

# IDIN Chapter Activity Ideas

## **Support IDIN local projects or innovators**

Every chapter has a few members who are actively working on projects and they need your help. Innovators need mentoring, space to work in, funds, people to ask for questions, connections to larger networks, etc. Chapters may choose to adopt a project or innovator who shows promise and help support them through mentorship, connections, funding, etc. Additionally, a chapter may take on a project as a team. You can work on a project together from its initial stages to finish (although some projects are ongoing) and help gather all the necessary materials to prototype and launch a social business. Adopting a local innovator or project will help make sure they get the support they need to grow to scale.

## **Organize a Hackathon or a short Summit**

Chapters may enjoy hosting or partnering up with a local accelerator, university or an NGO to hold a Hackathon or organize a short Summit. Such an event would bring together people from different disciplines, areas, and skills together for a weekend to build something that either solves a specific problem. Themes are up to the interests of the organizers but they can include education, waste, community health, disaster and crisis response, and mobility and transportation. They may also focus around different approaches such as hardware design, software, or electronics, depending on area of focus and tools available. Sometimes there is a contest element and a panel of judges, often including organizers and sponsors or peers and colleagues, selects the winning teams, and prizes are given.

## **Organize events around hands on Build-Its**

Chapters can take IDDS Build-Its and run workshops with local communities or students who want to practice hands on skills while they build something that they can use in their every day lives. Built-Its are hands-on learning modules written for trainers to teach basic workshop skills or engineering concepts through the building of a useful tool or technology. You can teach someone to make an off-the-grid mobile phone charger, a manually-powered PVC water pump, a dimmable LED lantern, or a hand-held maize sheller! For a list of build-its please contact us!

## **Annual Get Together or Networking Meeting**

Your IDDS get together may be for an alumni reunion or for a networking event, meeting new people in areas you are exploring. Reunion events are usually social and celebratory, while larger networking events may be focused around a variety of interest areas or fields. Networking events might be focused on bringing together people within

different fields, such as engineering or nonprofit work, or who have similar goals such as creating project teams. Your event may include anywhere from only IDDS alumni to community members to larger professional groups. At reunion or networking events, you will usually find light snacks or beverages, tables, open spaces for groups to form and talk, and sometimes areas to sit.

### **Presentations of IDDS to Local University Students**

Presenting IDDS to local university students is a fun way to contribute to the IDDS recruiting process. Find individuals who you would have wanted as part of your year's program participants, or who you would want to bring more exciting news and projects back to your community from IDDS. Alumni student recruiting presentation would ideally include speaking to a large group of engineering or other students, telling them about IDDS and how to apply, and challenging them to start an IDDS-supported design group at their school. Be sure to speak to universities early, since they may need some time to schedule the presentation around current class meetings, contact the students, and let them know that the presentation event will be held.

### **Sports and Active Events**

Do you remember IDDS participants running, bicycling, having cricket matches, playing football/soccer, dancing, playing games, singing, playing music, cooking together, and sharing food? You can still do those things together, or other fun things you enjoy doing with groups of friends or in your community. Sports and active group events are easy to organize, inexpensive, and will appeal to a variety of different alumni groups.

### **Entrepreneurial and Continuing Education Events**

The entrepreneurial spirit of IDDS continues among its alumni, who have a remarkable record for creating startups to help get products and devices they have created out to communities around the world. If there are other entrepreneurship and startup encouraging organizations in your area, you may try working with them to co-sponsor events. Many new or already successful entrepreneurs enjoy the opportunity to meet together and talk about project designs, community testing, manufacturing, business strategies, and distribution methods. There are some clubs that provide excellent models for activities like roundtable discussions, networking breakfasts, and instructional presentations on topics like finding funding, recruiting team members and expertise, and organizing distribution to hard-to-reach customers. Chapters might also choose to plan ongoing events like seminar series, tours of local organizations, and expert panel discussions.

### **Welcoming IDDS Participants Back into the Country**

Like those planned for many graduates from universities, local congratulatory and welcome-home events for those who complete far-away programs are popular in many

communities. A local event for those who just returned from IDDS, welcome back events are best planned in early August just after the participants have returned home. Just-finished participants, their friends and family, and local alumni may enjoy attending the event. Generally, these events may be most enjoyable and welcoming to diverse groups in a casual location, and may be a picnic or a barbecue.

### **Community Service & Community Projects**

Find out about events in your community or develop your own ideas based on local alumni interests. Alumni might contribute to house-raising or school building events in nearby villages, contributing to projects with local community-supported organizations. Some organizations might use the opportunity to share the spirit of IDDS in their communities by creating their own community projects. For example, community projects might include installing water pumps or purification systems, building handicapped ramps at community buildings, or building and sharing agricultural processing and food storage tools at harvest time. Some chapters might also hold fundraising events to raise money for scholarships for those from their surrounding community interested in IDDS or higher study opportunities.

### **Arts and Entertainment Events**

Fun arts and entertainment get-togethers might include monthly dinner meet-ups, adventures like hiking or bike trips, attending local celebrations or festivals together, small parties, or attending local movies or shows. If you are dining out or meeting up at a ticketed event, you may be able to get a discounted price by planning the meet-up in advance.

### **Create a Book or Reading Club**

At IDDS, we experienced a daily flow of new information and ideas. Tackling the kinds of problems you want to solve may mean keeping up with new developments in technology, community-centered agriculture, education, or a variety of other fields. Do you ever wish you had more opportunities to discuss new developments in areas you and other alumni are following? If so, a book or article reading group might be a fun way to create a space for discussing these ideas. Being part of a reading group can be a great motivation to learn new things, stimulate your thinking, and provide greater insight on how new ideas or methods could be useful in your own work.