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**HIVE LEARNING NETWORKS**

Hive Learning Networks are regional organizational collectives, most often located in large cities, consisting of local out-of-school educational organizations including museums, libraries, and after-school programs. In a Hive Learning Network, local organizations work collectively to create new initiatives that support young people to engage in long-term, interest-driven learning in domains including art, digital media production, science, design, and social activism. Hives can be understood through two lenses: (1) as networks that learn—collectives of organizations that support one another to create new and innovative approaches to pedagogy through sharing best practices, ongoing collaboration, and interorganizational learning and (2) as networks for learning—coordinated educational opportunities for youth to engage in interest-driven learning in a variety of areas within a given city.

Within the context of out-of-school learning, hives exemplify a number of trends in the field:

- Increased focus on the usage of digital technologies and associated competencies such as digital literacy and design thinking within the context of out-of-school time (OST) organizations.

- Positioning of OST organizations as sources of innovation and experimentation as opposed to solely as providers of educational services.

- Greater orientation toward “ecological” views of youth learning as occurring across many settings including home, school, after-school settings, online, and within peer cultures, and attendant shifts in how OST organizations see their role in terms of supporting interest-driven “learning pathways” that span settings.

- Support for and valuation of OST organizations to engage in collective action, innovation, and collaborative work across institutions.

This entry describes the key features of Hive Learning Networks, who participates in them, their core pedagogical orientation, how organizations interact within them, and the influence of technology culture on organizations in hives.

**Stewardship and Key Features of Hives**

Hive Learning Networks were first formed in New York City and Chicago in the late 2000s, and as of the writing of this entry, locations include Pittsburgh, Toronto, Chattanooga, and Kansas City. The initiative is stewarded by Mozilla, best known for creating the open source Firefox Web browser, as part of larger efforts by the foundation to promote digital literacy. Enacted stewardship of the networks is varied, but it is most often characterized by regular face-to-face and digital contexts where local members can meet and share best practices, catalytic funding from local philanthropies supporting collaboration among organizations, and cross-organizational affinity groups that focus on network-level challenges.

**Constitution of Hive Members**

Organizations that participate in hives are diverse in terms of mission, organizational form, size, expertise, and age. Some organizations are long-standing cultural institutions that are more than 100 years old, while many others are younger than the youth they serve. For example, in the Hive NYC Learning Network, members include museums such as the American Museum of Natural History and the Museum of Modern Art, library systems, after-school organizations with national footprints such as the YMCA of Greater New York, and grassroots community-based organizations such as The Point based in the Bronx. Across member organizations exists diverse pedagogical expertise in areas such as design, informal science, film making, civic engagement, engineering, digital literacy, and computer programming.

**Pedagogical Vision and Orientation**

Hive Learning Networks are guided by particular views on how learning should occur in a digital age. In particular, they aim to support the development of initiatives that align with a philosophy of “connected learning”—experiences that are interest-driven, production-centered, peer-supported, academically oriented, and openly networked, and have shared purpose. This approach builds on classic progressive education aims such as those oriented toward youth development,
empowerment, and leadership and extends them in ways that take into account digital, networked culture. However, beyond creating individual educational experiences that exemplify this philosophy the idea behind the networks is to create coordinated mechanisms whereby youth are supported to engage in long-term, interest-driven learning pathways that span a variety of settings, organizations, and institutions.

**Interorganizational Collaboration, Innovation, and Collective Action**

Practices around collaboration, innovation, and collective action are central to how Hive Learning Networks operate and aim to create impact, and they are often intertwined within the context of these networks. Organizations engage in collaborations whereby they can leverage distinctive expertise in both disciplinary areas as well as organizational processes, material resources such as facilities and equipment, and networks of both youth and educators to which specific organizations have access. Leveraging these resources across organizations allows actors to create educational innovations that might not have been previously possible. Beyond this, organizations engage in collective action activities where multiple organizations collaborate not just to create new educational programs and technologies but also to address network-level problems that exist across organizations. For example, in the Hive Chicago Learning Network, “moonshot groups” consisting of members across different organizations address issues such as school–Hive connections, engaging and educating parents, usage of data to improve programs, and youth transportation challenges.

*A working open*: **Open Source Culture’s Influence on Hive Learning Networks**

A distinctive feature of Hive Learning Networks’ stewardship by the Mozilla Foundation is the influence of open source software culture on the ways by which member organizations engage in their collective work. Practices of “working in the open” that are actively enacted and discussed within each network represent a circulation of open source culture into the out-of-school learning sector. Such practices include (a) public storytelling and context setting, (b) “rapid prototyping” (i.e., quickly developing and testing prototypes of technologies or curricula) in public contexts, (c) enabling community contribution in the context of developing innovations, (d) public reflection and documentation, and (e) making innovations accessible and “remixable,” both legally and practically, by other actors. These practices aim to improve the quality of projects, achieve greater efficiency, make innovations more discoverable, and create a stronger “commons” of knowledge and innovations that other organizations can draw from.

*Rafi Santo*

See also Access and Equity in Out-of-School Learning; Connected Learning; Digital Media and Learning; Digital Youth Network; Ecological Systems Theory; Learning Pathways; Out-of-School Time

**Further Readings**


**Hobbies**

Hobbies are a category of leisure activity that spans a wide variety of practices, including collecting (e.g., stamps, dolls), making or building (e.g., knitting, model rocketry, and woodworking), observing nature, and, perhaps, contributing to science (e.g., amateur astronomy and land surveying), among others. Common to these practices is the fact that hobbies are prototypical of what psychologists call an individual interest—that is, the extended, self-motivated, systematic, and intense engagement in a practice. Investigating how people participate and learn in hobbies,

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