Understanding Networks

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Rural Health Initiative, October 14, 2016

Topics

Why networks?

What are networks?

What does a network strategy include?

How does this impact your organization?

How to get started?

SOCIAL SERVICES

CHURCH & COMMUNITY PROGRAM
THRIFT SHOP FOOD PANTRY

SOCIAL SERVICES
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SOCIAL SERVICES

SOCIAL SERVICES
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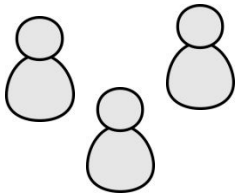
CHURCH & COMMUNITY PROGRAM
THRIFT SHOP FOOD PANTRY



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The Network Advantage

Network strategies have the capacity to connect everyone impacted by an issue

Help them see the whole system

Enable them to work collaboratively in a variety of ways to transform that system.

The Network Advantage

Don't Need Network Strategy

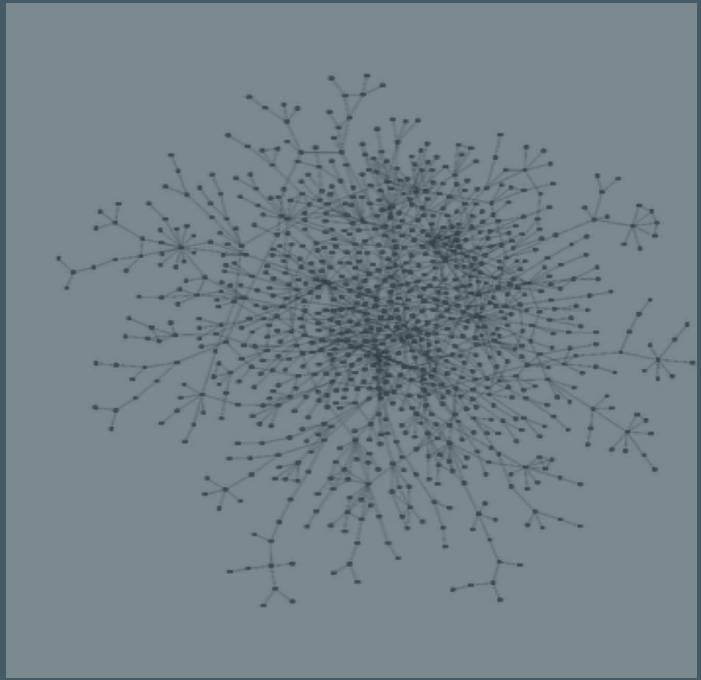
1. When the problem is simple
2. When the problem is relatively small and does not impact a large number of people
3. When there is clear evidence of a solution that works

Benefit from Network Strategy

1. When problem is complex
2. When many different groups and individuals are impacted by the problem
3. When there is no obvious or clear solution
4. When experimentation and innovation are needed
5. Want to shift the system so it is effective

What are networks?

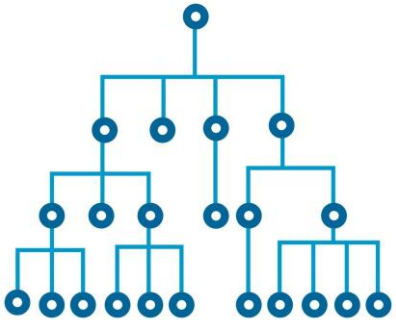
Network Definition



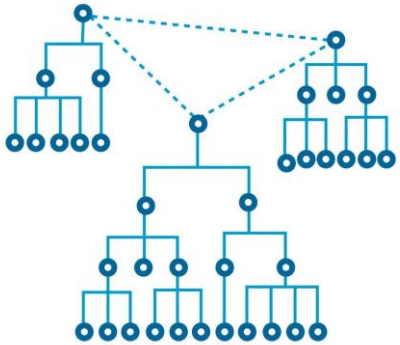
Networks are sets of relationships and the patterns they create that influence the quality of communication and the likelihood of collaboration and innovation.

