

Initiation Phase

LOCAL LEARNING LAB Developing a Lab

Purpose

During this phase you will determine if a Local Learning Lab is right for your area.

Goals and Outcomes

- Commit to a Lab (or not)
- Identify a working group and Lab Lead Connector/Coordinator and Local Host Partner
- Identify First Nations Advisory
- Adapt the Lab timeline
- Consider the experience you are seeking to create

INITIATION PHASE

Phase overview

Assumptions

Labs assume that there are people already working to bring about sustainability and regeneration in a given region. They may be working on the environmental, economic, or social dimensions, or a combination of these. Labs seek to bring these people together to provide practical ways forward for individuals, but also to keep weaving community connections and building the ecosystem of people who share related hopes for the environment and their region—even if they hold different perspectives. ‘Stronger together’ is one of the fundamental underlying assumptions of Local Learning Labs.

Championing a Lab

Like any project or initiative, a Lab needs people to grab onto the idea of a Lab and champion it to others. A Lab could be championed by an individual, a pair, a group, an organisation. Champions tend to come across the idea of a Lab and form a view that, for various reasons, it could be right for the community or region.

Identifying partners—working with Momentum

Getting a Lab up and running takes a lot of convincing. Labs are strongest when supported by a range of partners, a broader network. Champions find and work with the energy, as well as work around any roadblocks.

Committing to a Lab (or not)

The champion plus key partners ultimately decide if a Lab or other event is right for the community, the region, the timing, etc. The Discussion Guide, “Is a Local Learning Lab right for you” is intended to support the evaluative thinking needed for this decision-making.

Discussion Guide

On the next pages you will find the following discussion guide:

“Is a Local Learning Lab right for you” - This discussion guide steps through the value proposition, audiences, and Theory of Change for Labs. Overviews of the Local Connector/Host Partner, and Indigenous Cultural Advisor is also outlined. It provides examples of what a Lab may look and feel like. Activities that might be conducted in a Lab are listed, and a suggested overall Lab timeline is provided.

Tip

Timeline

Discuss the timeline. If the group is happy to commit to a Lab/event, set a date. Work backward through the calendar and set milestones for each stage. See the last slide for suggested timeline and steps.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Hello



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Local Learning Labs



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REGEN
STUDIOS



We acknowledge the traditional custodians and owners of the lands in which we work and live on across Australia. We pay our respects to Elders of the past, present and emerging. We are committed to collaboration that furthers self-determination and creates a better future for all.



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Is a Local Learning Lab right for you?



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Contents

Value proposition

Audiences

Theory of Change

Lab experience

Timeline



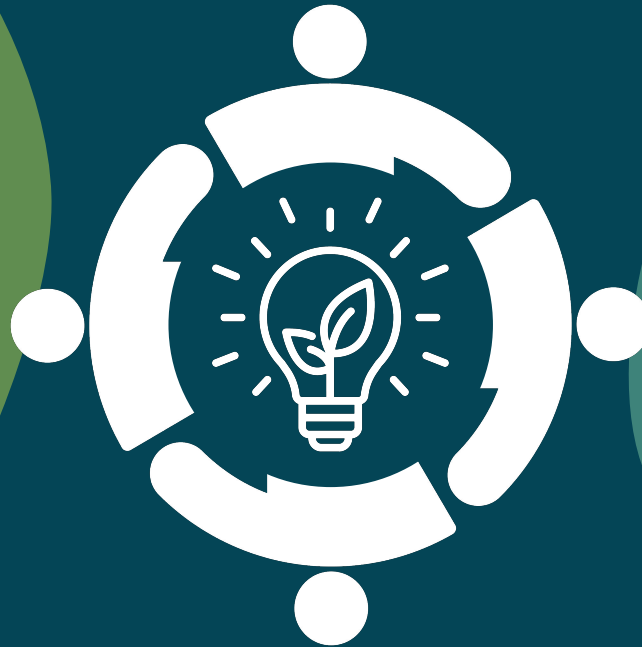
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Value Proposition

Support the development of regional regen-entrepreneurship by bringing together community members with ideas, small-to medium-sized enterprises, and local partners to focus on creating local economic benefits, build social resilience, and reversing environmental degradation.



