

# Employer Practices – Community of Practice Series 2: Future Proofing Your Organization

Session 2: How to Navigate Your Theory of Change  
in a Shifting Employment Space







# Gratitude and Commitment #CCI

By Chataya Holy Singer

By Rutendo Sanganza

By Jeena Leigh Hill



In the Tamarack **Learning Centre**  
we support our learners in the  
**five interconnected practices**  
that we believe lead to impactful  
**community change.**



ENDING POVERTY  
DEEPENING COMMUNITY  
BUILDING YOUTH FUTURES  
CLIMATE TRANSITIONS  
**Vibrant Communities**  
TAMARACK INSTITUTE

In **Vibrant Communities**, we support  
**cities and local leaders** to implement  
large-scale change initiatives to  
**reduce poverty, deepen community,**  
**build youth futures** and address  
**climate transitions.**

# Workforce Transitions - Employer Practices Community of Practice

Session 1: Evaluating Your  
Impact  
October 4, 2023  
1:00 – 2:00 pm EST



Session 2: How to Navigate  
your theory of change in a  
shifting employment space  
October 25, 2023  
1:00 – 2:00 pm EST



Session 3: Telling Your  
Impact Story  
November 15, 2023



[Register Here](#) for  
Individual Community of  
Practice Calls or the  
Whole Series

## **Session 2: What challenges do you face when evaluating your organization or program impact?**

### Getting to Know Each Other

- Introduce yourself
- Introduce your organization

## **Session 2: How to navigate your theory of change in a shifting employment space**

# **Agenda for Today**

1. Welcome, Land Acknowledgement and Setting the Context for the Session – 10 Minutes
2. Setting the context: How to navigate your theory of change in a shifting employment space.

Michelle Wilson, Ed.D National Fund for Workforce Solutions – 15 Minutes

1. Question and Conversations – 30 minutes
2. Next Session in the Series – Thank you and evaluation – 5 minutes

# Community of Practice

- A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who share a common concern, a set of problems, or an interest in a topic and who come together to fulfill both individual and group goals.
- Communities of practice often focus on sharing best practices and creating new knowledge to advance a domain of professional practice. Interaction on an ongoing basis is an important part of this.
- The Employer Practices - Community of Practice will be a web-based collaborative environment to communicate, connect and conduct community activities.

# Workforce Transitions - Employer Practices Community of Practice

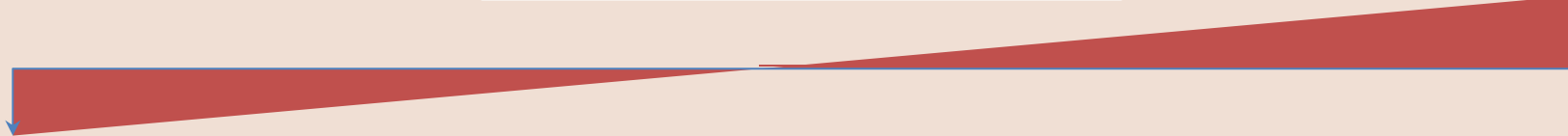
Session 1: Evaluating Your  
Impact  
October 4, 2023  
1:00 – 2:00 pm EST



Session 2: How to Navigate  
your theory of change in a  
shifting employment space  
October 25, 2023  
1:00 – 2:00 pm EST



Session 3: Telling Your  
Impact Story  
November 15, 2023



[Register Here](#) for  
Individual Community of  
Practice Calls or the  
Whole Series



# Employer Practices - Co-Design Team

The Employer Practices Community of Practice Co-Design Team

- Bassel Ramli – Jump Start Refugee
- Crystal Kalaitzakis – Momentum Centre
- Tom Strong - The National Fund for Workforce Solutions
- Carolyn Yang -TechEquity Collaborative
- Rochelle T. Cooks – The Welcoming Center
- Kannyka Pouk – Centre for South-East Asians
- Abdulla Daoud – The Refugee Centre

# Session 2: How to Navigate your theory of change in a shifting employment space

Michelle Wilson, National Fund for Workforce Solutions

## Session 2: How to Navigate your theory of change in a shifting employment space



Michelle Wilson, Director, Evaluation and Learning

[National Fund for Workforce Solutions](#)

