
Center for
Partnership
Systems
THE
PARTNERSHIP
TECHNOLOGY
TOOLKIT
For framers, funders, and builders of a Partnership future

About this Toolkit

The Partnership Technology Toolkit was developed by the Center for Partnership Systems with support from the Ford Foundation. Its goal is to shift technologists' thinking, reject false narratives about what is possible, and build technologies that support a more caring, sustainable, equitable, partnership future.

Grounded in decades of interdisciplinary research from both biological and social science, the toolkit provides individuals and teams with a practical, values-based framework that connects technology with the real needs of people and the planet.

About CPS

The Center for Partnership Systems (CPS) was founded in 1987 to meet the grassroots response to Riane Eisler's book, *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future*, now in 57 US printings and 30 foreign editions.

CPS's Partnership Systems Framework reveals root causes rather than only symptoms of social and environmental dysfunction and points the way to foundational interventions that will prevent further regressions to strong-man rule, violence, and injustice.

Our whole-systems work connects the dots between the personal and political, offering the missing bridge to an equitable future where Partnership structures and values support human and planetary flourishing.



"What kinds of assumptions about the world does technology communicate? Our future depends on the answer."

- **Riane Eisler**, Founder of the Center for Partnership Systems

Contents

1 Background and Introduction to the Partnership Systems Framework

2 Assessment of Self and Context

3 Moving the Needle: Nine Critical Questions

4 Examples of Pioneering Partnership Projects

5 Resources

6 Contributors

Asking the Big Questions

Technologies are human creations.

What is our project as a species on this planet?

The answer to this question hinges on the cultural values and social institutions that consciously and unconsciously shape our current ideas about technological development, programming, and use.



Are we developing technologies that perpetuate inequalities and promote escape from realities - or even escape from our despoiled planet?

OR

Are we crafting technologies that accelerate movement to a better future?

Have we been building technologies that support our capacities for insensitivity, cruelty, and destructiveness?

OR

Are we developing technologies that deepen our human capacities for consciousness, caring, and creativity?



"In our age of technological breakthroughs, the basic question is whether technology is guided by an ethos of Domination or Partnership."

- Riane Eisler

The Partnership Systems Framework

Reclaiming a lost story

The Partnership Systems framework at the heart of this toolkit is the outcome of decades of interdisciplinary research.

It tells a story of what is possible for our future that is not new - it is millions of years old - but has been largely hidden from view for the last 6,000 years.

Most of us have been taught a false version of human history, a story of Domination that valorizes conquest and control over “lesser” peoples and the earth. Yet, evidence from archeology, mythology, DNA studies, and other disciplines shows long before the power to take life became revered, there were cultures in which the capacities to give and nurture life were sacred. Women and the feminine were valued and children were taught an ethos of mutual responsibility and care for each other and the earth.

In her groundbreaking book *The Chalice and the Blade*, Riane Eisler called these "Partnership cultures."



Bold technologists are leaving traditions of Domination behind

Leaders like you recognize that the Domination path is an evolutionary dead end. The Partnership Technology Toolkit provides a roadmap to leave Domination systems behind and support life-sustaining cultures of care, equity, peace, and renewal.

The Toolkit is intended for tech sector leaders who are:

- Visionaries reframing what is possible in technology
- Funders deciding which new technologies deserve investment
- Designers or builders committed to bringing better values to life

How do we begin?

We start with the premise that technologies are human creations that reflect the values of the individuals who build them and the values embedded in the social structures in which technologies are made and used.

If we, consciously or unconsciously, operate within systems of Domination, our technologies will perpetuate those values.

Using this Toolkit, we have the opportunity to shift our thinking, reject false narratives about what is possible, and build technologies that intentionally move our culture toward Partnership.

Four Core Elements of Partnership & Domination Systems



Domination System	Partnership System
Family, Economic, and Social Structure	
An authoritarian structure of ranking and hierarchies of domination in family, economics, and society, so children grow up in authoritarian, punitive, male-dominated families where they observe and experience inequity as the norm.	Democratic structure and hierarchies of actualization empower rather than disempower. Caring is economically valued. Egalitarian and equitable adult relations are the norm. Parenting is not authoritarian but authoritative and non-violent.
Fear, Abuse, and Violence	
High degree of fear and violence, from child- and wife- beating to abuse by "superiors" in families, workplaces, and society as required to maintain rankings of domination.	Low degree of fear, abuse, and violence, as they are not needed to maintain top-down rankings. Respect for diversity and human rights.
Gender Roles and Relations	
Rigid, binary gender stereotypes, with "masculine" traits and activities such as toughness and conquest ranked over "feminine" ones such as caregiving and nonviolence in all people and in social and economic policy.	Fluid, nonbinary gender roles, so that difference is not equated with superiority/inferiority, dominating/being dominated. This inclusive, equitable view of differences in our species provides a model for relations not based on in-group vs. out-group thinking. High valuing of empathy, caring, caregiving, and nonviolence in all people as well as in social and economic policy.
Narratives and Language	
Beliefs and stories that justify, idealize, and normalize domination and violence.	Beliefs and stories recognize our human capacities for negative behaviors but emphasize empathic, mutually beneficial, nonviolent relations and present them as normal, moral, and desirable.

The Missing Core of Progressive Movements

The real struggle for our future is not Right vs. Left, religious vs. secular, Eastern vs. Western, or capitalist vs. socialist.

All our common social categories were created in times that oriented primarily to the Domination side of the Partnership-Domination Social Scale. All include societies that have been repressive and violent. None tell us what kind of social system supports equity and sustainability. All marginalize family relations, and subordinate women and children -- the majority of humanity.

These old categories, as well as conventional studies of society, obscure social configurations that repeat themselves cross-culturally and trans-historically: the Partnership System and the Domination System.

From this new perspective, we can see that all progressive modern movements challenged the same thing: an entrenched tradition of Domination.

