

Reimagining Pay

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Introduction

In our current paradigm, our ability to meet our needs and conditions of communal thriving rely heavily on pay; it is a requirement for life in consumer society that ([Jeff Noonan, 2012](#)), depending on context, extends from basic needs for living, care and learning through to luxuries.

Rethinking pay is a very entangled task, it directly connects to things beyond the individual interlocking and entwining with the realities of life in the workplace and wider society. It asks people to reach deep within the structures of their lives, what begins as a conversation about

finance or value, can veer towards control, fairness, politics, equality, equity, justice, power, accountability, responsibility and more. It can draw up issues that have long lurked beneath the surface, that we sometimes lack the toolkit to dissect, the language to articulate or the time and listening ability to fully engage with.

On a personal level, pay relates to whether we feel valued, whether we feel seen, whether we feel we can cope, or whether we feel we can thrive. Individual thoughts and feelings about pay are often highly personalised; they can bring emotions (and trauma), latent beliefs and former experiences to the surface.

At a group level, overhauling the distribution of pay means being willing to engage in - and act on - deep listening about power redistribution, structural inequality and different personal narratives.¹

Despite the daunting-sounding challenges that it surfaces, pay is among the most promising sites to unlock different ways to show up together. Through #BeyondtheRules, we've reimagined pay in our own setting and spent time hearing from people who've innovated around pay, taking us beyond the symptomatic challenges of CEO pay ratios or the gender pay gap, to consider what it means for pay to help scaffold individuals and groups to show up in full agency for the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Pay and value

One participant at the [Reimagining the Wage event in March 2021](#) proposed, "the focus on the pay gap has blinded us to question the assumptions of what pay is, and the many ways it codifies injustice".

A standard company is explicitly driven by singular (or a few) understandings of value - profit and assets - that is coded in the accounting and reporting structures and the company purpose.

"Traditional accounting (P&L and balance statements) aren't designed to recognise how value is created or delivered, only the money captured. Could shifting the conversation to "value" (including how it's captured & destroyed) provide insight into how people participate in "pay"?" - Susan Hasty

People and groups who have been able to own assets and rent them out, generating profit through a socially accepted and legally backed concept of 'ownership' as a valid way of organising things in the world (including land, material things and living beings), have typically been able to extract high profit and, in correlation, personal wealth ([Katharina Pistor, 2019](#)).

¹ Fortunately, these are among the most enriching conversations that you can have, if you are willing to genuinely open your hearts to these questions as a group. And if you are wondering whether it is better to avoid these conversations altogether, the example of [Basecamp perhaps provides a warning](#) to us all about what it looks like to further entrench the existing 'rules' of the system in an age when people are aching for new ones.

This structure incentivises us to seek ownership and invites us to view it as an indicator of personal 'success', linked to ideas about the freedom from a 'boss'/someone else's decisions and control. The 'corporate ladder' is a metaphor for the widely accepted goal to take on higher levels of control and power, each in turn correlating to an increase in pay. The lower rungs of this 'ladder' - often manual, practical work - is where the actual services of the company or its product - and thus its core value - are created (as encapsulated in Jean-François Zobrist's phrase "value is created on the shop floor").

Not only is pay a poor indicator of real value creation, it can also have a negative correlation, rewarding those who extract value from others and penalising those who create it (as explored in this 2009 New Economics Foundation paper [A Bit Rich](#)).

"Value is not just about skill, years of experience, or how quickly you can do things. Actually, there are lots of the young people we work with who will ask one question that's hugely poignant, that could completely impact the way we might think about a piece of work. That person asking that question is massively valuable. And for me, that's about like the perspective that people bring into their work." - Tessa Cooper, Collaborative Future

Pay and the traditional work of 'public good'

Work that has an intention of creating shared benefit/'public good' has an interesting place in these structures. It is often poorly paid (if at all) as a 'sector', particularly compared to its private and capital accumulating counterparts, and highly relied upon. Where this work becomes structured into formal organisation, it also often adopts the similar organisational structures of the modern firm (separation of duties, managerialism, top-down decision-making etc), including in relation to pay and the differential between executives, managers and the 'front line' workers within charities or social enterprises (we explored this in this earlier [#BeyondtheRules](#) blog). Lower paid 'public good' workers are often also among the highest creators of social value in society, yet the value they create is not profit and is not commensurately rewarded, in turn, through pay. They are commonly double impacted financially by both this type of work and the adopted structures within it.

