Gabriela Fitz

Knowledge Synthesis, Systems, and Leadership

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Co-founder of the social sector's largest open research repository and recognized leader in the production, collection, synthesis, and sharing of research on social issues. 17+ years of experience translating complex findings into usable, actionable knowledge for social change organizations.

This work has taken many forms, including: landscape scans, formal reports, digital collections, interactive summaries, literature reviews, evidence scans, learning sessions, and knowledge syntheses, as well as presentations and discussions exploring the use of open knowledge concepts and practices in the social sector.

🔖 2012 CHICAGO COMMUNITY TRUST LEADERSHIP FELLOW

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Founder and Principal
Think Twice LLC, 2018-present

Director of Knowledge Management Initiatives
Foundation Center, 2012-2017

Co-Founder and Co-Director
IssueLab, 2006-2012

Independent Consultant in Digital Fundraising
StoryCorps, 2007

Web Designer and Strategist
New Media for Nonprofits, 2004-2006

Digital Strategist
Feeding America (formerly Second Harvest), 1999-2004

EDUCATION

M.A. in Organizational Sociology, University of Illinois at Chicago
B.A. in Sociology, University of California at Berkeley

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Project Management & Oversight for Evaluators, Basics of Program Evaluation**, The Evaluation Institute, 2017
- **Methods in Participatory Photography**, PhotoVoice, 2016
- **Introduction to Systematic Review Methodologies**, Campbell Collaborative, 2013
- **Introduction to Programming for Interactive/Reactive Systems, Practice of Interaction Design,** Summer Intensive in Interaction Design, School of Visual Arts, 2012
- **Training in Social Network Analysis**, with Valdis Krebs, 2012

SKILLS

Analysis
Talent for helping people get to the most relevant questions, surfacing meaningful patterns within complex data, and separating the noise from the evidence.

Research Design
Skilled at identifying the most appropriate methodology for both the questions being asked and the stakeholders asking them.

Content Design & Development
Expert at translating complex findings into digestible and actionable knowledge for public audiences.

Project Design & Management
Ability to lead projects from concept to completion, from needs assessment to launch, effectively managing budgets, timelines, and group dynamics along the way.

Facilitation & Public Speaking
Strength in both facilitation and presentation with significant experience designing conference panels, presentations, and workshops.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Co-founded and co-directed the social sector's largest open repository for practice-based evidence.

Successfully secured multi-year funding for IssueLab, including its acquisition by Foundation Center in 2012.

Designed and codified Foundation Center's methodological approach to knowledge synthesis and evidence review.

Led a sector-wide effort to educate and influence private foundations on their handling of social sector research as a public asset.

SAMPLE PROJECTS

Association of Arizona Food Banks, Grantmaking Strategy and System Design (2018)
Supported the Association of Arizona Food Banks in designing and implementing a grantmaking system. The challenge for which AAFB enlisted my help was to design a grantmaking process that would be inclusive, fair, balanced, and accountable to both AAFB's funders and a diverse network of local service agencies who were seeking funding. Through a series of interviews with food bank staff, service agencies, and AAFB board members, we were able to design a process that met that challenge, while also selecting and implementing a grants management software.

IssueLab (2006-2018)
Co-founded IssueLab as independent nonprofit in 2006, growing it to become one of the social sector's largest, open repositories for practice-based evidence. As Co-Director, facilitated its acquisition by Foundation Center in 2012, and led its expansion into a full-service knowledge mobilization platform, including custom research projects, an extensive social media presence, and an ongoing, sector-wide awareness building campaign about open knowledge practices. http://www.issuelab.org

Special Collection on Disconnected Youth (2016)
Led the design and delivery of this publicly available collection of practice-based evidence about disconnected youth. Worked closely with project stakeholders to define key research questions and inclusion criteria and led the research team through the search, thematic coding, collection, indexing, and summary of key findings. http://disconnectedyouth.issuelab.org

Synthesis Review of Key Lessons for Small-Scale Sustainable Fisheries (2014)
Effectively managed a collaborative team of foundation program staff, external technical researchers, interactive designers, and contributing nonprofits to bring implementation-based lessons to the design and development of a large-scale funding initiative. Led the design and development of the project, from the initial proposal stage to the final launch of project deliverables, including: a synthesis report, interactive summary, digital collection, and learning sessions. http://fisheriesviz.issuelab.org

SAMPLE WRITING

Crafting a Better Tap of Knowledge, Transparency Talk, 2017
Social Change & the Critical Importance of Open Archiving, HistPhil, 2017
Grey Matter(s): Embracing the Publisher Within, Foundation Review, 2016

SAMPLE PRESENTATIONS

Scan, Synthesize, Share: The Use of Knowledge Synthesis in Setting Foundation Strategy
What Works Global Summit, 2016

Open Publishing and Archiving: Where Principles Meet Practice
Technological Affinity Group Annual Meeting, 2015 (won the "best of conference" award).

Networked Knowledge, New Perspectives and New Practices
Worldwide Initiatives for Grant-maker Support (WINGS) Forum, 2014

Evaluating and Learning for Greater Impact
The Center for Philanthropy and Public Policy, USC, 2013

SOFTWARE & LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

- Data analytics and management tools including: Zotero, Tableau, and NVivo
- Project management and collaboration software including: Basecamp and Wrike
- Remote collaboration and communication tools including: Slack, Google, and Zoom
- User experience and interface design tools including: Photoshop, InVision, and Balsamiq
- Social media campaign delivery and user analytics tools including: Hootsuite and Google Analytics
- German: conversational proficiency

PERSONAL INTERESTS

Things that remind me I'm an earthling: interacting with animals, gardening, hiking, open water swimming, landscape photography, and ceramics.