

FINDINGS AND ASSESSMENT:  
INNOVATION LAB FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Prepared for the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation

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- MAPP International Productions (NY)
- Roadside Theater/ Appalshop (KY)
- The Civilians (NY)
- STREB Lab for Action Mechanics (NY)
- HERE Arts Center (NY)
- Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (CA)
- Children’s Theatre Company (MN)
- Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OR)
- Bill T. Jones/ Arnie Zane Dance Company, with Dance Theater Workshop (NY)
- University Musical Society (Ann Arbor, MI)
- Center of Creative Arts – COCA (MO)
- Liz Lerman Dance Exchange (MD)

## Introduction

*“It’s about looking for opportunities to unfreeze the system.”<sup>1</sup>*

Facing changes in the economy, funding streams, technology, and audience engagement, the performing arts field needs innovative approaches to meeting these challenges. Yet given the often boot-strapped nature of their operations, performing arts leaders rarely have the time, space and resources to engage in the in-depth strategic thinking and bold experimentation needed to re-imagine their future. In sponsoring the EmcArts Innovation Lab, DDCF provided leaders just that opportunity—to invent and imagine, to deeply and critically engage their assumptions, beliefs, practices, and business models that tether the field to the past.

The performing arts field can no longer afford to “tinker around the edges.” Consequently, the Innovation Lab was designed to prototype new business models that could ultimately stretch the possibility horizon for the field. To this end, the Lab involved several defining features: 1) the development of multi-constituent Innovation Teams; 2) a five-day off-site intensive retreat to allow for in-depth strategic thinking; 3) the implementation of a prototype or pilot; 4) process facilitation over an extended time period; and 5) funding to support the implementation process.

Innovation is a complex process—characterized by fits and starts of insight; stumbling and triumphs; newly discovered obstacles and opportunities; and ultimately, a deepening understanding of the innovation process and facility with the strategies and tactics needed to bring an innovation to fruition. In this Final Assessment, I consider the Lab’s major contributions to the field as well as more specific measures of Lab success. Throughout, I offer feedback on how the Lab might be improved to leverage further the investment in the program going forward.

## Innovation Lab: Incubator for Field-Level Innovation

*“The process has made innovation seem less revolutionary than before. We can go off to the wild side at will.”*

The Innovation Lab has the potential to have far-reaching impact on the performing arts field. First, several important artistic and organizational innovations that would not otherwise have reached the public arena were designed and prototyped. Second, the Lab graduated a cohort of *catalysts*—leaders who have developed a greater capacity and appreciation for making non-routine projects, change initiatives and innovations happen. Third, the Lab developed grantee organizations’ innovative capacity, seeding the potential for an evergreen stream of innovations in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> All quotes are from grantees’ Innovation Lab team members.

## New Business Models

While every grantee embarked on prototyping innovations that would stretch their organizations, several prototypes offered particularly novel solutions and opportunities for the field, including 1) a new earned income model, 2) a model for merging organizations, 3) models for collaborative creation, and 4) a first-of-its kind script management software.

- ***Developing a new earned-income model***

In light of dwindling contributed income streams, what are the alternatives? Center of Creative Arts in St. Louis (COCA) developed COCABiz, a program designed to integrate arts practice and concepts into leadership development consulting for businesses. To develop this program, the COCA Innovation team, which comprised COCA staff, artists, corporate CEOs and entrepreneurs, worked through differences in language, assumptions and meaning across business and artistic worlds. For example, who are the creativity experts? What do the arts and leadership have in common? What do we mean by creativity? The Lab created the space for COCA to synthesize expertise and experience from across artistic and business worlds, and as a result, forge a new earned-income model that holds great promise for the field.

- ***Mergers: A new structure for sustainability***

A second major breakthrough involved exploring a merger between The Dance Theater Workshop (DTW) and Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company. Strategic partnerships, alliances and mergers can provide a sustainable structure for dance companies as they mature through their lifecycle. Modeled after a French choreographic house, the DTW/Bill T. Jones merger brings together all aspects of the dance ecology under one roof. News of the merger was detailed in a *New York Times* article<sup>2</sup>, including recognition of the role of the EmcArts Innovation Lab program in facilitating the merger discussion.

- ***Collaborative creating: New models for engaging audiences***

With an eye for developing novel and multifaceted strategies for engaging audiences, several grantees developed prototypes that embraced new collaborative approaches to the creative process. To implement its new “kid-centric” strategic mission, the Children’s Theatre Company in Minneapolis harnessed the energy and expertise of an elementary school teacher to develop a novel, school-based approach to engaging students collaboratively in the creative process. HERE Arts Center realized they could best engage their audiences by training their HARP resident artists to be more social media savvy. By decentralizing artistic promotion and audience engagement, HERE is now able to harness the unique personalities and approaches of their artists, empower artists to be more self-sufficient, and better leverage HERE’s time and expertise. Working with Appalshop, Roadside Theater’s solution to reinventing its 30-year old theater involved developing its massively collaborative, interactive *Thousand Kites* website<sup>3</sup> that not only brings together thousands of voices around the criminal justice system, but also has enabled Roadside to raise an additional \$200,000 in funding.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/27/arts/dance/27dtw.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.thousandkites.org/>

- ***Final Draft redux: A breakthrough for theaters***

Theater organizations constantly wrestle with how to manage changes to scripts as directorial and logistical details are worked out. To address this problem, Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF) customized *Final Draft* software to create a version that streamlined script modifications and instantaneously updated all relevant parties involved in the theater’s productions. The idea for the script management tool was borne out of the OSF’s Innovation team’s deep engagement with the complex web of operational and artistic processes that comprised the theater. Participants who had worked with each other for decades noted their surprise at what they learned, “We had no idea [the other person] did that!” OSF successfully tested the software on Artistic Director Bill Rausch’s plays earlier this spring, and OSF’s technology group is working to make the software available to the larger theater community in the near future.

## **A Cohort of Catalysts**

*“I now have expertise in dealing with non-artists, especially board members and community members—that I never had before. I just had a great brainstorming session with a team made up of radically different perspectives, modeled after the session we had during the Lab. It was amazing. I am definitely using the process and this new expertise!”*

Through the Lab, a cadre of leaders gained experience with the entire innovation process arc—from casting a team comprised of diverse perspectives and expertise, to initial brainstorming, to winnowing and refining the idea into concrete actionable steps, to securing buy-in from key stakeholders, to ultimately implementing and assessing their pilots. Having a cohort of leaders who can mentor others who are navigating the innovation life cycle is an invaluable resource for the field. Ideally, the individual expertise, passion and experience of these leaders can be further transformed into a *community of practice*—a community of innovators who exchange ideas, collectively challenge prevailing assumptions and support each others’ experimentation in an effort to further move the field forward.

