

A Journey Towards a Just Transition

A presentation for the Miami Institute



JUSTICE FUNDERS

Powering Philanthropic Transformation

Twitter: @justicefunders

Dana Kawaoka-Chen, Co-Director

About Dana

- Descendant of incarcerated during World War II and mother to the next inheritors of our collective legacy.
- Non-profit and philanthropic practitioner for more than 20 years
- Founding staff, now Co-Director of Justice Funders

Invitation to Liberate Philanthropy: Kodomo no tame ni (for the sake of our children)



Dana Kawaoka-Chen
Apr 9, 2018 · 6 min read



This post kicks off “Liberate Philanthropy,” a new blog series curated by Justice Funders to reimagine philanthropy free of its current constraints — the accumulation and privatization of wealth, and the centralization of power and control — to one that redistributes wealth, democratizes power and shifts economic control to communities. Over the next few months, we will be sharing stories from some of our most forward thinking, transformational leaders in philanthropy about how they are facilitating a Just Transition for philanthropy.



About Justice Funders

- ▶ Mission: Justice Funders is a partner and guide for philanthropy in reimagining practices that advance a thriving and just world.
- ▶ 11 year-old national organization; 12, soon to be 14 Staff
- ▶ Justice Funders' office is located on the unceded land of the [Lisjan Ohlone people](#), who we recognize as the past, present and future stewards of this land. We pay the [Shuumi Land Tax](#), a voluntary annual contribution to support the critical work of the Sogorea Te' Land Trust to return Indigenous land to Indigenous people.



2010 - 2017



2018 -



Bay Area Justice Funders Network





JUSTICE
FOR

OSCAR GRANT

JUSTICE
FOR



Bay Area Justice Funders Network

- ▶ Purpose
 - ▶ Build across philanthropic silos – geographic, issue, identity
 - ▶ Build with and between movement and philanthropy -- transparently and with accountability.
 - ▶ Mobilize philanthropic resources to support social justice issues and movements.



**FUNDING MOVEMENT BUILDING:
BAY AREA APPROACHES**



The Challenges

- ▶ Nonprofit & Philanthropic Industrial Complex
- ▶ Organizational Structure / Model not conducive to transformation
 - ▶ Org. systems reflective of the values and capacity of the fiscal sponsor
 - ▶ More than 400 philanthropic affinity groups nation-wide utilizing a “member service” model
- ▶ Org. growth created demands on our Steering Committee for decisions that they did not always feel fully equipped to make.
- ▶ Difficult to be aligned with the priorities of movements for racial, economic, social justice



and Generosity: How philanthropy has fueled the accumulation and privatization of wealth

1913

Income tax status established beginning of industrial complex

1913

Income taxes & tax exempt status established: The beginning of the non-profit industrial complex

The Revenue Act of 1913 established an income tax on the highest incomes. At the same time, institutions “organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific or educational purposes” were exempted from paying federal income tax.

INTENT

Federal income tax was established to compensate for the reduction in tariff dues, which was also a part of the Revenue Act. Charitable organizations were defined as those whose net income does not benefit “any private stockholder or individual.”

JUSTICE FUNDER ANALYSIS

Public charities and independent foundations had been in existence for decades, and operated for the public good. This Act formally started the era in which tax policy regulated philanthropic activities and incentivized charitable giving. These laws created a distinct non-profit sector defined by their legal status. This was the beginning of the non-profit industrial complex, in which the government has the ability to monitor and control social movements, and a reliance on state/foundation/corporate funding has derailed the course of social movements. Non-profits can only be as radical as their donors, and must often shape their activities to align with donor interests.

The Challenges

- ▶ Form Follows Function
- ▶ Membership business model = challenging
 - ▶ Centers those who already have wealth & power
 - ▶ Can only be as radical as your least radical member
 - ▶ Membership constrained growth
- ▶ How can we challenge the conditions that produced wealth inequality that created this tax shelter?



What Do We Stand For?



Sun, 2014-06-29

Dana Kawaoka-Chen is the Network Director for the [Bay Area Justice Funders Network](#). She is an active member of the [AAPIP-SV chapter](#) and [LOTUS Giving Circle](#).

[Peggy Saika](#), AAPIP's President & Executive Director opened the AAPIP gathering on Friday, June 6th at the Joint Affinity Groups' Unity Summit with "[#Because of Yuri](#), we have learned that it is not what you look like, but what you stand for." She would echo that refrain in her comments when addressing the assembled mass of 400+ philanthropic colleagues gathered from around the country when talking about the role of philanthropic affinity groups. Peggy's statement offered in two different contexts surfaced three questions for me—What do we stand for locally? What do we stand for from our particular philanthropic perch? And, what do we

stand for in the field?

