# SOLUTIONS LAB COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE LEARNING PLAN 2018-2019

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Solutions Lab Community of Practice Learning Plan, 2018-2019

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Introduction

About the Solutions Lab (SLab)

Vancouver, like other cities internationally, is facing increasing pressure to address convergent and complex challenges like reconciliation, affordability, equity, climate change, , social isolation, and decreasing trust in government, among others. The go-to structures and processes of local governments were set up for a very different reality, and for significantly different work and responsibilities. We're being called, both as individuals and as an organisation, to experiment and learn to find new ways to respond to these pressures, and to keep pace with these changes. We're also being called to respond to the root causes of these systemic challenges, and not just apply or rely on incremental quick fixes. The Solutions Lab is a response to this call.

We envision a Vancouver that is able to collaboratively, systemically and effectively respond to complex challenges facing our city in order to improve the lives of current and future generations and restore a relationship of care with each other, the land and the water. This is made possible because City of Vancouver staff and key partners are growing greater capacities to experiment and learn in service of addressing these complex social, economic and environmental challenges.

The SLab supports this vision by:
- **Building innovation infrastructure** in the CoV that delivers ongoing research, invention, innovation, implementation, and scaling of solutions to complex service, policy, democracy and engagement challenges
- **Shifting organisational culture** to support an ethos of, and commitment to, experimentation as learning
- **Unlocking the potential of people** by building adaptive leadership, transformative learning, co-creation, intersectional understanding, and collaboration skills, competencies, experiences and performance expectations for CoV staff
- **Growing authentic and high impact partnerships** to amplify the potential impacts of our work through authentic, mutually beneficial, and action-oriented partnerships with the many collaborators working toward a similar vision for Vancouver.

What is a Community of Practice?

A Community of Practice (CoP) is a group of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. While originally developed by cognitive anthropologist Jean Lave and educational theorist, Etienne Wenger, the concept has been elaborated by Wenger (now Wenger-Trayner) and Beverly Wenger-Trayner in the development of the sphere of social learning. In thinking about the concept of emergence (when the whole has qualities that its individual parts do not have) as a theory of change, Communities of Practice have also been recognised as an important incremental step in the lifecycle of emergence, leading to systems transformation. (Wheatley et al, 2015) In this context

of sharing and developing new practices collectively, individuals learn and grow more quickly than if they were engaging in this work on their own.

Figure 1: Life Cycle of Emergence. These images illustrate the three stages of emergence and how change happens in systems, starting with Networks, evolving into Communities of Practice and eventually emerging into Systems of Influence. (Wheatley et al, 2015)

According to Wenger (2002), CoPs are comprised of the following elements:
- **Strategic Intent or Purpose**: overall goal of the CoP.
- **Domain**: the field or context in which practice building occurs.
- **Community**: the individuals who are engaged in the practice. In some contexts, there are multiple layers of community.
- **Practice**: the actions that the community is furthering.

The characteristics of a CoP will inevitably vary across different sectors and contexts. Some common features that have been found in CoPs are[1]:
- There is space for people to continually ask questions and gain deeper understanding about their work and the systems in which they work in.
- The community is intentional about learning for its members.
- People are able to be candid about what they are facing.
- There is a sense of mutual commitment to each other's learning and practice.
- The community exists not just for its members but for the rest of the world.

About the Solutions Lab CoP

Setting up the Community of Practice

The first iteration of the Solutions Lab (January 2017 - February 2018) was evaluated using a developmental evaluation[2] approach, supported by Mark Cabaj from Here2There Consulting, a nationally recognised expert practitioner in the evaluation of social innovation processes,

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[1] From Mark Cabaj, Here2There Consulting, Presentation for Solutions Lab, Vancouver BC, April 9th, 2018.

[2] Developmental Evaluation (DE) is a field of evaluation designed to support social innovators as they create or transform programs through a process of trial and error. Individuals creating these programs may implement, reflect and adapt future developments of the program according to what was learned from previous iterations. (Patton, 2011)

projects, and initiatives. This evaluation aimed to tell the "what, so what, now what?" story of the first iteration of the Solutions Lab in order to build a strong second iteration that responded to the learnings and promising practices from version 1.0. One key finding of this evaluation was that lab participants had an interest in bringing social innovation and design frameworks, methodologies, and practices into their work, but that they needed more opportunities to learn, practice, and develop their skills, experience, and confidence in order to be able to do this. Their participation in a specific lab as a team member didn't give them enough experience to then lead these processes back in their day to day work.

In response, this CoP was formed as a key component of the second iteration of SLab. The CoP will support City staff who have been experiencing the lab as a participant in being able to learn the processes, methods and practices of social innovation and design in order to integrate these practices more broadly into their work, teams, departments. This will also enable broader use of these frameworks and practices in ways that aren't limited to a specific lab question, timeline, and process. This is a key element of the theory of change for the SLab 2.0; that creating enabling conditions and capacities for more people to use social innovation and design methods in their work is necessary for a broader systems and culture transformation impact than is possible by limiting their use to the very small number of complex challenges that are being worked on "in the lab."