Through two-day learning lab experiences, build regenerative capability and strengthen connections in order to support ideas and regenerative enterprises to progress AND build a networked regenerative innovation ecosystem.

Seeding Regenerative Enterprises

Growing local regenerative economies through entrepreneurship that is connected to place and embedded in community



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What does 'regenerative' enterprise mean?

Building social resilience



Positive environmental impact



Local economic development



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Audiences

Listen: [Liz Sanders, Participant, Food Embassy](#)

Listen: [Tiahni Adamson, Participant, CH4Global](#)

People who want to nurture ideas and enterprises



Partners who can provide support

Listen: [Greg Sarre, Local Host \(Mount Barker District Council\)](#)

Catalyst, connection, and exposure to ideas. *Not an accelerator for startups.*

A shared focus on creating local economic benefits, building social resilience, whilst reversing environmental degradation

Creating the conditions for local regen-entrepreneurship via networked regenerative innovation ecosystems



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Audiences

People who want to nurture ideas and enterprises



Partners and local stakeholders who can provide support

Test and stretch thinking and connect with peers and partners
Build (regen) business skills
Identify pathways forward
Identify (more) ways to contribute to regeneration

A shared focus on creating local economic benefits and building social resilience, whilst reversing environmental degradation

Enrich the collective thinking about how to contribute to the regeneration of a place

Learn (more about) what's needed to support ideas and enterprises

Identify ways to provide support (financial / non-financial)



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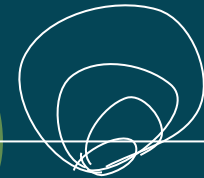


Benefits for Audiences

Not even an idea yet



Lab audience



Mature entity

Ideas/inspirations

Idea has grown to a project or enterprise and is seeking support and pathways forward

Mature and looking to scale, secure more funding, etc.

A glimmer in someone's eye

Looking to prototype an idea

Looking to grow

Needs to find ways to be sustainable

Requires a business model

Fully functioning entity looking to scale

Proof-of-concept already

Social Initiatives

Start ups

Entities



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Theory of Change

A Theory of Change describes the *outcomes* you seek to achieve, and *how* you will get there.



Local Learning Labs:
walking together to
identify how enterprises
may take 'next steps',
supported by a local
innovation ecosystem



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Theory of Change

A Theory of Change describes the *outcomes* you seek to achieve, and *how* you will get there.

If we do the following...

Local regeneration needs and supports identified

Labs co-designed with community members

Local Learning Labs: walking together to identify how enterprises may take 'next steps', supported by a local innovation ecosystem

Over two days, enterprises and partners connect and anchor in community and place for local regeneration

Activities focus on growing enterprises through community empowerment, financial sustainability, and innovation ecosystems

Follow up for momentum



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If we do the following...

Local regeneration needs and supports identified

Labs co-designed with community members

Local Learning Labs: walking together to identify how enterprises may take 'next steps', supported by a local innovation ecosystem

As a result...

Participants further strengthen their connection to community and place - and to each other

Participants learn about regenerative business models and innovation ecosystems

Enterprises identify clear next steps; Partners identify ways to support innovation ecosystems and eventually regenerative economies

First Nations leadership, culture, and innovation is engaged and supported

Participants continue walking together to develop capability, confidence, connections, and innovation ecosystems for regeneration

Over two days, enterprises and partners connect and anchor in community and place for local regeneration

Activities focus on growing enterprises through community empowerment, financial sustainability, and innovation ecosystems

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Collaborators and Partners

Every lab takes a team. The Local Learning Labs are intended to be developed in deep collaboration with a local working group. They are also intended to be supported by an ecosystem of collaborators and partners:

Collaborators and partners include:

- Local Lab Coordinator (eg connector and/or coordinator),
- First Nations advisory (eg Elder, Indigenous business advisor/support, other)
- Local host partners (eg. Local Council, Social Enterprise Collective, environmental NGO)
- Other key stakeholders (eg. Startup spaces, venue sponsors, regional or state government stakeholders, relevant ecology, sector, industry people)

Working group members can include a selection of the above.

