



Future Economy Lab

## Abundantly Investing in Girls, Femmes, and Gender Expansive Youth of Color

FUTURE  
ECONOMY  
LAB

Historically, the financial mechanisms and tools that drive our global economies have been typically developed through highly exclusive and extractive processes, behind boardroom doors and at the expense of communities that have experienced centuries of systemic oppression. Those with a seat at the table often represent a highly homogeneous group from similar cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Unsurprisingly, these financial mechanisms and tools are disproportionately utilized by individuals with similar backgrounds.

We have seen girls, femmes and gender expansive youth of Color continue to engage in transformative organizing work to dismantle the systems of oppression that prevent them and their communities from thriving despite the many challenges they face. These young people live at the intersections of sexism, racism, and other forms of oppression that create structural barriers in their lives and prevent their full participation in our global economy and democracy in the United States. Yet they have been at the forefront of some of the most important social justice movements, including efforts to achieve racial justice, gender justice, climate justice, and economic justice. And still they are underinvested in. ***We want to change that.***

We define investment as inclusive of **material, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual elements** that all contribute to community wellbeing (from [G4GC's Theory of Impact](#)).

Using SecondMuse Capital's proven participatory research & design approach, the [Future Economy Lab](#), [Grantmakers for Girls of Color](#) (G4GC) and [SecondMuse Capital](#) have partnered for this lab focused on abundantly investing in girls, femmes, and gender expansive youth of Color (ages 13-24). Through this approach we aim to co-create and launch financial mechanisms and strategies that increase investments into communities of Color that are designed **with** girls, femmes, and gender expansive youth of Color, and not only *for* them. This lab invites girls, femmes, and gender-expansive youth of Color to interrogate the question: *what do economies that center your wellbeing and justice for you and your communities look like?*, and design strategies to execute their visions.

## Our Process: Collaborative Research and Design

During this two-year lab, we are working directly with nearly 40 youth through both a fellowship and advisory program to articulate what abundant futures and economies look like for them and how best to bring these to life. We are also collaborating with key stakeholders in this ecosystem including financial investors, entrepreneurs, economic justice activists, philanthropic entities and individuals, and organizations supporting youth to identify challenges and opportunities for making transformative interventions that accelerate the transition to a more just and inclusive economy.

Through this collaborative research & design process we will co-create an investment strategy with an actionable roadmap for mobilizing capital and other resources into these interventions. This may include elevating and supporting existing, lesser known capital innovations, new financial mechanisms, alternatives to enable new financing, and/or resourcing the implementation of community-governed economic models. It might also mean galvanizing an entire community of active stakeholders to drive the intended systems change. Whatever the outcome, we have a four step process of collaborative research and design where we serve as a convener and build community. In each of these phases we will directly engage a broad range of co-investors including girls, femmes, and gender expansive youth of Color, organizations that support and are led by them, thought leaders, and those with the financial and social capital to invest in the final outcome.

1

### Envision

We start by **envisioning** a market opportunity with a landscape assessment of public and private actors in the space as well as the community itself that is most impacted by the economy.

2

### Define

We then **define** challenges, assets, biases and gaps in the economy through research, interviews, and workshops in direct collaboration with our partners, communities and stakeholders, including investors, governments, and entrepreneurs.

3

### Design

Next, we **design** new financial mechanisms and identify the need for complementary ecosystem development programming to address the gaps and catalyze new solutions to the challenges we've surfaced.

4

### Launch

Lastly, we **launch** these new solutions. We refine the financial and impact models in order to raise new capital mechanisms and begin new programs with the support and collaboration of the communities themselves.

## The Impact We Hope To Achieve

Building economies of the future—economies that are more inclusive, resilient and sustainable—will require a new, collaborative approach to their research and design. The Future Economy Lab seeks to shift how our communities, governments, organizations, and investors think about economic development, and how we can work together in building a better future for all.

Our ultimate goal with this lab is to increase investments into girls, femmes, and gender expansive youth of Color and their communities. Specifically, the impact we seek of this work is to:



**DEVELOP TAILORED, COMMUNITY DESIGNED AND GOVERNED FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC MECHANISM(S) AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES** for girls, femmes, and gender expansive youth of Color and their communities to thrive.



**ENGAGE GIRLS, FEMMES, AND GENDER EXPANSIVE YOUTH OF COLOR** and other stakeholders in a collaborative research and design process so that we are designing **with** and not *for* the community.



**SUPPORT OTHERS IN THIS SPACE BY OPENLY SHARING OUR LEARNINGS** with the ecosystem so that others are able to use it and build upon it with the hopes that more investments will flow to girls, femmes, and gender expansive youth of Color and their communities.



**SHARE KNOWLEDGE** that interrogates economic frameworks, power systems rooted in extraction, invites discourse on and exploration of economic structures, and explores strategies rooted in reciprocity, sustainability, and justice.



**SHIFT PERSPECTIVES** to ensure that girls, femmes, and gender expansive youth of Color are seen and respected as leaders and economic actors within communities.



**FOSTER MORE OPPORTUNITIES** for girls, femmes, and gender expansive youth of Color to increase their engagement in the design of economic strategies and opportunities..

## Join Us!

To build this, we need visionary thinkers like you. Our structured, phased approach is collaborative in nature, and we are committed to designing *with* not *for* the community. Let's work together to reimagine and resource future economies created by and for girls, femmes, and gender-expansive youth of Color.. **Click the icons below to learn more about the organizations.**