## **Long-Term Innovative Capacity**

*“We now have the permission and room for innovation to happen.”*

The Lab not only developed individual leaders’ agility in leading innovation, but also laid the groundwork for creating organizations that can imagine and implement innovations. The Lab provided participants specific techniques and processes for brainstorming ideas, refining action plans, implementing pilots, and engaging in continuous learning that they could bring back to their organizations. Further, participants developed a culture of openness to interrogating assumptions, risk-taking and experimentation that could shape their organizations going forward. Participants noted that they re-learned how to listen to each other, developed a greater willingness to share and explore “wild” ideas, and developed the ability to probe underlying assumptions and behaviors that had limited their organizations’ ability to innovate in the past.

Defining innovation in terms of discontinuous practice required grantee organizations to consider ideas that had previously been seen as “off the table”—either because participants

thought the ideas would not be embraced by stakeholders, might not work, or were beyond the current organizational capacity. As innovation teams worked through real and assumed constraints to innovation, many grantees realized their work involved more than a single prototype or pilot. Instead, their prototypes were the beginning of a long-term strategic reorientation around a new business model and refinement of the organization's core mission. Thus, while innovation was originally conceived of as isolated, containable programs, grantees realized they were involved in a more robust and larger embedded change effort that would stretch over several years. The Lab, then, not only provided techniques and processes, but also helped grantees establish new strategic frames within which further improvisation, prototyping and learning could occur and be continuously pursued over time.

## Insights: Innovation within the Performing Arts

By defining innovation in terms of discontinuous practice, EmcArts encouraged Lab participants to lay bare their assumptions and truly think beyond what they knew would succeed. Similarly, one could argue that the Lab itself was an example of engaging in discontinuous practice—at the field level. Here I highlight several nuanced insights emerging from the Lab that are of relevance to organizations across the performing arts.

### **The Paradox of Innovation: Returning to the Core Mission**

*"We have our strategic plan to improvise within for the next five years."*

The Lab challenged participants to focus deeply on their organizations' unique core missions and capabilities as they considered "wild and crazy new ideas." This revelation was surprising to grantees since the Lab was supposed to be about innovation and change, pilots and prototypes. Discontinuous practice, then, did not translate into simply adopting the latest new idea or adopting what another organization found successful. Instead, innovation was deeply rooted in the unique expertise, culture and relationships of particular organizations.

With this deeper understanding and appreciation, grantees noted they could make more judicious decisions regarding the benefit and "fit" of future pilots and programs. The philosophy underpinning this revelation gives particular credibility to the Innovation Lab program and provides a needed antidote to the general trend of throwing resources, time and energy toward flavor-of-the-month initiatives that seem attractive in the face of turbulent times.

### **Leveraging Untapped Expertise: Board Members**

The Lab also revealed an untapped resource for the field and its efforts to innovate: board members. Several leaders remarked that the Lab forced them to confront a deeply-held practice of keeping board members at arms' length—presenting the best possible report to them at regular points in time. Board members were seen in aggregate, as approvers and auditors. The Lab forced profound shifts in board member engagement. First, by revealing the "constraints and weaknesses" of the organization, select board members were brought into the organiza-

tion's problem-solving process. Second, board members who attended the retreat had a better appreciation for how radical ideas could forge the solution to these problems. Armed with this understanding, these board members were able to help teams obtain the buy-in of other board members and key stakeholders during the Lab's implementation phase. Third, individual board members were now seen as a source of expertise who could be brought in to springboard and sustain the organization's success over time.

Going forward, performing art leaders would benefit from exploring ways to harness the untapped expertise of their board members. Further, the field should explore ways to bring select board members into discussions about the challenges facing the field—inviting them to yearly conferences, professional meetings, workshops, etc.

## Engaging Expertise across the Innovation Lifecycle

Innovation involves a broad arc of activities—from idea generation to idea refinement, prototype design, securing buy in, implementation, assessment, and ongoing re-evaluation. Participants found that the innovation process demanded differing capabilities and expertise over time. Performing arts leaders, especially those leading smaller organizations, needed to build a web of expertise and experience, including not only organizational members but also board members, community members, and other leaders in the field, whom they could draw upon. Leaders of innovation thus become the *nexus* of a network of expertise—a network comprised of individuals who might not necessarily identify as a “team,” nor who are under the leaders' authority, but who are brought together as needed around the innovation process.

## Program Assessment

*“We have used the Innovation Lab as a jumping off point for new program work, fund raising and developing new internal structures.”*

*“The Lab “fast-forwarded our work” and “was so much what we needed to be doing.”*

Overall, the Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts was a positive, transformational experience for participants: 100% of the thirteen project leaders<sup>4</sup> stated they would recommend the Lab to their peers—despite the considerable time and commitment required. However, several leaders noted that prospective grantees should be prepared for the intense time commitment to make the Lab successful, and be aware that additional funding may need to be raised to bring larger innovation projects to scale. The Lab was invaluable to those organizations whose long-term strategic thinking had previously taken a back seat to fighting fires, and provided leaders positive leverage with other foundations and individuals who had yet to “buy in” to their innovative ideas.

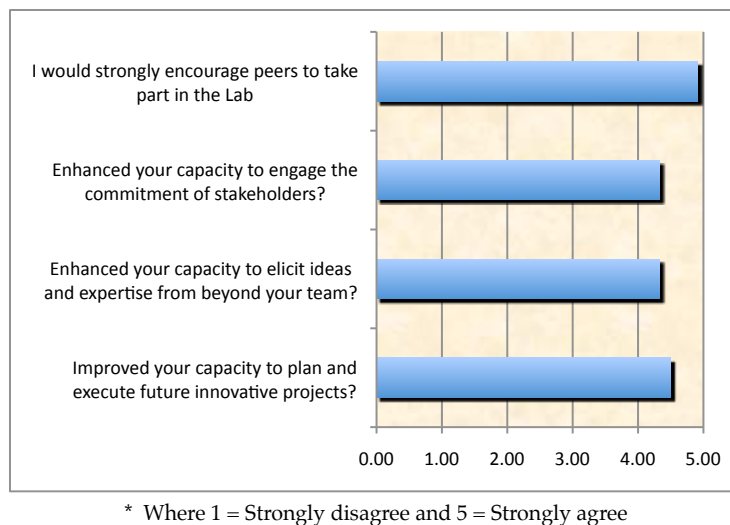
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<sup>4</sup> While there were twelve Lab project teams, I interviewed both team leaders from the Bill T.Jones/DTW merger—thus raising the number of leaders to thirteen.



In this section I focus more specifically on the effectiveness of the Lab to enable participants to plan and execute innovations. As summarized in Figure 1, several questions inform an overall assessment of the Lab in this regard. First, when asked whether involvement in the Innovation Lab improved their organizations’ capacity to plan and execute innovative projects in the future, twelve out of thirteen leaders agreed or strongly agreed (4/13 and 8/13, respectively). Second, leaders agreed (8/13) or strongly agreed (4/13) that the Lab enhanced their ability to engage the commitment of key stakeholders for innovation. Another sign of overall innovative capacity is whether the Lab enhanced their capacity to elicit ideas and expertise from those on and beyond the innovation team. Eleven out of thirteen leaders agreed (4/13) or strongly agreed (7/13) with this statement, with the others noting they entered the Lab with strong capacity in this regard. One leader noted, “We are now open to the idea of hiring in contract workers and consultants who bring the skills we need into a given project. The Innovation Lab provided a space for us to develop this within our organizational and creative process.”

