



Camps and Competitions

A Report on Open Methods of Social Innovation

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FOREWORD

This is an abridged version of a report created by the Centre for Social Innovation on behalf of The LiveGreen Toronto Community Animation Program. The LiveGreen Toronto Community Animation Program is a city-wide initiative to help residents and community organizations take action to reduce emissions and protect the climate.

As part of the larger activities of LiveGreen Toronto, there is interest in some form of open innovation event that engages citizens in the co-creation of new solutions to address climate change. Provisionally titled "Climate Camp", this activity would be a first of its kind in Toronto. The Centre for Social Innovation has been hired to design and implement a vision for Climate Camp, a process which began with a global scan of comparable projects.

The original version of this report includes material specific to the LiveGreen Toronto program. This version has endeavoured to "neutralize" the content to make it more useful to a broader reading audience. However, since the report was written to specifically address the vision for a Toronto-based Climate Camp, it is impossible to completely disassociate the research from its specific purpose. We therefore encourage the reader to negotiate the text with this in mind; the term "Climate Camp" should be seen as a placeholder for any initiative to engage citizens in the co-creation of solutions to social challenges. The findings contained in this report are positioned as lessons for Climate Camp, but are relevant to a wide spectrum of social innovation camps and competitions.

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CONTEXT

Barely heard of a decade ago, social innovation is an emerging concept that is making waves around the world. Practitioners are working to understand how social innovation can be employed to address social change and academics are clamouring to produce definitions and frameworks that advance this uncertain terrain. The result is considerable excitement but also considerable noise.

Rather than weigh ourselves down judging the field's parameters or the merits of competing definitions, for the purposes of this report we will understand social innovation simply as *new processes, products or services intended to address social challenges*.

With this definition in mind, Climate Camp may be seen both as a strategy to spark social innovation and as a social innovation in its own right.

Trends in Social Innovation

Several trends are worth identifying in order to better understand how and why a Climate Camp initiative could work to advance the goals of LiveGreen Toronto. While each of these trends deserves deep exposition, a cursory review helps to situate Climate Camp within the field and to stimulate thinking about the possibilities for its design.

Intentional Innovation

For most of us, innovation is cloaked in mystery. There is no formula for innovation - it just appears. Sometimes it appears in response to a sudden or growing challenge. Other times it is the product of a particularly creative individual or team that is struck with a flash of insight and which possesses a remarkable capacity to translate vision into action. In these cases, innovation is seen to have a magical quality that is not easily cultivated or replicated.

This view of innovation is being radically and effectively challenged. Increasingly, practitioners are developing ways to *intentionally innovate*. Intentional innovation is about the deliberate application of methodologies to stimulate and develop new ideas of all kinds, from commercial products and services to projects that address social and environmental challenges. There has been a recent surge in these new methods and their analysis as organizations around the world seek to consciously develop and harness their innovation potential¹.

Localism

Individuals and communities across the globe are integrated to an unparalleled degree. Vast and intricate webs of communication technology connect and bind us together in ways that were previously unimaginable. Our sense of global interconnectedness continues to spike and is triggering implications that we are only just discovering.

¹ See, for example, W.K. Kellogg Foundation's *Intentional Innovation: How Getting More Systematic about Innovation Could Improve Philanthropy and Increase Social Impact* (2008) or The Young Foundation, *Social Innovation: What it is, Why it Matters, How it can be Accelerated* (2007)

And yet, despite the fact that faraway nations are just a Skype call away, there is, remarkably, an equally strong movement in the opposing direction: a movement toward localism. The role of place - the physical locations in which our lives are rooted - is recognized as increasingly vital. Our social capital, understood as a key determinant of personal well-being, is cultivated and exercised most frequently at home. And the socio-political context in which we lead our daily lives is exceedingly local. Most relevant to Climate Camp, the solutions we adopt to pressing challenges are most often born in our local communities and reflect the specificity, capacity and needs of our immediate context.

In the UK, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) has been researching the relationship between social innovation and localism, specifically exploring the challenges faced a national government seeking to address local issues². NESTA finds that governments are generally predisposed to scaling local solutions, but that this approach is ineffective without local buy-in and the often unique configuration of characteristics that lead to a given initiative's success. Instead, governments should adopt an orientation to 'mass localism' - a common national framework that emphasizes locally tailored programs and solutions.

Open Innovation

Open innovation refers to the notion that innovation can be pursued and achieved through practices that engage users and thinkers outside of organizational or institutional boundaries. The term has been promoted by Henry Chesbrough, an academic, whose 2003 book, *Open Innovation: The new imperative for creating and profiting from technology*, outlined the principles and practices of open innovation. His use of the term and its primary application to date is associated with commercial settings where businesses engage external actors (often including the user community) to improve organizational practices and product development. In the past few years, new web-based platforms have amplified the potential of open innovation by tapping into vast communities of participants³.

But open innovation is not the exclusive domain of industry. Socially-oriented organizations increasingly recognize that they too can harness the wisdom and insight of individuals outside of their institutional boundaries. Open innovation leverages collaboration, self-organization, and decentralization to engage people in the process of solving social challenges. Several examples of open innovation applied to social challenges are discussed in the next section⁴.

If open innovation can be seen as a mindset or orientation, then crowd-sourcing, co-creation, competitions and camps can be seen as methodologies, tactics or expressions of that mindset.

