

Amplifying Community-led Innovation in the HIV/AIDS Response - Key Insights for CSOs

The Love Alliance, in collaboration with Frontline Aids, UNAIDS, ViiV Healthcare, Elton John AIDS Foundation, and Avert worked with ThinkPlace to lead a participatory research study with HIV funders and civil society organisations to learn how to better support community-led innovations in the HIV/AIDS response. The overall goal of the research is to create a connected global innovation ecosystem to develop and scale community-led innovations.

We focused on and engaged the following groups of stakeholders:

14 Civil Society Organisations - CSOs **6** Funding Organisations

Here are some of the highlights of the research findings and recommendations for how CSOs can amplify and leverage best practices in community-led innovations.

Cycle of innovation funding



Innovation is the process of CSOs adapting something new and functional within a context that targets communities that they work with. It responds to the needs of different user groups and involves these groups in the development of innovation.

1 EXPLORE

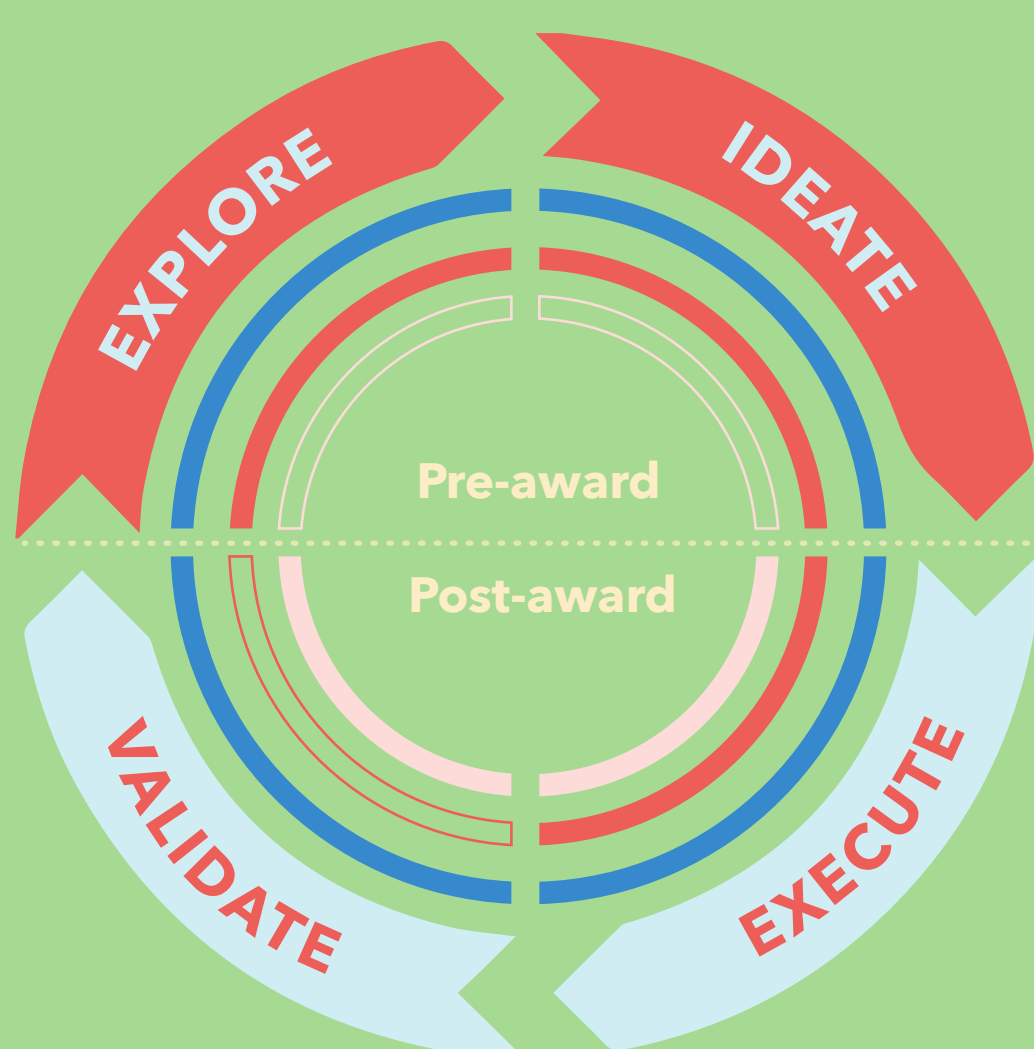
Searching for proposals and engaging with funders ahead of RFPs

CSOs are looking for RFPs (requests for proposals) to finance innovative programs and interventions in the communities they work.

4 VALIDATE

Proof of concept and scaling

Preparing reporting and documentation demonstrating strong evidence to support additional funding for scale-up.



