The RAINFOREST

SCORECARD

A Practical Framework for Growing Innovation Potential

Alberta: Progress observations, 18 months

Scores and select event outputs from 6 Rainforest Immersions across Calgary & Edmonton from September 2016 through March 2018

Version: 2018-06-20

Rainforest
STRATEGIES

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PART 2:
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- We conducted six Rainforest Immersion events (1-day duration, each with 35-60+ participants), four in Banff/Calgary and two in Edmonton, from fall 2016 through spring 2018. Typical sessions included the following modules/outputs.
  - **Playing "If we could…"**
  - **Helpers/Hinderers**
  - **Elephants in the Room**

- **About Improvement Priorities & Initiatives –** So much has been done by others in Alberta to synthesize, prioritize, and flesh out priorities and initiative ideas from the Immersions that those elements are not presented here.

About the Rainforest Scorecard

The Rainforest Scorecard provides a strategy for creating economic value in the 21st century, by building and nurturing an innovative organizational culture. The Scorecard, applied within the context of a carefully structured deployment process, functions as a modern framework for measuring and building innovation culture at scale in public, non-profit, and corporate settings. The framework outlined in the Rainforest Scorecard is essential for fostering growth of new products, services, and enterprises; for creating high-wage, knowledge-based jobs; and for enhancing sustainable economic competitiveness. We believe that a highly innovative, efficient and trusting culture is the most critical challenge in achieving these goals.

The Rainforest Scorecard is based on the notion that understanding, measuring and developing an innovation culture is a deeply pragmatic exercise, aimed at pragmatic outcomes. The Scorecard addresses organizational and leadership issues associated with deploying measurable strategies into organizations, in a data-centric manner, to achieve improvements that can be tracked, reported and understood by leadership.

Our Interpretation & Advice

Thousands of individuals representing hundreds of companies and communities have completed this assessment. From statistical analysis and years of dialogues with individuals and leaders, Rainforest Strategies has identified Scorecard patterns, some of which are universal and some of which are idiosyncratic to setting. Our interpretation of your scores leverages that experience. Even so, every organization is at a unique point in developing its innovation capacity, velocity, and sustainability. Our **observations** about your scores, the **implications** we see of the current pattern if unchanged, and the **recommendations** we make, should be taken as pointers for further inquiry, checked against internal experience, and considered in the context of your strategic planning and change management processes.

In the Context of Alberta

Rainforest Strategies recommendations – the perspectives that have been presented in Alberta by [Joe Sterling](#) and [Henry Doss](#) during Rainforest Immersions, many meetings across the province, and in these pages – should be taken as input from outside observers. We care and have made many friends in Alberta, but we are not from Alberta. We observe patterns in the data collected during assessments and events, but we don't know the strategic plans of the hundreds of organizations that have participated in our sessions. We don't know the nuanced politics or movement of resources and power that are in play in Alberta, as they are in everywhere we work. There are local consultants and agencies that specialize in these topics.

It is out hope that what we have presented in our sessions, and in the following pages, will highlight where progress is being made – there's a lot of it! – and help all players in Alberta move the province forward toward robust, resilient, and sustainable prosperity for all.

Rainforest Strategies – Alberta Events

*Immersion #1
Sept. 2016 Banff*

*Immersion #2
March 2017
Banff*

*Univ. of Calgary
May 2017
Calgary*

*Immersion #3
Oct. 2017
Calgary*

*Immersion #4
Oct. 2017*

*Immersion #5
Mar. 2018*

*Immersion #6
Mar. 2018*

PART 1:
Rainforest Scorecard Assessment Results

Scores from 6 Rainforest Immersions across Calgary & Edmonton from September 2016 through March 2018

Rainforest
S T R A T E G I E S

How to Think About Scores

The use of the term "score" is not to be understood as placing inordinate value on assessment or scoring per se; rather, the Scorecard should serve as a means of establishing a baseline for ongoing organizational dialogue and a shared cultural narrative of innovation. As an outcome of completing the assessment, the Scorecard helps institutionalize innovation language, nomenclature, and ways of thinking. As a baseline, Scorecard measures and scores can be used for improvement initiatives, looping feedback, and measuring progress over time. These internal behaviors and language are as important, if not more important, than the assessment scores. Focusing too intensely on scores diminishes the returns possible from the dialogue.

All the scores reported here are from using the Short-Form of the Rainforest Scorecard. The Short-Form is intended to provide an introduction and generate just enough data for useful dialogue. The Long-Form enables a deep dive with the same rigor as continuous improvement programming.

Exploring Assessment Results

In the following pages you'll find the Rainforest Scorecard results from six different cohorts of approximately 40-60 respondents each. The assessments were conducted every six months from fall 2016 through spring of 2018 with groups mostly from Calgary. Fall 2017 and spring 2018 two groups were run with participants mostly from Edmonton.

For each of the six attributes of the Rainforest Scorecard you'll find the questions that were assessed (Short-Form of the assessment).

Each cohort's responses to a question were averaged (mean calculation) and presented as a % of total possible points for that question. At right (in small print) you'll see the Cohort, Date, and numeric value (%) for each cohort. The bars show that value graphically.
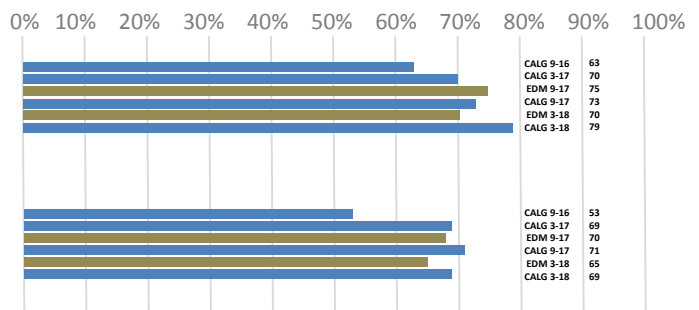**BLUE bars** = Cohort participants mostly from Calgary
GRAY bars = Cohort participants mostly from Edmonton
ORDER OF BARS = Cohort results are stacked in order from the first/top (Sept. 2016) to the most recent on the bottom (March 2018).

Leadership

Overall, local leadership promotes innovation.

Cohort	%
CALG 9-16	63
CALG 3-17	70
EDM 9-17	75
CALG 9-17	73
EDM 3-18	70
CALG 3-18	79

Total Mean: 53% ➜ 69%

Cohort	%
CALG 9-16	53
CALG 3-17	69
EDM 9-17	70
CALG 9-17	71
EDM 3-18	65
CALG 3-18	69

The "Total Mean" shows the range of lowest to highest scores. The last set of bar charts represent the total mean scores of each cohort for that section, here it's Leadership.

Rainforest Scorecard Attributes

Here is a quick reminder of the six attributes of the Rainforest Scorecard. (download book here)
Maximum possible score is 1000 points.

LEADERSHIP (200 POINTS)
Identifying leaders and champions in the organization will be one of the most essential first steps in assessing innovative potential. Leaders of innovation must have a clear understanding of the motivations, experiences, and perspectives of their organization's potential, in order to better understand the decision-makers and influencers.

FRAMEWORKS, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND POLICIES (150 POINTS)
Frameworks, Infrastructure, and Policies form the structural landscape for organizational innovation. They include all the organizations, departments, support infrastructure, and policies that have a role in the process of innovation. This section is a process of identifying who these stakeholders are and the policies that determine their action and interaction.

RESOURCES (150 POINTS)
Resources form the foundation for both the generation and implementation of innovation. Physical resources are an essential element of the implementation of innovation; knowledge resources are essential for the generation of innovative ideas; and human resources span both functions. Understanding the quantity, quality, and origins of the array of resources available to an organization provides a fundamental understanding of its innovative potential.

ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT (100 POINTS)
Activities and engagement represent a measure of the vibrancy of an organizational economy. Activities that are initiated on an organizational level (i.e. top down) are an important signal to constituencies of organizational ambition and commitment to innovation. Activities that promote innovation and actively encourage engagement across a diverse array of participants are an essential part of a thriving innovative ecosystem.

ROLE MODELS (100 POINTS)
Role models come in all shapes and sizes and are those individuals who embody characteristics that others wish to emulate. They are powerful influencers for the accelerated learning of new social behaviors and can transform entire organizations through inspiration.
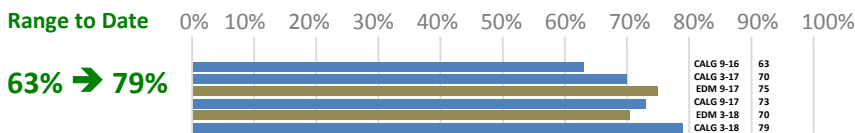
CULTURE (300 POINTS)
Culture is the foundation for any innovative ecosystem and while it is a component of all other areas being evaluated, must be considered as an independent and isolated factor as well. The principles of shared culture will ultimately determine the success of any innovative initiatives
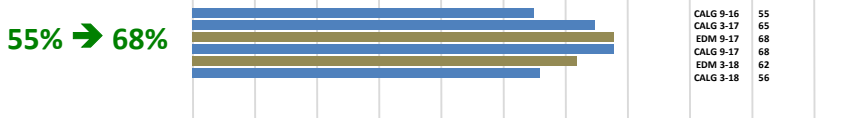
Leadership

Range to Date

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Overall, local leadership promotes innovation.