Strategic Intent

The intent of the CoP for the City of Vancouver SLab is to create a regular process for CoP members to share, build and implement lab practices in a way that …
- Engages mainly City staff though select external parties might be involved;
- Supports Lab projects in SLab 2.0;
- Focuses on design and social innovation practices within the Lab as well as practices that can be integrated into broader City activities;
- Draws mainly on internal and local expertise and knowledge (rather than outside consultants);
- Facilitates opportunities for CoP members to receive formal training on lab practices, create peer support sessions, and access tools; and
- Builds on the experience and learning of other peer-learning networking within the City of Vancouver (e.g. Project Management group, Engaging Bureaucrats, etc.)…

… so that the City of Vancouver staff – and key partners – have greater capacity and experimental culture to lead a lab process that addresses complex social, economic and environmental challenges within their respective departments and initiatives.
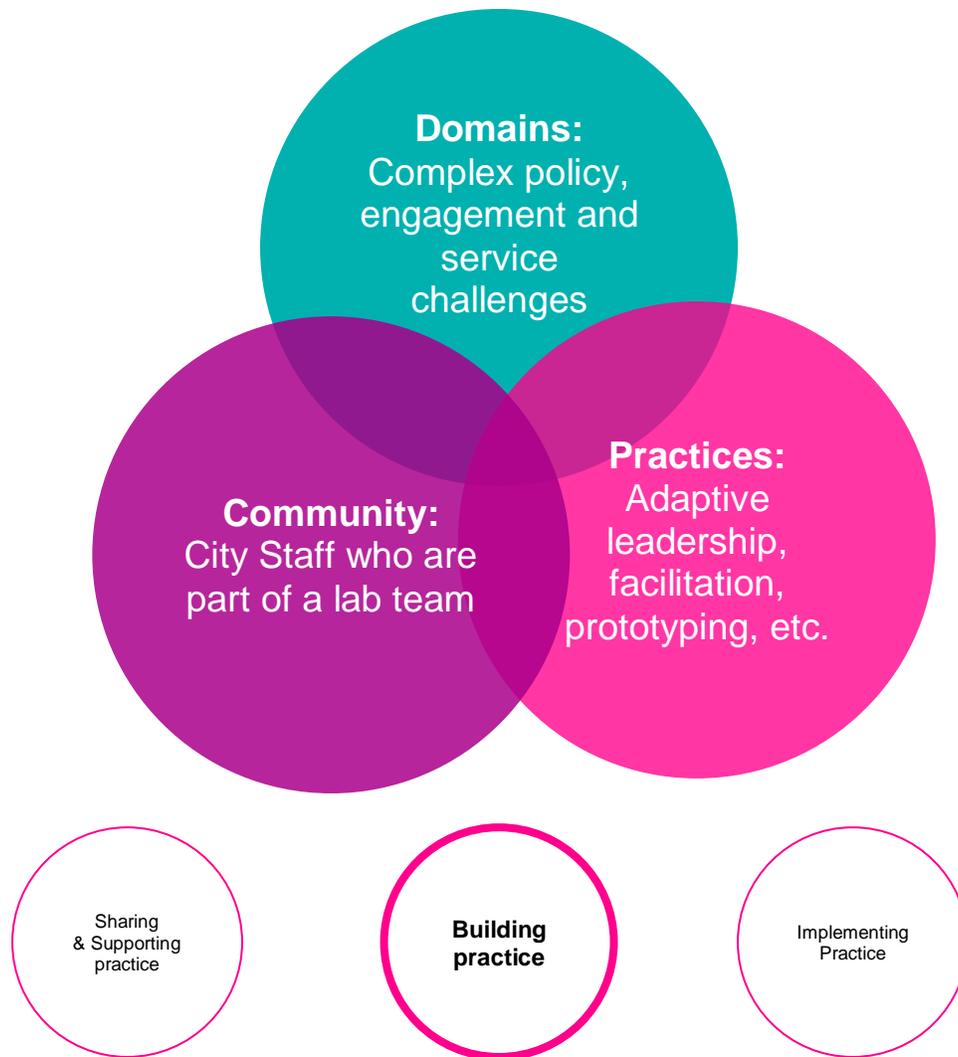
Figure 2: Structure of SLab CoP, developed during a launch meeting in April 2018 with support from Mark Cabaj.

Community

In some cases, CoP have varying levels of community. There might be a Core group of members who are fully involved in the domain of practices, then outer rings (Active and Peripheral) of individuals who are a part of practice building but not actively participating in the development of the CoP or the evolution of practices. (Wenger 2002)
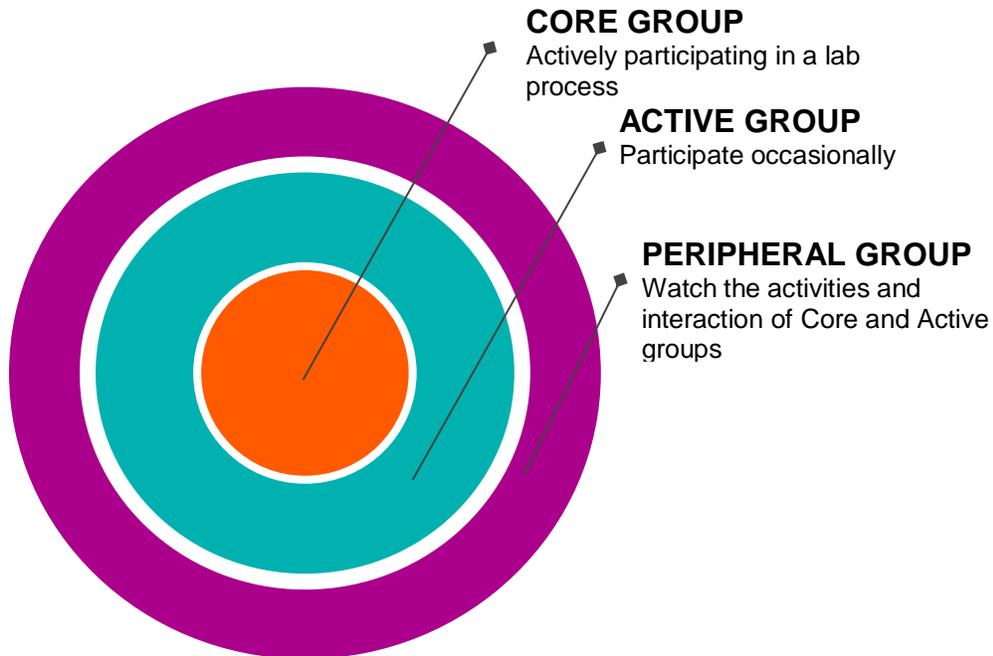
Figure 3: Typical Community Layers in CoPs. The SLab CoP has been focused on developing the core group so far.

