



Geeks Meet Wonks: Collective Intelligence 2014 Matchmaking Ignite Session **Makerspaces: Crowdsourcing Creativity, Innovation, & Entrepreneurship**

Artisan's Asylum is a 501(c)3 non-profit community design & fabrication center that inspires and empowers individuals to give form to their ideas. We provide public access to professional manufacturing equipment, education, space, and a creative community network.

In our 40,000 square foot facility, over 200 artists, engineers, and fabricators, hobbyists, professionals, entrepreneurs and small businesses share space, tools, and resources. Through formal and informal channels, users exchange goods and services and knowledge amongst themselves in the context of commerce, barter, and personal relationships.

Members engage in collaborative multi-media projects, and have created some successful businesses and remarkable products: 3Doodler, the world's first 3D printing pen; Stompy, the giant open-source hexapod vehicle; and the giant Penrose Triangle art installation at Burning man, to name a few. They've also engaged in incredible experiences of discovery, empowerment, and connection, which are more challenging to document and quantify.

The organization itself is a collaborative effort, physically and conceptually constructed by a group of volunteer "wardens" and now made possible by a tiny staff supported by dozens of volunteers and active community members, all participating in finding and enacting solutions to organizational challenges.

Collective Intelligence: Research Questions

- Assess Our Impact
 - How do we measure/demonstrate the impact of fabrication and hands-on spatial problem-solving on an individual and on a community in the digital age?
 - How do we measure/demonstrate the impact of participation in a collaborative environment in the same context?
- Collective Problem-Solving
 - How do we engage a community of creative, intelligent, innovative individuals towards common goals, without quashing their creativity and independence?
 - To put it another way, how to organize increasingly large groups of people effectively without "institutionalizing"? What is it that happens in established institutions that makes them unattractive to those seeking creativity & innovation?
- How to create a replicable model for organic, innovative organizational development?
 - There are existing makerspaces currently engaged in replicating their own models, but these models are fairly inflexible. The power of Artisan's Asylum is how organically it has evolved to serve the needs of its own community, and how it has made use of its available resources. How can we give communities around the world tools to empower them to establish their own collaborative making spaces, without constraining their vision to our own?

Intrigued by these questions? Write to outreach@artisansasylum.com