



National Commission on Innovation and Competitiveness Frontiers

Working Group on Place-Based Innovation

Session 1 Discussion Guide

Monday, March 27th, 2023

3:50 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Agenda

- 3:50-4:10 – Welcome and Working Group Overview
- 4:10-4:20 – Kick-Off Discussant Remarks
- 4:20-4:50 – Discussion of High-Level Priorities
- 4:50-5:00 – Summary of Takeaways for Plenary

Discussion

Welcome & Working Group Overview (20 min)

Welcome & Introductions

- Moderator (Mr. Mike Freeman) will welcome the group and lead a roundtable introduction before providing some opening remarks.

Working Group Charter Issue Areas

- Issue 1: Establishing regional and national strategies to define, coordinate, and support specialized regional innovation hubs.
- Issue 2: Investing in expansion and retention of the local talent base.
- Issue 3: Promoting inclusive growth and innovation in regional hubs.
- Issue 4: Strengthening local innovation ecosystems by enhancing digital infrastructure and local financing.

Recent Developments Affecting Place-Based Innovation

- Chips + Science Regional Tech Hubs
- Other Relevant Legislation (incl. ARP, IJJA, and IRA)
- **Question for Working Group members:** What additional recent scientific, geopolitical, or public policy developments are highly relevant to our Working Group discussions this year?

Kick-Off Discussant Remarks (10 min)

Dr. Melanie Roberts and Dr. H. Rao Unnava will provide opening thoughts to frame the Working Group discussion.

High-Level Priorities (30 min)

- What are the largest challenges facing place-based innovation efforts in the U.S. today?
- What are some of the most promising opportunities on the horizon for strengthening regional innovation systems?
- Are any major issues or themes missing from the Working Group charter?
- At a high-level, what are policymakers getting wrong in efforts to support place-based innovation? What are they getting right?
- In what areas could this Working Group provide the greatest value-add by developing recommendations for policymakers?

Summary of Takeaways (10 min)

Working Group members will collaboratively summarize key takeaways.

Session 2 Discussion Guide

Tuesday, March 28th, 2023

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Agenda

- 11:00-11:10 – Welcome & Session 1 Recap
- 11:10-12:00 – Topic #1 Discussion
- 12:00-12:50 – Topic #2 Discussion
- 12:50-1:00 – Summary of Takeaways

Discussion

Welcome & Session 1 Recap (10 min)

Moderator (Mr. Mike Freeman) will provide a brief overview of topics discussed and key takeaways from first session.

Topic 1: Establishing regional and national strategies to coordinate and support specialized regional innovation hubs (50 min)

Note: The questions below are intended to guide discussion and provide food for thought. Not all questions need to be directly addressed in during discussion of a given topic and likely cannot be given time constraints. Moderators and working group participants will collaboratively shape discussion around priority issues.

- Are current models for place-based innovation antiquated and/or broken? If so, what can be done to improve these models? Should entirely new methods or approaches be employed?
- Has the meaning of “place” within place-based innovation shifted dramatically? If so, what does this imply for regional coordination and differentiation?
- Which experimental place-based innovation policies have been impactful or successful, and what lessons can they provide for future action?
- Why are some areas particularly uninvolved in American innovation? What barriers are inhibiting innovation-based growth in many areas?
- What regions, states, or metropolitan areas present the clearest opportunities for specialized place-based innovation efforts? How can these areas best be supported?
- What kinds of organizations, programs, or partnerships should be established to develop and support national place-based innovation strategies?

- How can the almost \$80 billion of recent investments in place-based industrial policy be fully leveraged to spur growth in target areas? Beyond funding, what additional barriers exist to supporting place-based innovation in underutilized regions around the country?

Topic 2: Strengthening local innovation ecosystems by enhancing digital infrastructure and local financing (50 min)

- What steps can be taken to enhance digital infrastructure in promising innovation hotspots around the country?
- Is the United States investing enough in broadband buildout or should more be done to close the digital divide?
- What investments must be made in areas such as affordable housing, health care, and other supporting infrastructure to make areas more attractive as innovation hotbeds?
- What programs, incentives, or funding mechanisms should be established to support innovation in new regional hubs?
- What role can university engagement play in strengthening innovation hubs in traditionally underutilized geographies?
- How can policymakers support and incentivize the spread of venture capital capacity to underfunded regions of the country?

Summary of Takeaways (10 min)

Working Group participants will collaboratively summarize key takeaways.