Since April 2018, the initial focus of the CoP has been on growing a strong **core group**. In its initial form, it is intended for City staff who are actively involved with a Solutions Lab process or have participated in a lab previously. The 17 core group members who have been invited so far represent the following departments:

- Social Policy
- Sustainability
- Public Engagement
- Engineering
- IT
- Digital Services
- Vancouver Public Library

Practices

Generally, a CoP's orientation towards practices may include *sharing practice* (sharing stories, experiences and ideas)*, building practice* (creating, testing and refining tools or resources)*,* and/or *implementing practice* (providing support to ensure high quality and the reliability of a proven practice) (Wenger 2002). The SLab CoP is primarily focused on **building practice** by sourcing, creating, testing and refining social innovation and design tools and resources for the specific City of Vancouver context.

We have chosen to base the practices around Nesta's[3] *Principles of Innovation* (2018) 6-pointed star model, which highlights the main principles of innovation and the relationships between

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[3] Nesta is a global innovation foundation based in the UK. See Innovation Playbook for more details.

these certain "mindsets, skillsets and ways of acting." (2018) The six dynamics Nesta illustrates cut across various methods and tools (e.g. Theory U, design thinking, systems thinking, etc.) and emphasise the essential innovation principles that connect these methods. We have adapted this model more specifically to our context and set of practices by adding another pair of principles: **Personal Transformation** and **Cultural Transformation**. These two principles encompass the SLab CoP's specific focus on the inward, personal development of individuals as well as the outward-facing organisational development that currently needs consideration at the City. Specific practices relating to each principle are shown in Table 1.
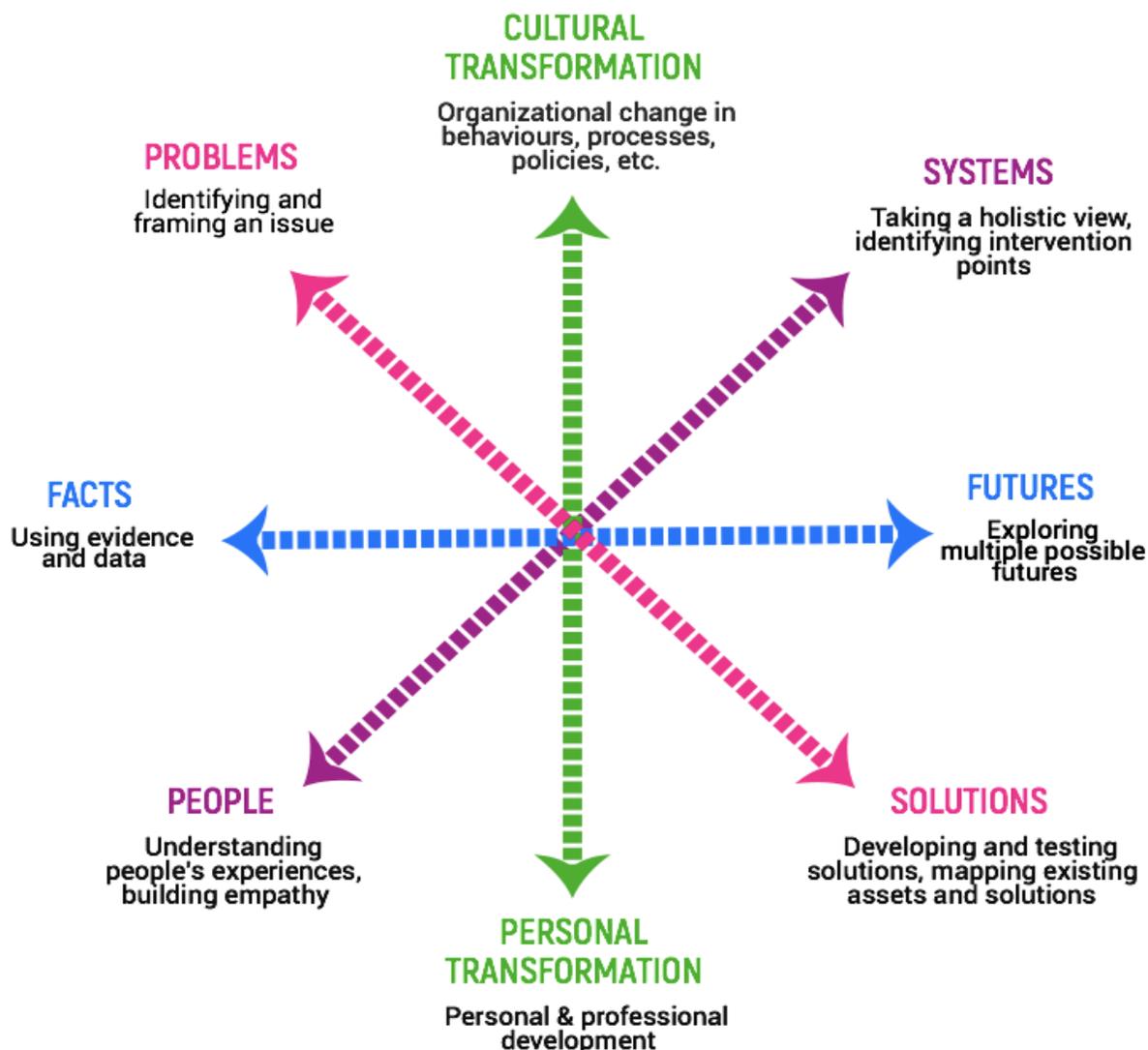
Figure 4: Principles of Innovation that guide the SLab CoP Practice Areas