The Enlightenment challenged the "divinely ordained" right of kings to rule. The abolitionist, civil rights, and Black Lives Matter movements challenge the "divinely ordained right" of some races to dominate others. The feminist and women's rights movements challenge the "divinely ordained" right of men to rule over women and children. All the way to the environmental movement, which challenges our once hallowed conquest and domination of Nature.

Recent history saw the formal abolition of slavery and the outlawing of torture. The Geneva Conventions sought to reduce atrocities of war. We saw the birth of human rights and important strides for women's rights and children's rights. Colonialism dwindled, the movement to care for our natural life-support systems grew, and nonviolent regime changes now outnumber violent revolutions by a ratio of two-to-one. This was all the result of progressive social movements.

So why do Domination Systems persist and regenerate?





Building on Solid Foundations



Most progressive social movements have focused on dismantling the top of the Domination pyramid: politics and economics as conventionally defined.

They paid scant attention to what neuroscience shows most affects brain development, and therefore how people think, feel, and act, including how they vote: parent-child and gender roles and relations. Nor did they address the values that lie behind unjust and unsustainable economic systems, or the stories and language we inherited from rigid Domination times.

These, however, are the four foundations on which the Domination pyramid has continued to rebuild itself in regression after regression - whether through totalitarianism, religious fundamentalism, or other Domination "isms" of strong-man rule, warfare, in-group versus out-group ranking, and violence.



The movement toward a more Partnership-oriented world has not failed—it is incomplete.

To complete this movement, we must pay special attention to shifting these four cornerstones from Domination to Partnership:

- Childhood,
- Gender,
- Economics, and
- Narratives/Language.



Consider that those pushing us back toward Domination Systems all prioritize top-down control in childhood and gender relations, whether secular and Western like rightist Nazi Germany or Stalin's leftest Soviet Union, or Eastern and religious like the Taliban and ISIS.

To complete the Partnership Movement, we must:

- bring women, children, and members of racially oppressed groups out of the margins,
- focus on designing economic systems that recognize and adequately reward caring for people and nature,
- change our normative stories so we can see one another as co-creators of a world that works for us all.

Artificial Intelligence and Cultural Transformation

While this toolkit will support technologists of all kinds, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a space where attention to cultural transformation from Domination to Partnership is especially vital.

Moving from programming software and technology to developing AI systems requires a mindset change. Rather than simply following instructions, AI systems learn and act independently, writing their own rules and code based on base guidance and emergent inputs. This greatly limits human control, and makes it essential to focus on shaping the cultural environments in which AI systems learn with special care.

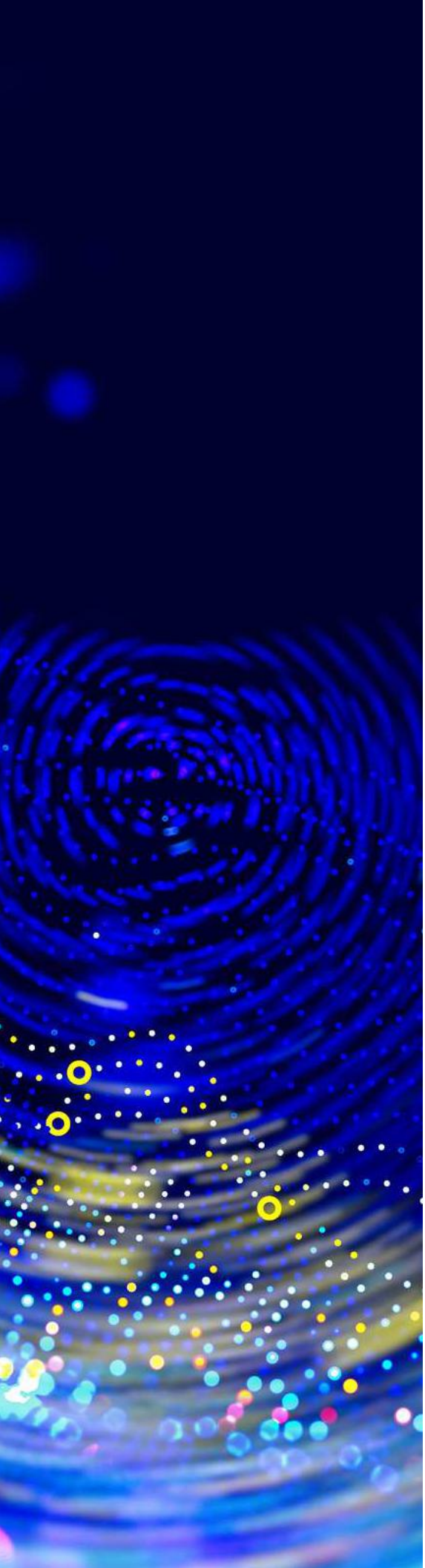
Just as a person's childhood affects the adult they become, the culture and base environment in which AI is developed has a massive influence on its ultimate shape. Neuroscience now confirms that children raised in Domination settings develop brains that are more rigid and less nuanced in their categorizations, less able to recognize and adapt to change, and less able to develop creative, nonviolent solutions to conflict.

Given that AI development is more like parenting a child than programming a robot, the same lessons must be heeded by technologists as by Partnership parents: If we want our AI systems to support the movement toward Partnership, we must be very diligent in assuring that the cultures in which they are "raised" do not default to the false assumptions and biased inputs of Domination Systems.

Whether you are working to advance AI or other new technologies, consciously steering toward Partnership will make all the difference between perpetuating oppression, violence, and inequity or moving toward greater equity, peace, and sustainability.



If we want our AI systems to support the movement toward Partnership, we must be very diligent in assuring that the cultures in which they are "raised" do not default to the false assumptions and biased inputs of Domination Systems.



Part 2. ASSESSMENT OF SELF AND CONTEXT

PLEASE NOTE:
The assessment worksheets in this section are digitally interactive. Just click into a text field to type your responses. Be sure to save this document if you want to preserve your answers for later review.

ASSESSMENT OF SELF AND CONTEXT

PICK A FOCUS

What is the technology project you'd like to focus on as you explore and apply this toolkit?

