



FLL-NP Overview Specification

The aim of the Imagining Africa's Futures (IAF) project is to complete an 'innovation cycle', specifically that part of the cycle involving the testing of the prototype to ensure that the final "product" is ready for "mass-production/mass-diffusion." The so-called "product" being tested is called a Futures Literacy Laboratory-Novelty (FLL-N). The core of the IAF project's work involves working on-the-ground with 'local champions' to test a prototype of the FLL-N or, what we have labelled as the FLL-NP.

In the context of the IAF project UNESCO is issuing a call for local champions, groups or organisations anchored in specific communities of interest or practice, that are ready to co-create and run FLL-NP. Finding such 'local champions' ready and able to take on the special requirements of a prototype FLL-N (the FLL-NP) is the objective of this call for expressions of interest.

1. Description of Futures Literacy Laboratories-Novelty Prototype

The FLL-NP consists of five distinct stages:

- 1. Stage 1: Initiation.** This is when a 'local champion' first engages with the idea of Futures Literacy and takes the initiative – by contacting a source of FL expertise (which could be a FLC, but not necessarily) to undertake a Futures Literacy Laboratory-Novelty Prototype (FLL-NP) in their community. In the case of this 'call for expressions of interest' the initial contact is the encounter and decision to submit an expression of interest.
- 2. Stage 2: Co-design.** The FLL-NP co-design process requires close interaction with UNESCO's Futures Literacy team and a Futures Literacy Centre tied to the IAF project. The first FLC is at the University Mohammed VI Polytechnique, Morocco. Key parts of the co-design process and training for 'local champion' designers and 'peer-facilitators' (3 to 4 people) are planned to take place at the Moroccan Futures Literacy Centre or, at a second centre envisaged by the IAF project that is still in the process of being established. The co-design phase has a number of steps, including discussions of the topic for the FLL-NP, who to invite to participate, how best to invite them, how to structure the FLL-NP learning-by-doing process and what are the most appropriate tools to use at each stage. Typically the actual Lab part of the FLL-NP (stage 4 below), when a group of interested and committed participants work together for 1.5 to 2 days in an action-learning collective intelligence process, involves some 25 to 35 participants.
- 3. Stage 3: Rehearsal.** Prior to actually running the Lab it is necessary for 2 or 3 additional peer-facilitators to be trained (since generally speaking there are 4 to 6 small break-out groups of 6 to 7 participants, each with a peer-facilitator) and the Lab agenda needs to be tested by running a 'dress rehearsal' on site with key members of the 'local champion' group. The training of the peer-facilitators and the testing of the learning tools and phasing of the Lab agenda go hand-in-

hand, providing a feedback loop that adapts the agenda to the actual time, place and social/narrative context. The list of participants in the Lab is also now very close to being accurate since the Lab will take place very soon after the rehearsal (next day in most cases). This allows for a highly personalised approach to specifying the annotated agenda that will guide the plenary and break-out group facilitators. In the case of the FLL-NP, which involves researchers testing the performance of the prototype, there is also the inclusion of the observers role and the various instruments for testing performance into the overall design of the FLL-NP.

4. **Stage 4: Running the Lab.** The Lab consists of 4 phases.
 - a. Phase 1 is Tacit to Explicit on the basis of imagining probable and desirable futures related to the topic.
 - b. Phase 2 involves a double reframing, one that disconnects participants from their anticipatory assumptions by evoking non-probabilistic and non-normative futures. Inducing this anticipatory disconnect requires that participants plunge into a set of narrative and analytical frames that disallow the elements they usually use to describe imaginary futures – in other words the ‘play’ with a new set of anticipatory assumptions. Note that this ‘reframing’ must be co-created with the ‘local champion’ prior to running the Lab.
 - c. Phase 3 engages participants in a comparative exercise, recalling the assumptions and images of the future generated by the break-out group discussions in Phases 1 and 2. The focus of Phase 3 is on aspects of the present that can be sensed and made-sense of on the basis of different imaginary futures. The ability to detect, invent or give different weights to different (often previously invisible) aspects of the present provides participants with a clear demonstration of the power of the future to influence perception. It also provides an opportunity to point out that different anticipatory systems and processes, why and how the future is used, are what makes the expansion of perception practical. In particular participants can come to appreciate the role of non-probable, non-normative imaginary futures in enlarging perception of the present. They start to become more futures literate.
 - d. Phase 4 is highly context dependent, related to the expectations and aspirations of the local champion. The purpose of Phase 4 is to consolidate lessons, celebrate learning, open up avenues for sharing and consider next steps.

5. **Stage 5: Follow-through.** The content of this stage is determined by the local champion and the specific intentions of this group. A variety of outcomes are generated by running a FLL-N process, ranging from specific policy options to initiatives to build further Futures Literacy. The elements selected for FLL-N follow-through are specified during Stage 2 Co-design and Stage 4 Running the Lab. The Lab will alter expectations and outcomes, generating new ideas for follow-through and diffusion. In this respect the FLL-NP is similar to an FLL-N, with the main difference being that with the prototype version there is an additional research/observer that will help with the testing/refinement of the prototype.

Once again, in the framework of the Imagining Africa's Futures project the objective is to test and refine the FLL-N by working with 'local champions' to test a prototype version. This is a critical step in the innovation cycle and brings to the forefront research related to finalizing the prototype. This does not diminish the benefits, given the nature of FLL-N as action-learning, that every 'local champion' can expect to acquire from both the cultivation of Futures Literacy in their community/organization and the new insights into critical issues being addressed by their community/organization. Running an FLL-NP will generate an enhanced understanding of the challenges selected for consideration by the 'local champion' and, in keeping with the priorities of the IAF project, themes aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, UNESCO's Priority Africa, with an emphasis on youth, gender and agriculture.

2. Role of a 'local champion'

The 'local champion' takes the lead in the determining the specific topic, participants, tools and follow-up related to the FLL-NP. The 'local champion' also take responsibility for a significant share of the costs of implementing the FLL-NP. Any candidate who expresses interest in conducting a FLL-NP is committed to become a key constituent and actor of the research process for the refinement and assessment of the IAF prototype.

3. Next steps

The selection of 'local champions' to run FLL-NP will reflect an assessment of which proposals best correspond to the needs of the IAF project's ambitions to complete the innovation cycle and thereby support the widespread diffusion of FLL-N. From this perspective it is important to underscore that every expression of interest in undertaking an FLL-NP will be encouraged in one way or another, even if not all candidates are selected to run FLL-NP. Many 'local champions' may be able to conduct FLL-N while the IAF project is still engaged in the prototyping phase of the innovation-cycle, that is prior to the moment when the prototype becomes a general diffusion product. Of course even more 'local champions' will be in a position to run FLL-N once the prototyping effort comes to fruition in 2020 and the general diffusion model is available for widespread adoption. Indeed, the whole point of undertaking the IAF project's special innovative work on prototyping FLL-N is to enable many more 'local champions' to run FLL-N.

The testing of FLL-NP during this prototyping phase will occur in two waves. The first one will target initiation and co-design (Stages 1 & 2) with 'local champions' during the Spring/Summer of 2019 in order to run the Lab (Stages 3 & 4) during the early Fall 2019. The second wave will launch in the Fall 2019, with the aim of running more Labs in the Winter of 2019. In total it is expected that the IAF project will conduct five special FLL-NP tests as part of the preparation for finalisation of an FLL-N ready for general use.

For any further questions on the technical aspects of the project on Futures Literacy Research, Dr Riel Miller r.miller@unesco.org and Kwamou Eva Feukeu ke.feukeu@unesco.org remain at your disposal.