Table 1: SLab CoP Practices

SLab CoP Practices According to Guiding Principles

PROBLEMS: Identifying and framing an issue	SYSTEMS: Taking a holistic view, identifying intervention points	CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION: organisational change in behaviours, processes, policies, etc.	FACTS: Using evidence and data
• Reframing problem statements and questions. • Creating a container for change (i.e. process design and facilitation basics, power and conflict engagement, hosting, etc.)	• Systems thinking, mapping, and finding leverage points for change	• Innovation infrastructures (i.e. job descriptions, performance evaluation and planning, social innovations and design competencies, permissive space) • Intersectionality, reconciliation, decolonisation • Social presencing theatre	• Research and data: building the design brief • Summative and realist evaluation: framing, measuring and communicating results
SOLUTIONS: Developing and testing solutions, mapping existing assets and solutions	PEOPLE: Understanding people's experiences, building empathy	PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION: Personal & professional development	FUTURES: Exploring multiple possible futures
• Creativity and ideation • Experimentation (i.e. prototyping, adopting/adapting from elsewhere, positive deviance, user testing, iteration) • Scaling social innovation and prototypes	• Ethnographic research, empathy building, thick data collection, and story-making • Service journey mapping • Cultural competencies building	• Self-reflection and mindfulness • Adaptive leadership • Social presencing theatre	• Scenario building and testing

Prototyping the CoP Session

Developing and testing possible directions is an integral part of the innovation process at SLab and thus guided the development of the first three SLab CoP sessions. We engaged in action research with core group invitees to understand their goals for building practice related to lab processes and collaboration to inform the development of these prototypes. Keeping in mind the co-creative nature of CoPs and their ability to evolve according to the needs of the group members, it was important to design sessions in an adaptive manner that allows for input from participants.

During the CoP launch workshop, participants who attended committed to convening one half-day a month for CoP sessions for the coming year. In summer 2017, initial members of the CoP were surveyed about their lab-related interests, learning style, and generally what they might like to do during the CoP sessions. Key insights from the survey include:
- Regarding learning styles, most respondents were comfortable with **dialogue and discussion, learning by doing,** and/or through **observation**
- Respondents preferred that initial sessions focus on:
  - Creating enabling conditions, adaptive leadership, and culture change at CoV
  - Inclusion/Intersectionality
  - Evaluation, storytelling, and lab impact
  - First part of Theory U (initiating, sensing, presencing)

Based on this input, we developed three initial sessions, integrating learnings from each session so that the format continued to evolve and improve. Each session had a purpose and set of intended outcomes that we hoped to achieve by convening core members. This section summarises the three sessions and key learnings from them.

Session 1: May 28, 2018

Purpose:
- Rejuvenate and reflect
- Deepen connections with each other
- Continue to develop our CoP framework
- Workshop SLab 2.0 theory of change

Outcomes:
- Experience and learn some lab methods
- Create a stronger, shared, theory of change
- Make commitments to personal prototypes connected to creating enabling conditions

Number of people who attended: 9
Timeframe & Location: 10am-12pm, CityLab

Key activities: In this session, we aimed to lay the foundation of the CoP sessions as an opportunity for rejuvenation, reflection and communication that is different from what members experience in their day-to-day work at the city. The activities we engaged in were as follows:
1. Opening Mindfulness Activity
2. Review and Discussion of the establishment of the SLab CoP
3. Introduction to and discussion about the Theory of Change (ToC) for SLab
4. Development of personal commitments related to practice-building
5. Invitation to practice, providing tools and resources for individuals to build on their learning and practices in between CoP sessions

Key learnings: While certain elements of the session were well-received, such as the mindfulness activity and the idea of building practice between sessions, the tone of the sessions still felt like a working group or steering committee meeting. Individuals who attended specified further what they would like to learn in the next session to help them feel more oriented to the CoP, namely some examples of what other Public Sector Innovation Labs are doing and how they each fit into the system of which they are a part. A major takeaway from this first session was to provide the opportunity for practice building *during* the sessions, making our time together more of an interactive learning experience, and also to lengthen the session to 3 hours to create more expansive time.

Session 2: July 4, 2018

Purpose:
- Rejuvenate and reflect
- Deepen connections with each other
- Practice building by hearing stories from the field
- Learning by doing

Outcomes:
- CoP members teach and learn a lab method and are provided with tools, and commit, to try it out
- Have some tangible stories from the field to deepen practice and understanding
- To share and learn from each other's personal prototypes and ethnographic research

Number of people who attended: 12
Timeframe & Location: 11am-2pm, CityLab
Key activities: Building on the foundation we laid in the first session, we integrated more interactive elements into the activities and provided the opportunity for a CoP member to facilitate and lead a component of the session. The activities we engaged in were as follows:
1. Opening Mindfulness Activity
2. Review of homework and discussion
3. "Stories from the field": presentation of examples of other Public Sector Innovation Labs (spin the bottle format)
4. Practice-building: "What Would Beyonce Do?" ideation exercise led by CoP member
5. Invitation to practice

Key learnings: This session felt more interactive and like it flowed well. Three hours (instead of two) allowed for more depth and variety of activities. It helped to break up the session into more of a review + practice sharing + practice building format as well to keep the group stimulated. Having more members attend helped to keep a higher level of energy. The homework review portion risked putting those who weren't able to complete it on the spot, and in the future more of a small-group discussion format would perhaps work better instead of a large-group circle, at least while the core group is still taking shape in this early stage of the CoP.

