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WASAN ISLAND

Global Networks

*Strategies and learning
with peers*

„Today, the notion of the network is one of the most used – and overused – terms in any context: the popular press, government policies, corporate strategies, blogs, tweets, and every-day conversation. Many social phenomena can be usefully thought of in terms of a network—from families to social communities to the Internet—with the latter at least partly responsible for the dramatic growth in interest in networks. ‘Network’ seems to play the same role in the social, economic, and political discourse of the twenty-first century that the concept of ‘machine’ did in the twentieth: it is a fundamental organizational metaphor for our times. (...)

The key is not to see the conflict system as a problem to be solved, or to attempt to impose change on it, but instead to map, observe, and listen to the system to identify the spaces where change is already happening and try to encourage and nurture them.”

– Ben Ramalingam¹

“Serendipitous networking is essential because, in the real world, it is impossible for a central agent to do everything. No agent can possibly have enough information and time to broker all the potentially useful connections in a Rainforest. For example, leaders frequently promote institutional collaborations, such as between scientific and business entities, but they rarely work as promised.”

– Victor W.Hwang, Greg Horowitz²

¹ Aid on the Edge of Chaos, Ben Ramalingam, 2013, Oxford

² The Rainforest: the Secret to Building the Next Silicon Valley, Victor W.Hwang, Greg Horowitz, Regenwald, 2012, Los Altos Hills

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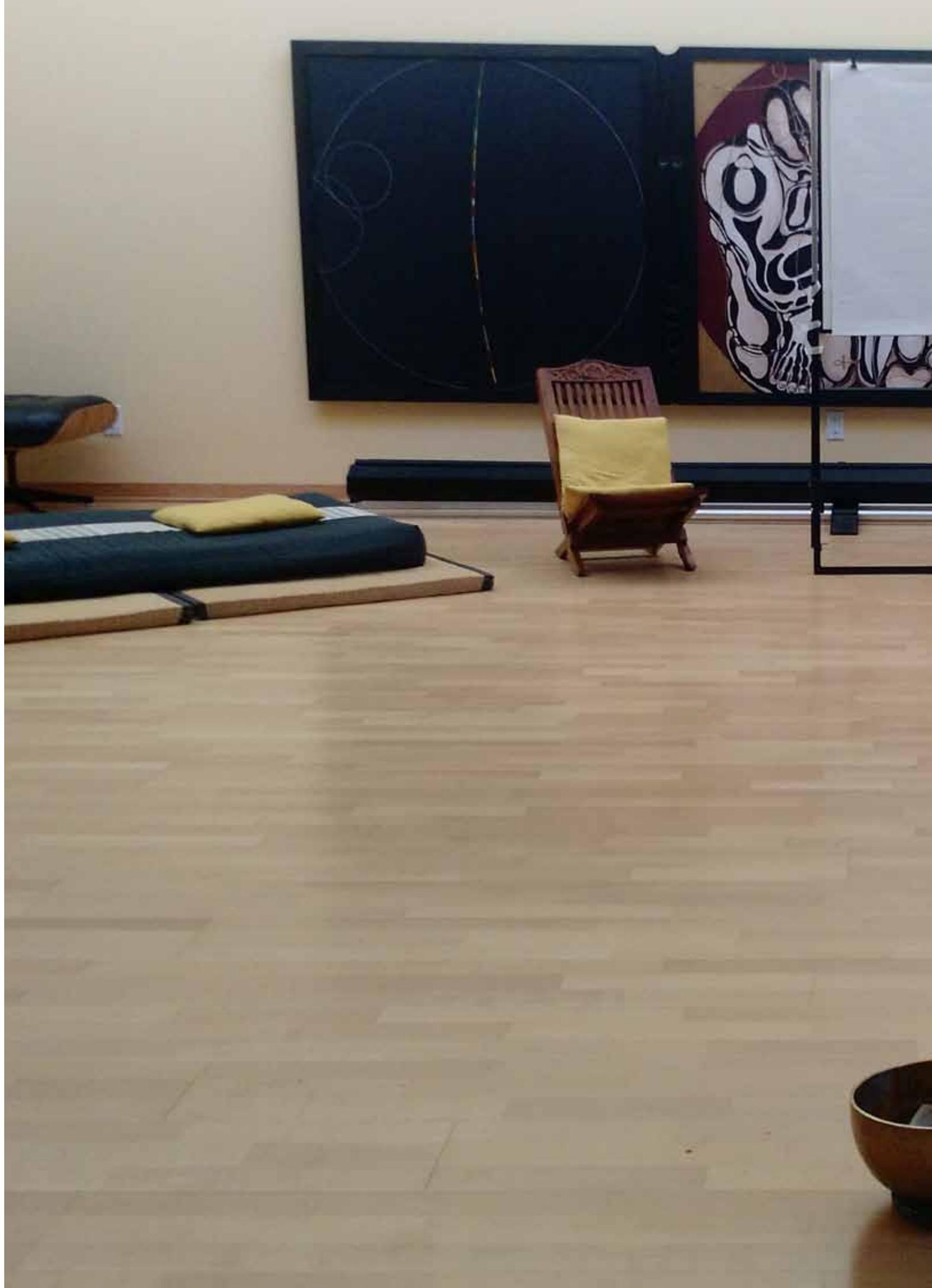
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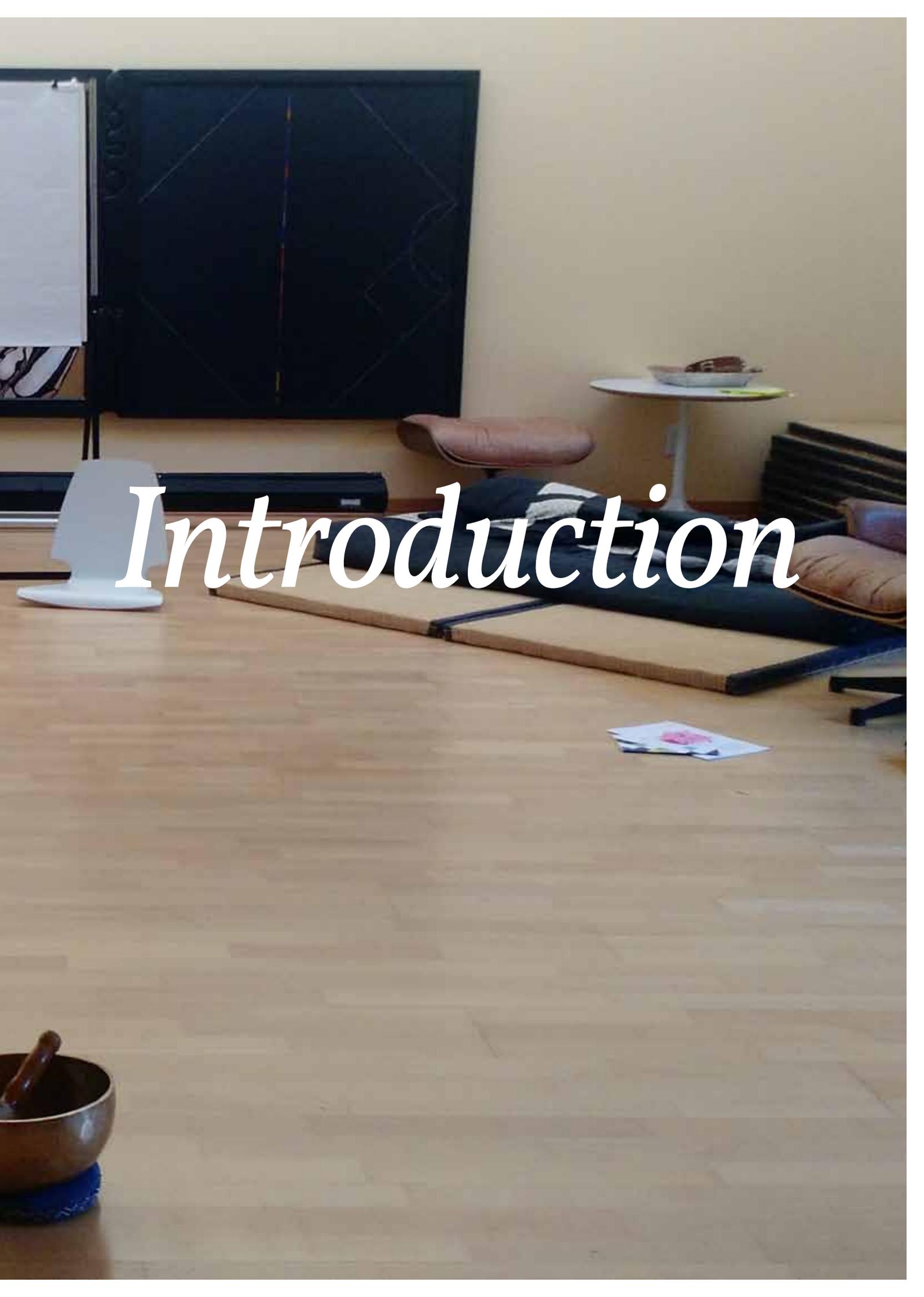
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Introduction

Global Networks

Networks are a powerful and growing vector for social change. Considering the complex nature of today's global challenges, solutions need to be reactive to an ever-evolving landscape of players and circumstances. Networks are a fitting way to approach this complex challenge and if well-managed, networks help us share and use knowledge across sectors and geographical boundaries.

