The Innovation Lab and Pilot Showcase

2026 Innovation Concept Submission Form

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in submitting a pilot concept for the **Innovation Lab and Pilot Showcase at the 2026 Great Ideas Conference (October 2026)**.

This application is intended for associations that have successfully piloted a new or significantly reimagined initiative and can demonstrate measurable outcomes or clear indicators of success. The Innovation Lab highlights pilots that moved beyond experimentation to deliver real value—and offers a platform to share what worked, why it worked, and what comes next.

Before You Begin

You will be asked to provide information about:
- The pilot concept and target audiences
- The problem addressed and why it matters
- How the pilot differs from existing approaches
- Implementation process and organizational commitment
- Metrics, outcomes, and evidence of success

Please be prepared to reference data, results, or evaluation findings where possible.

Eligibility Snapshot

This application is a good fit if your pilot:
- Was launched or tested in the past five years
- Demonstrated measurable success
- Is not yet fully scaled or embedded
- Has leadership and organizational support

Pilots that are still untested or did not achieve their intended outcomes are not eligible.

General Guidance
- **Be clear and concise.** Reviewers value clarity over marketing language.
- **Focus on learning and results.** Emphasize what has been tested, what you've learned, and what's next.
- **Write for a broad audience.** Assume reviewers may not be experts in your specific field or technology.
- **Word limits matter.** Responses that exceed limits may be truncated for review.
- **Pilots are welcome—even if imperfect.** Concepts do not need to be fully successful to be valuable, but they must demonstrate measurable outcomes or clear indicators of success.

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Section-by-Section Instructions for Applicants

Section 1: Primary Contact

Identify the individual who can respond to questions and provide clarification during review and selection. Provide the contact information for the person most familiar with the pilot's design, outcomes, and next steps.

First Name
Last Name
Organization Name
Job Title
Phone #
Email Address

Section 2: Concept Overview

Provide reviewers with a clear, high-level understanding of what the pilot is, who it serves, and where it sits in its development journey.

1. **Concept Title**
   Provide a short, descriptive title that clearly reflects the pilot concept.

2. **Concept Description (150 words or fewer)**
   Provide a high-level overview of the pilot, including the core idea, who it serves, and what it is intended to accomplish.

3. **Target Audience(s)**
   Select all audiences that directly benefit from or interact with the pilot.
   - ☐ Members
   - ☐ Staff (Internal Operations)
   - ☐ Volunteers/Committees
   - ☐ Non-Members
   - ☐ Industry
   - ☐ Profession
   - ☐ Public
   - ☐ Exhibitors/Sponsors
   - ☐ Students/Young Professionals
   - ☐ Other not listed

4. **Technical Readiness**

   Has the concept successfully completed an internal Alpha or technical validation stage? Meaning: Is the core process, platform, or technology internally functional and ready (or already used) for testing?
   - o Yes
   - o No
   - o Unsure

5. **Innovation Stage**

   Select the option that best reflects the current stage of development.
   - o Pilot – Ready (Planning/Technical Complete)
   - o Pilot – Value Testing (In Progress)
   - o Pilot – Complete (Analysis Pending)
   - o Post-Pilot – Not Yet Fully Integrated (Pilot completed, positive indicators, but not scaled or embedded in operations)
   - o Post-Pilot – Fully Integrated (Pilot completed, positive indicators, and scaled/embedded in operations)

Section 2: Problem, Solution, and Differentiation

Explain why this pilot exists, how it works, and why it is meaningfully different from existing approaches.

6. **The Core Problem (150 words or fewer)**

   Clearly describe the specific problem, challenge, or unmet need this concept addresses. Focus on why this problem matters.

7. **The Proposed Solution (150 words or fewer)**

   Explain how the concept works and what makes it innovative. Highlight new approaches, creative applications, or meaningful improvements over existing practices.

8. **Comparative Advantage (150 words or fewer)**

   Briefly note existing alternatives (within associations or the marketplace) and explain why your concept offers a stronger or more effective approach.

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Section 3: Feasibility and Organizational Commitment

Demonstrate that the pilot is realistic, supported, and positioned for sustainability or scale.

9. **Implementation Plan & Process (150 words or fewer)**
   Describe how the concept was or is being developed (e.g., pilot design, agile testing, feedback loops) and the team's ability to manage challenges.

10. **Organizational Alignment & Support (150 words or fewer)**
    Explain how the concept aligns with your association's mission, strategy, or brand. Confirm leadership or board awareness/support.

11. **Sustainability & Resources (150 words or fewer)**
    Outline the human and financial resources required to sustain the concept long-term, including how it will be funded after the pilot phase.

12. **Applicability and Scale (150 words or fewer)**
    Describe how the concept could be scaled within your organization and what would make it transferable or adaptable for other associations.

Section 4: Success Metrics and Outcome

Show how success is defined, measured, and evidenced.

13. **Primary Success Metrics (No word limit)**
    List 3–5 metrics used to measure success (e.g., participation, revenue, efficiency, satisfaction).

14. **Target Outcome (100 words or fewer)**
    Describe one concrete outcome you expect this pilot to deliver within the next 12–24 months if successful.

15. **Key Visuals / Artifacts (Optional)**
    You may upload supporting materials such as mockups, wireframes, pilot summaries, or a short video to help reviewers better understand the concept.