Session 3: July 25, 2018

Purpose:
- Rejuvenate and reflect
- Deepen connections with each other
- Learning by doing
- Map out future of CoP

Intended Outcomes:
- CoP members teach and learn a lab method and are provided with tools, and commit, to try it out
- Have some tangible stories from the field to deepen practice and understanding
- To share and learn from each other' personal prototypes and ethnographic research

Number of people who attended: 6
Timeframe & Location: 9:30am-12:30pm, Helena Gutteridge Plaza
Key activities: This session followed a similar pattern to Session 2, providing opportunity for practice building related to ethnographic research. We also gained input from those who attended that informed the shaping of this CoP plan. Activities:
1. Opening Mindfulness/Active listening activity
2. Review of homework and discussion
3. Learning & Practice-building: Ethnography
4. Invitation to practice
5. CoP plan input gathering

Key learnings: On the one hand, the small group size allowed for more informal relationship-building to take place and a fluid movement between activities; on the other, the schedule challenges of summer made it difficult to gather a robust amount of feedback from core group members on how the upcoming year will look and will require further outreach to those who could not make it. While some great input was gathered for the CoP plan, lack of clarity for certain areas of the CoP still remain, such as what collective commitment looks like for core group members, and more time devoted to this would be helpful in creating a clearer path forward. A key question in this co-process is how to balance the need for dedicating time to community-generating with providing time for actual practice building.

Overall Learnings

Testing these sessions has helped shape the structure of the SLab CoP. In general, we learned that a format that is interactive and multifaceted is helpful in reaching our goals of facilitating experiential learning and relationship-building for core members. Establishing traditions within the session format helps to create a special identity for our time together and for the CoP itself. What remains to be co-created by core group members is a collective agreement and commitment to one another—and the larger purpose of the SLab CoP—to strengthen the sense of community and maintain momentum and continuity in the efforts of convening and building practice.

From the perspective of the SLab CoP team coordinating the sessions, one important overall learning from the initial CoP sessions is how quickly core members have begun to grasp and talk about innovation-related practices. Though some members had previously participated and/or led lab processes through SLab, in the lab setting they were oriented towards one specific challenge in a concentrated amount of time. In the CoP sessions, however, core members have been invited to think about and apply these tools and approaches more broadly to their respective departments and individual roles. This context has shown that core members have begun to transition from "exposure to", to "deeper understanding of" the innovation principles and specific practices. While Wheatley (2015) describes this as a noteworthy characteristic of Communities of Practice, observing this specifically in the SLab CoP is encouraging when thinking about the potential of this group and in what ways they can grow and contribute to new knowledge within a year's time.

Looking Ahead: 2018-2019

In the upcoming year, we intend to continue to develop the CoP so that it aligns with the goals, interests and needs of its members while also strengthening the work of the Solutions Lab and social innovation and design at the City of Vancouver. In this portion we delve into further opportunities and discussions to nurture the CoP in the upcoming 2018-2019 year, focusing on three areas of consideration: 1) Prioritising practices and specific ways of building them; 2) Nurturing community at different layers of the CoP; and 3) Evaluation of the CoP. A timeline and next steps are also included at the end. This plan has been informed by lessons learned from our prototype sessions, SLab Lab questions, and current core members of the CoP.

Prioritising Practices

With such a robust set of practices encompassed in the SLab CoP, we asked core members for input on their preferred areas of focus for the first six months starting in September of 2018. This section details the priority practice areas and opportunities for deeper practice building related to the different practice areas and learning framework.

Based on input from core group members, the three main priority practice areas are **Cultural Transformation**, **Systems,** and **People**. Most core group members have expressed feeling

