



Hi Bev,

Another year, another newsletter, with an intention to send updates more regularly. Some highlights from 2023 and a look forward to what's happening in 2024.

2023 highlights

CoP summit dinner - a jazz café

We thoroughly enjoyed the second annual CoP summit with 32 participants - lots of energy and new connections. The summit dinner was to take place outside, but the night brought some wild wind and rain. At the last minute, we moved the garden tables inside to create a romantic café, with candles and music from a jazz pianist. Rain was pounding on the large glass windows as we cosied up inside. Magic rose to a climax when Shane Beales from the UK grabbed his guitar to accompany Robyn Smith from Australia singing songs and inviting all our participation. We also had a lullaby by Travis of the US and contributing speeches from others.

For one evening, at least, it felt like CoP leadership is a comforting place to be in a wild, stormy world.

Here are some pics of the summit, set to music by Shane, who composed the "summit song" with suggestions of lyrics from fellow summit participants

[Summit highlights](#)

Nurturing agency through social learning

We were commissioned to write a report about a programme for entrepreneurs in health and technology. The participants were academic researchers and medical experts turned entrepreneurs. We were charged to investigate the question: What is the value of this programme outside the formal training? The energy we got from interviewing these budding entrepreneurs was an experience of mutual inspiration - something we called "contagious hopefulness." Most interesting for us was the increased sense of agency that people gained

from being part of a social learning space with others in the same boat.

Everyday use of the value-creation framework - Travis' tiles

Hats off to [Travis Tennesen](#) who leads the Community Engagement Fellows program at Western Washington University. He has adapted our value-creation framework to work in a multitude of everyday ways by associating value-creation cycles with colors on children's tiles (<https://www.cefellows.org/tiles>). It's always inspiring to see people using our stuff in new ways. Travis demonstrated the use of the tiles as a fun way to structure a reflection at the end of the cutting-edge BEtreat last year.

Private retreats

We were happy to host custom retreats for organizations holding their annual offsites. The hotel is literally next door. The space at the Lab works well for configuring a variety of conversations and activities. And for us, the fun challenge is to help give these retreats just enough of a social learning twist to make them distinctive and memorable — interactive and meaningful, enjoyable and productive.

Events calendar

Events in 2024

May cluster around the CoP summit

(early bird April 1)

We have a cluster of workshops around [the CoP summit](#). Before the summit is our practice-oriented workshop on Cultivating communities of practice. After the summit is the exploratory Cutting-edge BEtreat with an emergent agenda of issues to explore in depth. (More about the cutting-edge in a future newsletter.)

U.S. workshop

(early bird June 1)

For the third year in a row we'll be running a workshop in Bellingham in July. We are still honing in on a date and will come back with more info in the next newsletter.

September cluster around the new Systems Convening summit

(early bird August 1)

For the first time this year, we will have a Systems Convening summit in September. Before that is the Systems Convening workshop, which is more structured than the summit. And after that is the Beyond Evaluation workshop for people who use the value-creation framework for research or evaluation.

October cluster

(early bird September 1)

More about the reading and writing retreats in a future newsletter. But just to let you know that our relaxing, quirky location really lends itself to focused thinking, reflections, and conversations. It's ideal for taking some time to do that reading or writing you've been meaning to do.

Social learning fellows

We will end last year's cohort of [the Fellows program](#) with presentations at the cutting-edge BEtreat and start a new cohort in June.

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Look forward to seeing you in one way or another in 2024!

Bev and Etienne



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