**Figure 1: Overall Assessment—Did the Lab Enhance Innovative Capacity?\***



While these measures provide an overall assessment, in the next section I look more closely at five features of the program design that were considered to be particularly salient to these outcomes: 1) the development of an Innovation Team; 2) the Intensive Retreat; 3) the prototype or pilot; 4) EmcArts’ process facilitation; and 5) funding.

## Developing the Innovation Team

At the core of the Lab was the development of multi-constituent Innovation Teams. While the strength of these teams lay in their diverse perspectives, this diversity could also become problematic. Successful team development was evidenced by a shared understanding of the team and innovation’s purpose, clarity of the unique roles individuals would play on the project, candid exchange of ideas, a culture of inquiry, and an understanding of how the project would proceed. In this section I examine the extent to which innovation teams developed along these dimensions during the Lab.

## **1. Were multi-constituent innovation teams created and made operational?**

*“We now understand it as a collaborative process, with more stakeholders involved in decision making and allowing people to buy in.”*

While teams varied widely in terms of the constituency of their teams, with some leaning toward more staff members and others toward board members, all of the teams had some level of diversity. The Lab requirement that the innovation team must include non-staff members was incredibly potent since it 1) expanded the role and commitment of involved board members and artists and 2) leveraged an “outsider, yet insider” perspective on the grantees’ strengths and constraints. The selection of the right board members, artists and other external parties was key, and grantees appreciated coaching in this area. Grantees also noted the importance of having visiting or guest artists on the team. They not only provided fresh perspective, but also knew the organization well enough to be able to draw conclusions and point out organizational assumptions and practices.

## **2. Did teams show positive overall changes in their team dynamics?**

*“We are listening now. Ideas are not automatically shot down.”*

While productive team building and interaction is critical to all aspects of the innovation process, the majority of the Lab’s team building focused on the initial innovation team involved in strategic planning and ideation of the innovation prototype. As such, this assessment focuses on team dynamics among members of the innovation team. However, to the extent that other individuals were involved in implementation, the Lab currently does not have a strong framework for developing their relationship with the “original” team—especially external constituents who were not immediately involved in Phase 3 implementation.

Team building in the Innovation Lab pertained to two specific relational processes: 1) addressing dysfunctional communication habits and power dynamics within the grantee organization—including among staff and between top leadership; and 2) developing productive relationships among team members who had *not* worked together previously—i.e., between staff and artists, board members and consultants.

Some of the grantee organizations entered with healthy, productive habits of interacting. For example, one organization demonstrated a Quaker practice of agreeing with one another, “That friend speaks my mind.” On the other hand, other teams entered the Lab with staff interactions that could undermine, if not derail, their innovation efforts. For example, one participant described his organization’s interactions as exhibiting a “ladder of passive-aggressiveness.” Other teams experienced great frustration when building relationships with external constituencies— limiting the potential to harness their needed expertise and outside perspective.

The Lab, and especially the Intensive Retreat, was a uniquely visceral experience that was invaluable for illuminating needed change in organizational and team roles, communication dynamics, and organizational culture. All of the teams ultimately had the “a-ha” moment when they became a team and worked together. However, the later this occurred at the Intensive, the less likely teams were to have a detailed and robust implementation plan.

Survey results from the beginning of the Lab and at the end of the Intensive show that all teams experienced marked improvement along key indicators of positive team dynamics, such as the ability to exchange and respect differing perspectives; a strong sense of team spirit; the ability to bring up difficult problems; and a rating of overall team effectiveness. For ease of presentation, I show averages across the 12 organizations.

Table 1: Assessing Positive Team Dynamics\*

	Start of Lab	Post Intensive
The differing perspectives of team members is encouraged and seriously considered.	3.2	3.8
At this point I feel a strong sense of team spirit.	3.3	3.8
Members of this team are able to bring up problems and tough issues.	3.3	3.8
Our team works together effectively	2.3	3.2

\* Where 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree and 4 = Strongly agree

Marked improvement was evident in other indicators of positive team dynamics, including clarity about goals and purpose; clarity about one's roles, responsibilities and the tasks ahead; clarity about how the team can work together; and the ability to assess progress.

Table 2: Assessing Clarity Regarding Team Roles, Responsibilities and the Work Ahead\*

	Pre-Intensive	Post-Intensive
The goals and purpose of the innovation itself	--	3.9
My role and responsibilities in developing the innovation	3.2	3.6
My role and responsibilities in implementing the innovation	2.7	3.2
The roles and responsibilities of other team members in developing the innovation	2.9	3.5
The roles and responsibilities of other team members in implementing the innovation	2.7	3.2
The tasks that remain to prepare for implementation	2.3	3.3
How my team can optimally work together to implement the innovation	2.3	3.2
The ways we will be able to assess our progress.	2.4	3.0

\* Where 1 = Very unclear and 4 = Very clear

A final set of indicators also showed participants’ increased confidence in the capacity to accomplish the goals of the Lab and increased personal commitment to the work ahead.

Table 3: Assessing Confidence and Commitment in the Work Ahead\*

	Pre-Intensive	Post-Intensive
How confident are you in your organization's capacity to accomplish its project goals?	3.2	3.5
How personally committed are you to this project right now?	3.6	3.8

\* Where 1 = Not at all and 4 = Very

### Recommendations

- While it was invaluable to have artists, board members and other outsiders (often entrepreneurs) on the Lab team, grantees expressed that it was often a huge burden for these key individuals to be at the Intensive for the five days. While a stipend is available for artists to attend, it might be useful to consider providing a stipend to certain non-staff Team members on an as-needed basis.
- Much closer attention needs to be paid to potential negative power dynamics that might arise between corporate board members and grantee staff and artists—prior to attending the Intensive. Candid exchange of ideas was limited in some cases where staff members did not feel comfortable challenging board members or when staff lacked facility in contributing in large, group strategy meetings vis-a-vis their corporate team members.
- Teams who included organizational development consultants greatly benefited from their expertise. Where possible, it could be useful to engage consultants on the Innovation team who can complement the work of EmcArts during the implementation phase.
- I highly recommend that all participants read Liz Lerman’s *Critical Response Process* book prior to attending the Intensive. The book explicitly deals with the challenge of giving and receiving feedback in the performing arts and would spur reflection on dysfunctional interaction habits prior to entering the Intensive.

### Intensive Retreats

*“The intensive laid incredibly important groundwork in terms of trust and communication.”*

*“It was the most incredible work-related experience I’ve ever had. Tough conversations and working through those issues—just amazing.”*

Many of the grantees expressed that they were initially cynical about the Intensive—a cynicism borne out of a deep distrust of consultants. One leader captured this sentiment: “We had seen consultants’ work before. But by mid-day of the first day [of the Intensive], we knew this wasn’t going to be your grandma’s retreat.” While many also initially felt that it was

“outrageous” to spend five days at the retreat, grantees strongly agreed that it was definitely worth the time, effort and commitment of resources to attend. For some grantees, the retreat was the first opportunity to take time away from the office together. The ability to focus deeply on organizational issues, the details of the pilot, and the “Whys of what we were doing” was incredibly invigorating. In retrospect, grantees generally agreed that five days was the right duration for the retreat. Based on the Lab experience, several grantees noted they were committed to making the space for annual organizational retreats—“island time”—going forward.