Getting clear on roles and commitments up front across collaborators is very important. We have created a Play - A4 Convening a Working Group - to assist you to start well together.

- Why are we here
- Who are we
- What strengths do we bring
- How will we collaborate

Tips

Who

The working group covers Lab organisation, conceptual design, and getting things done.

Think carefully about time commitments and be honest.

How

Consider co-creating an MOU that outlines clear purpose, vision, objectives, who is involved, principles for the collaboration and decision making, ways of working, and commitments (who is doing what)

Choose a collaboration platform that works for all of you.



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Example: Who may do what?

Local Lab Coordinator

- Overall event management
- Event production (venue, catering, logistics, etc)
- Marketing and communications
- In-community relationship connections, including potential partners, sponsors and Indigenous Leaders
- Manage any seed funding and grants
- Host post-Lab mentoring, open training workshops and speaker series
- Contribute to post-lab documentation

First Nations Advisory

- Regeneration of a place begins by understanding deeply the ecological and cultural uniqueness and potential.
- First Nations Elders / Cultural Advisors are key relationships.
- The Lab program begins with foregrounding First Nations wisdom and connecting to place.
- For the Gippsland Local Learning Lab, the team engaged Cheryl Drayton, Kurnai Elder, and respected, experienced leader in the social enterprise space. Cheryl contributed to the design of the Lab, joined as a guide, and led the Welcome to Country and Walk on Country

LAB Working Group

- Engaging Aboriginal community members in the process of shaping the Lab for local needs
- Process design for end-to-end community engagement
- Implement tools to support scoping
- Design and facilitate co-design sessions
- Local Learning Lab facilitation design and adaptation
- Prepare materials for and brief any topic/content specialists and co-facilitators
- Design Lab resources and materials
- (Co-)Facilitate the Labs
- Final documentation

Local Host Partners

- In-community relationship connections, including potential partners, sponsors and Indigenous Leaders
- Scoping community need and value proposition fit
- Identification of co-design participants
- Coordinate local event suppliers including facilities and catering
- Identify potential Lab participants, eg regenerative ventures / initiatives and other attendees, and support recruitment
- Co-design and Co-facilitate as desired

Co-design & facilitation Team

- Sub-group of the Lab Working Group.
- Likely to include the Local Lab Coordinator
- Your community may have experienced facilitators and designers. If not you may engage experienced facilitators, and experts for specific elements of the Lab.

Sponsors / Partners / Mentors

- This group is critical to ensuring the Lab is nested within the regenerative economy ecosystem.
- Key roles are to ensure participants have a system of support post-Lab and are networked.
- Includes Local Councils (eg Community Wellbeing, Economic Development, Sustainability Coordinator roles, support from CEO)
- May include REgional DEvelopment Boards, Startup incubators, Social Enterprise mentors.



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Local Connector / Host Partner(s) / First Nations

Local Connector/Project Coordinator

The Local Connector is often the initiator of a Lab. They are deeply connected to relevant enterprises and partners throughout the ecosystem and often have respectful and long held relationships with Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander elders. They are passionate about place-based, community-led enterprise and the shift to a regenerative economy.

Local Connectors often make excellent Local Project Coordinators.

The role needs to be funded.

Examples: At the end of this document, see an example of typical roles.

Local Host Partner(s)

The role of Local Host Partner(s) is critical to resourcing, supporting, contributing, marketing, and nurturing the outcomes of the Lab.

In Eurobodalla we were supported by Zero South East. In Adelaide Hills & Fleurieu the Lab was guided by Mount Barker District Council, and in Gippsland, the Gippsland Social Enterprise Collective were local hosts.

