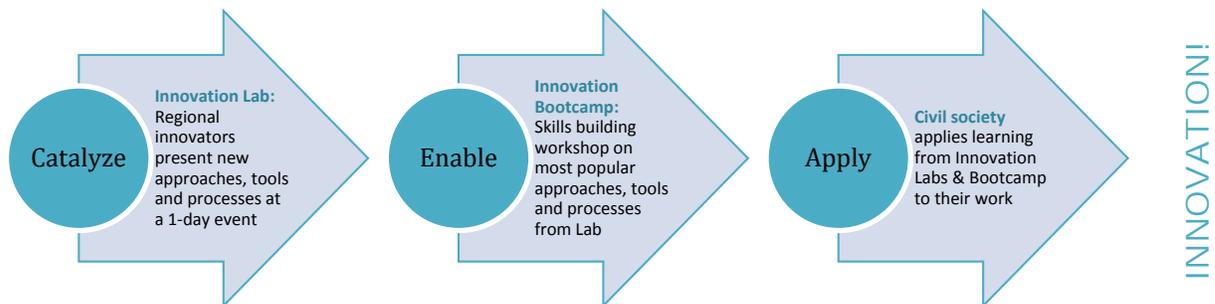


# Innovation Lab Toolkit

**Innovation for Change (I4C)** is working with volunteer leaders around the world to set up regional Innovation Hubs, including Central Asia. These Hubs shall support the development of Civil Society by helping organizations create and utilize innovative approaches that address challenges they are facing in their regions.

The **Central Asia Hub** brought 40 representatives from civil society together from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan together in Almaty in February 2016 to begin identifying the particular requirements of Civil Society in Central Asia and designing the Hub's activities. Based on input from this working group and expert consultations, the Central Asia Hub will begin by supporting innovation through a two-step process: **(1) holding Innovation Labs** that catalyze interest in innovation by promoting improved awareness and knowledge of innovation for civil society with a day of presentations by regional innovators talking about new approaches, tools and processes. At the end of the Lab, participants will prioritize which innovations are most relevant to their work and which ones they would like to be able to apply to their work. Based this feedback, the Hub will **(2) running Innovation Bootcamps** that enable civil society to be more innovative by building participants' skills and apply innovative approaches, tools and processes identified as most relevant and useful during the Labs. After Labs and Bootcamps, participants will apply their knowledge and skills to their work.



The hope is that I4C partners in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan will each organize an Innovation Lab and Bootcamp during 2017 as well as contribute to the development of a replicable methodology for planning locally-led Innovation Labs and Bootcamps around Central Asia.

This **Innovation Lab Toolkit** is designed for I4C members to support the planning and implementation of Innovation Labs in their countries.

It will continue to be updated as lessons are learned from other Innovation Labs.



# Innovation Lab Checklist

## PRE-PLANNING

- Determine local objectives and target participants
- Identify a venue
- Set a date
- Submit Innovation Lab planning form, work plan & budget
- Get approval from I4C

## PROGRAM & SPEAKERS

- Adapt agenda
- Adapt call for innovations
- Create nomination application form
- Send out call for nominations broadly through civil society networks
- Identify regional civil society innovators to invite
- Select speakers
- Confirm speakers
- Adapt, send and review guidelines with speakers
- Do a virtual run-through with speakers
- Collect & compile final presentation files