Examples of networks

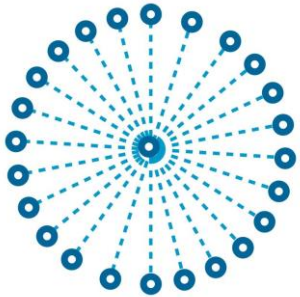
ORGANIZATION



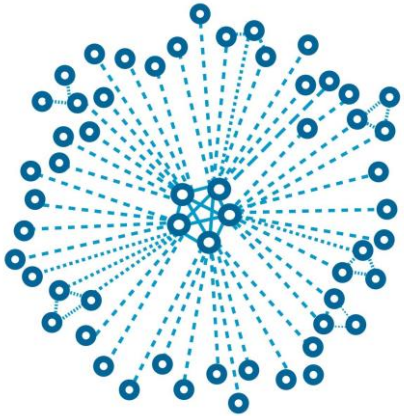
COALITION

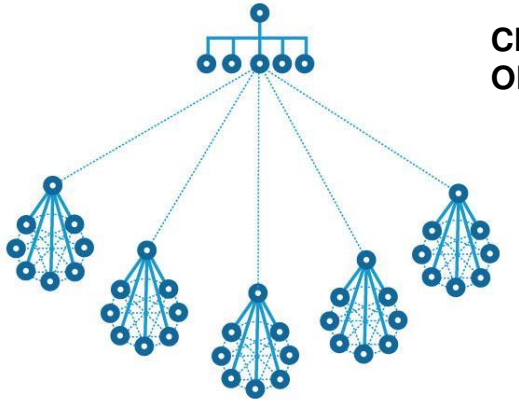


EMAIL LIST



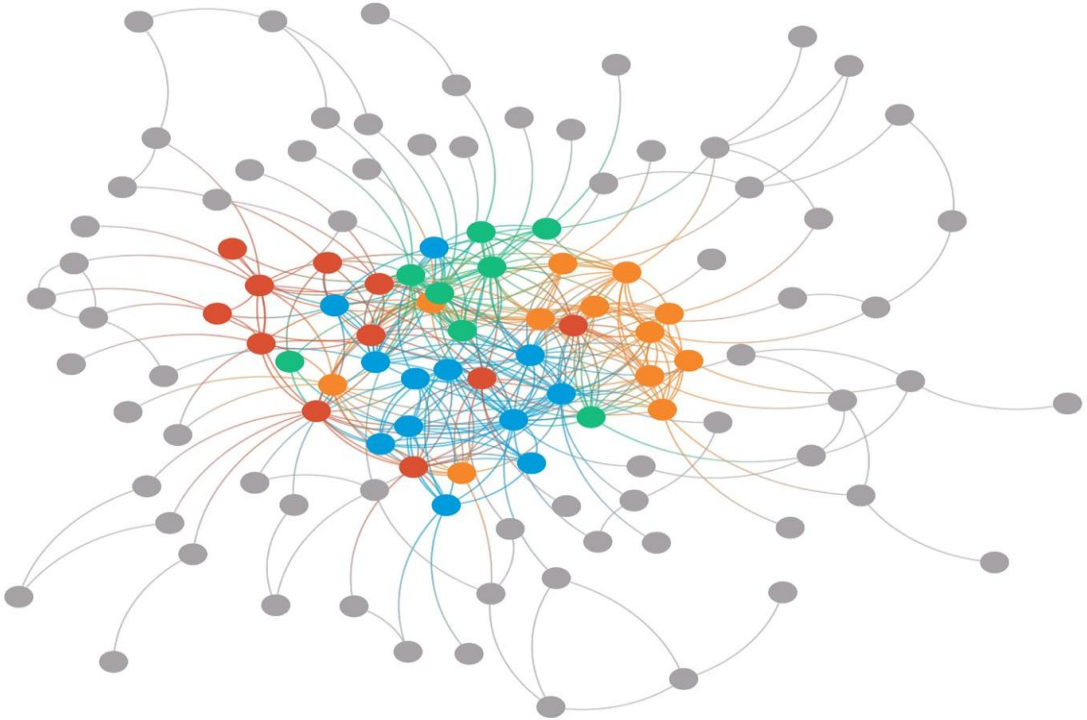
ONLINE CAMPAIGN ORG



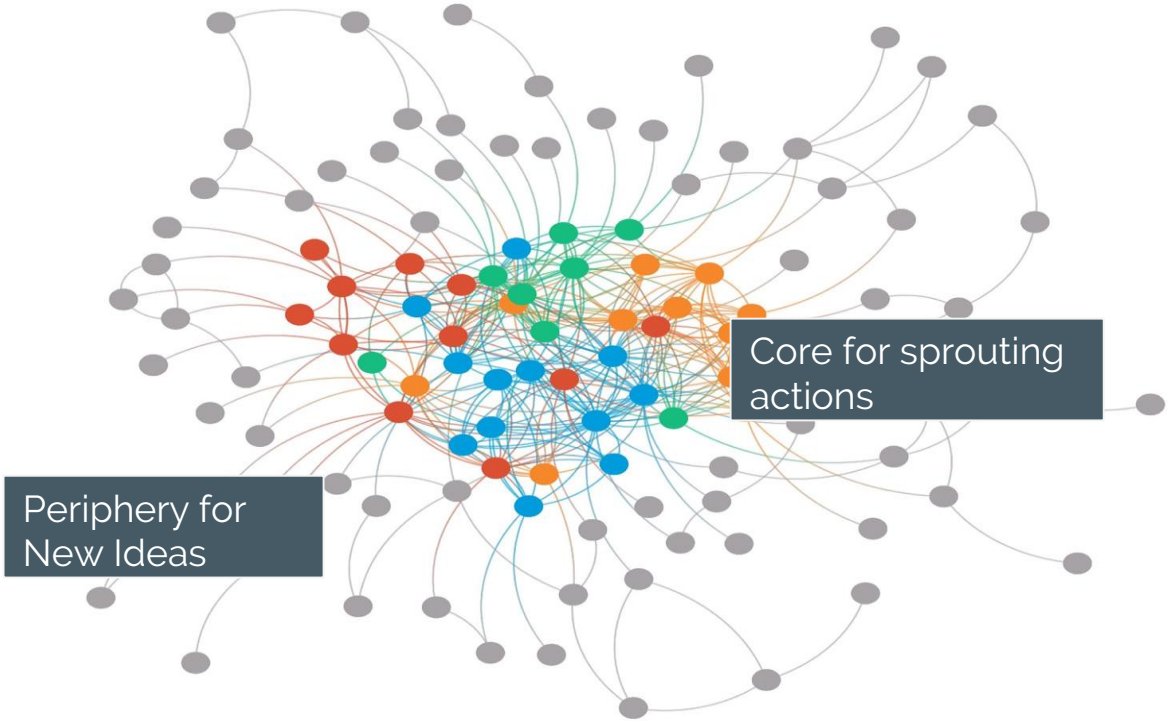


CHAPTER ORGANIZATIONS

Intentional Change Networks

