenarios for future Frihamnen: Creation of city-planning scenarios in response to gradual adaptation to rises in sea level due to climate change
- **Urban empowerment:** Cultures of participation and learning: Investigation of how resident participation in underserved urban areas can affect quality of life

- **Urban games:** Development of games and visualization tools for young people in school settings, as well as decision makers, to understand the city as a complex system
- **Business-driven sustainable urban development:** Analysis of entrepreneurship as a driving force for sustainable urban development

Digital Media (Games) and Online Platform

Urban Futures is exploring the use of digital media and visualization tools with a gamification element to engage young people and also civic officials. Created in collaboration with Chalmers University, these tools illustrate the complexity of city systems and allow participants to experiment with sustainable urban development ideas. These tools include Urban Games (mentioned above); Urban Planet, a web-based tool for residents and other users to visualize cities and innovation solutions for more sustainable urban development, including interactive data and maps; and a mayor-oriented city planning game.

The center is also creating a robust website platform through which it can communicate with its constituents and facilitate communication between them.

Events

Urban Futures organizes large-scale events both in Gothenburg and globally. In 2010, these events included the World Urban Forum V in Rio de Janeiro, an information meeting on EU research, a bus tour for researchers and practitioners in Gothenburg, Dialogue on Urban Challenges (where more than 100 participants took part in shaping the strategic development of the center) and the World Expo in Shanghai, as well as a Shanghai follow-up meeting in Gothenburg.

In 2012, Urban Futures is organizing a Q4 conference on behalf of the Swedish government to assess the performance of government investments in sustainable urban development.

Metrics and Impacts

The network has measured its accomplishments thus far by accounting the number of projects, events and activities coordinated by the center and through associated metrics such as participants and cross-sector engagement. It has recently engaged researchers from outside Chalmers and Gothenburg universities to assess the impact of one of its Gothenburg-based projects: "Scenarios for a Future Frihamnen."

Lessons Learned

Urban Futures has conducted research called the Transdisciplinary Research Framework

on best practices to create an optimal environment for knowledge-sharing. Initial findings from this work can be applied broadly to its innovation networking activities. Based on initial projects in Gothenburg and in global Interaction Platforms, the center has identified several key factors for promoting knowledge production and innovation, including:

- Broad inclusion of consortium partners and involved stakeholders
- In-depth collaboration throughout the process
- Thorough integration of relevant values, priorities, world views, knowledge, expertise and methods
- A high degree of usability regarding effectiveness and excellence in both scientific and practice-oriented contributions to sustainable urban development
- Explicit focus on co-reflection regarding collaboration, integration, usability and mutual learning

The center has also learned much about programming, networking, and innovation activities since its inception. These lessons include:

- **Stakeholders must have ownership of projects.** A collaborative approach with even and fair engagement of all stakeholders must be used to advance a project or create an environment for open knowledge-sharing.
- **Relationships built on collaboration are more effective than those built on affiliation.** Urban Futures hopes to promote the kind of cross-sector relationships that are built on working relationships (“I have worked with someone at the City Council”), rather than just networking relationships (“I know someone at the City Council”).

Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN)⁶³

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

The Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) is an engaged network of North American city and county sustainability directors dedicated to collaborative activities and knowledge-sharing that will advance the field of urban sustainability.

USDN was formed in April 2009 when municipal sustainability leaders recognized that local governments were solving similar cross-cutting sustainability issues in geographic silos, without a forum to collaborate, to share best practices or to partner. The network has grown rapidly since its inception and is currently composed of 111 member cities and counties in the United States and Canada. Its activities and efforts are focused on building relationships to alleviate shortages of trusted information and recognize the opportunity to build economies of scale to address common challenges.

For the first two years of the USDN, members focused on building relationships and peer exchange of ideas; collaborating on practical challenges by contributing practices and tools; and crafting strategies for field development. In 2012, however, members are developing the network to move beyond information-sharing into alignment and joint production. Strategic priorities including strengthening, sustaining and expanding its peer exchange and learning programs, extending support to regional sustainability director networks and ramping up investment activities through the Sustainability Innovation Fund and Local Sustainability Matching Fund.

