

Kosmos Author, David Cooperrider, Business as and Agent of World Benefit, Will Announce A Nobel-Like Prize for Business in 2014

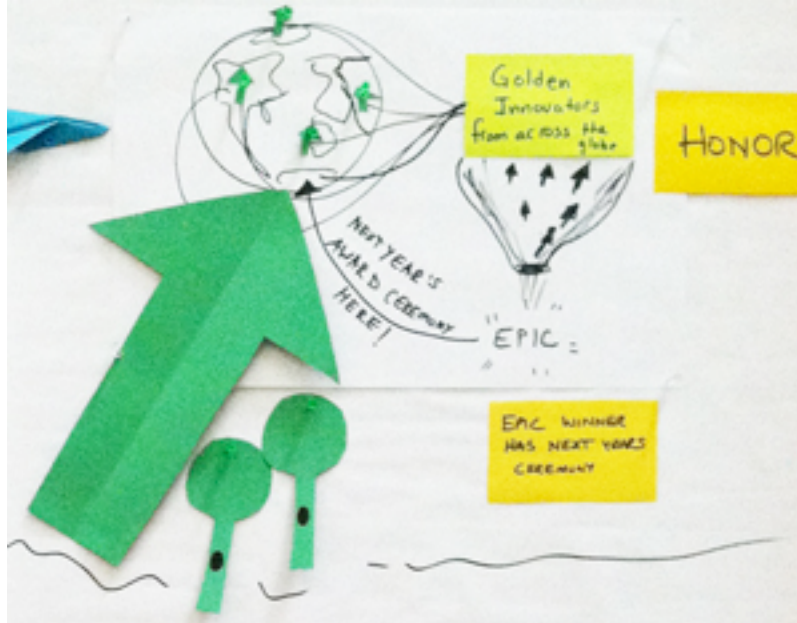
‘Designers Paradise’ Prototypes New Business Prize

Michelle Strutzenberger

Having jokingly settled how they would address one another — by name, not title — a nun and a business student turned their attention to the task at hand — rapid prototyping a new process that will celebrate businesses that are agents of world benefit.

In just these two the diversity of a group of about 70 gathered at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland this past weekend is captured.

From executive director of the Drucker Institute Rick Wartzman to the former newscaster for 20/20 Roberta Baskin, the gathering was a melting pot of academics, business leaders, journalists, students and more.



Four Phases of the Prize: discover, honour, scale up and accelerate

“We were able to create a designers paradise — a concentration effect of strengths,” says David Cooperrider, global thought leader and Case Western professor, who co-convened the gathering.

All attendees had been specially invited and volunteered their time to participate. Some came from as far as California and Ontario. While the hosts repeated deep gratitude for people’s generosity in joining, it was clear delegates felt honoured to contribute to a process that has the makings of a world-changing effort.

The overarching design question for the group was this: How might we create a “more than” Nobel-like prize for business as an agent of world benefit that accelerates and inspires our epic transition to a world of mutual flourishing?

Sitting in small groups, the delegates whittled away most of Saturday seeking to answer this question through a mix of talk, sketching and writing that ranged from the intense to the playful. Peter Coughlan of the design firm IDEO led the group in IDEO's oft-proven design process that he cautioned would feel messy and provoke anxiety but "must be trusted" to yield a valuable end product.

The session closed with eight groups showcasing their designs of a complete recognition process that starts with finding businesses that are agents of world benefit in every part of the world to amplifying what they've done globally.

The roomful of diverse strengths fed through the world-renowned IDEO process sprung a vibrant bouquet of insights, connections and ideas. For instance, the sister mentioned above was keen to see mindfulness practices included. A Brazilian resident reminded people to not forget those in the most remote parts of the world who have no modern technology.

"The energy in the room was overwhelmingly positive from all the diverse perspectives," says Roger Saillant, executive director of Case Western's Fowler Center for Sustainable Value. Roger is working with David to spearhead the design of the process.

"(This) shows us that our work will serve to help focus and accelerate what seems to be emerging throughout the world: the need to make a movement toward a flourishing world."

"One thing was clear from all the buzz after the prototyping session: this Nobel-like prize for business as an agent of world benefit will be so much more than a prize," David tells Axiom News. "It will be a world-changing global learning process, spreading and scaling 'up-building' and 'up-worthy' news, helping create a new grand narrative about the exponential rise of good business for creating a sustainability + flourishing world."

The ideas and insights gathered will inform the next phase in the design of this recognition process. The new prize or "prizing," as some came to call it, is to be announced at the 2014 global forum for Business as an Agent of World Benefit.

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