² Bunt, Laura and Michael Harris (2010). *Mass Localism*. NESTA. Accessed December 3, 2010: www.nesta.org.uk/publications/assets/features/mass_localism

³ See, for example, <http://www.ideaconnection.com/>, <http://www2.innocentive.com/> or <http://www.innovationexchange.com/>

⁴ For examples of online open innovation platforms that address social challenges, see <http://www.avivacommunityfund.org> or <http://openideo.com/>

Crowd-Sourcing

Crowd-sourcing is the term applied to processes that engage a high number of people outside of an institution in the performance of some kind of task. Crowd-sourcing relies on the principle that an open call will attract people with a vested interest in a given task, and that broad participation will result in more innovative and viable solutions than those produced by a small group - the so-called 'wisdom of crowds' argument. Crowd-sourcing is an example of mass collaboration, or distributed problem-solving, and is increasingly used outside of commercial sectors to advance a social agenda.⁵

Co-creation/Co-Production

Co-creation, or co-production, implies joint participation among users to create something new. The term is generally applied to the for-profit sector, in cases where corporations engage customers in the improvement of existing products or the development of new ones. Unlike the traditional paradigm in which customers are passive users of a given product or service, through co-creation the customer is invited to actively participate in the processes of product development.

Open source technology provides an archetypal example of co-creation that is truly decentralized and that is not framed in a creator/user relationship. With open source software, distributed programmers work collaboratively to create and evolve code. Another common and illustrative example of successful co-creation is Wikipedia, whereby a globally distributed network of participants works in concert to establish an authoritative online encyclopedia of knowledge. Of course, co-creation is not something that occurs exclusively online; the act of co-creation is often accomplished by groups working together in shared space.

Organizations pursuing social innovation are now beginning to use the strategies and tools of co-creation, engaging the perspectives, energy and input of their stakeholders in addressing organizational challenges and developing new solutions to social dilemmas. With a co-creation approach, these organizations are facilitating the emergence of new ideas rather than attempting to create and direct those ideas internally.

Competitions

Competitions have long been used as a device to stimulate innovation. The principles are simple: an organizing body issues and defines a challenge for which the winner receives some kind of prize. Historically, competitions have been primarily used to stimulate medical and technical innovation. More recently, a flurry of philanthropic prizes have appeared to address all types of social challenges, aided in part by the capacity of the internet to engage a sizable audience. The form and variety of socially-oriented competitions is exploding.

Competitions are useful for several purposes. As identified in a recent report by McKinsey & Company⁶, competitions are excellent mechanisms to spark social innovation because

⁵ Among the more interesting socially innovative uses of crowd-sourcing, Kiva.org uses a 'crowd-funding' method of pooling contributions among a distributed network of donors.

⁶ *And the winner is: Capturing the promise of philanthropic prizes* (2009). McKinsey & Company. Accessed December 3, 2010:

they mobilize creativity, mobilize capital, generate many ideas and increase exposure to a social problem. The report also finds that, among other characteristics, prizes work well with a clear goal, specific prize objectives, a large potential audience of submissions, and post-prize support.

Camps

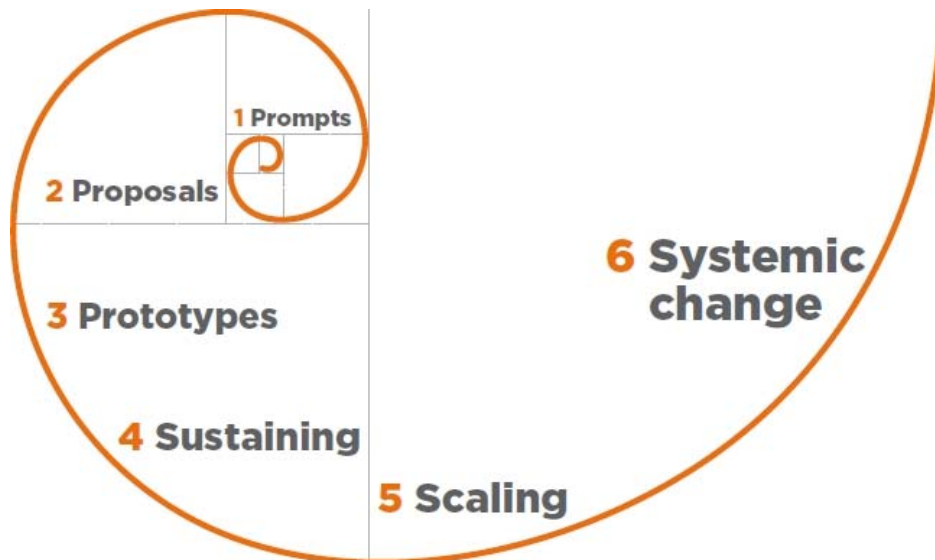
The final example of an open innovation process is the camp model. Born out of the unconference methodology (where participants design a conference's content in real-time) with roots in "hacker" culture, camps are physical gatherings of a short duration intended to solicit ideas, prototype projects, or grow enterprises. The format of these camps varies as widely as their content or purpose, but they generally involve the real-time co-creation and co-production of new projects, pursued within a very specific framework imposed by the organizing body.

* * *

The examples cited above are not the only expressions of open innovation. There are dozens of other methodologies that sit within the open innovation framework, or which reside on the borders of the examples listed here. More importantly, new methodologies and tactics are continuously being designed, tested and shared. The field remains wide open as practitioners explore new ways of engaging people in collaborative problem-solving processes.