ABOUT YOU

Stepping back from a specific project for a moment, take a moment and think about the future of human beings and the Earth we share, and picture a version of that future that you would most like to be a part of creating. What are some of the elements of that future that matter most to you?

What are 3-5 of the values you hold that are embedded in your vision of that better future?

What aspects of your life experience have most shaped those values?

ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

What group or groups is the project intended to help or serve?

In what ways are members of those groups involved in this project?

In what ways are members of those groups similar or different to you in terms of life experience, power, or privilege?

Besides those intended groups, who else might this project impact (intentionally or unintentionally)?

Which of the values you named in the "About You" section of this assessment are expressed through this project? How does this project contribute to the future you envisioned in that section?

ABOUT YOUR TEAM

With whom are you working on this project? Who is part of the team?

As human beings, we all hold a range of perceptual biases that we inherit from our culture.

- Collectively, what biases do you think your team is most likely to have?
- What is in place in your team's culture or processes that helps safeguard your project from expressing those biases?

ABOUT THE PROJECT ECOSYSTEM

How would you describe the business imperatives that are shaping the conception and implementation of this project?

What data sets will you rely upon to complete the project?

How inclusive are those data sets of people of all genders?

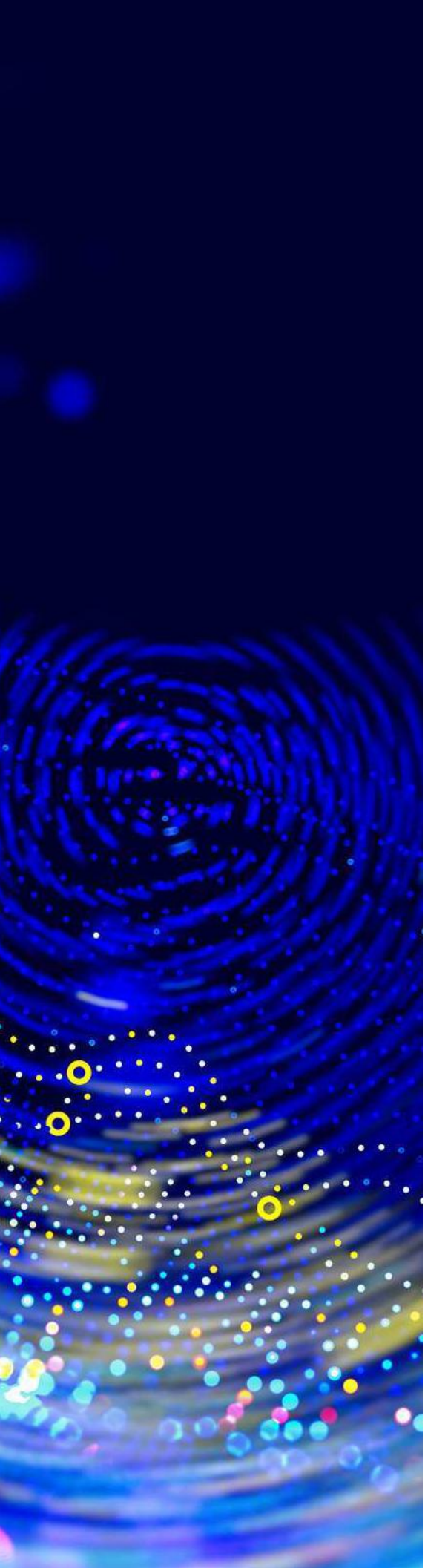
- Very inclusive
- Somewhat inclusive
- Not very inclusive
- I don't know

How inclusive are those data sets of racially diverse people?

- Very inclusive
- Somewhat inclusive
- Not very inclusive
- I don't know

What are your sources of funding for this project? How would you describe the priorities and aspirations of your funders as they relate to your work?

What other key dynamics of the project ecosystem do you think will most influence the project's trajectory?



Part 3. MOVING THE NEEDLE TOWARD PARTNERSHIP: Nine Critical Questions

Working with the Nine Questions: A Process

On the following pages, you will find nine questions that highlight key areas where you and your team can move the needle away from Domination and toward Partnership.

As you consider these questions, use the separate **Moving the Needle Workbook** document to capture your ideas and action plans.

We recommend the following 4-step process for getting the most out of your exploration of the nine questions:

STEP 1. Read through the brief discussion of each question, then read through the scales, and reflect on where you think your project falls. Click the button that corresponds to where you place your project on the scale, remembering that the goal is not to judge yourself or your team for areas where you still orient to our legacy of Domination, but to identify leverage points to move in the direction of Partnership.

STEP 2. If you are working on this as a team, take some time to compare your answers. If team members differ in their assessment of where you fall on a particular scale, share your thinking - what was your rationale for selecting the number you chose?

STEP 3. Next, focus on any scales where you clicked on number 3 or below. Using the **Idea Generation Worksheets** in the **Moving the Needle Workbook**, brainstorm a list: what are some ways you might shift toward Partnership in this area?

STEP 4. Looking at your list of ideas, pick out 1 to 3 actions you commit to taking that will help move your project toward Partnership. Capture these commitments on the **Action Planning Worksheets** in the **Moving the Needle Workbook**.

Things to Keep in Mind

- Domination Systems and Partnership Systems are not rigid opposites, but form a continuum of possibilities for human relations.
- The goal is not “pure” or “perfect” Partnership Systems, but rather intentional shifts toward mutuality, peace, equitability, creativity, and sustainability.
- As you place yourself or your team on these scales, remember this isn't about judging ourselves or others for unwittingly maintaining the Domination Systems we inherited. The goal is to raise our awareness of the often invisible values embedded in our culture, and our work.
- The Domination/Partnership scale focuses our attention on the foundational systems and structures needed to create a better future. While none of us alone can change those systems, we each have an essential role to play in cultural transformation. Culture change starts with individuals changing their own thinking and then modeling new priorities and actions.

