![ExxonMobil logo — Energy lives here™]

2025Q3

# Design and Scaling of ExxonMobil's Global Open Innovation Program

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*Slides shared by Kyle J. Basler-Reeder, ExxonMobil, Innov8rs Conference, 2025*

# Future Proofing Capabilities is Important



**Google**

Google Searches per Year
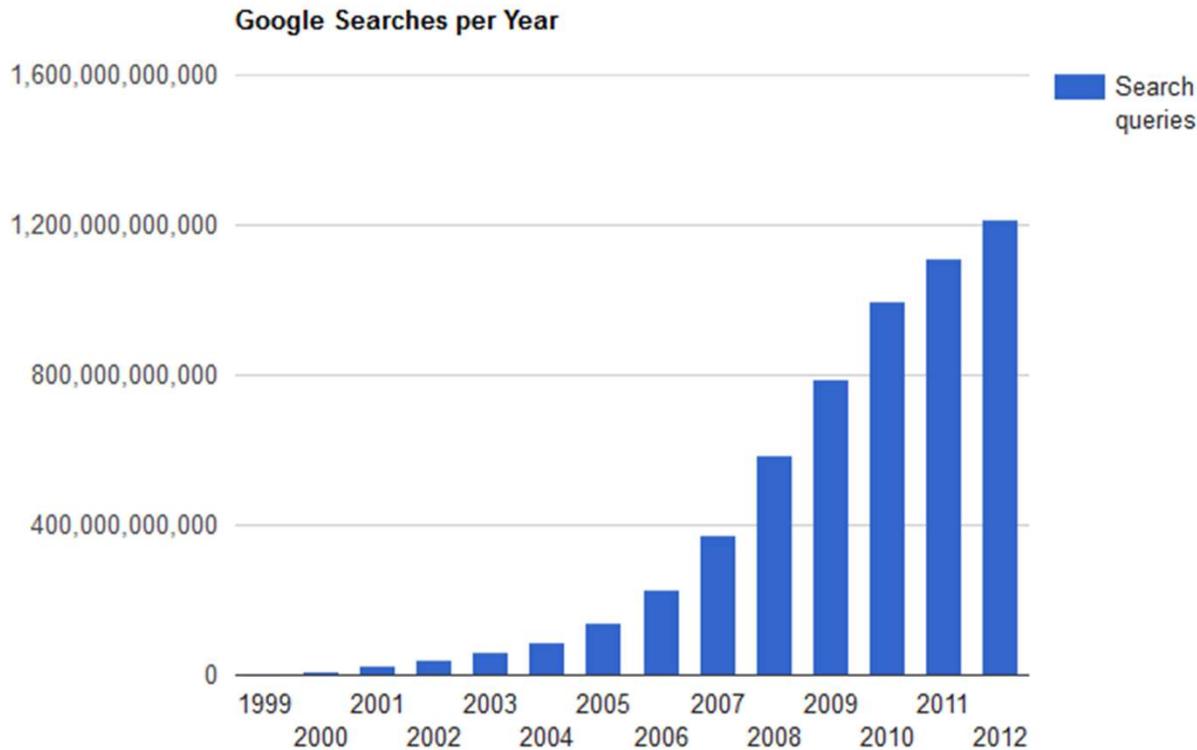
- Imagine being a librarian in the early 2000's and facing this disruption from the traditional knowledge management model.

- Currently ~100,000 searches per second

- Libraries responded by becoming more digital

# Agenda

- Why should we care?

- What can we do?

- How can we do it?

- ExxonMobil's journey

# The Open Innovation Tsunami

10 G total population[7]
     5 G internet users[8], 3.5 G workforce[9]
     1 G freelancers[1], 600 million active entrepreneurs[2]