63% ➜ 79%

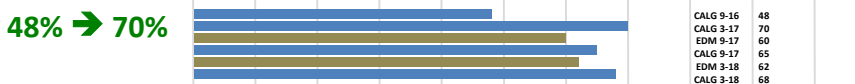|	
CALG 9-16	63
CALG 3-17	70
EDM 9-17	75
CALG 9-17	73
EDM 3-18	70
CALG 3-18	79

Leadership's perspective aligns with the perspective of others in the organization working to promote innovation.

45% ➜ 70%

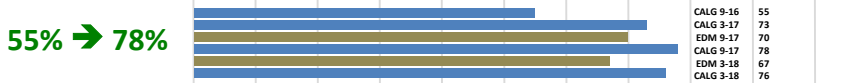|	
CALG 9-16	45
CALG 3-17	68
EDM 9-17	65
CALG 9-17	70
EDM 3-18	62
CALG 3-18	67
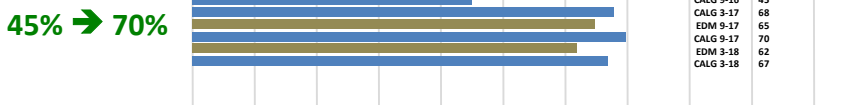
Leadership comes from diverse backgrounds and has diverse social, professional and cultural networks.

55% ➜ 68%

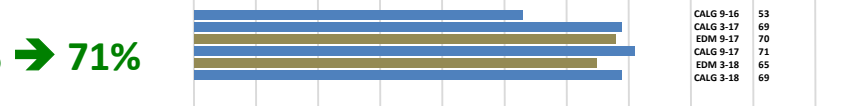|	
CALG 9-16	55
CALG 3-17	65
EDM 9-17	68
CALG 9-17	68
EDM 3-18	62
CALG 3-18	56

Leaders are effective at communicating their visions and agendas to their constituencies.

48% ➜ 70%

CALG 9-16	48
CALG 3-17	70
EDM 9-17	60
CALG 9-17	65
EDM 3-18	62
CALG 3-18	68

I understand the economic motivations of the organization's leadership.

55% ➜ 78%

CALG 9-16	55
CALG 3-17	73
EDM 9-17	70
CALG 9-17	78
EDM 3-18	67
CALG 3-18	76

Total Mean: 53% ➜ 71%

CALG 9-16	53
CALG 3-17	69
EDM 9-17	70
CALG 9-17	71
EDM 3-18	65
CALG 3-18	69

Observations

The total mean began at 53% of possible points in this attribute. After six months, all cohorts in Edmonton (2) and Calgary (4) scored 12-18% higher. This is a significant and sustained increase in perceived leadership focus on innovation. Two areas for improvement are: Leadership's perspective aligns with the perspective of others" and "Leaders are effective at communicating their visions and agendas." Both show solid progress. Alignment appears to be the most challenging, not surprising for such a distributed and complex population.
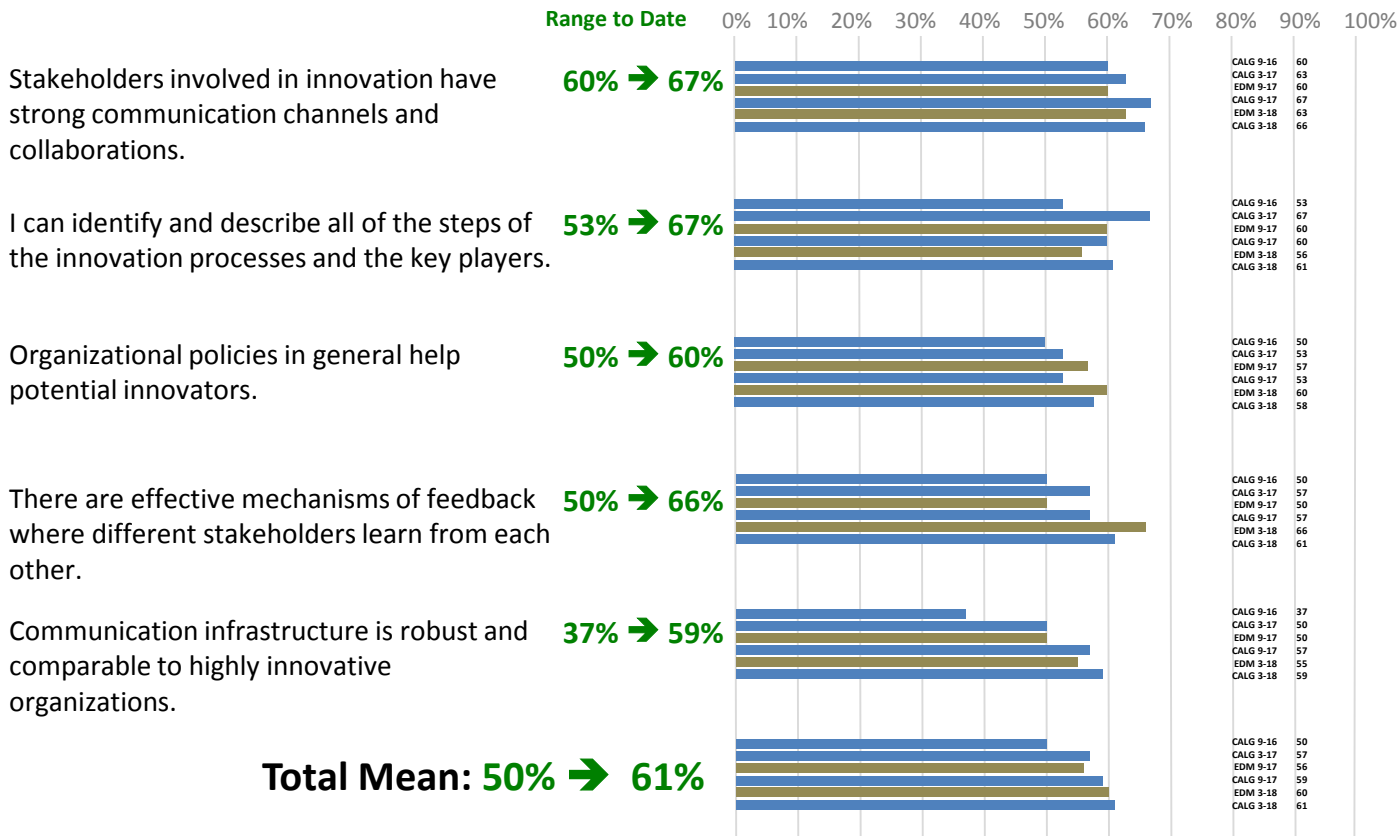
Implications

If efforts continue to collaboratively align visions and agendas province-wide, and those are well communicated, then we would expect other leadership scores to rise too. Diversity of participants in leadership may well become the next challenge as leadership settles into a groove.

Recommendations

- **Continue collaborative activities across the province regarding an Alberta vision and set of objectives, measures, targets and initiatives.** Identify what themes can be common across the whole, then make the most of local pockets of unique strengths. Look for ecosystem strengths to compete globally vs parochial zero-sum games.
- **Increase diversity** in the groups leading innovation and transformation activities. Dip into the population for the most creative, forward thinking, and energetic people. Balance genders, industry representation, and conservative/ progressive mindsets to the extent possible.
- **Develop a framework and rhythm for communicating** leadership's values, vision, objectives, measures and targets relative to innovation. Level setting expectations among groups for what innovation leadership is, what it does, and what everyone's role is relative to innovation helps align the culture.

Frameworks, Infrastructure, Policies

Range to Date

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Stakeholders involved in innovation have strong communication channels and collaborations.

60% ➜ 67%

CALG 9-16	60
CALG 3-17	63
EDM 9-17	60
CALG 9-17	67
EDM 3-18	63
CALG 3-18	66

I can identify and describe all of the steps of the innovation processes and the key players.

53% ➜ 67%

CALG 9-16	53
CALG 3-17	67
EDM 9-17	60
CALG 9-17	60
EDM 3-18	56
CALG 3-18	61

Organizational policies in general help potential innovators.

50% ➜ 60%

CALG 9-16	50
CALG 3-17	53
EDM 9-17	57
CALG 9-17	53
EDM 3-18	60
CALG 3-18	58

There are effective mechanisms of feedback where different stakeholders learn from each other.

50% ➜ 66%

CALG 9-16	50
CALG 3-17	57
EDM 9-17	50
CALG 9-17	57
EDM 3-18	66
CALG 3-18	61

Communication infrastructure is robust and comparable to highly innovative organizations.