The network employs two full-time staff members—a Network Coordinator and a Network Assistant—whose main responsibilities include staffing all working groups and committees, including the Planning Committee (a governing body); supporting planning and evaluation of events and activities; supporting communications and knowledge exchange; and budgeting, fundraising and reporting to funders.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

True to its name, USDN is designed as a network to support the activities and collaboration of sustainability directors in North America. These include heads of traditional city environmental agencies, sustainability departments and Mayor's Office or City Council special initiatives. Additional criteria for these sustainability leaders are evaluated through an application process and include:

⁶³ www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/usdn

- Responsibility **for cross-departmental** and **communitywide** collaborations to achieve sustainability goals
- **Proven sustainability policies or practices** that they are willing to share with their peer USDN members
- **Commitment to actively** learn from, assist and collaborate with their peers and regularly contribute time and effort to the Network:
 - » Open weekly e-news at least two-thirds of the time
 - » Respond to two of three annual surveys
 - » Actively participate in a USDN committee, working group, user group or regional network (goal: to be connected to at least five other members through an activity)
 - » When a new website is launched, update their profile once per year and contribute at least once per quarter to content/answers
- **Honoring USDN's policy of creating a safe space for exchange**

Once sustainability leaders meet these criteria, they may fall into one of two types of USDN active members: core and associate. Core members must be city staff members who are heads of broad sustainability initiatives. These members pay dues based upon their city size and are the only members who attend an annual meeting and lead joint innovation projects. The core membership is about seventy-five cities, and an effort is made to contain growth to about 5-10 more Core members per year. Associate members, by contrast, may be either city or county staff members and have a non-sliding membership fee of \$100 per year. Associate members may participate in all USDN activities, but they cannot attend the annual meeting, lead a USDN Sustainability Innovation Fund grant proposal or join an oversubscribed USDN committee/group.

The USDN further extends its community by allowing members to invite multiple city staff to receive e-news and privileged access to the website, as well as take part in small group discussions, working groups and user groups. However, USDN takes member participation seriously, and these member guests may not substitute for the leadership and active involvement of the member.

Sponsorship and Revenues

USDN is funded by the Summit Foundation, the Kendeda Fund, the Kresge Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Surdna Foundation, the Barr Foundation and the Home Depot Foundation. Additionally, it receives income from core membership dues and voluntary contributions.

Beginning in calendar year 2012, USDN is charging sliding scale dues with a scholarship program for members who are contributing time and effort to creating network value. Dues in 2012 are structured to cover 25% of core network operating costs and grow over three years to 50% of core network costs. USDN dues are based on city size:

- Below 100,000 population = \$500
- 100,001–500,000 population = \$1,000
- 500,001–1 million population = \$1,625
- Above 1 million population = \$2,500

Because dues are likely to be paid by the city, if a member leaves before the end of the calendar year, the city can assign another staff member who leads a broad sustainability initiative to participate through the end of the year and attend the annual meeting.

Governance

Together with the Network Coordinator, Julia Parzen, USDN's Planning Committee is responsible for the network's strategic plan for the coming year. Initially composed of the founders of USDN, the Planning Committee is now composed of ten members. Each year, two of these members cycle off and two other members cycle on, allowing for dynamic leadership changes. The current Planning Committee decides which members will cycle on based upon interest, past participation in the Network, vision for the future of the network and contribution to diversity (size of city, region, etc.). Planning Committee members must fulfill the following duties:

- Oversee achievement of the purpose of USDN
- Help establish goals, objectives, action plans and budgets
- Assist in fundraising for the Network
- Be an ambassador for the Network
- Lead one or participate in several USDN activities (e.g., small group discussions, emerging projects)
- Be on three-quarters of monthly Planning Committee conference calls
- Respond to requests for advice from the Network coordinator
- Help to recruit members
- Stay in touch with eight members semi-annually about their own activities, interests and needs
- Participate in monthly network-wide calls
- Read weekly e-newsletter
- In total, dedicate at least five hours per month

