Getting to a better future

In this section, we discuss innovative ideas and sources of inspiration for each of the Three Characteristics for a better future. You can read across all Three Characteristics or dig more deeply into one as you prioritize actions to try for your organization and the issue areas in which you work.

What do the trends mean for this characteristic

For each of the Three Characteristics, we begin with a review of trends that are relevant for that characteristic. This is meant to help stimulate thinking about new realities we need to adapt to and new opportunities we can harness. Then for each element we discuss:

• Bright spots
  We provide multiple examples of bright spot organizations that are already succeeding or showing promise in one or more of elements of the Three Characteristics. These are meant to provide inspiration and examples of how innovative practices have actually been implemented.

• Collected bright spot practices
  We list practices distilled from bright spots and research that you can integrate into your organization as you innovate in a specific element. A summary of opportunities for all of the elements can also be found in the appendices.

• Where else can we find inspiration?
  We share an example from an adjacency that might help generate new or adaptive ideas to improve a better future element. Additional examples of adjacencies to spur innovation thinking are available as part of our supplemental innovation materials.

• Calls to action
  At the end of the sections for each of the Three Characteristics, we list promising new ideas, some for individual organizations and some that can be done in collaboration, to test additional hypotheses about how to propel the field forward. These calls to action were developed through research, our innovation lab, and multiple convenings. Some calls to action will be more or less relevant, depending on your organization and issue area, but they are meant to cover a range of opportunities.

Key resources

While not listed in this section, note that in the appendices there are additional materials for creating change for each of the Three Characteristics. These are not exhaustive, but they include practical guides, tools, and other resources that may be particularly helpful.
A better future: More productively learning at scale
More productively learning at scale

A better future

...for more productively learning at scale is one where:

- Knowledge is shared openly and widely
- Knowledge gaps and learning agendas are collaboratively undertaken
- Data is integrated at scale needed to assess social impact
- Evaluation synthesis, replication, and meta-evaluation are supported

What do the trends mean for this characteristic

The larger context

Technological advances are creating greater opportunities for collaboration and making data aggregation and analysis dramatically easier and less expensive. Open data systems enable people to easily share and access data, while integrated datasets combine multiple data sources to enable new insight through the combination of expanded reach and different types of data. Large quantities of data from multiple sources are being used to report real time traffic conditions, identify changes to tropical forests globally, track malaria through mobile phones, and enable real-time monitoring of complex global supply chains.

Given the interconnectedness of today’s world and the scale of the challenges we face, as well as government retrenchment, organizations are increasingly focusing on ecosystems and collaborative approaches across sectors. For example, the number of public-private partnerships has grown to 400, compared to 50 in the late 1980s. Innovative new approaches and models blend elements from multiple sectors.

There is a broad open data movement to make data more accessible, with a specific focus on access to governmental information and the use of government administrative data for public benefit. Civil society organizations have been both proponents and beneficiaries of this movement, and a vibrant “civic tech” movement and ecosystem has emerged. However, these technological innovations also bring the challenges of data privacy and ownership, data quality, and diverse data standards, which must be overcome in order to realize the full potential of learning at scale.

Within the social sector

Productively learning at scale has been historically difficult in the social sector, which has established an “opt-in” culture for transparency and sharing, rather than an “opt-out” culture. Knowledge is generally closely held, although cross-currents exist. When foundations and nonprofits do share, they are incentivized to share only those results that reflect positively on their organizations, handicapping the field’s understanding of what works. Nonprofits that are transparent about failures in particular are vulnerable to a loss of funding.
Although technology is making it easier to productively learn at scale by collecting, analyzing, sharing, and aggregating information, overall the social sector lags behind the private and public sectors in the development of these platforms and tools. There are limited forums for sharing information and those that exist aren’t widely used, but some are slowly gaining traction. However, there is considerable disparity in collaboration in different issue and geographic areas, and some areas such as health and education have experienced much more data sharing than the rest of the social sector.

As a result, we heard expectations of continued knowledge silos and an inability to take full advantage of the possibilities for field-level learning in the expected future. Without serious efforts to create incentives and reduce barriers to collaboration and collective action, organizations are not expected to truly prioritize sharing learnings with the field. Evaluations are expected to continue to largely be conducted in silos, with some increased coordination among funders. Shared data standards and integrated data systems may become more common, although without more systematic intervention real hurdles will likely remain. There’s greater interest in big data and analytics, but most datasets are expected to remain small and historical without a data infrastructure push, and big data analytics only shows real promise in a few specific applications.

