

MetLife/TCG **A•ha!** Program: Think It, Do It Round 5



A program for TCG member theatres that supports creative thinking and action in two ways: Think It grants (\$25,000) give theatre professionals the time and space for research and development; Do It grants (\$50,000) support the implementation and testing of new ideas.

Funded by **MetLife Foundation**

Administered by  **TCG** Theatre Communications Group

MAY 1, 2012: ONLINE REGISTRATION AND POSTMARK DEADLINE



“ Innovation in science and manufacturing starts with the Eureka moment, that moment of creation, that moment of seeing the problem and seeing a solution. ”

— William A. Wulf,
former President of the
National Academy of Engineering



“ We need a type of theatre which not only releases the feelings, insights and impulses possible within the particular historical field of human relations in which the action takes place, but employs and encourages those thoughts and feelings which help transform the field itself. ”

— Bertolt Brecht



In a recent CEO survey, 100% of the respondents listed “innovation and creativity” in their critical success factors, yet only 6% of the respondents said they are doing it well.

69% of American voters believe that, when compared to other nations, America devotes less attention to developing the imagination and innovation.



Almost nine in ten voters (89%) say that using the imagination is important to innovation and one’s success in a global knowledge-based economy and essential to success in the 21st Century.



Your mind wanders 30% of the time that you’re awake. Researchers say that daydreaming promotes creativity.

Brushing one’s teeth with a different hand stimulates the use of new brain pathways

Process Over Product

“ Failure is just part of the culture of innovation. Accept it and become stronger. ”

— Albert Yu, Senior VP,
Intel Corporation

“ 70% of all business initiatives fail. ”

— Harvard
eLearning Alert



“ If at first the idea is not absurd, then there is no hope for it. ”

— Albert Einstein

“ The wrong answer is the right answer in search of a different question. Collect wrong answers as part of the process. Ask different questions. ”

— Bruce Mau

Ideas that have had significant, global impact and a high factor of “Gee, I wish I thought of that...”:

Post-it sticky notes

\$100 computer developed for the national One Laptop Per Child initiative

Microloans to entrepreneurs in low-development countries



* Visit our website for project descriptions of all previous recipients

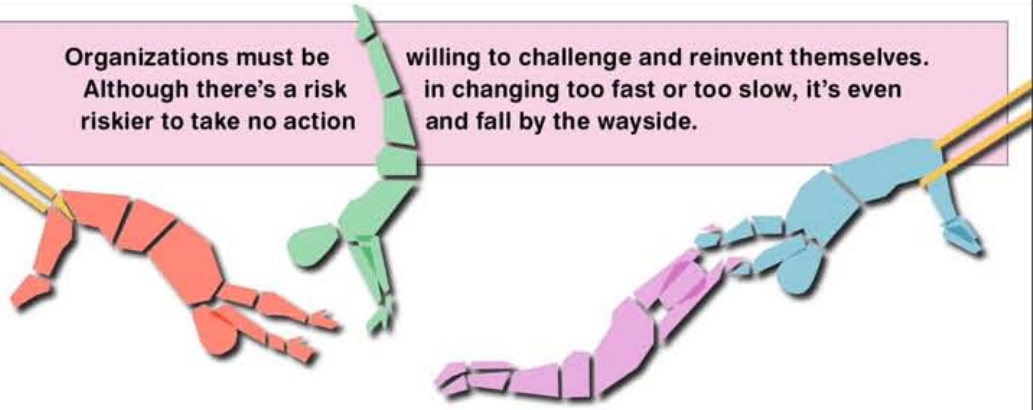
A-ha! recipient
Mo’olelo
Performing Arts
Company’s*
creating the Green
Theater Choices
Toolkit to measure
the environmental
impact of theatre.

BACK STORY



Organizations must be
Although there's a risk
riskier to take no action

willing to challenge and reinvent themselves.
in changing too fast or too slow, it's even
and fall by the wayside.