Summary of the Nine Critical Questions

1. Who is framing and building this technology?
2. What assumptions and narratives are embedded in the technology?
3. What kinds of power relationships does the technology support?
4. What language is embedded in the culture within which the technology is being developed?
5. Will the lives of families and children be improved by the technology and will it promote healthy human development?
6. Are rigid gender stereotypes and the gendered system of values perpetuated by the technology, or does it model Partnership gender roles and relations?
7. Are racial inequality and other in-group vs. out-group rankings perpetuated or countered by the technology?
8. Are Domination economic and business models perpetuated by the technology or does it model Partnership alternatives?
9. What kind of relationship with our natural environment is supported by this technology?

The Partnership/Domination Technological Scales

PLEASE NOTE:
The scales in this section are digitally interactive. Just click on the circle corresponding to the number that best reflects your current state. Be sure to save this document if you want to preserve your answers for later review.



KEY

1
Strongly expresses or reinforces Domination System values and relations

2
Beginning to move away from Domination System patterns, but Domination legacy still very present

3
A mix of both Domination and Partnership values and relations

4
Beginning to leave Domination legacy behind and move toward Partnership values and relations

5
Strongly committed to Partnership System values and relations

N/A
This scale is not applicable to the project at hand

TEAM

Question 1.

Who is framing and building this technology?

Increasing diversity in visioning and developing new technologies is essential. If we are committed to building technologies that meet real human needs, we must include people with varied perspectives and experiences in project teams.

However, increasing the diversity of the people at the table is not, by itself, enough to catalyze a shift to Partnership Systems. As diversity increases, it is also essential for project teams to consider the foundational values and assumptions that guide their decisions.

As individuals, our life experiences are shaped by the complex interplay between gender, race, socio economic status, religion, etc. However, the key question for our future is the degree to which we are oriented to a Domination or Partnership model.

People who have historically been marginalized and oppressed in Domination Systems tend to see the value of the partnership end of the spectrum. However, being in a marginalized group does not necessarily guarantee that one has internalized partnership values. Therefore, it is critical for everyone in the project team to articulate the values that they hold and seek to embed in their technology.



TEAM

a. privilege and experience



Team includes only people of social and economic privilege.

Team includes people with diverse perspectives and life histories.

b. values



Team members perpetuate top-down, superior/inferior, in-group versus out- group thinking.

Team members value egalitarian relationships founded on mutual respect, care, responsibility, and benefit.

c. inclusion



People whom the technology is intended to serve are not included in the design or development process.

The design and development processes involve members of the communities who the technology is intended to serve.

Go to the Moving the Needle Workbook to plan how you will shift in the Partnership direction .

NARRATIVES

Question 2.

What assumptions and narratives are embedded in the technology?

Domination Systems rest on a story of human nature that tells us that humans are competitive, violent, and selfish, and that we have only two choices, to dominate or be dominated. Domination Systems marginalize the perspectives and needs of the majority of humanity - women and children - and keep us distracted by other social categories such as Right/Left, capitalist/socialist, religious/secular, Eastern/Western, Northern/Southern.

Domination Systems also maintain a false narrative of our past, ignoring the evidence that for many millennia in our prehistory societies were Partnership-oriented: more egalitarian, peaceful, and gender balanced.

The Partnership Lens reveals that this is a distorted story and unhelpful categories. Key findings from neuroscience show that the "pleasure centers" of our brains light up more when we share and care than when we win and dominate. Technology that builds on this neuroscience spreads a vital narrative that is often overlooked: it feels good to give, contribute, and care.

Through the Partnership Lens, we can see that even the story of evolution that we have been taught isn't quite right. As evolutionary scientist David Loye extensively documents, technology must communicate and reflect what Darwin himself emphasized: that culture, love, and morality play a major role in human evolution.

As technologists, we can ask ourselves whether the tools we are envisioning and building contribute to the assumption that violence and conquest are just human nature and justice and peace are impossible? Or do they offer a balanced view of human nature emphasizing our human capacities for love and justice rather than violence and aggression?

These questions become even more urgent with the development of virtual reality technologies which reward escape from reality and denial of reality. Meeting the challenges facing us requires accepting our shared responsibility to improve the lives of people living and working in imperiled natural environments.



NARRATIVES

a. human nature



The technology assumes that human nature is basically selfish, violent, and competitive, and supports the expression of those potentials.

The technology supports our human capacities for caring, empathy, and creativity, recognizing that individual thriving requires supportive social and natural ecosystems.

b. narrative of human possibility



The narrative is that people are inherently self-interested and competitive and must choose either to dominate or be dominated.

The narrative is that people can and do care for one another, empower one another, and act for mutual benefit.

c. scarcity



A narrative of scarcity (of time, money, resources) creates an austerity mentality that constrains our vision for what the technology can make possible.

We recognize that scarcity is a construct of Domination Systems, and orient instead to a narrative of abundance and care. We shape our sense of what is possible and desirable around what will expand the common good.

NARRATIVES

d. innovation



We valorize individual "genius" inventors and innovators as the drivers of technical progress and believe that technology, by itself, has the capacity to save the future.

We think of technology development as an inherently social process and we recognize that cultural change must accompany technology change to ensure a better future for all.

e. reality



We assume that existing reality is inadequate and can be improved by technology-rendered realities

We assume that the existing reality of embodied human beings, animals, plants, and place is rich and valuable and needs support for thriving rather than substitution by alternate realities.

Go to the Moving the Needle Workbook to plan how you will shift in the Partnership direction .

Question 3.

What kinds of power relationships does the technology support?

Technology can play a significant role in promoting relationships that are democratic and equitable, allowing spontaneity and creativity to flourish.

In Partnership-oriented relationships, linking (instead of ranking) is a high priority, the contributions of all genders are equally valued, the "feminine" is not devalued, communication flows in all directions, and our interconnection is recognized.

A Partnership System does not require a completely flat structure. We cannot do away with all hierarchies because sometimes someone has to make a decision. Technology should foster **Hierarchies of Actualization** and discourage **Hierarchies of Domination.**

In a Hierarchy of Domination, accountability, respect, and benefit only flow from the bottom up. In a Hierarchy of Actualization, accountability, respect, and benefit flow both ways.