**Where do we look for inspiration to get to a better future?**

In the social sector, there are some ongoing and emergent efforts to aggregate and share learnings from the field that can be further promoted and supported. There have been multiple efforts to increase accountability and transparency about how foundations operate and make decisions, including foundation grants, performance data, and funding decisions. Platforms exist to share evaluation learnings, along with “what works” repositories. There are also multiple efforts to create common indicators to enable benchmarking of data, as well as a few bright spots in platforms for data aggregation and sharing.

Outside of the social sector, there is wide array of exemplars and lessons to draw from with large companies using big data across geographies and organizational boundaries, industries that have solved common standards and interoperability issues, and multiple stakeholder open source and open data efforts. Efforts to open up and build on government data in particular offer important opportunities, examples, and lessons learned.

“**Foundations themselves are struggling. They don’t share evaluations across their own programs, let alone across a sector. They still rely heavily on calling each other up to make decisions, relying on networks, trying to shortcut the information overload by asking trusted partners what to read in order to feel as though they’ve done their due diligence.**”

—Director of an organization serving foundations and nonprofits

“**There are increasing expectations for sharing and collaboration and an open source mentality. This applies not only to sharing information, but also to being collaborative and trying to be a thought partner...**” —Foundation M&E professional
More productively learning at scale

A better future for learning at scale is one where:

**Data, learning, and knowledge are shared openly and widely**

In a better future, foundations and nonprofits use monitoring, evaluation, and learning efforts to build evidence, and they share the results regardless of strategy or program success. They share information as openly and widely as possible while still respecting ethical considerations. Prior to sharing, organizations invest in translating their information so that it is helpful knowledge for other actors.

**Bright spot practices to ensure knowledge is shared openly and widely at your organization**

- **Create an open knowledge policy** for sharing materials that have been funded or produced by your organizations
- **Publicly share grantee and constituent survey results**
- **Publicly share evaluation results**
- **Adopt an open licensing policy** that enables others to reproduce, distribute and adapt materials to promote learning and enable additional research and knowledge development
- **Have grantees use open repositories** to enable broad access to knowledge products
- **Use open standards for** your website knowledge materials to enable them to be more easily tracked and found

**Existing bright spots in the field**

- **Developing an open data policy**

  The Laura and John Arnold Foundation (LJAF) created Guidelines for Investments in Research, criteria to ensure that research funded by LJAF meets the most rigorous standards of quality and transparency. The Guidelines require researchers receiving funding from LJAF to preregister their studies through the Open Science Framework before statistical analyses are performed and, if possible, before data are collected. In addition to preregistering studies, researchers are also expected to make their datasets and computer code publicly available to the extent possible while respecting any confidentiality or privacy requirements. Finally, researchers must report the results of the studies even if they are not published in a peer-reviewed journal. LJAF instituted the Guidelines to reduce publication bias and improve the reliability of empirical analysis.
• Developing a social sector repository that makes open access to social sector knowledge an easy and expected practice

Foundation Center’s IssueLab is an open repository, providing free access to more than 20,000 social sector knowledge products such as case studies, evaluations, and white papers. Operating on the principle that “knowledge is a public good” which should be freely accessible to all, IssueLab encourages and enables the open publishing of field-based knowledge as expected practice in foundations and nonprofits. It also works with organizations to develop and curate topical collections that build on – and in turn, contribute to – the larger IssueLab platform when materials are added.

• Enabling field-wide learning by sharing detailed data with researchers

Crisis Text Line, a nonprofit that provides counseling services to teens via text message, shares detailed, anonymized data with approved researchers. Over 32 million text messages have been exchanged via Crisis Text Line since its launch, making it the U.S.’s largest open set of crisis data. The volume of messages and variety of content enables researchers to investigate trends and explore services and policies that can better support teens facing personal crises. One group of researchers, for example, is investigating how LGBTQ youth in various zip codes talk about their experiences and then is comparing those experiences to local school and government policies.