## LOGISTICS

- Get venue
- Identify and hire caterer
- Set materials list
- Acquire materials

## PARTICIPANTS

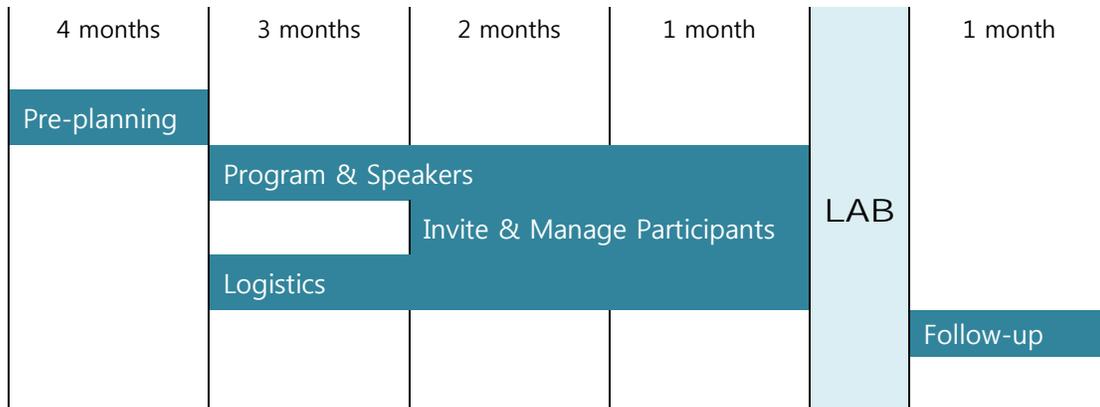
- Determine criteria for participation
- Adapt Innovation Lab invitation
- Adapt participant application form

- ❑ Send invitation broadly and encourage sharing
- ❑ Select participants based on criteria
- ❑ Inform all participants
- ❑ Confirm attendance & pull from waitlist

FOLLOW-UP

- ❑ Survey participants
- ❑ Summarize learning and innovation support priorities
- ❑ Send learning to I4C

## Timeline



## PRE-PLANNING

In order to get approval for your Lab, I4C will require some basic information. You'll need to set local objectives, identify target participants and complete your pre-planning documentation.

### Objectives

The general objectives of the Central Asia Innovation Labs are to:

- Improve awareness and knowledge of innovation for civil society
- Prioritize topics for further training

Depending on the unique needs of civil society in your country, however, you may add local objectives. You can choose to keep the event broad *or* focus in on topics that might be most relevant or needed in your country (i.e. media, closing spaces, citizen participation, social entrepreneurship, etc.)

### Participants

Think about who should attend the Lab. What type of people will benefit most from attending? What types of people do you want to bring together for potential collaboration? What type of participants will be best placed to take ideas forward?

You may have a very specific group (i.e. Executive Directors of Human Rights CSOs) or you may want to set goals for diverse engagement that may lead to collaborations (i.e. 20% Youth, 20% technologists, 25% staff from CSOs, 25% CSO management).

When you have defined your audience, set an attendance goal number.

### Identify a venue & set a date

You'll need to find a venue that has at least one large room where all participants can gather for presentations ideally a few smaller rooms (or areas) for break-out sessions. The size will depend on how many participants and speakers you expect to attend.

### Submit Innovation Lab Planning Form, work plan & budget

In order to get approval for funding you'll need to submit a few documents.

- Innovation Lab Planning Form
- Workplan
- Budget

All forms and templates are available in the annex of this document and as soft copy.

### Get approval

You must get *written approval* from I4C before committing any funds or officially announcing the Innovation Lab.

Once your forms are submitted expect approval within 6 weeks.

## PROGRAM & SPEAKERS

Start planning your program early so there is enough time to recruit, confirm and prepare the best speakers possible.

### Adapt agenda

You'll find a sample agenda in the annex of this document, but you're encouraged to adapt it based on your local customs as well as learning from other Innovation Labs.

You can also adjust the length and number of speakers based on the number of quality applications you receive and budgetary considerations. For instance, if there are a number of potential speakers based locally (that do not require travel funds) you may want to shorten presentations and include more!

### Send out call for innovations & nominations form

Adapt the sample call for innovation based on your objectives and audience. Create a form for individuals to apply or nominate a speaker. You can create the form in word and have individuals email it to a contact or create a Google Form (<https://docs.google.com/forms>) that automatically creates a spreadsheet of all applicants.

Once you have the text for your call and an application form, recruit speakers in two ways:

1. **General call for nominations** – send a call for nominations broadly to civil society actors. You may find some interesting people and innovations that you didn't know about previously that will be great additions to the Lab.
2. **Targeted invitations** – to ensure a good group of speakers, also identify specific individuals and/or organizations to invite directly. These could be innovators you know personally, popular presenters from other Labs or speakers or participants from other innovation-focused events held previously (i.e. Internews Innovation Labs, TechForum, TechCamp, etc.)