What do we stand for locally?

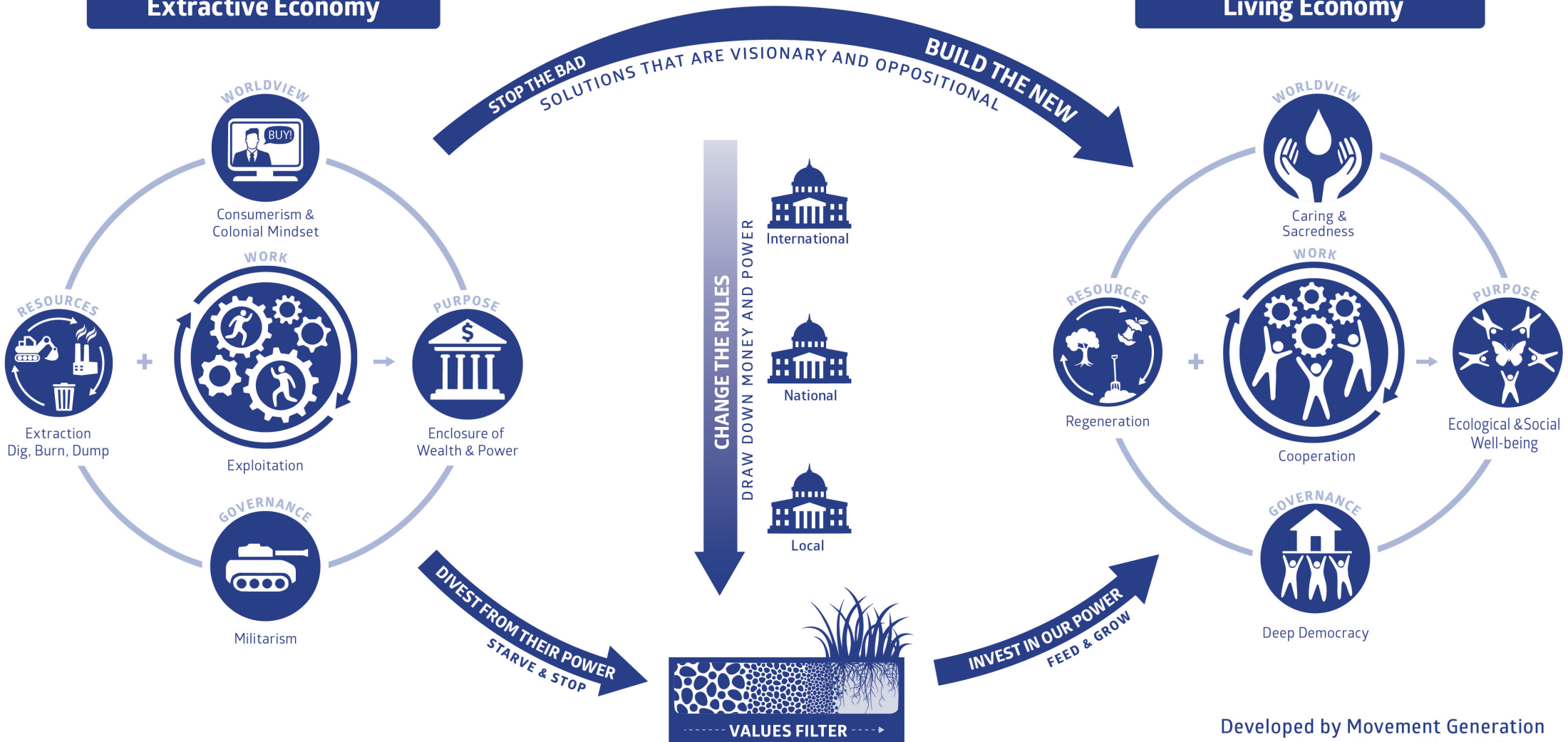
At the AAPIP meeting, Saket Soni of the [National Guestworker Alliance](#) and the [New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice](#) noted that corporations are increasingly using a contingent worker business model that is de-stabilizing our economy. Low-wage jobs—notably in the fast-food, retail, and restaurant industries combined with the practice of classifying workers as temporary, seasonal or project-based perpetuates under-employment and deprives workers from access to consistent wages and benefits. Sarita Gupta of [Jobs with Justice](#) wrote in the [Nation](#), that, "*Nearly one-third of the workforce is now contingent, as employers abandon traditional employment models to rid themselves of union contracts, labor standards, direct liability and employment taxes.*" Here in the Bay Area, we see a number of local campaigns to raise the minimum wage. This is one strategy being used to address unchecked corporate labor practices that are undermining our economy, and many of the individual wage campaigns have strong Asian-American leadership.