Examples: At the end of this document, see an example of typical roles.

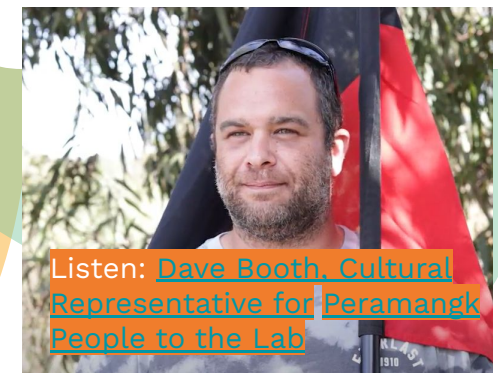


Listen: [Greg Sarre](#), Sustainability Manager, Mount Barker District Council

First Nations Advisory

Co-designing with First Nations Elders is ideal. This may or may not be possible in your area. Your Working Group may already have First Nations members. Key is seeking to be authentic, long term, respectful and open.

The Local Host Partner can establish relationships and open conversations around extent of collaboration/ interest.



Listen: [Dave Booth](#), Cultural Representative for Peramangk People to the Lab



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FIRST NATIONS ADVISORY

Tips

Research the history

If you know the general area you will be working in, but do not know the local Traditional Custodians, get informed on the history of the area and the Traditional Custodians prior to colonisation.

Local advisory

Reach out to local elders. Let them know what you hope to do. As relevant, invite them to attend and/or seek paid cultural advisory for your event and joining the Working Group. Seek their advice as to who is approved and recommended to conduct a Welcome to Country ceremony (and [Walk on Country](#)). Also, how it weaves with the program of the Lab.

Culturally safe space

Check with elders as to whether or not your proposed location is a culturally safe space. Take their recommendations for alternatives or how to make the space culturally safe.

First Nations flags and imagery are often displayed.

Inclusive

Questions you may reflect on together with local elders and First Nations leaders: How might the process, content and collaboration be inclusive? How can the Lab be improved to increase the number of First Nations participants and initiatives led by First Nations peoples? How might First Nations participants be more comfortable in participating?

Remuneration & Permissions

Welcome to Country ceremonies and performances are paid. In requesting services, ask for the fee schedule.

Discuss and agree on image release forms, as a duty of care and use.



Gippsland | Kurnai Country
Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony:
Cheryl Drayton



Eurobodalla | Brinja-Yuin Country
Welcome to Country: Minga Cultural Experiences, Patricia Ellis
Smoking Ceremony:
Muladha Gamara Dancers



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Example: Local Connector / Lab Coordinator & Local Host Partner

Sarah Tate - Local Project Coordinator, Gippsland Local Learning Lab - also member of the Gippsland Social Enterprise Collective, Local Host partner

Sarah is a proud Gippslandian, Sarah's drive is collaborating on projects that build strong, resilient and connected communities. Sarah has a varied background in career education, regional development, and economic inclusion in government and community roles. With a particular passion for growing the ecosystem of socially responsible businesses as we transition to the next economy, Sarah has found her place with the Gippsland Social Enterprise Collective. She has extensive experience in program design and delivery, capability building, and community development which she brings to her work at Elbow Community Building.

Sarah's reflections: "It was a truly powerful experience to come together from across the region as a community with a breadth of interests, skills and lived experience, but with a collective vision for a hopeful future. Thank you all for your commitment and leadership in reimagining and transforming Gippsland.

It is going to take both inner transformation and systemic change to shift the narrative. An important part of this work is exploring our inner selves and being vulnerable; a valuable reminder from the Lab was the importance of creating, holding and gathering in safe and nourishing spaces to do this work.

As we move forward together, my wish is we continue to support and energise each other on our collective journey to shift the system. On our way, may we deeply embrace the beauty of emergent outcomes.

"Without inner change there can be no outer change. Without collective change, no change matters."