A recent study by the Living Wage Foundation finds that [a fifth \(17%\) of workers in the third sector earn below the Living Wage, amounting to 388,000 workers nationally \(UK\)](#). Following from a previous study this shows that the conditions of low pay have not improved in 5 years COVID-19 has only exacerbated the situation where there has been an increase in demand for the work done by the third sector leading to increased costs and workload while at the same time there has been a slow down in numerous funding streams. The study also highlights how these changes disproportionately impact the already low paid workers and within them women, people of minority groups and disabled workers are further disproportionately affected with lower pay.

The increase in demand for work done by charities ([63% charities reported an upsurge in demand](#)) during the pandemic highlights the public value provided by people working in them which stands in stark contrast to how their work is lowly valued through compensation.

As the work of 'public good' currently is largely funded from public sector funding or public and private grants, granting and commissioning norms commonly exacerbate this when they invite groups to compete in 'value for money' to secure funding, contributing to a race to the bottom within and amongst social organisations to demonstrate low-as-possible expenditure to compete for funds.

Rethinking Narratives of Pay and Value Creation: some ideas

- As we face colossal global and deeply interconnected challenges (whether climate crisis, collective psychological trauma, a broken social contract, food precariousness...), what does creating value in our 21st century world mean, and how do we structure pay to align with it, rather than disincentivise it?
- If most of the value creation that we need ahead is in non-monetary form (beyond profit), which can't always be meaningfully measured, what does pay correlate to?
- What if we were not bound by the dominant narratives of today and could create new narratives based on what the world (human and other living) needs now and perhaps even in the future?
- How might we re-write those narratives so that they serve us to build a just future (or to quote [Kate Raworth](#), "the safe and just space for humanity") and one where the world's living systems are set up to thrive?
- How do we unleash pay and use it as a transformational tool towards alternative narratives, whilst still within many of the prevalent rules and norms? What might we need to consider to do this?

[Read more on this here including some propositions about what some of these narratives shifts might look like](#)

Innovating Pay

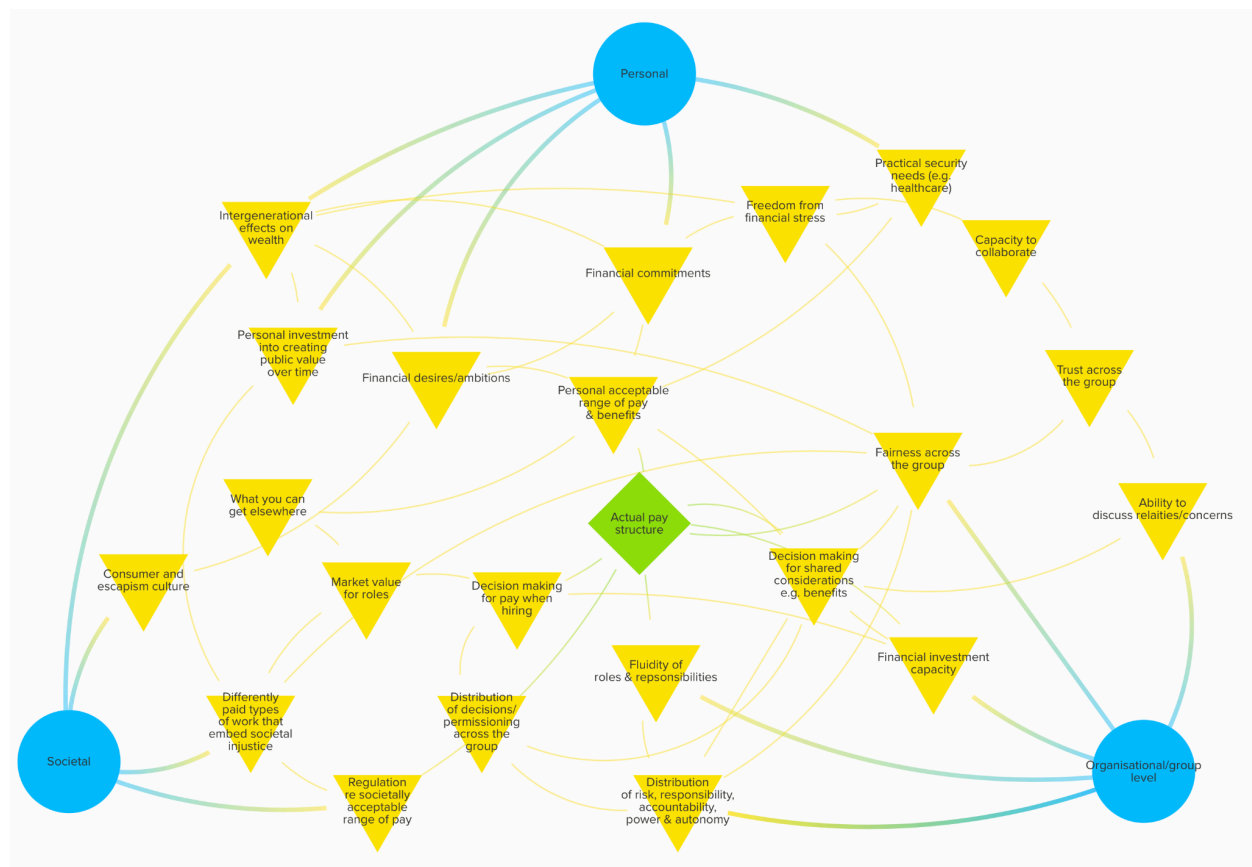
"Traditionally, the pay is with how someone sees how they're valued by an organisation? And how much are they valued by that organisation? ...And I think because there's such a strong alignment of people within your organisation to do the work that we collectively want to do, that it's not so much a reward for doing that work. It's like what we're paying people to give them the capacity to do that." - Andy Reeve, Civic Square

