RESOURCES
Phase I: Creating Consistency

Activity 1: Landscape Analysis

Goals
1. Understand where your program fits in the competitive landscape
2. Use results to innovate, make decisions, identify opportunities for collaboration, increase usefulness/effectiveness of your platform

Activity Instructions
1. As a group, build as comprehensive a list as possible of the competitive landscape - programs or organizations that are engaged in roughly the same work, serving roughly the same stakeholder groups. This list can be created during an in-person brainstorming session, or offline through a shared document or virtual whiteboard.

2. Create an assessment template that includes (at least) the following categories:
   a. Program or Organization name
   b. High level purpose
   c. Target audiences
   d. Mission, values and vision — What are the specific, tangible goals they’re trying to accomplish?
   e. Unique value proposition — What does the program claim to do that is different from other programs?
   f. Financial resource model - is the program supported by membership, earned income, grants, etc.?
   g. OSS license (or note if it’s a proprietary application)

3. Analyze the landscape by discussing and capturing answers to the following questions about each program. If you have identified a large number of programs, you may prioritize them via sticker vote or group them according to category to limit the amount of research required.
   a. How is your program different? How is it the same?
   b. What are you doing better? What can you highlight in your messaging and communications that is unique and will resonate with your target stakeholders?
   c. Where are your competitors excelling? What can you learn from them?
   d. Where are your competitors falling short? Are there any strategies that aren’t working? Could you do them differently, or better?
   e. What “gaps” do you see? Are there missed angles or opportunities? Could you fill those gaps? How does this information inform your own point of view and messaging?

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Prerequisites
Governance Activity: Mission/Vision
Community Engagement Activity: Who Is Your Community

Who Should Participate?
Program management (tactical thinkers) with initial brainstorming input from program leadership and program staff.

Length
60-90 minutes

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Output

- Keep the documentation generated from this activity - the landscape analysis and the discussion questions - somewhere accessible to all program staff
- Use the results of this activity when:
  - Working to communicate the advantages of your program over another
  - Developing messaging or outreach strategies
  - Identifying new opportunities for innovation to increase the usefulness or effectiveness of your platform
  - Identifying new opportunities for collaboration or integration