Having a pilot to talk through during the Lab gave needed traction and focus to what could have been merely abstract discussions. It was through the specific discussions around the pilots that differences in assumptions and tensions arising among participants were illuminated and worked through.

Grantees felt they absolutely needed their EmcArts process facilitator to help manage their Intensive conversations. Leaders sensed that there were too many ideas and relational dynamics at play to stay objective; process facilitators played a critical role in managing the conversation, helping the team transition when needed from dead ends, and keeping the team oriented toward their goals. In addition, three other aspects of the Lab played a large role at the Intensive.

### **1. Were appropriate data collection and external research completed?**

EmcArts encouraged all of the grantees to engage in data collection and external research where appropriate. In retrospect, however, certain data collection efforts seemed to bear more fruit than others. Data collection included surveys or basic research conducted prior to the Intensive as a way to gain traction on the innovation concept. For some grantees, data collection was especially useful. The data provided a needed counterpoint to existing assumptions and served as a way for participants to move beyond opinion-based interaction and discussion at the Intensive. However, given that this data often was not rigorously collected, participants needed to be reminded of the limits of this data.

Pilots were also a source of data. The grantees who were able to conduct pilots prior to the Intensive found these to be an incredible springboard for their Intensive retreat. All of the grantees noted that the learning and insights from prototyping during Phase 3 were invaluable; grantees who were able to conduct mini-programmatic pilots early on and prior to the Intensive benefited even more so in this regard.

### **2. Were the content experts chosen by the teams of value to them?**

Grantees who utilized their content experts were generally thrilled with them—especially the Civilians, who were able to turn their content expert into a future collaborative venture partner!

While some grantees appreciated the process of identifying their content experts, leaders often struggled with whom to utilize and several of them did not utilize content experts at all. However, board members and volunteers were often an incredible source of content expertise for the Innovation Team. EmcArts may want to consider allowing organizations to utilize

content expert funds for stipends for board members or volunteers with specific expertise to add to the team, who otherwise may not be able to attend. This would also enable the content expert to be a long-term team participant who could continue their work with the grantee into the future.

### **3. Value of other consultants?**

The Intensive also included a workshop and customized coaching by communication consultant Phil McArthur. McArthur's content was viewed as important—many participants still referenced his “ladder of inference”—however nearly all of the Round 1 and 2 participants described his approach as “corporate” and perhaps needing to be adapted for performing arts organizations. This feedback appears to have taken hold in Round 3, whose participants rated McArthur very highly (4s and 5s, where 5 is extremely valuable).

#### ***Recommendations***

- Several project leaders highly recommended giving the teams a greater sense of what to expect at the Intensive, especially the difficulties, “intense moments” and “tipping points” that every team works through as part of the innovation process. For example, every group experienced a transition—whether focused on relationships, task or process—at the midpoint of the Intensive.
- Several project leaders recommended having a change consultant session early on during the workshop at the Intensive to complement the “difficult conversations” coaching offered by Phil McArthur.
- Many of the larger organizations benefited from talking through an inventory of what was involved in the day-to-day operations of the organization. What are the respective constraints and wishes of respective departments? Simply understanding the organizational reality faced by fellow staff members was invaluable. Could this “inventory process” become a professional development workshop offered at the annual or regional conferences?
- EmcArts and/or DDCF might want to develop a “go-to” resource pool of experts, such as a data collection/methods expert; social media expert; website developer; and funders or investors to help grantees identify content experts. To the extent that cohorts might be clustered along certain innovation categories, bringing in content experts who rotated through the teams during the Intensive could also be a useful approach.

### **Prototypes and Pilots**

*“We’re conditioned to show metrics of success. The Doris Duke program is unique in that they want you to push boundaries. We entered into a dialogue about, “This might fail!” For us it was an amazing experience and it will have a positive impact for the organization going forward.”*

Grantees agreed that the requirement to implement a pilot/prototype as part of the Lab was critical to its transformative power. Phase 3 was described as difficult. While most of the pilots

involved specific, concrete “tasks”—such as developing a website or producing a new program or event—many of the pilots also required change in cultural beliefs and practices and the need to introduce new decision and communication systems to the organizations.

**1. Did each innovation team focus and refine their ideas into a clear strategy for investment of time and resources?**

The specificity of teams’ plans leading out of the Intensive varied widely—both in terms of understanding exactly what needed to be done and how they would accomplish it. As one would expect, those who were not able to come up with a specific plan struggled more with maintaining momentum during Phase 3. They had not fully worked through how they were going to keep momentum going, and/or underestimated the amount of work and resources required by their prototypes. Teams that had to work through relational or communication dysfunction at the Intensive were also more likely to have a less fully articulated implementation strategy.

When project leaders were asked in retrospect whether the Intensive experience had prepared them for the challenges of Phase 3, only three of the twelve (3/12) project teams strongly agreed. Six out of twelve teams (6/12) agreed, while three were neutral (3/12).

Of note, as summarized in Table 4, participants were not very clear about the resources needed for implementation and assessment, both in terms of exactly what was needed and where these resources would come from.

Table 4: Clarity regarding Resources for Implementation and Evaluation\*

	Pre-Intensive	Post-Intensive
The resources needed to implement and/or sustain the innovation	2.4	3.1
The resources needed to evaluate the success of our innovation	2.2	2.8

\* Where 1 = Very unclear and 4 = Very clear

**2. Were the emerging innovations prototyped in an adequate fashion, and strategy revisions made as needed?**

*“We know we need to test our assumptions. Our prototype was invaluable for that.”*

All of the teams have prototyped, or are in the process of prototyping, some aspect of their innovation. Some of the smaller scale programmatic pilots were easier to pull off and thus learn from than others. For example, STREB was able to prototype a teen night early on and learn that it needed to revise its strategy and assumptions. Other grantees, such as the Children’s Theatre Company, successfully brought their classroom program to fruition, but realized that scaling the concept would be difficult; they are now in the process of exploring a second, website-oriented prototype, but this has not been developed enough to evaluate. University Musical Society’s (UMS) Lobby program has been successful for certain programming, but it remains to be seen how it will work for the spectrum of UMS performances.

As EmcArts and DDCF evaluate creating a “hard stop” around Phase 3 as a way to keep momentum going, they will want to consider how to build in smaller prototyping projects and how grantees can make sense of what they are learning along the way. Several grantees found data reporting around their pilots to be tedious and premature—the implementation cycle was not long enough to give a true assessment of the innovation. Going forward, it will be useful to consider the nature and type of reporting—especially for larger-scale projects.

### **3. Were organizations ready and capable for Phase 3 selected for participation?**

One of the hidden values of the EmcArts Innovation Lab is the thorough screening and coaching of applicants during the pre-selection process. This approach helps provide a more rigorous, up-close assessment of grantees’ readiness and capability on three dimensions. First, that grantees understood and embraced the more rigorous definition of innovation—discontinuous practice—established by EmcArts, and had conceived of an innovation that could indeed potentially provide a new business model for the field.