Nevertheless, networks can also inadvertently become echo chambers that reproduce societal silos of like-minded people and mindsets, insulated from important challenges to their thinking and knowledge. Like many positive change phenomena, they have a “shadow side” that needs to be anticipated, understood and mitigated.

When talking about generative networks, we have in mind networks that contribute to a positive social change. Without diving too deep into network theory, here are some loose guidelines we stood by.

Impactful (or generative) networks are

- future oriented, solutions focused and have a long-term outlook,
- align the efforts of individuals and institutions to increase impact and strive for system change,
- reinforce the participants' motivations to be active contributors,
- enable ongoing communication and learning to deepen insight and knowledge,
- are cognizant of the emergent character of the knowledge required to achieve their system-level goals,
- reflect the values of openness and transparency, reciprocity and sharing,
- manage a creative tension between distributed power and insightful servant leadership offered by their support platforms and
- are ethically grounded in support of enhancing public goods.

The following reflections in this report are contributions to and results of the Wasan retreat on Global Networks in August 2017 and are centered around three areas of questions and insights:

1. WHAT INFRASTRUCTURE CAN SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENERATIVE NETWORKS?

What kind of social infrastructure underlies generative networks, and how technology can help support these relationships. How can effective networks be built and maintained?

Inspired by Charles Landry and his positive (utopian?) perspective on the ‘Civic City’ where togetherness in difference meet and mix well, we discussed the macro level changes and the climate of ideas in our increasingly nomadic world. Yes, there are emerging conditions in this time of crumbling certainties supporting the foundation of networked and collaborative approaches.

For networks to be impactful and generative, they must be designed and curated with a high level of intention. Meanwhile, it is important to be aware of power dynamics so that each player can fully participate unhindered. If networks are overly hierarchical, they become slower moving, and more vulnerable to the loss of a few key players. For networks to be resilient, they must be deeply connected so that their success does not rely on any one person or organization. A flatter hierarchy enables networks to be “anti-fragile”, as an attendee put it.

A key element of this social infrastructure that was discussed is the importance of a common focal point (or focus) for the network's work, like the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Common goals and objectives allows a network to develop a common goal and language, and can act as a barometer against which to assess success.

Even if such a clear goal is not present, networks can still enable a dynamic process of alignment between key players.

2. HOW CAN ORGANIZATIONS DEVELOP A NETWORKED WAY OF THINKING?

Are there characteristics that distinguish a networked approach from the way we are used to lead organizations? What does adopting a networked mindset mean for the way our organizations are led and structured?

During the retreat, Helen Yung prompted us with her question "What can networks learn from polyamory?", provoking a deep discussion on loyalty and our readiness to transformation.

Our conversation concluded that porous organizations seem to be more innovative than that siloed and insulated ones. As an example for the openness of an organization towards other systems we discussed the concept of a secondary operating system, that infuses the main entity with a renewed innovation capacity. This topic is explored in more depth in "Partnerships Spur Innovation Capacity: Secondary Operating Systems as Innovation Catalyst", a piece kindly contributed by Tim Draimin.

What is called for in today's highly uncertain conditions is an approach to strategy that starts by redefining the outcome of strategy as an ongoing process, rather than an inflexible strategic plan. Thomas Vellacott's reflection on how to strategize eco-systems was the starting point for our discussion on strategies for networks.

We've also included another first-hand account of how a partnership has had generative qualities on the work of two organizations. Gabriela Gandel and Thomas Vellacott wrote a piece about the effect that the World Wildlife Fund and Impact Hub Network partnership has had on both organizations.

3. HOW CAN LEARNING SYSTEMS AND LEADERSHIP SUPPORT NETWORKS CONSTANTLY EVOLVE AND CREATE IMPACT?

In order for networks to be impactful, knowledge needs to be mobilized within and for the change makers who are a part of them. We need to create the supporting infrastructure – a learning system – that becomes the connective tissue between the current and emerging practices of networks – supporting citizens to be agents for positive social change. Anna Birney records our conversations in this thread, creating a concept and proposal to take forward.

We discussed leadership in networks as a combination of ingredients – a set of attributes of the whole system. Leadership facilitates visioning and becomes part of a shared vision, rather than being the vision, or owning the vision. It requires actively listening, empathy and the willingness to shift focus when appropriate. It is responsive, flexible and adaptive in the face of the speed of change. Leadership trusts and knows that effectively working together and achieving shared impact moves only at the speed of trust, as Katherine Watson writes in "Leadership in spaces of intersection".

This report is an invitation to learn about the Global Network Retreat, and to join the community of individuals adopting networked thinking as a lens for social change.

Enjoy!



About Wasan Island

Wasan Island is located on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe peoples, who have been there for millennia. Prior to settlement, the Muskokas were rich hunting grounds that supported many families and communities throughout the year. Today, several First Nations live close to Wasan Island, including the Rama, the Wahta and the Wasauksing.

Today, Wasan Island is a magical retreat centre that lends itself to deep, reflective thinking. The retreat center was founded by the Breuninger Foundation. The foundation operates the island in partnership with the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the BMW Foundation, Community Foundations of Canada, and the McConnell Foundation. At this retreat, we were grateful to have representatives of each of the five partner foundations present at once: a first!

Meetings on the island happen amidst a soundscape of quiet waves, chirping pileated woodpeckers and the sound of crackling leaves. Wonderful smells permeate as the devoted team cooks up the evening meal.

It is the perfect place to take a step back and reflect on our work in a deeper, slower way.



About Us

In August 2017, 22 practitioners, funders, academics and artists from nine countries gathered at Wasan Island in Canada to reflect on how networks can strengthen their positive social impact, their resilience and adaptability to respond to global challenges.

The idea to this retreat was born in February 2017 during an annual meeting of the partners of the “Wasan Places” invited by Helga Breuninger Foundation to Paretz (Germany). We identified the topics of “Network of Networks” and “Impactful Networks” as relevant for all us.

- McConnell Foundation partnered with others to create the 10-year network experiment of SiG (2007-2017) to foster a Canadian ecosystem for system change,
- Community Foundations of Canada entered a new stage in development of the network of nearly 200 members in Canada,
- the growing Impact Hub Network now consists of 95 Impact Hubs with 16,000 members,
- Breuninger Stiftung supports the exchange of placemakers and a global network of “Wasan Places”,
- BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt coordinates a global Responsible Leaders Network, and
- Robert Bosch Stiftung in 2017 founded the International Alumni Center, a Thing- and Do-Tank for alumni communities with social impact.

We decided to start a coordinated exchange on generative networks and to invite colleagues from North America and Europe to a retreat in summer 2017 on Wasan Island.

Design of the Retreat

A networked approach was a guiding principle in the design and process of the retreat, as well as it being the focus of the retreat.

In practice, there are several ways to design using a network approach. We played with power dynamics, developing a non-hierarchical atmosphere in which there were no experts: everyone felt comfortable sharing and engaging honestly. The facilitation was shared, fluid and flexible. Facilitators were not there to direct or lead. We used nature and the magic of the island to support the deep discussions and working sessions – participants could be found on walks in pairs, or sitting a dock, flip chart paper flapping in the wind. We believe this connection with nature helped deepen relationships.

The retreat was designed around the questions participants arrived with, not around a predetermined, fixed agenda. The process supported the retreat's purpose - for participants to learn from together and to develop strategies. Taking a network approach in the design enabled us to create an environment where anything could be shared and said.