— Angel Kyodo Williams"



Listen: [Sarah Tate, Gippsland Social Enterprise Collective](#)

Image credit: Dimity Podger



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Example: Local Connector / Local Lab Coordinator

Matthew Wright-Simon, Ecocreative - Local Project Coordinator, Adelaide Hills & Fleurieu Region (and strong relationship with Local Host Partner, Mount Barker District Council)

Ecocreative is a specialised engagement consultancy works with purposeful organisations and individuals to catalyse and deepen collaboration and impact. Its work in strategy, facilitation and communications inspires, motivates and involves people in making progress together.

<https://www.ecocreative.com.au>

Matthews reflections: “It has been great to co-design and co-facilitate this lab on Peramangk Country – my home country growing up. I have long sensed the regenerative potential of this place and its people.

The weekend brought together a diverse group of wise and brilliant people ranging in age from their 20s to their 80s... each and every participant (and partner-participant) had so much in common, including common purpose and a dedication to the natural and social commons of the Adelaide Hills and Fleurieu region.

Alliances have been formed and there are projects that extend across many kilometres and years that will be enriched by who and what emerges from this lab. We have plenty to do together – and an agenda and approaches to clarified as a collective – but this is an extraordinary start to things.

We also have great enthusiasm for this to continue, not only from participants and partners, but the many people who could not join.”



Image Credit: Baldwin Media



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Example: Local Host Partner



Image Credit: Baldwin Media

Greg Sarre, Strategic Planning and Economic Development Manager, Mount Barker District Council, Local Host Partner, Adelaide Hills & Fleurieu Local Learning Lab

Council was pleased and grateful to be able to host the Local Learning Lab in the heart of the Mount Barker parklands, on Peramangk country.

Working with WWF, TACSI and Ecocreative to deliver the Lab, with the help of regional partners, was an opportunity to apply the highest ambitions of the Community Plan and consider the collaborations and partnerships we can continue to foster to see these ambitions realised.

Hearing the ideas and experiencing the energy and commitment of participants was inspiring and invoked visions of what is possible in the local and global effort to regenerate. Thank you to everyone involved, I'm looking forward to regenerating together!



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Example: Local Partner / Collaborator

Dr Keri Hopeward, [Living Lightly Locally](#)

It has been absolutely inspirational to partner with the Local Learning Lab to invigorate local regenerative activities and projects on Permangk Country!

I am so grateful to everyone involved for the connection this event provided to Country and to one another, to help move our local regenerative projects forward, and to strengthen the [‘active hope’](#) that is so necessary during these challenging times.

The week after the lab, my street was hit by a devastating storm, and the week after that, the pandemic arrived on our doorstep.

The Local Learning Lab helped present an expanded vision for how our local projects can support one another and grow the regenerative local futures we need.

I look forward to being part of the journey from here as we work together to bring these visions to life.



Image Credit: Baldwin Media



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Example: Cultural Advisor: Cheryl Drayton, Kurnai Elder

Cheryl Drayton, is an Indigenous and Community Advocate and Leader, supportive of Self- Determination and furthering First People's opportunities for well-being and greater social participation. Cheryl is a Kurnai woman from descendant from the Brabuwoolong with deep ancestral roots from Country. Her Grandfather, Mr. Stewart Hood settled in this region in 1930 after being at the Lake Tyers Aboriginal Mission. With a profound knowledge of culture, customary laws and practices, Cheryl brings out her invaluable contribution to enhance VACL's ethical practices and protocols. She has contributed her entire life to the improvement of Aboriginal people through numerous roles across the community and the State Government.

Cheryl's reflections: *The Regenerative Communities Projects are so important across rural and town-based communities; to engage and invite people to be a part of the process in solution-based problem solving. We can have youth, family, people and the retirees to join forces to encourage change for the Plant and for the Animals we share the Land with.*

As an Elder, the Lab has given me clarity of the necessary projects that could be rolled out across Gippsland for The Gunai/Kurnai Aboriginal people, along with introduction of First Nations Perceptive around education to be apart of history that is taught by who and how we survived on sustainable plants and medicine in Australia for 65,000 years.