The second consideration is whether participants had the organizational resources—human, processual, financial—to bring the innovation to fruition. These resources are often more difficult to assess up front. In some cases, grantees lacked the slack human resources needed to fully gain traction on their implementation phase. This was particularly the case for smaller organizations who embarked on developing new websites where all of their venture/implementation money went to external website development. The additional staffing needed to manage the conception of the website and develop non-website processes and programs that rounded out the innovation strategy was lacking. One challenge, then, is to consider how to support smaller organizations embarking on website development—to ensure that these grantees are able to fully implement their innovation strategy—not only the website, but the portfolio of programs that work in concert with the strategy.

A third consideration is the interpersonal capacity of participants involved in all aspects of the Innovation process. Given the program’s new insight that the innovation lab team composition might change dramatically over time—as the project moves from brainstorming to conceptualization to implementation, potential grantees should be evaluated for their capacity and interpersonal dynamics among participants involved in all phases of innovation, including implementation positions staffed for the essential work done after the Intensive retreat.

### **4. Were plans for full implementation drawn up by the end of Phase 3 of the Lab?**

Many of the grantees were still in the process of implementing their prototype at the time of this report, and as a result, not all of the organizations had full implementation plans drawn up. To the extent that the time horizon and funding of the Lab allowed for implementation of a prototype; development of a full implementation proposal is best suited for the application for “Phase 4” funding through the additional grant program offered by DDCF.

#### ***Recommendations***

- Given the considerable organizational challenges facing grantees during Phase 3, enough time should be spent at the Intensive or at the very beginning of the phase: 1) creating a plan



for eliciting the support of those not at the intensive; 2) detailing very concrete steps and a team meeting schedule to continue momentum after the fantastic retreat; 3) establishing a strategy for how to best utilize the EmcArts process facilitator during the hard work of implementing the prototype; and 4) determining a series of smaller pilots and milestones that could be used to evaluate progress and offer moments for learning.

- Of note, one area for improvement involves developing a strategy for engaging the entire organization post-Intensive. Many participants responded that upon return from the Intensive, people who had not attended were 1) jealous, 2) thought that the hard work was already over when in fact it had just begun, and 3) did not understand the great leap in thinking that had occurred during the Intensive. At the Intensive, it would be useful if grantees planned for meeting(s) to present the ideas to top leadership and/or the board, with the EmcArts process facilitator present. Teams should also plan their strategy for engaging the larger organizational constituency, a point I develop further in the next bullet. The support of the process facilitator during the implementation phase is invaluable.
- It is critical to create a shared narrative around the innovation upon return from the Intensive. Participants noted that other people brought their own interpretations to the project and did not understand the new thinking as deeply as those who were at the Intensive. Project leaders felt it was important to maintain the essence of the innovation while also bringing new people in. In response to this challenge, one of the grantees created a shared narrative through a process akin to telling of the “hero’s journey and coming home.” As appropriate, EmcArts might connect with the organizational design consultant that led that session and offer this as part of their Phase 3 consulting work going forward.

## Process facilitators

*“Our facilitator helped us navigate our peaks and valleys. He was the reason why we were able to get where we got.”*

EmcArts process facilitators provided their expertise to a broad swath of performing arts organizations during the application process. This Pre-Phase 1 of the Lab is an invaluable resource for the field—helping organizations challenge their assumptions and critically evaluate their organizational readiness.

In this section, I examine whether EmcArts process facilitators were effective in guiding the work of each Innovation Team. Overall, leaders (10/13) rated their process facilitators as extremely invaluable—“excellent, excellent facilitators and coaches.” Facilitators were particularly invaluable to leaders as they worked through difficult moments and potential roadblocks. One leader noted, “He was so diplomatic, experienced, rational and reasoned.” Another leader reflected, “He brought a deep tool bag on navigating roadblocks and making organizational moves within the realities of non-profit arts organizations. We are still utilizing some of his notions and insights in our day-to-day operations.”

In general, process facilitators earned consistently ecstatic reviews from their respective grantee organizations, generating such comments as:

- *“Our facilitator was amazing!”*
- *“Our facilitator was extremely helpful preparing us for both the Intensive and the organizational work which occurred afterward.”*
- *“Professional, thoughtful, deep, and organizational intelligence are a few ways I would characterize our facilitator.”*

However, some grantee organizations expressed concern about their facilitator’s ability to anticipate and navigate tensions at the Intensive. These cases involved a larger number of strong corporate board personalities on the team. Uneven power dynamics, coupled with conflicting assumptions and practices held by various participants resulted in spiraling tensions. Each of the cases reached a crescendo late in the Intensive, leading participants to feel they had huge “A-ha” moments after their breakthrough. However, participants candidly noted that the board members were the key to moving these conversations forward. To the extent that organizations might want to take advantage of board expertise, process facilitators should be more prepared to tackle power and professional contests.

### **Recommendations**

- As noted earlier, participants felt more facilitation during Phase 3 would be invaluable. Grantees recommended holding an initial post-retreat team meeting just a few weeks after returning from the Intensive to check in about “messaging” and obtaining buy-in from staff and board members who did not attend the retreat. Leveraging the process facilitators in meetings to elicit buy-in was viewed as a particularly effective strategy.
- EmcArts’ proposal to institute phone-based check-ins among different grantee leaders to maintain momentum is an excellent idea. This will free up EmcArts facilitators to engage in more strategic, high profile facilitation as needed, as well as provide on-the-fly personal advice to project leaders during Phase 3.

## **Program Logistics and Funding**

As summarized in the section below, the logistics of the program were manageable for grantees, and as noted earlier, worth the time, energy and commitment. Perspectives on funding ranged broadly, as detailed below.

### **1. Process and Logistics**

- Grantees did not find the application process burdensome (4.2/5, where 5 is the application process was not at all burdensome).
- Grantees found the logistics around the Lab to be reasonable (3.8/5, where 5 is it was extremely easy to arrange logistics around the Lab).
- Grantees found it was very easy to receive the grant money from EmcArts (4.6/5, where 5 is extremely easy).

## 2. Were financial resources sufficient or constraining?

*"We were able to leverage several hundred thousand dollars for the overall implementation of our innovation. The seed funds from the grant were key in this process."*

*"We will need some serious financial support to move this ahead - it would have been nice if there had been the opportunity to apply for a large-scale implementation grant."*

Innovation requires taking risks. However, financial constraints often preclude performing arts organizations from taking needed business risks. The funding accompanying the program enabled the grantees to take risk—and learn from the experience. Yet the Lab unfolded at the same time funding was contracting. In consideration of the difficulties that organizations were facing in the current economic climate, DDCF offered grantees an additional \$7,750 in general operating support grants—with no further requirements.

