Bouncing Beyond to Wellbeing: Next Economies

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Transforming toward a Flourishing World for All

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Bounce Beyond to Wellbeing: Our Next Economies Vision

Around the world people are transforming the exploitive and corrosive aspects of their economies in favor of economies that support the flourishing of all life. They are doing this work under a wide range of banners, such as circular-, sustainable-, doughnut-, *buen vivir*-, well-being-, socially just-, environmental-, and regenerative-economies. The urgency, scale and complexity of the economic transformation task requires connection, coherence and amplification of effort. Siloed and niche efforts are greatly impeded by the huge, complex forces of the current dominant economy. Bounce Beyond aims to provide the connections of people, tools, knowledge, and initiatives to greatly accelerate the movement to the “next economies” paradigm. Our mission is to ‘catalyze global transformation communities to co-create a flourishing future of life-centered economies’.

Core to our strategy is to identify and support those who are already on this economic transformation path. We focus on two groups. One is the many initiatives working around a particular geography, such as a political unit or bio-region. The other is initiatives around particular issues and sectors such as agriculture and health. We consider these to be communities that we call “CoNECTs”: Collaborating Next Economies and Communities in Transformation.

Stimulated by the Covid-19 crises that highlights both the great problems of the dominant economy and the ability to enact change, a dozen people with deep transformation knowledge and active in economic transformation formed Bounce Beyond. Out of this group four CoNECTs began coming together as Bounce Beyond in January, 2021. They form the initiating CoNECTs cohort to pilot the Bounce Beyond approach. They are very diverse, in order to gain experience with a variety of contexts for the next stage of Bounce Beyond’s development. They are:

1. Global Seafood Transformation: This group has six diverse stakeholder networks that have come together to take to a next stage of development the numerous initiatives in support of transforming to sustainable seafood production.
2. Devon Bio-Region: This modest-sized CoNECT is led by the Bio-Regional Learning Centre in Devon in the southwest of England. It has been operating for several years, drawing from various traditions such as regenerative and doughnut economics.
3. Social Purpose Business in Canada: With leadership of the Social Purpose Institute in Vancouver, this economic transformation focuses on integrating social purpose into the core operating objectives and logic of business.
4. Costa Rica Regenerativa: This initiative emphasizes both global and local connections to produce an array of activities to transform the country’s economy towards regeneration.
These initiatives all share their commitment to transformation, which Bounce Beyond summarizes as a movement towards economies with a core set of values or principles. These values and principles include stewardship of the whole system, understanding the importance of relationship and connectedness, co-creating collective value for the whole community at relevant scales, generating local to global governance mechanisms, and developing equitable markets and trade for businesses. In forwarding these values, we directly counter the impact of today’s dominant economics—neoliberalism.

Bounce Beyond engages in three sets of activities: seeing and sensemaking, connecting, and catalyzing action. In working with prototype next economies, Bounce Beyond helps them see and map their own systems, so that they can align themselves with others as relevant. For example, with Bounce Beyond, the Devon CoNECT used Synthesis Mapping to describe their journey forward. This work of seeing and sensemaking addresses deep system challenges, including creating new narratives around economies and economics, among others.

The connecting activity joins people working around a specific geography, sector, or issue, who are facing common challenges, so they can co-develop knowledge and tools to share. With these connections, fragmented efforts can turn into powerful transformations systems, gaining awareness of their activities as efforts pursuing transformation. With this transformations systems awareness, people in the CoNECTs sense how they can and do work collectively so that they cohere their efforts in new ways, and avoid duplications and overlaps that waste resources.

Catalyzing action involves turning the sense-making and connecting into actions. Action might mean developing new partnerships for collective power, focusing on an issue now understood as a highly strategic leverage point, or experimenting to develop clearer pathways forward. In doing this work, Bounce Beyond is acting as a transformation catalyst: accelerating the activity of those working for transformation in a shared direction. It sits in the middle of these different activities to help them integrate their actions holistically, prototype, and experiment to emerge needed new innovations and infrastructure. Bounce Beyond provides the connective infrastructure for connecting, amplifying and cohering next economies activities into a powerful force.
You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.

Buckminster Fuller

Bouncing Beyond today to a new future, a new imaginary

Imagine living in a world where everyone had enough, always. A world of communities where thriving nature is nearby. A world where work is fulfilling, engaging, and provides the means to live the life you want to live and securely support your family, meeting all their needs. Where all who want to have voice can participate in decision making that affects them and their communities. Where there is enough leisure time to pursue talents, hobbies, arts, and crafts that beautify and enhance the community.

Imagine this world as one where children can play outside safely, learning and growing with each other and the natural world around them. A world where safe streets, parks, and playgrounds are plentiful. Where schools inspire children to learn and grow throughout their lives. Where values of decency, connectedness, and belonging flourish.

Imagine a world where everyone truly finds a place to belong. In this world people accept each other as they are, no matter their differences. Each place uniquely reflects local culture, traditions, heritage, and landscapes. Yet each place is also connected to a bigger set of communities and ultimately to a global community that cherishes all life. There is safety, security, and equity for all people, including racial and ethnic equity. There you can lead the life you want, doing meaningful work that earns enough to ensure the wellbeing of your family.

Imagine a sense of abundance, enough for all, always. A world where all living creatures are treated with dignity, where the fields, mountains, oceans, rivers, and lakes, forests—and all of nature—flourish. In this world you, your children, and their children’s children will be able to all thrive in connection with each other and with the bigger planetary world. It is a world where people treat each other—and other beings and the whole of nature—with dignity and respect. A world where work and play can hardly be distinguished. A world where arts of all sorts abound because there is enough time for people to develop their interests, abilities, and talents to the fullest in ways that fulfill them and enhance the lives of others. A world where everyone has enough.

Imagine in this world there is enough food for all, including the animals and other beings around you. Imagine that this food is
grown in regenerative ways that actually replenish and restore the land, often locally. Where gardeners and farmers regenerate and honor the land that produces crops, using nature’s ways to do so. Where people, communities, and nations are self-sufficient yet connected to each other and the greater planetary whole. Where you, children, youth, and elders are valued, have dignity, and are respected. Where goods and service that are needed are made with quality and durability in mind. Where goods and food are produced in ways that enrich the natural world, leaving the water cleaner, the earth and soil richer, the mountains, deserts, forests, plains, fields, rivers, streams, lakes, and oceans intact and healthy. Where forests flourish nearby, and orchards are planted locally so that anyone can harvest local fruit from them. Indeed, where non-human beings are treated with dignity and respect. Where children can run and play in open fields or in the forests and lakes. Where cities, towns, and villages are self-sufficient and vibrant, yet connected to each other locally and globally.

Imagine a world where vibrancy, abundance, and wellbeing for all—including all living creatures—is at the heart of work, learning, arts, and play. Importantly, imagine that economics and economies build and support that world.

Add your own ideas about what your dream world looks like.

Imagine you can be part of building such a world. Imagine that we all can. Emerging that world is what Bounce Beyond does. This e-book highlights Bounce Beyond’s learning journey during its first year with full recognition that the learning is on-going. While we have emerged a fairly deep understanding of transformational system change already, that understanding is likely to change over time.

Join us on our learning journey to system transformation!
Experiments Everywhere. Let’s Connect Them!

Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.

Barack Obama

There are efforts and experiments, initiatives attempting to build aspects of the world described, all over the world. Individually, they are trying to build this world. Each one is unique—suited to its people and its place in the world. They are giving voice and agency to people in particular domains. They are shifting local economies, changing how food and other goods are produced and delivered, building healthy and supportive communities. They are shifting how people think about their economies towards building communities of mutual respect and support. In doing so, they are changing their own lives and helping their communities to flourish.

Individually they are inspiring. Together, they could be remarkable—and unstoppable. Together they could change the world as we know it, overcome today’s many crises—from economic and racial injustice to climate change, ecosystem collapse, and species extinction to the lack of connection and understanding that leads to political divisiveness.

Here’s the thing: Right now most of these efforts are small scale and quite localized. While they are wonderful and inspiring, they mainly work independently of each other. They do not yet have the wherewithal to transform how the majority of people still think about economics—and economies—or how we live and work. Together, though, such ideas could become the norm. Working in sync they could determine what their own future looks like—and show others how to do the same for themselves. Together they could form what Bounce Beyond calls powerful transformation systems—collections of all those efforts and initiatives that are aimed at building their communities into locally-flourishing and inspirational mini-worlds where everyone flourishes.

Together, they—we—can transform the world! Together we can bring about new ways of thinking about how we all connect, work, and live. Ways that suit local traditions, places,
and heritages and give everyone a chance at a good life for the long term. Ways that keep us all connected at the planetary scale. That is the vision that Bounce Beyond holds. It is a vision that involves connecting these now fragmented and independent initiatives. It means helping such emerging initiatives and the people in them find ways to cohere and enhance their efforts. Then it means building them out—amplifying them—so that everyone, everywhere, and all of nature benefits.

Bounce Beyond works from a place of deep (and still emerging) knowledge about transformation and systems change. We work with a range of emerging economies, focused on flourishing and well-being, to help them accelerate their own knowledge of new/next economy ways of doing things. We identify patterns in these new models. Then we develop and share synthesized learning and understanding that emerges from them broadly, both within the innovative economies themselves and far beyond. This knowledge and learning can help next economy innovators everywhere better draw from their own experiences. By learning with others with similar experiences, innovators can build interconnected webs of effective action, or transformation systems, to support innovations that are needed in a given place, sector, or issue.

Bounce Beyond’s core idea is that we need to move beyond today’s flawed and problematic economics and economies towards ones that enrich both human and natural life. That means new (and very ancient) understanding about our interconnectedness with each other and the land on which we thrive. It means emerging broadly shared knowledge that so that next economy innovators can expand effective action towards economic—and social—innovations. These innovations can build promising new economies that can work better for all, from the local to the global, from the human to the natural world. Next economy evolution, viewed from Bounce Beyond’s lenses, means carefully incubating promising new socioeconomic models, accelerating knowledge, and facilitating experimentation towards “bouncing beyond” today’s flawed economic models towards the next economies that are needed to build a world where all can flourish.

All of this transformation is a journey—a long-term process of connecting, cohering, and amplifying efforts to build the world—locally and globally—that we want. It is about moving from today’s business as usual system towards—eventually—what is known as the third horizon, a viable future for all. While the third horizon can be envisioned, there is a process of emerging new organizations—second horizon initiatives—that provide innovations that move the system towards that third horizon. Doing that is an emergent and unpredictable process. There are, however, patterns and visioning that third horizon can make transformation feasible. Different efforts at connection and transformation will evolve differently, depending on their circumstances. No one can predict exactly what will happen in any given place or how things will work. All of that depends on what happens in that place, who is involved, and what decisions they make. We do know, though, that bringing together people focused on that new imaginary—
the vision of a flourishing world for all—can accomplish what no individual effort can.

It will take time, effort, engagement, and active involvement by people everywhere to turn around today’s economies—to convert to equitable and flourishing communities with healthy, productive, and stable economies. It will take imagination and hard work to shift away from today’s thinking about economies and economics, which play a huge role in creating the crises of our day, towards new ways of thinking—towards that third horizon. But it is already happening in numerous places and through many different efforts and activities. And we believe that by working in alignment, together we can achieve the flourishing communities—and world—we dream about. We are on a journey, learning more and more as we go along.
We are called to be the architects of the future, not its victims.

Buckminster Fuller

Possibility: Bounce Beyond Today’ Crises to a Flourishing Future for All

The Bounce Beyond team believes that it is possible to build the better world we imagine, the world we dream—that third horizon. We believe it is possible to shift how people think about economies and their communities—from the ground up and with the support of people everywhere. Building these worlds means creating what some call a new social imaginary. That social imaginary means bouncing beyond today’s flawed economics thinking and production approaches to regenerative, restorative, and nature-based ways, from local to global (or what we call cosmopolitan localism). This new social imaginary recognizes the flaws in the current situation—the first horizon. It envisions what is possible and desired—the third horizon. And then it engages with initiatives that build towards that third horizon who are acting on what is known as the second horizon—innovation towards the vision. Bounce Beyond connects today’s second horizon initiatives to bring the third horizon closer faster.

We believe that building thriving communities locally and connecting them to each other is humanity’s deepest desire. To do so, we have to work together because our individual efforts, while laudable, are not enough to make the changes needed. We need to do so from the context of local places that flourish because they shape themselves in accord with local cultures, traditions, and resources. Each place, each sector, each community can take on the power and agency to shape its own local and shared visions of what our/their community looks like, how it operates. Then they can connect to the bigger world of communities that surrounds them becoming vibrant and vital part of the whole—bioregion, nation, and planet! Together they can change the world and make all of our lives better.

Bounce Beyond aims to help communities connect the now fragmented initiatives that are aimed at building this type of flourishing world for themselves. We help them cohere their efforts and amplify their impacts—and thereby generate a globally flourishing world of abundance for all, where today’s many crises resolve themselves, and people have agency and live in harmony with nature. In the rest of this document we will explore how we (to date, anyway) do that work.

We hope you will join us as we explore what it will take to make these possibilities into reality.

The Bounce Beyond Team
Envisioning a New Economics for Local and Global Next Economies

You really can change the world if you care enough.