37% ➜ 59%

CALG 9-16	37
CALG 3-17	50
EDM 9-17	50
CALG 9-17	57
EDM 3-18	55
CALG 3-18	59

Total Mean: 50% ➜ 61%

CALG 9-16	50
CALG 3-17	57
EDM 9-17	56
CALG 9-17	59
EDM 3-18	60
CALG 3-18	61

Observations

The total mean began at 50% of possible points in this attribute. Over 18 months, all subsequent cohorts in Edmonton (2) and Calgary (4) scored 6-11% higher. This suggests steady progress around frameworks, infrastructure and policy. The two significant improvement opportunities involve alignment of region-wide policies around innovation, and communication/collaboration infrastructure.

Implications

Without aligned policies and a strong communication infrastructure leadership's vision and agenda are hard to align and communicate. Also, innovators and entrepreneurs will find it hard to promote compelling proposals. To the extent policies are mis-aligned or have gaps, proposals may be idiosyncratic (vs strategically or thematically aligned), and leadership will have a hard time deciding what merits prioritization and investment. With a shared policy framework, proposals, prioritizing, and innovation experiments run faster, and initiative monitoring is more effective.

Recommendations

- **Adopt a simple, easy to implement communication infrastructure to support the innovation** activities already underway and developing. Lean toward a system that will have the easiest adoption and increase complexity of it in step with the maturation of the innovation ecosystem.
- **Adopt a shared set of policies and processes for proposing and executing innovation experiments.** This not only aids leaders in deciding which experiments to resource, but it enables easier comparison of initiatives (strategic theme, level of effort, ROI, and so on). Knowing the policies and processes gives innovators and entrepreneurs more confidence in proposing innovations and recognizing the cross-pollinating and synergies between initiatives.

Resources

It is easy for innovators to identify and access funding for their ventures.

Range to Date **37% ➔ 47%**

CALG 9-16	37
CALG 3-17	40
EDM 9-17	40
CALG 9-17	43
EDM 3-18	40
CALG 3-18	47

Up to date and relevant information across a broad spectrum of disciplines is accessible by the majority of the organization.

40% ➔ 60%

CALG 9-16	40
CALG 3-17	53
EDM 9-17	53
CALG 9-17	57
EDM 3-18	40
CALG 3-18	60

The organization's workforce is highly diverse and talented across a broad range of relevant skill sets aligned with market demands.

53% ➔ 63%

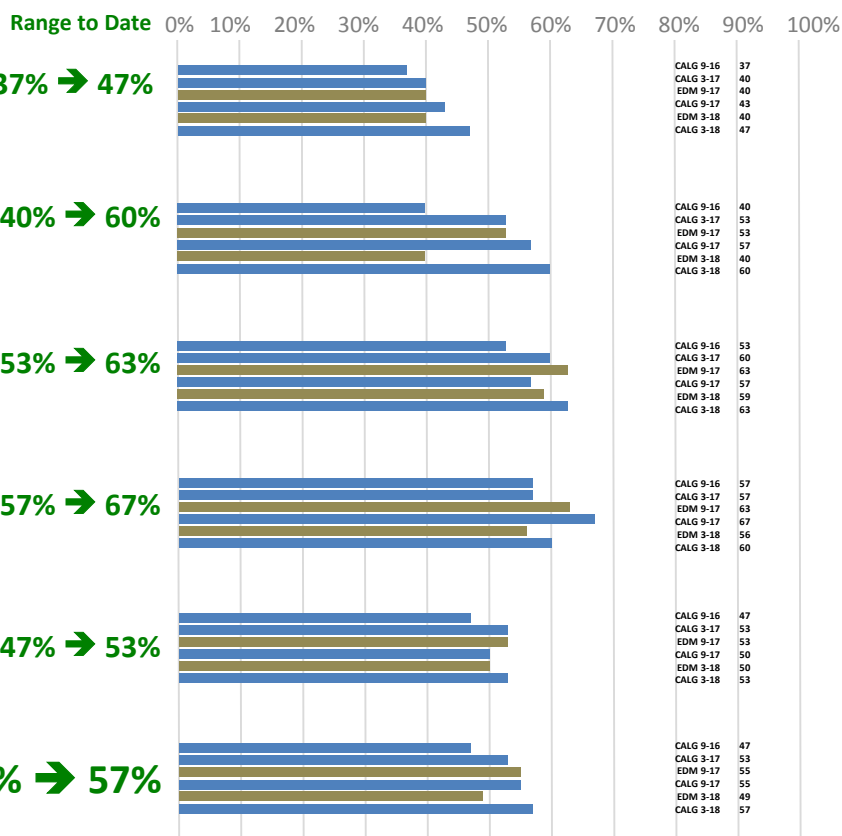|	
CALG 9-16	53
CALG 3-17	60
EDM 9-17	63
CALG 9-17	57
EDM 3-18	59
CALG 3-18	63

There are effective entre-and/or intrapreneurial support org.s and individuals with experience available to mentor and support innovation.

57% ➔ 67%

CALG 9-16	57
CALG 3-17	57
EDM 9-17	63
CALG 9-17	67
EDM 3-18	56
CALG 3-18	60

There are programs that specifically train workers to be current in their field and these programs are widely accessible.

47% ➔ 53%

CALG 9-16	47
CALG 3-17	53
EDM 9-17	53
CALG 9-17	50
EDM 3-18	50
CALG 3-18	53

Total Mean: 47% ➔ 57%

CALG 9-16	47
CALG 3-17	53
EDM 9-17	55
CALG 9-17	55
EDM 3-18	49
CALG 3-18	57

Observations

The total mean began at 47% of possible points in this attribute and has generally risen. This perception of Resources dedicated to innovation suggests three areas of improvement: Funding; Information; and Training. Low scores on communication infrastructure and policy frameworks for innovation/start-ups (see previous section) would make it both difficult to identify and access funding and get information. Given the range of excellent AB institutions, these scores may be more about collaboration between training resources than whether they exist in the province.
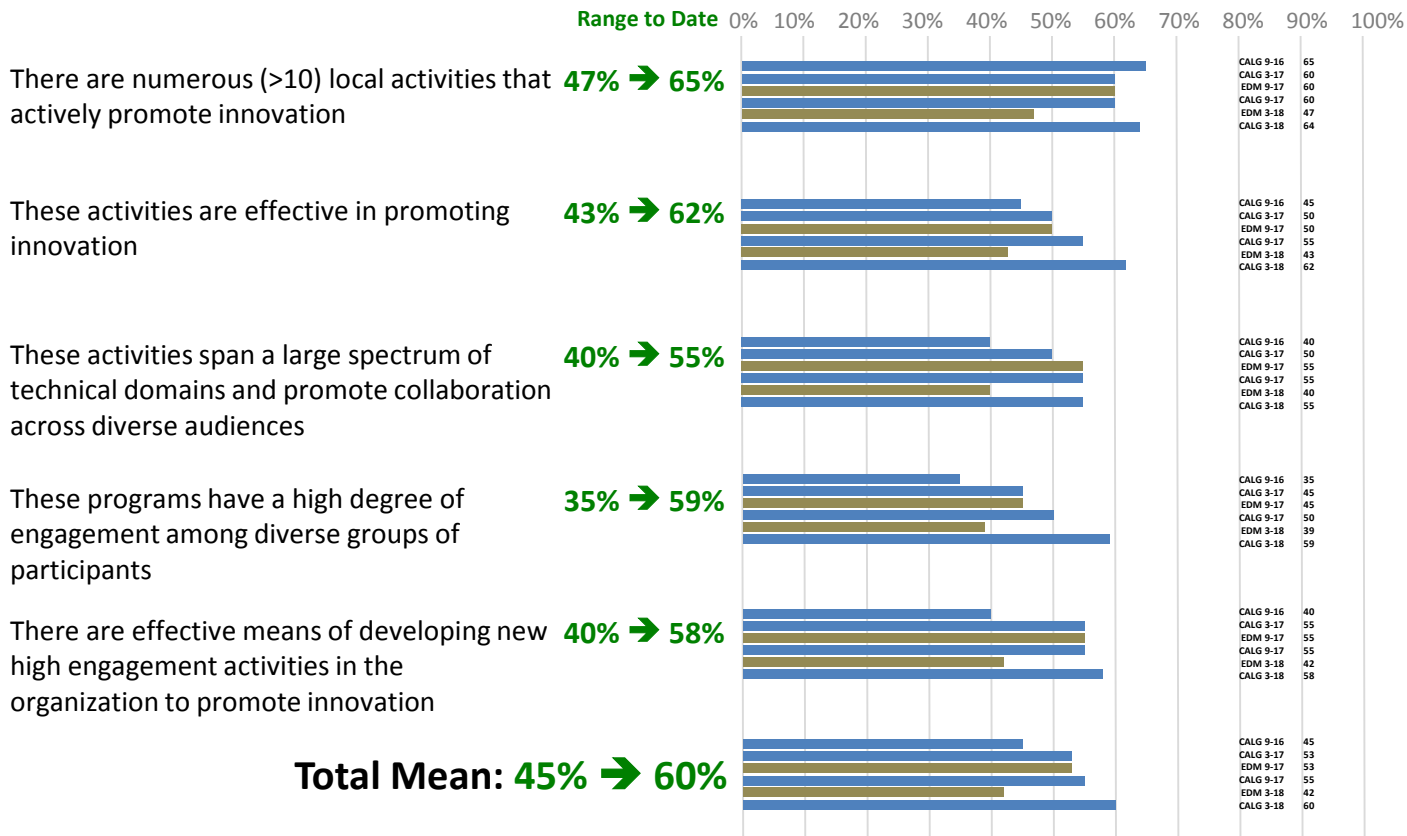
Implications

If the resources are present, but not aligned and not accessed, then they won't translate into new proposals/start-ups and innovation experiments. Two dynamics could be expected: A) leadership will be frustrated by seeing expenditure with no return; and B) innovators and entrepreneurs who aren't already innovation role models won't be confident enough to make innovation proposals or run experiments.