300 million new startup companies founded per year[3]
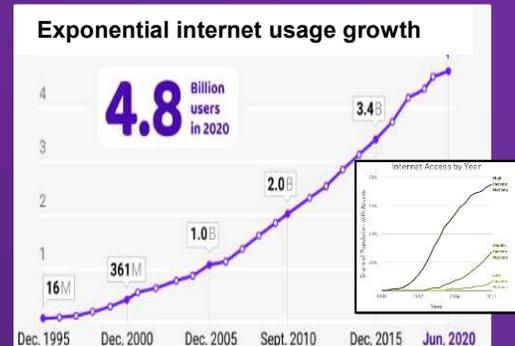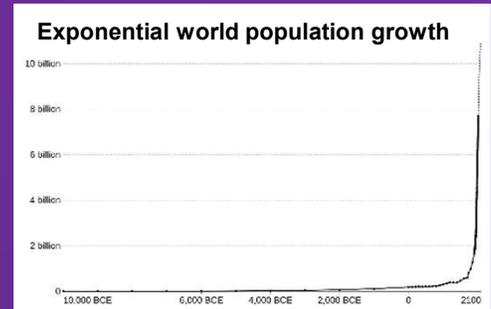     10% survive to become new companies[6]

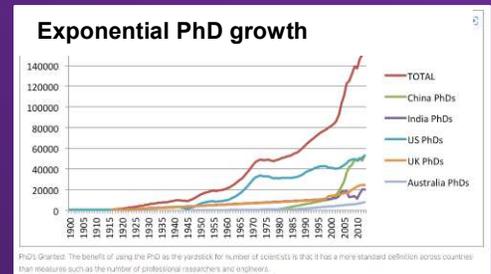90% of all scientists who have ever lived are active[4]
     Every year they are more connected globally[8]
     1,500 patents and 300 new articles per hour[5]

*How can large corporations access these resources **efficiently**?*

**Exponential world population growth**

**Exponential internet usage growth**

High Income

Low-Med Income

**Exponential PhD growth**

*See slide notes for reference links*

# Tool 1: Open Talent Models

- Identify expertise that you are lacking and efficiently connect

- Engage 1:1 or a handful of world experts ("Hollywood Model") for a small workshop format discussion

- Can some times be executed in 1-2 days

- Can be low cost or even free

- Confidence for uncertain decisions

- Accelerate R&D in "new to Organization" technical areas, products, and markets

# Tool 2: Global Crowdsourcing

- Put together solution requirements with a prize associated for winners

- Engage 10's to millions of people

- Find fresh ideas

- Extraordinarily diverse backgrounds

- Probe for "unknown unknowns"

# Tool 3: Global Request-for-Proposals (RFP)

- Distribute a document with solution requirements, seeking proposals

- Engage a few or up to 10's of thousands of institutions

- Accelerates programs

- Reduces development costs

- Probe for "off the shelf" solutions or joint development partnerships

# Four Eras of Open Innovation Implementation

## 2021-2022



"The Lab is my World"
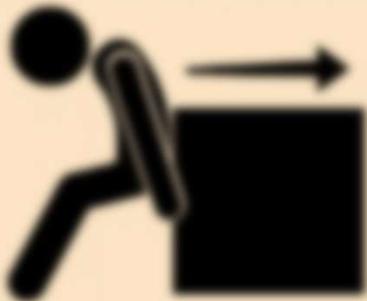
**Analysis**

## 2022-2023



**Marketing**

## 2024-2026



**Execution**

## 2027+



"The World is my Lab"

**Optimization**

# 2021-2022

**"The Lab is my World"**

*Lack of clarity and support*

Working Externally
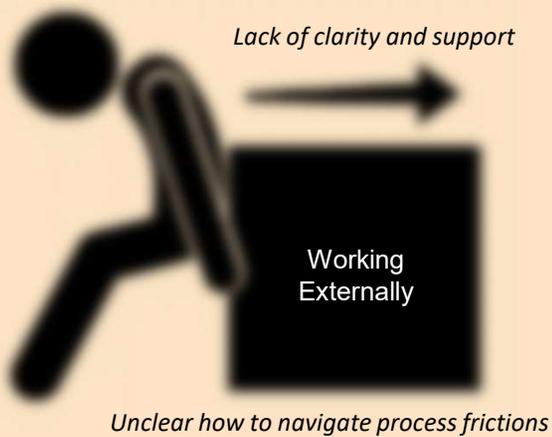
*Unclear how to navigate process frictions*

*Conducted >200 1:1 interviews 2022Q1, compiling a first draft of best practices*