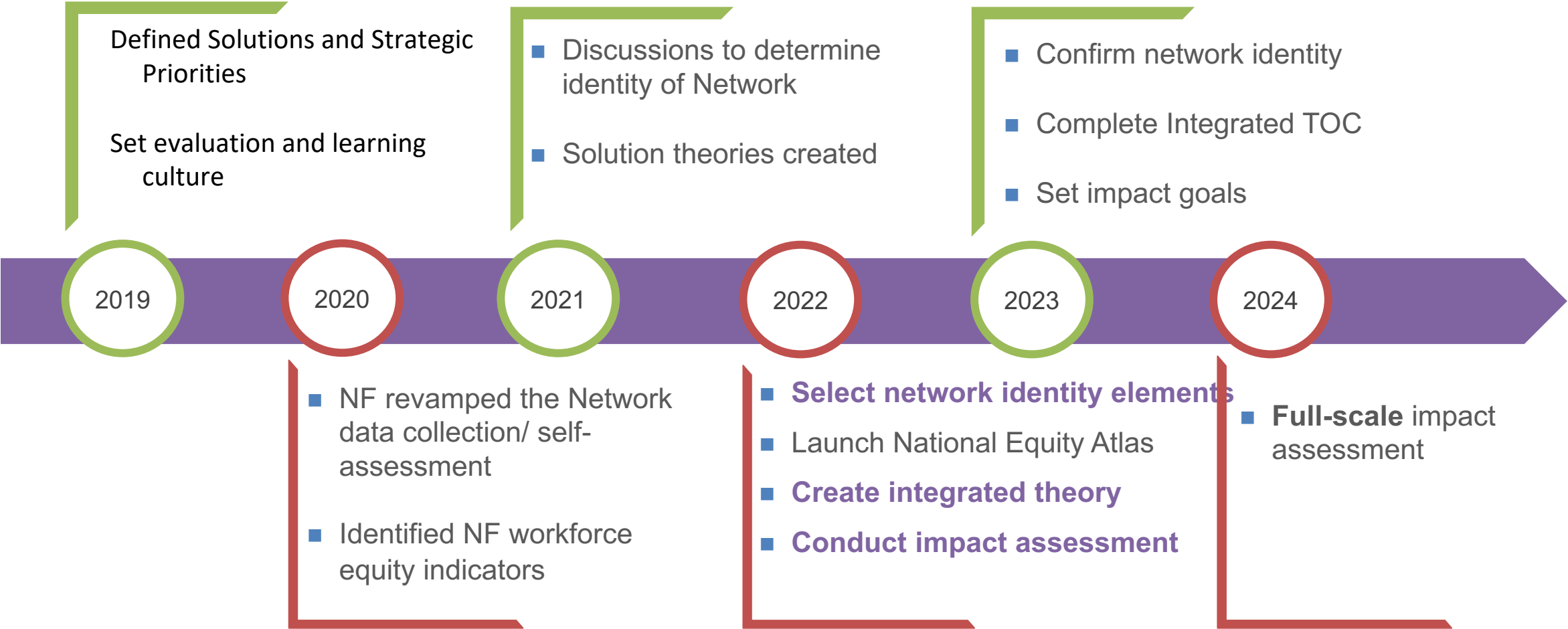
Michelle Wilson, Ed.D., is the director of evaluation and learning at the National Fund. Michelle has worked in a variety of settings focusing on issues of access and equity in health and educational settings. She has spent over 18 years conducting community-level research, evaluation, and program development and specializes in research and evaluation design and implementation in complex and challenging settings. Michelle earned a doctorate in adult and community college education from North Carolina State University, a master's degree in applied anthropology from the University of Maryland, and a bachelor's degree in sociology and anthropology from North Carolina A&T State University.



Integrated Theory of Change



# Our Impact Timeline



## *Nationally Powered, Locally Driven*

The National Fund supports a network of 34 regional workforce collaboratives aligned around a **vision for workforce equity** to ensure all jobs are good jobs, race does not dictate employment outcomes, and equitable systems provide workers with foundational supports required to thrive in a career.

### *Guided by a set of beliefs*

We must orient around action

Change is best driven by local stakeholders rooted in the community taking coordinated action, with regional workforce collaboratives leading and balancing the needs of employers, workers, and other stakeholders.