• Using prospective registries to promote transparency and avoid the dangers of “publication bias”

AllTrials, an international initiative led in the U.S. by Sense About Science USA, Dartmouth’s Geisel School of Medicine and the Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy & Clinical Practice, promotes the pre-registration of studies with an agreement to fully disclose study methods and results. The objective is to reduce the tendency of organizations to publicly share only positive results, which skews the field’s understanding of what works and what doesn’t. One example of the dangers of this “publication bias” was discovered with an anti-arrhythmia medication Lorcainide. Numerous people died because original studies pointing to problems weren’t published, resulting in other manufacturers developing similar drugs.

Where else can we find inspiration?

Using third parties to mediate data sharing

The Yale School of Medicine Open Data Access Project (YODA) serves as an independent third party reviewer for requests from researchers seeking access to Johnson & Johnson’s clinical trials data. YODA takes full responsibility for investigating the requests and making decisions on data sharing.24

What if a third party intermediary served as a responsible gatekeeper to increase accessibility to and safeguards for key social impact datasets?

For more examples of adjacencies related to more effectively putting decision-making at the center, see companion adjacency materials.
More productively learning at scale

A better future for learning at scale is one where:

**Knowledge gaps and learning agendas are collaboratively undertaken**

In a better future, there is greater focus on working collaboratively with actors in the system and learning together as a field. Organizations within issue areas consistently work together, perhaps via formalized communities of practice, to identify knowledge gaps, collaborate on learning agendas, and build collective evidence.

**Bright spot practices to ensure collaborative undertakings at your organization**

- Map evidence gaps with others working in your issue areas to help identify strategic learning priorities
- Determine key learning questions for stakeholders in the field to drive knowledge development
- Create learning communities to promote ongoing collective learning

**Existing bright spots in the field**

- Collaborating with grantees to create a shared learning agenda and collectively prioritize issue areas
  
  **The Vancouver Foundation’s Fostering Change initiative** created a learning community of its multi-year grantees and collaborated with them to develop a shared “learning agenda.” The learning agenda, driven by the grantees’ challenges and open questions, enabled the Foundation and its grantees to prioritize issue areas and tackle them together. Managers and frontline staff from each organization met every six weeks as a “shared learning and evaluation” working group. A different grantee hosted each meeting, allowing the grantees to see one another’s sites and further enabling peer-to-peer learning.

- Creating grantee cohorts that learn together with built-in evaluation support for the collective
  
  **The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation**, a private funder in Southern California, embeds collective learning in its six strategic initiatives, each of which may involve as many as 50 grantees working toward a shared set of goals. An external partner manages the evaluation and learning for each initiative. Edmund Cain, vice president of grant programs with the foundation, describes the approach: “[The evaluation partner’s] job is not to issue a report card on each grantee’s performance but to track the collective impact...on that particular issue over time.” This strategy not only promotes collaborative learning, but also reduces the burden on grantees to manage their evaluation and learning.
• Mapping evidence gaps to help identify strategic research priorities

3ie, an international development grantmaking NGO, develops evidence gap maps (EGMs) to facilitate evidence informed decision-making about program and research investments. EGMs are collections of information on the effects of development policies and programs in a particular sector or thematic area, such as education, water, sanitation, hygiene, and adolescent health. They provide a graphical display of existing and ongoing systematic reviews and impact evaluations in a sector or sub-sector, structured around a framework of interventions and outcomes. 3ie maps are available on an interactive online platform, which allows users to explore the evidence base and findings of relevant studies. By identifying what we know and do not know about “what works”, the EGMs can be used to inform strategic priorities. For example, 3ie found that in the land use and forestry sector, few studies assess if forest protection activities result in trade-offs between food security and climate change mitigation, suggesting new studies are needed to address this gap.

Where else can we find inspiration?

Mapping data gaps to determine where to focus efforts

Earth Microbiome is a crowd-sourced open science effort to analyze microbial life on the planet that includes the mapping of “dark matter” as part of its efforts. Up to 99% of microbial organisms are deemed unknown dark matter, which biologists can’t culture in a lab due to limited knowledge or insufficient growth conditions.25

What if funders could broadly map out existing knowledge to help identify where there are critical gaps in information that need to be addressed?

For more examples of adjacencies related to more effectively putting decision-making at the center, see companion adjacency materials.
More productively learning at scale

A better future for learning at scale is one where:

**Data is integrated at the scale needed to assess social impact**

In a better future, data is integrated across organizations through common indicators or data interoperability. Shared data systems are common and developed using open source, open standards, and open innovation principles and practices. Integrated data systems overcome data silos and facilitate issue-level learning at the scale of the problems that organizations seek to address.