A STRATEGY FRAMEWORK FOR JUST TRANSITION

RESIST — RETHINK — RESTRUCTURE

Extractive Economy

Living Economy



- THE WAY WE MOVE CAPITAL MUST:**
- ▶ Shift economic control to communities
 - ▶ Democratize wealth and the workplace
 - ▶ Advance ecological restoration
 - ▶ Drive racial justice and social equity
 - ▶ Relocalize most production and consumption
 - ▶ Retain and restore cultures and traditions

Developed by Movement Generation
with **OUR POWER CAMPAIGN**
COMMUNITIES UNITED FOR A JUST TRANSITION

JUST GIVING 2016
EDGE FUNDERS ALLIANCE VERSION



Justice Funders



	MARKET-BASED PARADIGM	COMMONS-BASED PARADIGM
Social Dynamic	Competition; I prevail at the expense of others.	Collaboration; together we rise.
Power Tendency	Centralization and monopoly	Decentralization and collaboration
Leadership	Individual	Shared, rotating, co-leaders
Racial Imaginary	White-led and White-culture organizations can serve everyone and deserve to receive the majority of programmatic, financial, and informational resources	Culturally-grounded and community-based organizations serve their people and receive an equitable distribution of programmatic, financial, and informational resources
Strategy	Five-year strategic plans	Emergent, principled, responsive
Org Form	Hierarchical firm, nonprofit, 501c3	Collective, cooperative, worker-managed nonprofit, guild, mutual association, LLC, 501c4, unincorporated
Creative Agents	Individual artists, charismatic leaders	Culture-bearers, collectives, rotating co-leaders, culturally-grounded orgs
Grantmaking Culture	Polite, avoid conflict	"Messy," rupture and repair
Role of Foundations	Charity, "we know what is best for you," proud convener of artists	Solidarity, reparations, "we follow your lead," humble attendee of artist-led gatherings
Leadership Skill Sets	Written word, delegation, strategic planning, research, measurement, analysis	Storytelling, power analysis, conflict transformation, facilitation, organizing
Tools of Support	Grants	Grants, peer lending, mutual aid, community currency, non-extractive finance
Outputs	Short-term projects	Daily practices, member gatherings, trusting relationships, long term infrastructure
Timeframe for Support	1 year or less, restricted	5-20 years, unrestricted
Application	Written	Conversations
Decision Makers	Program officer, panel-review	Grassroots advisory board, participatory assembly, ripple granting



Re-Orientation of the Organization

- ▶ Change of role to change relationship to power
- ▶ Regional Organization -> National
- ▶ Membership-centered -> Membership as one way to be in relationship
- ▶ Center transformation / develop earned revenue



Justice Funders

- ▶ Greater Alignment
- ▶ Worker self-directed nonprofit organization
- ▶ Co-Directorship Model
- ▶ Circle Governing Structure
- ▶ Democratic Decision-making process



Leadership Legacy



Justice Funders Following

Jan 8 · 5 min read



Justice Funders

- ▶ Outcomes as a result of moving towards a Just Transition
 - ▶ Values to practice alignment
 - ▶ Organization is now 6x of BAJFN
 - ▶ Collective governance/stewardship has made the organization both more resilient as well as increased engagement amongst staff