constrained in their ability to participate more deeply in the CoP format as it is different than the dominant work culture and system at CoV. Prioritising building practices that will support the organisational and **cultural transformation** of the City to support social innovation and citizen-centred design practices will hopefully help facilitate a deeper participation in the other practice areas and the ability for CoP members to integrate them more readily into their work. **Systems-related** practices will also help with understanding intervention points for change and embedding new cultural norms. Core group members have also identified the dichotomy between the City's fragmented department structure and the public's view of the City as a unified entity that exists to represent their interests and needs. By concentrating on **People** and building practices that encourage a deeper understanding of, and relationship with, communities, stakeholders and end-users, CoP members can further embed people-oriented approaches and methods into their departments.
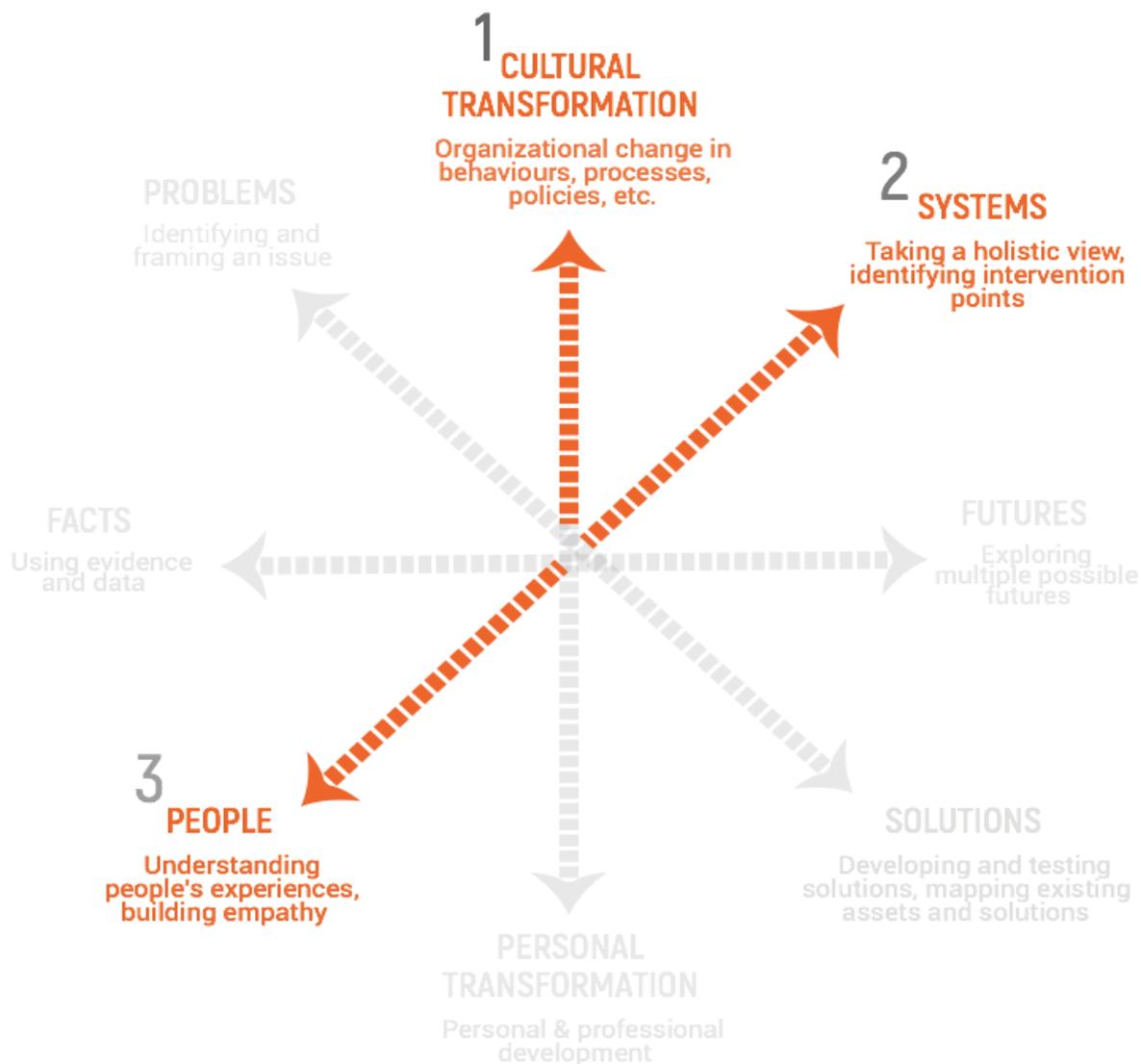

Figure 5: Priority Practice Areas based on input from core group.

Along with identifying these three guiding principles as priority areas, some core group members have also signaled guiding principles and specific practices for which they would be willing to co-create and lead practice-building opportunities for themselves and their colleagues in the CoP, and maybe other City staff as well.

Training Opportunities

The CoP sessions so far have been designed to integrate personal and professional development as they relate to Theory U, design, and other innovation frameworks, methodologies and tools. The current format includes both personal and professional development components, integrating mindfulness, teaching, practice building, and an invitation to build on these practices in between sessions using different tools. The format can evolve according to the group's needs and interests. In an effort to build the internal capacity of City staff, there are opportunities for external facilitators and consultants to be brought in to teach new tools and approaches that support the practices being built. The following table contains training opportunity options according to practice area that may be brought in over the coming year.

Table 2: Training Opportunites for Building Practice According to Guiding Principles

Training	Practice Area
Decolonising practices	Cultural Transformation
Intersectionality, race, and inclusion in labs	Cultural Transformation
Creating enabling conditions for innovation	Cultural Transformation
Innovation infrastructure	Cultural Transformation
Engaging conflict, collaboration across difference	Cultural Transformation; Personal Transformation
Social Presencing Theatre	Cultural Transformation; Personal Transformation
Strategic communications about innovation in the public sector	Facts
Developmental evaluation	Facts
Summative and realist evaluation	Facts
Strategic Foresight for scenario building	Futures

Social Innovation 101	Systems
Service design 101	People
Ethnography 101	People
Service journey mapping	People
Transformative, adaptive and collaborative leadership	Personal Transformation
Mindfulness and self-care	Personal Transformation
Leading in times of change	Personal Transformation
Facilitation 101	Problems
Design brief, problem (re)framing, building shared understanding of challenge	Problems
Starting well, planning the process arc, establishing a strong container	Problems
Prototyping on-line course cohort	Solutions
Creativity and ideation practices	Solutions
Prototyping 101: making, creating, user testing, evaluating	Solutions
Scaling social innovation	Solutions
Design 101	Solutions
Systems leadership and mapping	Systems
Systems leadership in the public sector, dialogue with other PSIL leaders	Systems

Building Practice Between Sessions

In between the monthly CoP sessions, CoP members are invited and encouraged to continue to develop their practice by utilising the **practice tools** provided at the end of each session. The homework is also helpful in that it's an opportunity to test out the practices in a way that is applicable to the work context of each member, enabling them to deepen their learning while also providing insight to the larger group about what innovation practices and approaches look like for different complex challenges at the City. Additionally, CoP members actively participating in the **Solutions Lab** implement practices that can be learned from and shared with the group during CoP sessions. A **digital binder** will be created as a space to share a curated collection of resources that support this shared practice building.