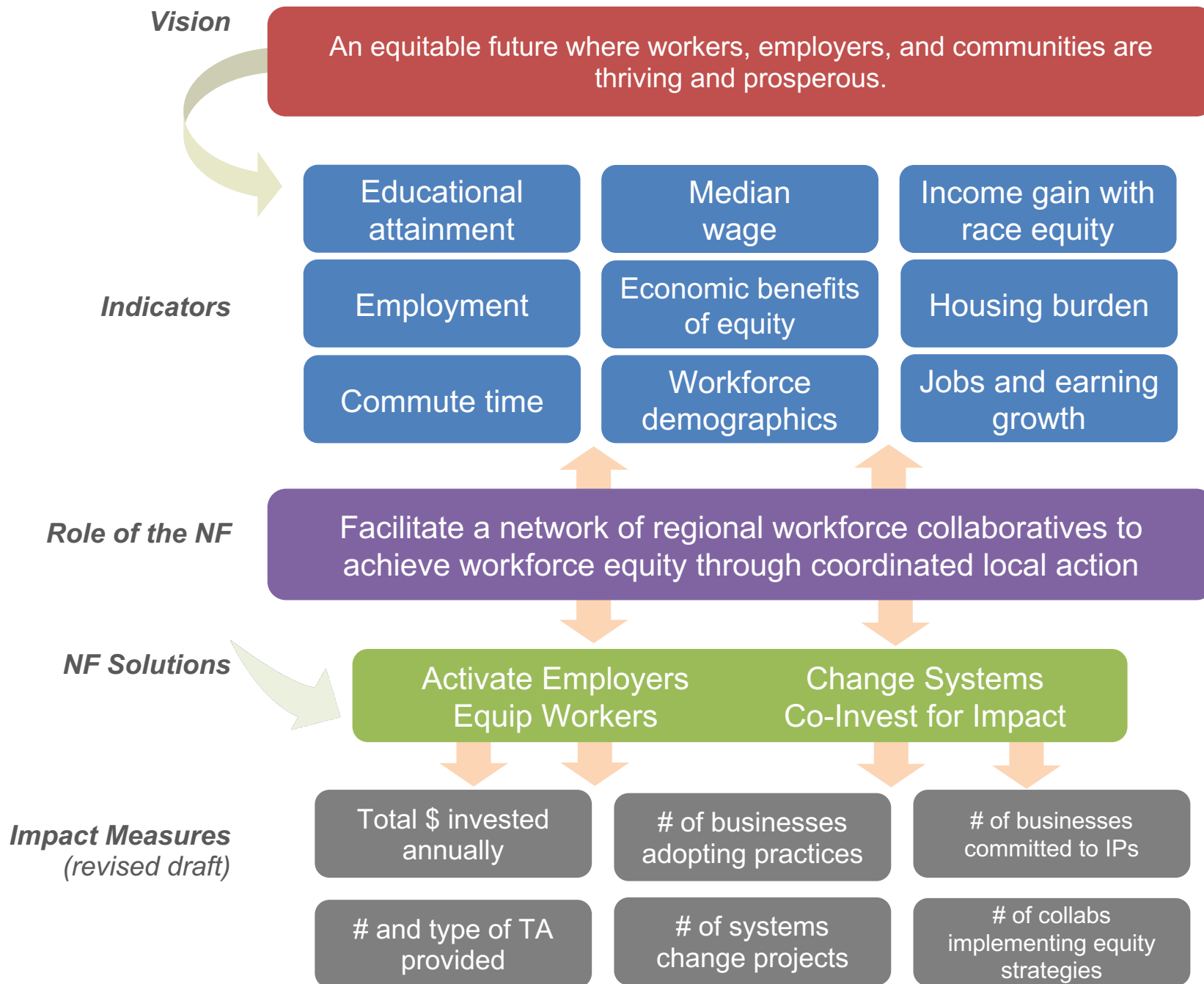
Access to ideas, inspiration, and resources at a national level is a key ingredient to advancing outcomes at a local level

It is possible to test different paths to change locally and spread promising practices and new narratives nationally

Network diversity - as reflected by each community's beliefs, values, priorities, and competencies - is a strength