By Dana Kawaoka-Chen and Lorenzo Herrera y Lozano



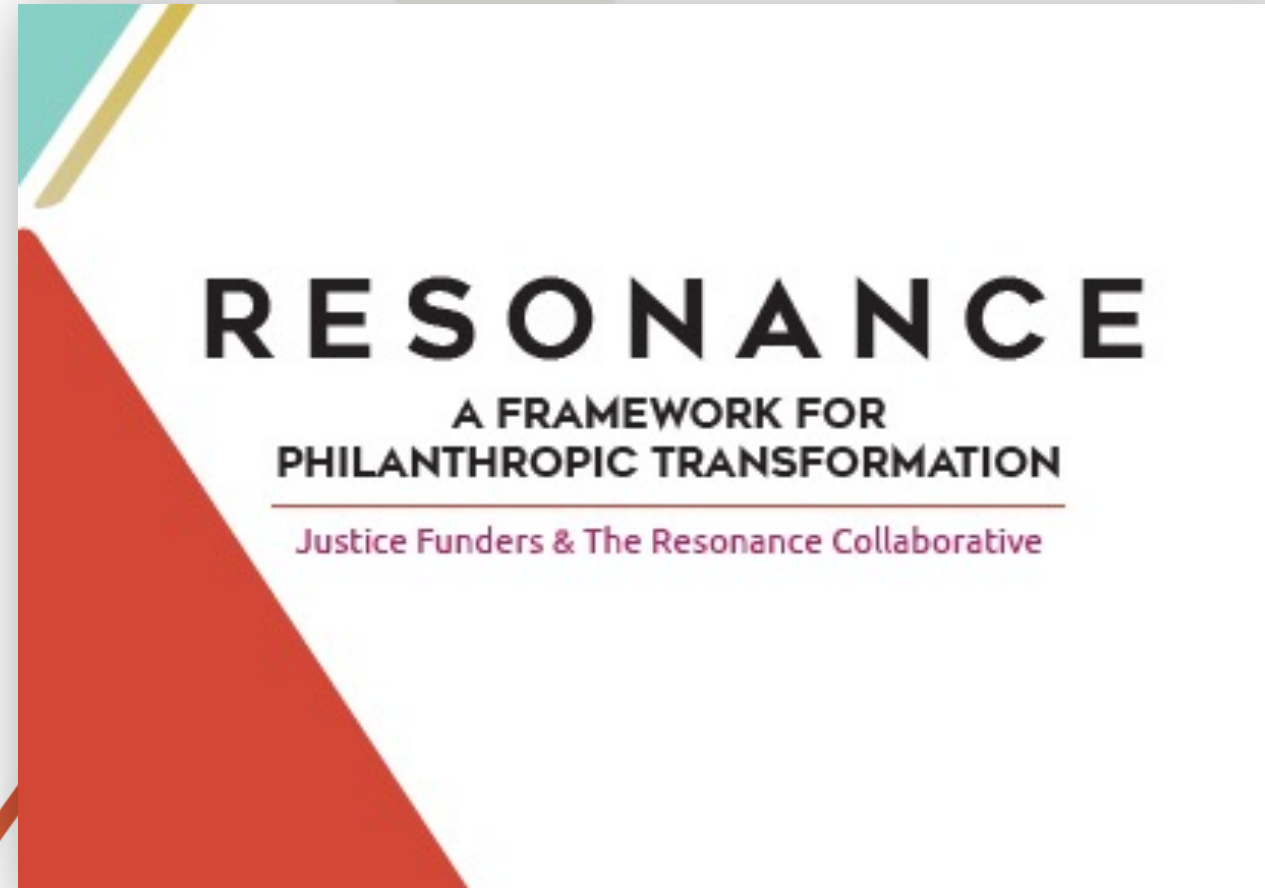
Photo by "My Life Through A Lens" on [Unsplash](#)

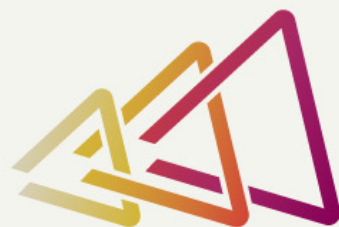
In the field of philanthropy, perhaps more so than in other fields, we talk a lot about legacy, usually as it relates to money, institutional longevity for purposes of notoriety, or transitions in leadership. Sadly, conversations about legacy and leadership rarely go beyond transition plans, depriving our movement from exponentially strengthening our capacity for, and practice of, shared leadership and self-determination. This is a problem. **This is also an opportunity for us to continue moving toward deeper democracy.**



Redistribute Wealth, Democratize Power & Shift Economic Control to Communities

- ▶ Hospice the Old and Build the New
- ▶ Framework developed to be in relationship to the Just Transition Framework, specifically for philanthropic organizations
- ▶ Transform our underlying approach to capital—
 - ▶ Away from an approach where individuals and institutions have the right to endlessly accumulate capital and make decisions on how it should be allocated for the public good
 - ▶ Towards an approach where the collective capacity of communities most impacted by extraction and exploitation are able to produce for themselves. Give to and invest directly in what their communities need, and retain the returns generated from these investments
- ▶ Outlines 7 domains to create a more regenerative philanthropic practice





JUSTICE FUNDERS

Powering Philanthropic Transformation