...I am so keen for the Local Learning Lab to engage the whole of communities across a course of 12 months as there are real projects that could close the gaps for all communities for change”



Listen: [Cheryl Drayton, Kurnai Elder / Cultural Advisor](#)



Cheryl Drayton, leading walk on Kurnai Country and guiding throughout the Local Learning Lab.
Image Credit: Dimity Podger



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Cultural Adviser: Dave Booth, Bushtucker Artefacts

We were fortunate to have Dave Booth, Cultural Advisor, attend as a participant, providing guidance and raising opportunities for amplifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in regenerative initiatives.

Dave shared: “The Local Learning Lab was an awesome experience learning of regenerative living and how to better our environment. Also the connection in meeting other like-minded people with regenerative ideas and organisations that could connect with Cultural practices and learning to benefit our environment long term.”



Listen: [David Booth, Cultural Representative of the Peramangk People / Adviser for the Lab](#)



Image Credit: Baldwin Media



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Adapt Lab Timeline

INITIATION



Decision: A Lab/
event is right for us

- Initial stakeholder consultations in a community/region
- Review of approach and value proposition based on community needs and opportunities
- Agree to move forward
- Community lead identified
- First Nations advisor identified

LAB CONCEPT



Allow 4-8 weeks to
agree the concept and
launch the event

- Starting well session to form working group and confirm scope and goals
- Conceptual design session(s) to agree high level design and location
- Develop initial communications, materials, and registration process
- Launch event

LAB PREP



Allow another 2
months to promote
and prepare

- Social media and word of mouth recruitment
- Confirm participants no less than 2 weeks prior
- Arrange Welcome to Country and Walk on Country
- Detailed event coordination and facilitation planning
- Participant communications

LOCAL LEARNING LAB



Allow a week to prep
and host a 2.5 day Lab

- Friday Film preview, dinner, and Our Community Vision workshop
- Saturday-Sunday Local Learning Lab

WALKING TOGETHER



Allow 4-6 weeks for
follow up

- Working group debrief and reflection
- Lab documented and shared with participants
- 2 x follow up sessions with participants
- Coordination with any funding providers and ongoing support (if available)



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Explore the feel of the Lab – *the experience you want to create*

- Respect for Culture
- Warm, welcoming, accessible
- Hands on, participatory
- Connecting, reflecting, and creating together
- Natural materials and light



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Patricia Ellis, leading the Story Circle:
Dreaming up the future, and sharing the yarning stick she made

Eurobodalla | Yuin Country
Welcome to Country: Minga Cultural Experiences, Patricia Ellis
Smoking Ceremony: Muladha Gamara Dancers



Experience example: Eurobodalla





“The value for me was in the linkages, knowing that there is a diversity of individuals and organisations that have similar objectives and with a little coordination could make a larger impact.”

— Patrick Guinness, Participant, Eurobodalla Local Learning Lab



Walk on Country, led by Patricia Ellis, local Aboriginal elder, Minga Cultural Experiences, and Adam Nye, Muladha Gamara



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Example: Overview of the 2 days

Saturday

9:30 - 5:00

Hello

Walk on
Country with
Cheryl Drayton

Nangara Reserve

Back to
Warragul

Settle in

Love of
Place

What we
mean by
'Regen'