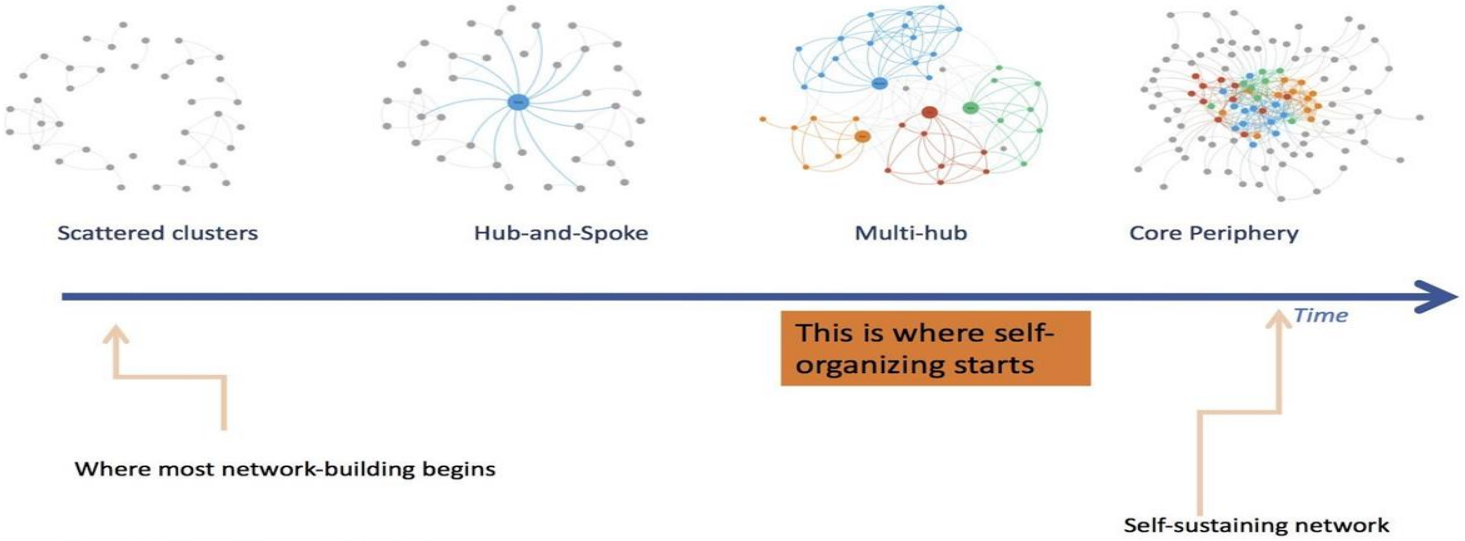


Intentional Change Networks



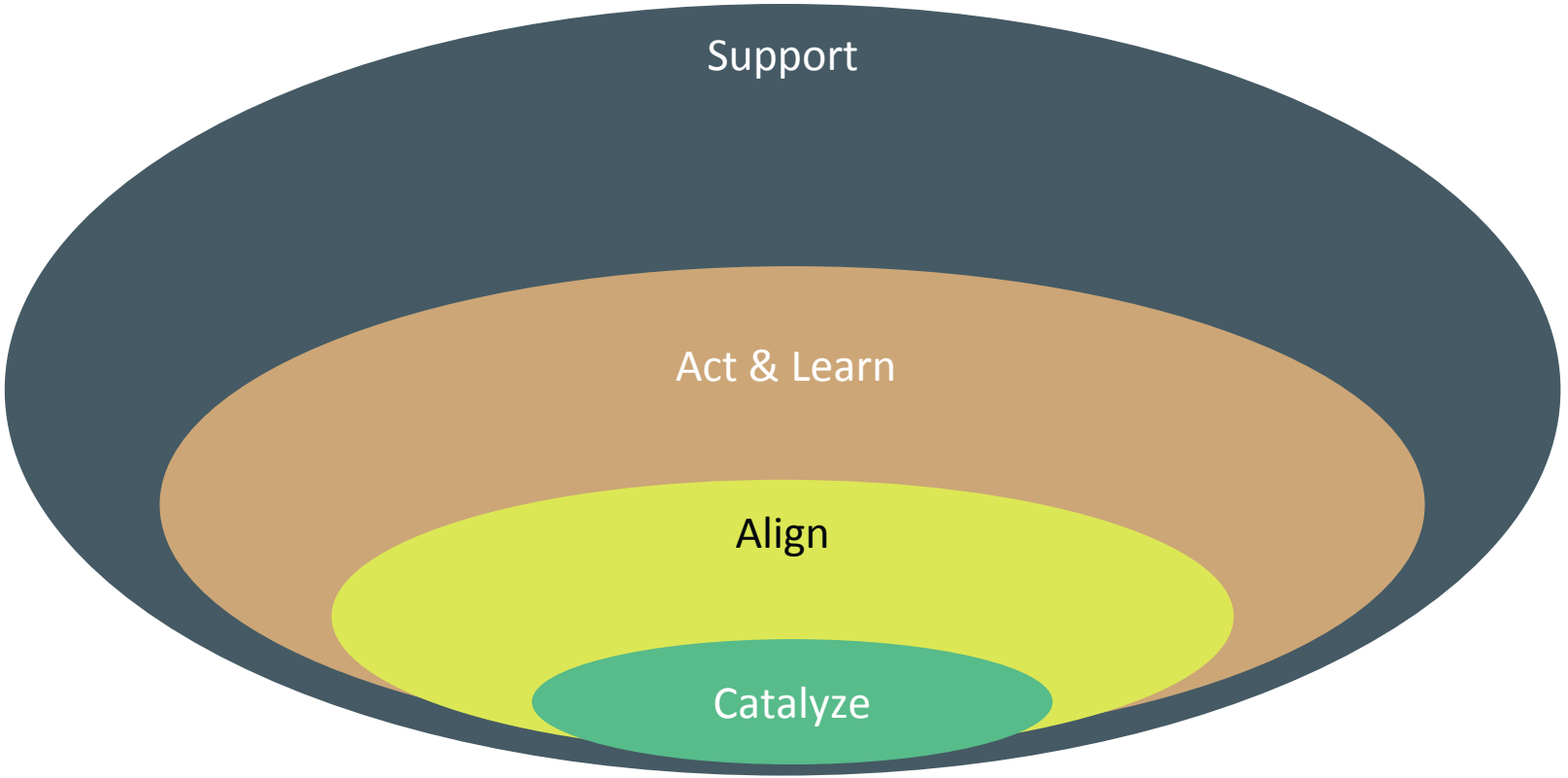
- Core consists of clusters w different perspectives who know of & trust each other
- Periphery draws in new ideas & resources
- Action is self-organizing: anyone sees how to make a difference, gathers others and tries an experiment