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**Bright spot practices to ensure data and methods needed to inform decisions at your organization**

- **Coordinate on shared metrics** with organizations working in the same issue areas
- **Create an open data policy** for sharing data that has been funded or produced by your organizations
- **Promote open data principles, standards and practices** in the issue areas in which you work
- Where relevant, **support the development of data collaboratives** in your issue areas that share data across organizations and sectors
- Where relevant, **support the development of integrated data systems** in your issue areas that aggregate governmental administrative information for the purpose of learning which interventions are working and why

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**Existing bright spots in the field**

- **Using a shared measurement system to see the progress of both the field and individual organizations**

  Grounded Solution’s HomeKeeper program standardizes the way affordable housing programs across their sector track data, measure outcomes, and implement effective practices. Over 70 member organizations pay an annual fee to use HomeKeeper, a cloud-based app. Built by and for practitioners, HomeKeeper helps programs manage their day to day program activities, while tracking a core set of fields to produce a common social impact report. HomeKeeper organizations seamlessly share social impact data with the HomeKeeper National Data Hub where information is aggregated and shared across the sector. HomeKeeper’s shared measurement system creates an understanding of how the field as a whole is meeting the needs of underserved buyers, but also allows members to benchmark their data to their peers.
• **Connecting local place-based initiatives to inform national field building**

**National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP)** combines local expertise with the power of a national peer-learning network to strengthen communities. NNIP is made up of independent data intermediaries in 30 cities that have a shared mission to help community stakeholders use neighborhood-level data for better decision-making, with a focus on assisting organizations and residents in underserved communities. NNIP is supported and coordinated by the Urban Institute, a nonpartisan research organization. One of Urban Institute’s roles is to lead cross-site initiatives across local partners, enabling them to share their successes and challenges, and then synthesizes lessons from their work to inform other localities, as well as national policy. The Partnership recently launched “Turning the Corner”, for example, a pilot project in Detroit, Minneapolis-St. Paul, and other cities to develop protocols and methodologies for monitoring neighborhood revitalization that can then be adapted by other cities and used to advance the field.

• **Creating a location-based open data platform to improve transparency and decision-making**

**Connecticut Data Collaborative (CT Data)**, a cross-sector partnership, compiles data from disparate sources including the state’s various departments, integrates and curates the data, and provides open access in order to inform residents, nonprofits, policymakers, and funders. CT Data enables users to access organized, processed data or download raw data for independent analysis. CT Data provides over 135 datasets that can be explored by topic (e.g., education, housing) and Connecticut geographies. By making data accessible, CT Data has informed planning, policy, and decision-making. For example, as part of the Racial Profiling Prohibition Project, communities have access to town-level traffic stop data by race.

• **Building a social sector big data platform to share social impact data**

**Illumidata**, a suite of data services currently under development by the Council of Michigan Foundations in collaboration with leaders in data analytics, aggregates and analyzes data for social sector actors of all sizes. The platform will provide access and analysis for baseline data that includes more than 500,000 social data sets across issue areas. Organizations can also contribute their own data, protected by a rigorous data rights management policy. Users can then overlay their own program data with related public data and the shared data of other users, leading to greater insight, more meaningful impact assessment, and the identification of gaps and trends.

• **Bringing diverse datasets together to make invisible connections visible**

**The Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX)** is an open platform managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to share data about humanitarian crises. The goal of HDX is to make data easier to find and use for analysis. Over 200 organizations are sharing 4,400 datasets that are being accessed by users in almost every country in the world. For example, HDX includes 84 datasets for the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, covering changes in global food prices, landslide locations, health infrastructure, and population movements. These datasets can be analyzed together to understand recovery efforts in Nepal. Building on the work of HDX, OCHA will establish a new Centre for Humanitarian Data in The Hague in mid-2017 to further increase data use and impact in the humanitarian sector.
Using common indicators to compare progress across geographies

The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta joined 20 states and four cities in producing an annual Civic Health Index, using common indicators that enable comparison across the participating geographies and through time. When the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta made the Civic Health Index its primary gauge for progress, it adopted the common indicators already used by the other participating geographies. It collected the same data points for comparison in 2014, and has continued to collect data at regular intervals thereafter. In the interim, the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta has enhanced its efforts to seek common data within the metropolitan region’s 23-counties and has worked with the Atlanta Regional Council’s "Metro Voices" project. Consistently using these common indicators, enables the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta to compare across peer organizations and across time.

