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# Looking Ahead

## Purpose of the Tool

Whether your innovation project is moving ahead full-steam, or has hit a road-block that is raising questions about how to move forward, it is a good idea to regularly make time as a study group to reflect on what you are learning and where you might want to take your work next. This tool offers some suggestions that can help you envision how you will move your innovation project forward over the next few months.



TAKING STOCK

## Suggested Time Commitment



You will probably need at least an hour to engage in this activity.

## When & How

You'll likely find it most helpful to use this tool for the first time when you are at least a month into piloting your innovation project, and to revisit it periodically throughout your project implementation. It's best to use this tool with your study group, so that you can collect a variety of perspectives and plot a course forward together.

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## Steps

### 1. What have you learned so far?

Study group members are asked to individually write down their responses to the following questions:

- What have I learned so far in terms of my group's inquiry focus (a research question or topic of inquiry that is guiding your teaching and learning context's Creating Communities of Innovation work)?
- What more do I want to learn and figure out about this focus area? This might include continuing what you have been doing in a deeper way, or trying something new.

### 2. Where do you want to go?

As a study group, share your responses to the previous questions with each other. Then, envision what the upcoming 3-4 months might hold for your innovation project. To do so, discuss one or more of these questions:

How can your study group...

- **Go deeper?** If your group is feeling as though it has already "finished" implementing an innovation project, take another look. Are you pushing your ideas far enough into the innovation space and getting at something that is a significant departure from what's happened before in your teaching and learning context?

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- **Take a different tack.** If your group is feeling that you might be missing something important, how might you take your work in another direction? Can you think of ways to gain a deeper understanding of the needs or design challenges related to your project, the impacts of the innovations you have tried out already, or ways to apply what you have learned so far to other aspects of your practice?
  - **Play with size?** Look inside your teaching and learning context. Is there a compelling reason to try to expand the scope of your innovation project or to scale it back? You might think about expanding the model you are implementing, including more people, etc.—or about scaling it back if the project is feeling unwieldy.
  - **Expand your network?** Now, think outside your teaching and learning context. What networks and/or communities might you want to work with beyond your teaching and learning context? Perhaps you would like to expand the network associated with your innovation project by making connections to existing literature, reaching out to other teaching and learning contexts, or making a connection to a relevant expert.

### 3. Share out & discuss next steps

As a group, decide on a few actionable steps you will take in the near-term to move your innovation project work forward.