What stage is your network?



Source of network maps: Jeff Mohr, kumu.io

Four Network Strategies



Strategy 1:
Become Catalytic & Collaborative Network Leaders

DO LESS ourselves!

Catalyze and Support

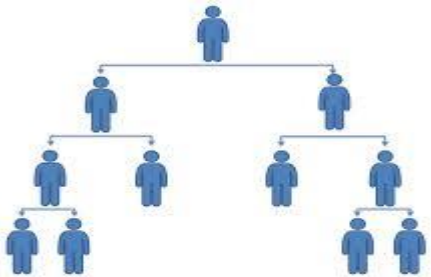
Others more!

Strategy 2: Align around Network Mindset

Not looking for agreement……

EXCEPT around Network Mindset: a set of values and behaviors that make collaboration more successful

Network Mindset.....



FROM Hierarchy
TO Peers

FROM Conformity differences

TO Appreciation of

FROM Control

TO A Web of Support

FROM Planning taking,

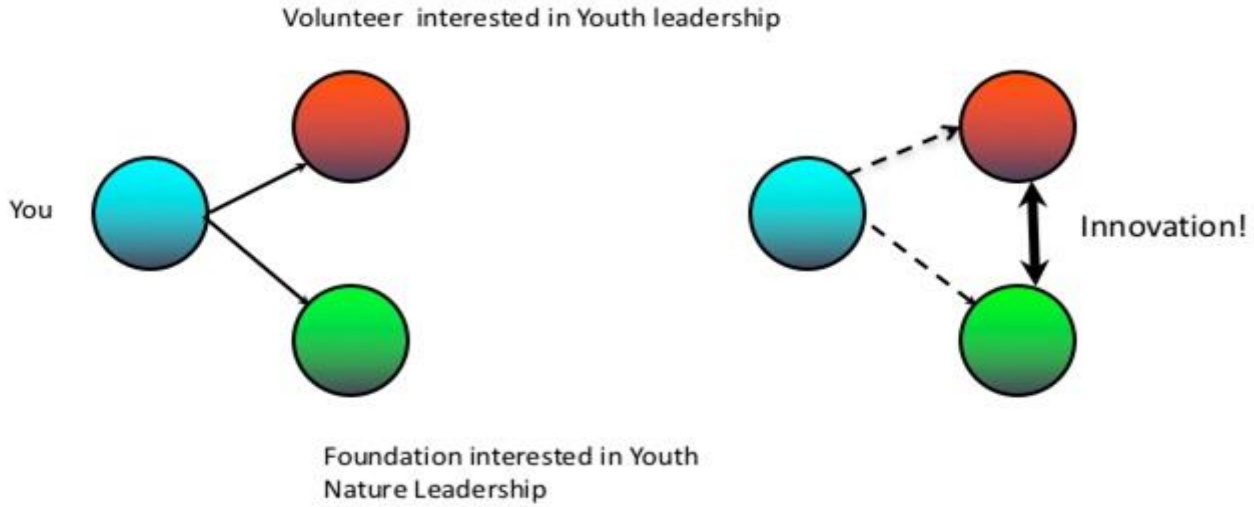
TO Experimental, Risk

Innovative

Strategy 3: Action and Learning

Notice what is emerging

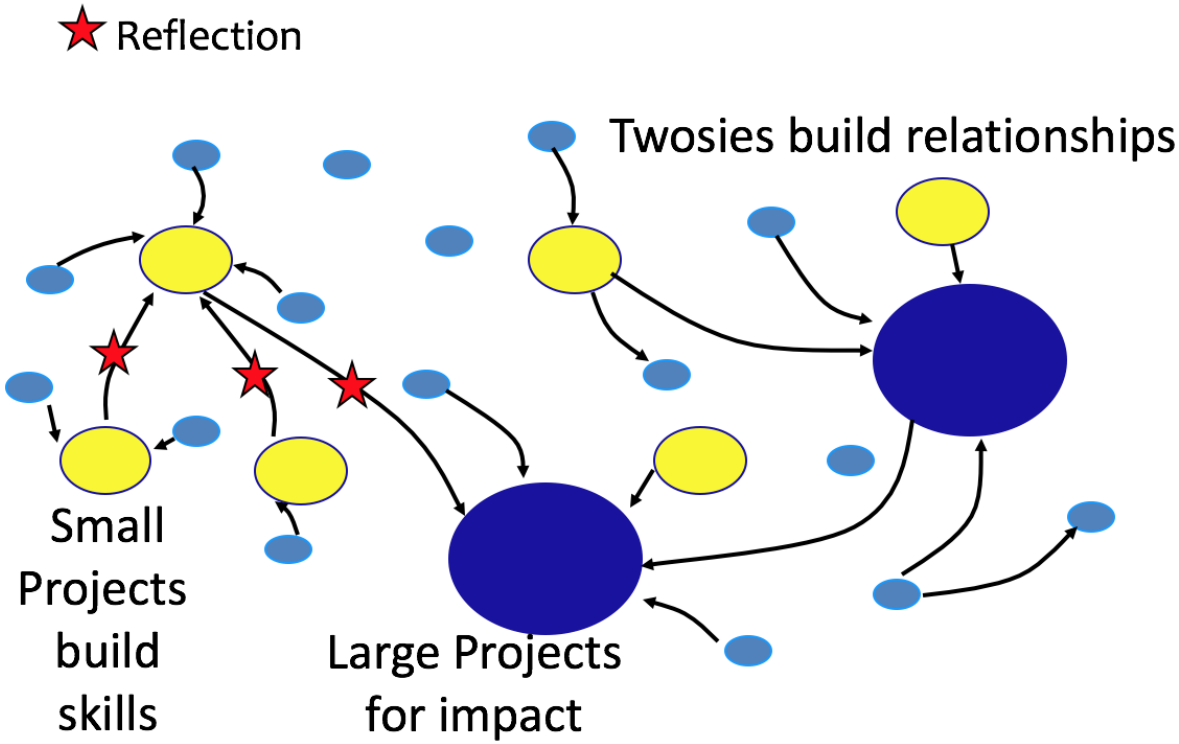
Closing Triangles -Twosies



- Both interested in the same thing
- One can help the other out

Cluster:
break up into
small groups
around interests

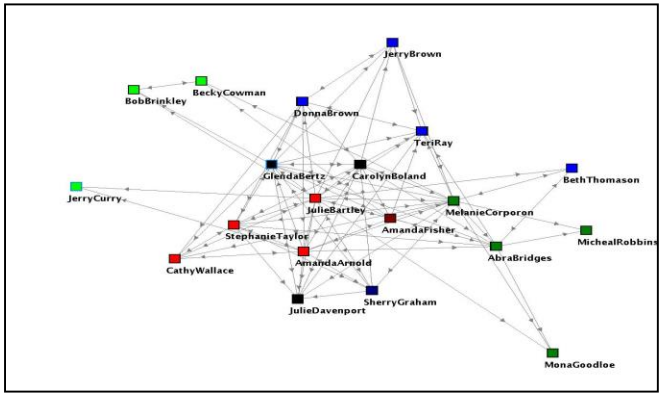
Self-organizing Collaborative Projects or Working Groups



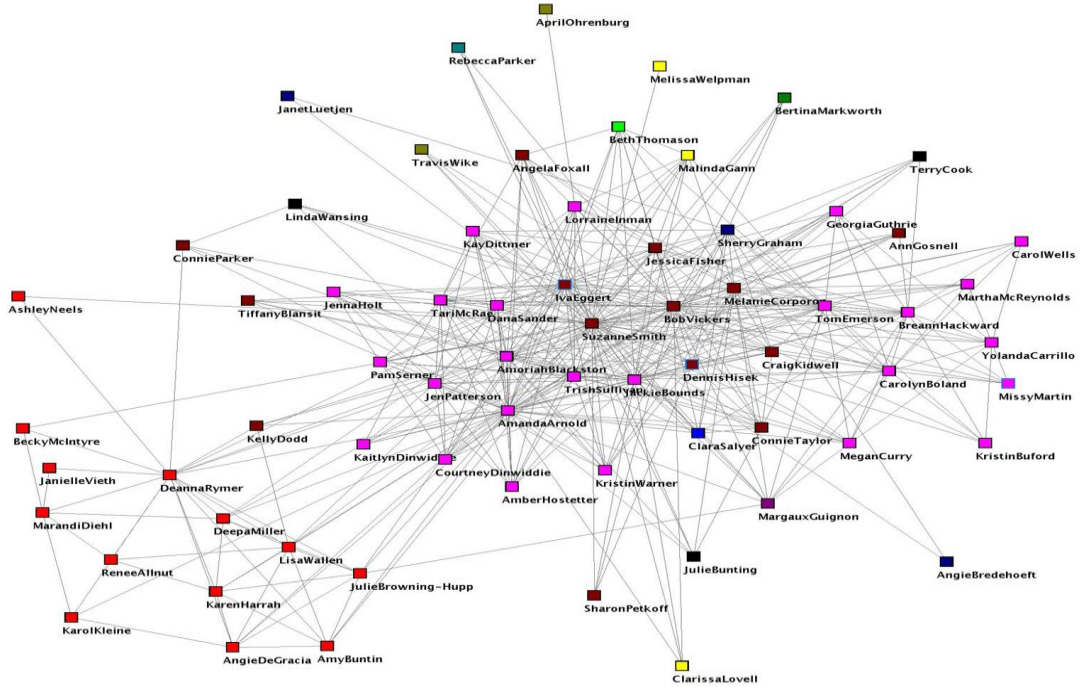
Strategy 4: Five Ways to Support Networks