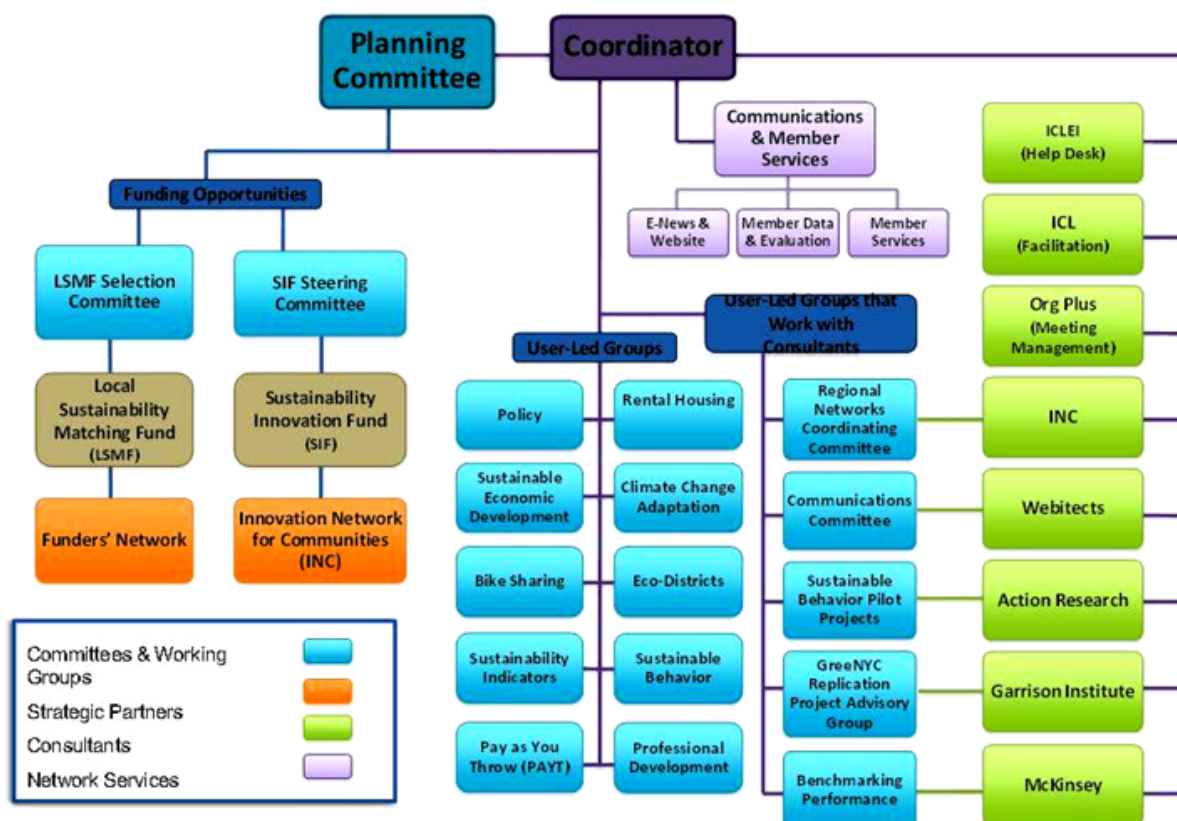
At each annual meeting, members decide whether to continue this approach to governance. While the Planning Committee decides the overall strategic direction of USDN, it is important to note that most Network activity is directed by working groups of members.

The Planning Committee and the Network Coordinator oversee a number of working group activities, as well as strategic partners and consultants. The organizational chart on the following page.