Marian Wright Edelman

Bounce Beyond focuses on what we call next economies—efforts emerging everywhere, often but not always from the ground up, to shift away from today’s destructive and unsustainable economic practices and beliefs. We are bouncing beyond today’s flawed and problematic economics towards an economics of wellbeing for all—life centered economies and economics. A life-centered economics\(^1\) offers a vision of the flourishing of all of life based on economic ideas that support—rather than destroy—life. Below is a set of life-centered economic principles, values, tenets, ideas, and understandings that we rely on as we do our work. These ideas are drawn from many ways of thinking and support a wide range of diverse next economies that move towards flourishing for all of life:

- **Stewardship of the whole**: Take shared responsibility for the whole community, enterprise, institution, and, indeed planet (not just individual responsibility)

- **Relationship and connectedness**: Recognize that humans and other beings live on one interconnected planet, and are integrally connected to each other and to all other living beings on the planet, on whom we depend for our existence, meaning that we have shared responsibility for the wellbeing of all (as opposed to being solely self-interested profit maximizers)

- **Co-creating collective value**: Reframe the purpose of economies and businesses as creating the common good—wellbeing, prosperity, health, flourishing for all (not simply financial wealth and growth)

- **Local to global governance**: Build ground-up local governance networks working with agency to shape their own local economies and meet local needs in contextually appropriate ways while staying

connected to the global context where we also live (as opposed to one-size-fits-all economics)

- **Regenerative, reciprocal, and circular production of economic goods and services:** Produce goods and services in ways that harmonize with nature, in a ‘waste equals’ food’ approach where what is waste for one process/production becomes food in another, where toxins are eliminated, and regenerative processes that restore, replenish, and reuse materials are the norm

- **Equitable markets and trade:** Recognize that markets need to be fair and equitable, accessible to all, locally sensitive and open, with nations and communities able to gain self-sufficiency locally if that is desired

We would note that these tenets, principles, values, memes, understandings, ideas—whatever you want to call them—are meant to support life-giving economies of all sorts—the kind that Bounce Beyond wants to support. They provide guidance to understandings that support and affirm life in all its aspects.

These ideas are not dogma. Instead, they are principles to be applied in contextually sensitive ways that recognize differences in people, heritage, place, and culture, yet work toward valuing life in all of its beautiful manifestations. They can be used to support emerging next economics models like Kate Raworth’s Doughnut Economics, ecological economics, common good economics, and various other approaches to new/next economies. What they are, in technical terms, are what are known as memes—core ideas or cultural units. These new memes can (like the ideas so commonly found in today’s more dominant form of economics—neoliberalism) be stated in different ways as appropriate to different contexts and situations. They also support the aspirations of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (with the exception of the idea of continual growth as expressed by SDG #8), which generally aim for emerging a life-centered (rather than wealth-centered) world.

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3 The aggregator WEAll, the Wellbeing Economy Alliance, has many such initiatives as collaborators. See: https://wellbeingeconomy.org/.

Bounce Beyond: Possibilities in Abundance

A winner is a dreamer who never gives up.

Nelson Mandela

What is Bounce Beyond?

Bounce Beyond brings dreamers together—practical dreamers who envision a world of flourishing for all of life. Dreamers who are willing to work collaboratively in the interests of the greater whole—a world where all can flourish. Dreamers who recognize the wisdom inherent in local and Indigenous knowledge and understanding, as well as scientific and otherwise shared knowledge. Dreamers who tap that wisdom in supporting new initiatives specifically aimed at replacing today’s ways of doing business and economics with something better, more grounded in the complex realities of local communities connected to the bigger global community. Dreamers who know that economies that are more inclusive of all voices including some that cannot easily be heard—like voices of nature, youth, and future generations—will be more equitable, more in harmony with nature, and better serve all their people. Dreamers who collectively envision a third horizon where all life can flourish.

We believe that in the collective wisdom of community there is power. Power to bring radical change—transformation—about. Thus, Bounce Beyond helps these visionaries and dreamers move beyond small niches into mainstreaming their efforts through integrated and coordinated actions. We believe that the problems of the world today demand radical action to transform flawed economics concepts and practices into regenerative, life-affirming concepts and practices. We believe that by connecting with, helping, and supporting each other multiple initiatives with similar long-term visions can form powerful transformation systems—the collection of actors working towards transforming towards flourishing. Then those transformation systems, working from the ground up and with the participation of people who will be affected by the transformations they plan, can better come about.

Thus, Bounce Beyond brings together initiatives who are working for the vision of life- and people-centered economies so that they can connect, cohere, and amplify their efforts for greater effectiveness in the interests of emerging a future where all, including all humans and all living beings, can thrive, building a connective infrastructure among them. These communities still own their own ideas, processes, and ways of doing things. They can still evolve their own approaches and visions of what they want their particular community to look
like. Bounce Beyond’s role is that of providing the connective tissue—the infrastructure of connection, while initiatives are still responsible for doing what needs to be done. In the Bounce Beyond context, however, initiatives can do so with greater impact because they are linked to others with similar dreams and aspirations who are willing to collaborate and cohere their efforts in the interests of achieving their shared vision.

Bounce Beyond provides not just connectivity but also tools, methods, and approaches for these communities to come together and collaboratively evolve their own vision of a better future. As noted, sometimes that vision is called the third horizon, the viable future for all. The third horizon is that aspirational future that many communities seek—one where all thrive together. To make it work, they need to be willing to work together in new ways, to envision a shared set of aspirations, and to co-create ideas and innovation.

Seeds of the diverse local to global communities—framing new or next economies needed for a thriving human tomorrow—are emerging everywhere, often from localized efforts. Some are focused on places or geographies, others on bioregions. Still others emphasize issues, like equity, poverty reduction, climate change, or specific sustainability problems. Some efforts focus on sectors like sustainable fisheries or regenerative agriculture. All of them can be said to be focused on bringing about a better world by transforming the way things are being done so that they work to bring about wellbeing and flourishing for all—not just economic gains as measured in monetary terms or growth.

Many of these fledgling efforts send forth tentative shoots of economic transformation that explore economies that support all of life—second horizon experiments and prototypes. Too often, however, their developers work in isolation, disconnected from the dialogue, co-creative processes, mutual engagement, and shared experiences of initiatives with similar long-term agendas. Too often they are taking initiatives to develop new ideas, products, and services that serve life, but without the knowledge of what other efforts are doing that could make their own experiments and initiatives work better—or help others. Bounce Beyond’s core insight is that connection to others with similar or related agendas could help all of them learn from each other and really gain impact for their efforts.

Such connections can help move efforts from being sideshows to being mainstage. Shared know-how and innovation can really help bring next economies to the desired transformation at scale. Avoiding duplication and filling in where there are gaps can make the overall impact of their activities far more effective, bringing together many different initiatives, each with their own focus and orientation, into a powerful web of transformation. Ecology and Sociology, 21(2): 47-62. DOI: 10.5751/ES-08388-210247.
efforts. Bounce Beyond believes that such linking of many different efforts together could be the key to coping with the very real complexity of the transformations that are needed. It is in creating and amplifying such connectivity—infrastructure—that Bounce Beyond’s uniqueness lies.

In fact, far too many initiatives operate in what ecologist Paul Hawken called ‘blessed unrest’ in his book by that name. Hawken was referring to the lack of connection and fragmentation among what he found were between one and two million independent, often small, initiatives that could broadly be thought to be working on issues of social justice and ecological flourishing. That situation still exists today.

Individually, such efforts are inspiring. Collectively, they have the potential to become an unstoppable force for co-creating a flourishing world for our children and grandchildren—and all of nature’s other beings. Like the green sprouts of spring emerging after the dormancy of winter, these initiatives, which we call next economies, need cultivation and nurturing to thrive into beautiful flourishing gardens: local economies that support people and nature everywhere.

Bounce Beyond brings such communities and initiatives together. Through engaging with each other, they can begin to cohere their efforts and then amplify their effectiveness, impact, and scale. They can see what is in their community—or system—and what is missing or needed to be developed. By learning and working together, engaging in deep conversations, learning to see the whole of what they are trying to change and its interconnections, such next economies efforts can transform their part of the world for the better. Then they can use their limited resources to build out the changes that are needed, avoiding overlap and competition. Instead, they can work towards shared aspirations that fit local needs and interests, while still being part of a greater transformative whole.

Bounce Beyond aims to provide the means—the tools, techniques, and processes—that facilitate and support such diverse communities and initiatives to co-create collective engagement, dialogues, shared learning from experience, and wisdom so that such burgeoning next economies become the norm. It supports these communities—or CoNECTs (Collaborating Next Economies and Communities in Transformation) as we call them—to build needed physical and social infrastructure that power the emergence of next economies that harmonize with nature, foster regenerative practices in businesses and other institutions, and tackle local issues, whatever they might be, more effectively. We will explore these approaches and ideas in more detail below.

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Bounce Beyond: Vision, Mission, and Goals

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.  

Margaret Mead

Vision

Bounce Beyond operates with a very simple vision in mind: emerging a world where socially just wellbeing economies support and enhance the flourishing of all life.

Bounce Beyond evolved from the work of the SDG Transformations Forum and was founded by Steve Waddell, also founder of the Transformations Forum, along with a global team of knowledgeable transformation stewards. Initially a group of people with understanding of and skill in systems transformation came together to design, and ultimately, steward Bounce Beyond’s activities. When asked (or asking ourselves), who are we to envision this magnitude of transformation, implicitly, we keep in mind the statement above by anthropologist the late anthropologist Margaret Mead that it is small groups of people who always change the world—we hope for the better.

Bounce Beyond recognizes that small groups, however effective independently, typically do not bring radical change about in isolation—in part because of powerful, dominant forces aligned in opposition. To be truly impactful, emerging next economies initiatives need to collaborate and co-create the changes that are desired with like-minded others. Different groups can bring different skills, interests, and emphases to the issues at hand so that more holistic approaches can be taken that have the potential for greater impact. Often such collaborations need to work from the ground up to ensure that all voices are heard. They need to work laterally, connecting with others across the many silos that exist. Silos tend to keep knowledge, action, and policy separate and fragmented, so connecting across different types of boundaries is vital to bringing whole system transformation about. And, yes, such efforts also need to work from the top down, through more conventional mechanisms like policy change, structural change, and changing institutional purposes.
Mission

Bounce Beyond is an example of a new way of organizing for transformation called a transformation catalyst. Transformation catalysts work explicitly on bringing change about catalytically through connecting, cohering, and amplifying actions that tap into what is known and being done in ways that magnify such efforts and their positive impacts. Such catalysis enables existing initiatives to become more powerful and impactful because they cohere into transformation systems (T-systems)—the set of actors and initiatives working towards change in a given place, sector, or issue (see page 17 for a summary of mission, goals, and values).

Bounce Beyond’s mission is to greatly speed the transition to wellbeing economies by catalyzing the collective power of everyone working for them. This mission is accomplished through engaging with collaborating partners in activities of seeing and sensemaking about their own system(s) and the issues they face, connecting with aligned others to emerge powerful transformation systems, and catalyzing coherent transformative actions to change what needs to change, either together or independently. These activities, including deep conversations and dialogue, enable useful diagnoses of the relevant communities, systems, stakeholders, and issues or problems being faced to emerge—so that they can be acted upon more effectively.

Goals

Bounce Beyond brings together diverse exemplars of next economies over a relatively short period of time to co-develop methods, practices, and economic infrastructure that provide the foundation for next economies that are appropriate to their place, issues, and sectors. We intend to use appropriate approaches, dialogical processes, tools, and methods to connect actors within these CoNECTs (Collaborating Next Economies and Communities in Transformation). We help them weave together, that is, cohere their own efforts, and then amplify them for greater effectiveness and impact. In that process, they build dynamic and powerful transformation systems in what is often a ground-up set of actions geared to enhancing flourishing for all life—toward third horizons that they collectively envision. Once a network of CoNECTs is established, we will link the diverse CoNECTs and their transformation systems with each other to create a global groundswell of transformative action towards economies that foster the wellbeing of all life. In the process, we seek to upend
today’s dominant and destructive forms of economics in favor of economics and economies that favor life.

**Values**

In our view, system transformation needs to be guided by a clear set of values focused on building a world where all people and life can flourish. Such values create an ethos in our work that enables respect and dignity with and for all participants. Otherwise, there is the potential for transformation to lead in the direction of elitism or autocracy. Further, no one can assume that they know everything about any given socio-economic or ecological system. Nor does any one person—or even group of people—have all the answers that are needed. System transformation towards flourishing for all life is guided by a strong set of values emphasizing participation by many, voice for all, and keeping decision-making as local as possible.

Bounce Beyond’s values also provide a framework for all of our actions as we engage with the partners in transformative action towards next economies that we call CoNECTs (Collaborating Next Economies and Communities in Transformation) as well as for ongoing learning both within Bounce Beyond and the CoNECTs and more broadly. We seek partners who share our values and have a shared set of aspirations for what the next economies they hope to foster look like. In other words, we work with allies and like-minded initiatives, rather than trying to change resisters.

In the context of Bounce Beyond, values include ensuring *flourishing and dignity for all of life*, where life includes all people, everywhere, no matter their status, race, ethnicity, or other attributes. All of life also includes other living beings. Life even can be thought of as meaning the whole planet conceived as a living system, as ecologist James Lovelock has argued.⁷ Thus, another value is working in *balance and harmony with others and nature*, while simultaneously recognizing the integral *interconnections and relationships* among all beings. Indeed, from a systems perspective—ecologically, physically, and in human terms—we are all connected. What happens in one part of a given system, affects the whole in either small or large ways.

Further, we value taking a *whole systems perspective* wherever we are working—community, place, bioregion, sector, state, issue, or planet. That perspective means that another core Bounce Beyond value is that of taking *shared responsibility and stewardship of the whole*, which means the whole system not just one aspect of the community or system. From a systems perspective all the parts of a given system (or community) are interrelated—interconnected. So when something affects a part of the system, other aspects of that

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system also change. When systems are approached piecemeal, or only parts are nourished, they cannot be healthy overall. Importantly, that means also incorporating values of equity, justice, and inclusion in all of our work.