1. Understand the Network Through Mapping & Analysis

Connectors



End of 2014

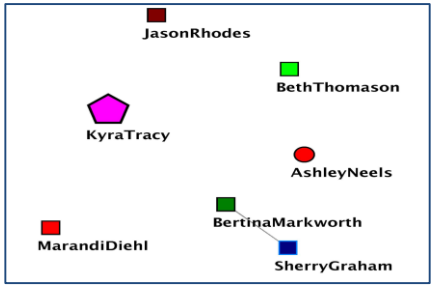


2016

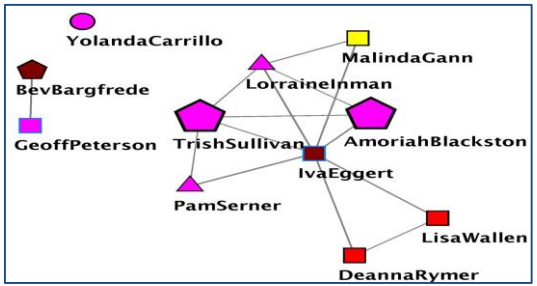
Potential Projects

Legend

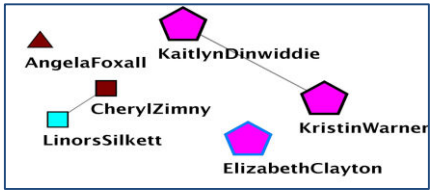
- Healthcare
- Social Services
- Education
- Special Needs
- Faith based
- Nursing Home
- Children's Services
- Mental Health