Recommendations

- Settle on a shared framework to define for entrepreneurs what type of funding to pursue at each stage of their business and organizational development and where to get funding. Help funding sources communicate using the same framework.
- Using communication infrastructure suggested in the previous sections, develop relevant hubs for information by industry cluster. Then look at sharing-bridges between clusters and any isolated groups.
- While the Edmonton scores were the same or lower from cohorts 1 to 2, we are confident that the perception of resources (scores) will rise with more connections for sharing and discovery of under-utilized resources. Link and promote resource pools across Alberta to increase awareness and access.
- Look at how training programs across the province are aligned (or not) and promoted. What can be done to decrease any unproductive competition between institutions and align programs in support of innovation and entrepreneurship?

10

Activities & Engagement

Range to Date

CALG 9-16	65
CALG 3-17	60
EDM 9-17	60
CALG 9-17	60
EDM 3-18	47
CALG 3-18	64

There are numerous (>10) local activities that actively promote innovation — **47% ➔ 65%**

CALG 9-16	45
CALG 3-17	50
EDM 9-17	55
CALG 9-17	55
EDM 3-18	43
CALG 3-18	62

These activities are effective in promoting innovation — **43% ➔ 62%**

CALG 9-16	40
CALG 3-17	50
EDM 9-17	55
CALG 9-17	55
EDM 3-18	40
CALG 3-18	55

These activities span a large spectrum of technical domains and promote collaboration across diverse audiences — **40% ➔ 55%**

CALG 9-16	35
CALG 3-17	45
EDM 9-17	45
CALG 9-17	50
EDM 3-18	39
CALG 3-18	59

These programs have a high degree of engagement among diverse groups of participants — **35% ➔ 59%**

CALG 9-16	40
CALG 3-17	55
EDM 9-17	55
CALG 9-17	55
EDM 3-18	42
CALG 3-18	58

There are effective means of developing new high engagement activities in the organization to promote innovation — **40% ➔ 58%**

CALG 9-16	45
CALG 3-17	53
EDM 9-17	53
CALG 9-17	55
EDM 3-18	42
CALG 3-18	60

Total Mean: 45% ➔ 60%

Observations

The total mean began at 45% of possible points in this attribute and has generally risen significantly. Each of the questions in this section have shown marked increases in scores, with the exception of the second Edmonton cohort that perceived lower scores across the board. The lowest scoring questions, about diversity of participation and technical domains, suggests room to expand the number and breadth of groups involved. Activities/ Engagement has great potential to help raise the scores of the other attributes, and we see progress.
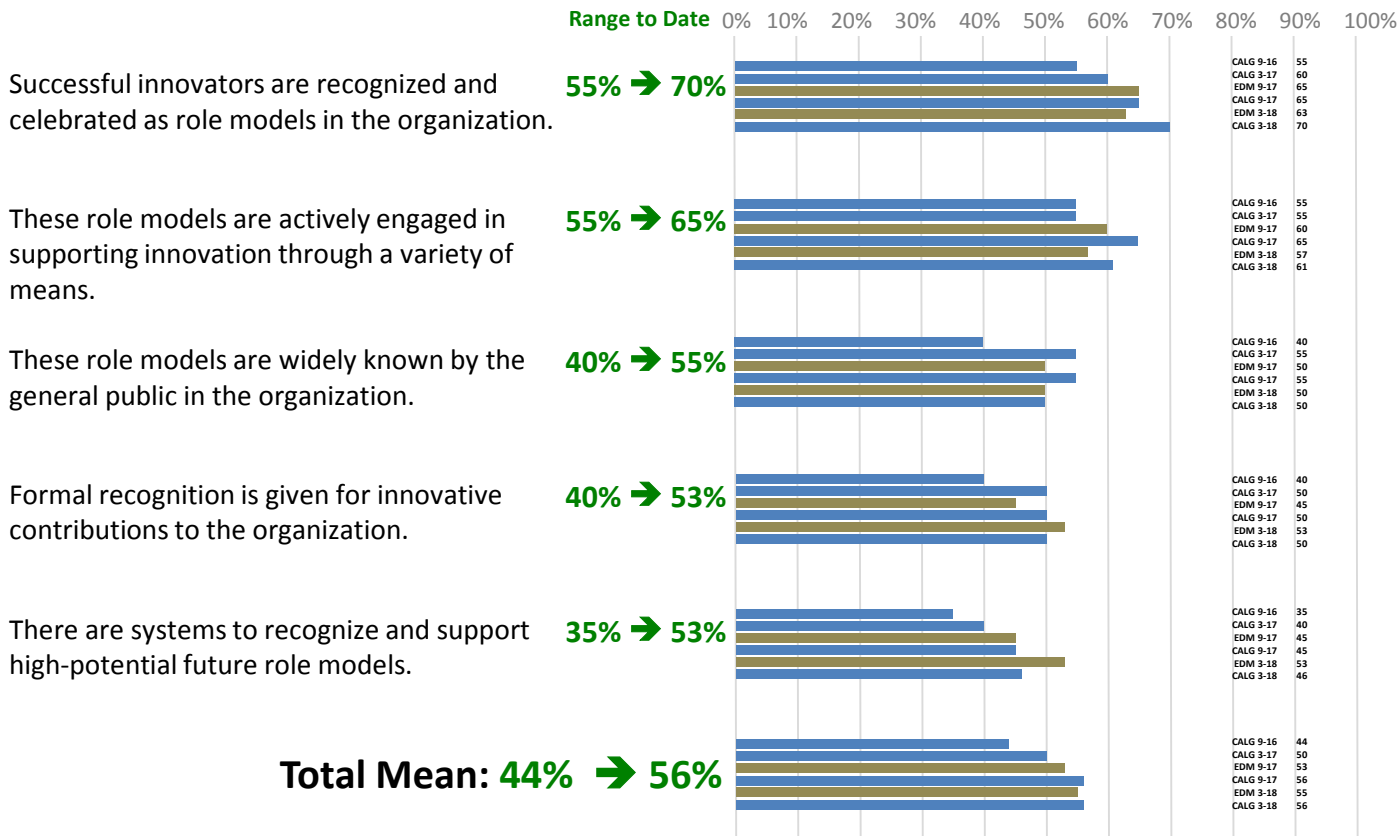
Implications

To the extent that leaders across the province allocate time, resources and align policies to Activities/ Engagement for innovation and entrepreneurship, then they become a priority in AB. With more activities innovation Role Models can step forward and show others how to work with innovation Frameworks and Policies.

Recommendations

- Continue the activities that work in the province:
  - **Semi-Annual Immersions & Assessment of the innovation ecosystem –** this engages even more types of individuals and organizations;
  - **Lunch Without Lunch meetings** clearly work very well and need to be strengthened.
- **Ensure that all of Alberta is included –** Where possible bridge barriers or silos, for example between energy and technology sectors, or between Edmonton and Calgary.
- **Expand activities related to ecosystem governance and cultivation expertise.** Build on new relations to form an ecosystem cultivation framework, and facilitating body.
- **Design Sessions by Vertical** – Engage stakeholders in similar roles (service providers; funders; educators; governments; etc.) in design sessions for strategic alignment on innovation and entrepreneurship by vertical.
- **Beware volunteer burnout –** After 18 months, burnout is a real concern. Resourcing the care and feeding of those who administer the liveliest elements of the ecosystem and the major events is crucial for sustainability.

Role Models

Range to Date 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Successful innovators are recognized and celebrated as role models in the organization.

55% ➔ 70%

CALG 9-16	55
CALG 3-17	60
EDM 9-17	65
CALG 9-17	65
EDM 3-18	63
CALG 3-18	70

These role models are actively engaged in supporting innovation through a variety of means.

55% ➔ 65%

CALG 9-16	55
CALG 3-17	60
EDM 9-17	60
CALG 9-17	55
EDM 3-18	57
CALG 3-18	61

These role models are widely known by the general public in the organization.

40% ➔ 55%

CALG 9-16	40
CALG 3-17	55
EDM 9-17	50
CALG 9-17	55
EDM 3-18	50
CALG 3-18	50

Formal recognition is given for innovative contributions to the organization.

40% ➔ 53%

CALG 9-16	40
CALG 3-17	50
EDM 9-17	45
CALG 9-17	50
EDM 3-18	53
CALG 3-18	50

There are systems to recognize and support high-potential future role models.

