Welcome to the Flying Labs Global Model

The Flying Labs Framework

The Flying Labs network is co-created by WeRobotics and local experts in the “Global South” through a well defined, tested and constantly evolving framework. This framework includes the 2 models that allow the network to grow in size, quality and sustainability:

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**“Local” model**

Allows local organizations with a proven track-record to join the network through affiliation to grow the network in size.

The main elements of this model are the Flying Labs Guidelines and the annual renewable license. Discover the guidelines [here](#).

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**“Global” model**

Brings individual Flying Labs together to grow a strong and sustainable global network.

This model allows each Flying Labs to actively manage its qualitative aspects, by identifying its strengths, gaps and improvement opportunities and understanding how they progress. It also allows to keep track of how and where the whole network is growing.

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This document introduces Flying Labs to why the “Global” model is an integral part of the Flying Labs framework, how the model works and what various elements make up the model.

For any questions, please contact your WeRobotics Community Coordinator if you are already part of the Flying Labs network. If you are not part of the network (yet) and are interested in learning more on this model, feel free to contact us at [humans@werobotics.org](mailto:humans@werobotics.org).
1) Why, How and What

**Why is the Flying Labs Global Model needed?**
“A network is only as strong as its weakest link”. While each Flying Labs is fully independent in their local activities, they are part of a global network. The stronger the network grows as a whole, the more sustainable each Flying Labs become. As such, each Flying Labs has its role to play to contribute to the overall success and strength of the network. To be able to contribute, each Flying Labs needs to know the unique strengths they bring to the network as well as the gaps they can fill.

**How does the Flying Labs Global Model work?**
The “Global Model” allows each Flying Labs to start out with a baseline evaluation, which Flying Labs can then build on to become stronger by tracking their growth through bi-yearly or yearly follow-up evaluations.

Based on these self-evaluations, each Flying Labs can decide what gaps they want to fill and what strengths they are best placed to share with their colleagues in the network, to help them become stronger.

Through the individual evaluations, a benchmark of all Flying Labs can also be created, which in turn gives each Flying Labs the possibility to place themselves and their skills within the network and contribute to more South-to-South collaboration. In addition, knowing which areas Flying Labs want to improve on allows WeRobotics to direct its efforts and resources effectively, and support the gaps identified by the network.

**What makes up the Flying Labs Global Model?**
The model is made of following parts:

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<th><strong>8 objectives, each defined by 3-8 specific and easily measurable criteria.</strong></th>
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<td>A self-evaluation form, allowing Flying Labs to perform self-evaluations (by replying “yes” or “no” to the various criteria), set goals and grow.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individually shared self-evaluations for each Flying Labs, updated first at a bi-annual rhythm, then later on an annual evaluation rhythm.</td>
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<td>A network-wide benchmark (combining evaluations of all Flying Labs), as a reference for each Flying Labs to place themselves within the network.</td>
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<td>Public communication of each Flying Labs key strengths, on their webpages and on WeShare (internal knowledge sharing platform) to support mentoring within the network.</td>
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<td>Incentives in the format of awards to recognize most important contributions from individual Flying Labs to the qualitative network growth.</td>
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These elements have been co-created with 10 Flying Labs in Spring 2020, then tested during a 2-month pilot phase in summer 2020 by the same labs. The Co-Creation process as well as the pilot phase allowed us to put together a first model corresponding to the network’s needs and working practices, in order to be a helpful and impactful development tool all the while being light in design, unbiased and easily applicable.
2) Details of the Global Model

2.1 Objectives

The 8 objectives represent the building blocks that make up the Global Model. Each objective is defined by a number of measurable criteria. The objectives as well as the criteria will evolve over time, to adapt to the qualitative growth of the network.

- **PROFESSIONALISM**
  - Standard Operating Procedures / Active use of checklists / Flight logging / Pilot Certifications / Proof of insurance (where available) / Project management skills / Knowledge / integration of other data sources such as satellite and other remote sensing data

- **EXPERTISE**
  - Expertise on data processing and data analysis / Knowledge on producing insights and data products / Sector knowledge of the 5 key sector programs / Other specific expertise

- **IMPACT**
  - Impact of trainings (number of people trained and variety of trainings proposed) / Impact of projects (workflow integration and data-driven decision making) / Data literacy & interaction / Variety of SDGs targeted

- **SHARING**
  - Publication of use cases / Blog posts & social media posts / Conferences attended / Guidelines & workflows produced and shared / Events organized (demos, conferences, youth programs, knowledge sharing days, etc.)

- **COLLABORATION**
  - Joint trainings & events organized with other Flying Labs / Joint projects worked on with other Flying Labs / Mentoring and support of other Flying Labs / Active promotion of the Flying Labs network

- **ETHICS**
  - Community engagement organized / Consent from stakeholders to acquire and use their data and/or do drone activity in their community / Data sharing defined for projects / Actively promoting ethical behavior / Consent for photos and videos

- **PARTNERSHIPS**
  - Number and diversity of partners / Activities for ecosystem building / Number and diversity of supporters

- **SUSTAINABILITY**
  - Diversity of Revenue Sources / Degree of economical health / Number and skills diversity of staff members
2.2 Self-Evaluation Form & Help Guide

The self-evaluation form, including the detailed criteria making up each of the 8 objectives, allows Flying Labs to perform their self-evaluations. To allow for a simple evaluation process, the only 2 possible answers for each criteria is “Yes” or “No”, based on conditions for each criteria stated also on the evaluation form.