### *Focused on reinforcing activities*

The National Fund	The Collaboratives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share learning and illuminate trends to inform action on the ground</li><li>• Develop tools and frameworks to mobilize change locally and align around shared language</li><li>• Make connections to peers across the country to create a system of support and provide inspiration</li><li>• Provide funding and thought partnership for meaningful shifts in outcomes</li><li>• Amplify the work happening at a local level to reach a wide audience</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop deep understanding of local needs, history, and politics</li><li>• Understand the root causes and drivers that contribute to different experiences of work across local populations</li><li>• Coordinate cross-sector stakeholders on a shared vision and outcomes</li><li>• Drive collective action toward those outcomes (run / fund initiatives)</li><li>• Share experience and stories to help others learn and try new approaches</li></ul>



## Impact Roadmap

### Race Equity Index\*

- 1) Offers comparative snapshot of RE for US cities, regions, states
- 2) Assesses 9 indicators of economic vitality, readiness, and connectedness – includes overall population well-being and racial gaps in outcomes
- 3) Tracks change over time

## Integrated Solutions Theory of Change

Advancing and sustaining workforce equity at scale will require an integrated solutions approach. This new approach will:

- Enable our staff to work collaboratively across the solutions framework,
- Capitalize on the guiding principles of the newly minted draft network design,
- Focus our collective resources on the activities most likely to produce change,
- Support our fundraising efforts via focused proposals that make a compelling case for impact, and
- Guide our evaluation and learning agenda and network growth and management strategy.



# Conditions We Seek to Change

## National, global trends:

- Disparities in employment, income, and wealth levels that perpetuate racial inequity.
- Decline of good jobs accessible without a post-secondary degree.
- Occupational segregation that crowds workers of color in lower quality jobs.
- People of color and immigrants facing disproportionate risk of being dislocated from their jobs due to automation.
- Lack of affordable, safe and accessible housing, transportation, medical care and other basic needs. Unequal access to quality K-12 education and vibrant, safe communities.

## Policies, systems, employer practices:

- Structural and explicitly racist policies and practices that create inequities in the social determinants of work, including insufficient resources for foundational supports required to thrive in a job.
- Inequities in access and completion of post-secondary degrees, credentials or other training needed for quality jobs.
- Structural and explicitly racist hiring, advancement and business capital lending practices, including influence of social capital.
- Limited number of employers that treat workers as partners who can help the company succeed.
- Power dynamics that prevent workers from advocating for their rights or improving the quality of their jobs.
- Regional economic growth is hampered by local systems and rules that are difficult for business owners (SMBs) and aspiring entrepreneurs to navigate.
- Structural and explicitly racist policies and practices that create inequities in access to capital and business planning support.
- Inequities in access and utilization of tools and resources that support financial wellness and enable wealth building.

## Specific to workforce practitioners:

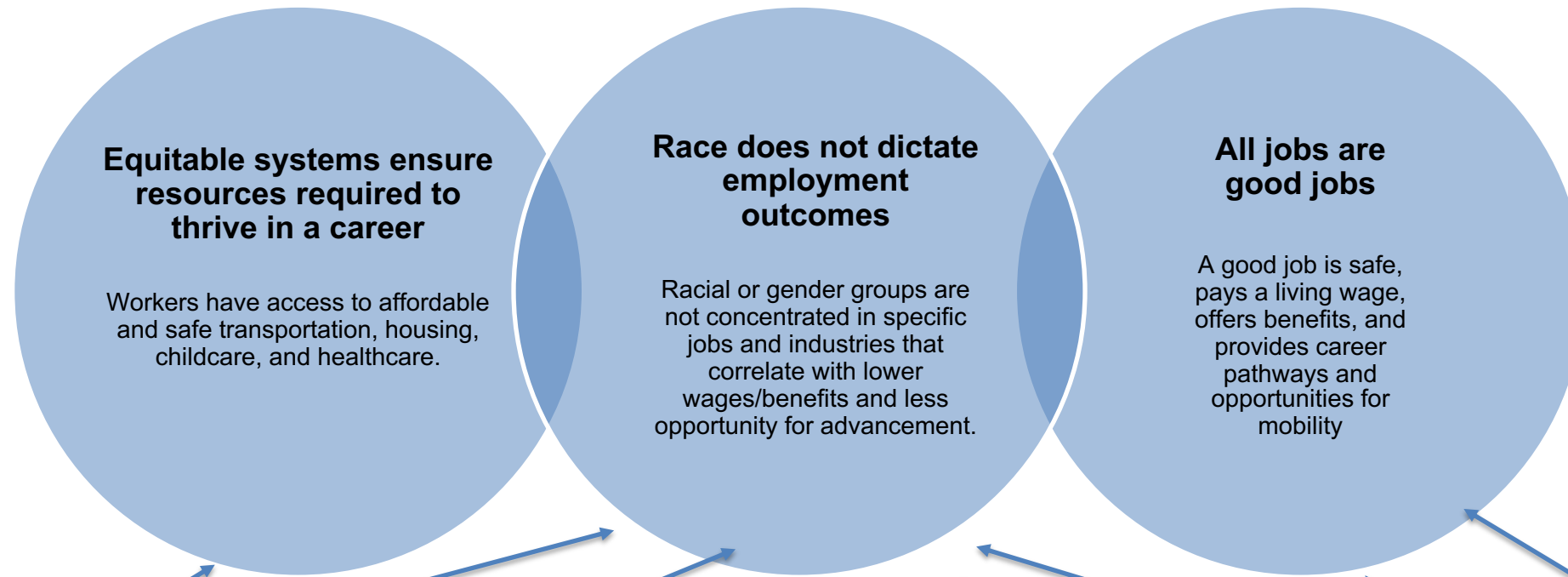
- Siloed and fragmented approaches to addressing workforce needs by stakeholders.
- Workforce programs that are overly reactive to short-term employer demand, failing to center worker voice in design and delivery of programs and overlooking businesses committed to good, equitable jobs.
- Lack of support (coaching, TA, resources) for small-to-medium sized businesses to design equitable jobs that create the most value for workers, the community, or the company itself.
- Traditional mindsets and approaches to solving workforce problems that do not address root causes and emphasize linear thinking and direct, reactive programmatic interventions.