Innovation Networking Activities

In addition to organizing a two-and-a-half-day annual meeting at which core members set USDN focus areas for the following year, the network staff also facilitates ongoing communication between its members through virtual peer-to-peer learning and knowledge-sharing opportunities, including peer-to-peer user groups, small group discussion marketplace, help desk/online networking and the creation and co-creation of tools/products through working groups. USDN tries to connect to many more cities by helping members to create regional networks.

Committees, Consultants, & Partnerships



Peer-to-Peer User Groups

USDN peer-to-peer networking activities are the first step toward identifying opportunities for joint gain and innovation investment. Peer-to-peer user groups are self-formed groups of USDN members that share operational questions and challenges for a particular field (e.g., instituting a citywide bike-sharing program). Importantly, these groups are composed of peer-only members who may openly share problems and challenges. However, with the consensus of other group members, these groups of 15-40 members are permitted to bring external subject matter experts to speak to the group or manage initiatives. Groups are often virtual and are facilitated by the network coordinator or hired consultants via conference call.

Eighty percent of USDN members participate in one or more ongoing user groups. **All groups have member co-chairs.** The groups include:

- **Sustainable Behavior Pilot Projects Group** (28 Members): To test CBSM as a means to change resident and employee behavior
- **Sustainable Behavior User Group** (23 members): To learn from each other how to succeed at behavior-change initiatives
- **Bike-Sharing User Group** (29 members): To learn from each other how to build and sustain successful bike-sharing programs
- **Pay as You Throw User Group** (11 members): To learn from each other how to build support for and structure PAYT programs
- **Sustainable Economic Development User Group** (27 members): To learn from each other how to spur and promote sustainable economic development
- **Climate Change Adaptation User Group** (40 members): To learn from each other how to build resilience, including policy, funding and measurement
- **Rental Housing EE User Group** (32 members): To learn from each other how to improve energy efficiency of local rental housing through comprehensive approaches
- **Policy** (57 members): To work together to track federal policy, partner with federal agencies and communicate the value of pursuing sustainability
- **Sustainability Indicators** (22 members): To learn how to choose effective sustainability indicators and use them to drive improvement
- **Other Groups Under Development:** District Energy (22)

Small-Group Discussion Marketplace

Small-group discussions are conversations brokered by USDN staff that take place between 7-10 USDN members. Agendas include presentations (no more than fifteen minutes each) and time for discussion between the members.

Requests for these small-group discussions are advertised in the USDN Weekly E-News, and example topics include urban climate adaptation strategies, eco-districts and responding to external sustainability rating organizations.

Help Desk/Online Networking

Until early 2012, USDN used a website hosted by the Sustainable Cities Institute to coordinate an online Help Desk—a members-only online forum for discussion on sustainability topics. USDN members can post questions on the Sustainable Cities Institute website and participate in an online dialogue with other members. Questions are publicized in the Weekly E-News, and examples of topics include information on recycling contamination rates, training programs and safety requirements for city employee bike programs, and ways to accelerate permitting of EV charging stations.

In 2012, USDN launched a private social networking website for its members focused primarily on relationship-building and sharing. Created with features proposed by USDN members, the site is organized around a series of tags that index documents, links, discussion topics and, most importantly, individuals who are related to that topic. The goal of the site “is not to create a best practices library, but to connect people in real time who can help each other solve problems. It is focused on reaching the right person, not the right document.”

Working Groups/Co-Creation of Products

USDN also coordinates working groups of ten or more interested members to address issues around field-building. These groups differ from peer-to-peer groups because they are focused on collective creation of field-building tools and products, rather than issue-focused. Working group focus areas include Professional Development, Innovation, Regional Networks and Public Policy.

Working groups also evolve organically out of member interest. For example, the Professional Development Working Group came about when thirty new sustainability directors joined the ranks of the USDN and shared an appetite for professional development activities. USDN subsequently raised some grant money and put together a working group to address this need. The group conducted an analysis of core competencies across sustainability directors, developed a toolkit for self-assessment and then partnered with a third party that provided skill development for gap areas assessed. To date, up to 100 cities have gone through this training program.

