PARTNERSHIPS INCUBATOR'S INNOVATION SHARK TANK
CHALLENGE #2

INNOVATION SHARK TANK BACKGROUND

The Partnerships Incubator is testing an engagement process—the "Innovation Shark Tank"—to address a variety of business issues.

Any team member can propose an Innovation Shark Tank challenge. Respondents to the challenge are composed of consultants and Incubator team members.

Responses to the challenge should cover:

- Brief description of the solution: *What is it, and for whom is it?*
- Innovation approach in response to the business need: *Why is it different?*
- Concise instructions: *How is it to be used?*
- Key questions that the solution answers for users (and USAID): *How does it help?*
- Application of design thinking: *What design and/or partnership challenge(s) did you have to overcome?*

INNOVATION SHARK TANK #2

THE CORE CONCEPT
Essentials for executives in development.

THE CHALLENGE
Create an innovative product or service to engage, empower, and educate leaders in global development.

WHY
To deliver on the Incubator's goal to amplify the New Partnerships Initiative (NPI) and help multiply global development gains through leadership as an entry point to USAID or an opportunity for local capacity building.

TEAM MEMBERS
Stuart Belle (leader), Dominique Haywood, Michaela Reich, and Alyshia Linares.

OUR QUESTIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Who is the target, and is that target different from other NPI audiences?
We are micro-targeting a subset of the NUP community, specifically C-suite, executives, and other decision-makers.

Where is the target—for example, is it national or global? Is there a specific area of focus?
We are targeting a global audience encompassing all development disciplines and sectors.

What is the budget?
The budget will be dependent on the breadth of the offering and the necessary investment to bring it to market. Our goal is to create an innovative service with a suite of derivative products and corresponding campaign elements that can be scaled up or down, depending on funding availability.

Why are we creating this new service/product? What is the research behind it?
We aim to address a gap in both the marketplace and current NPI offerings for this specific audience. We are leveraging industry insights to draw conclusions that can inform our strategic and creative approach.

THE LANDSCAPE

USAID has funded leadership development in the past with a focus on gender equity and youth leadership:

- Gender Equity Leadership Program, the USAID Promote Women's

- Leadership Development (WLD) Program in Afghanistan

- Feed the Future Youth Leadership for Agriculture

The Agency also developed a 'Leadership Philosophy' (PDF) with key principles that promote inspiration, well-being, innovation, and accountability.

A 2014 report by Devex,[1] a global media platform found:

- Development executives in Asia (84% of respondents to their survey) are the most optimistic about the future of development.

- Two-thirds of development executives think that the industry will fundamentally transform over the next decade.

- Executives who think that the industry will transform picked five top drivers of change:

  » Rise of developing countries

  » New actors

  » New technologies

  » Market-oriented shift

  » Decreasing bilateral funding

In addition, Devex has conducted interviews with CEOs of key organizations in the development field (tagged on its website as "leadership" articles), but has not developed specific products, such as training. [2]

Gender equity in leadership is a recurring theme in the development landscape. As an example, ActionAid embedded its "Ten Principles of Feminist Leadership" in its leadership approach.[3]

---

1   https://pages.devex.com/future-global-development.html
2   https://www.devex.com/news/search?query%5B%5D=Leadership
3   https://actionaid.org/feminist-leadership

THE STRATEGY BRIEF

THE OPPORTUNITY

The global development universe is changing at a rapid pace. We see the growth of low- and middle-income countries across all sectors, the appearance of new development actors, significant advances in technology and its applications, shifts in the market, and decreases in bilateral funding. At the same time, major events affect the world such as devastating natural disasters, ongoing conflict, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Against this backdrop of opportunities and threats, executives risk failure if they do not innovate.

Traditionally, development executives have built and grown their organizations by enlarging their portfolios and seeking USAID and other bilateral funding for their projects, amassing knowledge through their experience. However, the landscape lacks both research and resources that assess the rapid changes the sector is experiencing and the methods development leaders can use to prepare, adapt, and build for the future.

A program focused on the future of global development for executives gives the Incubator a unique opportunity to commission a landmark study on the sector's future and develop a suite of leadership tools.