Depending on the nature of the pilot, grantees also needed to consider the extent of organizational "slack" (human, material, financial resources, etc.) available to put their pilots in place. For example, development of a new website could easily eat up the bulk of pilot funding, leaving little monies left to fund additional staff needed to put the pilots into action. Organizations already stretched thin with few employees had minimal "slack" to dedicate to their pilots. One challenge, then, is to consider how to support smaller organizations embarking on website development—to ensure that they are able to fully implement their innovation strategy.

One of the greatest innovation challenges is to move from prototyping to more full-blown implementation and organizational change. To continue their support of grantees' innovation lab work beyond the prototyping phase, DDCF has developed a new program, *Continuing Innovation*. Innovation Lab grantees are eligible to apply for the competitive program that will award up to 18 months of support to organizations wishing to take their organizational change to the next stage. Only organizations that have completed the EmcArts Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts, the Creative Campus Innovation Program (administered by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters), the Jazz.Next program (administered by Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation), the Engaging Dance Audiences program (administered by Dance/USA) and several past recipients of DDCF's Fund for National Projects are eligible to apply by invitation. Grant amounts will range from \$25,000- \$120,000 per grantee organization over the 18-month grant period to help organizations continue progress in the project originally launched with DDCF help. Grantees will be required to match DDCF funds at a 1:2 ratio over the grant period (e.g., grant recipients who receive the maximum grant award will be required to provide a match of \$60,000 for a \$120,000 grant.) Of note, several of the Innovation Lab grantees have already translated the initial DDCF seed money into other grants and venture money to further expand and enrich their innovations.

## Bringing Lessons to the Field

Given its reflexive nature, the Lab has great promise as a learning laboratory—building knowledge and practice around how innovation can be uniquely fostered within the performing arts. EmcArts began bringing its lessons to the field during the application process—helping a broad swath of organizations challenge their assumptions and critically evaluate their organizational readiness. Grantees and EmcArts are already sharing insights from the Lab with the broader performing arts field at conferences, workshops and roundtables. EmcArts is expected to develop web and multi-media based materials in the future.

Building a community of practice around innovation is an important next step in harnessing the expertise developed in the Lab. The field would only benefit from knowledge sharing across cohorts of the Lab, the foundations' other innovation program grantees, and other leaders deeply interested in change and innovation. What are the common challenges? What insights can be integrated across programs and types of innovation? What are the common leadership development opportunities? How can we share insights from the personal coaching more broadly? For example, how do leaders identify and address dysfunctional communication habits and power dynamics that limit innovation? How can leaders develop productive relationships among team members who have *not* worked together previously—i.e., staff and artists, board members and consultants—especially when they have strong differences in opinions, assumptions and power? As one leader reflected, “Our coach brought a deep tool bag on navigating roadblocks and making organizational moves within the realities of non-profit arts organizations. We are still utilizing some of his notions and insights in our day-to-day operations.”

EmcArts' recent proposal to have project leaders commit to ongoing phone calls during the difficult prototyping phase is an excellent way to start building a more robust community of practice within cohorts in subsequent rounds of the Lab. Going forward in the Continuing Innovation program, grantees will be expected to participate in a learning cohort, which involves attending 2-3 meetings in New York and participation in cohort decision making (including the cohort's determination of use of an additional \$75,000 of funds designated for cohort learning).

Other low-cost mechanisms can help share knowledge around innovation, such as a mentorship program developed across cohorts and programs or a Lab blog or wiki that enabled leaders across the performing arts to ask questions and share information with each other. The wiki might focus on more general innovation topics, such as finding and utilizing content experts, collecting and analyzing data, selling the innovation across the organization, and managing change.

Taken together, these opportunities offer great promise for leveraging the lessons learned in the Innovation Lab to their fullest extent across the field.

# Appendix I: Summary of Methodological Approach

The assessment of the EmcArts Innovation Lab involved a multi-method approach, synthesizing findings from interview, observation (where possible) and survey data.

## Surveys

Surveys were used to provide interim feedback to EmcArts and to capture quantitative measures of team progress and individual growth. Surveys were administered at four points:

1. At the beginning of Phase 1
2. At the start of the Intensive Retreat
3. At the close of the Intensive Retreat
4. Toward the end of Phase 3

## **Survey Assessment Framework**

Survey questions were used to quantitatively evaluate the Lab along the following dimensions:

- 1. Bringing together expertise: Team composition**  
*Analyzed over time, these questions shed light on how involvement in the EmcArts lab contributes to the development of a robust, multi-faceted innovation team.*
- 2. Team dynamics and learning behavior**  
*Analyzed over time, these questions shed light on how involvement in the EmcArts program fosters productive team building and interaction.*
- 3. Engaging the commitment of key stakeholders**  
*At the heart of bringing innovation and change to fruition is the ability to identify key stakeholders, understand their interests/concerns, and engage their commitment. Analyzed over time, the following questions shed light on how involvement in the EmcArts program fosters the teams' ability to identify and engage key stakeholders.*
- 4. Understanding and evaluating innovation/change**  
*Innovation requires the capacity to compare across alternatives and identify the range of potential challenges and opportunities facing an innovation project. Analyzed over time, the following questions shed light on how involvement in the EmcArts program fosters the teams' ability to assess the viability of their projects and understand critical constraints to innovation.*
- 5. Evaluation of EmcArts coaching**  
*These questions assess the important role of the EmcArts coach in helping guide teams through the innovation process.*
- 6. Perceived progress and support**  
*These questions shed light on ebbs and flows in support and progress over the innovation lifecycle.*

### Observation of the Intensive Retreats

As part of the evaluation process, it was invaluable to observe an “intensive retreat” first-hand. I had the opportunity to observe the second cohort retreat in June 2009. During the retreat I had the chance to observe all of the Innovation teams for extended periods of time. I also had the opportunity to chat informally with participants about their experience at mealtimes and after hours at the bar. At the end of each day I attended the EmcArts debrief sessions and then typed up my field notes for the day.

### Interviews

I conducted in-depth, one-on-one interviews with Innovation Team members toward the end of their respective Innovation Labs. Interviews were invaluable for understanding exactly how involvement in the Innovation Lab program shaped teams’ innovation efforts, including critical moments of learning and progress. In the interviews, I also inquired about the value of certain unique aspects of the Innovation Lab, including the Intensive Retreats, the use of content experts, and the availability of financial grants.

I conducted interviews both in-person and over the phone. Working with EmcArts, I selected four organizations for site visits where I conducted interviews *in person*. In selecting organizations to visit, I chose organizations that were viewed by EmcArts as “progressing very well” and those that “may be struggling.” Sampling on performance/progress helped provide insight into the effectiveness of the program under different contexts and circumstances. During site visits, I interviewed as many team members as possible. I conducted one-on-one interviews over the phone with project team leaders from each of the remaining organizations.

## Appendix II: Initial Baseline Survey

Dear Innovation Lab grantee:

Thank you for filling out this program assessment survey. The survey includes 30 multiple choice questions, which should take you approximately ten minutes to complete. I have also included an open-ended space at the end of each page (6 pages) for any further comments or reflections you may have regarding the Lab or specific questions. At this early stage, many of the questions may seem to be a stretch for your team—that is OK! Many of the questions will serve as a baseline assessment.