**Next Economies’ Values**

This section elaborates on the values that are listed at the front of this e-book. In addition to the values that are internal to Bounce Beyond, there are related values associated with the emerging next economies of interest—the ones working towards that third horizon. This set of values is what Bounce Beyond’s collaborators bring with them (and that we seek in them) or are aligned with values we co-creatively emerge into suited to a given CoNECT. One next economy value is that of stewardship of the whole, valuing places and cultures as unique, distinct, and valuable in and of themselves. What that means is recognizing that each place, issue, and sector brings its own uniqueness, legacy, cultural heritage, and place-based context. That distinctiveness is vital and it means collaborating with very different sets of initiatives without needing or desiring to homogenize them.

Another next economy shared value is around the purpose of economies, shifting away from a sole focus on economic or monetary growth towards optimizing collective value, that is, creating common good for people and flourishing for all of life. A third value recognizes the importance of voice and participation in decision making processes at multiple levels and by many people, while also simultaneously acknowledging the reality that we live in a global / planetary context. We are linked by the nature of ecology and physics—and also, these days, digitally. Creating voice in such contexts requires respectful collaborative governance that enables local initiatives in the context of a cosmopolitan sensibility (or what scholar Gideon Kossoff calls cosmopolitan localism—cosmo-local).

There are three other values that we hope to see in our collaborating next economies (CoNECTs). One is learning from nature through regenerativity, relationship, and reciprocity. This value speaks to the need for human institutions, particularly businesses and other economic entities to operate based on the principles that nature works on—giving and taking in equal measure, in relationship, and working regeneratively to restore and rebalance our relationship with nature to stay in harmony with her bounty. The related value recognizing connectedness and relationship draws on the Indigenous principle that sees all people and all other living beings, which the Lakota express as all my relations.

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interdependent with other people and with nature, and Africans express as Ubuntu, I am because you are. This value respects the idea that we humans are integrally connected to and dependent on nature for everything—everything we have, do, eat, wear, shelter in, something that is too often forgotten. It also posits that other beings should be accorded dignity—not just humans. The final value relates to how economies and their markets operate, noting that they need to be equitable and accessible, including money, resources, markets, and trade.

**Bounce Beyond’s Design Principles**

Bounce Beyond is a continuously evolving set of relationships among people and initiatives aiming for transformation in the direction of next economies. The values above are incorporated into a set of design principles that reflect the Bounce Beyond team’s ways of approaching transformation and engaging relationships. These relationships evolve processes and structures that participants find valuable in their transformations work. Rather than an ‘organization’ or ‘network’ in the traditional sense, Bounce Beyond is better thought of as a set of interacting systems, people, and initiatives/efforts that evolves and emerges over time.

Bounce Beyond is built on the following core set of design principles that aim to foster healthy relationships and well-designed economies that foster wellbeing, dignity, and flourishing for all:

1. **Values-based:** Bounce Beyond systems incorporate values that foster trusting and just relationships.
2. **Whole systems approach:** Bounce Beyond supports connections among all those working for transformation to next economies, to provide the breadth and depth of exchange necessary for successful transformations. It does this with a primary focus on Co-NECTs’ transformations systems participants.
3. **Independent, decentralized action:** Bounce Beyond includes multiple centers of action that are responsible for their own activity, including budgeting, expenses, income, and priority-setting.
4. **Interconnection:** People can connect among the various parts of Bounce Beyond as easily as possible, and connecting produces mutual benefit.
5. **Entrepreneurial:** The culture and infrastructure of Bounce Beyond facilitate and reward entrepreneurial energy.
6. **Diversity-embracing:** There is a drive to continually increase the diversity ethnically, culturally, sectorally, geographically, and in other ways, while ensuring shared vision, aspirations, and mission that helps cohere efforts and actions.
7. **Evolutionary resilience:** Structures and processes in Bounce Beyond are easily collapsed, expanded, and changed in response to experience, learning, and innovations.
8. **Open participation:** People and initiatives can participate in Bounce Beyond and influence its
direction in relationship to their constructive participation.

9. **Low cost**: Bounce Beyond greatly reduces transaction costs among those efforts supporting transformation by creating a platform with shared language and purpose. Its own costs are low, as it engages as much as possible expertise and activity through volunteers and leveraging people from other organizations. These people will be driven by their passion and the benefits Bounce Beyond brings through its aligned work to support active participant’s own organizations.

10. **Urgency-enabling**: The pace and scale of crises globally require urgent action. Linear methods of analyzing – planning - action taking – impact and learning, must be modified to support approaches like “design and build”, experimentation (success and failure), and action research.

Bounce Beyond believes that collectively the many initiatives now emerging to reshape economies and economics, places and bioregions, societies, industries, and whole sectors have the potential to become tomorrow’s economies. Collectively, they can reshape the societies in which those economies are embedded towards greater equity and flourishing. Further, economies build on these values and design principles will enable everyone and every being everywhere to live their lives fully. Such economies will move away from the unequitable and unsustainable economic ideas that now dominate the world, discussed next and work in harmony with nature, all people, and all of life.
Bounce Beyond Vision

A world where socially just wellbeing economies support and enhance the flourishing of all life.

Mission

Bounce Beyond greatly speeds the transition to socially just wellbeing economies in a flourishing natural environment by catalyzing the collective power of everyone working for them.

Goals

To create conversations and actions that turn new economies’ efforts into effective global transformation (T-) systems and critical infrastructure necessary for them to create flourishing communities of all sorts in harmony with the natural environment.

To connect, cohere, and amplify efforts to build a flourishing world for all of life.

Bounce Beyond Values

- Flourishing and dignity for all life
- Interconnection and relationship
- Shared responsibility and stewardship of the whole
- Equity, justice, and inclusion
- Balance and harmony with others and nature

Next Economies Shared Values

- Stewardship of the whole (valuing places and cultures)
- Optimizing collective value (creating common good, flourishing for all of life)
- Respectful collaboration governance (enabling local initiatives)
- Learning from nature (regenerativity, relationship, and reciprocity)
- Connectedness (All my relations: interdependent relationships with others and nature)
Equitable and accessible (money, resources, markets, and trade)

Transformation in a Time of Reckoning

In the twenty-first century, supplies are running short and the global thermostat is running high. Climate change is also showing us that the old model is more than obsolete. It has rendered it extremely dangerous. Over time, that model is a recipe for national disaster. It is a global suicide pact.

Ban Ki-moon

As long as the problems of the poor are not radically resolved by rejecting the absolute autonomy of markets and financial speculation and by attacking the structural causes of inequality, no solution will be found for the world’s problems or, for that matter, to any problems.

Pope Francis

A Time of Reckoning: Why Bounce Beyond?

It is hard to overestimate the number and scope of the crises that face humanity in this still relatively early part of the 21st century. As one striking example, in 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic shut down many of the world’s economic and industrial systems in their tracks. The pandemic disrupted employment, sending people who could afford to do so to work from home, while others simply lost their jobs. It interrupted food and other supplies, shut down much travel, while education at all levels, and work for many people went online. The pandemic closed restaurants and pubs, and many other businesses in many places. It made everyone aware of just which workers were actually essential—and some who were,
maybe, not so essential. Health systems were overwhelmed as millions around the world fell ill and many died, while health workers were exposed to the disease and exhausted, sometimes working without adequate protection. Experts believe that Covid-19 will not be the last pandemic to hit an increasingly globally connected world. Communities without adequate health care or social support infrastructure or where people live in poor or marginal circumstances have been particularly hard hit by Covid-19, raising important issues of social justice, equity, and viability on a global scale.

The Covid-19 pandemic, though, is just one of many serious—some existentially threatening—crises now facing humanity, some on a global scale. Long-standing economic inequality and racial/ethnic injustice became starkly evident during the pandemic. It became clear how much harder disadvantaged populations around the world were being hit with both illness and economic distress resulting from Covid-19 than were better off or less marginalized populations.

Global inequality was already a growing concern before the pandemic. In some ways the wealth gap is a consequence of the harshness of the dominant strain of economics in the world in the second half of the 20th century—neoliberalism, as discussed later in more detail. Indeed, neoliberal economics, which is still the dominant form of economics, ignores and even celebrates the fact that the rich keep getting richer, while the poor continue to struggle. Neoliberalism also argues, as one of its strongest advocates Margaret Thatcher once stated, that ‘there is no such thing as society’.

Another global crisis is species extinction, also known as biodiversity loss. The world has entered into what is sometimes called the sixth great extinction. The only thing is that this one, unlike past species devastations, which have been caused by natural events, is human-induced. Recent reports indicate that up to a million species may be lost. And lost species are gone forever. The problem with losing species is that healthy ecosystems, not to mention human wellbeing, depend on species diversity for their resilience. Species diversity is core to nature’s natural orientation towards abundance and regenerative capacity—and loss of species diminishes both. While sometimes we humans like to separate ourselves from nature and think that somehow we are not reliant on her bounty, the reality is that we are, ourselves, nature. Because we are integrally linked to and part of nature—we are of and from nature—we are entirely dependent on the flourishing of nature and all her biodiversity for our own long-term wellbeing.

Another crisis and perhaps the most dangerous of all for the future of humanity, of course, is the climate emergency. Many climate scientists now believe that we have but a few years to reverse course. Climate scientists, ecologists, and many other astute observers argue that we need to change our economic policies, practices, and actions, in effect—to be able to control the trends that could result in a world where human civilizations are deeply threatened—and do so sooner rather than later. A series of graphs shows what scientists call the ‘Great Acceleration’. These charts show dramatic exponential growth in a wide range of socioeconomic trends since about
1950. The great acceleration graphs highlight expansive growth human activities (including in human population, GDP, energy use, water use, fertilizer consumption, and others) and negative impacts on earth systems (including increases in carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, methane, stratospheric ozone, marine fish capture, tropical forest loss, domesticated land) and others.

Not only do these human activities have the same magnitude of impact as many natural forces, but they also are taking place at a much faster rate than nature would ordinarily change. Collectively, this growth in human—largely economic—activity and its resultant impact on the natural environment has generated what some experts call a new geological era—that of the Anthropocene. The Anthropocene is a term that has been proposed to mean the era of human impact on the Earth’s geology and ecosystems. It is tightly linked to the civilizational threat of the climate emergency.

There are many other crises in the world today. Some are social, like threats from political extremism, racial injustice, hunger, food insecurity, and not enough decent living wage employment. We could add terrorism—both international and domestic, migration of people away from abusive governments, economic scarcity, or impacts of climate change, digital surveillance, privacy, housing, and nuclear threats, and others to this list. Other problematic human practices that have both social and ecological effects include inhumane industrial animal husbandry, overuse of human-made fertilizers and pesticides, deforestation, destructive mining practices, industrial wastes and toxins, plastic waste in oceans, polluted streams and rivers, as examples. Still others crises are ecological in nature, including the biodiversity loss and climate change already mentioned. Ecological crises also include increasing desertification in many places, deforestation, extreme weather events that include extreme heat, flooding, topsoil erosion, drought, water scarcity, and raging fires, depending on location. Further, about half of humanity lives in coastal regions, which are the very same places that are most threatened by rising sea waters associated with climate change.

Given the confluence of these manifold crises, especially with the wake-up call provided by the pandemic, there is little doubt that human communities, particularly human economic systems, face a time of reckoning. We need to bounce beyond today’s economics in particular towards next economies that are capable of supporting wellbeing and flourishing for all. No one quite knows how to do that. The power of collective wisdom, however, is that we can work together to develop new ideas and approaches, try experiments and see what does and does not work, and make changes quickly. Helping communities work through the reckoning we all face towards a better world is what Bounce Beyond is all about.
Changing the Economic Story

The point is made. It is clear that there are no shortages of problems—economic, social, and ecological problems (we can call them socio-economic problems as shorthand). The question, of course, is what to do about them? That is where Bounce Beyond enters the picture. Bounce Beyond’s team brings knowledge about transformation at the systems level, understanding of different types and scale of systems, and an interest in emerging powerful and effective transformations systems with an agenda of creating locally-informed and governed next economies geared toward the flourishing of all life.

But how is that shift to happen? Why focus on next economies and on economics and not some of these other problems?

There is a rationale for fostering ‘next economies’ that are explicitly oriented towards the flourishing of all life. That reason is that economies and the economic beliefs and hence practices and actions that back them up have dramatic impacts on both societies and the natural environment. Economic activities are deeply embedded in societies and in turn in nature, and their impacts ripple out to the rest of the world.

Today’s economics forms and frames a belief system that is what anthropologists call a cultural mythology. Cultural myths are narratives or stories so deeply held and understood that they tell us a lot about our place in and impact on the world. Really powerful such stories and myths are called meta-narratives. The economic ideology that is dominant today is so pervasive that it constitutes such a meta-narrative. Other ideas, like the separation of mind and body in Western cultures and the separation/domination of humans from/over nature are related in some ways and also represent dominant narratives in the industrialized world. Such ideas feed into the deliberate ignoring of nature in today’s dominant economics, as discussed below, and also feed notions that nature is only worth something to the extent that humans can exploit her resources.

The ideas that constitute today’s still dominant economics—neoliberalism—are so pervasive that they effectively constitute an important and widely accepted cultural myth—a metanarrative. Cultural myths basically inform people about how to view the world about them and what their place in it is.
The power of neoliberalism is that, despite growing concerns and critiques of it, many people accept its tenets unquestioningly, despite that they are flawed and highly problematic in many ways as we discuss below.