Learning Opportunities Outside of the City of Vancouver

In addition to the SLab-led learning opportunities and in-session trainings led by consultants, there are other opportunities and resources that SLab group members can access as part of their individual learning path in the upcoming year.

Table 3: Learning Opportunities Offered outside of SLab CoP

Course name	By who	Cost	Format	Timeframe	More info/sign up
U.Lab 0.0	Presencing Institute, MIT, EdX	free	on-line	anytime	https://www.edx.org/course/ulab-leading-change-in-times-of-disruption
IDEO: prototyping	IDEO	free	on-line	July 10 2018, 5 weeks	https://www.plusacumen.org/courses/prototyping
Social Impact Analysis	Acumen	free	on-line	July 10, 2018, 5 weeks	https://www.plusacumen.org/courses/social-impact-analysis
IDEO: intro to human centred design	IDEO	free	on-line	September 11 2018, 11 weeks	https://www.plusacumen.org/courses/introduction-human-centered-design
U.Lab 1.0	Presencing Institute, MIT, EdX	free	on-line	September-December	https://www.edx.org/course/ulab-leading-from-the-emerging-future-15-671-1x-1
Systems dynamics	Omidyar group	free	on-line	Oct. 8 2018, 11wk	https://www.plusacumen.org/courses/systems-practice
International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Facilitation Training	City of Vancouver	free	5 in-session days	TBC	Contact the Public Engagement Team for details

Nurturing Community

CoPs tend to have multiple layers of community, though an integral factor in their ability to exist and evolve depends on the drive and initiative of core group members. (Wenger-Trayner) This section details in what ways the SLab CoP could work initially to continue to harvest excitement and interest in the CoP, both at the core and peripheral levels. In addition to identifying ways of encouraging collaborative engagement of core group members, the core group is also beginning to consider how to share beyond the group with emerging outer layers of the CoP, both at the City and Partner Organisation/Community level, while ensuring that the quality of the

experience and learning remains high and not stretching the capacity to convene the CoP beyond what is feasible.

Nurturing Core Group Commitment to the CoP

Of the 17 initial individuals invited to be a part of the CoP, 11 participated in at least one of the prototype sessions and 8 have participated in at least two sessions, not including the SLab CoP team. The average across all three session has been 7 attendees, again excluding the SLab CoP team. While small groups can allow for more close-knit discussions and relationship-building, if the SLab CoP is to be in greater service of growing innovation capacities at the City, it would be helpful to have more core members of the CoP from diverse departments and backgrounds who can apply this learning in their work, and consistently attend. The challenge is in finding a balance between having a larger group size that addresses the current organisational needs of the City while still being able to meet the individual needs and objectives of core group members.

Individual Commitments

For most core group members, the major challenge to commitment is the workload they are tasked with and the deadlines they must meet in their respective positions. For others, it is the lack of opportunity to apply these practices into their day-to-day work.

In light of these challenges, core group members have identified ways in which they are interested in, and able to, engage with the CoP in the coming 12 months to build their personal practice, as well as to support departmental and organisational learning and experience with innovation practices. Such forms of engagement include:

- Regular and active participation in the CoP
- Learning, preparing, and leading CoP sessions in areas where individuals would like to deepen their learning and practice, and/or they have existing competencies to share
- Building competencies within department on innovation concepts, experimenting with institutional dexterity
- Applying systems change, service mapping, and design approaches to complex questions that could be supported by their department
- Testing and sharing practices with partner organisations that we regularly work with
- Sharing and adapting tools and resources used in Solutions Lab processes
- Understanding and communicating the role of research in challenging systems
- Building knowledge and facilitating conversations about innovation
- Integrating innovation competencies into performance plans and job descriptions
- Providing "off-site" meeting space for CoP sessions
- Providing research and data analysis support
- Writing about experiences and learning in the CoP to share more broadly with CoV staff
- Hosting open sessions (i.e. lunch and learns) to invite more CoV staff into Solutions Lab practices in a more accessible format

Leadership Groups or Roles

One option for beginning to share the responsibilities of nurturing the SLab CoP would be to introduce the concept of "leadership groups" or roles. Internal leadership has been found to be instrumental in nurturing the learning capability of communities of practice and building a sense of shared ownership of the development of the community (Wenger-Trayner 2012). Though these roles are not fixed, and others can be identified, Wenger-Trayner have defined seven leadership roles that could be adapted to the SLab CoP context:

- **Agenda activists**: driving the learning forward
- **Community keepers:** weaving the social fabric
- **Critical friends:** reflecting on the process
- **Social reporters:** creating a shared memory
- **External messengers:** communicating with external audiences
- **Value detectives:** making value-creation visible
- **Organizational brokers:** connecting with organizational stakeholders

Learning Out Loud

Core members generated different ideas about how to grow the periphery by creating entry points for people who may wish to engage with the SLab CoP. These prototypes that could be tested offer varying degrees of engagement for non-core individuals and have different types of significance and intended outcomes. As an overall additional outcome to this process, "learning out loud" in these possible ways also has the potential to encourage leadership among core members as they take initiative to facilitate the implementation of these activities.

