



## **Setting a New Shared Ownership Agenda**

### *Unleashing Cooperative Principles for a New Economy*

a 4-week virtual workshop  
for leaders seeking to reflect on what cooperative economy principles have to  
offer us in this unique moment as we seek to build an economy for our collective flourishing

“As a result of the authenticity and skill of the facilitation, I and every group member were surprised by how quickly we were able to drop into high-trust sharing and collaboration. The amount that we got “figured out” in a short amount of time was remarkable, life changing for many of us, and potentially world transforming.”  
~ Sam Hummel, former CEO, Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council (Participant in April 2020 Workshop)

#### **Welcome!**

We’re living in an extraordinary time - skyrocketing unemployment, the disruption of status quo business and supply chains, the corresponding financial uncertainty and danger of displacement for millions of households. These negative impacts are being borne disproportionately by communities of color. As a growing number of independent businesses are predicted to close, we see the consolidation of power and wealth among a handful of actors whose interests continue to dominate the shape of the financial markets. Consequently, we see a stock market that reaches an all time high while a growing number of Black and brown-owned businesses are facing risk of closure.

And yet this time is also characterized by a reimagining of the social safety net, of the public commons, a new level of recognition for essential work and perhaps a deeper appreciation for those whose work is often undervalued (or never valued at all) in the formal economy as it exists today - those who care one another and our communities. We are reconsidering the social compact that binds us all together.

The time has come to reorganize how we generate and distribute value in our economy—toward ownership, creativity, care, and repair.

#### **What do we mean by ‘New Economy’?**

In the years since the 2008 financial crisis, a new economy of shared ownership has been quietly emerging. It has taken form in new approaches to employee ownership, renewed localism, and cooperative online platforms. The current crisis requires that ownership economy to move from experiments to policy.

The cooperative economy is not a new concept. In fact, it is a paradigm that exists in practice, at scale, in various places. Cooperatives represent a way to broaden the ownership of wealth and stabilize communities, and much more.



In the 1930s, some of the most successful policies to emerge from the New Deal were rooted in shared ownership. When we own our community assets, we are more willing to take healthy risks and invest in care for the long term. In that troubled time, Americans used public finance for community ownership to enable rural electrification, the credit union system, and the 30-year mortgage. Today, as we face the greatest economic crisis in generations, we need to return to those lessons and supercharge them.

Investing in shared ownership offers the promise of unlocking wealth-building power that has been suppressed for too long. By starting among communities that have borne the brunt of historical and present inequities, we can come out of this crisis stronger and more united than ever. What we propose is not a handout, not even a hand up, but a rightful stake—an invitation for those on the margins to lead the next economy.

### **Why this format?**

Due to the information oriented culture we live in and the lingering effects of quarantine, we're bombarded with news and opinions and yet left with fewer in-person relationships to process and digest with. Worse, we're often swimming in bubbles of ideas very similar to our own. While the world continues to move at an ever faster pace; to create structural change requires us to slow down and reflect - often with the shared insight of others.

This workshop is meant to be an environment for exactly that. An opportunity to engage deeply with ideas, both individually and collectively, and to foster new and genuine relationships with cross-sector peers about how we can leverage the tools of capital, policy, and innovation to explore a new agenda for the shared ownership economy.

Through writing and dialogue over an intensive month-long period, we'll work collectively to build trust, community and solutions. Writing will allow us to engage with our ideas and emotions critically and surface the best of our individual insights in an authentic voice. Through reading the writing of others we'll gain perspective from peers about new concepts and get needed feedback on our own work. Together we'll refine and discuss ways to use the collective knowledge of the cohort to progress from ideas to application.

### **About this Workshop:**

- 4 week workshop facilitated virtually through Zoom meetings ~2-3 hours/week
- 4 prompts / frameworks to help you go deeper in your understanding of what you most want to build in this moment ~ 2-5 hours/week;
- Deep connection and collaboration with other leaders through collective imagining and laying groundwork for the new economy through spiritual community building;
- Accountability in doing the hard work first & embracing emotional labor;
- A way to build relationships across the levers of entrepreneurship, policy, and funding in service of a new vision around shared ownership as a strategy for human and community wellbeing

We are building this experience to include group work, collective and individual discernment practices, personal written reflection, and deep feedback from peers. It will be a way to extend and expand the culture we're seeking to create - a deeply relational culture that's curious, generous, and focused on building communities of collaboration & new economic praxis.



**Who is this for?** The workshop is for people who are seeking a bold new imagination around how to build an economy that is rooted in shared prosperity. By prosperity, we refer not only to wealth, but to our health, relational capital, resilience and self-actualization in community. We seek participants who are versed in shared ownership as a tool for wellbeing, as well as those who are simply interested in better understanding its promise and application. Mostly, we seek to build a community that is eager to learn, dream and imagine together how we craft a new agenda for a shared ownership economy.

**Our commitment to you:** The aim for this workshop is to **create a generous group space** where you can spend meaningful time working to refine your own leadership and its application in your work, as well as discover new collaborations.