Looking at the litany of crises facing the world described earlier from a systems perspective we can see that many of those issues and crises arise directly from the way that economics frames our beliefs and shapes economic, business, and governmental activities. For example, such impacts ripple out from the particular approaches that businesses and governments of all sorts and sizes and others take to their work. As alluded to, those approaches are built on a set of beliefs—an ideology even—that frames today’s dominant economic model, neoliberalism. We explore some of the most problematic aspects of neoliberalism next.

Why Is Neoliberalism Flawed?

The core of Bounce Beyond’s efforts, as we have seen, is to develop next economies based on life-affirming principles, though our understanding of what constitutes a next economy is quite broad and inclusive. Life-affirming next economies tenets and core ideas (what we like to call the memes or core ideas that support them) are quite different from the flawed principles that are often used to justify today’s economics of neoliberalism (our particular notions are elaborated starting on p. 26). Amidst the chaos of the crises described above, there is much talk of how our economics and economies must and will bounce back. But if we only bounce back we will create the same patterns as before.

We need instead to understand that everything we do, are, eat, wear, live in, consume and manufacture comes from nature. That we humans are interdependent with and fully dependent upon all of nature’s regenerative capacities and diversity for our survival. That recognition of this fundamental—biophysical—set of relationships is vital. Sadly, many of today’s dominant economic practices that shape our societies fail to recognize this fundamental reality. And that means that
too many humans are also devalued, too, in part because they do not appear to contribute economically.

Just what does neoliberalism say? Why is this way of thinking so troublesome? While neoliberalism is a product of—and most dominant in—Northern industrialized nations (particularly the US), its influence is global—and highly problematic. That is why we focus on its influence here. Here is a summary of neoliberalism that lays out its core ideas:

Businesses and economies operate best with free markets, free economies, and free trade on a global scale, that is, with as few rules and restrictions as possible. Growth is a core objective of this system because free and unregulated markets are expected to benefit everyone. Further, free markets are believed to take care of most if not all problems. The bottom line is financial wealth, measured in maximized shareholder wealth and profitability for businesses and growth in gross domestic/national product for countries/societies (or, as they are known, ‘economies’). Private property is a core value, thus privatization of what might once been considered public goods (like clean water) is advocated, along with ‘laissez-faire’ [hands off] government, i.e., deregulation or as little government regulation/intervention in markets as possible, since such regulation might reduce profits. Competition, among businesses and even nations, is a hallmark of the free enterprise system as thus defined, with a winner-take-all attitude based on individualism and libertarianism, free trade, economic freedom, and social Darwinism. This approach favors policies that include economic liberalization, privatization, fiscal austerity, deregulation, and spending limitations for governmental agencies.9

The core ideas in neoliberalism—and, importantly, the ones that people developing next economies are working on changing—have proved both flawed and problematic. Yet they are pervasive—you can hear them on the nightly news, read them in newspapers. They have become so common that it is hard to recognize them as simply a ‘story’ (or narrative) that we tell ourselves. That story is about what economies and economics are, what businesses are for, and how these things should operate. But that is what these understandings are. Stories. So too, we admit, ideas about economies that foster the flourishing of all of life, are also stories and narratives. We simply believe that flourishing of all of life, wellbeing for all, and similar stories based on our connectedness with each other and nature, are better stories for our troubled times.

In neoliberalism, for example, the idea of endless growth on a finite planet results in overproduction, excessive consumption,

and an endless pursuit of wealth—as measured solely by financial gain. This idea triggers excessive production because of economies of scale and then sophisticated marketing to sell goods and services that are not truly needed. Such actions generate a constant quest for more stuff and more money—by businesses, communities, and people. Because the negative by-products of economic activities go into the natural environment or society, both of which are assumed not to exist in neoliberal thought, however, they do not matter in neoliberal framing. There is no such thing as ‘enough’ in neoliberal thought.

The result of ignoring both nature and society in economic thinking is that many of the ecological and social costs of doing business are not counted. Instead, they are considered to be what economists call externalities. Such so-called externalities are not incorporated into the production costs of goods and services. But those costs are out there somewhere in the system. Sometimes they are paid through what philosopher John Ruskin called ‘illth’—the opposite of wealth—in society. Other times taxes are used for cleanup or restoration, meaning that everyone who pays taxes indirectly pays those costs. Still other times the costs are ecological—in loss of biodiversity, pollution, deteriorated landscapes, and similar losses.

The sad reality is that such losses, diminishments, and costs do not factor into GDP and thus are hidden, while restoration and cleanup costs, ironically, do add to GDP. Yet we all pay those invisible costs in one way or another. Thus, there is nothing in neoliberalism that reckons with the environmental or ecological impacts of economic activity. But someone, somewhere, somehow is picking up the costs—in cleanup costs, in illness and death, in higher taxes, in lost jobs and wages, or in the lost beauty of open fields and lush forests, to name a few ways.

Indeed many futurists expect that a significant jobs crisis is coming as a result of automation, digitalization, and artificial intelligence. A bigger jobs crisis than already exists means that there will not be enough decent work in the world to provide support for everyone. Yet many other futurists also recognize that so-called green or what we call life-affirming next economies could, if widely implemented, counter those trends to a great extent, providing many different new ‘green’ jobs in the process of also transforming towards next economies that value all life.

Further, neoliberalism’s pursuit of growth at all costs—and resulting profitability in terms of financial wealth—is what matters in today’s economics and economies. Whether that growth is in the expressed need for companies to ‘maximize profits’ or in the endless pursuit of GNP growth for countries—it remains problematic. We have only one planet with finite resources. Human activity, indeed, human population, cannot conceivably grow endlessly in such circumstances without hitting limits. Indeed, some of those limits are already being hit as work from the Stockholm Resilience Centre on planetary boundaries shows.

The very metric of GDP (gross domestic product), which is central to how most governments still measure themselves, has
been known to be flawed since its introduction. It measures only economic activity—whether that activity is beneficial or harmful. Thus, blowing the top off of a mountain (and creating cascades of toxic waste in the process) to get at minerals is considered an addition to GDP. Hospital costs associated with sickness caused by, say, pollution, or mental health costs associated with lack of wellbeing, also add to GDP. And so on.

On the other side, activity that is not typically measured in economic terms does not get counted in GDP. Things like child or elder care, helping someone who is sick, neighborliness, or volunteer activity have no ‘worth’ in the eyes of today’s economics because GDP does not take them into account. The only thing that matters in conventional economic thinking is what adds to the bottom line—of companies and of nations. And that raises another issue.

Companies, particularly large ones, in neoliberal thought, are understood to have a sole purpose, according to one of its most famous proponents, Milton Friedman. A famous New York Times article published by Friedman in 1970 still is used to articulate that position: ‘The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits’. That thinking is still widespread, as is the idea of profit maximization as company purpose. This understanding has been deeply embedded in both practice and thinking about business. It can also be found in some legal standards, despite that legal scholars like Lynn Stout have argued against defining business purpose so narrowly. That narrow emphasis is still true despite that even some key, relatively conservative, business organizations like the US-based Business Roundtable have argued for broader, more stakeholder-oriented purposes.

The reality is, however, that in many places in the world, particularly the Global South, small and medium sized businesses and enterprises are far more prevalent and important to the health of local economies than are the large multinational firms envisioned in neoliberal thought. Such enterprises are necessarily deeply embedded in their communities and connected with their stakeholders, with whom they interact on a regular basis. Because they are so deeply rooted locally, small and medium sized enterprises (and some larger ones, too), and because they can take many different forms—from sole proprietorship to partnership to incorporation (and others), their owners and employees tend to recognize the importance of wellbeing for all stakeholders, not just shareholders. The link between the health of the community and the enterprise is more obvious than neoliberal thought would have it—including links to the natural environment and local to regional governance mechanisms.

Broader conceptions of wellbeing or flourishing—when those conceptions cannot readily be measured in financial or economic terms—are not considered in neoliberal thought. Because flawed assumptions are core to neoliberalism—for instance that humans are always self-interested profit maximizers (and therefore so are the companies they form), it has been hard to break beyond this barrier. Such ideas form a paradigm, even an ideology—a set of ideas that helps explain (in this case) how economics does and ought to work. When
deeply embedded in thinking, such paradigms—narratives and stories with often repeated and highly resonant core memes—shape mindsets and in turn influence how people act.

Neoliberal thought further emphasizes both freedom and responsibility. The idea of freedom here is rooted in individualism. Responsibilities are conceived solely as individual responsibilities, in part because of the belief expressed by Margaret Thatcher that ‘There is no such thing as society’. If there is no such thing as society, the negative societal impacts of economic activities do not matter. If responsibility is simply mine—individual—then there is no shared responsibility for the good of the whole (whether community, company, bioregion, organization, or nation). Similarly, neoliberalism posits that responsibility is individual, and related to individual actions.
Rethinking Economics for Next Economies

Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

It is past time to put flawed economic ideas to rest and emerge next economies that value people everywhere, not to mention other living beings. We need new economic thinking. Thinking that values all of life including nonhuman beings. Thinking that recognizes that societies do exist and that their health is vital to ensuring wellbeing for all. Thinking that the real meaning of wealth goes well beyond monetary wealth or more stuff. Thinking that understands that while we humans can sometimes be selfish we are more often caring, collaborative, and concerned about our communities. Thinking that understands that our responsibilities go beyond self-interest to the wellbeing of our communities and the natural environment that supports and sustains us. Thinking that acknowledges economic impacts on the natural environment and works to alleviate them.

Defining wealth narrowly, purely as financial wealth, limits thinking about other possible goals for economic activities and other definitions of wealth. After all, the word wealth in its origin means happiness, good fortune, welfare, wellbeing, or health. Wealth as originally conceived thus relates to a general idea about wellbeing. Clearly, that original meaning was not limited to financial or material gains. Along similar lines, the words economy and ecology both derive from the Greek word oikos, which means house. Economy fundamentally means household management, while ecology means the study of our natural (nature-based, even planetary) house. Would it not be useful to re-link these two important ideas around wellbeing for all of life in reframing an economics of wellbeing and flourishing? The idea of fostering ground-up next economies does exactly that, integrating economics and ecology in the care for all of life on the planet.

Some of the needed new thinking about economics is arising in the very local, sector, and issues-based contexts that we call CoNECTs as they shape their views about next economies. Such thinking tends to take a holistic orientation towards wellbeing, not a money-centered orientation. This new thinking tends to be inclusive of many different priorities and perspectives, and recognizes the uniqueness of individual settings. Many new models of next economies, as well as new understandings of economics, are emerging that do emphasize the positive—and life-affirming—values that we outlined above: stewardship of the whole, relationship and
connectedness, co-creating collective value, local-to-global governance, regenerative, reciprocal, and circular production of goods and services, and equitable markets and trade.

These principles, which underpin Bounce Beyond’s understanding of next economies, stand in stark contrast to the ones they are meant to counter. They can be the basis of many different versions of next economies. They support a multitude of possibilities and a considerably more holistic take on what economies—and ecologies—are. They are meant, like economist Kate Raworth’s Doughnut Economics, to support many different approaches, while providing a holistic understanding of core needs that need to be taken into consideration. Here we elaborate these ideas a bit in the context of having them evolve as new memes that can replace the problematic ones that shape neoliberal thought.

**Stewardship of the whole** means taking responsibility not just for what belongs to one individual or the actions of one company. Rather it means taking into account the whole system—at whatever level is appropriate. That could be community, organization, bioregion, nature, or even the whole planet, because they are (as the next principle notes) all connected. Stewardship, which fundamentally means care, recognizes that living systems cannot be fragmented into their parts without considerable damage to—or sometimes without killing—the organism, whether that is a living being or a human system. Though no one person can completely understand any given whole system, it is vital to recognize that the whole system has a form of integrity that needs to be maintained if it is to stay healthy—and alive.

**Relationship and connectedness** mean acknowledging at some level that we are part of one planet, one human family, and one natural environment. We are all connected. We are integrally connected to and interdependent with other beings. Indeed, Indigenous wisdom and many faith traditions argue that we are one with the universe. Even if we do not go to a metaphysical level, we do know that realistically human wellbeing and flourishing depends entirely on nature’s ability to support our activities—economic and otherwise. The latest thinking in physics, ecology, and biology also affirm those interconnections and interdependencies. They need to be built into economic thinking. Economic thinking that recognizes relationality and connectedness would automatically take into consideration the importance of care, community, inclusion, and diversity, however these ideas might be expressed locally, and would return the idea of wealth to its original conception of wellbeing.

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Co-creating collective value allows for expanding the core focus of economic activity well beyond financial or monetary gain—towards wellbeing and flourishing for all. Collective value means taking into consideration the good of the whole in how we value and assess the output of economic activities. Wholes might be local businesses, communities, multinational corporations, nonprofit or non-governmental organizations, bioregions, nations, or, indeed, the planet as a whole. These different communities’ interests and needs—what they value—need to be balanced and harmonized with each other, co-creatively, and new metrics developed (or used) that take into account multiple sources and types of value beyond monetary ones. That means that many people are engaged in an ongoing process of defining what they collectively value and implementing policies that create such values that serve their community. Collective value thus has the potential for multiple meanings—aligned with wellbeing and flourishing for all, not just monetary ones. The idea of co-creation means that everyone has a role in producing such values that go well beyond money. Different communities might value different things. They could define their version of collective value in relevant terms, while more global metrics that define collective value for whole nations or even the whole planet can also be devised (and, indeed, are emerging in a variety of contexts already).