In spring 2021 we did desk-based research and spoke to various groups, most of whom were fairly small (up to 60 people), but actively identified as working outside/trying to change the status quo and evolving their pay structures. We came across various other groups of a larger

scale exploring some earlier shifts towards pay, such as teams within larger orgs getting better at discussing salaries more transparently, developing fluency in relational skills and setting precedents for their wider organisations. We note that, in larger groups, pay innovation is more likely to be a change that follows a longer process of change (once preconditions are established)², and thus here we have focused in this research more on the learning from smaller groups that have been able to learn from more radical experiments.

Among the people we spoke to, the changes in pay reflected the wider changes that were taking place in the group, its people and the culture. For those ‘successfully’ rethinking pay, it was part of a transformation of the collective culture already underway.³

We started to see factors that intersect with pay which we have roughly mapped out in the image below. You can interact with the map on [Kumu](#).



² Simone Cicero's [recent blog](#) makes reference to adopting a 'pilot-to-scale' approach in larger settings, embedding two partially and temporarily co-existing structures to exist while the new approach is being tested, which is another approach to this in larger groups.

³ [Spill](#)'s experiment with flat pay gives us an idea of what might come up if we look to change pay without transforming some of the linked factors to it

Pay intersects across multiple layers at a personal, social and group level., how much pay can be a tool for transformation heavily depends on the factors that it links to, such as how deeply the people in the group are questioning and considering their personal desires and financial situations; how willing the group is to consider what genuine fairness might look like, and to discuss stories and agency in a caring way; and how the situated societal lock-ins play a part in preventing some of the opportunities for change.

Considering alternative pay systems might mean:

- Considering how decision-making around financial distribution (what is invested in and where) is done, and what more distributed decision-making to smaller units or nodes (as proposed by Simone Cicero in [this blog](#)) or shared decision-making to group-wide shared formulas or approaches (or a mix between these)
- Collectively inspecting relationships between people in the system, and deeply considering what fairness means from different perspectives. Creating a platform for trust
- Looking at the balance and distribution of power, autonomy, risk, accountability and responsibility in the system (more on that [here](#)), and how the distribution and balance is linked to roles and responsibilities taken in the group, and how these link to pay (including their fluidity or rigidity)
- Considering what security looks like for people to be able to fully contribute their gifts to the work
- Considering factors across personal, societal and group dynamics that might create friction relating to for example lifestyle choices, cultural values and narratives, historic earnings among many others.