Other examples of working group output include:

- **Professional development:** Sustainability Director Professional Development Toolkit, prototype for self-assessment tool to identify which skills/knowledge sustainability professionals want to further develop, Urban Sustainability Leadership Academy
- **Best practices/management:** Prototype for innovation best practices and field scans, project case examples, prototype “job description” of a sustainability director
- **Directory services:** Supplier Directory for Sustainability professional development services/products, regional networks guidebook
- **Financing resources:** Collaboration with the Funders’ Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities to create the Local Sustainability Matching Fund
- **Other tools:** Boston triple bottom-line calculator, Social Networking Guidebook

Other Activities

In addition to these peer-to-peer exchange and learning activities, USDN coordinates regional network building and opportunity identification and development processes for promising innovation investments.

Alignment with regional networks: USDN is helping to build and align with structured multistate networks of sustainability directors as a way to grow networking opportunities and collaborative action. USDN has supported the creation of regional networks in New England, Western States, Southern States, the Heartland, the Midwest, and the Northwest. The group that coordinates regional network development, capacity building and exchange is the Regional Networks Coordinating Committee. USDN raised funds with partner Innovation Network for Communities to offer to partner regional networks seed funding, as well as training, consulting and toolkits.

Innovation (Collaboration) System: USDN’s Innovation System is the Network’s strategy for collaborating across member jurisdictions on the identification, development and distribution of key urban sustainability innovations for investment. The detailed process includes a scan of best practices and other initiatives, financial support for development of innovations, and piloting approaches to scale and replicate these innovations. Investments are determined by responses to formal Request for Proposals for priority areas that the members choose each year at the annual meeting. For 2012, these focus areas are large-scale behavior change, sustainability indicators, urban agriculture, funding sustainability initiatives, alternative financing for building

energy efficiency, zero waste and sustainability marketing campaigns. The effort is led by the USDN Sustainability Innovation Fund Steering Committee, made up of ten members and its strategic partner, the Innovation Network for Communities (INC). The RFP, launched in December 2011, has attracted sixteen collaborative innovation proposals totaling about US\$700,000, from forty-five member cities.

Metrics and Impacts

USDN manages and measures value-add of its activities by keeping constant track of its members' contributions to the network, as well as their satisfaction with the user groups and activities. For example, the network keeps a scorecard for members' participation and contribution to network value creation. It also measures the depth and breadth of the member network on a "connectivity map," to understand the broader reach of diverse network members.

Members are committed to three in-depth surveys annually so that the network may measure its effectiveness and impact. The third survey is an annual check-in to make new contacts and relationships with incoming sustainability directors; to monitor ideas and practices adopted because of USDN participation, as well as progress made in addressing key challenges, and to measure satisfaction and perceived effectiveness of USDN activities.

Lessons Learned

- **None of the innovation that USDN has supported or surfaced would be possible without peer-to-peer networking.** All innovations—defined by USDN as not only products, but also policies, practices and any new systems or tools that advance a city's goal around sustainability—have been collaborative in nature and have sprung from self-formed peer groups that have built trust by sharing challenges around an issue.
- **In-person networking is valued, but not necessary for trust-building.** USDN's members have limited resources and time to meet in person to collaborate, and much of the network's activity is conducted virtually. The single annual meeting is an essential and intense opportunity to build relationships. However, with excellent facilitation by the network coordinator, relationships of trust and mutual sharing can still be built.
- **USDN has a dynamic programming model that is based on members' unmet needs and focus areas.** Each year the organization compiles a "zero-based budget" and allows the annual meeting and Planning Committee to determine strategic directions for the organization based on current member challenges. Additionally, leaders from old groups are encouraged to start and join new groups (e.g., one member who was instrumental in the Professional Development Group is now co-

chair of a regional networking group) based on their changing needs and interests. USDN believes in putting energy only into projects that have member momentum and interest.