Local-to-global governance places priority over decisions made in local contexts where the impacts of those decisions will be felt over more centralized or global forms of decision making. Both types of decisions are needed because we do live in a globally connected world. Many next economies, however, next economies are arising from the ground up. Bounce Beyond assumes that people know what is best for them in their situations, and should be able to make relevant decisions accordingly. Governance structures in next economies need to reflect this localized understanding along with connection to the greater whole of nations and even the planet itself.

Regenerative, reciprocal, and circular production of goods and services means that production processes need to be maintained within the ecosystem’s capacity for renewal and regeneration, in line with, for instance, The Natural Step’s core principles or system conditions for avoiding overuse of natural resources or persistent toxins in nature. The Natural Step’s four system conditions or principles are: ‘In a

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sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing: 1. Concentrations of substances extracted from the earth’s crust. 2. Concentrations of substances produced by society. 3. Degradation by physical means, and 4. In that society people are not subject to conditions that systemically undermine their capacity to meet their needs.’ Reciprocity here argues for mutual benefit in all exchanges of goods and services—providing for fairness and equity in such activities rather than excessive profits or returns. Circularity adds to these principles, arguing that goods and products need to be produced in accord with the ‘cradle to cradle’ principle that food equals waste—what is waste in one system or stage becomes food for another.

**Equitable markets and trade** means going well beyond the concept of free markets towards markets that offer fairly- and fully-costed products and services without any so-called externalities, the costs of which are in the system somewhere. Such costs need to be incorporated into goods and services—internalized through mechanisms like full cost and lifecycle accounting, and fully reported through what is known as integrated reporting. Such costs in next economies include both social and ecological costs, human and natural ones. Things like strict labor standards, conformance with environmental and social regulation, and other policy moves established by participative governance structures are vital in ensuring equity in markets and trade. Further, self-sufficiency of communities at whatever level they seek is also important, as is the producing goods with durability, quality, and transparency.

Of course, the above framing is only one way to express the types of principles that might be expressed in next economies, though it is synthesized from a wide range of sources. One core partner with Bounce Beyond is the GANE (Global Assessment for New Economics) project, which is undertaking a global study to synthesize different expressions of new and next economics. The idea behind GANE is to ensure that changes, particularly changes arising from today’s many crises, including the Covid-19 pandemic, evolve a just future for people and planet—very much in line with what Bounce Beyond has in mind with CoNECTs and next economies.
Many Emerging Next Economy Exemplars: CoNECTS

I do not like carving the world into segments. We are one world.

Indira Gandhi

Bounce Beyond realizes that diverse economies needed for a thriving tomorrow are emerging everywhere, often from localized efforts. Bounce Beyond, for example, is already working with multiple next economies initiatives that we call CoNECTS (Collaborating Next Economies and Communities in Transformation). There is no one right model for emerging next economies. Such efforts can and do take many forms, names, and emphases. Some are called regenerative or circular, others build on ‘doughnut economics.’ Still others emphasize sustainability, connectedness, wellbeing, localism, buen vivir, and bioregionalism, to name a few. Some potential CoNECTS focus on industries or sectors, others bioregions, others communities or whole nations. They are each designed to fit the needs of their people, locale, issues, sectors, and natural environment. While they differ in specifics depending on where they are, these next economies are generally oriented towards wellbeing for all, flourishing life, and harmony with nature, not endless growth and financial wealth.

Here is the problem and the reason why Bounce Beyond is needed. Many powerful interests would like economies and economics to bounce back to pre-Covid19 economic practices—the very ones that created the conditions in which the pandemic emerged. The ones where species extinction, the climate emergency, political divisiveness, job loss, and growing inequality, rather than people and planet, were what was prospering. There is a significant danger that after the immediate crisis, innovative, relatively small, and still emerging ‘next economies’ will be swept away in the interests of economic growth at any cost, ignoring the true cost of such ‘growth’.

To truly become tomorrow’s economies, these innovative, often bottoms-up, next economies need support, coherence, and connection with each other. They need to learn from others how to succeed and avoid pitfalls. And they need to band together to create powerful networks and forums, what we call transformation systems. Then they can learn to work together to bring about the next economies they seek more broadly. These initiatives are already telling new stories about how their economies work. They are developing localized pathways to prosperity for all. They are already incorporating values that support all people and harmony with nature—global values. But currently, such initiatives are still fragmented and lack the power to really make the sweeping changes that are desperately needed. Bounce Beyond can help them connect to amplify their power, impact, and effectiveness.

It is time not to bounce back but to bounce beyond into new approaches to economy, economies, and economics. As we have seen, in ecology and economy the ‘eco’ means our house, our home. Our home is local—where we live and work. Increasingly, we also know that it is planetary. The crises that
we now face are on a planetary scale. These crises—like inequality, injustice, climate change, and species extinction, do not know boundaries as they are established by nation states. It is time for us humans to respect, manage and care for our local and planetary homes by respecting them and all that live in and on them, so all can flourish. The voices and intelligence of all peoples, the marginalized and the currently dominant, youth and elders, women—and men—respecting feminine as well as male voices and values. Next economies need to be inclusive of those who currently have no, or insufficient, voice in the shaping of, deciding about, and making real our forward path. Those voices must be present and have agency. Now.

The CoNECT Concept

Bounce Beyond envisions that its initial partners, which we call Co-NECTs (Collaborating Next Economies and Communities in Transformation) will become prototypes that others can imitate, in their own unique ways suited to their unique circumstances. They will learn from their own activities. Eventually they will connect with other CoNECTs, and emerging new ones to exchange ideas, insights, and new knowledge about how to transform towards flourishing with each other—and the world.

CoNECTs have a wide range of shapes and sizes. They can take many different approaches, as the table on the next page illustrates for the first four with which Bounce Beyond is working. Some are oriented towards whole sectors of the economy, e.g., the global seafood community, while others focus on a type of institution, as with the Canadian Social Purpose Institute’s emphasis on the issue of shifting business purpose. In contrast, Regenerative, Costa Rica is a country-wide effort to shift the entire nation towards regenerative agriculture, tourism, business, and living, while the South Devon Bio-Regional Learning Centre is similarly place-based, though emphasizing a bioregion. Transformation activities can be place-based, sector-based, or issues based.

The table also illustrates that vast differences in scale are possible for systemic transformation efforts, ranging from the quite local to national, for whole sectors, and for others not included yet, quite possibly global. Different frameworks can also help guide transformational efforts, depending on the needs, knowledge, and interests of the particular community. Bounce Beyond is agnostic with respect to particular frameworks, tools, or methods used, believing that local concerns, knowledge, and expertise is the best resource for understanding what is needed in a given context. That said, Bounce Beyond can and does supply expertise on a range of such frameworks, methods, and approaches as appropriate.

What does Bounce Beyond add since many initiatives are already underway? The key insight of the Bounce Beyond team is that such entities mainly tend to be operating in highly fragmented contexts. While there may be numerous initiatives attempting to, for example, improve a bioregion, chances are they are unconnected and uncoordinated. Thus, their actions may lack coherence and the necessary overall impact to achieve transformation at the system level. There may be duplications of effort—or there may be gaps that need to be filled if transformative change is to be achieved.
Table: Initial Bounce Beyond CoNECTs (as of Spring 2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead Organization</th>
<th>Boundaries</th>
<th>Key Framework</th>
<th>Development Stage</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Distinctive Activities Proposed (see Box)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Sustainable Seafood Community</td>
<td>Global – Sector (Seafood)</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Very large</td>
<td>Designing the Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Infrastructure Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Purpose Institute</td>
<td>Political (BC - Canada)</td>
<td>Social Purpose</td>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Mapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(provincial/national)</td>
<td>(business)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regenerate Costa Rica</td>
<td>Political – Costa Rica</td>
<td>Regenerative</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Designing the Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bio-Regional Learning Ctr</td>
<td>(national)</td>
<td>Donut Economics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deep Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bio-regional (Devon, UK)</td>
<td>Eco-system Donut Economics</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Mapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T-Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key to Bounce Beyond’s efforts is emerging a **powerful and shared infrastructure** for CoNECTs to greatly accelerate their work—the sense of identity as a transformation system. That is what Bounce Beyond is designed to enable and produce. This infrastructure allows CoNECTs to scale their activities in ways they might otherwise not be able to do. There are three aspects of this infrastructure. **Scaling deep** means engaging with more diverse activities because they are avoiding overlap and integrating the power of numerous efforts. **Scaling up** means creating larger impact because of the power of many actors moving in integrated and at least somewhat coherent, though
not necessarily identical, ways. Scaling across means connecting different geographies, issues, or sectors to their efforts. Scaling deep, up, and across is only possible when multiple efforts become known to each other and are willing to engage in collaborative processes to integrate and synthesize their efforts in productive ways. We foresee CoNECTs on every continent as well as globally, sharing knowledge, addressing common challenges and mobilizing people and resources to address the scale and complexity of the economic transformations challenge.

Bounce Beyond is a transformation catalyst. In the next sections, we explain how Bounce Beyond acts as a transformation catalyst, then explore how it acts to bring system transformation about through engaging with CoNECTs in emerging catalytic processes of seeing and sensemaking, connecting, and catalyzing action.
Making Transformation Happen

We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in your hands to make a difference.

Nelson Mandela

Bounce Beyond’s Theory of Change

Bounce Beyond and other transformative efforts work from what is known as a theory of change. Simply put, a theory of change is a description of how and why desired changes are expected—or helped—to take place in a given context, in this case with respect to next economies.

In this section, we will share what Bounce Beyond’s (evolving) theory of change is. We want to acknowledge that like the next economies, our theory of change is also emerging and evolving along with the next economies. Our theory of change starts with understanding what systems are—and why we focus on systems level change rather than other types. We understand Bounce Beyond as a transformation catalyst that is trying to catalyze change to make it more impactful and effective than it might otherwise be. That catalytic role involves developing powerful transformations systems. Bounce Beyond helps these transformations systems emerge, find identity as a transformation system, and develop action strategies. To do that we use different tools, methods, and processes, appropriate to their context, to help participants in the CoNECTs better understand or see who is doing what in their system, sensemake or articulate about what needs to change and why, connect with others to evolve their transformation systems, and then take transformative action, sometimes radical action to begin the transformation process, experimenting and prototyping as necessary to allow for both success and failure—and trying again.

System Transformation in Complex Wickedness

Before we go much further, we should define what we mean by systems—and systems transformation, as well as understanding a bit about the context in which it takes place. Systems are interconnected and functioning wholes that cannot be taken apart with doing significant damage to them. Bounce Beyond is interested in the living systems that can broadly be called socio-ecological systems. Living systems can include...
biological organisms as well as human systems like organizations, communities, societies, and nations, and natural systems like various ecologies. Such systems are dynamic, complex, and constantly changing. That is because they are what is known as complex adaptive systems. In addition, today’s socio-ecological systems also have many so-called wicked problems, which are similarly complex, interactive, and dynamic.

Living systems have integrity and wholeness—as themselves. They are made up of many interconnected and interdependent parts, or subsystems, particularly the socio-economic systems of interest to Bounce Beyond. This mix of complexity and wickedness can be called complex wickedness or wicked complexity. It is a characteristic of virtually all human systems, though that reality is often unrecognized.

Systems can be living organisms—like human beings, animals, and insects. Take them apart…and they are unlikely to continue living. Socio-economic systems also can be conceived as living systems, as can ecological systems like forests, plains, oceans, rivers, and deserts. So can the entire Earth when viewed through the lens that ecologist James Lovelock provided. Lovelock called Earth the living system Gaia.\[13\n
Systems, as wholes, have integrity—and many dynamic, interrelated parts. Communities, too, can be conceived of as living systems, as can nations, economies, societies, organizations, and other institutions like families, governmental bodies. They have integrity at each level.

It is important to recognize that some of these ‘wholes’ have subsystems with their own integrity. For example, living beings are wholes in themselves, and they also have subsystems like digestive, circulatory, or pulmonary systems with integrity of their own, which are tightly linked to the whole organism. Similarly, economies are comprised of multiple subsystems—industries of various sorts, markets, supply chains, governmental agencies, and business organizations, and the like, each of which is a system of its own embedded within the larger one. Further—and needing more recognition—economies are part of larger social systems that we know as societies, which themselves are embedded in natural ecosystems. Economies are subordinate to societies! And all of these systems are interdependent, interrelated, and dynamic.

System transformation thus takes place in the context of complex wickedness. In practical terms what that means is that there are many dynamic, interactive, moving parts at any given time, making system definition difficult at best. Different aspects of the system might have their own purposes and ways of doing things, but they relate to the bigger whole. Different actors in socio-economic systems can act both in concert with

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others and independently. Because once actions are taken there are unknown ripple effects, predicting outcomes and traditional approaches to planning change do not work in complex living systems, though patterns can often be seen.

Instead of planned change with specific outcome goals, transformative system change, particularly around creating next economies that meet local needs, has to be guided by a combination of shared aspirations and collaborative actions. There needs to be flexibility in assessing outcomes—and that needs to happen holistically, too. The importance of common aspirations is why shared purposes, stories, and narratives are important in this type of system change. Such narratives help inform peoples’ belief systems and dreams about the future—their general mindset. They also shape attitudes—and ultimately behavior. Mindset changes—what people believe and how they think the world is—are the most powerful levers for transformation, according to Donella Meadows, who was an important systems thinker, environmentalist, scientist, and writer.14 Mindset change, Meadows said, is second only to the ability to transcend a given mindset to see entirely new ways of thinking. Shifting mindsets towards life-affirming next economies is why focusing on shared aspirations and common narratives is so important in the system transformation that Bounce Beyond works on.