Questions that might be raised may include:

- How do we share financial value equitably amongst its creators in ways that encourage shared creativity, collaboration, well calculated risk and experimentation?
- How do we recognise risk, accountability and responsibility holding in a system, and attract and retain talent from the existing market norms, whilst still creating shared fairness, legitimacy and trust?
- Who makes the ultimate decisions around allocation of resources, and how we settle disputes around this when multiple factors may be in conflict?
- If pay is not an indicator of professional development, self-worth and success, how is the need for growth and self-worth addressed by other things in the system in a healthy way?

“Challenge of recognition in the system, a pathological problem in social enterprise, when you take money off the table, social recognition can very easily become the incentive, ego becomes the thing that drives the system.” - Indy Johar, Dark Matter Labs

<add your own with a comment>

It is important to note here that compensation usually goes beyond the basic monetary pay and these can themselves go a long way in identifying needs and discourses around compensation within the group. These might include areas such as:

- Flexible working hours
- More generous social security such as healthcare, pensions or life insurance
- Forms of paid leave
- Childcare
- Access to unions and information about workers' rights
- Mentorships
- Continuous learning and development
- Workspace and social conditions

“You have to live the journey to gain a contextually appropriate solution.”
Dave Snowden

Different kinds of work suit or require different ways of organising. What kind of work is being done within a setting places specific needs and demands on people and structures, so there is no singular blueprint or right approach to a pay structure, only divergent and plural ways of approaching it unique to the context.

The work of [Cognitive Edge and their Cynefin framework](#) provides some guidance on acting in complex systems, where there is not best practice but exaptive/emergent practice that is developed by probing the systems, sensing the impact and responding to that.