To support the self-evaluation process as well as the opportunity for Flying Labs to grow and improve on the individual criteria, a detailed Help Guide has been developed. The goal of this guide is to provide Flying Labs with the most important information related to each criteria (detailed description and example) to help during self-evaluations as well as for growth, providing Flying Labs with the resources and tools needed to achieve each criteria.

Each self-evaluation is followed up with a call between the Flying Labs and WeRobotics, to discuss and validate the outcomes together, answer possible questions and, through the learnings made in these calls, help evolve the model over time.

2.3 Individual Flying Labs Evaluations

Each individual Flying Labs will receive the outcome of their self-evaluation in the form of a 1 page document. It will not be shared publicly or with other Flying Labs.

The 1 page document includes a graphical representation showing the percentage (%) reached for each of the 8 objectives. The goal is to update the evaluations on a bi-annual rhythm to start out with, then later on move to an annual evaluation rhythm. We also leave it up to Flying Labs to decide if they would like more frequent evaluations, which they can request on demand.

To build a common language around where Flying Labs stand in their growth, the document will also include a summary of the 8 objectives with pre-set levels. Using such levels allows Flying Labs to share with each other where they stand in an easy way. Staying in line with the idea of “Flying”, the levels are named after birds and what they symbolize. Discover the 4 birds and levels here:

**Bluebird**
First level (20% - 40% of evaluation). The bluebird symbolizes prosperity, happiness, harmony, the arrival (of spring), and good luck. Blue is also the colour of Flying Labs, so for us it symbolizes becoming part of the network and the community.

**Sparrow**
Second level (41% - 70% of evaluation). The sparrow symbolizes teamwork, joy, protection, community and hard work.

**Falcon**
Third level (71% - 99% of evaluation). The falcon symbolizes speed, superiority, determination, loyalty, strength, wisdom, freedom, focus, ambition and aspiration.

**Eagle**
Fourth level (at 100% of evaluation). The eagle symbolizes inspiration, victory, longevity, speed, pride and royalty.
2.4 Network Benchmark

All individual Flying Labs’ evaluations are combined into an overall network benchmark (expressed in %). This benchmark is visible to all Flying Labs in the graph of their individual evaluations and can be used as a reference for each Flying Labs to place themselves within the network.

The benchmark also allows WeRobotics and the Flying Labs network to track how the network evolves over time. In addition, this information is highly relevant for current and future key donors who are interested in learning about the qualitative growth of the network. It will therefore also be shared with select donors.

2.5 Public communication on individual evaluations

A new section on each individual Flying Labs’ web page will show the key strengths of each Flying Labs. The levels described in point 2.3 above will be used for this external communication. Before posting this section on the individual web pages, the content will be discussed with and approved by each Flying Labs.

An overview document of all the Flying Labs and their current levels will also be created on WeShare (internal knowledge sharing platform). This internal communication allows for Flying Labs to know each other’s strengths, so that Flying Labs can reach out to other Flying Labs to support/be supported for mentoring within the network.

2.6 Incentives

We want to recognize the most important contributions from individual Flying Labs to the qualitative growth of the network. Recognitions are made annually in the form of awards. To start out, we plan for following 10 awards that will be announced after the second round of evaluations:

- “Objective Champions” (8): award for highest evaluations per objective (one for each objective)
- “Growth Champion” (1): award for the most important growth within one individual Flying Labs from one evaluation to the other
- “Seed Champion” (1): award for the Flying Labs who has most helped others to grow, through mentoring and collaboration (this award will be awarded by Flying Labs)
Just like the “Local Model” has been evolving over the past years, the same will be the case for the “Global Model”. Once introduced and applied, we will learn together on how to adapt the model to support the continuous growth and changing needs within the network. Each evaluation cycle will allow us to make improvements to the various elements making up the model, as well as the model as a whole.

This first edition of the model has been inspired and co-created by many bright minds. We are very grateful to and would like to thank the following organizations and individuals who have contributed their ideas, insights and experiences to create this first edition of the “Global Model”:

> The 10 Flying Labs for co-creating and testing the model, allowing us to come up with a strong and SMART model for the network wide implementation: Jamaica Flying Labs, Panama Flying Labs, Papua New Guinea Flying Labs, Peru Flying Labs, Philippines Flying Labs, Namibia Flying Labs, Nigeria Flying Labs, Senegal Flying Labs, Tanzania Flying Labs, Uganda Flying Labs

> The Hewlett Foundation and the Autodesk Foundation for inspiring and motivating us to continuously improve our model and dedicate efforts towards the qualitative growth of the network as well as for supporting us actively with their experiences, insights and ideas during our model design process.