- **USDN does not consider ending a group to be a failure.** The network has created a self-regulating system where only groups that continue to produce value and appeal to its members will continue.
- **Ongoing data collection and analysis by a network development expert allows the USDN Planning Committee and staff to assess the health and evolution of the network and plan accordingly.**
- **While the network is closed, USDN's Planning Committee and staff actively seek outside opportunities to advance the network members' agendas.** A colleague of the USDN network coordinator requested some help from USDN members in a benchmarking study on sustainability performance management being done by the McKinsey and Co. consulting group in the Boston area. Tracking sustainability performance is of high interest to USDN members, so USDN staff identified a group of USDN members who agreed to help if they could shape the survey and get the results.
- **USDN believes there is an optimal core network size and is scaling growth accordingly.** USDN hypothesizes that a network of seventy-five cities (or about 100 individuals at an annual meeting) is the maximum to facilitate a peer-to-peer sharing environment. For this reason, in part, the network has instituted member dues to create a barrier for those who may not be serious about contributing to the network. Additionally, USDN is attempting to understand how it might scale its efforts to more of the community online or through exchange with regional networks across North America, in order to preserve the core member number at about seventy-five.

ROI Community⁶⁴

Jennifer L. Yee

Background and History

The ROI Community is a collaborative network of young Jewish adults who have demonstrated a commitment to positive social change underscored by Jewish values. Founded in 2005, the ROI Community began as a partnership between Taglit-Birthright Israel and the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation. After five successful years and 100,000 participants in the Birthright Israel educational travel program, Jewish community federations and philanthropic sponsors of the ten-day Israel trips were beginning to question the impact, or “return on investment,” of the program.

Lynn Schusterman, a Birthright Israel steering committee member, founded the ROI Community to engage the young alumni of these trips by organizing an annual invitation-only summit as a way to foster community, collaboration and innovation between them. Summit attendees were identified by Birthright Israel-affiliated organizations and trip leaders as individuals who were actively “building Jewish community,” for example, by engaging in Israel advocacy efforts, creating rich media and online content and addressing environmental issues in their local areas.

LEADERSHIP

Lynn Schusterman, Board Chair
Justin Korda, Executive Director
No’a Gorlin, Director of Strategy and Leadership Development
Beto Maya, Director of Gatherings and Recruitment

The mission of the ROI Community is to increase the impact of young Jewish leaders on their global communities by encouraging local and global initiatives based on Jewish values. Currently the community includes more than 700 participants and alumni in their twenties and thirties from nearly forty countries around the world who collaborate and provide strategic advice and support for ventures and initiatives.

The organization employs a small full-time staff to organize the annual summit and regional gatherings, manage a robust informational and social networking website and process applications for and administer small professional and personal development micro-grants for ROI Community members.

Organizational and Sponsorship Structure

The ROI Community seeks individuals for its annual summit who have complementary skill sets and experience and may come together to create a hub for innovation. The network has identified four types of people that it seeks to create this dynamic:

⁶⁴ www.roicommunity.org

- **Creative and Social Entrepreneurs:**
 - » Individuals who are launching new Jewish initiatives
 - » People with an idea and the drive to make it happen
 - » Those who are developing a social start-up and seeking to take it to the next level of success.
- **Change Agents and Community Professionals:**
 - » Individuals who are trying to change their organizations from within
 - » Those responsible for transforming an established institution into one that is more relevant in today's world
 - » People who are working for a Jewish organization that is on the cutting edge of connecting young people to Jewish life
- **Connectors and Cultivators of Network Hubs:**
 - » Individuals who manage a network of people who will be instrumental in shaping the Jewish future
 - » Those representing a community of stakeholders who have an important voice that should be heard
 - » People who are experienced in matching collaborators based on their strengths and needs or skilled at mobilizing people for good causes
- **Experts and Capacity Builders:**
 - » Individuals with experience and expertise that could impact a global network of young leaders
 - » Those who can share sound advice and knowledge with people who want to change the world
 - » Busy professionals who are seeking to get involved in meaningful and innovative Jewish initiatives as an advisor or volunteer

Full membership in the ROI Community is granted only to attendees and alumni of the invitation-only annual global ROI Summit, but participation in the organization's regional gatherings grants limited access to the community.