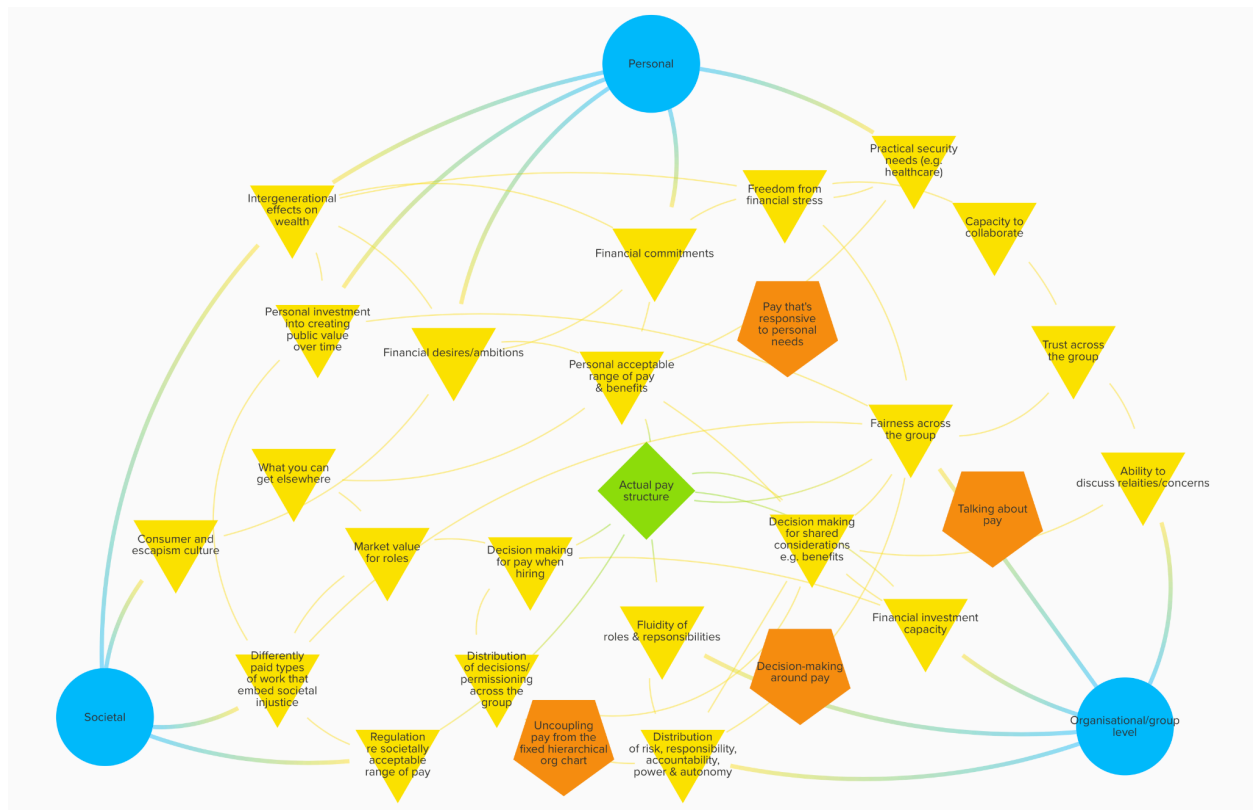
Experimenting with new approaches

We have come across various ways that groups have started to reimagine and restructure pay in their settings.

Some case studies focused on creating formulas based on needs, some on the value/performance, some with hybrids, others with flattening, the specifics of the actual pay structure are contextual and can be less important than the process and the considerations that have gone into them.

So here we explore some of the sites of experimentation and probing from the group level that led to those specifics (these are of course only some types of intervention that we came across, we welcome your additions and suggestions of others that are included here). Pulling these

strings unravels others along the way and can activate a process of transformation, whatever the end result of pay might be.



The probes are shown in this map in orange (interactive map on [Kumu](#)), somewhat like trojan horses into the existing system that make new things possible (noting that these probes are at the group level, and what is possible is also influenced by the personal and societal conditions).

Probe: Talking about pay

While innovating pay we need to remember that *money and pay* have a breadth of social and cultural connotations for different people, which influences each individual's relationship to pay. It is a deeply emotional topic that can be associated with trauma. As people we need to be heard and understood when talking about pay.

Pay also influences relationships to our colleagues, and their roles and responsibilities and sits within a wider context of relational dynamics.

Groups can facilitate situations which support each other to share, listen and hold differences; creating safe space to explore some of the dynamics and contexts that might be in place, including assumptions and narratives held. The optional and equal nature of this is important, where it's agreed that no one can morally police life choices (and the baggage and contexts that come with them) and that it isn't obligatory or requested for people to share their experiences.

Some groups use conversations around pay as vehicles for clear, considered communication, which unlock conversations about care and responsibility and a better understanding of each others' drivers and needs.

"With the care budget...you find people talk about that more often amongst each other. So they might say, 'oh, I've done this with my care budget this month', or 'I've done that to help or booked an appointment for this'"

- Andy Reeve, Civic Square

Ongoing discourses shape the meanings people attach to their experiences in the world. Shifting how we make sense of pay through reflection on the discourses we take for granted can help unlock fresh thinking across a group around what pay means to people and where it might make sense to probe an alternative together.

"The mechanics of how an organisation sets pay is far less important than the culture you build. The value of creating a safe space that everyone can share what their needs are, and the onus for everyone to be open to understanding." - Abigail Handley

Example: Transition Town Network has spent time working on their Relationship Agreements with each other about how they want to interact together. As part of discovering their approach to pay, they held a workshop about people's relationships with money in the team, not as a decision-making process, but to help surface the difference that was in the team. It invited people to speak from three perspectives, their personal perspective, the group, and the organisation. Peter LeFort described how the workshop highlighted that "the way they see and experience money might be completely different to someone else in the team above and beyond certain things that might be obvious or assumed, or kind of explicit, and I think that helped that process a lot in terms of how to navigate the difference in in people's initial suggestions of where we should go with this."

For Saran McAdam, it settled the idea that "we're going to probably have to go for something simpler here, because actually the complexity of the difference is certainly feeling beyond me to try and design an algorithm to respond to it."

The conversations led the team towards agreement on a pay structure, in this case flat.