'A detour through relationships is the fastest way to success.' (Helga Breuninger)

The Connecting Global Networks Retreat was rich in insights and observations. Some of those insights centered around the organization of the retreat itself. Attendees appreciated the opportunity to slow down and reflect in the setting of Wasan Island. In fact, a resounding theme was the importance of building places of belonging and connection, like the Breuninger Foundation has done at Wasan Island in Canada or at Paretz in Germany.

Attendees also appreciated the diversity of attendees from different countries and the range of academics, practitioners, and an artist. We were lucky to have the presence of Helen Yung who was tasked with bringing an artistic practice and reflections to the space. Her presence encouraged others to think differently, unlocking further potential for creative thinking.



Why Networks?

At the retreat, we had a conversation about why networks are important. Anna Birney kindly reflected the collective wisdom in the following piece:

Love, human touch, joy
Trust, social capital, kinship, roots
Relationships, people, communication
Value exchange, transaction, value added
Experience, encounter, time, orchestration
Potential, serendipity, miracle, doors, opportunity
Shared intent, shared problems, putting a question
into the relationship
Adaptability, flow, strong and weak, looseness, energy
Potential to reconfigure, restructure and shift to a
new system

By Anna Birney





Reflections

CHARLES LANDRY

The Civic City

We live in awkward times. The world is turning to its darker face. The zeitgeist is one of rising anxiety. The grey zone disappears. Deep fractures are emerging within our world. Our social and our tribal nature and our ingroup and outgroup instincts are in tension as our world continues to shrink and our cities become more mixed, more nomadic and more diverse.



We are in the midst of redesigning the world and all its systems – legal, moral and political as well as the economy and our infrastructures for a digital age. The crucial question is: ‘will the public interest be put centre-stage’.

Our built environment has been designed for how we lived and worked 50 years ago and more. A reverse engineering process is necessary to adapt to

the digital age as well as to create new infrastructures that live within its hard-engineered fabric.

Place matters as never before in spite of our increased virtual interactions as people need physical place to anchor themselves in. The public realm rises dramatically in importance and as working patterns change gathering places and especially third spaces have renewed relevance.

The volume, velocity and variety of instantly available data streams combined the 'anytime, anyplace, anywhere' phenomenon changes how we interact with space, place and time.

Digitization represents a tectonic shift providing computing with an immense force. Its devices are changing society and social life, culture, levels of connectivity, the economy as well as cities. These devices are both liberating and potentially invasive.

The impacts and influence of the digital age are vastly stronger than some tinkering on top of business as usual. They will be as powerful as the climactic changes that swept through our world with the industrial revolution 200 years ago.

Old certainties are crumbling and systems are breaking at escalating speed. Apprehension is in the air as we seek to invent a different kind of city. Periods of history involving mass transformation can produce confusion: a sense of liberation combined with a feeling of being swept along by events. It takes a while for new ethical stances to take root or to establish a coherent worldview that makes the most of our increasingly nomadic world.

Taking an eagle eye view of change-making projects across the world you detect an eager longing. It is bursting out for this 'Other City' where the dictates of finance are curtailed; one that resolutely, yet with imagination and verve, addresses the faultlines and dilemmas of urban change and seeks to *bend the market to a bigger picture and more ethical purposes*.

This is a city that: contains the ever-widening gap between haves and have nots; that prefers to open out to the world rather than closing in; that sees the opportunities in problems so might lead the way in creating the 4th clean, lean, green industrial revolution; and that has the courage to deal with the creeping corruption and criminality that pervades so much of public life and erodes the civic fabric.

This is perhaps the Civic City where togetherness in difference meet and mix well. It tries to find a pathway through the major faultlines, dilemmas and potentials of our time – shared lives, inequality, environmental distress, urban vitality, the desire for involvement and engagement and most importantly, at a personal level, the longing for meaning and a sense of wholeness. So, this is a place where we reinvent anchorage, an urban commons, connection, possibility and inspiration.

"The people must come first. Where they do not, sooner or later, they will overthrow their governments. The technology that is fueling the transformation of the social and economic order within nations – from hierarchies to networks – gives the people more power to destabilize politics than ever before. Their governments also have more power than ever before, but borders and walls, whether physical or digital, cannot ultimately contain the power of a connected citizenry.

Open societies, open governments, and an open international system are risky propositions. But they are humankind's best hope for harnessing the power not only of states but also of businesses, universities, civic organizations, and citizens to address the planetary problems that now touch us all."

- Anne Marie Slaughter¹

¹ How to Succeed in the Networked World: A Grand Strategy for the Digital Age", Foreign Policy, November-December 2016

Networks and Polyamory

At the retreat someone asked me, “What is a secondary operating system?” I hesitated, then reached for a metaphor instead: “It’s like if you had a second home. Another household, with another partner, and so you got to run that household differently. Do things differently. And if what you learn in that home, in that relation, you might sometimes bring back to your other home.”

Polyamory is the practice of having many ‘romantic or sexual partners’. I suggest you think of it, literally, as the practice of having ‘many loves’. Author and Jungian analyst Robert Johnson writes,

“Sanskrit has 96 words for love; ancient Persian has 80, Greek three, and English only one. This is indicative of the poverty of awareness or emphasis that we give to that tremendously important realm of feeling.”

Humans love in many more ways than we can name. Polyamorous people love many – openly sharing their lives with more than one partner. Each love is distinct – a different relation, a different commitment, a different offering. As humans, we grow through relationships. Our experience of the world – mentally and physiologically – is changed when we are in contact with others – particularly when their systems are not like ours. We live larger through our relations.

Life is enriched by pluralism – “the energetic engagement with diversity.”

What do networks have to learn from polyamory? What does polyamory give us to consider about the network mindset?

Polyamory is different from dating, or promiscuity, because it is committed and transparent. The network mindset is different from ‘networking’ because there is commitment to playful discovery, to

mutuality, to collaboration. The emphasis is developmental, not transactional.

Polyamory calls attention to eros, passion, in our discussion of ‘networks’ and the ‘network mindset’. What motivates you? What drives you? Plato argues that eros helps the soul recall knowledge of beauty, and contributes to an understanding of higher truth.

Polyamory recalls, too, the corporeal, recalls the body to the conversation about capital, resource and information flows... The network transcends while simultaneously is animated, enlivened by the flesh. Networks pull, push, drag, elevate and dance around or with the humans they serve. How they serve is up to us.

Networks as polyamory is an exciting, provocative suggestion. The dizzying concept of freedom, the aura of counterculture cool, the pursuit of pleasure – all of it knit with responsibility, trust, shared values, and willingness to be vulnerable, to communicate, and to devise alternatives.

The network mindset is about untying some of our ideas about the ways things have to be. What if we allowed ourselves, our organizations, our teammates, more freedom to explore our roles? Beyond giving permission, what if we challenged each other to be more available to discover different ways of being?

It is said that no one person can fulfill all of our needs. We acknowledge that no one organization can,



on their own, solve any one of our social or environmental issues. The point, though, is not that we lack the ability to act alone – but about growth and possibility. The point is not about fear – but about the courage to offer more of you to the world, and to be open to receive more of the world's gifts. To be open to mutual joy. To be open to discovering that you have more inside you and that you can be offered more than you might have let yourself believe – more talent, more insight, more wisdom, more ability, more energy, more fulfillment. To be open to transformation. To be open to letting each connection develop you in delicate and immense ways.

Whatever your personal opinion of polyamory is – consider it a metaphor, a thought experiment – what kind of lover are you? Generous, inspired, hesitant, shy, searching, mysterious, queer, quixotic, cherished or imaginative? In a network, how do you bring your best self forward, and who is that?

Partnerships Spur Innovation Capacity: Secondary Operating Systems as Innovation Catalyst

“In the last century, the competency of an organization was measured in terms of its operational excellence... In the twenty-first century, it is going to be measured in terms of its innovation capacity.”

