Onward and Upward

What it is:
This activity helps diverse groups connect and co-create positive solutions to challenging problems. It is adapted from the “Yes, and…” tool developed by Applied Improvisational theater.

Why it works:
Nature survives by leveraging whatever, and whoever, is locally available and by constantly driving toward positive outcomes (rather than focusing on problems and constraints). Connectivity and creativity are enhanced when a diversity of ideas are generated and then leveraged to strive for more and more positive outcomes in a free-flowing and playful environment.

How it works:
Choose a challenge for your group to address.

One person kicks things off by throwing out an idea or solution for addressing the challenge. A really bad idea can be a really good starting point!

The next person describes some aspect or characteristic of that idea that they like, and then adds on to it or takes it in a new direction.

Others in the group repeat this process.

In Applied Improv, each person engages by saying, “Yes, what I like about your idea is….. And we could …”

Tips:
• Be sure everyone agrees to follow the “Yes, and” approach with each response.
• This is not about saying that you like someone else’s idea – it’s about describing what you like about it.
• Be sure that each person adds on to the previous idea or takes it in a new direction.
• Have fun!