Be sure to include a deadline for speaker applications/nominations (best 4-6 weeks before the event). Leave enough time to select and confirm speakers, allow them to prepare their presentation and arrange for visas and logistics.

### Select & confirm speakers

Gather a selection committee from the organizations planning the Innovation Lab and use the criteria to determine which speakers to extend an invitation.

*Do not reject any speakers until all speaking slots are confirmed.* If there are not enough quality speakers, identify additional speakers to invite. If a speaker doesn't fit the criteria, don't select them just because there is space.

Adapt, send and review guidelines with speakers

You'll need to prep speakers to ensure they prepare a presentation that is appropriate for the audience and time provided. Adapt the speaker guidelines found in the annex of this document to fit your Innovation Lab.

Don't assume speakers will read the guidelines! Set up a call with each speaker to review *and reinforce* the guidelines. Place specific emphasis on the time restrictions. Most speakers will go over the time allotted if you let them.

Do a virtual run-through with speakers

At least 1 week before the Lab, have each speaker present to you over skype or alternative video conferencing app. This will help ensure they are prepared and provide an opportunity to give feedback on presentations to ensure they are clear, engaging and within the time limit.

Use large cards to indicate when a speaker has 5 minute, 2 minutes and 30 seconds left in their presentation and cut them off at the allotted time. Use these during the Innovation Lab as well to ensure the program stays on time.

Collect & compile final presentation files

Set a date a few days before the Lab for all speakers to give you their final files. Combine presentations into a single file to reduce the time required to set up each Lightning Talk. You should be able to click from one presentation to the next without opening a new file.

## PARTICIPANTS

Getting the right participants in the room will make a great event *and* lead to participants trying and applying innovations.

### Determine criteria for participation

Make sure the right people are in the room by creating criteria for participation that reflects your objectives, speakers and target participants. Think about the following questions:

- Is there a specific topic area participants should be interested in?
- What geographic areas do you want represented?
- Should they work at a civil society organization or do you want to include students and/or individuals working on socially-minded projects independently?
- Do you want to encourage participation by people in specific organizational roles (i.e. program officers, executive directors, both)? Note: think about who will be best placed introduce and implement innovations within organizations.
- What gender balance would you like to achieve?

Your criteria should list out what characteristics people must have to attend. You may add other “preferred” criteria that doesn’t eliminate participants, but encourages individuals from that group.

Don’t make criteria so narrow that people can’t apply, but narrow enough that your team can use them to decide who can attend if demand is higher than the number of spots allotted.

### Adapt invitation & application form

Adapt the Innovation Lab participant invitation and application form to fit your event. You can start with the sample text provided in the annex.

Using an online tool such as Google Forms (<https://docs.google.com/forms>) is recommended to help organize the potentially large number of applications.

### Send invitation broadly and encourage sharing

Send the invitation to as many people as possible! At a minimum you should send to:

- Your individual and organizational networks
- Relevant listservs or Facebook groups working on civil society and/or innovation
- Participant lists from previous events that are related to civil society and/or innovation

Make sure to encourage others to share the event with their networks too through email and social media! See the sample social media posts in the annex.

Select participants based on criteria & inform participants

Once the deadline for applications has passed, go through the list and select participants based on criteria. If there are more applicants than spots:

- Accept the number of participants you have budgeted for
- Place approximately 20% of total number of participants that are not selected on a waitlist (Example: If you have 100 participant spots, put 20 people on the waitlist).
- Send regrets to those not accepted or on the waitlist.

You may send out bulk emails, but input all participant emails as bcc: to protect privacy.

Confirm attendance & pull from waitlist

A few days before the Lab send an email to all participants reminding them of the event and event details.

Request that if participants can no longer attend that they please let you know in order to provide the opportunity to those on the waitlist.

## LOGISTICS

Getting logistics set up is probably something you've done before for other events and it will come easily. A few tips follow.

### Get venue

If you follow the format of the agenda, you'll need a venue that has a large room that can seat the entire group of participants and 3-5 smaller breakout rooms (or areas where groups can meet comfortably).

It is best if the large room is already equipped with audio/visual equipment such as a projector and sound equipment for presentations.