Your specific responses will remain anonymous; responses aggregated at the team level will be shared with EmcArts to provide interim feedback to them. If you have any questions regarding the survey, please do not hesitate to email me:  
elizabeth.l.lingo@vanderbilt.edu.

Thank you. I look forward to meeting you!  
Warm regards, Elizabeth

### **Intro**

1. With which grantee organization are you affiliated?

### **Team composition**

2. I understand the unique contributions (e.g., skills, knowledge, relationships, and expertise) that each person brings to the team.
3. We have examined whether we have the right people on our team for the planning work ahead.
4. We have examined whether we have the right people on our team for the prototyping or implementation work ahead.
5. We have examined the types of “outside” experts we will want to consult on this project.
6. We have a plan in place to identify and secure people needed on the team.
7. Please add any comments or suggestions below.

### **Team dynamics**

8. At this point I feel a strong sense of team spirit.
9. The differing perspectives of team members are encouraged and seriously considered.
10. People in this team regularly speak up to test assumptions about issues under discussion.
11. Members of this team are able to bring up problems and tough issues.
12. Our team meetings are filled with many opinions, but no questions.
13. It is difficult to ask other members of this team for help.
14. We take time out to improve our team’s work processes.
15. We seek out new information that leads us to make important changes.
16. Our team members treat the constraints and suggestions of others NOT on the team with respect.

17. Please add any comments or suggestions below.

### **Stakeholders**

- 18. I understand who the key parties are for making this innovation happen.
- 19. I understand why key parties do and do not support this innovation.
- 20. We have a compelling story to tell about our innovation.
- 21. We have strategically communicated our progress to key parties.
- 22. Please add any comments or suggestions below.

### **Innovation**

- 23. I am clear about the purpose of our proposed innovation(s).
- 24. We have conducted an adequate investigation of how our innovation and approach compares/contrasts with other relevant innovations or initiatives.
- 25. We have assessed the potential constraints and opportunities for change in our organization (e.g., “structural,” cultural, technological, relational).
- 26. We have developed plans to address any constraints.
- 27. We have the skills and knowledge to evaluate the merit of different innovation approaches or alternatives.
- 28. We have assessed why problems have occurred, or why the project is not unfolding as planned.
- 29. We have developed metrics for evaluating the impact and success of our innovation.
- 30. Please add any comments or suggestions below.

### **EmcArts coaching**

- 31. Our EmcArts coach is available for consultation on problems.
- 32. Suggestions by our EmcArts coach have helped us manage critical moments in our innovation process.
- 33. Please add any comments or suggestions below.

### **Organizational support**

- 34. Our team is receiving adequate resources (training, time, people and financial) to develop our innovation project.
- 35. Our team is receiving a lot of encouragement from our organizational members.
- 36. Our team is receiving a lot of encouragement from our board.
- 37. Please add any comments or suggestions below.

Thank you for your time and energy dedicated to this survey.

I look forward to meeting you at the retreat. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or suggestions.

Best regards,  
Elizabeth Long Lingo, PhD

[elizabeth.l.lingo@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:elizabeth.l.lingo@vanderbilt.edu)



# Appendix III: Pre-Intensive Survey

## BASELINE ASSESSMENT- INNOVATION LAB INTENSIVE RETREAT

*This is the second of four questionnaires in which you will be asked to participate during your involvement in the Innovation Lab. The purpose of these questionnaires is to assess your perceptions during different stages of your organization’s innovation work.*

*To preserve your anonymity we are not requesting your name. However, please indicate your organizational affiliation so that we can share aggregated feedback with each Innovation Lab team. Thank you for your cooperation!*

Today’s date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Please check the grantee organization with which you are affiliated:

- The Children’s Theatre
- HERE
- Oregon Shakespeare Festival
- Yerba Buena

2. Do you have a clearly established innovation team?

- Yes
- No

3. Which team-building areas are most important for your team to work on during this week’s Intensive Retreat? (Please check the appropriate box.)

	Very Important	Somewhat Important— our team has some need for improvement	Not important— our team is doing this very well
Encouraging and seriously considering the differing perspectives of team members			
Bringing up problems and tough issues			
Developing each individual’s capacity to ask other team members for help			
Seeking out new information that leads the team to make important changes			
Generating a stronger sense of team spirit			

4. If you invited a content expert to attend the Intensive, how satisfied are you with your choice of content expert?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neutral
- Not satisfied at all
- Not applicable

5. At this point in time, how clear to you are the following? (Please check the appropriate box.)

	Very Clear	Somewhat Clear	Somewhat Unclear	Very Unclear
My role and responsibilities in <b>developing</b> the innovation				
My role and responsibilities in <b>implementing</b> the innovation				
The roles and responsibilities of <b>other</b> team members in <b>developing</b> the innovation				
The roles and responsibilities of <b>other</b> team members in <b>implementing</b> the innovation				
The tasks that remain to prepare for implementation				
How my team can optimally work together to implement the innovation				
The resources needed to implement and/or sustain the innovation				
The resources needed to evaluate the success of our innovation				
The ways we will be able to assess our progress.				

6. At this point, how confident are you that your organization and its partners have the capacity to accomplish your goals in this project?  
 Very confident       Somewhat confident       Neutral       Not confident at all

7. How aligned does this project seem to be with the other commitments/priorities of your organization?  
 Very aligned       Somewhat aligned       Neutral       Not aligned at all

8. Given your work as a whole, how personally committed would you say you are to this project right now?  
 Very committed       Somewhat committed       Neutral       Not committed at all

9. How connected do you feel to other performing arts organizations involved in developing innovations?  
 Very connected       Somewhat connected       Neutral       Not connected at all

10. If you were to describe the state of your innovation within your organization at this moment, what might be an image that captures your sense of it? (Please write or draw below.)

## Appendix IV: Post-Intensive Survey

### CLOSING ASSESSMENT- INNOVATION LAB INTENSIVE RETREAT

*This is the third of four questionnaires in which you will be asked to participate during your involvement in the Innovation Lab. The purpose of these questionnaires is to assess your perceptions during different stages of your organization's innovation work.*

*To preserve your anonymity we are not requesting your name. However, please indicate your organizational affiliation so that we can share aggregated feedback with each Innovation Lab team. Thank you for your cooperation!*

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Please check the grantee organization with which you are affiliated:

- The Children's Theatre
- HERE
- Oregon Shakespeare Festival
- Yerba Buena

2. Please check the appropriate box for each of the following statements.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
The differing perspectives of team members is encouraged and seriously considered.					
We have the right people on our team for the work ahead.					
At this point I feel a strong sense of team spirit.					
Members of this team are able to bring up problems and tough issues.					
Our team meetings are filled with many opinions, but no questions.					
We take time out to improve our team's work processes.					
We seek out new information that leads us to make important changes.					
Our team works together effectively					
I understand who the key stakeholders are for making this innovation happen.					
We have a compelling story to tell about our innovation.					

3. If you invited a content expert to attend the Intensive, how satisfied are you with your experience with your content expert?