Governance

The ROI community is fully supported by Lynn Schusterman and operates independently as an organization within the Schusterman Philanthropic Network. ROI Community's board is composed of members of the Schusterman family—Lynn Schusterman, her daughter Stacy Schusterman and the President of the Schusterman Family Foundation, Sandy Cardin.

Innovation Networking Activities

Given its beginnings as a summit convener, the ROI Community has placed emphasis on in-person gatherings to facilitate innovation and collaboration. It convenes two types of gatherings: the annual ROI Summit and regional meetings. It also maintains a robust website platform and continues to refine its social networking and online engagement strategy.

The ROI Summit

The keystone of the ROI Community's innovation activities is its annual four-day global Summit held in Israel. The Summit has become known for its facilitated networking modalities that are aimed at having attendees share ideas and find collaborators and other types of strategic support for their respective initiatives. The Summit gathers 140–150 individuals—100 brand-new participants, and 40–50 returning alumni, each year. The majority of participants are referred to the ROI Community by Summit alumni, and the about 25% of those who apply are accepted. (In 2011, 150 of 600 applicants were selected to attend.)

The Summit is a venue for idea development and collaboration between participants. The first day opens with an inspirational keynote to set the tone for the next few days and is followed by icebreaker activities.

Organizers view the participants at the Summit not simply as attendees, but as the actual content for the programming. Using modalities such as “open space technology,” attendees articulate and identify discussion topics. To facilitate this, Summit staff places poster paper on walls around the venue, and participants create sessions by writing a topic on a sheet of paper. Topics have been known to include the widest possible range of subjects—from “Innovative Solutions to Dealing with Poverty” and “Establishing Giving Circles for Arts and Culture” to “Jewish Jokes.” Each of these topics receives a designated breakout area, and participants are free to select one or more sessions to join. Each of these sessions is assigned a note-taker, and discussions are published into a book for all participants at the end of the summit.

The ROI Summit also provides networking opportunities that aim to pair individuals who can support each other in a variety of ways. In one activity called “asset mapping,” participants create posters that briefly describe their project, its challenges and the resources needed. The posters are hung up on walls to create a gallery. Summit attendees then walk through the gallery and add comments, contact information and business cards to projects where they may add value. This facilitates connections between organizations that need skills and resources and individuals who have them.

Finally, the ROI Summit emphasizes professional development for its participants. It offers peer-led skills training, as well as master classes by proven external trainers. Participants are surveyed in advance for expertise or skills and are selected by Summit

staff to lead a series of ninety-minute skills training and professional development workshops for Summit attendees.

Regional Gatherings

The ROI Community has hosted four regional gatherings in Europe (Sweden, Lithuania) and Latin America (Argentina, Mexico) to foster continued collaboration between Summit attendees and Jewish community members in similar geographies. These gatherings were organized after the ROI Community observed that small listservs and Facebook groups were emerging from the annual Summit and that participants needed another local forum in which to exchange ideas.

To date, the Latin America regional gatherings have met with more success because the issues facing these countries have more in common than those that cut across European nations.

Micro-Grants

The ROI community is committed to the personal and professional development of its members and issues micro-grants to individuals with the expectation that these individuals will share newfound skills with the community. The ROI Community has approved 135 US\$1,000 micro-grants since March 2011 and hopes to catalyze additional collaboration and to fill knowledge gaps in the existing ROI Community network.