Conditions We Seek to Change			
Macro	➤ Disparities in employment, income, and wealth that perpetuate racial inequity		
	➤ Workers of color crowded in low quality jobs at higher risk of automation.	➤ Decline of good jobs accessible without a post-secondary degree.	➤ Inequities in the social determinants of work.
System	➤ Workforce systems focused on short-term needs of businesses.	➤ Inequities in access and completion of training needed for quality jobs.	➤ Siloed and fragmented approaches to addressing workforce needs.
Business	➤ Implicit and explicit racial discrimination in hiring and advancement practices.	➤ Limited number of employers that treat workers as partners in company success.	➤ Lack of support for small-to-medium sized businesses to invest in good job creation.

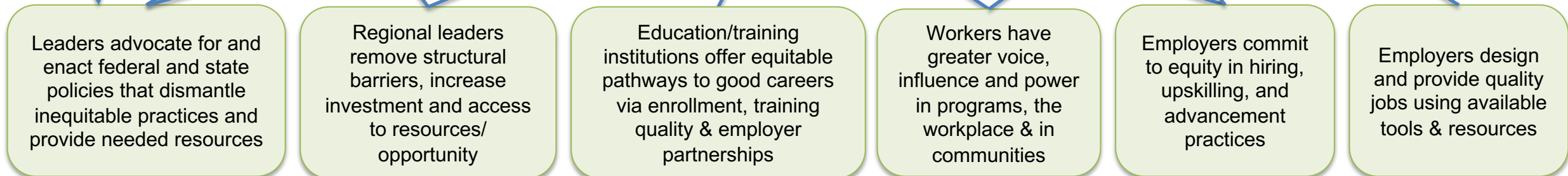
We aim to advance workforce equity

In order to eliminate racial gaps in employment, income, and wealth, we need a world where:

