Community Incubation

EDUCOPIA INSTITUTE AND THE STEPS MODEL

Katherine Skinner, PhD
Executive Director, Educopia Institute
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building networks and collaborative communities to help cultural, scientific, and scholarly institutions achieve greater impact.

Image and video: http://www.globalstewards.org/murmurations.htm
How can we help communities develop?
Community ↔ Business
Why do we need a “roadmap”?  

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Alignment apparatus</th>
<th>Communicate expectations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Articulate common cause</td>
<td>Identify opportunities</td>
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<td>Avoid duplicating efforts</td>
<td>Avoid roadblocks</td>
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<td>Assess impact</td>
<td>Elevate to next levels</td>
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<td>Audit growth</td>
<td>Respond to transitions</td>
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What does a roadmap provide?

• Distillation of common experiences

• Strategies and models for different stages of growth and development, ideally along common vectors
  • Technical
  • Fiscal
  • Governance
  • Communications

• Ability to scale community development and build “cohorts”
**Formation**

**Key Challenge:** How do we foster a healthy community?

**Focal Points:**
- Articulate mission/vision, strategic goals, and model of engagement;
- Foster relationships; pilot services/products; develop financial plan; grow leadership; begin to diversify funding streams

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**Validation**

**Key Challenge:** How do we demonstrate our viability?

**Focal Points:**
- Develop funding model for ongoing staffing support; empower and credit community members’ engagement; build/strengthen interdependency; test/iterate service model(s) within broadening circles; develop operational reserves; test efficacy of need; monitor landscape for competitors

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**Acceleration**

**Key Challenge:** How do we grow fast (or fail fast!)

**Focal Points:**
- Increase service/product use; generate revenue to cover operational costs + 10% (reserves); streamline onboarding; strengthen internal communications; increase community numbers; broadcast services/products; demonstrate ROI and impact; engage in second-phase strategic planning (re-evaluate mission/vision/value, conduct SWOT and landscape scans, map strategic goals, activities, and assessments, etc.)

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**Transition**

**Key Challenge:** What structure(s) do we need for continued impact?

**Focal Points:**
- Establish independence (select appropriate host or organizational form; ensure smooth transition of legal/fiscal/organizational systems and identity); mature governance framework and documentation; reinforce and deepen relationships (internal and external); generate revenue to cover operational costs and R&D; establish operational reserves to cover at least 18 months of operations

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**Ongoing community development, revisit previous steps/assumptions throughout progression**

**Sunset Review**
Katherine Skinner
katherine@educopia.org
404 783 2534