35% ➔ 53%

CALG 9-16	35
CALG 3-17	40
EDM 9-17	45
CALG 9-17	45
EDM 3-18	53
CALG 3-18	46

Total Mean: 44% ➔ 56%

CALG 9-16	44
CALG 3-17	50
EDM 9-17	53
CALG 9-17	56
EDM 3-18	55
CALG 3-18	56

Observations

The total mean began at 44% of possible points in this attribute and has risen with each cohort over 18 months. The effect of the Role Model in innovation ecosystems is very important. In these scores we see that Role Models are getting more recognized in Alberta, and that recognition is becoming more formalized. Systems to recognize and support high-potential future role models are making progress but have significant room to grow.

Implications

In many cultures, innovators are concerned that if they don't follow everyone else they will be punished. Likewise, those who are "too successful" fear drawing too much attention to themselves, even though their high performance comes from powerful innovations others could emulate. Innovation can spring from unlikely sources, often these are corners where recognition means a lot and is highly motivating. Formal recognition processes makes innovation everyone's business in Alberta.

Recommendations

- **Formalize recognition processes across Alberta to identify anyone who already demonstrates willingness** to take smart risks and innovate.
- **Highlight how Role Models identify and marshal resources.** This can go a long way to improving the perception of and access to resources.
- Where innovation efforts have been run, including ecosystem experiments, **make it a point of honor to share stories of experimentation, learning, and trying new things – especially outside the usual circles of power and wealth**.
- **Engage the Role Models in activities where they can teach and mentor up-and-comers** about the frameworks they use, their way of navigating regional helpers and hurdles, and how they enroll resources and engage others in collaborations.
- **Make it easy for Role Models and all others involved in innovation efforts to find each other, share information, and work together.**

Culture

Range to Date

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Trust is an important cultural element locally and is widespread and easily created. — **36% ➔ 59%**

CALG 9-16	36
CALG 3-17	48
EDM 9-17	52
CALG 9-17	58
EDM 3-18	50
CALG 3-18	59

People think in terms of "positive-sum" or "win-win" situations and not "zero-sum" or "I win only if you lose." — **42% ➔ 62%**

CALG 9-16	42
CALG 3-17	52
EDM 9-17	54
CALG 9-17	62
EDM 3-18	51
CALG 3-18	58

Failure is not viewed in a negative light. — **34% ➔ 58%**

CALG 9-16	34
CALG 3-17	42
EDM 9-17	48
CALG 9-17	56
EDM 3-18	50
CALG 3-18	58

Calculated risk taking is viewed positively. — **44% ➔ 66%**

CALG 9-16	50
CALG 3-17	44
EDM 9-17	58
CALG 9-17	66
EDM 3-18	57
CALG 3-18	66

People are often willing to help without expectation of immediate return. — **58% ➔ 71%**

CALG 9-16	58
CALG 3-17	56
EDM 9-17	60
CALG 9-17	68
EDM 3-18	64
CALG 3-18	71

People are encouraged to dream and "think big." — **42% ➔ 69%**

CALG 9-16	42
CALG 3-17	54
EDM 9-17	58
CALG 9-17	64
EDM 3-18	60
CALG 3-18	69

Total Mean: 43% ➔ 64%

CALG 9-16	43
CALG 3-17	49
EDM 9-17	55
CALG 9-17	62
EDM 3-18	55
CALG 3-18	64

Observations

The total mean began at 43% of possible points in this attribute and has generally risen with each cohort over 18 months. This suggests that the cultural baseline has strengthened in the ecosystem, much the same as the Role Model baseline. Changing culture requires consistent development and reinforcement of desired behaviors and attitudes. In the second Edmonton cohort, where scores dropped on a couple questions (as it did for that cohort in other sections), it suggests a different set of expectations or local conditions than the other cohort from Edmonton and those from Calgary.

Implications

Wherever the cultural strengths are leveraged to help build the other attributes, the ecosystem will generally see a positive cycle of win-win behaviors, calculated risk taking, and experimentation servicing visions from "thinking big"; that can lead to both incremental improvements and breakthroughs.

Recommendations

- **Look for demonstrations of trust in the ecosystem** and notice what forms it takes. Notice where and when people "go at risk" together; study the outcomes. Consider the kinds of trust needed to support innovation, and celebrate it.
- In activities and engagement that are introduced into the ecosystem, **dialogue about how calculated risks are taken,** include how outcomes of experiments are treated, especially when the result is not what was hoped for or expected.
- **Dialogue among leaders about each culture topic above.** This can bring leadership groups onto the same plane about their desired innovation culture – especially important for ecosystem governance/facilitation. Carefully constructed dialogues and design sessions can explore and elicit stories about the evidence of strengths and weakness in the ecosystem, and align all on what to look for and push toward.
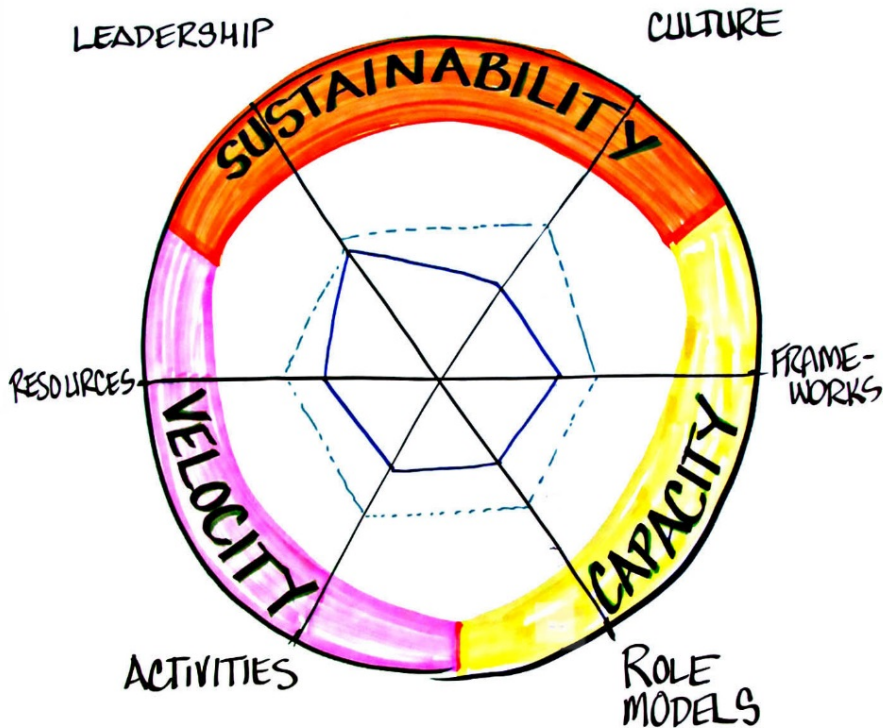
✳ IMBALANCE CORRELATES TO LOW SCORES