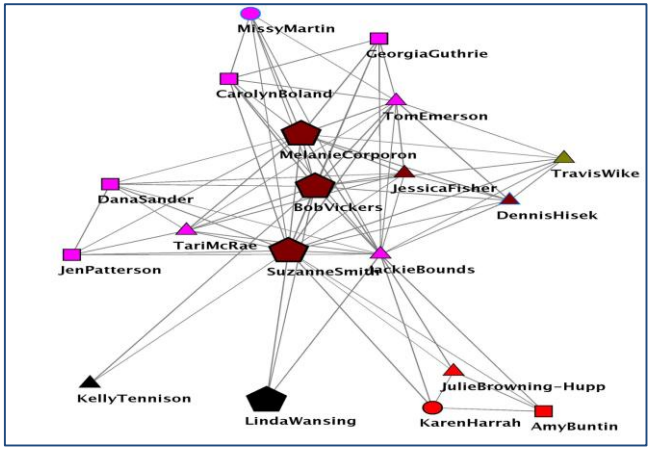
Transportation



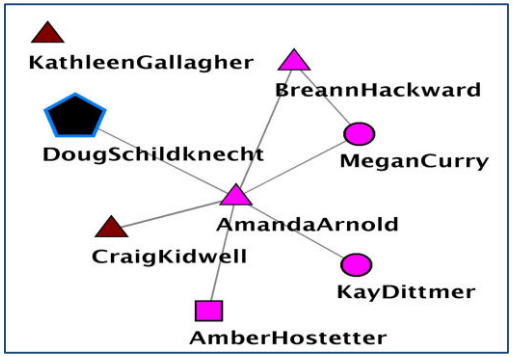
Homelessness



Veterans

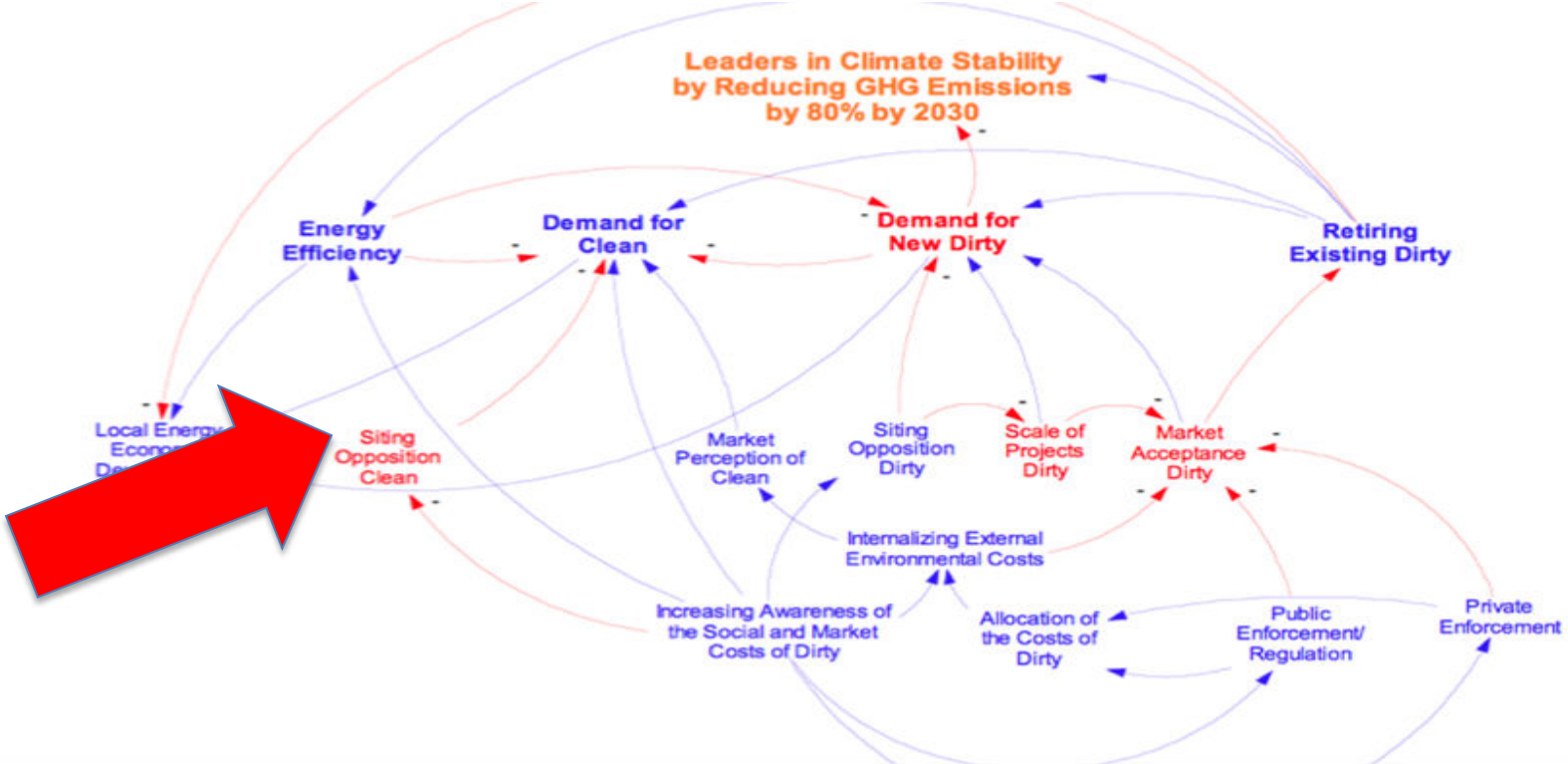


Connector

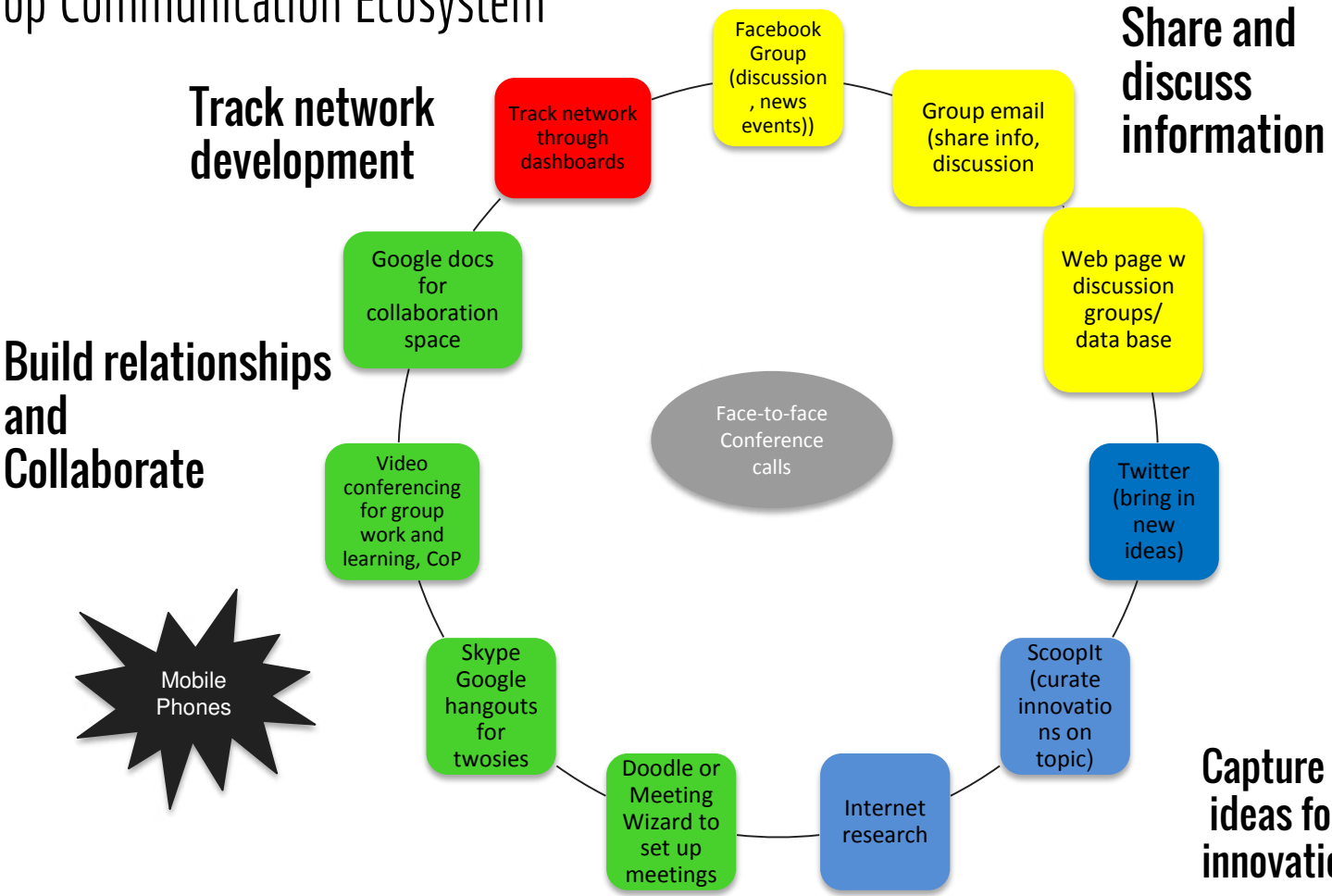


Warehouse Project

System Mapping Examples - Omidyar Foundation for Early Childhood in Hawaii; Multiple funders for RE-AMP a Midwest network



2. Develop Communication Ecosystem



Foundation Example

REACH:

- most consultant interaction through zoom.us, both counties using
- Use google docs to develop mapping survey together

Packard Foundation supports Summer Learning Network to have google docs, zoom, group email

3. Set Up Virtual Communities of Practice

- Small chunks of new learning about skills, etc
- Share what doing/learning
- Peer assists: person brings challenge and gets support
- Breakout groups (small) to build relationships of support

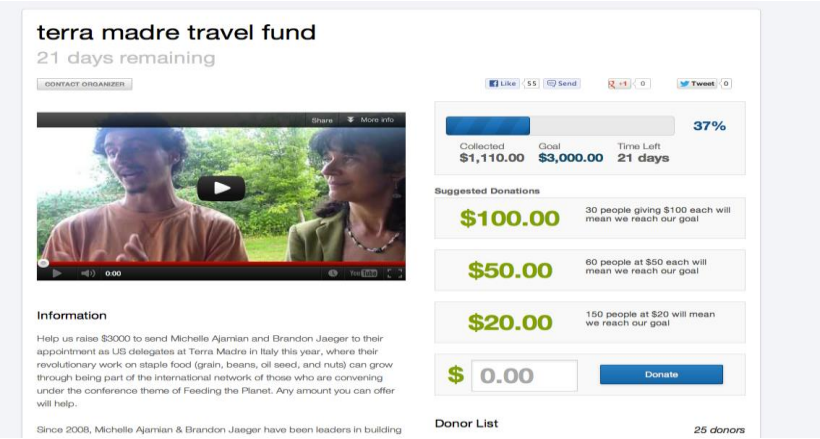
Foundation Examples

Packard Foundation supported a Community of Practice with Funders and Grantee Networks to learn about and practice network strategies

REACH Foundation supports both Face to Face and virtual Community of Practice among Counties

Novo Foundation supported a Community of Practice among organizations designing a “Movement to End Violence” network

