Grand Challenges are powerful tools that organizations, thought leaders, and socially active citizens wield to make noble contributions to society and life. Many partners become key players in a collaborative exploration that changes the world for the better by providing valuable learning and much-needed impact.

Grand Challenges are a way to give back to the world. They set bold, audacious goals that visibly move society forward by addressing critical issues. They work through collective impact, bringing together many partners under a single thrust that is well articulated, and coordinated through boundary-spanning leadership.

Many organizations carry out Grand Challenges. Here are some:

- Elon Musk moved electric cars forward by 20 years via his commercial endeavor, Tesla Motors, which proved undeniably that electric cars are today a viable transportation option that consumers will buy.

- Peter Diamandis established prize methodology as a viable marketplace creator for bold innovations. His XPrize Foundation is an engine that has systematically generated Grand Challenges since 1996. Active prizes include these two among others:
  - The Global Learning XPrize – $15 million to create free apps that spread reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, and prove their effectiveness over an 18-month period in African pilot communities where self-learning takes place by 2–5-year-olds.
  - The Tricorder Prize – $10 million for creating a mobile device that can "diagnose patients better than or equal to a panel of board certified physicians"

- The Entomological Society of America is focusing on the mosquito that transmits yellow fever, dengue, chikungunya, and other diseases, bringing together leaders in many fields to figure out how to reduce and sustainably manage the mosquito in the Americas.

- The American Geophysical Union, is developing the Thriving Earth Exchange, a platform for bringing together people who need solutions, scientist problem-solvers, and sponsor-funders.

- The American Nurses Association has begun Healthy Nurse, Healthy Nation, a Grand Challenge to measurably improve the health of 3.1 million nurses and by extension their family, friends, community, patients, and the country.

Associations are in a unique position to make positive impact by rallying the resources in their discipline, the people on the ground who they represent, as well as the natural stakeholders aligned with their mission and impact. When an association takes on a Grand Challenge they have the ability to convene multi-disciplinary leaders across the value spectrum of their membership's experience and expertise, which is a formidable array of subject matter experts, knowledgeable advocates and leaders of social action.

To learn more about Grand Challenges among associations, visit bit.ly/AssociationGrandChallenge.

Seth Kahan has worked with over 100 association leaders on change, innovation, targeted growth, and strategy. He is the founder of AssociationTransformation.com, a community of 50+ CEOs reinventing the association business model. Seth is a designated Thought-leader and Exemplar in Change Leadership by the Society for Advancement of Consulting®. He speaks to 1000s of executives every year on the topics of change and innovation. Seth is the author of the business bestseller, Getting Change Right, and the just published, Getting Innovation Right.

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Grand Challenges are bold, audacious, achievable goals that garner public imagination and position organizations to elevate their profiles and make major contributions to humanity.

Backstory: In 1995 I, Seth Kahan, was part of a small team that grew an unfunded mandate to a $60,000,000 annual work program at the World Bank in two years. We were able to achieve extraordinary growth through a learning consortium including four other organizations that did three things:

1. Brought us together periodically to share what we were learning with other organizations that were tackling similar, bold initiatives.
2. Introduced well-known thought-leaders to stimulate our thinking and provide us with valuable tools.
3. Assembled our collective learning into valuable documents we could share with our stakeholders and study to learn from.

This is exactly what the Grand Challenge Consortium will do:

1. Bring together the participants of the consortium three times over a 9-month period, to meet in each other’s organizations and work together with any of their major players. That’s right, you will be able to bring to our meetings any of your staff, volunteers, consultants, or other key players working on your Grand Challenge.

   Additionally, we will have a dedicated private online forum we can all access for open discussion, thought leadership, and a place to store documents, resources, and anything else. All participants will have 24/7 access to this space so you can raise issues, collaborate, and cut your learning curve.

2. Lisa McLeod, originator of the Noble Purpose concept, will play a major role all along our journey. She and I will be on call to you and your teams throughout the project via email, telephone and Skype. Lisa will join us at our face-to-face meetings to share what’s working with her other global clients. Lisa and I will bring in relevant content from other thought leaders.

3. I will bring in writers to capture what we learn and document it without revealing any of your proprietary or private information. If any of these items are made available for sale outside our group, you will be furnished free copies that you can distribute freely to your own staff and partners.
Seth Kahan is an innovation expert who works with leaders to identify high-value innovations, and provide the executive guidance required to retool their organizations for growth and achievement. He has advised over 100 CEOs and worked with some of the world’s leading organizations, including the World Bank, the Peace Corps, and Royal Dutch Shell. A best-selling author, speaker and advisor, Seth has written three books, many articles for Fast Company and Innovation Excellence. He produces VisionaryTalk.com – a weekly executive video series. Contact him through VisionaryLeadership.com or AssociationTransformation.com.

Lisa Earle McLeod is the sales leadership consultant who created the Noble Purpose business concept. She is the author of several best-selling books including, Selling with Noble Purpose, The Triangle of Truth, and Forget Perfect. She is the sales leadership expert for Forbes.com, and has been featured on The Today Show, Good Morning America and The NBC Nightly News. She serves as executive advisor and consultant for global firms like Google, Flight Centre and Roche. Contact her through McLeodAndMore.com.

**Value:** Grand Challenges are by nature challenging to execute successfully—they are *grand,* and they are *challenges.* Some are reluctant taken them on because they are so big. Yet we know that grand challenges provide grand rewards. They are quantum leaps for the leader and individuals who tackle them. They provide seven kinds of returns:

1. *The business return* – Grand Challenges grow profitable revenue and other resources, which can be used for organizational wealth building.


4. *The stakeholder return* – Grand Challenges attract new, powerful stakeholders aligned with your mission and goals.

5. *The engagement return* – Grand Challenges provide greater engagement for volunteer leaders and are exceptional for attracting next-gen minded members.

6. *The relevance return* – Grand Challenges establish beyond the shadow of a doubt your organization’s relevance to your members, potential members, and every beneficiary.


**Terms:** The fee for participation is $35,000 per organization, a willingness to host one of the meetings on site at your office, and the time for you to participate in the three meetings, which will last 1 ½ days each, held in Washington DC. Timeline is set for June 2015 – March 2016.