### Identify and hire caterer

Some venues will offer on-site catering for tea breaks and lunch. If not, you'll need to work with a local provider to arrange. Food does not need to be fancy. The focus should be on the content of the event.

### Set materials list & acquire

Go through the entire agenda and make a list of materials and resources needed. Some examples may include:

- Projector
- Computer
- Clicker (so presenters can forward their slides)
- Audio equipment including microphones and speakers
- Flip charts, easels and pens for break-out sessions
- Sign-in sheets
- Nametags
- Other?

## FOLLOW-UP

Each Innovation Lab will improve based on feedback from the others. Be sure to get feedback from your participants and share with I4C and others organizing Innovation Labs in the region!

### Survey participants

Get feedback about the event while it is still recent in participants' minds! Surveys can be distributed and collected in two ways:

- **Paper forms** distributed and collected at the event (preferred)
  - Pro: You'll get a much higher survey return rate.
  - Con: Someone needs to input the data.
- **Electronic survey** emailed after the event
  - Pro: No data input!
  - Con: Expect significantly fewer responses.

### Summarize learning and innovation support priorities

Record key learning from the event. Fill out the Innovation Lab Shared Learning Template. Your learning will be shared with other Innovation Lab organizers.

# Annex

<b>Innovation Lab Proposal Form .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Innovation Lab Budget Form .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Work Plan Template.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Sample Call for Speakers Text.....</b>	<b>17</b>
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<b>Sample Participant Invitation Text .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Sample Participant Application Form .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Sample Participant Survey.....</b>	<b>23</b>

## Innovation Lab Proposal Form

Please fill out the following information on the proposed Innovation Lab and submit for approval.

Innovation Lab Overview
Lab location (City Country):
Venue:
Lab date:
Estimated Lab attendance:
Proposed budget (USD):

Organizer Information		
Sponsoring organization:		
Point of contact:		
Email:	Phone:	
Number of hours committed to organizing this Innovation Lab:		
Other individuals and organizations assisting:		
Individual	Organization	# Hours Committed

Lab Planning
<p>The general objectives for regional Innovation Labs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Improve awareness and knowledge of innovation for civil society</i></li> <li>• <i>Prioritize topics for further training</i></li> </ul> <p>Do you have additional local objectives? If so, list here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Who will participate in the Lab?

Attachments
<p>Please attach the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft agenda</li> <li>• Work plan</li> <li>• Detailed budget</li> </ul>

# Innovation Lab Budget Form

Civil Society Innovation Lab  
(Central Asia + Afg & Mongolia)

	KZT Per item	USD	Units	#	Total (KZT)	Notes
<b><u>G001.1. Travel expenses</u></b>						
		#DIV/0!			KZT 0	
		#DIV/0!			KZT 0	
		#DIV/0!			KZT 0	
		#DIV/0!			KZT 0	
<b>Sub-total</b>					<b>KZT 0</b>	
<b><u>G001.2. Lodging and meals</u></b>						
Hotel		#DIV/0!			KZT 0	
Per diems		#DIV/0!			KZT 0	
Meeting package					KZT 0	
<b>Sub-total</b>					<b>KZT 0</b>	
<b><u>G001.3. Supplies and logistics</u></b>						
Facilitators and Notes' making					KZT 0	
Innovation Consultant					KZT 0	
Visa support (Afg+TK)					KZT 0	
Transtation					KZT 0	
Pens, files, badges, markers, scotch, flipcharts					KZT 0	
Printing service					KZT 0	
<b>Sub-total</b>					<b>KZT 0</b>	
<b>Total</b>					<b>KZT 0</b>	

# Work Plan Template

Template available in excel file format.