4. Restructure money and resources



Money needs to support **small experiments** & projects

Money to access **expertise** quickly (for social media, strategy, etc)

Foundation Examples

NY Health Leadership
Alumnae set up a pool of funds for collaborative projects of alumnae

Rotary Foundation in Michigan set up innovation fund for food system network

5. Try out tracking tools

Network Behaviors Dashboard

This survey is to help you think about and strengthen network behaviors and values.

1. I am open to new ideas.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ Strongly agree

2. My organization is open to new ideas.

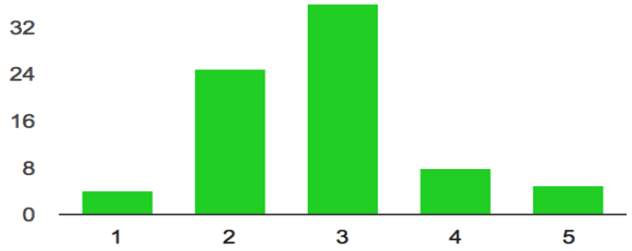
1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ Strongly agree

3. I enjoy diversity in my life: people, ideas, places.

1 2 3 4 5

11. It's easy for me to let go of control.



Tracking Example: Novo Foundation- MEV

Extensive tracking of

- Network values
- Meetings
- Relationships (mapping)
- Structures
- Interests

What does this mean for your organizations? Network approaches have big benefits but...You have to learn and change!

1. Set up learning cluster on networks and network strategies (preferably with other organizations)
2. Try one piece: values tracking, small pooled fund, mapping, etc