A Social Innovation Framework

The growing interest in social innovation has been gradually accompanied by an increasing number of frameworks with which to understand its processes. One particularly useful model comes from NESTA and the Young Foundation, and is depicted here⁷:



http://www.mckinsey.com/client-service/Social_Sector/our_practices/Philanthropy/Knowledge_highlights/And_the_winner_is.aspx

⁷ See The Open Book of Innovation, published by NESTA and The Young Foundation, March 2010

According to this model, there are six stages that bring an idea from inception to impact. While they are not necessarily as distinct or sequential as the image shows, a social innovation will generally pass through these six stages:

1. *Prompts, Inspiration and Diagnoses* highlight or inspire the need for social innovation.
2. *Proposals and Ideas* are methods that foster creativity and innovative responses to a need or opportunity.
3. *Prototypes and Pilots* are the process through which 'trial runs' or tests are executed in order to better understand a possible solution.
4. *Sustaining* refers to the process by which ideas are refined and turned into viable enterprises or programs.
5. *Scaling and Diffusion* are strategies for growing or spreading an innovation beyond a single case.
6. *Systemic change* refers to the more-or-less permanent integration of a social innovation into a given system.

Understanding this social innovation framework helps us to see where the Climate Camp initiative falls within a larger process of social innovation. Climate Camp fits most neatly into the second phase; "camps," as a method of open innovation, are most often used to generate new proposals and ideas intended to address a given challenge. Camps are also occasionally employed at the third stage of the process to help create prototypes of a given solution.

Indeed, in some ways, a camp can be employed to advance any stage of the social innovation process. A camp could, for example, focus on the first stage by engaging communities in surfacing the challenges they face. A Climate Camp could also focus on the final stage, Systemic Change, by engaging communities in the development and implementation of strategies for pursuing institutional change. Generally, however, the camp model fits into the second and third stages, and the Climate Camp initiative will be understood to focus on new proposals and prototypes that can, in time, be sustained and scaled or replicated.

SCAN

No project exists in isolation. Charting an effective course for Climate Camp requires that we learn from the experiences of comparable or illustrative cases around the world. It's also necessary to review other, related initiatives happening in Toronto in order to see how Climate Camp fits into a larger, local ecosystem of activity.

In this section, we conduct a scan of global projects and explore recent and related developments Toronto.

Global

There are hundreds of variations of competitions and camps intended to solicit and actualize new ideas. Here is a brief selection of initiatives selected based on their capacity to inform the design of Climate Camp.

Social Innovation Camp

<http://www.sicamp.org>

Social Innovation Camp is an initiative that "brings together ideas, people and digital tools to create web-based social innovations - from software to business model - all in just 8 hours". Originally conceived and implemented in London, UK, the Social Innovation Camp model has been adopted and adapted in a number of cities around the world. The basic formula is as follows: organizers issue a call for ideas, which participants can submit online through a designated platform; a series of Meet-Ups allow the SI Camp team to promote the event, stimulate ideas, and connect potential participants; judges select 6-8 ideas that will form the basis of the SI Camp event; participants apply to join the SI Camp event, and 100 are selected to help advance the chosen ideas; proponents present their ideas and teams are formed to bring the initial idea to a workable prototype; at the end of the 8-hour development period, judges select one winning team, which receives a cash prize to further develop its project.

The Social Innovation Camp model has seen considerable success in each of its iterations, spawning some novel and viable projects. And while the precise format changes from place to place, the general agenda has been proven to have some powerful effects. In 2009, the author of this report was fortunate to attend a Social Innovation Camp in Glasgow, Scotland. Some observations are shared here, along with some of the lessons learned by the organizers of the first ever Australian Social Innovation Camp in 2010:

- It is important to have skilled people in the room
- In-person lead-up activities help build awareness, momentum, and generate new ideas
- Proponents should do some preparatory work in advance to ensure that the team can be as efficient and effective as possible
- A skilled third-party team facilitator may help to manage group processes in the short period of the camp
- An emphasis on a final presentation means that a slick presentation can win over a more substantive and viable solution

What's especially valuable about the SI Camp model is not just what it tells us about bringing people together to create web-based prototypes, but rather what it reveals about the possibilities of a crowd-sourced, participatory open innovation process. What if the program was applied to projects beyond those with a web-powered solution? What if teams competed on solutions to the same challenge rather than different challenges? What if the teams came together to solve specific and pressing problems faced in a given community? The permutations of the camp model are endless.

Corporate Innovation Camps: The AmDOCS Experience⁸

Increasingly, corporations are undertaking innovation processes that borrow heavily from camp methodologies. AmDOCS - a \$3 billion company that provides software and services to major telecommunication service providers - held a four-day Innovation Camp in early 2010. The goal: to identify new business opportunities worth at least \$100 million in new revenues. Out of hundreds of applicants, 75 employees were selected based on their creativity, originality and diversity.

The first day was devoted entirely to "jolting" employees out of their everyday patterns of thinking and acting, and included several "mind-expanding activities". The second day focussed on brainstorming and creativity techniques aimed at generating new ideas. It was only on the third day when they got down to the business at hand; the employees were organized into groups to generate hundreds of ideas, which were whittled down to the top 85 ideas as participants applied variously coloured stickers to indicate the relative viability and innovativeness of the different ideas. Fifteen of these ideas were selected, turned into posters, presented to the group, and then narrowed down to the final four. On day four, three groups of 25 people researched each of the ideas and then delivered a 15-minute presentation to a panel of five management staff. Two ideas were given immediate go-ahead and seed funding.