Activity	Milestone	Month	Month	Month	Month	Month
<b>Pre-planning</b>						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Determine local objectives and target participants					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Identify a venue					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Set a date					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Submit Innovation Lab planning form, work plan & budget					
<b>Program &amp; Speakers</b>						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Get approval					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adapt agenda					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adapt call for innovations					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Create nomination application form					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Send out call for nominations broadly through civil society networks					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Identify regional civil society innovators to invite					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Select speakers					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Confirm speakers					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adapt, send and review guidelines with speakers					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Do a virtual run-through with speakers					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Collect & compile final presentation files					
<b>Logistics</b>						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Get venue					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and hire caterer					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Set materials list					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Acquire materials					
<b>Participants</b>						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Determine criteria for participation					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adapt Innovation Lab invitation					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adapt participant application form					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Send invitation broadly and encourage sharing					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Select participants based on criteria					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inform all participants					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Confirm attendance & pull from waitlist					
<b>Follow-up</b>						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Send survey to participants					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Summarize learning and innovation support priorities					

## Sample Call for Speakers Text

Call for innovations! \_\_\_\_ [ORG NAME] \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_ [ORG NAME] \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ [ORG NAME] \_\_\_\_ are hosting an Innovation Lab \_\_\_\_ [DATE] \_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_ [CITY, COUNTRY] \_\_\_\_.

The 1-day event will bring together civil society to learn about innovative ways individuals and organizations are achieving their social missions in the region.

Innovations are ideas put into action that are either totally new or combine existing ideas, tactics or tools in a new way. Innovations may include, but are not limited to applications of new technologies, methodologies, approaches, or other tools that are supporting social objectives.

***We are seeking speakers to present their innovations!*** Do you have an innovation you'd like to share or know someone who does?

Apply or nominate a speaker here \_\_\_\_ [LINK TO FORM] \_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_ [DEADLINE] \_\_\_\_.

Speakers will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Applying an innovation to a civil society challenge
- Relevance of the innovation to a broad group of civil society
- Achieving measureable results
- Applying the innovation in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan or Uzbekistan
- \_\_\_\_ [ADD ADDITIONAL CRITERIA IF DESIRED] \_\_\_\_

Travel and lodging will be paid for speakers originating within the Central Asia region.

Please contact \_\_\_\_ [CONTACT] \_\_\_\_ with any questions.

## Sample Speaker Nomination/Application Form

We are looking for speakers to present innovative tools and processes that are relevant to civil society working in the Central Asia region at an Innovation Lab in \_\_\_\_ [CITY, COUNTRY] \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_ [DATE] \_\_\_\_.

Your name:

Your organization:

Your title:

Are you nominating yourself or another individuals?       Self       Other

If "Other," please provide information on the person/organization you are nominating.

Nominee name:

Nominee organization:

Nominee title:

Your relationship to the nominee:

Please describe the challenge the innovation addresses (limit 200 words):

Please describe the innovation (limit 200 words):

What impact or measurable changes the innovation achieved? (limit 100 words)

How is the innovation relevant to other civil society organizations in Central Asia? (limit 100 words)

If available, provide a link to a Web site, social network page, YouTube video or other electronic resource or publication describing the innovation:

## Sample Speaker Guidelines

Thank you for participating in the upcoming Lab on \_\_\_\_ [DATE] \_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_ [CITY, COUNTRY] \_\_\_\_\_. We are excited to have you!

As a speaker you will have two roles:

1. Give a Lightning Talk of \_\_ [TIME] \_\_ minutes on your innovation to all participants
2. Lead 30-minute small group discussions with interested participants

Presentations and sessions will be in Russian. Translation can be arranged if presenters would prefer English.

### **Guidelines for Lightning Talk**

A Lightning Talk is a fast-paced presentation with a **hard limit of** \_\_ [TIME] \_\_ **minutes** from start to finish. The objective is to introduce your innovation and inspire participants to learn more about your work. There will not be time for questions & answers during the talk, but opportunity for participants to engage with you more deeply during small group discussions.

Every speaker will do a **run-through of their presentation with our team 1 week prior to the Lab** to provide an opportunity for you to practice and get feedback on the clarity and timing of your presentation. We will be in contact to set up that session.

Final slides must be sent to \_\_\_\_ [EMAIL] \_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_ [DATE] \_\_\_\_ in PowerPoint.