System transformation is different from other forms of change. The table ‘Types of Change’ illustrates key types of change as Bounce Beyond conceives them: incremental, reform, and transformation, which is what Bounce Beyond engages. Incremental change is the least radical. It is aimed at improving performance of the system by making improvements without much actual change to the existing system, that is, without challenging the system itself. For example, introducing a new and improved supply chain management approach in a company is an incremental change because it doesn’t change any of the fundamentals about the company, but it does potentially improve operations. At the economy level, adding more stores in a community might improve access to goods and services and improve business in a location, but it leaves the way things generally operate intact. Basically, incremental change asks question like: How can we improve on what we are already doing? How can we do more of what we are already doing or do it better? How can we be more efficient? Management thinker Peter Drucker called this view of improving things, ‘doing things right’, making them better.


Reform is more substantive because it addresses and changes the rules by which the system operates. Reforms can improve systems, because they change policy or adapt the system to changed circumstances. Reform leaves core purposes and operating modalities in place, but it does ask: What should the rules be in this circumstance? Reform often is a response to changing external conditions, such as policy shifts, environmental changes, or technological developments. Thus, in a business, shifting from an existing to a new information system platform can be a reform that helps improve existing services. At the level of economy, reform might mean, for example, requiring new reporting on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices by companies in stock markets. Reform could even mean requiring what is known as integrated reporting—reporting incorporates both financial and ESG information—to be listed on the stock market (as, for example, South Africa has done). Reform, while improving things, still leaves the existing system largely intact, while asking questions like: What new rules do we need? What new structures and processes will improve things?

Transformation is far more fundamental. In transformation, core aspects of systems—what the system is, does, and how it operates all change. For instance, the definition of core purposes might change, as when Bounce Beyond argues that next economies and their businesses need to shift their purposes away from growing financial wealth as a sole sense of purpose towards something more like generating collective value. The shift towards emerging wellbeing and flourishing of all, or collective value co-created by participants in a given setting represents a very different set of purposes. It can encompass financial wealth, but goes far beyond having that as a goal.

In some ways that shift of purpose redefines the whole system, as if new purposes are fully implemented, core performance metrics will also shift. Transformation can be accompanied by changing core metrics or assessment tools, for example, moving away from solely assessing economies by economic growth as measured by GNP towards more holistic wellbeing-oriented metrics. Mindsets—or the paradigm by which the system is understood—are also likely to change in transformation. In turn, how the system accomplishes its new goals will change, as well resource flows, power relationships, and operating practices. In transformative change new ways of thinking and acting can arise because the whole system, including its operating rules, purposes, and practices can all be changing. Transformation then asks: What are the purposes of this institution, initiative, or economy? How can those purposes best be accomplished? What needs to change to make that transformation possible?

See Table next page.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Question</th>
<th>Incremental</th>
<th>Reform</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How can we do more of the same?</td>
<td>What rules shall we create?</td>
<td>How do I make sense of this?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are we doing things right?</td>
<td>What structures and processes do we need?</td>
<td>What is the purpose?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How do we know what is best?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Incremental</th>
<th>Reform</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To improve performance</td>
<td>To understand and change the system and its parts</td>
<td>To innovate and create previously unimagined possibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power and relationships</th>
<th>Incremental</th>
<th>Reform</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirms existing rules.</td>
<td>Opens rules to revision.</td>
<td>Opens issue to creation of new ways of thinking about power.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Archetypal Actions</th>
<th>Incremental</th>
<th>Reform</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copying, duplicating, mimicking</td>
<td>Changing policy, adjusting, adapting</td>
<td>Visioning, experimenting, inventing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools Logic</th>
<th>Incremental</th>
<th>Reform</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negotiation logic</td>
<td>Mediation logic</td>
<td>Envisioning logic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are two kinds of people, those who do the work and those who take the credit. Try to be in the first group; there is less competition there.  

- Indira Gandhi

Bounce Beyond is an example of a new way of organizing called a transformation catalyst. Transformation catalysts work to help actors in transformation systems (t-systems) understand their own system, connect with others who have related agendas, to amplify their actions and effective impacts.

In chemistry, catalysts are substances that bring about a state change—a transformation—without necessarily changing themselves. In social contexts, catalysts are individuals, groups, or actions that precipitate, hasten, or stimulate that type of transformative action—often unpredictably and nonlinearly. Transformation catalysts are an emerging—quite new—way to organize that emphasizes not the direct doing of action but rather the processes involved in helping others evolve catalytic action for greater effectiveness. What catalysis means here is helping actors in a system to see and understand—make sense of—their own system, understanding it as a transformation system that can act coherently and cogently on the problem, issue, or place at hand.

Bounce Beyond creates relationships and dialogues that help initiative connect, cohere, integrate, and amplify the transformational capacity of initiatives and activities already working towards emerging a flourishing world for all. In building and enhancing relationships through dialogue, shared visioning, and joint activities, Bounce Beyond helps midwife initiatives’ visions into powerful transformation systems that collaboratively build a future where all people experience dignity and agency. Bounce Beyond, like other transformation catalysts, envisions a world full of meaning, connectedness, and possibility. In that world all have parts to play and where they can contribute to their best abilities for the common good. In other words, transformation catalysts like Bounce Beyond act synergistically, tapping into ongoing, existing efforts that are otherwise fragmented, to bring them into alignment and coherence.

The transformations catalysts with which the Bounce Beyond team is familiar generally aim at producing a socially just world where people and all other beings can flourish in a
healthy ecological environment. Because transformation aims at shifting the fundamentals of a system, it is complex and difficult to achieve, particularly when efforts to bring that change about are not themselves linked. A first step for many such efforts is to begin to understand who is doing what in the and where in the system—a process we call seeing and sensemaking to understand the system. Transformation catalysts recognize the fragmentation of many unaligned efforts and work to connect otherwise unlined efforts into effective and powerful transformation systems that recognize themselves as an often loosely-coupled collection of transformative change agents. This process of connecting involves cohering aspirations in new ways, which then leads to the third set of activities of transformation catalysts—catalyzing transformative action.

As we have already seen, Bounce Beyond supports the diverse actors in different CoNECTs in the form of principles and methodologies of transformation. Then local actors can generatively engage with the emergent processes of bringing forth their desired future in their own terms and context. In a very real way they create their own stories and futures. Connecting and cohering can be accomplished through a series of activities suited to the particular CoNECT’s needs and desires.

Bounce Beyond envisions that the Co-NECTs will become prototypes and exemplars that others can imitate, each in their own unique ways as suited to their unique circumstances. The seeds planted by Bounce Beyond as with other transformation catalysts, we intend, will propagate wildly once people begin to realize that they too can take their economic and social fates into their own hands. The next three sections explore in more detail how Bounce Beyond operationalizes its theory of transformative change through three sets of core processes:

- Seeing and sensemaking: understanding the system
- Connecting: emerging powerful transformation systems
- Catalyzing: generating transformative action
Seeing and Sensemaking: Understanding the System.

Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.

Harriet Tubman

Two activities are needed to understand the system subject to transformation efforts: seeing and sensemaking. Typically, such efforts to enhance understanding of the system take place early on in the emergence of the CoNECT, and they are also ongoing because living systems are dynamic and change over time.

Seeing: Although system transformation is hardly a linear process, one of the things that has to happen early on is the process we call seeing. Seeing means that next economy stakeholders can learn about, visualize, describe, and better understand what is going on and by whom with respect to transformation in their system. Fundamentally, seeing involves learning who is engaged in a possibly wide range of transformative efforts that likely already exist. It also means figuring out what the issues in the system are, who is connected to whom and what they are doing, and where disconnects exist, as well as what the areas of resistance are likely to be.

Seeing starts with recognizing common ground across initiatives in a place, a sector, or around issues that are associated with the emergence of next economies or new economic thinking. Bounce Beyond understands that the potential for emerging a flourishing future lies in people already working in that system who share a vision for a common future—but who may not yet know about or work with others with similar visions. It means clarifying issues, determining where boundaries and opportunities exist, and integrating across many different initiatives to try to establish understanding of the whole system. Boundaries, of course, can be organizational, sector, disciplinary, issues-based, or geographic, among likely others. By understanding the system in some detail, key actors can engage the second main activity of connecting those actors into coherent and effective transformation systems, as discussed in the next section.

Systems Mapping: Systems mapping is part of seeing, as it attempts to define and put some structure to a
given system. Seeing as mapping the system can be done informally through engaging in dialogue with system participants, or a bit more formally through a series of interviews that capsulize what and who they know are doing the transformational work. A whole range of possible approaches can also be used to map the system, as a way of understanding it, ranging from stakeholder mapping to data visualization, 7 Vortex mapping, webcrawling, and other cutting edge mapping techniques, like strategic foresight, critical systems analysis, and other methods. Such approaches attempt to show the whole system graphically, and highlight linkages or lack thereof among different people or initiatives in a system.

Mapping analyses describe relevant players, their relationships, and the issues they face in advancing the transformation. Product or outputs can be framed to be relatively easily understood using maps and documents that illustrate and point to opportunities and problems linked to advancing shared transformation goals. Of course, interpreting such maps and visualizations needs to be done by people within the specific CoNECT, because, after all, it is their system that is being mapped and they have the most knowledge about that system.

The key to understand here is that there is no one right approach to understanding and mapping the system. What is appropriate depends on the context, the needs and desires of participants, resource availability, and energy. The general idea is to figure out what will help participants in a system better understand what is present and what is needed in the system. Because socio-economic systems are complexly wicked, what often emerges from such analysis is a better understanding of patterns and relationships. Other times participants gain better understanding of the dynamics and relationships that exist within their system, all of which can help actors begin to make sense of their system, who is in it doing what, and what potential it has to become an effective transformation system. Thus, sensemaking is another vital aspect of understanding the system.

Sensemaking: The term sensemaking was coined by scholar Karl Weick, who defined it as the process of meaning making. Sensemaking provides a narrative or sometimes visual or graphic understanding of the system that can be shared with others. Thus, in the context of next economies and system transformation, sensemaking can mean translating a systems map so it is readily understandable by all participants. Or it can mean establishing ways to think about the need for transformation in a given setting, or other acts of framing the relevant system. It can mean developing memes on social

media, writing blogs that explain and explore what is happening in different situations, or writing white papers, books, or articles, creating videos, giving talks, webinars, or engaging in other processes of sensemaking. The need for system change and how it can happen can also be expressed in many different forms of art, including stories and other narrative forms, poems, visual art of all sorts, films—whatever forms make sense in given contexts.

It is clear that sensemaking means narrative development, broadly defined to signify any way of communicating that makes sense and enhances understanding. Sensemaking helps create system identity particularly as transformation systems evolve through the connecting processes described next to move from second horizon thinking towards the aspirational third horizon. Bounce Beyond also uses sensemaking by helping people in different communities learn to co-create inspirational common visions, stories, and narratives. These stories can cohere and amplify transformation efforts, based on shared and emerging understanding of the system.

Making sense of deep system challenges: Any workable approach to systems transformation involves multiple disciplines and types of activities, multiple institutions and actors. It is necessarily transdisciplinary, multi-sectored, multi-level, and integrative—or it is unlikely to work. That means numerous different people and initiatives will be involved—with differing perspectives, ideas, and strategies. The reason that sensemaking is important in transformation is that it is through such sensemaking processes that frame how shared aspirations, goals, strategies, and actions are generally agreed by diverse initiatives. In a very real way, the shared aspirations (vision, agenda, goals, strategies) of a next economy (or any other set of transformation initiatives) are the glue that holds these diverse elements together.

Shared aspiration guides different initiatives and actors towards common ends, even though they may well still be taking their own individual actions. Shared aspirations, of course, do not mean that all of the connected collaborators do the same things or do things the same way. What shared aspirations can mean is that they align their efforts cohesively so that they can achieve greater impact.

One reason that purposeful system transformation towards next economies where all life flourishes is challenging is because powerful status quo actors and systems hold the current paradigm in place. Bounce Beyond, working with the SDG Transformations Forum, has developed a way of thinking about the kinds of challenges and obstacles to change that are present in system transformation work. Given that any workable approach to systems transformation is multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional, multi-sectored, and integrative, transformation involves collaboration. Sometimes that collaboration or cooperation occurs among entities, organizations, individuals, and initiatives that might otherwise consider themselves competitors. That can mean a new way of
operating that puts the good of the whole system ahead of individual interests.

Bounce Beyond works with a framework of six particularly important status quo systems identified by asking numerous people working towards system transformations, “What is holding you back from being even more successful with your transformative actions?” and by reviewing relevant documents. From this analysis, Bounce Beyond and CoNECTs recognize six core challenges that when unblocked can provide transformative momentum to change efforts. Conversely, when they are stuck in old thinking, these challenges represent significant obstacles to change. Further, Bounce Beyond recognizes that specific CoNECTs or transformation systems might identify additional barriers and obstacles to change that are context specific.

Thus, to make sense of a given system, the Bounce Beyond team believes it is important to understand where the system currently stands in terms of (at least) each of these arenas: the system’s current narrative or story, existing capacity and limitations, evaluation and assessment approaches in use, existing approaches to governance, how innovation happens in the system (or not), and how, when and where financing occurs (or not). Below we briefly describe these challenges and ask

key questions to frame new ways of thinking about that challenge in the context of next economies emergence.

**Narrative:** The stories, narratives, and memes that shape and support mindsets and paradigms create powerful cultural mythologies that help ground peoples’ understanding of the world around them, as discussed earlier. Such narratives and stories shape attitudes, values, and ultimately behaviors and practices especially when deeply embedded in people’s mindsets, when they become cultural mythologies. When mindsets are stuck in old paradigms, stories, and narratives—problematic cultural myths—it is hard to be able to envision what next economies might be or how things might change. Successful transformation to next economies requires shifting those mindsets towards ideas and values that support all of life. Doing so is vitally important because new narratives and stories provide the framework that is needed to guide attitudes, actions, and practices in conditions of complex wickedness. Developing new narratives can be done through co-creative processes of visioning, dialogue, and other forms of generative action, including generating and acting on shared values. Visioning processes include approaches like the Three Horizons framework or other future visioning approaches (there are many), shifting them as transformation systems evolve.

