

Appreciating the Alternative Economic Story

Image



Louisville gathering to identify, connect and celebrate relational, community-oriented economy

A gathering in Louisville, Kentucky this week is intended to add to the work of changing the prevailing story of the economy.

Old Testament scholar [Walter Brueggemann](#) names the dominant economic story as that of empire. It's a story of scarcity, not abundance, individualism versus communalism. This story is at the root of the growing income inequality and unsustainable treatment of the earth. It is not a story that is making us happy or safe.

But there is an alternative story at work. It does not need to be created. It is happening. The work is to shed light on it, connect and celebrate the players and then pioneer additional models.

The alternative story recognizes that economy in its best form enables the flourishing of all life.

It has a far more relational understanding of what constitutes economy. It also recognizes the power of place as an enabler of a truly thriving, community-oriented economy. People and organizations already showing what's possible in this story include the Seattle-based [Community Sourced Capital](#), which offers loans for small businesses using capital sourced directly from people in their community. Some of the work that the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) is doing is also relevant.

The cofounders of [Social Capital Markets](#) (SOCAP), the world's largest event convening impact investors and social entrepreneurs, are co-organizing the two-day Louisville event geared to what they're calling neighbourhood economics. Kevin Jones and Rosa Lee Harden are both sensing the increasing importance of local economics and excited about its potential. They see all kinds of possibilities in funding local ventures, creating toolkits to support entrepreneurs at the local level and encouraging and learning from what's already happening in this realm.

Co-organizer of this week's event, Tim Soerens, has his feet in both the world of SOCAP and another host of the conference, [The Parish Collective](#). He imagines this gathering spotlighting, connecting, strengthening and then refracting back out into the world all the best of what is happening in this alternative story.

Then he'd like to see ongoing connection and learning happening between the actors in this story going forward.

As Walter says, "You create community by re-enacting the narrative." The very work of shifting the economy story from that of empire to community requires an ongoing re-enactment of the story. To learn more about the Nov. 12-13 Louisville event, click [here](#).

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