



### **Title of Design Lab:**

## **Public Health Institutes Working Together: Developing a Collaborative Framework**

### **Topic Champions:**

- Elissa Bassler, Illinois Public Health Institute (IPHI)
- Camille Miller, Texas Health Institute (THI)
- Vincent Lafronza, National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI)

### **Short Summary of session**

Over the past few years, collaborative projects among public health institutes (PHIs) have increased. In addition, some PHIs lead multi-state projects or have products or services that they offer to communities across the country. As NNPHI grows, and the PHI “brand” becomes more recognizable, more opportunities for individual PHIs to collaboratively work on projects with national scope or provide expertise in other states are rising. This session was a facilitated discussion of the following questions:

- 1) PHIs collaborate with partners all the time—it is in their DNA. What is unique about collaborations between and among PHIs?
- 2) How can PHIs balance a collaborative ethos with meeting their bottom line?
- 3) How do PHIs manage disparities in capacity when they collaborate, and ensure that they grow overall institute capacity while still achieving excellence?
- 4) How do PHIs distribute capacity across the network – that is, how can they leverage and maximize existing expertise in the network without stifling the development of new local expertise?

### **Key Takeaway points:**

1. With the right approaches for collaboration among institutes, NNPHI can become more competitive nationally, and all members will benefit.
2. The Network could explore regional approaches and/or support convenings of regional PHIs.
3. A better inventory and understanding of our individual institute expertise would help facilitate collaboration.
4. By investing in a PHI, funders are investing in the public health network because we share and learn from each other.

### **Action Steps:**

- Perhaps draft a charter among NNPHI members around how we work together and work in each other’s states/regions/etc. – include an agreed set of ground rules or guidelines about how PHIs work, compete and collaborate. May consider forming a subgroup to work on a business model for this approach.
- Consider how NNPHI could support the network to collaborate in surge capacity or bridging of staff. Post skills and competencies for bridge periods. NNPHI could post through the NNPHI website.