



A Springboard to Inclusion

The 50x15 Learning Lab Program

Demonstrating Success

The 50x15 Learning Lab Program acts as a springboard to demonstrate innovative technology solutions, validate business models, obtain knowledge about local markets, and foster local entrepreneurship. This is accomplished through innovative technology incubators called learning labs.

A 50x15 Learning Lab is a digital inclusion center in its infancy. As part of the larger 50x15 Initiative that aims to enable affordable Internet access to 50 percent of the world's population by the year 2015, learning labs represent the first step in building access to the digital economy for people in high-growth markets.

These technology-based projects are then examined and the results studied, to gain insight and knowledge on how best to replicate what has been successful, and foster digital inclusion on a broader, global basis.

Building on Knowledge

Built on the ideals of the 50x15 Initiative, learning labs are about empowerment, not charity. They use technology that is affordable and accessible, while at the same time providing solutions that take a geo-sensitive approach. And they ensure that all such solutions are part of an integrated, end-to-end 50x15 Digital Inclusion Ecosystem.

Currently, there are dozens of learning labs around the world, in countries like South Africa, Uganda, Brazil, India, Bangladesh, Mexico, and many others. Each has specific, community-based goals and objectives, in areas from education and e-healthcare to job skills and business development.

The Learning Lab Program Methodology: From Vision to Implementation and Beyond

The 50x15 Learning Lab Program seeks to deliver relevant content, software applications, and Internet access through affordable computing devices, while ensuring that local providers receive the training necessary to implement and sustain the learning lab.

Supporting this environment are the 50x15 partnerships—the many collaborations among the digital inclusion community, technology providers, businesses, government entities, NGOs, and others—that make the vision of 50x15 flourish. Beginning with a definition of the project and the digital ecosystem necessary to nourish it, the program seeks to engage local, regional, and national organizations in six key areas: power, connectivity, devices, content, financing, and expertise.* Other considerations also play a key role in sustaining the lab, including structure design, material logistics, and microenterprise business models.

Once defined, the collaborators develop a timetable, determine availability of other participants, and ensure that all hardware, software, and networking components are available and ready for integration.

When the learning lab is operational, it is monitored and evaluated, with the goals of maintaining its results and replicating its success to other locations.

*The six areas necessary to implement a successful digital inclusion center as identified by the World Economic Forum's IT Access for Everyone (ITAFE) Global Benchmarking study. Visit: www.50x15.com/ITAFEstudy

Vision to Implementation

→ Vision

The empowerment of communities by providing technology access to help them compete within the global economy; the enabling of people in high-growth markets to obtain “life services” for the first time—including healthcare information, financial services, job hunting, education, and communication

→ Considerations

The determination of available resources, including identifying local leadership and the various 50x15 partners that will be necessary to make the vision a reality

→ Project Planning

The definition of the ecosystem components, from power, connectivity, devices, content, financing, and expertise, to structure design, material logistics, and microenterprise business models

→ Building the Ecosystem

The development and implementation of a project timeline, including ensuring that all power, hardware, software, and networking resources are available and ready for integration

→ Monitoring and Evaluating

The measurement of the project against its stated goals, with the objective of sustaining its results and improving performance

→ Replicating

The duplication of a learning lab's success, or proof-of-concept, in other localities

Evaluating Success

Learning labs are evaluated on their effectiveness, sustainability, and prospects for replication.

When measuring effectiveness, a range of criteria is used, specific to the local program. A school initiative, for example, might feature testing on computer skills and knowledge, as well as student performance evaluations and cost-benefit analyses. An e-healthcare center might measure the number of patient records collected and maintained.

A learning lab's sustainability is often directly tied to sources of funding. In many impoverished areas, where there is no local tax base to support the learning lab, funding must come from outside the local district, often from public/private partnerships. Even so, local support for the day-to-day workings of the lab remains the most important criteria for the long-term success of the initiative.

A learning lab is designed to be easily replicated in other localities. This allows for a powerful multiplier effect, fusing technology and business strategy to empower more people in high-growth markets.

Learning Lab Capsules

To facilitate the replication of successful learning labs, the 50x15 Initiative is designed to provide open, transparent reporting of the results of every implementation. These key findings—called Learning Lab Capsules—serve as scalable blueprints, or recipes, for future digital inclusion efforts.

Learning lab capsules are available for download and distribution under Creative Commons Licensing at www.50x15.com/capsules. Capsule recipients are encouraged to add their own experiences to the documentation in instances where their implementation differs from the original learning lab environment.

The 50x15 Initiative

The 50x15 Initiative aims to enable half the world's population with affordable Internet access and computing capability by 2015. Built on the premise that no single entity can accomplish this ambitious goal alone, 50x15 unites private, public, and governmental partners in a highly-collaborative, end-to-end business environment.

For More Information

If you'd like further details about the 50x15 Learning Lab Programs, please visit www.50x15.com/learninglabs.

Learning to Grow

Creating a Learning Lab

The primary goal of the 50x15 Learning Lab Program is to advance the 50x15 Vision of a connected global population. Proposals are evaluated on a variety of criteria, including the ability of a project environment to meet basic standards for technology deployment; the availability of financing sources for post-launch phases of the project; the existence of leadership, government support, and local ecosystem; and the alignment of project goals with AMD business and social objectives.