In summer 2020 when Dark Matter Labs explored pay options across the team, people were asked (anonymously) what pay meant to them, and some of the answers provide an interesting insight into the varying ways that pay holds meaning:

*"A means to **be free to think** and do and live"*

*"Compensates for time and provides **subsistence to do your best work.**"*

*"A '**basic income**' that frees myself from worries of a decent and humble life and where so I can focus on the activities I am most creative."*

*"Security, flexibility, **success**"*

*"**Security**, fairness, contribution, measurement"*

"Security and stability to contribute to the world in a (hopefully) significant way"

*"Salary is an enabler in a way that it helps you to **support your loved ones** and live your life in a way that your choices are not very limited by your salary"*

"(1.)Reward. (2.) Responsibility(3.)Support for my family(4.)Opportunity for self-improvement e.g. experiencing and learning something new"

"Trade for labour, helping to support a life, measure of value"

"An aspect of recognised value"

*"**Financial value of work**"*

*"**Sleep** at night"*

Collective discursive practices can help:

- Identify underlying assumptions that people have about what pay means and how it shows up for them and others
- Build understanding about how others interact with questions of pay
- Uncover previously unknown potentials to try something different

As a group practices having conversations previously considered tough or taboo and holding them with care, respect and humanity, a pathway is laid towards more open conversations where financial needs (of the group, or of the individual) can be more openly discussed.

You can start to hold (optional) discussions as a group that might verge into questions such as:

- What does money really mean (to you)?
- What does work take from us, and give to us, that isn't compensated through pay?
- How do we create the security and foundations that we each need to step into our agency?
- How do compensation, rights and benefits interplay for us?
- What are the enabling structures that limit exploitation (intentional or unintended) of our boundaries and what might these look like for us?
- How much do present compensations tie you to doing parts of the work that you do currently?

You can invite the three perspectives as described by Transition Network above - the personal perspective, the group, and the organisation.

<add your own with a comment>

Probes: Decentralising decision-making around pay

The process and socialisation of decision-making is at the heart of how hierarchy forms, how governance is balanced, agency is distributed and innovation is enabled in a group.

Traditional decision-making around pay involves a small group (at managerial/executive level, normally) who have exclusive visibility of the key information required to make decisions around pay. The idea is that it is either too much time/work and/or too specialised to involve a wider team.

Most of the examples that we spoke to around innovating pay (as one part of group organising) had different assumptions and experiences about open information and decision-making. Including:

- Critical financial information being open (at least at an aggregated level) allowing higher shared fluency in financial status and progress
- Logic about approaches to pay made open and interrogable
- Decision-making as either highly distributed (such as [unit based micro-contracts](#)) or collectively shared (although note often by consent rather than consensus)

Supporting infrastructures include:

- Training or support to build financial fluency among those less comfortable
- Efforts to provide financial information in accessible formats (such as using more familiar terms, diagrams, term explanations)
- Decision-making processes that enable detailed consideration with effective sign-off of ideas, such as Percolabs' [Generative Decision-making process](#)

These exercises involve building muscles for financial fluency, agile decisions and open working that enable ongoing iterative approaches.

Abigail Handley from Outlandish spoke about how personal financial needs change and a structure that allows for that will see a change in revenue too. Repeating pay structure exercises regularly allow for flexibility in requests for that quarter. These questions go beyond the pay itself, extending to decision-making for broader financial questions (such as overall investment of surplus) and other non-monetary matters (such as approaches to benefits or pro bono work engaged). Since 2015 Outlandish have used [CoBudget](#) to spend part of their surplus [to fund projects that team members care about](#).

It supports individuals and groups to consider the value of their work in the real world, and balance personal financial needs with the work they want to create as a team.

Example: [DML pay iteration decision-making process PDF](#)

Probes: Uncoupling pay from the fixed hierarchical org chart

"Because managerial experience is over-valued by most organisations, personal development is skewed to obtain managerial skills and experience over other more meaningful opportunities." - Nick Stanhope

Various examples of pay experimentation have looked at changing the relationship between pay and roles by unpicking the traditional org chart and restructuring roles, hierarchy, pay ratios and pay itself in alternative ways. This might also mean removing the payer-payee dichotomy that sits in most modern companies, as sought to be done by [cooperatives](#), which are owned and controlled by their members. The [governance structures](#) in the group can also come into play here, exploring how responsibility, accountability, power, risk-holding and autonomy are balanced and distributed in the setting.

Rethinking the value of roles and responsibilities held in a system and what they entail helps to reshape an group's priorities, its work culture and what it creates together.