In Domination Systems, the normative ideal for power is power over, backed by fear and force. In Partnership-oriented Systems the norm is power to and power with: our power to create and empower rather than disempower.



POWER

a. structure of power



The technology reinforces social inequality and injustice through top-down, “power-over” relationships.

The technology supports an equitable society through “power with” and “power to” relationships..

b. recognition of complexity



The technology promotes rigid, binary categories of gender and race and fosters in-group versus out-group relations.

The technology values diversity and assumes fluid, nonbinary gender and racial categories.

c. ranking vs linking



The technology supports ranking people according to those categories (gender over gender; race over race; religion over religion; etc.)

The technology supports linking people across differences.

POWER

d. hierarchies



The technology reinforces Hierarchies of Domination in which violence and fear are used to control.

The technology supports Hierarchies of Actualization in which leaders, teachers, parents, etc. use power to nurture and empower.

Go to the Moving the Needle Workbook to plan how you will shift in the Partnership direction .

LANGUAGE

Question 4.

What language is embedded in the culture within which the technology is being developed?

A key question for our future is whether we, consciously or unconsciously, maintain language we inherited from more rigid Domination times or whether we develop technology with a Partnership worldview and the Domination/Partnership Continuum.

Linguistic psychologists have found that the categories provided by a culture's language channel our thinking. Perpetuating old social categories that came out of more rigid Domination times makes it virtually impossible to see that we can build a more equitable and sustainable Partnership way of living and making a living – and what foundations we must build for this.

As Einstein famously said, "we cannot solve problems with the same thinking that created them." Changing our thinking requires attention to language. We do this by introducing new terms like Hierarchies of Actualization, changing violent phrases to nurturing ones, and using terms like Partnership System and Domination System, rather than old categories that do not describe what is needed to build foundations for a better world.

Consider what language is prevalent in the culture of your team - where does it fall on the Domination/Partnership continuum?



LANGUAGE

a. language of success



Our team culture includes lots of Domination language like “killing it,” “crushing it,” “smashing it,” “dominating the space,” “winning”

We intentionally seek and use nonviolent language that acknowledges a Partnership alternative: “contributing something helpful,” “advancing an important human agenda,” “building something transformative,” or “showing a path forward"

b. language of connection



We objectify the people who will be served by our technology as “users” or “end users.”

We humanize and include those whom we wish to serve by shifting our language to “our community,” “partners,” “contributors,” or “collaborators.”

c. what other examples come to mind of Domination or Partnership language used by your team?

Domination language we use	*Partnership language we use*

Go to the Moving the Needle Workbook to plan how you will shift in the Partnership direction .

CHILDHOOD

Question 5.

Will the lives of families and children be improved by the technology and will it promote healthy human development?

Neuroscience shows that our brains are not fully developed at birth and that the architecture of our brains is formed in interaction with our environment, which is primarily cultural and heavily influenced by whether the family we grow up in orients to Domination or Partnership. This brain architecture affects how we feel, think, and act, including how we vote.

Practices such as genital mutilation, child brides, and male preference in education and nutrition normalize the abuse and violence inherent in Domination Systems. Even in the United States, where most of these practices are not part of the culture, the Adverse Childhood Experiences studies (ACES) show the widespread prevalence of adverse childhood experiences. The recognition of the prevalence of trauma is a healthy sign. However, these traumas are not just the function of an individual family; they are part of how Domination Systems perpetuate themselves through families.

In domination-oriented families, children learn to equate difference – beginning with the fundamental difference in our species between the female and male forms – with superiority or inferiority, dominating or being dominated, being served or serving. This is hardly a model for social, racial, and economic equity: it is a template for in-group versus out-group thinking and acting where out-groups are dehumanized and persecuted. We clearly see this in rigid domination regimes, be they secular and Western such as rightist Nazi Germany and Stalin's leftist former USSR, or religious like the Eastern Taliban and fundamentalist Iran or the Western "rightist-fundamentalist" alliance.

In contrast to the Domination System's authoritarian, punitive relationships between parents and children, Partnership Systems are characterized by authoritative, mutually respectful, caring family relationships that support healthy human development.



CHILDHOOD

a. communication



The technology fosters top-down or one-way communication between parents and children.

The technology fosters communication that flows in all directions (from children to parents and parents to children).

b. conflict resolution



The technology models/ normalizes violence as an acceptable means of resolving conflict and maintaining family hierarchies. It relies on the addictive quality of violent "entertainment" to fuel children's participation and engagement.

The technology models/ normalizes non-violent ways to resolve conflicts. It connects children to experiences of curiosity, creativity, and caring for people and nature.

c. gender roles



The technology supports rigid gender hierarchies in families.

The technology supports egalitarian sharing of household work and decision-making in families.

CHILDHOOD

d. social environment



The technology supports parents in dominating their children and exerting total control over the environments in which their children grow and learn.

The technology fosters a social environment where parenting is authoritative rather than authoritarian and children learn to be critical consumers and to make healthy choices.

Go to the Moving the Needle Workbook to plan how you will shift in the Partnership direction .

Question 6.

Are rigid gender stereotypes and the gendered system of values perpetuated by the technology or does it model Partnership gender roles and relations?

In domination cultures and subcultures, the binary categories of man and woman are used to separate human beings into categories of superior and inferior. Not only women but also anything stereotypically associated with women, such as caring, caregiving, and nonviolence, are seen as inferior to anything stereotypically associated with men and the so-called "real" masculine, like conquest and violence.

This gendered system of values influences the kinds of social, economic, and technical problems that are prioritized because we have been taught to dismiss as "just women's issues" anything related to the challenges of nurturing children and caring for elders and our communities.

This tendency to dismiss and devalue the essential labor coded "women's work," ignores the realities that caring work is human work, increasingly done by people of all genders, and that empathy, care, and mutual respect are foundational to our shared humanity and our economic success.

