

Abstract

SESSION 2:

Accelerating Actions for Sustainable Development and Climate Change

WORKSHOP 2.2:

Application of Knowledge Management in Scaling up Partnership Investments in a Blue Economy

Keynote: Building True Blue Knowledge Partnerships, Design Insights from the Global Knowledge Initiative

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Solving the most pressing challenges of our time requires that we capture the imagination, passion, and knowledge of the many, rather than a select few. Indeed, the challenges of food insecurity, climate change, and certainly coastal sustainability and ocean development will never be overcome by a single individual, institution, or discipline. Addressing these challenges requires that we find new and smarter ways of using our collective resources. While it is widely accepted that we must forge knowledge partnerships to make progress on these challenges, those partnerships do not form on their own; rather, they require consistent application of collaborative tools and approaches.

How can we create the necessary knowledge partnerships to solve our shared blue economy challenges? With six years global experience forging, optimizing, and sustaining knowledge partnerships and networks, the Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI) offers a unique perspective into the failures and successes of building tomorrow's knowledge society and engineering the knowledge partnerships that unleash it.

GKI Co-Founder & Chief Operating Officer Sara Farley will begin her Keynote address by offering a few illustrative examples of common failures seen while brokering over 1,000 knowledge partnerships across six continents. Inspired to learn from these failures, GKI has designed a number of programs that offer a unique contrast to business as usual. For example, The Learning and Innovation Network for Knowledge and Solutions (LINK) program features co-creation of agendas and solutions through collaborative knowledge networks aimed at particularly tough challenges in the developing world.

Addressing challenges selected through a competition, the LINK program in Rwanda—the first round of LINK—spurred an active international research network including private sector (e.g., Starbucks Coffee, etc.), government research institutions (e.g., Rwanda Agriculture Board, etc.), and universities (e.g., University of Seattle, Michigan State University) aimed at uncovering the cause of a taste defect that threatens specialty coffee, the country's most valuable export crops. Through LINK, GKI supports knowledge partnerships by (1) aligning stakeholders around a shared vision, (2) co-creating network action plans that build on stakeholders' self-interest, (3) maintaining network momentum through organized communication / convenings, that illustrate system-wide change, and (4) training members on collaborative innovation toolsets.

After discussing LINK and other GKI methods for building and optimizing knowledge partnerships, Sara will close with five essential design principles that fuel successful knowledge partnerships. Our charge is this: How will we use these design principles to build a knowledge-based blue economy together?



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About Sara Farley:

Sara Farley is Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer of the Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI). GKI, which was dubbed "one of the top 100 social innovations for the next century" in 2013, is a not-for-profit that facilitates partnerships between individuals and institutions to solve global challenges in science, technology and innovation. Beyond running the day to day operations of GKI, Sara leads the design of Collaborative Innovation programming, strategy, facilitation, and policy, with more than 1000 strategic partnerships forged to date. An internationally recognized science, technology and innovation strategist, Sara has been commissioned by national governments (Brazil, Canada, Slovenia, and the UK) and international development and science-related affinity organizations, such as the Rockefeller Foundation, to lead thinking, develop networks, and devise policies to strengthen developing countries' science and technology capacity. Prior to starting GKI, she served for a decade at the World Bank as a Science, Technology, and Innovation strategist. There, Sara successfully designed and managed innovation-related investments across Africa, Latin America, and Southeastern Europe. Beyond her work at the World Bank, she held an advisory position to the African Development Bank where she helped craft the institution's Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Technical/Vocational Training Strategy. Her strategy-shaping work brought her to the United Nations as well where in 2007 and 2008, she worked with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to establish its first-ever policy position on innovation. Other institutions served by Sara's innovation strategy-setting include: SRI International, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), among other organizations. Prior to her development work, Farley graduated with honors in Science, Technology, and Society from Stanford University's School of Engineering where she also earned a Master's degree in International Policy Studies. Following her time at Stanford and a stint working for a wireless start-up in Silicon Valley, she was a Rotary International Ambassadorial Fellow at the Universidad de Buenos Aires where she conducted post-graduate study in Technology Policy and Management. Beyond her love of innovation for development, Sara is the Founding Director of Uganda Arts Outreach, Inc. and Artistic Director for Bemoved Dance Company. She serves on a number of Boards, including those for the Society for the Advancement of Science in Africa, the Ohio State University's John Glenn School of Public Affairs, Lesole's Dance Project, and the Global Alliance for Linkages in Science (GALS).