GOALS

- Amplify NPI's goals and help multiply global development gains through capacity-building interventions focused on innovative leadership
- Position USAID and the Incubator as trusted experts and innovators
- Position NPI as a future-focused, transformative initiative of USAID

CORE STRATEGY CONCEPT

''The future of development starts with you.''

THE APPROACH

We are undertaking a two-pronged effort to create a content ecosystem that reinforces USAID's premier position in the global development universe and builds the knowledge and skills of development leaders around the world:

1. An industry-leading study about the future of effective leadership in development
2. A suite of resources for development executives.

THE RESEARCH

The research envisioned will consist of primary data, both qualitative and quantitative, collected globally with an emphasis on USAID new and underutilized partners (NUPs) and focused on the future of effective leadership in the development sector.

The research will consider the impact of uninformed or misinformed executives on organizational success (for example, are such executives a barrier to organizations wanting to work with USAID?). It will also examine the effects of the growth of developing countries, new development actors, technology advances, and decreases in bilateral funding.

The research will provide the foundation to develop content for a multimedia suite of products delivered through multiple channels.

RESEARCH TIMELINE AND ACTIVITIES

The research will begin in the fall of 2020, and most likely take three to six months to complete.

DATE	ACTIVITY	NOTES
9/9	Present challenge to Incubator team.	
9/10–9/15	Edit Shark Tank #2 concept(s) based on Incubator team feedback.	
9/16	Send final Shark Tank #2 innovation case study to Donna Vincent Roa, Project Director and Incubator staff.	
9/21–9/25	Develop RFP and concept note for USAID and research consultants.	
9/28–9/30	Edit, review, and finalize RFP and concept note.	
10/1	Post/submit final request for research partners.	consider applications on a rolling basis. Length of time to leave the RFP open TBD (3 weeks?)
11/5– 11/12	Review RFP responses; select research partner.	
11/30	Research partner initiates "The Future of Development" study.	
Q4 2020	Research activities underway.	length of study will be determined by research partner and budget
Q1 or Q2 2021	Release findings from our landmark study with a full public relations campaign teasing some of the findings to set the stage for the release.	

THE CAMPAIGN

360° ACTIVATION

- Create executive events and learning materials based on the theme, "The Future of Development Starts with You: Essentials for Development Executives."

  » Host #FutureofDevelopment webinar workshops

  » Develop an e-learning module

  » Leverage insights from the research as a way into live Q&A panels on Twitter and/or Facebook

- Enlist high-profile and credible influencers, experts, and our research partners as panelists. Leverage the networks and personal social channels of each panelist for added visibility before, during, and after any of the events.

- Develop a series of activities, tips, and resources for professionals who want to expand their organization's leadership capacity.

- Amplify #TheFutureofDevelopment events and post-event content through a (P)ESO (paid, earned, shared, owned) media strategy.

- Develop key insights from the research, events, and learning materials into a creative content series distributed on WorkwithUSAID. org,media, and bloggers via a (P)ESO strategy. It can also be promoted via our @USAIDBizzOpps Twitter handle (driving to the WorkwithUSAID.org hub). The series may include:

  » Short videos

  » Twitter #ExecutiveEssentials

  » Podcasts

  » Infographics

  » Stories, articles, and blog posts

COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

Marketing success would look like the following:

- Establish @USAIDBizOpps, WorkwithUSAID.org, and other digital platforms as destinations for engaging and credible content (KPIs: increases in followers, shares, engagement, and registrations).

- Our proprietary research earns media coverage.

- Sustain media relations outreach for subsequent products.

- Influencers and thought leaders promote the products.

- NUP executives and USAID partners see value in the content (measured through surveys, demand for the products, registrations for webinars, etc.).