The hope is to offer you the structure and accountability to "ship" a piece of your vision in writing each week. Then, other participants of the workshop will reflect back to you what they hear and see through generous open-ended questions & feedback. This feedback each week helps each participant **cultivate a coaching posture**, where we become more self aware and help others become more aware of how they're showing up and being perceived by others. In this way, our hope is that we **help you get clearer** on what you most want to contribute.

We offer resources from the Shared Ownership, New Economy, Cooperative, and Economy of Francesco movements including connections to some of the leading thinkers, practitioners, investors, and spiritual leaders of our time. More than anything, we offer a community. With that, we hope to inspire and equip you with frameworks so that you can also build a deeply meaningful community that gives rise to a more abundant, equitable new economy.

## Specifics

- **Q&A / Info Session - Is this workshop for me?** We held Q&A Sessions on July 10th and 17th.
  - You can watch [this Recording of the last 25 minutes of the July 10 Q&A session here](#). Password: 3q#7Bq%P
  - [Here's the last 40 minutes of the July 17 Info Session](#) & Discussion.
- **Workshop dates:** August 1 - 29, 2020
- **Applications due: July 21, 2020 - Apply here:** (<https://forms.gle/28d2WCpAwnanvYMRA>)
- **Time involved?** This workshop is about you. The more you put into it, the more you'll get out of it. We expect this can be done on top of a current full-time job and with a family (and kids out of school and summer camp). It can also be done in this strange time of anxiety, uncertainty, and public health crisis. We expect that at a minimum there will be 2-3 hours of in-person virtual peer group and meeting time each week. There will also be 3-5 hours of additional time writing and working on your projects each week. In other words, we expect 5-10 hours each week will be focused on this workshop -- but could see it being more for those who want to get the most out of it.
  - What's the commitment needed? [This post shares the three core components of the workshop](#).
- **Weekly Cycle:** More [details](#) about the weekly cycle of prompt, large group gathering, posting your work, learning group gathering, commenting on others, and the reflection script.
- **Workshop Fee: \$2,000.** We offer a sliding scale if you're not coming from an organization or background with resources. **We do not want cost to be a barrier to your participation!** In the application, you'll be asked to select the choice that best fits your situation.
  - \$2,000 -- I or my organization can pay the workshop fee.



- \$3,000 -- I or my organization can pay more and pay-it-forward to help others.
- \$1,500 -- I or my organization can pay, but not the full amount.
- \$1,000 -- I or my organization have very modest resources, yet really want to participate.
- Scholarship/gift needed at this time.

For those selecting the final option, you will be invited to explain your situation in the application and describe how you envision paying the experience forward. We know financial situations are dire at the moment and we don't want to turn anyone away due to prohibitive costs.

### Testimonials from prior workshops facilitated by members of our organizing team:

"The team created a space that was both inviting and challenging. I was impressed with how quickly they facilitated **trust and intimate self-reflection between** a group of relative strangers. Skilled prompting and enjoyable camaraderie provided **a helpful accountability structure** to dive deeper into important work that I had previously been leaving on the back-burner."

~ Sean Gaffney, MD, Geriatrics, UNC-Chapel Hill (June 2019 workshop participant)

"The visionary leadership style - thoughtful and relational - makes this work accessible even to those of us who are reticent to consider the mantle of "entrepreneur" or "businessperson". **We have needed this combination of visionary and practical** to build the movement for social and economic justice for so long!"

~ Sheila McMahon, Professor, **Barry University** (October 2019 workshop participant)

### Co-Curators

- [Jennifer Bryant](#) brings the piercing clarity of an organizer and deep intuitions for how the new economy must be grounded in real relationships with workers and those often excluded from re-making capitalism conversations.
- [Elizabeth Garlow](#) brings deep experience in philanthropy, impact finance, and policy. She's pioneered entrepreneurship programs, microfinance initiatives and co-convenes the North American Economy of Communion and the US Economy of Francesco.
- [Todd Leverette](#) brings years of experience as an employee ownership professional, his credentials as a JD/MBA, as well as his experience as start-up founder and a former Wall Streeter and his readiness to make big change happen with the tools and strategies of employee ownership.
- [Phil Reeves](#) brings the experience, tools, and ambition of a Wall Street investment banker, combined with the empathy, passion, and heart for small business.
- [Felipe Witchger](#) brings a love for creating spaces where we can get free to focus on our most important work. He loves economics, unleashing investors, entrepreneurs, and organizers, and facilitating dynamic projects that transform. He's eager to build power and new vehicles for action around this new economy we desperately need.

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*This workshop is inspired in part by the [Economy of Francesco](#), a movement catalyzed by Pope Francis and collaborators to inspire, equip and launch young leaders globally who, in the spirit of St. Francis, work to make the economy of today and tomorrow fair, sustainable and inclusive.*

*This workshop is coordinated through the [Community Cooperative](#).*