If you strip away the profit-orientation of the event, there are lessons to be learned from AmDOCS' Innovation Camp. Most significant is the degree of forethought and planning that went into this methodical innovation process. Importantly, the effort to spend half of the time preparing the group to begin thinking creatively appears to be time well spent. Finally, in addition to producing several promising ideas, the camp helped the organization to build social capital, create a sense of energy, share some new thinking techniques, and inspire a sense of possibility.

The Big Green Challenge

In 2008 NESTA launched a £1 million national competition - The Big Green Challenge - intended to identify community-led innovations that would lead to measurable reductions in carbon emissions. During the initial call for ideas, 355 groups came forward with an incredible range of ideas for reducing CO2 emissions. Of these, 100 of the most promising ideas received support from the Big Green Challenge Team to transform their ideas into actionable plans. This group was subsequently reduced to ten finalists who were tasked with the responsibility of putting their plans into action to reduce CO2 emissions in their community over a six month period. In February 2010, a panel of judges announced

⁸ See http://www.businessweek.com/innovate/content/jun2010/id20100628_117088.htm

the winners of the program based on the results. Three projects each received £300,000 and one runner-up received £100,000.

The above description gives short shrift to a considerably intricate and comprehensive initiative. However, for the purposes of the report, it is of primary importance to focus on the lessons learned. These include:

- Recognizing how the design features of a competition influence the results. The variables you communicate will determine how the proponents develop their ideas. An emphasis on measurable results will produce initiatives that focus on this goal, but may not facilitate a sense of community ownership or long-term sustainability unless these variables are also explicitly communicated.
- The importance of keeping participation costs relatively low. A rigorous and involved competition process can drain the capacity of those who are unsuccessful.
- Confirmation that communities are capable of developing solutions and ideas that are not apparent or achievable by existing institutions.

Interestingly, there were also lessons learned by the Big Green Challenge finalists that are relevant to the mission of LGT. These include the importance of providing a range of options to individuals, locating the climate change issue at a personal level, avoiding preaching about the scale of the problem, and providing the means to action through hands-on support.

I Do Ideas

<http://the-young-foundation.tagmap.co.uk/>

Launched by the UK-based Young Foundation, I Do Ideas is a project designed "to provide opportunities for young people to make a big difference to their community". Youths aged 13-19 from across England are encouraged to upload videos in which they identify projects for community impact.

In the first round, proponents of all "reasonable" ideas were invited to come to one of two in-person sessions. At the sessions, a panel of young people provided training on developing and pitching an idea. This led to pitch sessions in which each proponent was required to answer the same four questions in front of a youth advisory panel. The young advisors decided on the distribution of funds and ultimately awarded grants ranging £300 - £1,000 to about 60% of the ideas. A second iteration of the I Do Ideas program is now underway.

Some revisions to the program will be made based on learnings from the first go-around. Most substantially, the program will be working with youth-serving organizations as intermediaries; organizations with whom the Young Foundation has previously worked are responsible for finding ten projects from their local networks. The hypothesis is that these intermediaries will be able to help surface higher calibre projects and will be better able to engage and support youth who intend to undertake projects. While there seems to be some concern that this more narrowly cast opportunity reduces the reach of the program, there is a sense that a more targeted approach will produce better results.

The Social Innovation Safari

<http://www.kennisland.nl/en>

The Social Innovation Safari is a project of Kennisland, a nonprofit organization based in The Netherlands. Kennisland, which translates to Knowledge-Land, has a mission to create a smarter Dutch society by understanding and preparing for a knowledge economy. With €10,000 in funding, Kennisland undertook an experiment to address complex social challenges. The result is the Social Innovation Safari.

The 2010 iteration of the Safari began with a call to Kennisland's network to identify organizations that were addressing substantial issues and which were committed to implementing the solutions derived through the Safari process. Once the five organizations and ideas were selected, Kennisland promoted the Safari through its networks, searching for diverse, international, and multi-disciplinary participants. They selected 27 people out of the applicant pool, who were required to pay a nominal participant fee, and took them through a six-day Safari process: It began with a casual get-together. This was followed by a day that was devoted to helping the participants "discover the issues behind the issue". The participants then broke into groups based on their preferred challenge and were asked to make a prototype by the end of the day, where they would present to a panel of experts that would deliver critical feedback.

They then had 2 hours to redesign the prototype and test it with the target group. On the final day they reflected on what they did and what they learned, and then prepared a presentation to the "clients". Four of the five ideas were strong enough to be taken on by the client partner, and the process was deeply appreciated by all participants, who felt engaged and energized by the experience.

Several characteristics of the Safari stand out. The idea of a client helped ensure there was a proponent to take the idea forward. The process of selecting participants made those chosen feel special and hence committed to the process (as did the nominal fee). The idea to prototype solutions - and to ensure they were based on the real needs of the target group - helped ensure that the ideas developed were practical and grounded.

The Social Innovation Safari model can be adjusted in dozens of directions, and Kennisland is keen to explore its potential. They are particularly interested in strategies to ensure follow-up, and have spoken about the possibility of including a client representative in the participant group, or requiring a client commitment to hire the team to execute the task. These are just initial ideas and Kennisland is not yet sure if they are the right strategies, but in November 2010 Kennisland did undertake a more intense version of the Safari in which two days were spent exploring the issue and a quick-fire cycle of rapid prototyping was adopted.