- Banny Banerjee & Stefano Ceri in *Creating Innovation Leaders*, 2016

Most organizations are not designed to be innovative. Compounding this, over time a natural tendency of institutions is to become more siloed and insulated from outside pressures, stimuli and disruptions. This socialization process mitigates against flourishing innovation capabilities. Good ideas, says Steven Johnson in his book *Where Good Ideas Come From*, “want to connect, fuse, recombine...to reinvent themselves by crossing conceptual borders... When one looks at innovation in nature and in culture, environments that build walls around good ideas tend to be less innovative in the long run than more open-ended environments.”¹

¹ Steven Johnson, *Where Good Ideas Come From*, Riverhead Books: 2010

In other words, we need porous organizations. “Organizations with porous boundaries,” explains the nonprofit consultancy Bridgespan, “have leaders and structures that encourage the free flow of ideas and information within the organization and between their organizations and the outside world. They actively fight against the intellectual insularity that often develops within teams, silos, and organizations.”²

The pace of change in the 21st century is making unrelenting demands on organizations to be able to change and adapt. If a leader is interested in intro-

² Laura Lanzerotti, Daniel Pike, and Nidhi Sahni with Amira Bliss, *The Bridgespan Group, Building the Capacity to Innovate: A Guide for Nonprofits*, 2017 (PDF)

ducing more innovative mindsets, approaches and change-producing processes, what are strategies he or she can pursue?

One option is to establish a “secondary operating system,” a strategy developed by Harvard’s John Kotter. While all organizations have a primordial focus on their primary goals and role, they can find a way to create a secondary, or dual, operating system that allows them to pursue new ideas in a context relieved of the pressures of the primary operating system.

“The solution,” writes John Kotter in *Harvard Business Review*³, “is a second operating system, devoted to the design and implementation of strategy, that uses an agile, network-like structure and a very different set of processes. The new operating system continually assesses the business, the industry, and the organization, and reacts with greater agility, speed, and creativity than the existing one. It complements rather than overburdens the traditional hierarchy, thus freeing the latter to do what it’s optimized to do.”

Kotter has developed a set of principles to empower a secondary operating system approach including: creating urgency around a big opportunity, establishing a volunteer team of passionate people capable of overcoming institutional barriers by tapping into many change agents, giving them real permission to innovate and lead, identifying and removing barriers to change, and ensuring the organization sustains two systems maintaining a dynamic flow of information and activity between them.

Stephen Huddart, President and CEO of the McConnell Foundation, developed a variant of Kotter’s secondary operating system. As he explained at the 2017 SIX Funders’ Node, he used McConnell’s active participation in the Social Innovation Generation (SiG) partnership (2007-2017) as the foundation’s complementary system and source of new ideas.

SiG’s partners (which besides McConnell included a university, an innovation convergence hub, and an innovative nonprofit) explored and experimented in depth with many new ideas including: social finance and mission-related investing, social



innovation labs, social innovation education and acceleration programming. Through its involvement in these SiG activities, McConnell was exposed to many new ideas and connected with practitioners leading proven innovations. SiG became a gateway through which new ideas and new relationships enriched and empowered internal McConnell changemakers and shifted culture.

In turn this led to new experiments being pursued directly by the foundation’s staff. They covered grantmaking, capacity building, program research and program prototyping. SiG became a type of on-demand resource that provided not just a wealth of ideas but more direct access to personal advice and coaching for McConnell initiatives and change processes.

The result? Today McConnell is recognized as one of Canada’s leading practitioners of social innovation through grantmaking, capacity building, policy advocacy, multi-stakeholder initiatives (on topics as diverse as climate change, mental health, food security, etc), and open-sourcing its experiences new policies and procedures with its peers.

“The inevitable failures of single operating systems hurt us now,” says John Kotter. “They are going to kill us in the future. The 21st century will force us all to evolve toward a fundamentally new form of organization...” Secondary operating systems are a valuable means for social purpose organizations – as well as businesses – to make these transitions.

3 John Kotter, “Accelerate! How the most innovative companies capitalize on today’s rapid-fire strategic challenges—and still make their numbers,” *Harvard Business Review*, November 2012

Ecosystem strategising

1. THE CHALLENGE TO CLASSICAL BUSINESS STRATEGY

Classical approaches to business strategy, as practised in many companies and non-profit organisations today, commonly have as their outcome a strategic plan. In the process of formulating such a plan, management analyses an organisation's surroundings, its position and its specific competencies. Management then formulates an intended response, based on this analysis, often in the shape of a plan that includes a long-term vision, multi-year objectives and a more or less detailed plan of activities, by which to achieve the set objectives. Performance indicators are defined, either activity-based (milestones), performance-based (e.g. EBIT) or defined relative to competitors (e.g. market share, brand perception) – or a mix of the three.

Strategic plans are often based on four assumptions

- The medium-term future is broadly knowable
- Industry structure and political conditions are stable or change in a predictable fashion
- Industry dynamics are primarily competitive
- Strategy formulation and implementation are distinct phases
- Cascading objectives down the organisation enable each employee to make their contribution to the overall strategy

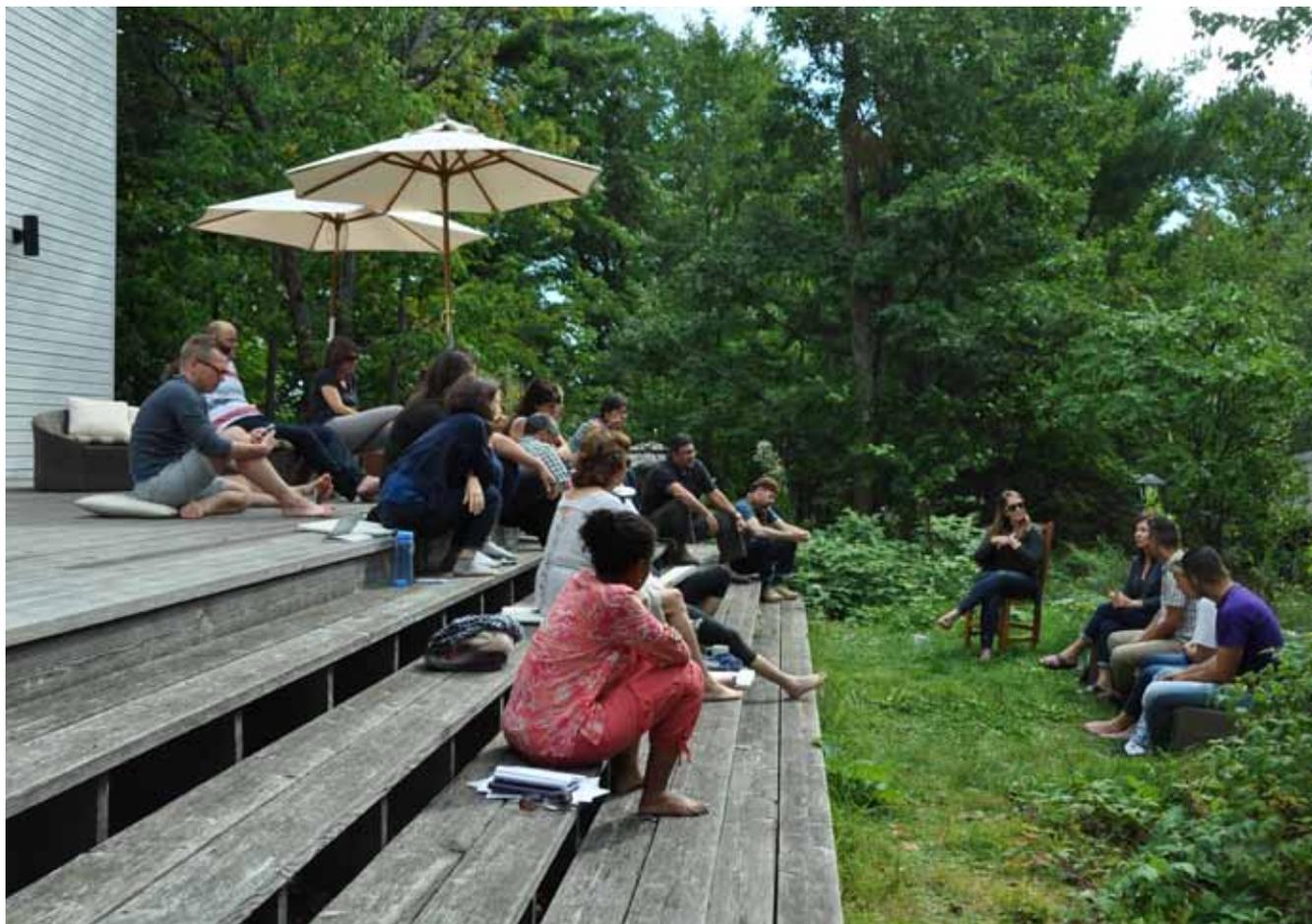
In many industries today, these assumptions no longer hold. Industry certainties are being fundamentally challenged, such as the energy sector being disrupted by rapidly sinking costs of electricity from solar and wind. Companies' average lifespans have shortened dramatically and new competitors come to dominate markets almost overnight. Political parties that once dominated national politics are being eclipsed by newcomers.