**Findings:**
- Lack of dedicated support
- Sparse best practices
- Process barriers
- Generally insular culture

## Era of Analysis
- First few months
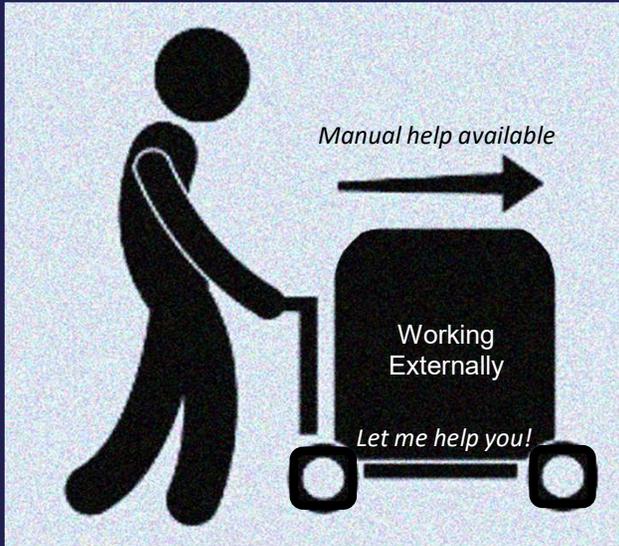- Open-ended in nature
- Low "return on investment"

## KPIs
- Input metrics (ex: # of people interviewed)

## Getting started
- You will need dedicated time and space to explore
- Keep the aperture open
- Beware of past biases
- Find and leverage external experts

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*Slides shared by Kyle J. Basler-Reeder, ExxonMobil, Innov8rs Conference, 2025*

# 2022-2023



*Engaged >100 teams, >250 open innovation projects, >40% identified internal solution*

**Test Hypotheses:**
- Full time support
- Dedicated resources
- Noisy best practices portal
- Process streamlining

## Era of Marketing
- 6-18 months
- Exploratory in nature
- Uncertain "return on investment"

## KPIs
- Input metrics (ex: # teams talked to)
- Output metrics (ex: # projects executed)

## First customers
- New businesses just getting started are ideal
- Build IP strategy in advance
- Explain the value proposition
- Share past wins

# 2024-2026



*Centralized and self-help available + local champions*

*Working Externally*

OI project manager

*Reengage across entire organization. Share self-help / OI champions. Refine workflows*

**Build on Momentum:**
- **Full time support**
- **Refined best practices portal**
- **In/external comms to raise awareness**
  - HELLO!
- **Initial scaling plan implementation**
  - Improve collaboration with other groups

## Era of Execution
- 1-3 years
- Targeted in nature
- Early "return on investment"

## KPIs
- Output metrics (ex: # projects executed)
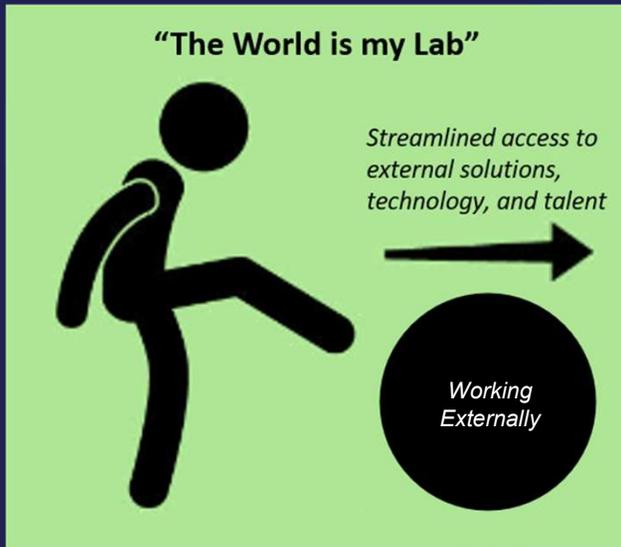- Outcome metrics (ex: % novel, % implemented)

## Building momentum
- At some point, less marketing is needed
- Your project management system will be tested
- Spontaneous champions will emerge

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# 2027+



"The World is my Lab"