Ideas Forum - World Design Capital

<http://www.wdchelsinki2012.fi/en/ideointipaiva>

The City of Helsinki hired the Helsinki Hub (a shared community workspace) to deliver a project whose goal was to embed design in citizen's daily experience of Helsinki. The Hub Team conceived of the idea for the Ideas Forum - a citizen-led process that would culminate in Ideation Day, a single day of distributed and concurrent events. Working primarily through social media, the organizers invited local businesses, nonprofits and

citizens to voluntarily organize events that would help improve Helsinki. They gave instructions to the organizers that included general guidelines, a facilitation handbook, ideation cards (intended to stimulate creativity), and instruction on how to properly document the experience. More than 100 events were simultaneously held and hundreds of ideas were developed and uploaded to the Ideas Forum website. About half of the ideas required the engagement of the municipal government and the other half were ideas that could be executed by local citizens within their own communities.

The major learning for The Hub Team was that the citizens were capable of self-organizing and of being engaged in a city-wide conversation about the future of Helsinki. This was quite reassuring and promising for future initiatives. Among the challenges was ensuring follow-up after the Ideation Day so that some of the ideas created were actually embraced. The strategy for this process hasn't quite been settled, although The Hub Team is working with city officials to influence their receptivity to the product and service ideas generated through the event.

Finnish National Innovation Fund

www.sitra.fi/en

Building on their experiences with the Ideas Forum, The Hub is undertaking a new crowd-sourcing project with the Finnish National Innovation Fund. The aim of this project is to surface and scale innovations that support the rural regions of the country. Rather than focus on an "Ideation Day" whose purpose is to generate ideas, this model pre-identified 10 cases of rural innovation. A website provided background information on the ten ideas and then a series of decentralized sessions were held to develop strategies for bringing the ideas forward (could be prototypes, business plans, patents, etc.).

The move to ten pre-identified projects reflects a desire to push the conversation past the ideation stage. The organizers also adopted a one-month window; events were held across rural regions of the country over a longer period in which people could delve more deeply into the issues. This month will lead to a workshop in which public, private and nonprofit sector representatives - as well as individual innovators - will prioritize the ideas. The goal of the project is to produce up to 200 strategies, out of which five will be funded and piloted by the Finnish National Innovation Fund.

The Hope Institute, South Korea

<http://www.makehope.org/>

Two open innovation competitions have been held by The Hope Institute in South Korea over the past two years. This year, the competition is focussing on ideas and strategies for solving social and environmental issues in the city of Suwon, and is being sponsored by the Suwon municipal government. The competition uses a blend of online and offline vehicles to generate and select proposals intended to make Suwon a better place to live.

Using social media as a promotional strategy, a call for ideas is issued over a one month period. During this time, a pair of Ideation Workshops are held, in which citizens come together to identify areas of concerns, explore solutions created in other jurisdictions, and develop proposals to address local problems. The sessions were consciously structured and professionally facilitated, and proponents of specific ideas were encouraged to upload their proposals to the "DIY Suwon" website. After the deadline for ideas, citizens are given one week to vote through the website on those ideas they felt were strongest. These public votes accounted for 10% of the overall score, and then a set of civil society

representatives vote the remaining 90% of the score to bring the ideas down to the final ten. These ten projects present their ideas and five are elected to receive financial support (about \$1,000) and mentorship to carry out their project. A final Ideas & Action Award Ceremony is held to showcase the work that is completed.

Representatives of The Hope Institute indicate that their networks in Suwon City were limited and hence they had difficulty promoting the competition; future iterations will work harder at developing networks in advance of the Call for Ideas. Next time, they also intend to conduct Ideation Workshops that focus on different topics and different target groups, as a strategy to improve participant engagement.

The Chicago Experience

<http://foresightdesign.org/about/>

In the case of Chicago, we had the opportunity to speak with Peter Nicholson of Foresight Design. The Foresight Design Initiative "fosters the culture shift necessary to create more environmentally robust, socially equitable, and economically resilient cities." Foresight has undertaken a number of design and sustainability-focussed competitions in the past few years. The Sustainable Innovation competition was targeted to the design community (primarily architects and product designers), and resulted in approximately 15 entrants presenting proposals at a public event. Attendees were invited to vote on the proposals and a jury helped to select the final winner, who received a cash prize.

Subsequent iterations of the event included a version in which applicants made a 3-minute pitch, and one in which a specific design challenge was issued (develop an integrated solution to the paper vs. plastic problem). Foresight Design has also managed competitions with blended online/offline components, and is exploring the idea of a competition on a competition; an initial competition to develop a new enterprise is followed by a competition to develop a business plan for the winning project.

Several lessons have been learned by Foresight Design through the process of managing sustainability and design competitions:

- A competition has one effect on the participants and another on the public who may hear about or get involved with the opportunity. Consider the indirect public message you want to share.
- Ensure that the competition is integrated within the community; isolating the topic to a single sector or ignoring the role of related sectors or institutional players will limit the potential success of a given idea.
- Some problems are too big and too complex to be realistically addressed through a competition model.
- The prize amount should be commensurate with the time required to participate
- Competitions require a common base of knowledge; some way to level the playing field and prevent it from focussing on people who are already experts.
- A public session is a good way to provide exposure and momentum for an idea.