The value of a three-year strategic plan diminishes quickly in times of high uncertainty. However, despite fundamental changes in their surroundings, many organisations cling to the classical approach to strategy and continue to produce multi-year strategic plans. Their response to greater uncertainty and faster change is to increase the frequency with which strategic plans are reviewed and adapted, but neither the rigid approach nor the underlying assumptions are questioned. Too often, this results in a vicious circle, where the increased frequency of strategic planning overwhelms an organisation, which in turn leads to superficial analysis (SWOT analysis, anyone?), necessitating ever more frequent review and adaptation.

2. ECOSYSTEM STRATEGISING

What is called for in today's highly uncertain conditions is an approach to strategy that starts by redefining the outcome of strategy: The outcome is not a product, the strategic plan, but rather an ongoing process, a set of conversations. Strategising, in this sense, ceases to be a distinct phase that is repeated at regular intervals, but rather becomes an ongoing reflection, inseparably intertwined with implementation. This allows new people joining the organisation to become part of the strategising conversations from day one. They are not asked to simply accept the strategy their elders wrote, but become part of an ongoing process of challenging and fine-tuning the direction of the organisation. 'A set of conversations' may sound vague, and to avoid a lack of precision, the current stage of each of these conversations should be regularly summarised, in order to provide a succinct articulation for anyone joining the conversation, seeking a quick overview or needing to communicate it.

Such an approach to strategising focuses on creating platforms for conversations around



three themes: Impact, ecosystem and experiments. Ideally, these conversations will involve both an organisation's staff as well as outsiders. A platform for conversations shared among different actors within an ecosystem allows them to calibrate and align their views of impact, ecosystem and experiments.

2.1. IMPACT

Non-profit organisations, by definition, aim to achieve societal impacts. More recently, a growing number of for-profit companies also aim to contribute to broader societal goals. When formulating their impact contribution, both non-profit and for-profit organisations risk falling into one of two traps: To make unhelpfully vague statements of intent ('We aim to give back to the communities where we operate') or to get bogged down in arguments over attribution ('That's my impact, not yours.')

Instead, organisations should create platforms for an open and ongoing dialogue about impact by discussing metrics and sharing stories.

2.1.1. METRICS

The dialogue about metrics usefully focuses on three levels.

The natural place to start is to ask whether positive or negative change is occurring at the macro level: Are poverty rates rising or declining? Are we on track to limit climate change to less than 2°C? Are species numbers going up or down? Does the picture differ depending on region? What explains the trends? Note that this is not about what 'we' as an organisation are achieving, but whether 'we' as in all the actors together are making a difference: Are we collectively bending the curves? Since the world's governments agreed on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, there is a shared set of goals and indicators which can help understand changes at the macro level. By referencing the SDGs, organisations can link their own dialogue about impact into the broader conversation about progress against the SDGs.

The second level focuses on the contributions that an individual organisation is making to collec-

tive impact. This is not the tired discussion of who should rightfully be allowed to claim certain impacts. Instead, the dialogue at this level asks different stakeholders in what way and to what effect one's organisation contributed to collective impact. The aim is not to out-compete each other, but to better understand how the ecosystem of actors functions, who contributes what, how effective a role one's own organisation plays and what we can learn to further enhance the ecosystem's collective impact. A word on competition: Often competition in the commercial arena coexists with cooperation on impact. Two retailers may be bitter adversaries when it comes to growing market share and margins, but happily work together on greening their supply chain, thereby increasing their collective impact.

The third level of dialogue discusses an individual organisation's health. Just as a single organisation may be healthy but fail to have impact because the larger ecosystem is weak, so for an ecosystem to thrive, it depends on its constituent organisations being in good health. 'Health' includes financial resilience (not limited to short term financial performance) as well as measures such as access to talent and employee satisfaction.

The dialogue about metrics at the levels of impact, ecosystem and organisation will include both a discussion of what the right metrics are and, more importantly, what their readings mean and what hypotheses might explain emerging trends.

2.1.2. STORIES

A dialogue about metrics is important, but, on its own, insufficient. It needs to be supplemented by stories to provide context, interpretation and inspiration.

Stories make impact come alive and link the three levels of metrics (e.g. illustrating how organisational health enabled an organisation to contribute to the impact of the broader ecosystem). Different stories about what the desired future looks like help illustrate impact metrics and calibrate different visions. The aim is not to come up with one sanitised 'corporate vision' for the entire organisation or coalition of organisations, but rather to inspire and build on each other's vision. Stories about past successes help different actors understand how the ecosystem functions, define what success looks like and provide motivation for current struggles. Stories of failures, possibly the most valuable of all, help identify and share learnings.

2.2 ECOSYSTEM

The second platform for conversation revolves around the question of what role one's organisation should play to enhance the impact of the broader ecosystem. This builds on the learnings from the second level of the metrics dialogue described above, but goes beyond understanding the organisation's current role to defining the future role and what competencies, partnerships and values are necessary to successfully play this role.

Roles vary. Beyond the obvious description of an organisation's geographical or thematic focal areas, it's worth considering the level of intervention – do we tackle an issue directly or work on the underlying drivers and root causes – and whether the organisation is focused on implementation or on enabling others to implement. Organisations are rarely one or the other. Instead, roles vary from one area to the next. Also, some degree of direct implementation experience may be necessary to be a good enabler/orchestrator of others. Still, the skill set for working on species loss in the field is very different from what's required to influence the financial flows causing species loss, although the ultimate objective may be identical. Roles evolve over time, often starting with a strong focus on an immediate level of intervention and on direct implementation. As the organisation grows more experienced, this role may shift to addressing underlying root causes and working through others, in order to effect change at greater scale.

There is no right or wrong role for an organisation, but there can be a mismatch between the role aspired to and the competencies brought to the table: We might be running a highly effective community-based poverty reduction scheme. If we decide that subsidies and trade regimes are an important root cause driving poverty, we need to first acquire a very different skill set if we want to effectively intervene at this very different level. Acquiring the necessary skills can be done within the organisation or through strategic partnerships, the latter often being faster. In such a partnership, two or more organisations with complimentary skills team up to work on shared objectives, each bringing their very specific strengths to the table. The partnerships an organisation chooses to enter into should be the result of the role it defines for itself and the skills this requires. It necessitates an honest assessment of the competen-

cies required and where these can be found, in and outside the organisation.

Finally, the role an organisation chooses to play requires not just a specific skill set, but also a set of values that correspond to the role envisaged. For example, an orchestrator role requires that relationships and alliance building are highly valued. It also means an organisation needs to have the humility required to be content working behind the scenes, leaving the spotlight to others.

2.3 EXPERIMENTS

When surroundings change rapidly and unpredictably, detailed planning loses much of its value. At the same time, experimentation gains in importance. Experiments allow an organisation to take risks, make mistakes and learn – all while limiting the downside risk in case things go wrong.

Experimentation is not the same as aimless wandering. It involves a rigorous process of assembling teams, designing prototypes, testing different options, seeking early feedback, collecting data and rapidly adapting one's approach based on stakeholders' reactions.

Experiments can take place at different scales, from one-person efforts to multi-locational initiatives, lasting anything from a few weeks to several months.

Distinguishing between experiments on the one hand and the projects and activities common in more classical approaches to strategy on the other may seem like mere semantics. The difference, however, is considerable. In a planning-based approach, management fixes objectives and defines multi-staged activities, believed to lead to achieving these objectives. Experimentation based strategising tests a hypothesis, but assumes a number of possible outcomes, the further direction being entirely dependent on the learnings from the experiment. Successfully running experiments and building and managing a portfolio of experiments, requires a specific set of skills and values, very different from the planning-based cultures of common to many established organisations.

Experimentation-based strategy involves assembling a portfolio of experiments, each testing a specific hypothesis. Conversations about the portfolio of experiments allow learnings to feed back into the conversations about impact and about the ecosystem, as described above. While experimentation

may (and should) take place at all levels and as part of any activity, enabling continuous improvement, the portfolio of experiments being managed by an organisation's leadership will make up only a small proportion of all activities. Leaders will pay disproportionate attention to these experiments. They will want to ensure rigour, sufficient resourcing and a strong focus on sharing learnings across individual experiments. If an experiment proves successful, leadership will want to scale it up, mainstreaming it and adapting its operations accordingly.