Streamlined access to external solutions, technology, and talent →

Working Externally

*Scale resources to demand. Accelerate the open innovation program as needed*

**Vision:**
- **Open Innovation Network**
  - User friendly best practices portal
  - Semi-automated process stewardship
  - Communities of practice
- **Externally open, innovative culture with global toolkit awareness. Recognized industry leader**
- **AI-enabled internal/external landscaping**

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## Era of Optimization
- 4+ years
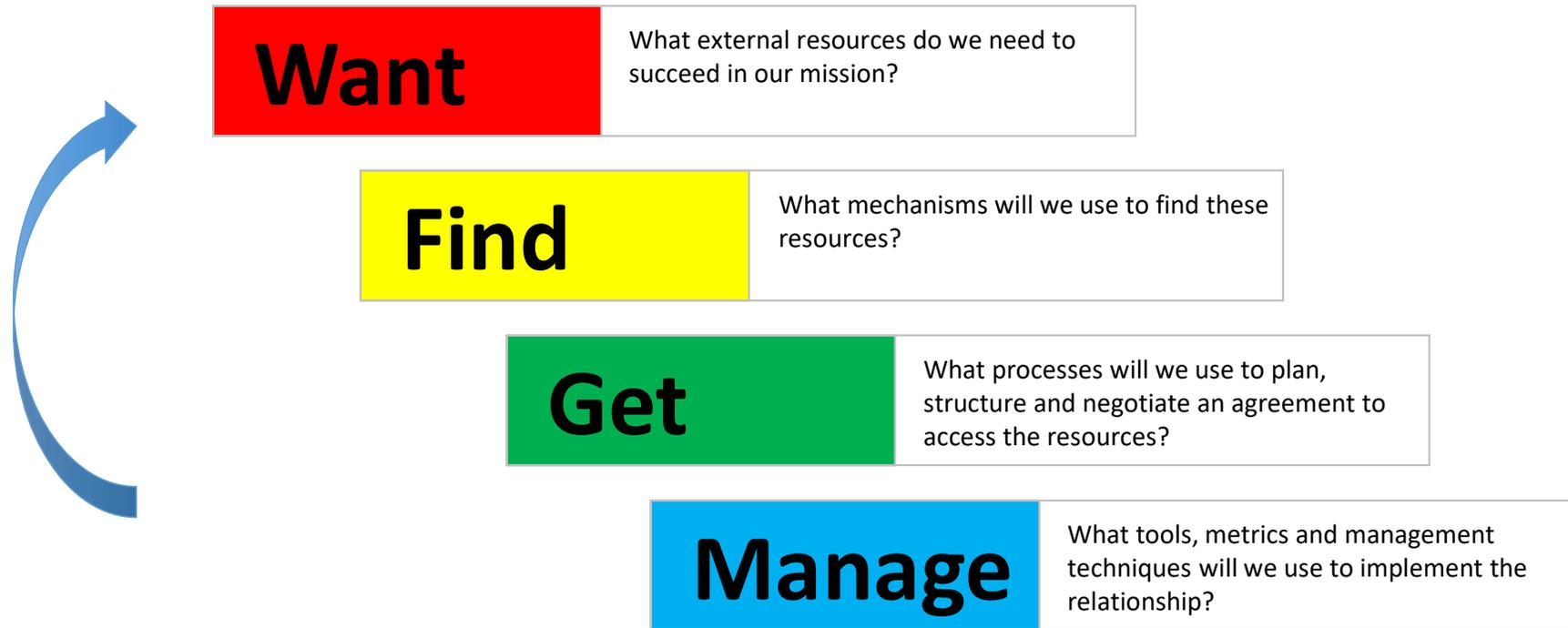- Sharply focused in nature
- Proven "return on investment"

## KPIs
- Output metrics (ex: solutions piloted)
- Outcome metrics (ex: $ avoided / gained, ROI)

## Right-sizing the program
- Can develop statistics on where it works
- Continue to grow the program as needed
- Recognize the wins

# The Want-Find-Get-Manage or "WFGM" Model®

**Want**
What external resources do we need to succeed in our mission?

**Find**
What mechanisms will we use to find these resources?

**Get**
What processes will we use to plan, structure and negotiate an agreement to access the resources?

**Manage**
What tools, metrics and management techniques will we use to implement the relationship?

Reference: The Strongest Link, Gene Slowinski & Matt Sagal. Alliance Management Inc