Local

In this section, we explore a few relevant open innovation initiatives that are currently underway here in Toronto.

Project Wildfire

<http://projectwildfire.ca>

Incubated by the Centre for Social Innovation, Project Wildfire is an initiative to support social entrepreneurship among youth in Toronto's diverse communities, with special concentration on residents in Toronto Community Housing properties. Project Wildfire, which starts in January 2011, begins with a series of free workshops intended to help young entrepreneurs identify and develop business opportunities. After attending one of the workshops, participants are invited to upload a 60-90 second video of their social business idea to the Project Wildfire website. Through a mix of public and jury voting, ten finalists are selected and will develop business plans with the support of a business team. The winner receives \$25,000 in funding and four runners-up will receive \$2,500 each. All five will receive mentorship and business development support.

MaRS Future Lab

Hosted during Net Change Week, the Future Lab is a camp-inspired event held annually at the MaRS Discovery District. Three technology-fuelled, social change projects are picked in advance of the Lab, each supported by a proponent who commits to bringing the project forward after the event is finished, either on their own or with the express support of a third-party host organization. These three proponents are invited to MaRS, where they meet a supporting team of 6-12 thinkers and practitioners from an array of design and business development disciplines. The teams then have 8 hours to collaborate on "high-impact solutions to a perceived social or environmental challenge", and a roving team of "animators" performs check-ins and supports the teams as required. Three judges select a winner based on presentations by all three Project Teams, and the winning group receives support from the Net Change Development Team and MaRS advisors.

Transition Town Toronto

<http://transitiontoronto.ning.com>

Transition Town - or the Transition Initiative - is a decentralized global movement of community-led responses to climate change and fossil fuel depletion. Thousands of initiatives around the world, ranging in scope from cities to universities to neighbourhoods, are adopting the principles of the Transition Model to address environmental concerns. The approach is roughly based on twelve-steps that emphasize community-led action, collaborative decision-making, local engagement and practical projects. A loose network connects Transition Initiatives around the world by providing guidance and shared resources.

A Transition Town Toronto project is now underway. Led by a small group of committed volunteers, the Transition Town Toronto team is borrowing insights from other large cities, in which the overall municipality is broken into neighbourhood-level groups and actions. The project is currently in the awareness building phase, growing its membership, supporting a few key activities, and sharing the vision of the Transition Model. Next steps

are to organize at least one monthly event, build a bank of volunteers who can support local projects, and develop a social enterprise strategy to ensure sustainability.

Project Neutral

Project Neutral is a new initiative planned for 2011 by members of the Toronto City Summit Alliance's Emerging Leaders Network. It is, in short, a competition to select an existing neighbourhood in Toronto and to make it carbon neutral. In early 2011, a request for possible locations will be issued, identifying the neighbourhood with the "strongest leadership, capability and determination". Once the neighbourhood is selected, the Project Neutral team, alongside partners from University of Toronto, will gather baseline GHG emissions data from as many homes as possible. A summit will be held in early summer or fall, gathering residents together to begin creating and selecting actions that will be undertaken to reduce carbon emissions in their neighbourhood. An options paper will be prepared in advance to help the community understand potential actions, and a number of leading environmental organizations and individuals will be invited to participate as subject matter experts. The goal is to work toward a carbon neutral neighbourhood, and to test and refine a methodology that can be replicated in other communities.

Climate Spark

<http://www.climatespark.ca/>

ClimateSpark is an initiative of the Toronto Atmospheric Fund, launched in fall 2010. The program uses an online platform to collect and rate ideas aimed at addressing the threats of climate change, with the winning idea receiving a cash prize and the potential for additional investment. In this first round, the program is aimed at the business community. Anyone with a "business-ready concept for a product, service or process that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions" is invited to post a short summary and up to two pages of background information to the ClimateSpark website. A community of users - both local and part of a larger user community that exists on the web-based Spigit platform - rates each idea, and an algorithm that includes factors such as user reputation translates a simple "thumbs up/thumbs down" choice into a more sophisticated weighting strategy. Several climate change experts have also been recruited to weigh in with comments and questions, and idea proponents are encouraged to respond to questions posed by the community.

To help stimulate participation, ClimateSpark issues a series of weekly prizes to participants. Through a process of weighted voting, nine finalists are selected to go forward into the final round, where they are presented with specific challenges. The community will have another opportunity to provide feedback to the evolved ideas, and a winner is selected through a combination of rating and expert review. The winner will be announced at the ClimateSpark Summit in February 2011 and will receive a \$10,000 prize. All nine finalists will have the opportunity to pitch their ideas to a live panel of experts and investors with approximately \$15 million available for potential investment.

As the project is still in its early stages, there have been no firm conclusions about this particular methodology. However, some insight has emerged. TAF reports that the number of ideas submitted is lower than originally hoped, and that there needs to be in place a strong strategy for soliciting and incentivizing participation. Learnings here include a reframing to highlight the \$15 million in financing over the \$10,000 prize, and a desire to populate the site with some interesting business ideas in advance of launch. The technology itself, despite the many benefits of an online crowd-sourcing platform, also

presents some hurdles. Technically, bugs and challenges occasionally crop up. Strategically, it takes some effort to encourage businesses to accept the online tool as a legitimate and valuable platform for developing their concepts. Nonetheless, people have been very responsive to the ClimateSpark initiative and some creative strategies for securing participation have helped to advance the program and the business ideas presented.