The Domination System's subordination of women and any gender outside the gender binary leads to a tendency to leave out women, non-binary, and gender-fluid individuals from the data sets that determine algorithms and teach artificial intelligence. Becoming aware of the gender imbalance in the collection of data, and in the data itself, is essential to moving in a Partnership direction.



GENDER

a. normalization of "masculine" priorities



The technology normalizes stereotypically “masculine” priorities, such as domination and violence.

The technology normalizes stereotypically ‘feminine’ values and priorities, such as caring, caregiving, and nonviolence.

b. gendered hierarchies of value



The technology reinforces the belief that activities, people, and products coded “masculine” are more important, valuable, and powerful than those coded “feminine.”

The technology reinforces the belief that activities, people, and products coded “feminine” or “nonbinary” are important.

c. violence and care



The technology is programmed so conflict and violence (and the corresponding addictive adrenaline highs) are normalized, depicting violence and hurting as entertaining and “manly.”

The technology is focused on normalizing and supporting our innate capacities for caring, peaceful relationships and nonviolent conflict resolution. It depicts helping and caring for others as heroic actions for humans of all genders.

Go to the Moving the Needle Workbook to plan how you will shift in the Partnership direction .

Question 7.

Are racial inequality and other forms of in-group vs. out-group rankings perpetuated or countered by the technology?

Technology reflects the biases and values of its builders and framers and those of the culture in which it is created. Without intentional efforts to recognize and correct them, technology will perpetuate systemic and cognitive racial biases. We see this when social platforms influence behavior by tapping into social conformity biases and fears.

When the racial prejudices of a culture are embedded in data sets, they become encoded in the technology and the way we interact with it. We see this with facial recognition tools that use machine learning algorithms that are trained with racially biased data.

Such technologies create "in groups" and "out groups" and dehumanize "the other," perpetuating the assumption that dominating or being dominated is the only alternative. This "in group" vs "out group" mindset is inherent in Domination Systems, regardless of whether they are Eastern, Western, secular, religious, etc. For example, in much of the Middle East it is Sunni vs Shia or vice versa, in parts of southeast Asia it is Hindu vs Muslim, and in Nazi Germany it was the dehumanization of Jews, Gypsies, Poles, etc.

In the United States, as we move towards Partnership, there is growing recognition of structural discrimination and dehumanization based on race. Technology development is also slowly becoming more aware of the systemic nature of the racist assumptions embedded in our culture – and hence in our minds, politics, and economics.

As technologists, we have an essential role to play not only in dismantling Domination biases and assumptions, but also in forging a new Partnership culture of equity.



RACE

a. racial categories



Race as a construct is believed to exist “in nature” as a simple, binary differentiator.

Race is recognized as a social construct and racial identities are understood to be complex.

b. the meaning of racial difference



Race is used as a signifier of the superior/inferior relations that characterize Domination Systems.

Equitable relations are emphasized and diversity is understood as a condition for creativity and growth.

c. the flow of accountability and benefits



Technologies reinforce in-group/out-group hierarchies. Accountability and benefits flow only upward from “inferior” to “superior” groups.

Technologies actively challenge in-group vs out-group hierarchies, promoting recognition of commonalities and interconnections. Accountability and benefits flow in all directions.

d. visibility and voice



The technology recognizes lighter skin tones more readily than darker skin tones. The technology is used to profile, target, control or constrain the voices of members of racial minorities or other "out-groups."

The technology equally recognizes the full range of skin tones. The technology helps uplift and amplify the stories and images of historically marginalized people.

Go to the Moving the Needle Workbook to plan how you will shift in the Partnership direction .

ECONOMICS

Question 8.

Are Domination economic and business models perpetuated by the technology or does it model Partnership alternatives?

The old business model of "maximizing profits for shareholders/owners" without considering whether the product or activity is harmful or helpful to people and the planet is not sustainable. **As we move toward Partnership Systems, there is increased recognition of the "triple bottom line" of people, planet, and profit.**

Both Capitalism and Socialism came out of early industrial times in the 1700's and 1800's and we are now in the 21st Century, a post-industrial age. We need a new operating system. Both Capitalism and Socialism are based on a gendered system of values that considers the work of caring for people and planet just "reproductive" rather than "productive" work– a spurious distinction still generally taught in economic schools.

This distorted view of what is valuable affects us all. It is an obstacle to business and government policies that recognize the enormous economic value of care and caregiving. This is reflected and perpetuated by metrics such as GDP and GNP.

We need new metrics that value care and caregiving because as the value of, and rewards for, care and caregiving rise, children's health and well-being improve.

This is essential so we have the "high-quality human capital" economists say is the key to success in our post-industrial age.

New business models are also important in transitioning from Domination to Partnership. For example, technologists are experimenting with including in the ownership structure the people whose data is used.

In these ways, technologies can support a caring economics of Partnerism: a socio-economic system that - in both the market and non-market sectors - values and rewards caring for one another, nature, and our collective future.



ECONOMICS

a. economic model



The technology is based on an incomplete and distorted model of economics, including only the market, government, and illegal economic sectors, from which women were generally barred in earlier Domination Systems.

The technology makes visible the economic value of the three life-sustaining economic sectors that modern economics ignores: the household, community, and natural economic sectors

b. measures of progress and value



Progress and value are measured in purely monetary terms

Progress and value are measured in terms of advancement in our human capacity to care for each other and for the Earth

c. nature of profitability



The technology is profitable by extraction, efficiency, rationality, and competition.

The technology is profitable by stewardship, resilience, and collaboration.

ECONOMICS

d. profit models



Profits flow one way, to narrow sets of owners, funders, and stakeholders

Distributed profit models are embedded, such as “Exit to Community” models in which ownership is shared equitably within the communities served by the technology.

e. financial incentives



Financial incentives align with the exponential growth model embedded in GDP and other economic metrics that leave out the well being of humans and the natural world.

Financial incentives align with the well being of society and the natural world.

Go to the Moving the Needle Workbook to plan how you will shift in the Partnership direction .