Metrics and Impacts

The ROI Community has recently begun an analysis of the impact of its work and its network, with the goal to reach one million Jewish people through its soon-to-be 1,000+ ROI Community members. It administers an annual survey that addresses the following topics:

- **Intra-network support:** What kind of support have you received from other members of the ROI Community? How would you rate this support?
- **Measurement of impact:** How many people are your projects reaching (volume), and what is the impact of these interactions (intensity)? For example, a YouTube video may have reach, and service work in a remote area of Israel may have deep personal impact.
- **Connection to Jewish Life:** How are you connecting communities of Jewish life? Beyond increasing the number of engaged people, how are you creating pluralistic Jewish communities that are open to different denominations and ways of practicing Judaism?

This network analysis work is only in its nascent phases but, in combination with anecdotal stories of success and partnership, constitutes the ROI Community's efforts

to measure the impact of the network.

Lessons Learned

In its first five years, the ROI Community has learned much about programming for its annual Summit, how to distribute resources as part of a philanthropic network, measuring impact and the need for a strategic plan as the network grows.

- **Summit attendees desire interactive participation, not just another conference program of A-list speakers.** At the first ROI Summit, staff intentionally scheduled a dense roster of impressive speakers but received feedback that participants did not learn about their fellow attendees' projects, nor were they afforded enough time to interact with one another.
- **Bringing back past Summit attendees serves as a human bridge between ROI Community alumni and current Summit participants.** In the beginning, without any repeat attendees, the ROI Community was creating siloed "classes" of Summit attendees who had no connection to one another and did not see the need or value of connecting to people from the prior year's conference.
- **Returning attendees provide an excellent (and unintentional) marketing opportunity for the ROI Community at large.** Because the ROI Community considers very seriously its programmatic evaluation, it has developed a reputation among repeat attendees for evolving based on feedback. This has contributed to help attract higher-quality people over time.
- **An earnest effort to distribute available financial resources to member projects created a conflict of interest.** In 2009–2010, the ROI Community provided a select number of member projects with pilot funding using available resources from the Schusterman Family Foundation. However, this created an unintended hierarchy and ranking of projects that eroded goodwill between community members and affected members' commitment to reciprocity in the network. The ROI Community has since transitioned to provide micro-grants for individual professional development, rather than for projects.
- **The ROI Community must measure the impact of its work by doing network analysis, in addition to highlighting anecdotal success stories.** After five years, the ROI Community only had one or two success stories to tout—and realized at this point that enumerating projects that emerged from discrete Summits was not the correct way of measuring impact. Instead, the community has calibrated its success metrics to reflect its position as a strategic network that supports deep impact and wide reach in the Jewish community.

Table of Abstract

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Abstract: This report describes and places in context the emergent phenomenon of Innovation Communities (InnoComms): groups of people who meet regularly to learn from each other about the challenges of managing innovation and entrepreneurship and to build personal and professional networks of supportive colleagues from industries and cultures beyond those they ordinarily encounter. It describes the basis and motivation for InnoComms and distinguishes them from networking organizations that focus on achieving specific business, macroeconomic or social results or on academic research. It characterizes and provides twenty-seven case studies from ten countries, placing them in five categories that span business, government, academia and nonprofit sectors. It analyzes how trust is built and maintained in an InnoComm and how online tools and social media can support InnoComm development (but cannot substitute for in-person meetings). It explores how InnoComms may support regional development, such as the creation of "innovation hot spots," and how the InnoComm phenomenon varies in different societies around the world.		
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Innovation Communities:

Trust, Mutual Learning and Action

Innovation Communities (InnoComms) are groups of people who meet regularly to learn from each other about the challenges of managing innovation and entrepreneurship. Participants build personal networks of supportive colleagues from industries and cultures beyond those they ordinarily encounter. They may come to view themselves in a new way through the experience of trust and support in the community and be inspired to take on the uphill battle of fostering significant change. This focus on learning, trust and renewal distinguishes InnoComms from networking organizations that focus on achieving specific business, macroeconomic or social results or on academic research. However, InnoComms support business growth indirectly by helping innovation leaders think differently and conceive innovation approaches that are differentiated from their industry peers. InnoComms that are focused on a local area or based in a small country or region may support the formation of "innovation hot spots."



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