2 IDEATE

Gathering information

CSOs gather information about RFPs, find partners, and set the plan for pursuing the call for proposals.

3 EXECUTE

Receive funding

Funding is received for community-led innovation and program implementation activities are conducted.

Key Factors for innovation



Trust

Relationship between CSOs and funders is open and transparent



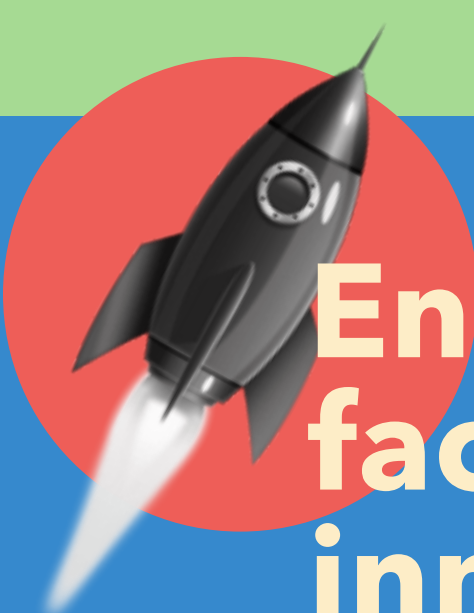
Capacity Building

CSOs feel supported to do their best work and scale their impact



Knowledge Production & Sharing

CSOs are empowered to share their learnings of their work



Enabling factors for innovation

These factors are two-way and require both the funder and CSO to be aware and engaged in order to promote healthy and equitable partnerships.

These considerations can help create an enabling environment to help foster innovative funding and strengthen the relationship between CSOs and funders.

Factors

Considerations

Best Practices

<p>Trust</p> <p>Building trust throughout the innovation process to build and open and transparent relationship between CSOs and funders.</p>	<p> Keep open lines of communication with funders and share results without fear of repercussions for speaking up.</p> <p> Share data that demonstrates the CSOs' impact. CSOs shouldn't be limited in only sharing quantitative data/metrics.</p> <p> Control the narrative of the project and the relationship with communities. CSOs understand the needs of their communities the best.</p> <p> Define project objectives and set the pace based on the communities and context CSOs are working in.</p>	<p>Transparent systems CSOs and funders work together to develop the right systems and mechanisms for reporting. <i>In which stage of innovation?</i> </p> <p>From retrospectives to project plans Intentional effort of creating spaces for reflective practices where CSOs together with the funders can deliberate on progress, identify successes, weak points and plan mitigation strategies in advance. <i>In which stage of innovation?</i> </p> <p>Learning from failure workshops Safe spaces and an opportunity to reflect on key aspects of program and intervention delivery <i>In which stage of innovation?</i> </p>
<p>Capacity Building</p> <p>Reinforcing skills and competencies through collaboration and partnerships to help CSOs feel supported in their work.</p>	<p> Create and enable an environment for capacity building among the CSO staff.</p> <p> Funders should invest: ◦ help build sustainable projects and scale impact across key communities. ◦ help CSOs feel empowered</p> <p> Build intentional partnerships with other CSOs who can provide technical support and guidance.</p>	<p>Innovative partnerships CSOs with different competencies and skill sets can partner for more complex and large-scale projects. <i>In which stage of innovation?</i> </p> <p>Speed-dating: finding the right funder This can help CSOs understand what qualifications are valued by funders (more information in the full report). <i>In which stage of innovation?</i> </p> <p>Knowledge sharing cafes CSOs sharing spaces to learn about each other's work and find ways of collaborating for enhanced efficiency and greater impact. <i>In which stage of innovation?</i> </p>
<p>Knowledge Production & Sharing</p> <p>Share lessons learned and best practices to enable scaling promising innovations</p>	<p> Collaborate with other CSOs working across other communities to bring intersectional lens to the projects.</p> <p> Embed documentation and knowledge production (what went well/what didn't, learnings, best practices etc.) into different phases of the project.</p> <p> Learn how to leverage different tools to help with documentation, data collection and analysis. Examples include video, photo journalism, social media (TikTok, WhatsApp, Instagram), podcasts, animation videos, soundbites, etc.</p>	<p>Communities of Practice CSOs create a support network for sustainability and scaling of impact, including communities, other CSOs or funders. <i>In which stage of innovation?</i> </p> <p>Meet-ups Sessions where CSOs invite beneficiaries, and other CSOs to interact and cross-share ideas on how to improve programming. <i>In which stage of innovation?</i> </p> <p>Engaging media formats for reporting Explore interactive media formats to simplify and make it easy for beneficiaries/public audience to interact with the project. <i>In which stage of innovation?</i> </p>

For further information read the full report here