Doughnut
Economics

Potential of
Place

Vision circle

Wishing well

Check out

Mural Launch! 5:30
onward
The Mast →

Sunday

9:30 - 5:00

Good morning

Check in
Reflection

Urgency of
place

The Mast →

The Goods Shed
→

Working with

Regenerative
Principles

Regenerative
Questions

Regenerative/Social
Business
Model Canvas

Case Study
Fishbowl

Gives and Gets
Gallery and
Marketplace

Action Circles

Check out

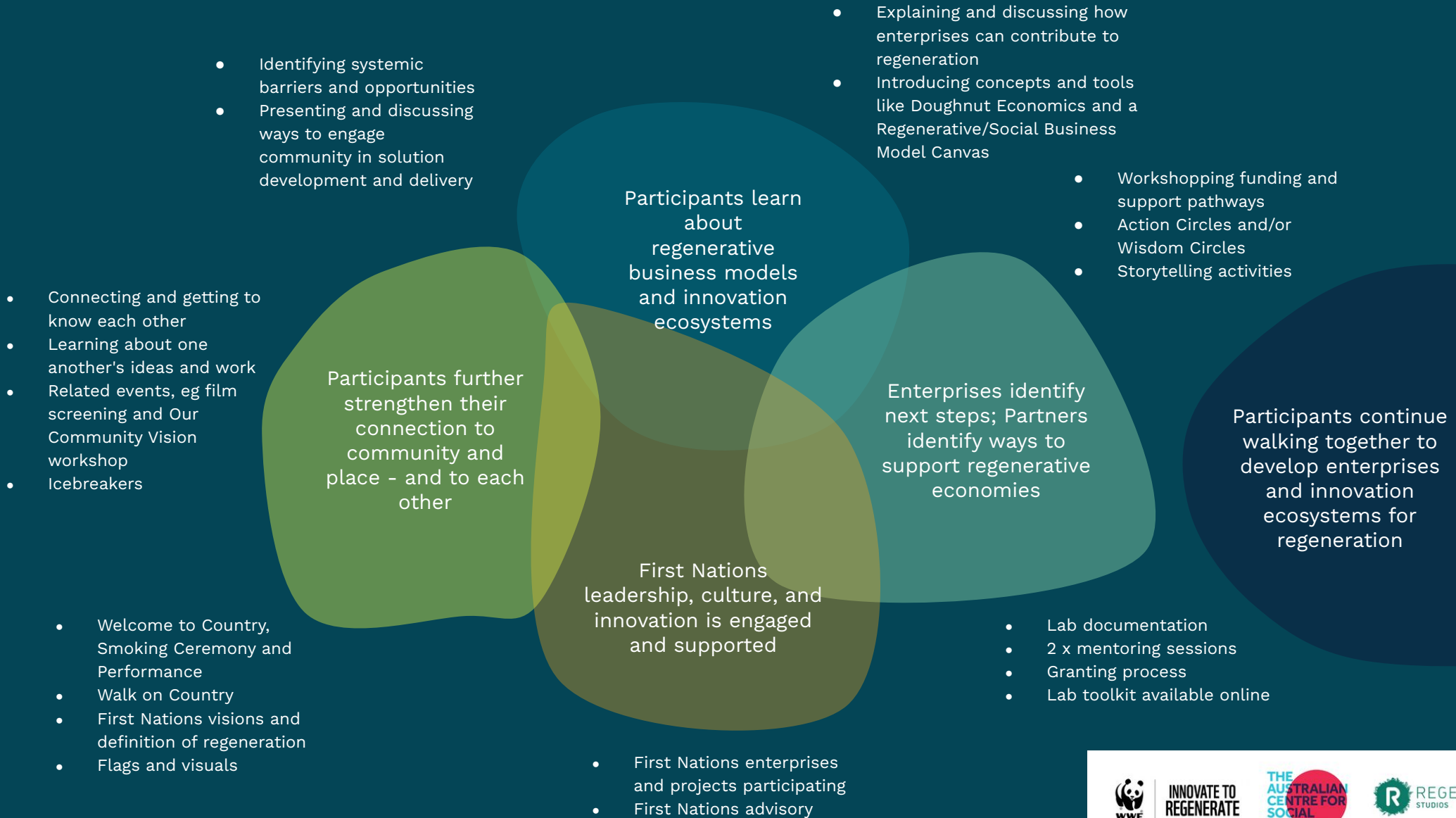
Gratitudes

Next steps

Survey!

Types of activities

Activities correlated to the Theory of Change



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