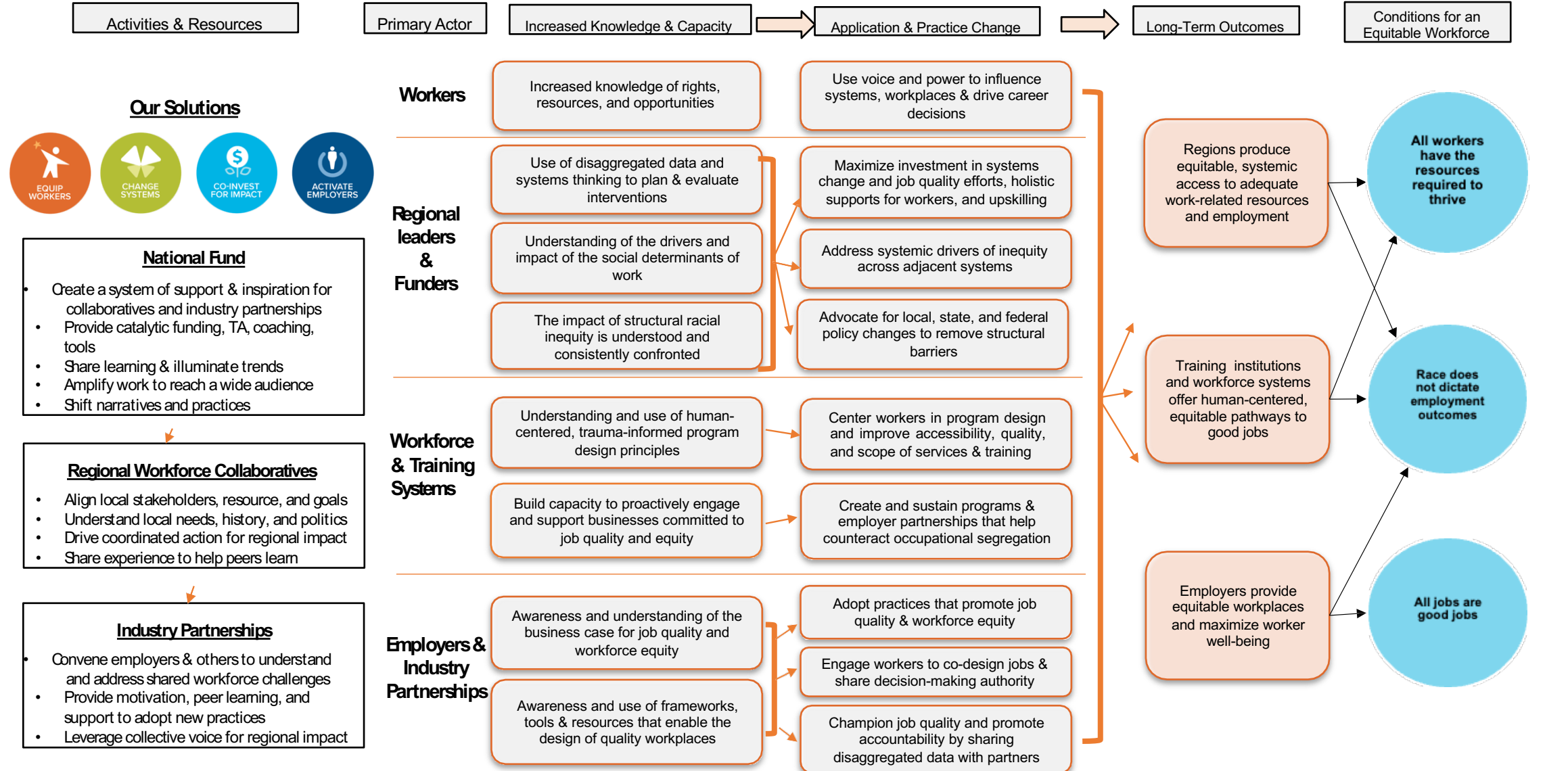


Lead: National Skills Coalition, Others

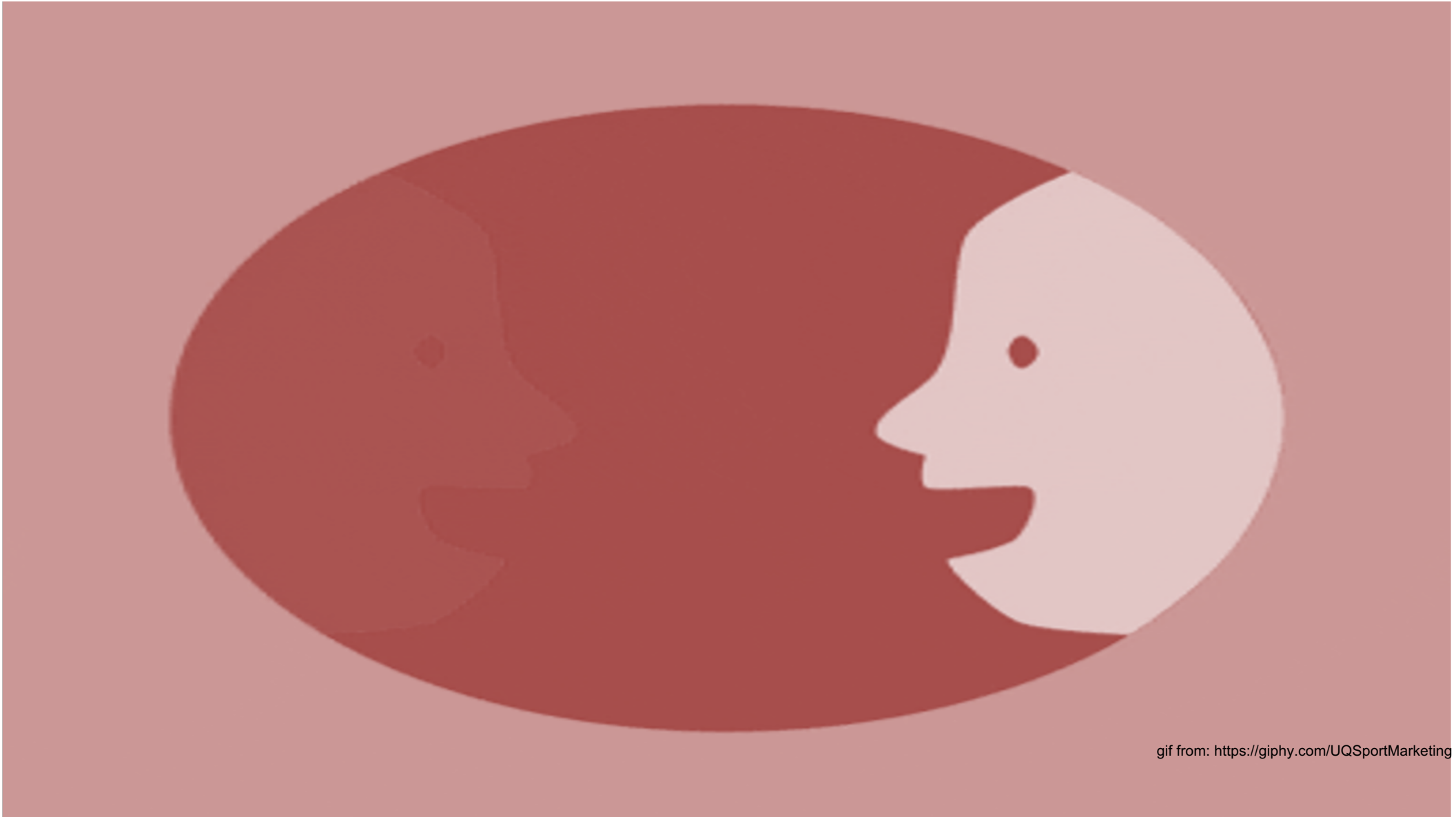
To be achieved through these key long-term outcomes:



*We envision an equitable future where workers, employers, and communities are thriving and prosperous*







# Discussion

 20<sup>th</sup> years  
TAMARACK  
INSTITUTE

## Discussion Questions – 30 minutes

These three questions are designed to prompt the conversation. Please do add your thoughts and comments and share examples from your organization and practice.

- What changes are you seeing in the employer/employment space?
- How is your organization adapting to these shifts and changes?
- What resources might you need be able to adapt better?

# What are your next steps?

Share in the chat box.



# We Appreciate Your Perspective

Please complete this short survey.

Your responses will help us plan for future Community of Practice Sessions.

Survey Link:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfm6nIrKPm86bxyT58Poit2SQ4M7NZQtI0\\_49oMxwnoOAnkYQ/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfm6nIrKPm86bxyT58Poit2SQ4M7NZQtI0_49oMxwnoOAnkYQ/viewform?usp=sf_link)

# Workforce Transitions - Employer Practices Community of Practice

Session 1: Evaluating Your  
Impact  
October 4, 2023  
1:00 – 2:00 pm EST



Session 2: How to Navigate  
your theory of change in a  
shifting employment space  
October 25, 2023  
1:00 – 2:00 pm EST



Session 3: Telling Your  
Impact Story  
November 15, 2023



[Register Here](#) for  
Individual Community of  
Practice Calls or the  
Whole Series



THANK YOU!

20<sup>th</sup> years TAMARACK  
INSTITUTE