



Resource Guide: Supporting Community-Led Innovation & Social Mobility through Maker Ecosystems

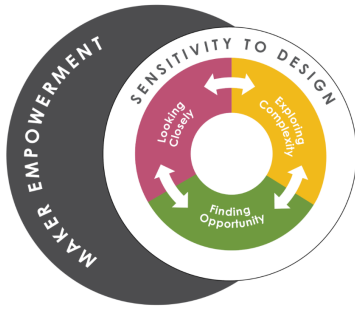
This 2-page guide provides a series of helpful best practices and resources for growing your local ecosystem to foster maker education and support maker entrepreneurs.

Tips & Best Practices for Maker Ecosystem Growth & Sustainability

- **Create a basic project description** – The purpose of this document is to solicit early support for the idea of your project.
- **Identify an executive sponsor** – This is a high-level leader at your institution that can/will endorse the project and help address political and, potentially, financial obstacles.
- **Build the action team**- Identify a core group of stakeholders (could be from within and/or outside of your institution) that will kickstart the effort, providing the expertise, resources and partnerships to set direction and build momentum. Your action team could include faculty and staff, student leaders and entrepreneurs.
- **Understand community needs and goals**- Before defining a set of activities for the ecosystem, make sure that you have a strong understanding of the existing work in your region. Are there existing makerspaces? Small batch production facilities? etc.
- **Develop a shared vision, mission and plan**- Convene your ecosystem to determine a shared vision and begin to build infrastructure, including staffing model.
- **Create a financial needs and fundraising strategy** – Make sure your plan is structured in stages; beginning with a pilot. This is an ideal place to involve your institution's foundation and other grant making entities in your area.
- **Launch community action**- Choose and execute pilot-year projects to build ecosystem momentum, gather learnings for future iterations and gain visibility locally, regionally and nationally, where relevant.
- **Start building deep and sustainable cross-sector and public-private partnerships**- Consider the role that a variety of stakeholders (colleges, K-12 schools, companies, foundations, museums, libraries, non-profit organizations, local government) can play in building these ecosystems.
- **Evaluate and iterate**- Understanding the impact of your initial work and communicating this to the community will lay the groundwork and gather the support you need to grow and adapt to the increasing focus on maker-based learning in your community.

Resources

Tools, Frameworks & Programs



- [MakerUSA Program Managers & Learning Network](#)- Submit a Letter of Interest to become a MakerUSA Innovation Site and participate in the Learning Network
- [Framework for Maker-Centered Learning](#) (Agency by Design)- Describes maker-centered learning as a responsive, flexible and interdisciplinary pedagogy that encourages community and collaboration
- [Maker-Centered Learning Thinking Routines + Practices](#) (Agency by Design)- Suggestions for teaching a variety of maker-centered learning activities
- [Maker Learning Leadership Framework](#) (Digital Promise)- Created to help school leaders develop sustainable maker learning programs
- [Remake Learning Playbook](#) (Remake Learning Network)- A field guide of ideas and resources for building innovation networks for teaching and learning

Research & Impact



- [Makerspace Impact](#)- A series of implementation strategies and stories of transformation from the CCC Maker project and beyond
- [Turning Makerspaces into Greater Places](#)- Examines the economic and social impact of makerspaces through a study of OpenWorks, a community based makerspace in Baltimore
- [Maker City](#)- A collection of real case studies and examples of how communities are taking unique approaches to building their maker ecosystems
- [International Journal of Academic Makerspaces and Making \(IJAMM\)](#)- Sharing the best practices in academic making on a range of topics from culture and community building to programming and makerspace management. [2019 papers](#), [2018 papers](#), [2017 papers](#).