- Very satisfied    Somewhat satisfied    Neutral    Not satisfied at all    n/a

4. At this point in time, how clear to you are the following? (Please check the appropriate box.)

	Very Clear	Somewhat Clear	Somewhat Unclear	Very Unclear
The goals and purpose of the innovation itself				
My role and responsibilities in <b>developing</b> the innovation				
My role and responsibilities in <b>implementing</b> the innovation				
The roles and responsibilities of <b>other</b> team members in <b>developing</b> the innovation				
The roles and responsibilities of <b>other</b> team members in <b>implementing</b> the innovation				
The tasks that remain to prepare for implementation				
How my team can optimally work together to implement the innovation				
The resources needed to implement and/or sustain the innovation				
The resources needed to evaluate the success of our innovation				
The potential constraints and opportunities for change in our organization				
The merit of different innovation approaches or alternatives.				
The ways we will be able to assess our progress.				

5. At this point, how confident are you that your organization and its partners have the capacity to accomplish your goals in this project?

- Very confident    Somewhat confident    Neutral    Not confident at all

6. How aligned does this project seem to be with the other commitments/priorities of your organization?

- Very aligned    Somewhat aligned    Neutral    Not aligned at all

7. Given your work as a whole, how personally committed would you say you are to this project right now?

- Very committed    Somewhat committed    Neutral    Not committed at all

8. How connected do you feel to other performing arts organizations involved in developing innovations?

- Very connected       Somewhat connected       Neutral       Not connected at all

9. If you were to describe the state of your innovation within your organization at this moment, what might be an image that captures your sense of it? (Please write or draw below.)

# Appendix V: Phase Three Interview Protocol

## **Introduction**

Thank you for taking the time to meet/talk with me. The goal of this interview is to get feedback from you on the Innovation Lab so that we can learn from your experiences, and identify the strengths of the program and possible ways to improve the Lab going forward. This feedback loop is an essential part of the learning organization and innovation philosophy.

I will ask a series of questions—including both open-ended and survey questions—of all the grantees. I will then roll up and aggregate these responses into general trends and observations. Hope that can be candid since you will not be identified with any specific information. Also want to assure you that will not impair your relationship with DDCF or EmcArts in anyway.

Do you have any questions before we start?

## **Critical moments. (*Probe for details as warranted*).**

1. What were the critical moments in your experience with the Lab to date? What were the specific challenges or obstacles that you and your team faced? How did you deal with these challenges? Did you experience any “a-ha” moments?
2. Were there any experiences that you wish had unfolded differently?

## **Intensive retreat.**

3. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all difficult to 5 extremely difficult, how difficult was it for your team to attend the five days of the intensive retreat?
4. Was the Intensive worth the investment in time and resource commitment? On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all worth the time and commitment and 5 is definitely worth the time and commitment, how would you score the retreat?
5. Do you remember Phil—he was brought in to coach on communications at the retreat. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all valuable to 5 extremely valuable, how valuable was Phil’s coaching to your group?
6. What changes would you recommend to improve the Intensive in the future? What would you definitely keep in the design?

## **Let’s turn to the role of the content expert.**

7. How valuable was the content expert to your innovation? On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all valuable and 5 is extremely valuable, how would you rate the content expert?
8. What suggestions would you offer to other organizations so they could more effectively leverage their content experts in their process?

**Phase 3.**

9. What has surprised you most during the phase three of the Lab? Have there been any unexpected obstacles or challenges?
10. To what extent did the coaching and the Intensive prepare you for the challenges of Phase 3? On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is that you were not at all prepared and 5 being extremely prepared, how would you rate your preparation for Phase 3?

**Financial support.**

11. Did the financial grant make a difference in your work? On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is that it did not make a difference to 5 it made a significant difference...
12. To what extent were the design and implementation of your innovation constrained by lack of funding? On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is that you were extremely constrained to 5 not at all constrained...
13. (*If appropriate*) How did you use the additional operating support provided by DDCF?

**Logistics and Process.**

14. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all easy and 5 is extremely easy, how easy was arranging for the logistics of the Lab (e.g., meetings with team members and EmcArts coach)?
15. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all burdensome and 5 is extremely burdensome, how burdensome was the application process?

**EmcArts.**

16. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all easy to 5 is extremely easy, what was the ease with which you received the grant money?
17. How would you characterize your interactions with EmcArts? On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 the interactions were handled poorly and 5 where the relationship was handled extremely well, how would you rate your interactions with EmcArts?
18. How would you characterize your interactions with your coach? On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 the relationship was handled poorly and 5 where the relationship was handled very well, how would you rate your interactions with your coach?
19. To what extent did your coach help you manage roadblocks or critical moments? On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is he/she were not of much help to 5 he/she was incredibly valuable...

**Going forward.**

20. What did you learn through your Lab that will be of value to your organization going forward?
21. On a scale of 1 to 5, has your involvement with the Innovation Lab improved your organization's capacity to plan and execute innovative projects in the future?
22. On a scale of 1 to 5, has your involvement with the Innovation Lab enhanced your capacity to elicit ideas and expertise from those on and beyond your innovation team?

23. On a scale of 1 to 5, has your involvement with the Innovation Lab enhanced your capacity to engage the commitment of stakeholders?

**Wrap up.**

24. If you were to rate your experience with the Lab overall, where 1 is you would **not** recommend it to your peers and 5 you would strongly encourage peers to seek out the opportunity, how would you evaluate the Lab overall?

25. Have you shared or do you intend to share your innovation with peers? Why or why not? Their response?



## Appendix VI: About the Author

Elizabeth Long Lingo is Assistant Director of the Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy at Vanderbilt and Adjunct Assistant Professor of Management at the Owen Graduate School of Management. Elizabeth completed her Ph.D. in the joint program in Organizational Behavior and Sociology at Harvard University and Harvard Business School.

Elizabeth is a creativity and innovation scholar who explores how novel projects and ventures are imagined, negotiated, and brought to fruition. She is particularly interested in how leaders, entrepreneurs, and change agents negotiate across disciplines and organizations as they forge transformative and non-routine outcomes. Elizabeth has studied creativity and innovation in the commercial music industry, the Nashville creative scene, and in the performing arts field. She has seized the rare opportunity to put her research into practice as a catalyst of Vanderbilt's Creative Campus Initiative and Vanderbilt's Curb Programs in Creative Enterprise and Public Leadership.

Elizabeth publishes in both academic and practitioner-oriented journals. Recent publications include: "Creative Campus: Time for a "C" Change" with Steven Tepper in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (2010), "Nexus Work: Brokerage on Creative Projects" with Siobhan O'Mahony in *Administrative Science Quarterly* (2010); "The Creative Foil" in *Qualitative Organizational Research* (2009); and *2008 National Performing Arts Convention: Assessing the Field's Capacity for Collective Action* (2009).

Elizabeth has consulted to Fortune 500 companies on issues of trust, risk taking, speaking up and customer loyalty, and to the nonprofit and for-profit performing arts sectors on their potential for change and collective action. Elizabeth was a graduate fellow at the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School in 2003-2004. She holds a Masters degree in Sociology from Harvard University and a Bachelors degree in Finance from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.