Replacing the classical strategic plan by dynamic conversations about impact, ecosystem and experiments enables organisations to quickly adapt to changing circumstances, speed up learning and thrive both as individual organisations as well as in their role as participants in broader ecosystems.

World Wildlife Fund and Impact Hub: A Case Study

The partnership between Impact Hub (IH) and WWF builds on 6 years of collaboration foremost between WWF Switzerland and IH Zurich – with a focus on the incubation of environmental solutions – or WWF Switzerland and IH Global – which explored joint learning & prototyping activities around communities of practice and impact measurement. The new phase of the partnership aims to scale the joint programs and workshops, share learning across borders, onboard new offices to the partnership and build a deep strategic alliance in each country and across borders.

THE WWF'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE PARTNERSHIP

Innovation is essential for natural conservation to achieve transformational impact faster. Our goal of the partnership is to find, accelerate, and scale solutions to tackle the world's most pressing environmental challenges as well as create economic opportunity for local communities.

IMPACT HUB'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE PARTNERSHIP

Many of the social entrepreneurs supported by IHs address themes like energy, food, and oceans, some of WWF's key focus areas. Together we aim to convene innovators from our complementing networks, identify high potential solutions and provide these with access to WWF's expertise in natural conservation & scaling.

Three examples how the partnership shapes up in practice

- Sustainable Seafood Accelerator by IH Tokyo and WWF Japan: 4 months acceleration program which builds a support ecosystem around individuals who are implementing sustainable seafood practices by identifying champions across the value chain of seafood, training those through workshops and mentorship to scale their impact and showcase their work to the local community
- Innovate 4 Nature by IH Vienna and WWF Austria: 1 year program which starts with an awareness raising campaign, workshop throughout Austria and a challenge where individuals with solutions to food challenges (consumption, production, waste) can apply to win the participation in an incubation program.
- Climathon by WWF Regional Team in Africa and IH Kigali: 2 day event where 40 stakehol-



ders from diverse backgrounds learn about the environmental challenges of the city, do field trips to dive into the topics, develop collaborative solutions and create an action plan to take those forward

All three examples were done as a pilot with a smaller scale in 2016 and implemented again in 2017 using the learnings made to redesign and increase the scope of the programs.

OTHER PROGRAMS INCLUDE

Deforestation Challenge in Sao Paulo, Fellowship programs in Milan (plastic topic) and Manila (sustainable energy), Business Model Innovation in Zurich, Healthy Ocean Accelerator in Amsterdam.

ENABLERS AND BARRIERS OF DEEP STRATEGIC (VS. PROGRAM BASED) COLLABORATION

ENABLERS

- Shared vision and goals
- Complementary skill-sets and networks to build on each other
- Needs aligned to internal organisational strategies
- Champions on both sides who are first movers and showcase the potential
- Openness to pilot, experiment and learn from different approaches to collaboration
- Inspiring stories that build trust
- Eye level partnership and interest on both sides
- Sharing success factors & reasons for failures to ensure the advancement of concepts for programs and events
- Codification of collaboration formats (toolkits, blueprints, etc.) that can be reused (when adapted to local circumstances)

BARRIERS

- Understanding and synchronisation of organisational:
- Structure (NGO vs. Bottom Up Network with Hybrid Legal Forms)
- Process & timing
- Culture & mindset (conservation vs. entrepreneur)
- Unlocking sustainable funding for long term collaboration & innovation
- Who pays for programs/events?
- Who pays for coordination?
- Business model vs. fundraising story?
- Building personal relationships between partners beyond initiators
- Lack of trust
- Workload on top not embedded
- Partnership on eye-level



WHAT DO WE DO TO OVERCOME THE BARRIERS IN PRACTICE?

- I. Organisational understanding & synchronisation:
 - a. Designed workshops to support local IH and WWF teams to get to know each other, understand each other's values and create a mindset shift
 - b. Regular strategy & alignment sessions and engagement of each other in strategic development efforts (i.e. WWF Switzerland on Advisory Council of IH Global)
 - c. Visible website to promote the reasoning behind the partnership, key success stories and provide formats for collaboration that have proven their impact in local realities
2. Unlocking sustainable funding:
 - a. Initial coordination costs covered by WWF Switzerland. Currently, exploring different opportunities for co-fundraising within and outside own networks, which requires dedicated fundraising focus on both sides
 - b. Possible options for a business model format to be explored once activities expands
3. Building personal relationships:
 - a. On-boarding calls to share overarching picture of the partnership and ongoing support for the local teams while building the relationship
 - b. Hosted introductions by internal WWF and IH champions which help individuals to ease into the relationship vs. always start a new direct relationship

ABOUT IH

Impact Hubs make up a global network of people, places, and programs that inspire, connect and catalyze impact build on the believe that change requires collective action. Part innovation lab, part business incubator, and part community center, the 100+ Impact Hubs around the world offer 15000+ members around the world a unique ecosystem of resources, inspiration, and collaboration opportunities to grow impact.

ABOUT WWF

WWF is one of the world's largest conservation organisations with offices in more than 80 countries and 6,200 full-time employees. The organisation values the support of more than 5 million people and over the 50 years of its operation has followed the mission to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

Learning Ecosystems

In order for networks to be impactful, knowledge needs to be mobilised within and for the change makers who are a part of them.

We need to help them navigate their own learning – learn how to learn. We need to support the network members with the ability to intuit and act effectively for change. We need to connect people to the right resources, insights and support, removing the friction in talking to one another. We need to create the supporting infrastructure to achieve this. By learning together you can support individuals and networks constantly evolve and address the complexity in achieving their goals (aligning to the SDGs for example).

THE PARTS OF A LEARNING SYSTEM

A learning system becomes the connective tissue between the current and emerging practices of networks – supporting citizens be agents for change.

The five parts presented here are suggested as being elements of a learning system that might work with networks.

1. Open source platform collating resources for change
2. Gatherings of experienced practitioners – translating knowledge
3. Supporting community mobilisers provide learning experience for practitioners
4. Setting up a network of learning curators
5. Proving places to meet and convene

1. OPEN SOURCE PLATFORM COLLATING RESOURCES FOR CHANGE

A wiki is a website or database developed collaboratively by a community of users, allowing any user to add and edit content. Standing on the shoulders of giants – Such a platform would link together the

knowledge, tools, case studies, resources that already exist – on how to create change. It would also be able to be searchable by the domains and areas that have originated, for example the SDGs, geographical and sector contexts. Participants at Wasan Island are already bringing together and creating some of this content, including but not exclusively:

- Disruptive Imagining – cataloguing futures techniques
- Academy for Systems Change – developing content on systems change from their network
- ESADA Business school – Social Innovation Labs
- SIG/ SIX – social innovation knowledge hub
- Impact Hubs and methods of Art of Hosting

The School of System Change is already in the process of collating many of the tools, case studies and key practitioners in an interactive map of the Frameworks of the field (see below). We are also exploring how it can be a navigation guide for practitioners to help them design and implement their change work. This might form the beginning of such a self-organisation contribution platform.

However, knowledge accumulation is nothing without the living organism that surrounds and supports it. We need to create not just a database but support a learning system around it.

2. GATHERING OF EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS – TRANSLATING KNOWLEDGE

To help the emerging field see itself, the practitioners who have been developing experience in delivering change in these different areas need to be brought

together. This gathering would help contributors not only share their own knowledge but learn from each other. Knowledge and materials also need to be made more accessible and engaging to emerging practitioners, alongside these gathering communicators, editors, artists can be brought in to help translate the work into different channels.

3. SUPPORTING COMMUNITY MOBILISERS PROVIDE LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR PRACTITIONERS

Many networks have nodes with people whose role it is to specifically support their networks learning and knowledge. Examples include:

- Community foundation exchange in Canada
- Impact Hub hosts across the Globe
- Members of the SIX network
- Groups within the Bosch Alumni Network

These community mobilisers are usually local, connected into the needs of the practitioners and can play a role in supporting the networks learning and capacity. They often do not have all the resources they need to design learning programmes and pull together tools and knowledge for their network.