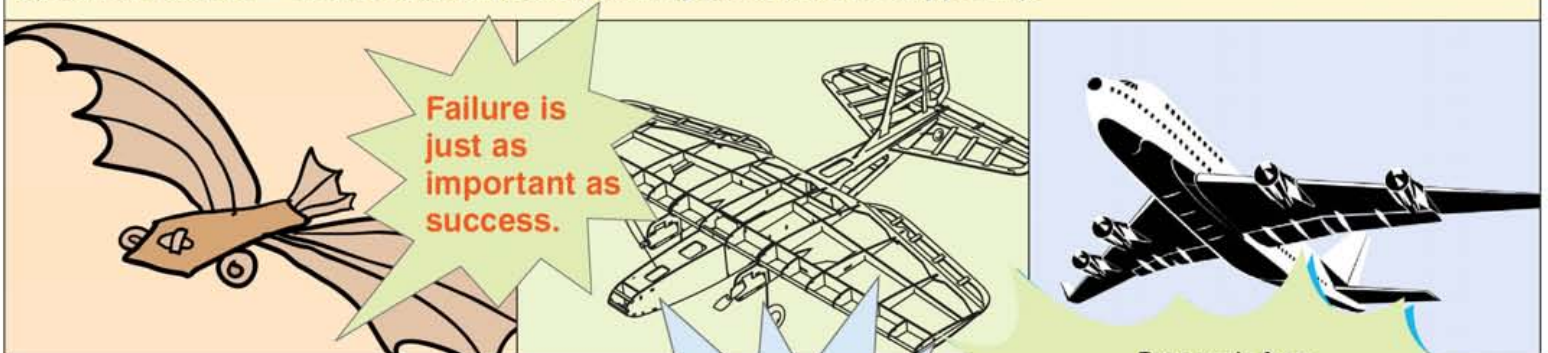
The intent of the program is to enable theatres to dare to try new approaches to problem-solving artistic, managerial, production and/or technological challenges-to try things the organization doesn't and couldn't normally do. The **MetLife/TCG A-ha! Program** doesn't want to encourage theatres to create programs that are only a reflection of the latest novelty or trend, but to discover and identify new strategies that will have far-reaching effect in helping organizations do their best work.



The program supports risk-taking, reflection, experimentation and creative strategies.



This program values process over end-product and recognizes that some projects and/or strategies will prove themselves spectacular failures — failure can be an effective learning tool in the discovery journey.



Failure is just as important as success.

TCG hopes that new effective practices and creative strategies will emerge from this process, and that the larger field will benefit.

Strong proposals will link strategies to core values, mission and programming.

Proposals from organizations seeking to test an idea that is new to them, but not to the field will be accepted. The proposals will be competitive if a strong case is made for the value and impact of the idea.

Emphasis is on identifying strategies that will be major catalysts for change to the organization, rather than strategies which will bring minimal change.

Preference will be given to projects that break from the organization's previous practice and have the best chance at long-term, field-wide impact over a longer arc of time.



Five Stages of the Innovation Process



THINK IT = 1, 2, 3

THINK IT Grants of \$25,000 for research and development.

The process begins with “what if” and spends more time asking questions than trying to find quick fixes.



Competitive **THINK IT** proposals will clearly demonstrate how and why the theatre selected the challenge and/or the questions to be examined, and how the theatre will structure their exploration.

- We’re open to all ideas—just make a case for it.
- You need to decide to apply in either **THINK IT** or **DO IT**.
- You can apply for **DO IT** without having done a **THINK IT** grant.
- Both categories are intended for any and all areas of your theatre.
- Cross-sector proposals (working with a non-theatre organization or individual) are eligible.



DO IT = 4, 5

DO IT Grants of \$50,000 to implement and test a fully developed idea.

“Just as it makes good sense to support creative problem solving, it makes good sense to avoid permanently killing off solutions that don’t reach the stage of implementation. The world changes and needs change, so innovations are needed continually. Ideas that don’t work today could be critical to the solution of a problem tomorrow. Many organizations find ways to capture and store ideas, subsequently pursuing them when the time is right.”

— Jeff Mauzy and Richard Harriman, “Creativity Inc”

DO IT grants will be awarded to theatres which have a fully developed idea, but have lacked the resources or time to carry it through. The idea does not have to be newly created, but strategies and projects that have been tested or implemented in the past are not eligible.



The program parameters are intentionally broad to encourage the widest possible range of ideas with the potential for maximum benefit for the field.

Eligibility



Theatre must be a member theatre of TCG in good standing.

Theatre may only apply in one category.

Project leader must be a key artistic, administrative or production staff member who holds a salaried position at the theatre.

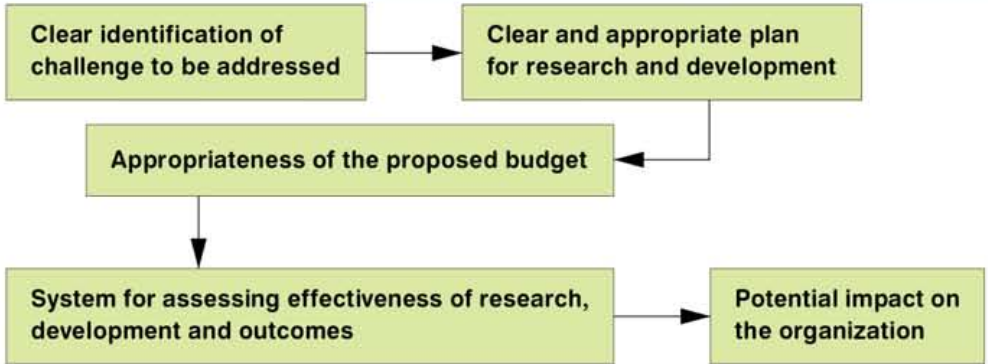
Strategies and projects that have already been tested or implemented at the applicant organization are not eligible.