✳ IMBALANCE, WHERE LEADERSHIP IS HIGHEST, OTHER SCORES TEND LOWER

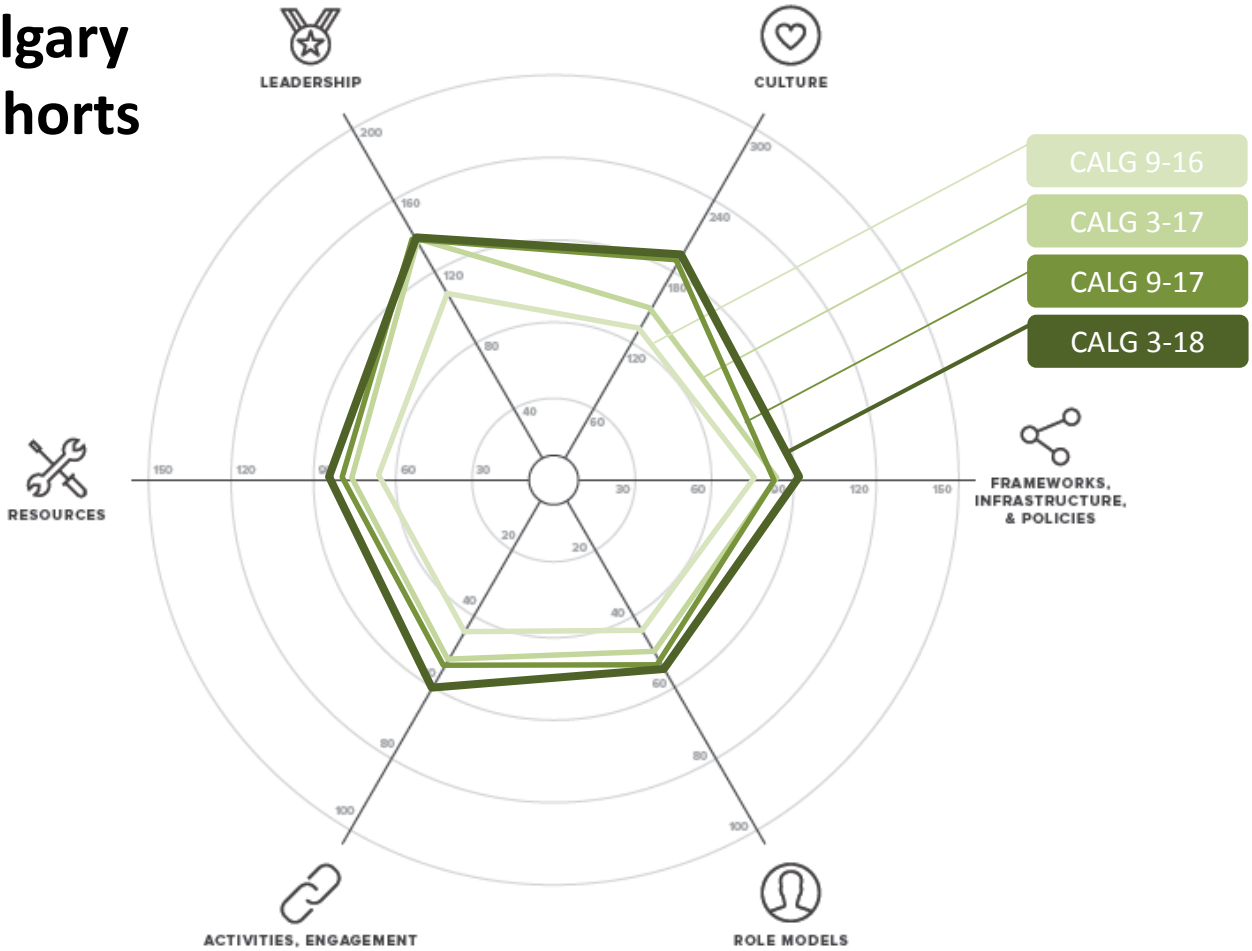**✳ ROLE MODELS TEND TO ATTRACT RESOURCES.**

Balance

Generally speaking, we look for a balanced set of scores. Statistically, imbalance correlates to lower scores. Where Leadership is out of balance with significantly higher scores, the rest of the attributes tend to be contracted. Within that general guideline, every ecosystem and organization will have a unique profile, and a unique pace at which weak areas are strengthened.

Capacity, Velocity, and Sustainability

A way to think about the relationship between the six attributes of the Rainforest Scorecard goes like this: Role Models use Frameworks, Infrastructure, and Policy to innovate and experiment. This is basic ecosystem **CAPACITY**. When Resources and Activities/Engagement are added to the equation, this increases **VELOCITY** of innovation and transformation. When Leadership sanctions frameworks, infrastructure and policies, and when they allocate resources, and celebrate role models, they are growing and sustaining momentum. When the culture institutionalizes these as a set of beliefs and norms, the innovation ecosystem can be said to have grown **SUSTAINABILITY**.

Calgary Cohorts

LEADERSHIP

CULTURE

FRAMEWORKS, INFRASTRUCTURE, & POLICIES

ROLE MODELS

ACTIVITIES, ENGAGEMENT

RESOURCES

- CALG 9-16
- CALG 3-17
- CALG 9-17
- CALG 3-18

Observations

The Calgary/Banff cohorts, from Fall 2016 to Spring 2018, show solid progress. The weakest attribute in 2016, Culture, has become one of the strongest. All others have improved significantly. Resources and Role Models are the two, generally speaking, with the most room to improve. The fact that the improvements between the last two cohorts are smaller than improvements between the first two may suggest that the easy wins have been achieved and more challenging issues are next up. The scores are becoming more balanced which is desirable.

Implications

If the Calgary cohorts keep this trajectory we would expect innovation to increase, accelerate, and be more sustainable. While leadership scores are still higher than the others, the degree to which it is out of balance with the other five attributes is getting smaller which bodes well.

Recommendations

Keep up the good work!

- Select and commit to an innovation Framework, that can inform aligned Policies across Alberta entities. Strengthen the innovation infrastructure to enable easier access to resources of all kinds.
- Resource regular innovation-focused Activities/ Engagements that showcase and teach the Framework and how to leverage the Policies.
- In Activities, celebrate both how the Frameworks are used by Role Models, and also how learning from "failure" strengthens innovation Culture.
- Make a concerted effort to collaborate across Alberta's private and public organizations on Resources of all types not just funds, information, and training. Allocate resources to maintain the Activities to prevent volunteer burnout.
- Memorialize these steps in ecosystem-wide communications, recognition programs, and online repositories to reinforce the culture of innovation, link innovators, and build Alberta's brand.

Edmonton Cohorts

LEADERSHIP

CULTURE

EDM 9-17

EDM 3-18

RESOURCES

FRAMEWORKS, INFRASTRUCTURE, & POLICIES

ACTIVITIES, ENGAGEMENT

ROLE MODELS
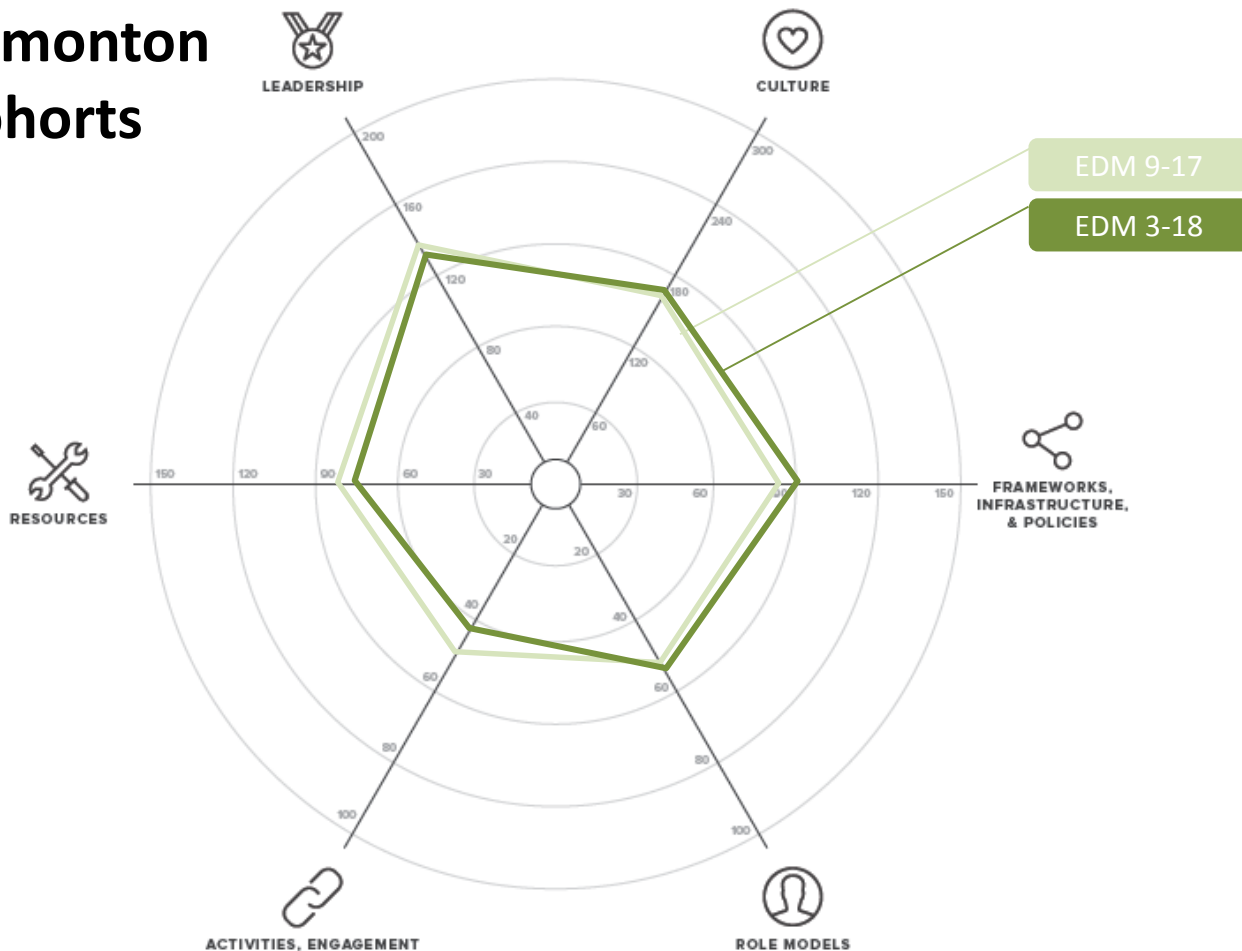
Observations

Like many ecosystems, early in their process with the Rainforest, Leadership is stronger than the other five attributes. Generally speaking, Leadership is required to launch changes to innovation culture. Frameworks, Infrastructure and Policies are also relatively strong, a key component to capacity for innovation. Resources and Activities/Engagement have the most room for improvement at this stage. It's worth looking into why perceptions of the first cohort were stronger than the second cohort.

Implications

If Edmonton follows a similar developmental trajectory as the Calgary cohorts, we would expect to see significant improvements between these first two cohorts and the next Edmonton cohort. As the Alberta ecosystem becomes more sophisticated region-wide, the Role Models, Frameworks, Infrastructure, Policies, and Activities will grow across the province and that will support Edmonton.