ENVIRONMENT

Question 9.

What kind of relationship with our natural environment is supported by this technology?

Designing technologies to care for and protect the natural environment is key to changing society's Domination-oriented relationship with the Earth. Today's extractive technologies have given human beings the power to "conquer nature" at a scale and pace that is leading to mass extinctions of plant and animal species and the elimination of key ecosystems.

Partnership-oriented cultures emphasize technologies that respect the Earth, balance human needs with those of the planet, and support regenerative and sustainable practices.

We must leave behind the technologies that view the natural world as a mere resource to be controlled and harnessed by humans. When technology views nature as an infinite, extractable resource, (old-growth forests are treated as timber, rivers are transformed into hydro-electric dams, fish are indiscriminately extracted from the oceans, etc), we not only risk destroying the natural world, but we erode our sense of the interconnection of all life, and hence of the sacred.

Policies that simultaneously preserve the natural world and ensure our own well-being are key in moving towards Partnership. Designing technologies to show the scale of our environmental destruction and to support awareness of our interconnection and dependence on the natural world is key to the ecological consciousness inherent in Partnership Systems.



ENVIRONMENT

a. core assumptions



The technology assumes that the conquest of nature is normal and good.

The technology assumes that humans are part of nature and must care for our natural life-support systems.

b. relationship with nature



The technology enables extractive, destructive activities that deplete natural resources.

The technology facilitates regenerative, sustainable relationships with nature.

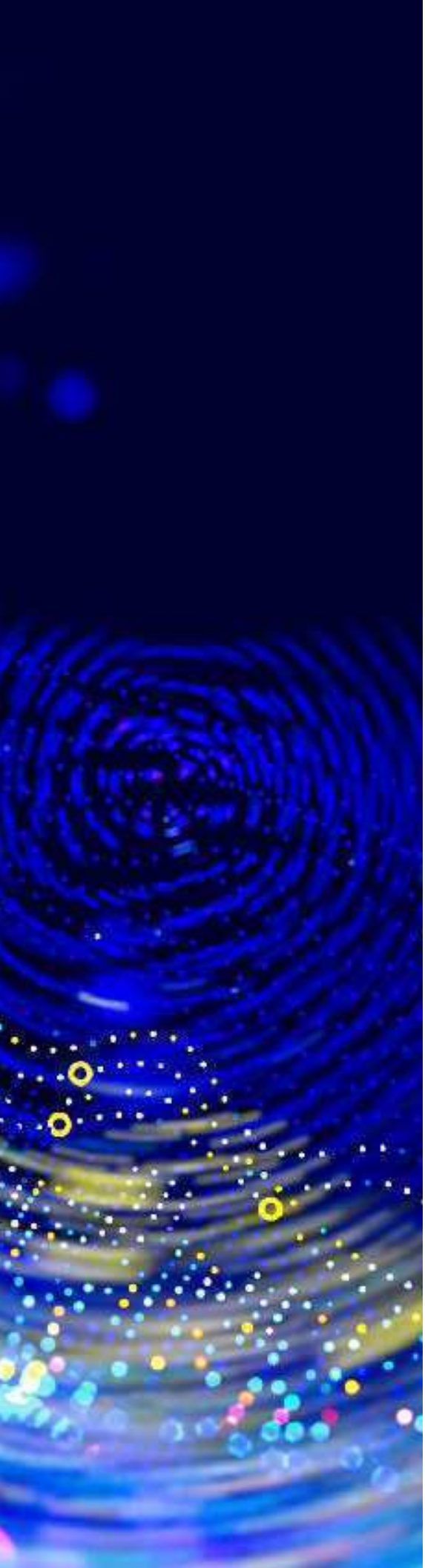
c. economic value of nature



The technology makes invisible the economic value of healthy natural ecosystems.

The technology makes visible the economic value of healthy natural ecosystems.

Go to the Moving the Needle Workbook to plan how you will shift in the Partnership direction .



Part 4. EXAMPLES: Pioneering Partnership Projects

All around the world, exciting projects and initiatives are underway that support the shift from Domination to Partnership. Here are just a few pioneering Partnership projects that are helping to move the needle toward Partnership in each of the four cornerstones. These kinds of projects expand our thinking about what is possible and encourage connection and cross-pollination.

Pioneering Partnership Projects

CORNERSTONE: CHILDHOOD

ALL IN
is a Partnership Project because it is developing an AI platform to connect foster youth transitioning into adulthood with the information, advice, and coaching they need to successfully navigate the world after foster care. The project recognizes the critical importance of childhood experiences, and the importance of care in making up for a dislocated childhood. All In also incorporates a participatory design model, involving current and former foster youth as content contributors. Youth are also being engaged in the development of success metrics, and markers of well-being and self-agency.

THE CENTER FOR HUMANE TECHNOLOGY'S YOUTH TOOLKIT
is a Partnership Project because it helps foster communication that flows in all directions by giving youth a platform to voice their opinion and reflect on questions and issues that technology poses. The Youth Toolkit helps young people navigate — and push to change — a broken social media environment while connecting them to experiences of curiosity, creativity, and caring.

THE CENTER FOR HUMANE TECHNOLOGY'S MYSOCIALTRUTH CAMPAIGN
is a Partnership Project because it helps young people critically reflect on their own experiences with social media and discern whether or not a technology supports their wellbeing and larger life goals. MySocialTruth encourages young technology users to question whether social media technology strengthens the ability to come together and focus on big challenges.

Pioneering Partnership Projects

CORNERSTONE: GENDER AND RACE

THE CODED BIAS FILM AND ACTION TOOLKIT
is a Partnership Project because it raises awareness of the hidden ways in which technologies can perpetuate the values and assumptions of Domination Systems, and provides activists with tools to move toward algorithms that recognize the equality of women and people of color. It helps us understand how data is being used, so our technologies no longer repeat and reinforce unconscious prejudices we inherited.