A system of support that can be adopted and adapted locally by these mobilisers needs to be co-developed and tested. Steps that would need to be taken include:

1. Identify the potential mobilisers who you can design a system with together, prototyping and refining the approach to supporting learning in their networks
2. Support mobilisers as a learning community
3. Codify and refine the approach – putting in place the backbone function enabling others to adopt.

The School of System Change have already started piloting a learning package – Basecamp – that can support practitioners navigate the field of practice and enable them to be learners. We are currently pulling together a Basecamp Design Toolkit which could be one of the ways to support the need of these mobilisers. We are also looking at the backbone operating and business model that might support these community mobilisers deliver such programmes and other learning experiences.

4. SETTING UP A NETWORK OF LEARNING CURATORS

A learning system will not be useful or a living entity without the intentional feedback loops that support learning. This system will set up networks of journalist, ethnographic researchers, learning curators who would help create stories of transformation, case studies and act as pollinating bees to feed and cross-pollinate within the platform. This can also support a developmental evaluation process, that can follow experiments and start to both demonstrate the value of taking these approaches as well as tracking and reporting on impact.

5. PROVIDING PLACES TO MEET AND CONVENE

Networks, as groups of people, need to meet and come together to share and learn. This usually happens in spaces and places. A network of places, such as Impact Hubs or other places where civil society might come together could be created to support the overall learning system.

A digital learning environment – that is self-organising and sits alongside the wiki might be created to support learners in and across different networks. A continual piece of work from this retreat is to explore what this learning environment might look like for different networks.

SUGGESTED POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

1. Find the funding and resources to continue to curate the open source platform – testing the need and format
2. Host the gathering of experienced practitioners in 2018
3. Find community mobilisers who are willing to test and trail the learning approach
4. Develop and prototype a learning curator approach
5. Explore how to create local and digital places for learning

Leadership in spaces of intersection; Are we ready?

The subtitle “Are we ready?” is explicitly a question to all of us, collectively – it is a provocation. I know that I cannot answer the question and I suspect – I hope – that my reflections will raise more questions in your minds. Asking powerful and challenging questions is fundamental to 21st century leadership. Leading and learning – and unlearning – are two sides of the same coin.

There is one definition and distinction that I would like to get out of the way at the outset – I am keen to talk to you about leadership – not leaders. Leadership is a capability, not a position. Leadership is a potent combination of ingredients and most importantly, leadership can come from anywhere – not exclusively “the top”. In fact we need much more leadership and the recognition of a full range of leadership attributes rather than exclusively searching and yearning for answers and direction from heroic “leaders”

The arc of my reflection begins with: What are some of the powerful influences that are shaping the world we live in? (What are the lines?) What energies do we need to harness in order to transition to a future that is equitable, sustainable and just for everyone? What spaces must we enter into – to colour and to be coloured by? And finally.... What is the nature of leadership that we need to unearth and nurture?

Certainly the digital shift has marked our recent past, our present and future – it was a phenomenal change for my generation but many of you – digital natives – have been born into it. In the wake of this shift, I would like to highlight four interrelated forces or influences: 1) Speed of change; 2) the increased scale of the global challenges with which we are

faced; 3) movement and mobility; and 4) the potential of connectivity and interdependence to address our challenges.

Marshall McLuhan notably said “Today each of us lives several hundred years in a decade.” Speed is a consideration in this thought but also an increasing understanding of multidimensionality (as opposed to linearity) – the conflating of time and space.

This speed of this change has impacted the way we think, interact, experience and consequently we need to think about how education should change, how our public engagement changes, how our systems should evolve, how we can better problem solve, build and share knowledge – in far different ways.

SCALE OF CHALLENGES

The scale of challenges we face cannot be addressed in singular ways and by the institutions that have grown over the past generations. Alliances and alignment for impact – collective impact – is crucial. We cannot unpick the entangled global environmental, economic, political, and cultural crises – through simple cause and effect analysis. Past solutions are out of sync and the speed at which everything moves is overwhelming.



Speed of change and scale of challenges means that we cannot expect to research, gather information, reflect and make a clear and fool-proof analysis in order to arrive at fully informed choices – which is certainly how we have been accustomed to working and most definitely how much policy has been developed. Please do not misinterpret this as my saying that the time for research and reflection is past – certainly not. However, we need to make closer connections to practice and lived experience and we may need to make the best informed choice at any given moment – to risk more. And we absolutely need to be more inclusive in the perspectives we bring to any given problem.

MOVEMENT AND MOBILITY

Hand-in-hand with speed and enabling technologies, everything in our world is in movement or impacted by movement – people, ideas, goods, information, communication, organisations, institutions. This movement, by consequence, brings change – change that is rife with opportunities and challenges. You and I are privileged in that we move by choice and the systems that we have built have fostered the inherent opportunities from which we benefit. At the

same time, global upheaval has resulted in unprecedented forced movement from peripheries to centres, from places of scarcity to places of abundance, from places of despair to places of hope.

Where tethered technology meant that one was interacting, engaging, learning from a fixed place – mobile means that the engagement goes back into the real world. We can order thinking and engage with others in ways not considered before – juxtapose, connect and relate – and construct meaning out of these relationships.

CONNECTIVITY

Movement and mobility brings intersections that have contradicting outcomes that we see in somewhat equal measure – connection and disconnection – convergence and divergence – collision and collusion. We need to recognize and understand these conflicting results – leveraging the positive and countering the negative – in order to benefit from the power of connectivity and the potential to address global challenges of such increased scale.

Despite these inherent conflicts, the greatest potential of connection remains that it can help us to see ourselves as part of an ecosystem, a great network



that is interdependent and requires systems thinking and systems acting. Connection has the power to move us from “I to we”.

SPACES OF INTERSECTION

Given that movement has facilitated our “relocation” – either physically or through ideas and concepts – it also allows us to interact and to enter into spaces of intersection.

This is the space “in between” – one can see this as an interstitial space, a gap – a space of transition – a space of “nothing”, a buffer and in fact a deepening and widening gulf between the two (or more) spheres that are approaching one another. Or – it can be a rich space of exchange where $1+1$ becomes 3 – where the perspectives and differences of each bring a new reality. There is excitement and possibility that grows in the spaces in between. We sometimes stumble into these spaces unexpectedly and need to figure out how to navigate them. But rather than happening onto (and into) them by chance, we should eagerly seek them out and boldly step in with a spirit of exploration, opportunity and experiment.

LEADERSHIP IN SPACES OF INTERSECTION

Given this understanding of spaces of intersection – who leads and how? I would like to illustrate and speak of “ingredients” for leadership, rather than qualities. Intersection and new practices that emerge from them demand new ingredients. 21st century leadership will both seek out spaces of intersection, fostering the exciting “spaces in between” and new forms of leadership will emerge from unexpected places within these spaces.

Leadership by necessity should follow purpose – purpose or value that is bigger than self, bigger than a single organisation, or a specific and focused mission and recognize where the actions fit in a larger ecosystem that is working towards change – leadership considers “we” and not “I”. Leadership means not knowing the answer but asks vital questions – challenging beliefs that stand in the way of a better world. It galvanises people around the questions to seek shared answers – with others, not for others. Jayne Ifekwunigwe in her essay, “When commoning strategies travel” wrote: “We can build a shelter by ourselves, but we need more than two hands to make a home.”

Leadership recognizes where it can act and sees how this action connects to bigger issues. It recognizes the contribution to the greater whole, sees where it fits in a solution. Leadership does not think and act in silos and actively seeks to build bridges between silos. Leadership understands independence in an interdependent system.

Leadership animates networks by being a hub in a wider ecosystem.

Leadership considers its value in terms of building social capital. To quote Charles Landry, “With financial capital the more you spend, the less you have, with social capital, the more you spend, the more you get.”

Leadership is the courage to enter into the unfamiliar – to bring others along and help them in their own anxiety. But it also the willingness to be led when another opportunity presents itself.

Leadership facilitates visioning and becomes part of a shared vision, rather than being the vision, or owning the vision. Reaching that vision requires actively listening, empathy and the willingness to shift and adapt – seeing and following new pathways as they open up. It is responsive, flexible and adaptive in the face of the speed of change.

Leadership is recognizing what you do not know – what perspectives can be brought to the table to bring knowledge that you do not have – it is open, inclusive and values and respects all perspectives equally. Leadership brokers knowledge – it is always learning and co-learning, rather than being the font of all wisdom.

Leadership trusts and knows that effectively working together and achieving shared impact moves only “at the speed of trust”.