Where else can we find inspiration?

Aggregating individual data on collective platforms

PatientsLikeMe’s Open Research Exchange is an open platform for developing, validating, and sharing health outcome measures that better reflect patients’ experiences with a disease. Researchers, can get feedback from real patients to test and improve health outcome measures to make them more relevant to a patient’s health and quality of life.26

What would it look like if funders aggregated data so that it could be made more accessible and useful for informing the day-to-day work of grantees?

For more examples of adjacencies related to more effectively putting decision-making at the center, see companion adjacency materials.
More productively learning at scale

A better future for learning at scale is one where:

**Evaluation synthesis, replication, and meta-evaluation are supported**

In a better future, evaluation synthesis, replication, and meta-evaluation become standard practice. Investments in shared infrastructure enable organizations to access higher quality information and synthesize, replicate, and learn from that information. Synthesis, replication and meta-evaluation enable foundations and nonprofits to make effective strategic choices based on that information.

**Bright spot practices to support synthesis, replication, and meta-evaluation at your organization**

- Support the development of systematic reviews and meta-analyses in your issue areas
- Promote the use and dissemination of systematic reviews and meta-analyses, including of data that you have funded or created
- Support the creation of repositories and platforms for systematic reviews and meta-analyses

**Existing bright spots in the field**

- Promoting replication to confirm the robustness of impact evaluation evidence

  **3ie**, an international development grantmaking NGO, established its replication program in 2012 to improve the quality and reliability of impact evaluation evidence. It incentivizes the replication of influential, innovative, and controversial evaluations of development interventions. 3ie supports efforts to use existing data to reproduce and test the strength of published results. Independent replication lends increased credibility to impact evaluation evidence, whether the studies confirm the robustness of the original findings or provide additional insights suggesting alternative pathways. 3ie oversees the multi-stage replication paper review process, publishes the resulting papers, and acts as a thought leader for research transparency.

- Aggregating clearinghouses across multiple issue areas

  **The Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative** created the Results First Clearinghouse Database, a one-stop online resource that provides information on the effectiveness of various interventions as rated by eight national research clearinghouses. The clearinghouses included in the Database conduct systematic research reviews to identify what works in areas including youth development, criminal justice, and education. To address the challenges posed by the existence of multiple clearinghouses, the Database compiles the information in one place, reconciles the different clearinghouse rating systems, and provides the data in a clear, accessible format.
• Creating a “one-stop meta-analysis shop” to help improve collective knowledge

Cochrane, a global network of researchers, professionals, patients, and people interested in health, works to improve evidence-informed health decisions by producing high-quality, systematic health study reviews. Cochrane’s network of 37,000 members from more than 130 countries, can serve as a powerful resource for meta-analyses of what works. The systematic reviews provide transparent overviews of the range of research studies on a given health subject to assess the current state of knowledge for that topic.

• Synthesizing existing evaluative evidence to inform strategy

Foundation Center’s IssueLab and The Rockefeller Foundation collaborated on a synthesis review of key success factors required to achieve social, economic, and ecological benefits for small-scale coastal fisheries in developing countries. The synthesis review aggregated existing data from more than 150 reports to identify 20 key factors believed to influence success in small-scale fisheries. For each factor, the review lists what is known in the literature, identifies different stakeholder priorities, and provides critical questions for funders and implementing organizations. The final synthesis, an interactive visualization of key findings, and a digital collection of the reports used in the synthesis, were all openly licensed and made freely available through IssueLab. The Rockefeller Foundation used the findings to guide the development of the strategy for its Oceans and Fisheries Initiative.

Where else can we find inspiration?

Enabling independent verification of the information of others

Provenance, a UK-based company, is using new blockchain technology to stamp out illegal fishing. Blockchain is a digital ledger originally used for the currency Bitcoin. It enables local fishermen to send SMS messages to register their catch on the blockchain, and the identification of the fish is then transferred to a supplier at each stage along the supply chain. Information about the complete journey of the fish can be accessed and verified by end buyers using their smartphones.27

What would it look like if philanthropy leveraged technology to make its data and results more transparent so others could learn from or confirm findings?