For example:

- [Transition Network](#) moved away from rigid job descriptions. They say "We move in and out of roles according to what best serves our organisational purpose. Many of us are holding more than one role and are working in a number of circles." Their current structure of role is shared [here](#). They removed the link between role and pay through a flat pay structure.
- [Collaborative Future](#) are looking at hours of focus spent in the work to help determine pay (via a flat structure), rather than biasing productivity, responsibility and the like, of which only a select few are able to progress. *"The problem with pay is that you have to keep working more, whether in terms of years of experience or hours a week, in order to earn what you need. So we're looking at hours of focus that we're giving to Collaborative Future."* - Tessa Cooper
- [Outlandish](#) have tried to move away from a discussion of subjective ideas of value, which they found to be favouring certain kinds of people. Their hybrid self-set pay approach allows people to take informed decisions about their need with consideration to others and the whole, rather than focusing pay around roles.
- [Civic Square](#) use a responsibility recogniser that prompts explicit discussions around what responsibilities people hold (rather than fixed roles) and biases the work towards everyone taking responsibility.
- Holacracy inventor Brian Robertson explains [here](#) how his company ties compensation to the talents and skills people are contributing to the organization in their many roles, rather than directly to the roles themselves. This involves a self-directed system with a collective vetting process.
- Percolab uses [variable self-determined salaries](#) based on budgets of the various projects people work on

- [Dark Matter Labs](#) removes the link between roles and pay altogether, in order to enable people to navigate their own picking up and handing over roles according to need like a hand of cards, without this having financial implications each time.

“I think the model that we ended up with, in terms of pay, was determined by it absolutely fitting with our governance model. We were explicitly trying to find a system of pay that would support us to work in this way where people would be able to move between roles and move in and out of different responsibilities in the organisation.” - Sarah McAdam, Transition Network

“Pay structure is deeply connected to how you organise. So pay for us is something that deeply sits alongside how we work as a self-managed organisation. I struggle to think about how our self management, dynamic hierarchy would work in a stratified pay environment.” - Annette Dhami, Dark Matter Labs

Probes: Rethinking the structure of pay

Self-set pay and pay responding to personal needs

Various groups have tried incorporating a need-based part to their pay - self-set or through e.g. indicators - on its own or alongside other factors. This means adjusting pay to the needs of the individuals in the team and using it as a way to fulfil needs, thus unlocking that person's agency and ability to fully contribute.

People live multidimensional lives and these intersect in many ways. Recognising that people have responsibilities outside of their work lives pays a part in determining their needs for certain kinds of pay and work.

- [Dark Matter Labs](#) utilises a shared base pay formula that uses life experience as proxy for life-need, as one of the elements in the approach to pay. It is increasingly layering different angles to pay, such as freedom, security and fairness.
- [Civic Square](#) works with living wage as a robust researched indicator of needs and through iterations tops it up to move towards a thriving wage
- [Outlandish](#) works with the principles of sociocracy and updates their pay based on real conditions of the company's financial health and the needs of the people. Needs change and a structure that allows for that will see a change in revenue too.
- In the corporate world, [buffer](#) uses a transparent pay formula that incorporates the person's cost of living in their location
- Makers Academy adopts a self-set pay approach, as described [here](#); GrantTree has also adopted the self-set pay method, explained [here](#).

It is important to note that needs are subjective and different people have different levels of comfort talking about their specific life situations. Wealth inequality is influenced by factors

beyond inequality of income, it is often shaped by differences in intergenerational transfers and returns on investment. These preconditions can dictate and influence financial choices and opportunities. An individual's needs and relationship to pay are not made in a vacuum or in isolation, they are influenced by existing factors that extend back further than education or previous work experience. "Choice" over work (working hours and contracts) is likely predetermined by other societal structures that are beyond the control of an individual.

Implementing an approach like this requires some keen consideration to what detail should and shouldn't be asked to be disclosed and how this also might be structured safely, avoiding 'moral policing' over peers' life choices or circumstances. . Having the *option* to discuss these considerations could be positive for a group, but is different from requiring it as part of the process.

Observations

Pay and impact on the team/ talent

Pay structures are reflective of organisation ethos and key tenets, they therefore attract people who think similarly, leading to hiring those who agree with and want to be involved.