Tips for Lightning Talks:

- Keep slides simple – reduce amount of text and use large images. Avoid slides filled with bullet points.
- Explain your innovation clearly: define jargon; provide context of its applicability; illustrate it with *at least* one example.
- Make the case for your innovation: How is it applicable to other programs and issue areas? How does it address a need or fill a gap?
- Refer to the “how” of your innovation: What main steps of implementation need to be followed? What circumstances need to be in place for it to work effectively?
- Explain existing or potential challenges with this innovation, with ideas on how to overcome those challenges.
- Create a title that is catchy and also somewhat descriptive of the innovation you’ll speak about.
- Include information about how participants can collaborate and learn more.
- **Practice, practice, practice!** You will be held to the \_\_ [TIME] \_\_ -minute time limit so practice giving your talk in that amount of time.

### **Guidelines for Small Group Discussions**

After Lightning Talks each speaker will be assigned times and locations for 30-minute small group discussions. Participants will choose which discussions to attend.

The discussions will provide an informal opportunity for participants to ask questions as well as speakers to get a sense of how participants think their innovation may apply to other organizations and programs.

Follow the flow of conversation, but you may want to structure the time as follows:

**10 minutes** – open questions & answers

**15 minutes** – discussion of relevance and applicability of the innovation to others:

- How can this innovation be applied to civil society in the region?
- How would participants apply it to *their* work? What challenges would they face?
- What resources and/or support would they need?

**5 minutes** – determine key takeaways of the discussion to share with the group

Don't hesitate to reach out with any questions. We're looking forward to the Lab and your participation!

## Sample Participant Email Invitation Text

You are invited to \_\_\_[COUNTRY]\_\_\_ Civil Society Innovation Lab!

Join \_\_\_[Organization/s]\_\_\_ for a day celebrating and learning about innovations in Central Asia.

The event will include fast-paced talks from our regions greatest civil society innovators and a chance to connect with them to discuss ways to apply new ideas to your work.

[WHEN]

[WHERE]

Speakers include:

[LIST CONFIRMED SPEAKERS + ORGANIZATIONS/LINKS TO ORGANIZATIONS]

Space is limited. Please submit your application by \_\_\_[DATE]\_\_\_ to attend. Apply here: \_\_\_[LINK TO APPLICATION FORM]\_\_\_

Priority for participation will be given to \_\_\_[DESCRIBE TARGET AUDIENCE (i.e. CSO staff, students)]\_\_\_

## Sample Social Media Posts

Don't miss chance to connect with Central Asia's civil society innovators! Apply \_\_\_[LINK TO APPLICATION FORM]\_\_\_

Learn about \_\_\_[TOPIC]\_\_\_ from @ [LINK TWITTER/FACEBOOK PERSON OR ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_[DATE OF LAB]\_\_\_. Apply today \_\_\_[LINK TO APPLICATION FORM]\_\_\_

## Sample Participant Application Form

First Name:

Last Name

Organization:

Title:

[ADD ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO HELP DETERMINE IF APPLICANTS FIT YOUR CRITERIA]

Please tell us why you are interested in attending the \_\_\_\_\_ [CITY/COUNTRY] \_\_\_\_\_  
Innovation Lab:

*Limited funds will be available for select participants.*

Would you require travel funds to attend?  Yes  No

Thank you for your application. We will notify you by \_\_\_\_\_ [DATE] \_\_\_\_\_.

## Sample Participant Survey

\_\_\_[CITY, COUNTRY]\_\_\_ INNOVATION LAB FEEDBACK

\_\_\_[DATE]\_\_\_

	Disagree		Agree	
I learned information that I will be able to apply in my work	1	2	3	4
My time was well spent attending this event	1	2	3	4

What was most useful about the Innovation Lab? Why?

What were the most relevant topics to your work:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Are there any topics you would like further training on? If so, what?

Are there any topics that were not discussed at the Lab that should be included in future events?

What would you recommend be done differently in future Innovation Labs?



Breakout session – Topic/Presenter	# Attendees
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8	
Which speakers/topics, if any, would you recommend participate in future Labs?	
What would you do differently if you could hold the Lab again?	
What advice would you give to others organizing Innovation Labs?	
Would you change or add anything to the Innovation Lab Planning Toolkit to help other organizers? If so, what?	

<b>Attachments</b>
Please attach the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda</li> <li>• Any other relevant materials you want to share</li> </ul>