

# The Global Institute on Innovation Districts Formally Established with Launch of New Research Brief "The Evolution of Innovation Districts"

New Research-Driven, Network-Based Institute Will Support the  
Growth and Impact of Innovation Districts around the World

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Jun 07, 2019, 18:08 ET

NEW YORK, June 7, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- The Global Institute on Innovation Districts ("The Global Institute") today announced its formal launch with its inaugural research brief entitled "The Evolution of Innovation Districts: The New Geography of Global Innovation."

An innovation district is a geographic area where institutions and companies cluster and connect with intermediaries, small firms, start-ups, and others. Physically compact, transit- and broadband-accessible, they offer mixed-use housing, office and retail.

The launch follows four years of research and on-the-ground practice by the authors of The Brookings Institution's "Rise of Innovation Districts" 2014 research, Julie Wagner and Bruce Katz, together with seasoned industry practitioner Thomas Osha, to offer new insights on how successful innovation districts are organizing themselves to forge ahead and to establish a formal network-based organization to support the growth and impact of innovation districts around the world. The paper can be accessed at <https://www.giid.org/the-evolution-of-innovation-districts-download/>

"This paper is released at a critical moment in time given that entrepreneurial dynamism is slowing, national and state investments in cities in many countries are contracting, divisions by income and wealth are expanding, and efforts to mitigate climate change face political pushback," shared Julie Wagner, President of The Global Institute.

Today, by conservative estimates, there are more than 100 innovation districts emerging around the world. In the United States alone, roughly

twenty districts have reached a high level of sophistication, concentrating in close proximity a mix of research institutions, mature companies, start-ups and scale-ups, co-working spaces, and supportive intermediaries. Similar districts can now be found in the U.K., Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands—each with a unique set of specializations that commonly draw on its region's historic strengths and advantages. At the same time, new districts are advancing quickly in cities in Germany, Italy, and France with strong public and private involvement and support. Other countries such as Finland, Poland, and Ireland are capturing this moment and are places to watch. Similarly, cities in Australia, Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia are observing the rise of innovation districts, building off specific innovation and research capacities.

The research brief released today offers insights on how successful innovation districts are reaching their full potential through the deployment of asset-based strategies that leverage a district's economic, physical, and social networking assets. Rather than work in silos, this paper demonstrates how holistic, integrated strategies are creating wonderfully mixed, complex, and "buzzing" districts.

"There is a strong desire on the part of innovation districts leaders, university anchors, municipal and regional governments, and other innovation actors to better understand the drivers, programs, and pathways around which they can grow their districts and positively impact their communities," said Thomas Osha, Global Institute board chair and senior vice president, innovation and economic development for Wexford Science & Technology, LLC.

The paper also stresses how successful districts rely on organizational strategies and structures, particularly a strong governance model and coordinated finance. And finally, given rising economic inequalities in many countries, innovation districts are contending with the challenge of linking innovation and inclusion, which is leading to the development of inclusion and social innovation strategies to guide their growth.

"Innovation districts can be a key driver of inclusive outcomes for cities as a whole and residents living in surrounding neighborhoods," said Bruce Katz, Global Institute board member and founding director of the Nowak Metro Finance Lab at Drexel University. "This is critical given the intense juxtaposition of wealth and poverty, growing concerns with gentrification and the close physical proximity between anchor institutions and economically disadvantaged communities."

## About The Global Institute

The Global Institute was recently established in response to growing demand to support innovation districts globally. It is designed to be a practitioner-led and empirically grounded not for profit organization to strategically advance innovation districts worldwide. The objectives of the organization are to:

- Create a global network of innovation districts
- Identify and monitor the growth of innovation districts across global regions
- Capture and dissect their main challenges and highlight their successes
- Provide detailed evidence-based strategies and data to accelerate their work
- Foster collective engagement on top priorities—such as access to capital or IP protections—creating norms around growth, finance, and governance
- Support communication and shared learning across districts

The Global Institute is establishing a Steering Committee charged with shaping the overall agenda of the Institute and ensuring research, network, and other activities meaningfully advance the paradigm and practice of innovation districts. The Steering Committee will include up to

fifteen innovation districts that have demonstrated real leadership in the field together with researchers, practitioners and policy makers to help shape the broader research and impact agenda.

The Global Institute is currently supported by two Founding Partners: Lendlease, a global property and infrastructure group and The Nowak Metro Finance Lab at Drexel University.

### About The Global Institute's Steering Committee

In addition to Julie Wagner, Bruce Katz and Thomas Osha, initial members of the GIID Steering Committee includes both US and international innovation districts: Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus in Buffalo, NY; Cortex Innovation Community in St. Louis, MO; Pittsburgh Innovation District, Pittsburgh, PA; Wake Forest Innovation Quarter in Winston-Salem, NC; Amsterdam Innovation District Zuidas, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; and the Melbourne Innovation District (City North), in Melbourne, Australia. In addition, academic and industry participants include Miquel Barceló, director of master in business innovation, Polytechnic University of Catalonia; Carrie Kolasky, vice president for development, The Atlantic Council; and Pamela Puchalski, executive director, The American Assembly at Columbia University together with representatives from the Founding Partners, Lendlease, and The Nowak Metro Finance Lab.

### About the Founding Partners

Lendlease is a leading international property and infrastructure group, with approximately 13,000 employees across operations in Australia, Asia, Europe and the Americas. Headquartered in Sydney, Australia, the Company aims to create places that leave a positive legacy with a focus on health and safety, and innovation and sustainability with projects such as the Athletes' Village in London, Sydney Opera House, Petronas Towers

in Kuala Lumpur, and critical infrastructure, stadiums, entertainment facilities and residential communities.

The Nowak Metro Finance Lab at Drexel University was founded in 2018 to help cities identify and implement innovative strategies to leverage public assets and fund public infrastructure for public benefit, with a focus on supporting inclusive and equitable growth.

To Contact The Global Institute on Innovation Districts

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