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17 This work was done by SDG Transformations and Bounce Beyond founder Steve Waddell.
Key questions are:

- What are the new narratives, stories, and myths that make sense for the desired next economy?
- What are our shared visions, aspirations, agendas, values, and/or goals? How can a shared set of aspirations guide our efforts?

**Capacity:** Capacity means developing the key skills, knowledge, understanding, attributes, capabilities, and actions that will enable systemic transformation and innovations to take place. It can also mean ensuring that critical infrastructure that supports the desired next economy is in place. That infrastructure might include, for instance, new ways of making exchanges for goods and services, new payment approaches, and other financing mechanisms, just to name a couple. In a leadership development sense, capacity emphasizes learning from others and the past, developing and engaging leaders from diverse sectors, ages, ethnic groups, economic and educational statuses, cultures, disciplines, and spiritual traditions. Capacity development can emerge new ideas, new ways of doing things, and new economic activities suited to a context, some of which may be transferable to other contexts through a learning process. Developing broad capacity, including systems understanding, narrative development, collaborative ability, sensemaking capacities, and an action-orientation, among many different actors can be essential aspects of this development. That development process involves rapidly engaging different people and their initiatives in action learning, knowledge development, and knowledge sharing where needed. It can mean building new tools, connective webs, and action strategies, and ensuring that would-be change agents are skilled in transformation and the action-oriented learning/research logic associated with it. New tools and methods can be locally developed to support the emerging next economy—for instance somehow valuing care work, homemaking, and volunteer activity in new ways, or emerging different aspects of what has been called a sharing economy.

Key questions include:

- What capacities and capabilities are needed in the system to move it forward towards flourishing for all and sustain that flourishing over time?
- What new infrastructure is needed to support emerging next economies?

**Evaluation:** Evaluation processes critically examine systems, programs, and initiatives through data collection and analysis to improve the effectiveness of ongoing efforts and inform future decisions. They form the basis for understanding whether the system is reaching its aspirations or not. For systems evaluation, innovative approaches to evaluation, like Blue Marble Evaluation, take a holistic, systemic, and principles-based approach to evaluative processes, particularly around economic and social development. Such cutting edge evaluative processes are needed as part of ensuring the system change associated with next economies is really working. Today evaluation largely rests in monetary terms—profitability for businesses and GDP for nations. As we noted...
earlier, such narrowly defined metrics are not good at the holistic assessment of wellbeing or flourishing needed in system transformation. Identifying proper performance metrics is also important because as the old accounting saying goes, ‘You get what you measure’. Metrics guide behaviors and practices, because people know they will be assessed on them. That is why countries focus so much on economic growth measured by GDP and companies on profitability, despite their known flaws.

Key questions include:
- What metrics are needed to guide the system towards flourishing of all life?
- How can the system be holistically evaluated so that participants can understand whether they are fulfilling their aspirations or not?

**Governance and Organizing**: Governance involves the way rules, norms, and actions are structured, sustained, regulated, and held accountable. Governance determines the degree of formality in a system, how resources are distributed, and power relationships—who controls what and how. In emerging next economies, traditional systems of governance, which tend to rely on top-down control mechanisms, need to give way to more participative, collaborative, bottoms-up, lateral. Sometimes such bottoms-up approaches need to be combined with top down or more centralized approaches, though local governance tends to be favored. Governance needs to be inclusive of numerous voices that are typically unheard—the marginalized, women, Indigenous peoples, youth, disadvantaged people, in addition to more traditional policy makers and leaders. Further, governance mechanisms need to be inclusive of ecological concerns and issues, despite that the natural environment has no voice. Consideration needs to also be given to the needs of future generations, who also have no voice. The principle from Native American wisdom that decisions should take into account the interests of seven generations out forms a basis for thinking about what types of governance structures may be appropriate in different contexts. The important thing is that governance in next economies provides for voice and localization of decision-making rather than attempting more centralized control.

Key questions include:
- How can next economies and transformation efforts ensure more inclusive, participatory, and engaged governance processes that emerge from the ‘governed’ rather than being imposed on them?
- What governance structures make sense for next economies?

**Financing and Resourcing**: Financing and resourcing mean ensuring that sufficient monetary and other resources are needed to be able to bring about the desired next economies. Ensuring such resourcing is a continual problem in much transformation work, whether it is for new infrastructure or capacity development or for funding transformational efforts themselves. In part that is because transformational efforts
require a whole systems perspective, and many funders still focus on relatively narrowly defined programs and outputs and want them to be predictable. As discussed earlier, system change is inherently messy and unpredictable, involving experimentation and prototyping that can seed other innovations. Today’s finance system is fraught with issues that hold a narrow logic of profitability and growth at all costs in place. Current financial logic focuses entirely on the maximization of financial wealth at the expense of other values—yet it is those other values as defined locally that are essential to next economy emergence—and the flourishing of life. As noted earlier, in the current system, the notion of wealth has been redefined away from its original meaning of wellbeing and health towards an exclusively monetary meaning. For next economies to thrive the original definition of wealth as wellbeing and prosperity for all needs to be restored—and the financial system changed accordingly.

Key questions include:

● How can next economies develop more creative, flexible, probably decentralized, financing and resourcing systems and approaches?

● How can finance return to its original role of supporting rather than dominating economies, be more localized and participatory, and accept innovation more readily?

Innovation: Innovation involves creation of new ideas, systems, products, norms, and ways of doing things (processes). Innovation is where innovative new infrastructure for next economies comes from. That infrastructure can include things like local currencies, new trading systems, elements of sharing economies, and other next economy processes that participants believe to be useful locally. Innovations can also be in ways of thinking, as in developing new narratives, or acting, as in collaborating across different types of boundaries to achieve new infrastructure. Sometimes such innovations will be adopted in other emerging next economies when they prove particularly useful. Others will be more locally specific. Even in those cases, sharing ideas can spark new innovations across different initiatives and economies that suit their needs.

Innovation argues for improving on existing systems and sometimes inventing whole new processes, products, services, and activities. Current innovation systems are largely driven by relatively short-term financial and growth goals, with little regard for the social and environmental impacts of these innovations. Next economies innovations need to integrate and internalize both social and ecological impacts to the extent possible.

Key questions include:

● What innovations are needed in areas of challenges like narratives, infrastructure, financing, and capacity?

● How can the innovations that arise in next economies innovations be made contextually relevant to places, sectors, or issues?

● How can innovations incorporate full costs and be driven by stakeholders who actually have a stake in their emergence?
**Interrelated Challenges**

One thing becomes clear in looking at these challenges—because they exist in systems that are complexly wicked, they are all interrelated. The reason why a systems understanding is important is that when something changes in one challenge area, there are likely to be knock-on effects elsewhere. The other thing that is important in considering these challenges is that some attention needs to be paid to all of them in any given transformation effort. There are likely to be other contextually specific challenges that will demand equal attention depending on the circumstances of a given emerging next economy—and those will be equally linked to these deep challenges. They are connected—and, as discussed in the next section, so are the various initiatives that make up effective transformation systems.

I alone cannot change the world. But I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.

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Mother Teresa

**Connecting** is about purposefully linking people, ideas, actions, and initiatives to form powerful transformation systems. Typically, as we have noted, there are numerous activities going on around transformation in a given system or context. Because they tend to be fragmented and unconnected, they are often largely ineffective in emerging next economies holistically or transforming whole systems. But working together, combining their resources and efforts, they have tremendous potential to bring about transformation. Bounce Beyond, serving as transformation catalyst, is a connecting agent for initiatives and actors who are willing and able to work collaboratively to emerge shared agendas—even though each will retain its own identity and action strategies.

Bounce Beyond connects like-minded initiatives, building connective tissue among them to enhance impact—and form them into transformation systems (T-systems). As relationships develop, the people working in different initiatives within the same general context can understand their common agendas. Then they can start to cohere their activities, forming powerful T-systems, with the idea of amplifying their overall ability to bring about desired changes and act effectively (the topic of the next section).

Connection does not mean that all actors will do the same things, at the same time, or in the same way. Indeed, most of them will continue to do whatever they had been doing prior to connecting. But they will also be able to act with the shared agenda or set of aspirations in mind, and, hopefully, in concert with others, as needed. The shared aspirations provide common

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ground for effective and coordinated or coherent actions as T-systems gain identity and capacity for concerted action.

Connecting also means understanding that the real agency for transformation rests in actors who live and operate in the given context, not in the transformation catalyst. Agency, that is, is in the T-system. System participants already have the knowledge, understanding, and skills to make desired change happen for their context. But to do that, they need to work with the many others who share—or can co-develop—a vision on transforming their place, sector, or issues. Connection, like system understanding, can start as simply as with a conversation. It can and needs to evolve into more structured dialogues, collaborative efforts, or attempts to cohere the work that is being done. Some of these processes are facilitated and organized by Bounce Beyond as part of its connecting role. Once connected, system actors who are willing can explore the idea of co-creating relationships, purposes, and actions that enhance their own work can also amplify the work of others. Connection, then, does not replace the work that is already being done—it enhances and amplifies it. This process of connection helps the transformation change agents in a given system begin to recognize themselves as part of a T-system.

Transformation catalysts bring relevant actors together to create their T-system. In generating what we call coherence, a transformation catalyst like Bounce Beyond helps generate dialogue and conversation, and other forms of linkage among initiatives. They can do joint visioning processes, including 3 Horizons types of visioning among others, to develop shared aspirations and identity. Bounce Beyond also provides numerous other frameworks, tools, and approaches that can cohere their efforts, as CoNECT participants need and desire. Such efforts build trust among initiatives, operating in a collaborative, participatory, and co-created process that builds hope for their desired future because they learn to engage in concerted actions.

Connection builds on the mapping and sensemaking processes discussed in the seeing and sensemaking section earlier. It helps actors in different initiatives figure out where gaps, duplications, and needs exist so that they can collectively achieve their shared aspirations. Establishing generative transformation of their relevant system—place, issue, or sector towards flourishing for all life. Part of what Bounce Beyond does is help such initiatives form an identity as a transformation system, so that they can then cohere and amplify their actions in ways that could not be done individually. Combined with the seeing and sensemaking analysis discussed above, connecting brings together next economy stakeholders to identify potentially high leverage action to speed coherent development of their transformation system and its impacts.
conversations, in person or online, is a core aspect of building identity as a T-system. Most of the people in independent and fragmented initiatives do not, at least initially, understand themselves as being involved in a greater coherent system oriented towards transformation when they begin dialogue. Instead, they see themselves as independent actors, doing good and important work—which they are. Part of the role that a transformation catalyst like Bounce Beyond plays is to build that very awareness of shared identity to emerge understanding that by acting cohesively as a T-system, they can be far more effective and achieve broader results than any independent actors might be.

Doing that requires better understanding of who is doing what, where, and when, that is, who is in the T-system and what they are doing, thus is tightly linked to the mapping process described earlier. As part of sensemaking, actors in initiatives can share learning and understandings, and co-emerge new ideas and potential actions. Actors in T-systems might be just about anyone: policy makers, business leaders, activists, social entrepreneurs, networks, educators, researchers, advisors, prophets, futurists, artists, designers, and others willing to co-create envisioned life- and people-centered economies.

The core insight from Bounce Beyond—and other transformation catalysts is that by acting collaboratively to actually develop a shared set of aspirations they will bring desired transformations about far more effectively and quickly. That also means engaging in ongoing communications with each to ensure shared understanding, and actions, and sharing emerging knowledge and insight with the world in ongoing sensemaking activity. And it can mean taking effective action in consistent and coordinated ways through emerging a connective infrastructure, as discussed in the next section.

**Connective Infrastructure:** Bounce Beyond is about creating the connective tissue—infrastructure—that helps existing and emerging next economies link to each other. New infrastructure might include new ways of connecting with others, as with an online platform. Or it can encompass new approaches to doing business responsibly and in ways that harmonize with nature. For example, regenerative agricultural, forestry, fisheries, and other production processes, where people from different initiatives share knowledge, learning, and action strategies can generate new understandings, processes, and ways of doing things. Connective infrastructure can include dialogical processes, webinars, shared visioning processes, and even simple conversations that help different initiatives better align with each other.

More dramatically connective infrastructure can involve creating partnerships or collaborations to engage in new activities that help build next economies. Some of those collaborative efforts emerge organically from conversations—and are themselves unpredictable. They can co-generate next economies infrastructure elements like new types of currencies, more equitable ways of doing banking, regenerative agriculture, and numerous others, briefly discussed in the next section.
Bounce Beyond works with a range of emerging economies, all focused on flourishing and wellbeing, to help them accelerate their own knowledge of new/next economy ways of doing things. We identify patterns in these new models. Then we develop and share synthesized learning and understanding that emerges from them broadly, both within the innovative economies themselves and far beyond. This synthesized knowledge and learning can help next economy innovators everywhere better draw from their own experiences. By learning with others with similar experiences, innovators can build interconnected webs of effective action, the transformation systems, to support innovations that are needed in a given place, sector, or issue.