For more examples of adjacencies related to more effectively putting decision-making at the center, see companion adjacency materials.
Calls to action
More productively learning at scale

To get to a better future in which we are able to overcome knowledge and data silos to more productively learn at scale, we need to go beyond what we’re doing today to embrace much more coordinated and integrated monitoring, evaluation, and learning. However, it is important to note that most activity will like be at the level of issue areas rather than the social sector as a whole. The following are some high-priority hypotheses about how to get to the better future for learning at scale.

1 Data, learning, and knowledge are shared openly and widely

How can we share what we’re learning, good and bad, at a much greater level than we do today? Beyond the open knowledge and data policies discussed in the earlier section, there are multiple calls to action that funders can try:

**Overcoming disincentives to share among nonprofits:** Nonprofit programs are typically evaluated individually. What if a funder or group of funders provided incentives to a group of grantees working in the same issue area with different theories of change to support aggregated learning and evaluation across multiple organizations?

**Expanding the scope of “what works” directories:** One concern about “what works” directories is the focus on wide applicability of program-level evidence. What if a directory or directories experimented with compiling evidence using more selection criteria than experimental rigor: looking at the likelihood of effectiveness in different settings and populations, with variation in implementation approaches; and/or at community and systems-levels?

**Building trust among intermediaries through anonymization:** One disincentive to share data is that foundations and nonprofits do not want to be publicly penalized for adverse results. What if several nonprofits in an issue area submit their data and results to a trusted intermediary, who then anonymized and aggregated the data? Or if a foundation incentivized nonprofits to contribute?

2 Knowledge gaps and learning agendas are collaboratively undertaken

To get to a better future where we work more collaboratively with other organizations in understanding and developing learning agendas in our issue areas, the development of evidence maps and synthetic literature reviews we brought up. We also heard other creative ideas that could be tried:

**Creating a diagnostic for helping groups learn together:** Some issue areas are much further along in terms of shared learnings, data collaboration, and collective knowledge development than others. What if a funder supported the creation of a diagnostic that detailed and assessed the conditions that need to exist and key choices for collective learning for an issue area?

**Promoting issue-level, action-oriented learning:** What would it look like if more foundations operated as “learning foundations,” orienting grantmaking to help answer key questions needed by other decision-makers in the issue area? What if one or several existing funders experimented with using a part of their portfolio to focus specifically on funding to answer key learning questions to spread the practice? What if organizations who work with those setting up new foundations helped explore this approach?
Data is integrated at scale needed to assess social impact

Open, shared and integrated data are watchwords in thinking creatively about what to try to increase the scale and speed at which we learn:

**Enabling better sharing of data through integrated data sets:** Governmental administrative data often contains important data related to social interventions, yet it is often either not available to social sector organizations or not configured to answer outcome-related questions. What if a group of funders working on a particular issue mapped and developed the ecosystem for the use of administrative data sets to understand intervention outcomes?

**Promoting open source and data extraction:** There are basic technical challenges involved in sharing data in the social sector given the number of proprietary systems and the structure of existing systems that limit data extraction. This can be relevant for sharing across organizations and within them. What a funder of funders supported the development of tools to enable data extraction and sharing from key systems for a given issue area?

**Promoting common data hubs:** Connecting program management software to a common data hub for a given issue area can enable benchmarking and aggregated information. What if a set of funders and grantees worked to assess the necessary conditions for developing this or related models for specific issue areas and then put their learnings into action?

Evaluation synthesis, replication, and meta-evaluation are supported

To get to a better future with higher-quality information in the social sector, the following calls to action may help us better learn across individual studies, data sets, and methodologies:

**Testing different large-scale approaches:** There are presently different hypotheses about how best to learn about variability in what works in an issue area, including multi-site evaluation approaches and data analytics approaches (e.g. machine learning). What if a funder chose an issue area and compared learnings using both approaches?

**Dedicating resources to synthesize existing literature:** There is extensive existing research in the field, but much of it is unavailable in a digestible way. For a given issue area, what if a funder or collection of funders shared data/studies and support issue curators/translator to synthesize existing research to create a series of comprehensive issue area reviews?

**Enabling safe independent verification of the information of others:** It can be a challenge to balance data openness with privacy and usage. For a particular issue area, what if a third party intermediary served as a responsible gatekeeper to increase accessibility to and safeguards for key social impact datasets?