Table 4: Possible Prototypes for Sharing CoP Learnings and Practices

Activity	Significance/Intention	Considerations	Potential Commitment Level of Core Members
SLab CoP Lunch and Learns for peers and colleagues of core group members	In-person engagement of peers and colleagues so they can **learn and experience practices that core CoP members are building**; Opportunity for core CoP members to teach and build certain skills related to practices	Additional time commitment of core group members may limit the frequency that this can occur	Quarterly; can be embedded into pre-existing Lunch & Learns (Urban Design & Sustainability; Engineering)
Website or CoP summary to share (with	Shows proof of SLab CoP's existence; **high**	Is it important to convey CoP's	One-time project, with occasional

senior leadership, colleagues, etc.)	**level information** to share with people initially or generally inquiring about the CoP	impact to individuals expecting hard outcomes or results? If so, how?	updates or revisions
Blog	Sharing broadly the **news**, **stories** and **resources** compiled by core CoP members to general audience	Individuals in the peripheral community layer may not be interested in reading at great length about the work	Rotation of responsibility, monthly production
City Insider	Very feasible to widely share in a concise way the work of CoP to City staff for **announcements, small updates, or practice building tips**	Only reaches City staff and not community partners or the public; Challenging to summarise the CoP in 200 words	Rotation of responsibility could be regularly or periodic when important announcements are needed

Evaluation of the CoP

As described previously, SLab is focused on the following areas in order to support the City of Vancouver to address complex challenges:

- Building innovation infrastructure
- Shifting organisational culture
- Unlocking the potential of people
- Growing authentic and high impact partnerships

Within this context, the SLab CoP's actions and measures support **building innovation infrastructure** and **unlocking the potential of people**.

As the CoP is still quite new and emerging, it is recommended that the group continue to use action research, developmental evaluation (DE), and a spirit of experimentation and prototyping to revise and adapt the CoP structure and focus. Additionally, evaluation of outcomes related to the components of the strategic intent should be targeted.

To further guide consideration for evaluation, core group members were asked what they would feel most proud of in a year's time regarding being a part of the SLab CoP. Most of their input related to individual and collective learning outcomes for core group members.

Outcomes for Core Group	Possible Measures
Sufficient proficiency in practice areas to feel confident designing or leading a Lab process within department or for partner initiatives	• Core members' confidence rating • Number of lab processes initiated or intended to be initiated • Number of practices built for CoP
Shared responsibility amongst core group members of coordinating and nurturing the SLab CoP	• Extent of involvement of core members in various aspects of CoP
SLab CoP is seen as a core part of group members' work and there is an ease in being able to commit to it	• Number of CoP members with active participation included in their annual performance plans • SLab support of CoP members in integrating innovation practices into their work

The evaluation and storytelling could be a shared responsibility of all group members, especially if contributions can be made under a structure such as the Leadership Groups described previously.

Timeline

The timeline on the following page (Figure 6) is an example of how the year could look for the SLab CoP. It includes all the different external trainings that have been identified so far according to their dates, the regular monthly recurring CoP session dates, and other important time frames to keep in mind that might help to organise the time of CoP members.

What's Next?

Due to time constraints in generating this plan and the need for this process to remain open and flexible as the CoP evolves, there are a few short-term steps (within the next 1-2 months) that could be considered to deepen the development of this plan.
- Reach out to previously invited individuals to confirm their interest in joining the core group (August)
- Gain further input from core group members who were unable to attend the third prototyping session (August)
- Begin to schedule in-session CoP trainings with external facilitators/consultants (August/September)
- Co-creation of core group commitment agreement (September kick-off session)
- Test out the idea of leadership roles/groups (September kick-off session)
- Decide on a recurring date for the CoP (e.g. every last Wednesday of each month)
- Create a formal schedule of sessions

	DETAILS	Q1												Q2											
		SEP				**OCT**					**NOV**				**DEC**					**JAN**				**FEB**		
		3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25
Driven by Core Group	CoP Core Group Monthly Session		■				■				■				■					■				■		
	Quarterly Lunch & Learns													■											■
	Monthly City Insider Communication			■					■				■			■				■					■
External Trainings for Core Group	IDEO: Intro to Human-centered Design	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨															
	U.Lab 1.0	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨												
	Systems Dynamics					▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨							
	Alchemy of Facilitation												▨												
	Human Systems Dynamics													▨											

	DETAILS	Q3												Q4											
		MAR				**APR**					**MAY**				**JUN**				**JULY**					**AUG**		
		4	11	18	25	1	18	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26
Driven by Core Group	CoP Core Group Monthly Session		■				■				■				■					■				■		
	Quarterly Lunch & Learns													■											■
	Monthly City Insider Communication			■					■				■			■				■					■
External Trainings for Core Group																											

Figure 6: Example of CoP Timeline for next 12 months. Future trainings may arise for Q3 and Q4

Conclusion

This document serves as a guide for the Solutions Lab Community of Practice as it continues to evolve over the upcoming year. The plan for building practice and nurturing community has been informed by lessons learned from the first three sessions prototyped in Summer of 2018 and input gathered from current core group members of the CoP. As a CoP's existence relies on the shared commitment and energy of core group members, ultimately it is their influence that will steer the future direction of the SLab CoP. We look forward to continuing to learn and build practice collectively with the core group in the next twelve months and onward.

In SLab's 2.0 version, the CoP has an integral role in building innovation infrastructure within the City of Vancouver and unlocking the potential of CoV staff to build the adaptive leadership and collaboration skills needed to address our complex challenges. As such, the CoP not only serves to meet the specific goals of SLab and CoP individuals; rather, it serves a much greater purpose of nourishing co-creative and collaborative environments within the City that can provide space for CoV staff to generate new knowledge more rapidly than conventional processes. Learning and working in this way is instrumental in understanding problems and developing solutions to address them, as the challenges currently faced in our city—and world— cannot wait.

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