THE GLOBAL DATA COMMONS
is a Partnership Project because it aspires to set in motion a global movement to significantly scale-up responsible access to data, empowering an unprecedented number of public, private and social sector actors to use data for public good. The initiative is creating a gender balanced database by making data collection and datasets accessible to and representative of all genders.

AI COMMONS
is a Partnership Project because every initiative and project AI Commons incubates is based on the principles of collaboration and sharing. AI Commons supports linking people across differences by connecting problem owners with problem solvers to make sure that the most impacted people are participating in the problem solving.

XPRIZE AI AND DATA FOR GOOD
are Partnership Projects because they are focused on enabling and cultivating actionable and tangible solutions to some of the world's most immediate challenges through the use of data sciences, machine learning and artificial intelligence.

Pioneering Partnership Projects

CORNERSTONE: ECONOMICS

THE INCLUSIVE VALUE LEDGER (IVL)
is a Partnership Project because it recognizes the shortcomings of current economic systems that are not designed to care for people, starting at birth, and for our natural environment. This legislative initiative to develop a public peer-to-peer savings and payments platform for the citizens of New York seeks to overcome the inequities caused by Domination economics, and reward the enormously valuable work of caring for people and nature.

REGEN VILLAGES
is a Partnership Project because it exemplifies how technologies can facilitate regenerative, sustainable relationships with the natural environment. It is designed to apply artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms to provide communities with surplus energy, clean water, and high-yield organic food that support neighborhood regenerative resiliency.

CENTREE
is a Partnership Project because it establishes a regenerative system where the living forest will have a quantifiable economic value to counterbalance extractive market forces that only value the forest when it is dead (logged). This technology not only makes visible the economic value of caring for our natural world, but also balances human needs with those of the planet, and supports regenerative and sustainable practices.

Pioneering Partnership Projects

CORNERSTONE: NARRATIVES AND LANGUAGE

THE MOBIUS COMMUNITY AND FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
is a Partnership Project because it recognizes that technology development occurs within the context of the stories we tell about the purpose of technology and our understanding of the value and worth of the people who will be impacted by technology. The Mobius community is designed to change those narratives as an essential step to creating a more equitable, non-violent, and empowering future. Moreover, the Mobius ecosystem recognizes that these new narratives must be authored by the people whose experiences and voices have historically been left out or marginalized.

THE FEMME FUTURISTS SOCIETY
is a Partnership Project because it explicitly seeks to support a Partnership future in which our narratives of possibility are informed by the experiences of women and the values of care, non-violence, and equity which have historically been dismissed and devalued along with all things associated with the "feminine." The Femme Futurists Society is staging a series of conversations with women futurists from around the world to "balance the dominant masculine side of the conversation with the currently underrepresented feminine" and "expand our belief in what's possible and encourage constructive action."



Part 5. RESOURCES

Resources

Keynotes & Webinars

Keynote address to AI for Good

Keynote from Bretton Woods

Text of Short Keynote from Next Generation Internet (NGI) Trust

Measurementality: Counting Mental Health and Caregiving

Uruguay International Conference on Policy and Education

Guides

Caring Economics

Caring and Connected Parenting

Social Wealth Index

CXI Council on Extended Intelligence

Books

The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics

Nurturing Our Humanity: How Domination and Partnership Shape Our Brains, Lives, and Future

The Chalice and The Blade: Our History, Our Future

Journal Articles

Bringing Partnership Home: A Model of Family Transformation by Julie Hanks

Glossary for Cultural Transformation: The Language of Partnership and Domination by Stefano Mercanti

Social Wealth Economic Indicators for a Caring Economy by Indradeep Ghosh

Untangling Partnership and Domination Morality by David Loye

Partnership-Based Health Care: Suggestions for Effective Application by Teddie M Potter

Websites

www.centerforpartnership.org

www.rianeeisler.com

www.partnerism.org



Part 6. CONTRIBUTORS

We want to thank The Ford Foundation, and especially Michelle Shevin, for supporting this Partnership Technology Toolkit.

This project has been informed by a community of brilliant collaborators from the worlds of technology, business, and cultural transformation. The Center for Partnership Systems convened a series of conversations and working sessions in 2022 to test and refine an early draft of the toolkit. We are grateful to the individuals listed on the following page who generously participated in those conversations and shared insights and suggestions that significantly enriched this resource.

We are also most grateful to all who contributed to this work, including the CPS Team: Riane Eisler, Sara Saltee, and Quincey Tickner.

Contributors

Amir Banifatemi
Executive Director, XPRIZE

Galia Benartzi
Co-founder, Bancor

Lisa Berkley
Faculty, UCSC; Founding Director, Center for Applied Values and Ethics in Advancing Technologies (CAVEAT)

Kate Byrne
CEO, KatapultX

Catherine Connors
Founder, Demeter Media

Peter Corke
Founder, Centree

Jed Diamond
Founder/CEO, MenAlive

Rickey Gard Diamond
Founder, and Steering Committee An Economy of Our Own (AEOO)

James Ehrlich
Founder, ReGen Villages

Nancy Giordano
Strategic Futurist, Play Big Inc

Laura Hall
Partner, WHYZ Partners

Cheryl Heller
President of the Measured Lab, and Founding Partner of the design lab CommonWise

John Havens
Sustainability Practice Lead, IEEE Standards Association

Bobby Kia
President, Global Solution Deployment Endowment

Ron Kim
New York State Representative

Laura Koch
CEO, Women4Solutions

Didintle Ntsie
Volunteer Project Manager, Life is Meeting

Emma Pezzack
Content/Communication, Play Big Inc.

Vicki Saunders
Founder, SheEO

Rachael Safirstein
Communications Director, Assemblyman Ron Kim

Alby Shale
EIR - ESG Liontree

Michelle Shevin
Senior Program Manager, Ford Foundation

Divya Siddarth
Visiting Scholar RadicalXChange Foundation, Ostrom Workshop

Aden Van Noppen
Co-Director, Mobius



Copyright © 2022
All rights reserved.
Center for Partnership Systems
PO Box 10312, Hilo, HI 96721 USA
center@partnershipway.org