Recommendations

Stick with it!

- Select and commit to an innovation Framework, that can inform aligned Policies across all Alberta entities. Strengthen the innovation infrastructure to enable easier access to resources of all kinds.
- Resource regular innovation-focused Activities/ Engagements that showcase and teach the Framework and how to leverage Policies.
- Focus on increasing Activities/Engagement. Celebrate sharing a Framework that enables trust and win-win outcomes across Alberta.
- Increase collaboration across Alberta's private and public organizations regarding Resources of all types (not just funds, information, and training). Allocate resources to maintain the Activities and avoid volunteer burnout.
- Memorialize these steps in ecosystem-wide communications, recognition programs, and online repositories to reinforce the culture of innovation, link innovators, and build Alberta's brand.

PART 2:
Rainforest Immersions Summary of Select Workshop Outputs

Participant outputs from 6 Rainforest Immersions across Calgary & Edmonton from September 2016 through March 2018

Playing "If we could..."

This is the first activity in the Rainforest Immersion and gently moves everyone into a conversation about innovation and why it matters in the Alberta region. Over 300 Albertan from business, government, and various agencies took part in this exercise, in five separate Rainforest Immersion events. Participants (in dyads) completed this statement about innovation: "If we could improve X , that would be great for the Alberta region because Y ."
It's worth noting that these sentiments are captured before any Rainforest presentations, so they reflect what the participants brought with them, not what we offered.

At right is a sample of how responses were captured in each event. Below are the comments from all six sessions clustered into thematic groups and edited for readability. *The clusters are roughly ordered by the frequency each theme was raised from most often to least often.*

IF WE COULD...
- CRACK TIRANY OF INSTALLED BASE (PEOPLE, CAPITAL, TECHN., POLICY, ETC.)
- TRANSFORM EDUC. TO GREATER FOCUS ON GROUP VS. INDIVIDUAL, WILLING TO RISK
- DEVELOP LEADERS & RISK TOLERANCE TO CROSS ORG. BOUNDARIES
- GROW TECH. SKILLS ▷ CODING
- ENTREP. NARRATIVE (MAKE IT REAL)

GREAT BECAUSE...
- ALLOWS MOVEMENT
- CONNECTED ▷ KNOW HOW ▷ RESOURCES
- CAPACITY TO ▷ COLLABORATE ▷ COMMUNITY MINDED ▷ ACTION
- MORE CROSS POLINATION, FASTER IDEA EXCHANGE
- MORE CAPABILITY TO START BIZ
- CREATE OPPORTUNITY

If we could improve…	That would be great for Alberta because…
If we could…diversify the economy for greater flexibility and dynamism…that would crack the tyranny of the "installed base" (people, capital, technology, policy, etc.) and help us think globally, beyond Alberta.	That would be great because…it would grow the economy and make it more resilient…and encourage new industries, more economic activity, and foster more alternatives and complements to the incumbent major industry here. It would also position Alberta to be a resource in the global "innovation economy."
If we could…connect social and community circles…more synchronicity and awareness of each other would arise…there would be more collisions and collaboration…and focus on innovation…which creates opportunities for ideation.	That would be great because…it generates more collaboration…accelerates fresh thinking and energy…increases capacity to collaborate and makes people community minded, so they take action…which attracts more people to get involved.
If we could…Increase diversity among innovators and entrepreneurs…a strength of Alberta, we could embrace "opposites," have more porosity and permeability for idea flows and novelty across industries. Embracing diversity includes engaging women, different kinds of companies and smart people from all over.	That would be great because…Feeding and growing diversity of ideas and opinions strengthens the social dynamics needed for innovation and…increases cross-fertilization leading to new wealth creation. Inclusion generates opportunity for young entrepreneurs to use and apply new intellectual property…as well as attracting women innovators and entrepreneurs, 50% of the population.
If we could…create energy and focus the community … we could cultivate the ecosystem…and embrace innovation. This changes the Alberta narrative, enabling celebration of success, innovators, entrepreneurs, and attracting corporate investment… and making the entrepreneurial narrative real.	That would be great because…More visibility to Alberta…would attract people to come and stay…generate more startups…and give us a better view of the future. We would see the results, see the potential in Alberta, and inspire action…including motivating individuals and businesses to buy local.

Playing "If we could…"

| If we could improve…	That would be great for Alberta because…
If we could…Accept failure in experiments and let things die if they are failing…we would demonstrate courage and humility…reduce fear of failure and improve acceptance of risk… we would take personal responsibility for experiments and their outcomes.	That would be great because…We would run more experiments and generate more innovation…faster. Youth and everyone would do more, try more. It would show that we are willing to roll up sleeves, get involved, take risks…make more innovation, start-ups.
If we could…Increase trust between research and innovators…and increase collaboration between university and industry that would accelerate commercialization of ideas…to produce incentive systems to support innovation and research.	That would be great because…Albertans would take advantage of resources and capabilities…including formal commercialization processes. Overall, it would accelerate evolution and improvement in our innovation ecosystem.
If we could…improve entrepreneur education and structures to support entrepreneurs…including combining knowledge and expertise beyond technology…that would transform education to greater focus on group vs individual, and willingness to risk. Growing technical skills (coding, etc.) would have a better context.	That would be great because…Retaining and growing local talent is core to Alberta's long-term strength. Resources and talent would combine… to better service and support entrepreneurs. More student start-ups and commercialization would result.
If we could…Get more private sector investment, and greater access to capital in general, that would accelerate everything.	That would be great because…it would grow capital and people… and give us more capability to start new businesses and grow existing ones.
If we could…Increase early-stage deal flow…then more sales, exports, revenue of existing companies… the success rate of companies would rise…it would require balancing the focus on technology success with the focus on business success.	That would be great because…Reducing costs and increasing deal flow…flow of the new…creates value…and creates opportunity.
If we could… see more pro-business government processes…including access to data sets…	That would be great because…with support from government things would move faster… and we could leverage our gold mine of data.
If we could…Improve air and ground transportation to, from, and around Edmonton…	That would be great because…we could get more folks engaged in Edmonton with improved time management.

AB Ecosystem Helpers & Hinderers

What helps us make improvements?
What hinders us?

This activity in the Rainforest Immersion helps participants take stock of what already exists to give life and vibrancy to Alberta innovation and entrepreneurship. Over 250 Albertans from business, government, and various agencies worked this exercise, in five of the six Rainforest Immersion events. Participants developed responses to the challenge questions in mixed teams of 6-8 individuals.

The themes below were captured before participants had received an overview Rainforest presentation, so they reflect helping and hindering forces that participants easily identify.

At right is a sample of how responses were captured in each event. Below are the comments from the five sessions clustered into thematic groups and edited for readability. *The clusters are roughly ordered by the frequency each theme was raised from most often to least often.*
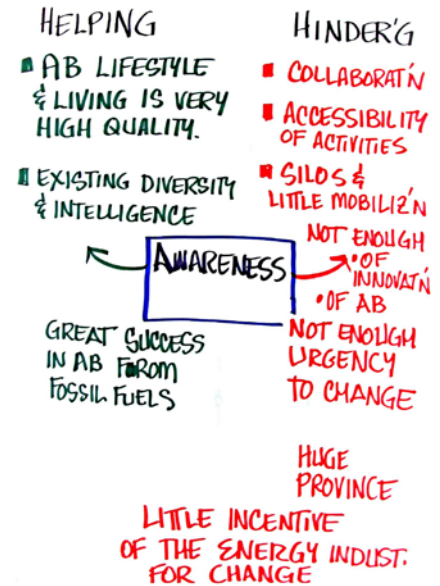
- **Helping: Awareness of Support & Resources**

  A key theme raised by participants in these programs was awareness among the greater Alberta population of support for entrepreneurs and innovators. There is some awareness of the helping forces and resources that could lead to improvements, but more awareness would accelerate and strengthen improvements. Silos between various support agencies and a multiplicity of models for how to get from concept to commercialization to a sustainable business cloud this awareness. The message: *The more we all know about our capability to innovate, the clearer and more aligned our set of models is, the more we can and will innovate to improve our region.*

- **Hindering: Acting as if Calgary and Edmonton are not in the same ecosystem**

  A theme in Immersions #1-2-3 was the perception that Calgary and Edmonton behave as if they are not part of the same innovation ecosystem. Furthermore, Alberta's rural areas are usually perceived as an afterthought regarding innovation and economic development. Pre-internet, separation and self-sufficiency were real. Today, connectivity and interdependence have closed many gaps between these communities. Through connectivity, diverse sub-regional strengths can be leveraged, weaknesses can be overcome, and synergies created. Albertans can compete and collaborate in a global context, not just national, not just provincial, and certainly not just at the level of a single city or agency. The take-away: *There is power and prosperity in collaboration.*