All of this transformation is a journey—a long-term process of connecting, cohering, and amplifying efforts to build the world—locally and globally—that we want. It is about moving from today’s business as usual system towards—eventually—what is known as the third horizon, a viable future for all. While the third horizon can be envisioned, there is a process of emerging new organizations—second horizon initiatives—that provide innovations that move the system towards that third horizon. Doing that is an emergent and unpredictable process. There are, however, patterns and visioning that third horizon can make transformation feasible. Different efforts at connection and transformation will evolve differently, depending on their circumstances. No one can predict exactly what will happen in any given place or how things will work. All of that depends on what happens in that place, who is involved, and what decisions they make. We do know, though, that bringing together people focused on that new imaginary—the vision of a flourishing world for all—can accomplish what no individual effort can.
Catalyzing: Generating Transformative Action

We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.

Albert Einstein

As must be clear, transformation requires actions—significant actions by a lot of people in a lot of different places and contexts. Bounce Beyond aims to help CoNECTs and other communities develop their own agency to take actions towards their aspirations. These actions are the ones that they—not Bounce Beyond—define as important to achieving their particular community’s goals towards the emergence of next economies that support flourishing for all. Bounce Beyond is an integrator, connector, and synthesizer—even a healer—in the service of helping next economies create the world they want. Creating coherence around CoNECTs’ efforts can offer all stakeholders needed guidance towards achieving their common ends. It will help them collectively ensure that they are all moving in the desired direction, despite that individual parts of the system have their own goals and momentum and despite that system transformation is inherently unpredictable and emergent.

Connecting, as described in the last section, can start small, with a few initiatives. Bounce Beyond helps it grow and amplify as visions align and actors begin to put their collective resources behind key actions and initiatives—that, in fact, is the catalytic function. The energy created by these collective efforts becomes an exemplar or prototype of something new. For example, a CoNECT might create or adopt a new element of economic or social infrastructure, such as a local currency, regenerative approaches to agriculture and food production, new distribution systems, or inclusive governance approaches, among many others—some of which have yet to be invented.

In a sense experiments and innovations in infrastructure can create what complexity scientists call a fractal (self-similar structures at multiple levels) of a bigger systemic change that has the potential to transform the whole system. Thus, connecting actors at multiple levels and in different ways across sectors, places, and issues enables actors in different initiatives to understand where potential for transformative action exists, as they engage with other aligned initiatives. Collectively, drawing on the strengths already in their initiatives, connected actors can birth new, more impactful, and effective actions, as people realize where opportunities and potentials lie. They can also supplement for weaknesses that might exist within their own initiative—when strengths exist in allied others.
Transformative action is what can follow from seeing, sensemaking, and connecting. It has both action and learning components. Transformative action means doing something informed by knowledge about opportunities and needs for transformation that deals with the fundamental or core issues in a system—and attempts to change in the desired direction. Transformative action can involve creating synergies, addressing deep systems challenges collectively, for example, by creating new narratives, developing new capacities or financing approaches, and otherwise dealing with the challenges discussed earlier), dealing with differences, and reducing unproductive duplication and competition.

**Motivating a Critical Mass towards Transformation.**

Transformative action—combined with connecting—is about creating a critical mass of people and initiatives oriented towards co-creating the new system, the next economy, or the shared aspirations. It means moving the aspiration and innovation, including innovative ways of thinking, practices, and innovations out into the public in significant ways, so that they can be adopted by many more people. As a whole, this group forms the leading edge of desired system transformation, bringing together visionaries, innovators, implementers, and pragmatists who all want to see the world—or their particular system—work better. One insight that comes from research is that transformative change does not require everyone to be on board—it does require a critical mass of people with changed mindsets, aspirations, and action strategies. Bounce Beyond is about bringing that critical mass together into action, sometimes radical action towards flourishing for all.

**Transformation Action Strategies.**

Bounce Beyond’s team believes that there are numerous ways that transformational change can be fostered. The figure synthesizes these types of actions into four main strategies: doing change, co-creating change, forcing change, and directing change. These action strategies are labeled as entrepreneurs, lovers, pathfinders, and warriors, and they can apply to individual partners or collaborators within a CoNECT or to the CoNECT as a whole. Transformative efforts may require some actors to use each or even all of these strategies to bring real system change about, possibly at different times and in different situations.

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This framework provides one way of looking at different action strategies that are possible as next economies move towards implementation of their ideas. Some CoNECT partners operate primarily in one of these quadrants, while others will engage two or more, and a few might use all four approaches.

**Figure: Four Strategies** (Source: Waddell, 2018)

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**Co-creating change, or the lover’s strategy.** The lover’s action strategy is primarily of collaboration, working together by bringing different actors or stakeholders together for concerted action. Collaboration can be very powerful, and is core to Bounce Beyond’s overall efforts, as seen above in the Connecting section. There is, however, a risk that one more powerful partner will somehow coopt others and that focus will shift away from the shared agenda.

**Doing change, or the entrepreneur’s strategy.** The entrepreneur’s strategy is that of creating innovations that bring change about, i.e., building a better widget or, in the case of economic transformation, a better economic system, so that people will begin to adopt and use that new approach. Entrepreneurs emphasize infrastructure innovation and tend not to wait for the system to change. In effect, they make changes that begin to bring change about. Examples in next economies might be the use of local currencies or the implementation of regenerative agriculture. The risk with entrepreneurial
strategies is that they stay small and localized, never achieving overall impact.

**Forcing change or the warrior strategy.** The warrior strategy is that attempting to bring change through forcing it to happen, e.g., of activism, protest, demonstrations, speaking out, and sometimes even more violent action (like insurrections and civil war, for example). There are obvious dangers to the whole system in this strategy if violence is used, and also if the efforts remain small and relatively insignificant. But sometimes forcing change to happen is necessary.

**Directing change or the pathfinding strategy.** The pathfinder strategy typically means working from inside the system to bring change about, finding new pathways to change that others have not yet seen and shifting things inside so that larger changes will begin to take place outside the system. Pathfinders take the risk of being suppressed by the bigger institutional forces that they are trying to shift.

There is a fifth way of acting that appears in the middle of this graphic, which is the role of a transformation catalyst like Bounce Beyond.

**Bounce Beyond as Integrator, Healer.** What is missing in all of these action strategies is the role that Bounce Beyond takes, the transformation catalyst: the integrator, synthesizer, and, in a sense, healer. Somewhere, somehow, to develop powerful T-systems, that integrative role needs to happen, to bring all of these different types of change activities together so that they can more effectively make desired changes. Indeed, that is what it means to form a transformation system and that intuition is fundamental to how Bounce Beyond works.

**Prototyping and Experimenting: Emerging New Infrastructure.** Transformative actions involve developing new infrastructure that ultimately needs to appeal to and attracts others: new products, organizations, processes, relationships, and infrastructure with scale and “standardized” identities. The key to understanding the action strategies is that each of these types of actions can result in experiments or prototypes for next economies—or other innovations. Such prototypes are needed to begin to shift the system and once implemented they begin to form new economic infrastructure.

When that infrastructure is successful, and oriented towards the flourishing of all, it can begin to replace existing ways of doing things. The hope is that new/next economies are that better model, and that the infrastructure that is generated is more inclusive and equitable than what it replaces. Because of the complexities involved in system transformation, because of the uncertainty and likelihood that some things will fail, experiments and prototypes rather than large scale efforts are needed, especially in the beginning of change efforts.
All innovations have secondary effects—and it is important to learn about them from prototypes. But when they work, they can be built upon, expanded, and seeded elsewhere. Though they cannot necessarily be scaled in the traditional understanding of how change occurs because each system and context is unique and thus each transformative effort will be somewhat contextually specific. Still, building prototypes, learning from them, and sharing that learning is important if larger-scale transformation and flourishing for all—on a global scale—and that is the ultimate goal, is to succeed.

In a sense, building next economies’ infrastructure is really about doing what visionary Buckminster Fuller talked about in his famous quote (cited at the opening): ‘You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.’ The next economies and systems transformation building process is one of prototyping in a design sense. Prototypes are experiments that enable people to determine whether they are working or not. They are unique to a given context—because, in a very real sense, all system change takes place in unique contexts. Thus, much of the activity of system transformation is going to be built on prototyping—finding out what works here in this context, and then seeding other similar initiatives that are also uniquely suited to their context.

New infrastructure can take many forms. Some of it is explicitly economic, while some is more social or process-oriented. Infrastructure innovations might be structural—focused on how organizations relate to each other and how they orient towards flourishing for all—creating new purposes for economic organizations, for example. Infrastructure might be related to how markets and exchanges are structured and operate. It might shift finance and accounting structures and requirements, for example, mandating the internalization of what are now known as externalities, implementing full costing, or requiring reporting of environmental, social, and governance activities (ESG). New infrastructure could mean adopting more holistic indicators and metrics that actually measure wellbeing and flourishing, rather than simply profitability in financial terms. Some infrastructure might involve governance realignment, for example, ensuring that different voices are present and heard in decision making, or other ways of ensuring that actions are oriented towards flourishing.

In other words, following Buckminster Fuller, if you want people to move towards a new way of doing and thinking about economies or economics (or anything else), you have to build a better economy. Bounce Beyond believes that these next economies can start with prototypes that allow learning to emerge so that similar ideas can be applied elsewhere. That, in fact, is what the CoNECTs actually are—prototypes, even experiments. As the saying in the movie Field of Dreams goes, “Build it and they will come”.

Sometimes these new connections can evolve new ways of making exchanges for goods and services that draw on far fewer natural resources yet enable self-sufficiency, greater equity, and ecological flourishing.
Learning from each other: Vital to this process of prototyping and experimentation is learning, creating new knowledge, and making that knowledge broadly accessible. Since transformative action often means doing something that has not been done before, ongoing learning is a critical activity. That learning takes place both within CoNECTs as well as across them, as well as in Bounce Beyond itself. One of the points of engaging with multiple CoNECTs is exactly that of fostering learning that can be broadly shared. Then that learning can be more generally shared with the world in a variety of ways—through webinars, white papers, scholarly research, blogs, videos, and any other ways that can be imagined. That possibly includes, in our dreams, a festival of transformation in which all the CoNECTs share their learning with each other and the world. Bounce Beyond supports the development of learning processes and, just as importantly, the sharing of that learning so that lessons can be identified, insights gained, and new experiments and prototypes can be even more successful than their predecessors.

Another part of learning is knowledge creation and dissemination. That learning is partly why Bounce Beyond has developed this e-book: to share our current and still evolving understanding of system change with anyone who cares to understand it. Bringing about a flourishing world for all of life is a hard thing to do. It will take all of us engaged in whatever ways make sense for us to make it happen. There is a role for everyone, and we hope that by sharing these ideas with you we have planted at least one or two seeds of new understanding about system transformation that are useful.

And so...how will you join in transforming towards wellbeing and flourishing for all of life?
Summing Up

The ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones who do. — Steve Jobs

Let us summarize by revisiting how we described Bounce Beyond at the outset now that we have shared our approach and theory of change.

Bounce Beyond works from a place of deep knowledge about transformation and systems change, developing and emerging the transformation knowledge to help build much-needed next economies. To do that we work with a range of emerging next economies, all focused on their own versions of flourishing and wellbeing, to help them build and accelerate their own knowledge of new/next economy ways of doing things, and share that knowledge broadly. We identify patterns in the next economy models that are emerging. Then we synthesize learning and understanding about transformation broadly, both within the innovative economies themselves and far beyond. This synthesized knowledge and learning can help next economy innovators everywhere better draw from their own experiences and contribute to others’ learning as well. By learning with others with similar experiences, innovators can build interconnected webs of effective action, what we call transformation systems, to support innovations that are needed in a given place, sector, or issue. We accomplish these things through fostering next economies’ processes of seeing, sensemaking, connecting, and connected, coherent, and amplified action.

Bounce Beyond’s core idea is that the world needs to move beyond today’s flawed and problematic economics and economies towards ones that enrich both human and natural life. That means new (and very ancient) understanding about our interconnectedness with each other and the land on which we thrive. It means emphasizing the importance of relationship and voice for all. It means emerging broadly sharing knowledge so that next economy innovators can expand effective action towards economic--and social--innovations that are needed and desired in local contexts. These innovations can build promising new economies that can work better for all, from the local to the global, from the human to the natural world. Next economy evolution, viewed from Bounce Beyond’s lenses, means carefully incubating promising new socioeconomic models, accelerating knowledge, and facilitating experimentation towards ‘bouncing beyond’ today’s flawed economic models towards the next economies that are needed to build a world where all can flourish.
All of this transformation is a journey—a long-term process of connecting, cohering, and amplifying efforts to build the world—locally and globally—that we want. It is about moving from today’s business as usual system towards—eventually—what is known as the third horizon, a viable future for all. While the third horizon can be envisioned, there is a process of emerging new organizations—second horizon initiatives—that provide innovations that move the system towards that third horizon. Doing that is an emergent and unpredictable process. There are, however, patterns. Visioning and third horizon thinking can make transformation possible—achieving the potentiality that is now latent, as shared aspirations begin to be implemented by a wide variety of concerned and caring people. Different efforts at connection and transformation will evolve differently, depending on their circumstances. No one can predict exactly what will happen in any given place or how things will work. All of that depends on what happens in that place, who is involved, and what decisions they make. We do know, though, that bringing together people focused on that new imaginary—the vision of a flourishing world for all—can accomplish what no individual effort can.

The seeds planted by Bounce Beyond and our collaborators, the CoNECTs, and all the other transformation catalysts and agents in the world, we intend, will propagate wildly once people begin to realize that they too can take their economic and social fates into their own hands. We can all build the towns and cities, finance systems, food and production systems, and other things, economically and socially, that people really need and want. We—all of us—can do that if only we can see, connect, and take actions in the direction of flourishing for all.
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