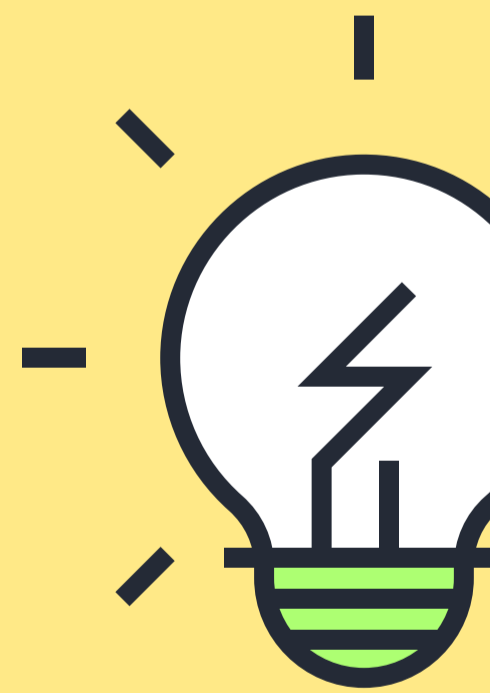


CONNECTED EDUCATION
EVERY LEADER, EVERY
TEACHER, EVERY LEARNER



BRIDGE's Communities of Practice



A BRIDGE Knowledge Product



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LINKING INNOVATORS IN EDUCATION

The following document details 1 of 7 innovative ideas as shared by Pat Sullivan, a participant of the Axis Education Forum 2016. Here, you will find

- a) A brief description of BRIDGE's Communities of Practice (CoP) and their benefits for educationists**
- b) Information on joining an existing BRIDGE CoP**

Pat Sullivan presented the idea of **Communities of Practice** and introduced **BRIDGE** as a facilitator for this sort of collaborative model.

BRIDGE is a non-profit organisation that drives collaboration and co-operation among educational stakeholders to increase their collective impact on the education system. One way in which BRIDGE does this is by convening, facilitating and supporting various Communities of Practice.

What is a Community of Practice (CoP)?

A CoP is established on the basis of a common interest and shared learning goals in relation to that interest. The purpose of a CoP is to connect people in the spirit of learning, knowledge sharing and collaboration. Members take part in facilitated meetings to discuss relevant topics, share working practice, expertise and resources, and collaborate in innovative ways. Through the networks that participants build in their CoP, members learn new things, add value to their professional lives, hone their skills and develop their organisations.

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PAT SULLIVAN

How are CoPs useful?

Some quantitative benefits of CoPs include:

- improved skills
- spread of useful information
- reduced costs through shared resources and less duplication of effort
- a quicker uptake of effective solutions
- the proliferation of effective practice.

Less tangible benefits include:

- shared problem-solving
- the development of a sense of trust
- increased self-reflection
- more collaboration
- an increased ability to innovate.

For a detailed overview on the workings and composition of Communities of Practice, see this [article](#) by Etienne Wenger (one of the founders of the term).

To learn more about BRIDGE CoPs, click [here](#).

To learn about Professional Learning Communities, another collaborative model similar to CoPs, click [here](#).