

## ECLF Silicon Valley Visit

Recently Sylvain Newton (GE) reached out to the ECLF community with the proposal to organize a learning expedition to Silicon Valley. The response was quite significant, so we discussed the idea in more detail and came up with a basic framework how we could approach such a visit, and what the financial parameters would be.

---

### The Idea

Silicon Valley is globally recognized as the world's leading hotbed of innovation and entrepreneurship. The proposed learning expedition will allow us get a firsthand look at the nature and the dynamics of this unique ecosystem, with special emphasis on disruptive approaches to learning and innovation, as well as on leadership challenges in the digital age.

### Possible meetings and visits

A dense program of facilitated encounters with outstanding people and organizations will allow us to look at and learn about the Silicon Valley phenomenon from various angles. Here are some options and alternatives what we can do (to be selected and fine tuned by the participant group):

- **Meet with fellow CLOs from Silicon Valley.**  
We have an excellent relationship to the founder and coordinator of the "Bay Area Network" of CLOs. We can meet (and also have a joint dinner) with its most interesting members to get to know each other, exchange ideas on innovative learning approaches, and build new relationships (examples: Agile, Adobe, Electronic Arts, Cisco, Hewlett Packard, Sun Microsystems...)
- **Meet with leading VCs and some of their portfolio companies**  
Silicon Valley is the home of the Venture Capital industry. They are the ones who play a major role in fueling the innovation engine of the region. We can learn about their approach to entrepreneurship and innovation and get a feel for current trends and developments (examples: Kleiner Perkins, Draper Fisher Jurgvetson ... )
- **Visit outstanding corporations.**  
We can organize ½ day or even full day company visits that allow for a series of meetings with various stakeholders to better understand business models for learning and innovation (e.g. Cisco, Google, Electronic Arts).

- **Meet selected faculty and thought leaders**

Silicon Valley features some of the world's most renowned research institutions and think tanks, which are an important cornerstone of the innovation ecosystem. Meeting with them helps us understand the dynamics of knowledge creation and diffusion and will provide insights into latest cutting edge thinking (examples: Stanford University, Institute for the Future, Xerox' Palo Alto Research Center, IDEO, Oracle's Sun Lab...)

## Contextualization of the Expedition

The following elements should assure a maximum of customization to the interests and needs of the participating group and anchor the learning experience beyond the immediate visit:

### Before the visit

- A small development team under the leadership of Sylvain Newton (3-4 companies +RD) will develop the design of the program (virtual collaboration)
- The work of the development team could be based on a mini-survey among all prospect participants about their specific interest and possible design ideas

### During the visit

- About 25% of the time (at least 2 hours per day) will be dedicated to internal reflection and discussion among all participants. Focus of the reflection will be lessons learned and the applicability to the various business and organizational contexts of the participants
- We will also immediately document all visits and reflections by written summaries as well as video recordings of selected highlights. For this segment we will use the proven services of Rick Benzel who is familiar with ECLF through his work on our annual documentation.

### After the visit

- We will integrate the entire experience through a professionally edited multimedia documentation that will contain the essence of each visit and the overall insights taken away. This document may be electronically published and thus disseminate our experience to a larger audience (non participating ECLF members and beyond).

## Time and Venue

### **Monday, August 29 – Friday, September 2, 2011**

The program starts with a Cocktail reception on Monday evening and ends with lunch on Friday, allowing participants to catch a plane back to Europe on Friday night, or to add the weekend for exploring the region leisurely.

Our home base for the visit will be most likely San Jose. The meetings will take place at company venues, universities, research labs, etc. We will have a dedicated “war room” in our hotel to be used for reflection sessions as well as for some meetings with experts/speakers. A dedicated bus will be available for the group all day.

For any questions and further information please contact

Sylvain Newton: +1 (914) 215-0584 | [sylvain.newton@ge.com](mailto:sylvain.newton@ge.com) or

Roland Deiser: +1 (310) 709 2565 | [roland.deiser@eclf.org](mailto:roland.deiser@eclf.org)