- **Hindering: Incumbent Hydrocarbon Paradigm**

  As described in Clayton Christensen's groundbreaking book "Innovator's Dilemma," organizations, even very large ones, that are highly successful often become insular and focus increasingly on getting more results from that which has worked well in the past. They become blind to paradigm shifts in their external world. They may never see the competitor coming that ultimately puts them out of business. Key take-away: *Looking for and embracing inbound paradigm shifts enables adaptation and or migration, the two options species have for survival in a changing environment.*

AB Ecosystem Helpers & Hinderers

Helping: Rainforest Perspective

The great success of the Alberta fossil fuel industry provides both the platform and resources for massive innovation, if only the region's leaders (business, social, and government) can see beyond the current paradigm to the emerging world view and economy. It is tempting to say that what we've always been is what we'll always be. My father was a rancher. I'm a rancher. That's the way it is. Or, our family has been in oil and gas for three generations, and the industry that made Alberta what it is will carry us into the future. Participants called this a culture of "cowboys and oil men" - iconic identities on the North American continent. Questions for 21st Century Alberta: *What types of innovation are "cowboys and oil men" uniquely suited to pursue? Where are those types of innovation needed most in an interconnected global economy that must restore environmental health even as it grows?*

- ## Hindering: Focusing on an "exit" versus legacy building in Alberta

It is the nature of entrepreneurs everywhere to launch and grow successful businesses with an eye toward wealth-building. The fabled path, glorified by high-profile Silicon Valley founders, often involves selling the company to a corporate giant for billions – which is a good thing for those who benefit from the sale. Where this can become a hinderance to the overall health of the Alberta ecosystem is if the sale moves expertise, employment, profits, and removes players from participation in the ecosystem. Exit-minded business leadership generates a dynamic of "growing, growing, gone!" As a result, new businesses only achieve a certain size before leaving the area; long-term employment and deep trusting relationships are cut short; income stability and growth for families is limited; and, the role models of local success stories don't cultivate the next generation of innovation and entrepreneurship to the extent they could. The issue to address: *What is needed to make it easier and more profitable for the owners of home-grown Alberta businesses, that have become acquisition targets, to stay in the province? What narrative elements would make building a multi-generational success story in Alberta the ultimate success?*

Name the Elephant in the Room

Having the Innovation conversation:

During large group dialogues, which occur at intervals in Rainforest Immersions, participants called out sensitive topics, themes they described as difficult to talk about but felt compelled to raise. The Rainforest Immersion process is designed to make it safe for participants in diverse groups of 30-60+ individuals, to challenge time-honored ways of thinking at the risk of being disloyal to traditions that built great success in the past. Once helpful frames of mind were called out as hindering the evolution of Alberta's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems in today's 21st Century context. Participants spoke of the need to address these important issues deliberately. ***What follows is the synthesis of "elephants" ordered roughly by the frequency and intensity with which they were raised.***

- **Definitions & Perception**
Each person has a different notion of what "innovation" means depending, on where they work and their background. To move Alberta forward, we need a shared vocabulary.

- **Diversity**
The various scores that participants gave on the Rainforest Scorecard assessment reflect the diversity of organizations and conditions around the region. This diversity revealed both strengths and weaknesses. To move Alberta forward, collaboration can leverage strengths and mitigate weaknesses. Without adequate diversity of perceptions, thinking styles, know-how, and background, innovation suffers. Collaboration between "odd bedfellows" can produce some of the most exciting innovations . . .because of the differences.

- **Female Entrepreneurs – Not enough women are active in the ecosystem**
Diversity is a great strength in Alberta and is often spoken of as a key asset for innovation and entrepreneurship. At a much more basic level, however, participants cited the challenges for women in Alberta to break into innovation and entrepreneurship circles. Given the obvious fact that women make up half the population, making it easy for women to participate is one of the quickest and most powerful ways to grow the pool of talent and human energy in the ecosystem. [A strong model for this is running in a different Rainforest: Daytona Beach, FL. See https://www.thebossladyretreat.com]

- **Competition**
Participants spoke of the "hydrocarbon paradigm" and the iconic identities of "cowboys and oil men." In that paradigm and those identities, being fiercely competitive is a core value. Observations of cultures where innovation is highest show that individuals put their competitive values on hold when collaborating to generate an innovation. They bring competition back into play when bringing those innovations to market. Collaborate to innovate; then compete to win.
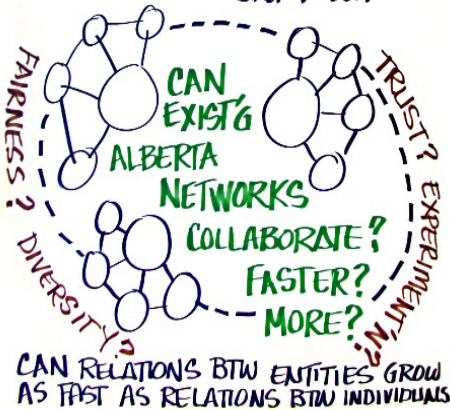
BIG TOPICS TO DEVELOP

INNOVATION PROGRAMMING & INVESTMENT	GOVT. PRIVATE
INNOVATION FOCUS	OIL&GAS ENERGY / EVERYBODY ELSE
INNOVATION MOTIVATION	EXTEND & PRESERVE THE LEGACY CASH COW / DIVERSIFY & DIVERGE FOR LONGEVITY

Name the Elephant in the Room

"IF THE OUTSIDE WORLD MOVES FASTER THAN THE INSIDE WORLD... THE END IS NEAR."

— JACK WELCH

CAN EXIST'G ALBERTA NETWORKS COLLABORATE? FASTER? MORE?

FAIRNESS? DIVERSITY? TRUST? EXPERIMENTING?

CAN RELATIONS BTW ENTITIES GROW AS FAST AS RELATIONS BTW INDIVIDUALS

- **Thinking Outside Oil & Gas**

  The group spoke about the challenge of stretching beyond the comfort and familiarity of the oil/gas industry to find and create new economic development opportunities. Improving the culture of innovation in Alberta does not necessarily mean abandoning the present, but it will demand thinking beyond the familiar. All acknowledged how delicate this part of the innovation conversation is in this region.

- **Crack the Tyranny of the Installed Base**

  As we heard in previous Immersions, this cohort cited the incumbent hydrocarbon industry and its decades-long investment in infrastructure and people as both good news and bad news. Over generations, the regional culture grew to become dominated by an "installed base," including a resource extraction-mindset, professionals deeply focused on the hydrocarbon industry, and a blue-collar population equally expert in field operations. The bad news is that this narrowly focused commitment to that "installed base" (naturally intent on harvesting maximum returns from sunk costs) often precludes preparing for inbound change and being able to pivot to new industries when the change arrives. As hydrocarbons are being displaced by renewables globally, and at an accelerating pace, the need increases to crack "the tyranny of the installed base."

- **Albertans Compete Globally…Ready or Not**

  The notion that Albertans have to compete between cities or even with other provinces is becoming quaint. For every role in an economy that can be digitized and delivered by internet, the entire world of educated and connected workers becomes the competition for Albertans. This means that Calgary and Edmonton are better served by working together, to build a regional competitive advantage, rather than thinking parochially and trying to compete on a city-to-city level. Competition between VC groups in Alberta appears to be cutthroat and running counter to the RainforestAB Social Contract. Participants felt that a shared investment framework could address this issue and help improve regional collaboration for mutual benefit.

- **Not enough financing support for businesses**

  Difficulty accessing investment and various funding needs was cited by multiple participants. As in the Banff Immersions, participants felt that a shared investment framework that both VC and government funders could use might address this issue.

- **When is it important to terminate a program?**

  Participants in multiple Immersions have spoken about programs initially designed to support entrepreneurs and businesses that have been around for years but aren't getting meaningful results. Collaborative programming between service providers that diminishes overlaps and replication, yielding a focused suite of complementary programs, could "kill the zombies" and upgrade the ecosystem.

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Rainforest
STRATEGIES

Joe Sterling, General Manager

Joe serves as General Manager for Rainforest Strategies. In that role, he supports the growth and overall development focus of the firm. Joe is the designer and lead facilitator of Rainforest Master Plan (RaMP) projects. He has facilitated collaborative visioning and strategic planning for nonprofits, municipalities and corporations since 1991. He has designed and facilitated large-group events from 50 to over 1,000 participants. His innovative work in California included being a principal architect of the San Diego Regional Vision Project which produced a 40 year vision for the greater San Diego region. Joe's entrepreneurial and innovation work has accelerated collaboration among companies, non-profits and philanthropic entities across entire regions. For leadership and humanitarian service, Joe has been recognized by the US Congress, California State Senate and Assembly, and the County of San Diego.
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Henry Doss

 Henry is co-author of Rainforest Scorecard: A Practical Guide for Growing Innovation and writes on innovation topics for Forbes. Henry has over twenty-five years of business experience in banking and telecommunications and extensive volunteer leadership experience in non-profits. His primary background is in financial services sales practices, data mining, TQM and consumer research. He has extensive experience in all disciplines related to sales leadership, with deeper experience in sales force automation, data mining, modeling and customer insight. Henry has led, or been involved in, a number of small business restructurings, startups and early stage ventures.
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For information about Rainforest Strategies services visit www.RFS-LLP.com