"Pay structure has led to a more interesting team, whenever we've gone to market people have joined. So I think what's really interesting for me is we're so conditioned to societal, recognition around finance, and I actually think as a result of the pay structure, the people that join DM, are really interesting." - Indy Johar, Dark Matter Labs

Pay structures play a role in who is attracted and retained to a group, and this is often used as an argument against decoupling pay from market rates. While some pay structures require people in certain industries to forfeit compensation, and all approaches place limitations on who a group might recruit, people we who had really been trying to shift cultures and practices in how they do pay have also suggested that pay structures can encourage people to join who were deeply bought into the ethos of the work and approach, sometimes to a surprising degree (e.g. forfeiting jobs offering twice, three or more times the pay).

That's not to say that market rate for a role isn't a real consideration in the world; but rather to note that seeing a group of people show up with genuine care for their dynamics and relationships also speaks to a different place of need and longing, and that place is important too.

Pay is always a work in progress

Above all it is important to recognise that pay is an ongoing process, what works for one group today may not work for others or for that same group in the future. Pay structures may be cyclical, iterative and they may require remaking as contexts/conditions change. The benefit of working continuously on the conditions that influence pay is that it allows the structure itself to be iterated when need arises. In many ways, the structure is less critical than the processes they encourage and build and that is where the innovation lies. None of these areas are simple

to navigate, and pay will not be a silver bullet. It will also never be a perfect system, but can be 'good enough for now' and up for continuous review.

Pay across an ecosystem

In this work so far we have referred regularly to 'groups', although much of the discussion has applied heavily to the context of an organisation or bounded group. At the same time, all of the areas discussed - working on relationships, discussing knotty topics, distributing decision-making, restructuring roles and responsibilities, being responsive to needs - are processes that can move us towards being able to blur the boundaries of groups and work more readily as a wider ecosystem of actors (across bounded groups as much as within them).

So how might these approaches apply in the context of an ecosystem of actors?

We don't intend to enter a full exploration of that in this particular piece, however it is worth highlighting that the probes discussed above also apply in an ecosystem context, For example:

- Discussing about finances across actors in an ecosystem can be a healthy way to uncover the inter-group dynamics at play and understand the needs of different groups in the system
- Agreeing on new decision-making protocols that aren't directed by, say, the funder of the ecosystem of work, but by the full range of actors in the ecosystem can be a strong foundation for a distributed collaborative working
- Working through many-to-many or many-to-mission (where many people make agreements with a collective broad overarching mission) micro agreements can be a way of unlocking a distributed method of establishing agreements around pay across a system
- Unpicking our traditional assumptions of how pay correlates to particular sectors (care, legal, advice...), types of organisation (private, public, charity, social enterprise...) or type of impact (business start-up support, homelessness services, place-based change....) and re-establishing an understanding of value creation and how pay links to this is a core part of addressing (in)justice across an ecosystem
- Recognising the unique circumstances of particular needs of some groups and being responsive to those can help to ensure that all needed actors can participate

Finding ways to distribute not pay but, say, funds from a central pooled budget across a range of actors in collaboration builds very much upon the principles of pay outlined above. This will be explored in more depth in our upcoming publication around transitioning grantmaking.

Case Studies

Outlandish

A digital agency that builds beautiful data tools, websites and campaigns for positive social impact. They are a worker-owned co-operative.

[Outlandish - Group set pay using sociocracy](#)

Civic Square

A public square, neighbourhood lab, and creative + participatory platform focused on regenerative civic + social infrastructure.

[Civic Square - Living wage to a thriving wage](#)

Collaborative Future

A social enterprise actively advocating for a society where everyone is valued and empowered. They help teams, networks and organisations to learn from, nurture and recruit individuals that they wouldn't normally meet, and we support people looking for work to pave their own career path.

[Collaborative Future - Decoupling pay and value](#)

Transition Network

Transition Network is a charity set up to support the Transition movement. A movement of communities coming together to reimagine and rebuild our world. The charity works to inspire, encourage, connect, support and train communities world-wide as they self-organise around the Transition model.

[Transition Network - Long journey to flat pay](#)

Dark Matter Labs

In a context of climate breakdown and technological disruption, Dark Matter Labs focuses on accelerating societal transition towards collective care, shared agency, systems approaches, long-termism and interconnectedness.

[Dark Matter Labs - Freedom. Fairness. Security](#)

Sites of experimentation

[Link to Airtable](#)

Resource database

[Link to Airtable](#)