Theatres receiving **THINK IT** grants are eligible to apply for **DO IT** grants in a future round, provided that their original grant was completed.

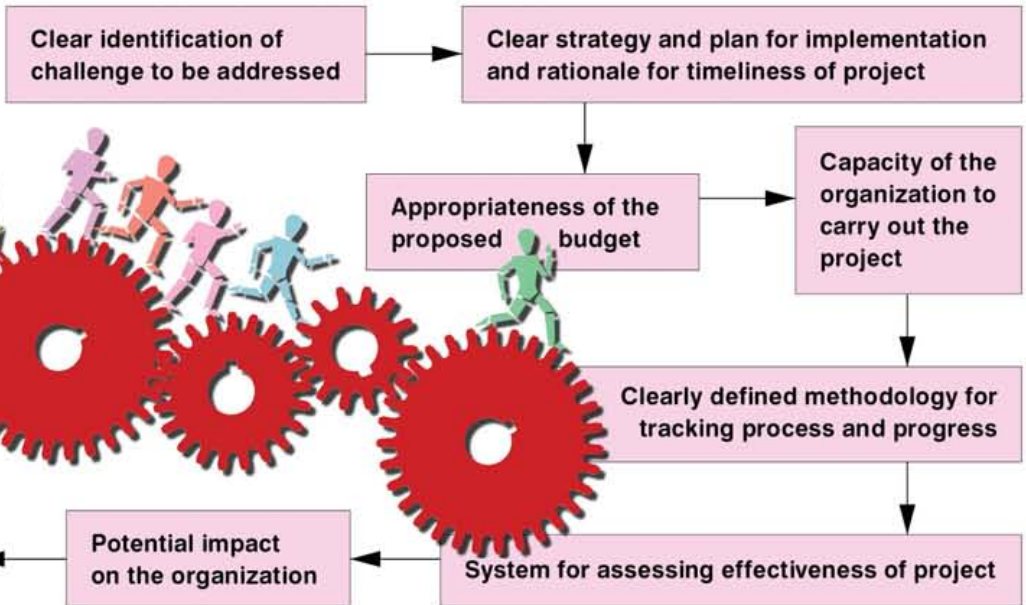
Selection Criteria



THINK IT



DO IT



Tracking Process and Progress

The dissemination of lessons learned through grant supported activities is a key component of this program. TCG will report on recipient's progress, whether successful or not, to the field; recipients must be willing to share their experiences. Since this program encompasses all areas of theatre, TCG recognizes that evaluation tools must be hand-tailored to specific projects which may require either an anecdotal or statistical approach, or a combination of the two. Recipients are responsible for selecting their own methodology for tracking process and progress, and then will report to TCG.



Application Process

THE APPLICATION DEADLINE IS MAY 1, 2012.

Proposals registered and submitted after midnight E.S.T. on **May 1, 2012** will not be accepted.

Proposals submitted by fax or email will not be accepted. There must be two copies of the application, single sided and unstapled. Supplemental material will not be accepted.

Proposal should be single-sided pages and double-spaced using a font no smaller than 11-point Times New Roman, with 1" margins on all sides.

The first step for applicants is to register on line at www.tcg.org/grants/aha/aha_guidelines.cfm no later than midnight E.S.T. **May 1, 2012.**

The second step is to send the completed proposal to TCG and postmark it no later than midnight, **May 1, 2012.** A complete proposal includes the original and one copy of the application form, and the additional materials listed on the Application Checklist. Applications must be approved and signed by the artistic director, managing director and project leader.



Application Checklist

Original and one copy of application form: first page, grant narrative, project budget, budget narrative and last page with three signatures.



Statement of the theatre's mission and organizational history (2 copies)

List of current season, including play titles, playwrights, directors, designers, dates and venues (2 copies)

List of principal artistic, they are full- or part-time

administrative and production staff by name and title that indicates whether employees and length of time on staff, not to exceed one page (2 copies)



PROPOSALS SHOULD BE SENT TO:

Mohammad Shatara,
Artistic Programs Associate
MetLife/TCG A-ha!
THINK IT, DO IT.

Theatre Communications Group
520 Eighth Avenue, 24th Floor
New York, NY 10018-4156

Please do not seek information on the status of your proposals prior to the August 1, 2012 notification date.

Timeline Recipients have up to 18 months for grant activities



METLIFE FOUNDATION was established in 1976 to carry on MetLife's longstanding tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation is committed to building a secure future for individuals and communities worldwide. Through programs focusing on empowering older adults, preparing young people and building livable communities, MetLife Foundation increases access and opportunities for people of all ages. Since it was established, MetLife Foundation has made more than \$500 million in grants and \$75 million in program related investments. For more information visit www.metlife.org.

THEATRE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre, exists to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit American theatre. Its programs serve nearly 700 member theatres and affiliate organizations and more than 12,000 individuals nationwide. As the US Center of the International Theatre Institute, TCG connects its constituents to the global theatre community. TCG is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, www.tcg.org.