DETAILED PRODUCT LIST AND ROLLOUT SCHEDULE

POSSIBLE PRODUCT	DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL	DATE FOR RELEASE	DEPENDENCIES/NOTES
Full research white paper	WorkwithUSAID.org (exclusive content offering)	Q1 or Q2 2021	• Distribute and promote via newsletter? • Distribute and promote via internal USAID communications?
Twitter card facts "series"	Twitter	Part of #FactFriday	Inspiration (and, potentially, design) pulled from BuzzFeed-type story (see below) (Tina).
Story (BuzzFeed style) "10 exciting things for leaders to know about the future of development"	WorkwithUSAID.org	TBD	• Christine/comms to write based on white paper. • Potentially design elements (Tina).
Twitter live events	Twitter	TBD	• Quantity and frequency TBD. • Find SME to speak on the topics highlighted within the research. • Find moderator(s) to host the event. (Could it be held on the Georgetown handle [TBD if Georgetown will be our research partner] and simulcast from @USAIDBizOpps handle?)
Podcast (not new, plugs into Comms Y2 podcast as a subject to cover)	WorkwithUSAID.org	TBD	• Secure topics. • Find SME to speak on the topics. • Find a podcast platform, given that we don't have one and creating one is expensive and needs followers.
E-learning module	usaid.gov	Fall 2021 (back to school)	Pull from research to create an e-learning module.
Virtual learning one-week course or webinar series		Fall 2021 (back-to-school series continued)	• Need to determine platform (can we leverage Zoom?). • May be tough to commit to a full series until we gauge interest. • For consideration: Might be best to roll this out once we reach a healthy number of registered users to the WorkwithUSAID.org platform where we can heavily promote the course

PROPOSED BUDGET

DELIVERABLE	BUDGET RANGE	NOTES
Research	Low: $15-20K Medium: $20-40K High: $40K+	**Dependencies include:** Length of study, depth of study, type of study, locations. **Opportunity:** Potential for Missions to buy-in in anticipation of benefit to their staff and/or local partners.
Content development and publications	Included in Incubator existing contractor slate	Requires engagement of specialists from the consultant slate and/or support through anticipated training and product publication subcontracts. **Opportunity:** Developed content becomes available as Incubator-wide resources in our portfolio of services.
Campaign	Low: $20-30K Medium: $30-50K High: $50K+	**Dependencies include:** Level of notoriety for influencers, level of paid media effort for content, and level of advertising for the events. **Opportunity:** Formally adopt the innovation into the PMP and its structured/streamlined funding.

APPENDIX

OMNI-CHANNEL MARKETING APPROACH:
FOR DISCUSSION (PENDING BUDGET AVAILABILITY)

PROMOTIONAL TACTICS	DETAILS	CHANNEL PROMOTED	
		WORKWITHUSAID.ORG	SOCIAL HANDLE
Earned national and local outreach	Communications team leverages the "The Future of Development Starts with You: Essentials for Executives in Development" research as a catalyst to pique interest among target audience, driving awareness of and engagement with the products and the full research study via impressions (for example, we could use paid mechanisms like Outbrain to promote research content by pushing to different channels).	●	●
Influencers and micro-influencers	Secure key influencers and micro-influencers within key partner target markets, generating continued buzz about the research and pushing to WorkwithUSAID.org for more information. Look to select the "who's who" of micro-influencers—resonating with the C-suite and development professional targets (number of markets and influencers TBD).	●	●
Owned social and newsletter	In addition to paid media (TBD), the campaign should be supported with a series of organic posts on Twitter and in the NPI newsletter, featuring assets aligning with theme, survey results in graphic treatment, article shares from influencers, thought leadership pieces, white papers and other campaign (relevant content) and influencer shares/RTs.	●	●
.gov and .org	Push to the .gov and .org platforms for all information about the products and events: • Full research study white paper. • Story content. • Tips and essentials tools or infographics. • CTA to watch the #TheFutureofDevelopment events. • CTA to sign up for virtual workshops and webinars. • Promotional video featuring influencers. • Evergreen content tied to the campaign theme, leveraged across social channels and at events.		●
Media partners	Paid partners: • Local publications (print and online) • National media (such as Forbes, Wired, Business Insider, TechCrunch, CNET)	●	●
Influencers and micro-influencers	Need to discuss whom we would secure—possibly USAID current staff (free) USAID former staff (probably paid), executives in major development organizations (perhaps free?).	●	●
Paid social	Promote campaign teaser ads, videos, live #TheFutureofDevelopment events and virtual workshops/webinars.	●	●