Leadership is curious, responsive and reflective – it recognizes patterns and sees connections and acts and engages on multiple levels.

Leadership builds agency – recognizes, shares and passes on leadership – everywhere that leadership is needed – be it setting out in new directions, “mainstreaming” and scaling, building bridges, translating and bringing change.

Leadership fosters the myriad of possibilities, not one view – what could be, not what will be.

Leadership is responsibility, action and “doing what you can”.





Colophon

For those who weren't present, we hope this report gives you a glimpse of the content and spirit of the retreat. We invite you to reach out, join our ecosystem, and let networked thinking work its magic on your organization and your partners.

We identified many next steps at the end of the retreat. These commitments revolved around four themes:

1. Include a practice of networked thinking in individual organizations (e.g. Review governing structure of the organization, introduce the board to networked thinking, bring networked intent to organizational culture);
2. Collaborate with other attendees on a given project;
3. Link various networks nationally and internationally;
4. Co-develop the networks ecosystem.

We'd love to hear from you. If you want to chat, please email Darius Polok darius.polok@iac-berlin.org

The retreat was planned and designed by Tim Draimin, Hinnerk Hansen and Darius Polok. Louise Pulford at Social Innovation Exchange (SiX) (www.socialinnovationexchange.org) and Niamh Leonard at the McConnell Foundation (<https://mcconnell-foundation.ca/>) facilitated the retreat together and penned the documentation of our reflections.

We owe deep gratitude to Kelsey Spitz from Social Innovation Generation (SiG) for helping plan and design the retreat. We thank Volker Hann, Helga Breuninger, and the entire Wasan Island team for being so warm and welcoming. You create a truly magical environment.

Many thanks as well to all the attendees. You each brought a valuable and unique perspective to the discussions.

Like the design and facilitation of the Wasan Island retreat, this report is a collaboration: we thank all those who contributed pictures and writing to this piece. Your works make this report come alive, and help illustrate the collaborative nature of the retreat and the ensuing work.

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Suggested Reading

1. “Of the network” and “A networked organization,” by Cassie Robinson, Strategic Design Director at Doteveryone (Medium, 2017)
2. “Achieving Greater Impact through Systems and Platforms,” by John Hagel, co-chairman, Deloitte LLP Center for the Edge, and Gemma Mortensen, chief global officer, Change.org (Medium, 2017)
3. “Seeing the connectedness of things is the starting point for understanding a world that otherwise appears baffling...Connexity Revisited”, by Geoff Mulgan, Chief Executive of Nesta, in *Network Logic: Who Governs in an Interconnected World?* (Demos, 2004)
4. “Surmountable Chasms: Networks and Social Innovation for Resilient Systems,” by Michele-Lee Moore, assistant professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Victoria, and Frances Westley, The J.W. McConnell chair in social innovation at the University of Waterloo, in *Ecology & Society (16)1*, part of a Special Feature on Resilience Through Multi-scalar Collaboration (2011)
5. “Accelerate! How the most innovative companies capitalize on today’s rapid-fire strategic challenges—and still make their numbers” by John Kotter in the *Harvard Business Review*, November 2012
6. “Building the Capacity to Innovate: A Guide for Nonprofits” by Laura Lanzerotti, Daniel Pike, and Nidhi Sahni with Amira Bliss, The Bridgespan Group, 2017
7. “Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation” by Steven Johnson, Riverhead Books: 2010
8. „Complexity in Networks: A Guided Tour“ by Melanie Mitchell, Professor of Computer Science at Portland State University (YouTube video, 2010)
9. “Participate: The Power of Involving Business in Social Impact Networks” by Anna Muoio, core team at Monitor Institute, and Noah Rimland Flower (Monitor Institute, Deloitte, and Rockefeller Foundation, 2016)
10. “How to Succeed in the Networked World: A Grand Strategy for the Digital Age” Article by Anne-Marie Slaughter, current President and CEO of New America (Foreign Affairs, November/December 2016), summarizing some themes of her book listed below.
11. *The Chessboard and the Web: Strategies of Connection in a Networked World* by Anne-Marie Slaughter (Yale University Press, 2017)
12. *Fostering a Canadian Ecosystem for System Change* by Geraldine Cahill & Kelsey Spitz (SiG 2017)

Partner



We see ourselves faced with powerful challenges: the problems arising from climate change, the financial crisis and growing poverty can no longer be solved within the “classical” structures of politics and administration alone. What is needed is a process of rethinking, new approaches and more commitment from all involved. We are convinced that we can effect this necessary change only as a civil society. For this we must create new forms of participation and strengthen the individual sense of responsibility. We work on a local, national and international basis and cooperate with people who have set out to foster integrated, sustainable and interlinked ways of thinking and acting. We invest in the ability of people to learn, to cooperate and to lead. We initiate and set up networks and establish platforms with those who have ideas and visions for the 21st century. Through our work we wish to contribute to making this century a just and peaceful one.

www.breuninger-stiftung.de



The Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH is one of Europe's largest foundations associated with a private company. In its charitable work, it addresses social issues at an early stage and develops exemplary solutions. For this purpose, it plans and implements its own projects. Additionally, it supports third-party initiatives that have similar goals. The Robert Bosch Stiftung is active in the areas of health, science, society, education, and international relations.

Moreover, in the coming years, the Foundation will increasingly direct its activities on three focus

areas: Migration, Integration, and Inclusion, Social Cohesion in Germany and Europe, Sustainable Living Spaces.

Since it was established in 1964, the Robert Bosch Stiftung has invested more than 1.4 billion euros in charitable work.

www.bosch-stiftung.de



J. W. McConnell Family Foundation is a private philanthropic organization funding programs that support Canadians in building a more innovative, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient society. The core purpose of the Foundation has remained constant since its founding: to improve the quality of life in Canada by building communities that help people develop their potential and contribute to the common good. The vision is a Canada where all people feel a sense of belonging and contribute as active citizens to improving the well-being of all.

www.mcconnellfoundation.ca



The BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt promotes responsible leadership and inspires leaders worldwide to work towards a peaceful, just and sustainable future. Through our activities, we aim to advance the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

We inspire leaders, through our leadership programs and encounters, to take their social and

political commitment to the next level – across communities, cultures and countries.

We connect leaders through our global BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Network, a diverse, collaborative and joyful community that drives positive change through collaborative action.

We invest in impactful organizations while encouraging leaders to embrace venture philanthropy and impact investing as effective tools for social change.

www.bwm-foundation.org



Social Innovation Generation (SiG) is a group who believes that serious social problems can be solved. Our focus is on fostering social innovation to achieve impact, durability and scale by engaging the creativity and resources of all sectors.

SiG seeks to address Canada's social and ecological challenges by creating a culture of continuous social innovation. Our focus is on social innovation that has the potential for impact, durability and scale.

SiG is a collaborative partnership founded by The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, the University of Waterloo, the MaRS Discovery District, and the PLAN Institute. Our ultimate goal is to support whole system change through changing the broader economic, cultural and policy context in Canada to allow social innovations to flourish.



The International Alumni Center (iac Berlin) is a Think & Do Tank for alumni communities with social impact. It was founded by the Robert Bosch Stiftung and advises foundations and other non-profit organizations in its alumni work, helps with practical solutions in the design of impact-oriented networks and initiates new forms of cooperation. With the founding of the iac Berlin as an open platform, the Robert Bosch Stiftung aims to support the creation of a global network of change-makers from different sectors.

The iac Berlin coordinates the Bosch Alumni Network, which brings together former and current fellows, grantees, and staff members of the Robert Bosch Stiftung and its partners, to support their activities and foster cross-sectoral exchange and international collaboration.

www.iac-berlin.org

“The key is to focus on learning rather than on solutions. Systems change in unexpected ways, but planners can learn to expect the unexpected. They can learn to embrace the feedback they get based on how their actions affect the behavior of the system. The goal of a development project should not be to meet predetermined benchmarks but to learn which elements of one’s initial understanding of the system were right and which were wrong. Which elements of a project nurtured the system in positive ways and which did not? These lessons can bring a sense of humbleness, which will encourage planners to listen to what the system is telling them instead of assuming they know best. Listening to the system means accepting the fact that systems change best when systems change themselves, and the job of those wanting to be of help is to learn about where change is already happening, or is ready to happen, in the system.”

– Roberto Ricigliano ¹

¹ Making Peace Last, Roberto Ricigliano, 2016, Routledge