LESSONS

Summary of Learnings

The scan of relevant global and local initiatives reveals key lessons that can inform our approach to the Climate Camp initiative. This section reviews the most meaningful discoveries of the research:

Resources are Required

Camps and competitions require financial, human, and technical resources. Plan your budget alongside your workplan to ensure that you have a grounded understanding of the costs involved in achieving your goals.

Careful Planning is Essential

The program or methodologies employed at a camp event require considerable and deliberate planning. It is obviously not enough to simply gather people in a room and see what emerges. A clear and comprehensive facilitation plan that guides participants through the process will help ensure that your objectives are achieved.

Consider Advanced Programming

Some advanced activities should be undertaken to prepare participants for the camp. Preceding events or activities help to generate awareness, interest and commitment. Background material or event agendas can help ensure that participants arrive in the appropriate "state of mind". Think of the event as existing along a continuum, and undertake the necessary actions to prepare the soil for the emergence of new and powerful ideas.

Focus the Challenge

Addressing Climate Change - or just about any other social ill - is a massive undertaking. Consider breaking the issue into smaller, more manageable chunks in order to solicit better input and generate more viable solutions. Recognize that the scope of the issue will dramatically influence the responses created; a defined challenge and appropriately scoped problem are key to generating the results you seek.

Select Participants Consciously

A general call for participation will produce different responses than a more targeted call. Often, there may be a competing tension between the desire for broad public participation and specific outcomes. Sometimes, it is necessary to acknowledge that a particular "type" of participant (e.g., a community leader or subject matter expert) will produce the required results with greater efficiency and effectiveness than a more "general" participant.

Create a Common Base of Knowledge

Some time should be spent establishing a base of knowledge for participants. Many of the issues that are ripe for open innovation methodologies are complex and obscure. Some effort to establish a baseline of understanding will help ensure broader participation.

Prepare to Think Creatively

Our lives are rooted in pragmatism and practicality. To shift suddenly into innovation and creativity requires attention and practice. A successful camp or competition will include devices to help stimulate creativity and to open new ways of thinking about the challenges we face.

Consider Process Facilitation

Due consideration to group dynamics is important anytime you gather a group of strangers to engage in collaborative work. Employing expert facilitation - or at minimum an expressed commitment to facilitation - will help ensure that participants contribute to their full potential.

Balance Experience and Outcomes

Participants of open innovation processes often highlight the enjoyment of the experience and the social capital that is built. This is an important finding. While any camp or competition may focus primarily on outcomes, it is essential to consider the experience of participation and to design and plan the format accordingly.

Proponents are Essential

A project without a committed proponent is just an idea. Any open innovation activity must engage or generate proponents for the ideas it surfaces if there is any intention to move to action. This can be achieved by identifying the proponent in advance (an organization or individual who seeks to address a challenge) or by incentivizing participants to follow through with the ideas they develop.

Incentives must be Commensurate with Costs of Participation

What are you asking participants to contribute? What are they getting in return? Ensure that the incentives or rewards for participation are commensurate with the investment that participants make in the process.

Follow-up is Vital

It is far too easy to put all of your resources and attention to "the big show". This is the focal point of the work and the time where energy is at its peak. However, we have all been to events where the energy is stimulating and then suddenly dissipates as we leave the session. It is not enough to simply implore participants to carry on with the work; a focus on actionable outcomes will require some consideration to and support for the processes that facilitate the transition from idea to action.

OPTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Decision-Points

The Summary of Learnings provides a strong starting point for moving forward with the Climate Camp initiative. However, there are several key decisions that must first be made. The reality is that Climate Camp can take on a dozen different directions; even our cursory review of camps and competitions demonstrate the extraordinary variety of models that have been created. Any successful initiative must be grounded in clear objectives. In this section, we surface several key variables that merit discussion and which, when decided, will lead toward a grounded and viable strategy for advancing Climate Camp.

The goal here is not to identify the "right" place on the spectrum for each variable, but rather to provoke thinking about the possible options and to lead toward a fruitful and conclusive decision. Of course, these decisions are not made in the abstract, nor can they be decided in isolation from one and other - each option has real bearing on the resources required and on the other variables.

1. Outcomes

What is the objective of Climate Camp? A clear answer to this question will inform where the program falls on these key scales.

Idea ~ Action

A focus on generating new ideas invites a wide number of participants and allows for creative facilitation techniques and hosting options. Successful brainstorming and engagement can produce a high number of feasible ideas to address climate change.

In order to test feasibility and to ensure the sustainability of the ideas conceived, some form of action will be necessary. Whether it is prototyping of new solutions or incorporation of new organizations, an emphasis on action will more likely lead to a reduction in CO2 emissions. However, an emphasis on action over ideas will require heavier investment and planning, and will most certainly require additional follow-up or support.

Experience ~ Output

Is Climate Camp about the experience of participating or the actual outputs that are generated? A focus on experience allows us to ensure that a wide number of citizens feel engaged in the conversation and have the opportunity to learn about the issues facing our city.

However, an approach that privileges experience over outputs can result in almost no impact beyond the goals of learning and engagement, and may not produce any outcomes of significant value.

2. Geography

As noted above, Toronto's geography has substantial implications for its character. Some decision needs to be made about the geographic scope of the project.