# Managing the Open Innovation System

**>400** Total **Challenges Scoped**

*4/2022 through 9/2025*

50% Pursued After Facilitated Problem Definition

15% Not Pursued

**35**% Pending

40% Executed

60% In-flight

*Of these, 40% were connected to an existing internal solution*
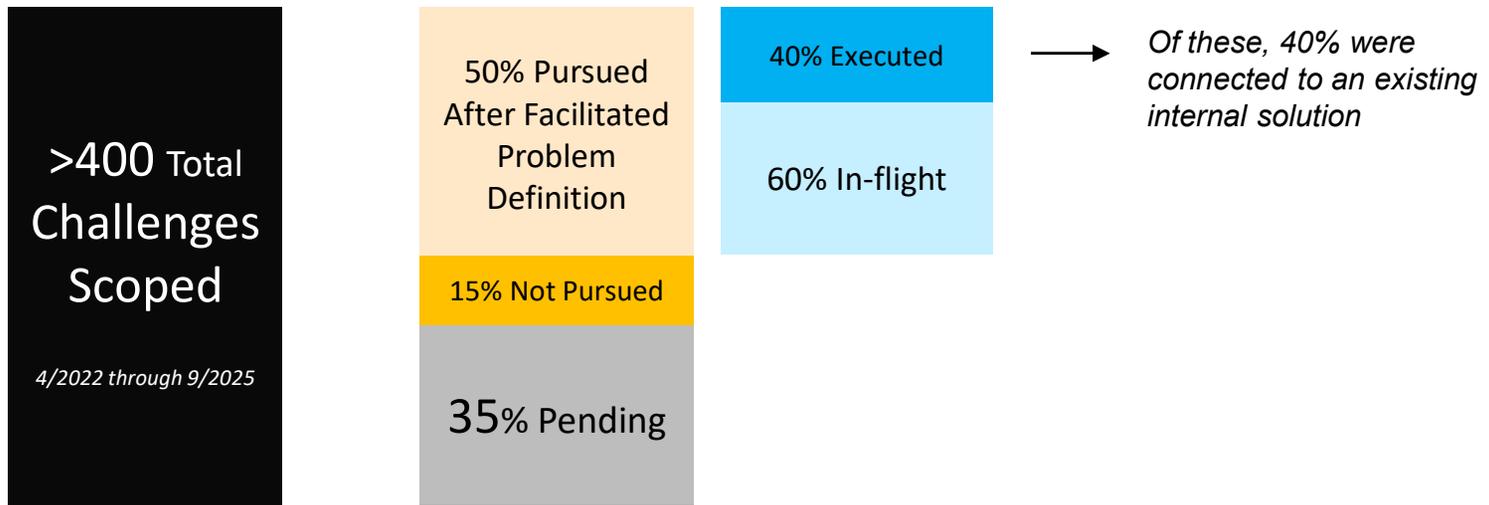
- Pipeline is building up and healthy
- Typical projects take on average 30 hours FTE and complete in 3 months from kick-off
- Changing the mindset from "My lab is my world" to the "World is my lab"
- Moving from ideas only to talent and testing facilities
- Goal is to make the team obsolete by training the organization

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# ExxonMobil Open Innovation – Areas of Interest

## Key Constraints

- Reponses submitted to Global Request-for-Information campaigns, need to be Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 5+ minimum

- Global Crowdsourcing campaigns can be lower TRL, by design

- Proposals cannot be too far from our core business; we must be able to find a "problem owner" to share with

## Sample Scouting Areas

- New Solutions for GHG Challenge
- Gas Demand and Gas Conversion
- New Hydrocarbon Products
- Carbon Capture, Utilization, & Storage
- H2 / Lithium market enabling cost reductions
- Finding and Producing Oil & Gas
- Transport and Conversion of Oil & Gas
- Bio-based fuels and Chemicals
- Industrial Security
- Energy Storage for Industrial Operations
- Industrial Water/Produced Water
- Digital Technologies/Business Models
- Reliability/Maintenance/EPC Practices
- Low Emissions Technologies
- Product and Operations Sustainability

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