City-Wide ~ Neighbourhood Specific

A city-wide initiative has the benefit of truly serving Toronto and presents the opportunity to engage a wide swath of the population while pursuing more systemic change.

A neighbourhood-specific focus is less costly and allows Climate Camp to go deeper into the particular context of a given community, and to potentially have more profound effects. A more narrow geographic focus is also more manageable and can engage a higher proportion of the population.

Urban ~ Suburban

A project that focuses on or is held in the downtown core may attract a more willing audience with deeper familiarity and engagement with climate change issues.

However, a focus on urban populations will naturally exclude people living in the suburbs, even if this is not intended. It also threatens to perpetuate a situation in which those living in the inner suburbs are excluded from key conversations regarding social and environmental change.

3. Integration

Climate Camp does not exist in isolation; it is part of the fabric of a city in which multiple environmental projects are underway. A decision must be made about the degree to which Climate Camp is its own distinct initiative.

Integrated ~ Distinct

An integrated event could play off of the efforts and successes of initiatives such as Climate Spark or Project Neutral. By dovetailing Climate Camp with these activities, we leverage existing investments and create the potential of a more cohesive and coordinated environmental change platform.

A distinct program would allow us to create something truly unique that serves the express purposes of the LiveGreen Toronto program, without weighing us down in the added process and potentially added expense of trying to collaborate with other parties who have their own agendas.

4. Technology

Many camps and competitions use the internet at one stage or another; some rely exclusively on technology-mediated communication.

Web-Based ~ In-Person

An exclusively web-based Climate Camp presents a very different program than one that is exclusively physical or inter-personal. The likeliest scenario is some kind of balance between the two. An emphasis on web-based technologies allows for broad reach in promotion and engagement, and presents the best options for crowd-sourcing ideas and evaluating projects.

Web-based tools, however, can be expensive and inherently influence the participating audience; projects that rely on technology require technical literacy and often skew toward younger, English-speaking populations.

5. Innovation

Camps and competitions are often assumed to be intertwined with innovation. Most such programs or events are intended to surface new and creative solutions to social challenges.

Invent ~ Replicate

It therefore seems quite natural for Climate Camp to focus on invention - the creation of entirely new projects or strategies intended to address climate change. A focus on innovation may draw attention to Climate Camp, motivate participants, and produce break-through ideas for reducing CO2 emissions in communities across the city.

That said, the focus on innovation is sometimes misplaced. If our starting point is to address the causes and implications of climate change, it may make more sense to adapt and adopt best practices that are already known to be making a significant impact in the fight against climate change.

6. Participants

Just as we need to make decisions concerning the objectives of Climate Camp, we must make decisions about who will be engaged in the Climate Camp process. Is Climate Camp an initiative for the City of Toronto, or is it a program that focuses on a specific subset of people?

Broad ~ Targeted

A broadly focussed initiative has the greatest potential to engage a demographically diverse audience and to invite "everyday" citizens to be part of the solution to climate change. Casting a wide net allows the program to be seen as supporting and engaging the entire city and will avoid accusations of preferential focus or treatment.

A broad approach, however, can create difficulties. A lack of commonality can make it challenging to appropriately and effectively engage participants. Moreover, a focus on specific people - for example so-called "bright sparks" or subject matter experts - arguably opens a greater possibility of generating innovative and sustainable projects.

7. Duration

Because we speak of Climate Camp in the singular, there is a tacit assumption that we are speaking about a single activity. But the examples identified above demonstrate the different formats that can be adopted, and almost universally speak to the importance of preceding or follow-up work.

Single-Event ~ Multiple Events

A single event is more cost-efficient and manageable, allowing the organizers to focus their energy and promotion on one major activity. It avoids the potential drain of energy (from both the participant and organizer side) or the potentially heightened expectations that come from multiple events.

Despite their extra effort, multiple events could be employed to great effect. Hosting multiple events allows us to deal with other challenges such as geographic or participant focus by creating multiple options for engagement. Hosting multiple events also allows us to evaluate and recalibrate the model as we go.

Self-Contained ~ Continuum

Separate from the issue of whether there is a single Climate Camp or multiple Climate Camps is the issue of whether the project is self-contained or whether it is part of a continuum of supports. A self-contained event would be a single day (or several consecutive days) in which all of the Climate Cap activities take place. This is the easiest and most straightforward model to plan and execute.

Approaching Climate Camp as a continuum of events or interventions would likely produce greater results. For example, a series of meet-ups or leading events could generate awareness and enthusiasm for the project. A staged approach also creates the possibility of engaging participants along a continuum; for example, a series of initial events could attempt to surface new ideas in local communities, and could lead to a larger gathering of participants - potentially proponents and subject matter experts - to come together to grow these emerging ideas into viable projects.

Importantly, whichever approach is adopted, some consideration to follow-up support will be necessary if the sustainability or longevity of an idea is a priority.

CONCLUSION

The last few years have seen an explosion in open innovation frameworks and methods. Within the social innovation sector, competitions and camps have emerged as a particularly interesting tool to generate new ideas, prototypes and enterprises to address a wide array of social challenges.

This report has offered a brief review of several case studies and has drawn from this review some key trends and lessons learned. Its purpose has been to set us further along the path toward the design and implementation of Climate Camp, an open innovation project intended to help Toronto address the threats of climate change. Conceived within the larger LiveGreen Toronto project, Climate Camp can serve as a flashpoint for community engagement in, and awareness of, the need for environmental protection.