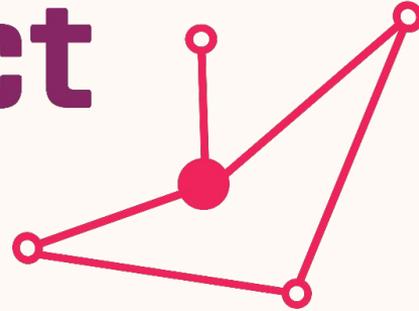


Economic Narratives & Ideas Project

by **Community Change**



Tuesday, October 18, 2022

**COMMUNITY
CHANGE**

Today's Plan

Project Overview

Findings

Ideas Labs Model

Ideas & Voting

Project Overview

Scope of Work

We wanted to learn

How people understood the state of our current economy

Where people understood themselves to be within our economy

What differences or changes people would like to see in our economy, & then

How they shared those ideas & how they responded to ideas shared by others

Key Context:

This project specifically focused on the **economy and economic ideas** - our recommendations and findings are based on this focused topic.



Three Central Goals



Investigate some of the observed fundamental weaknesses in progressive economic messaging



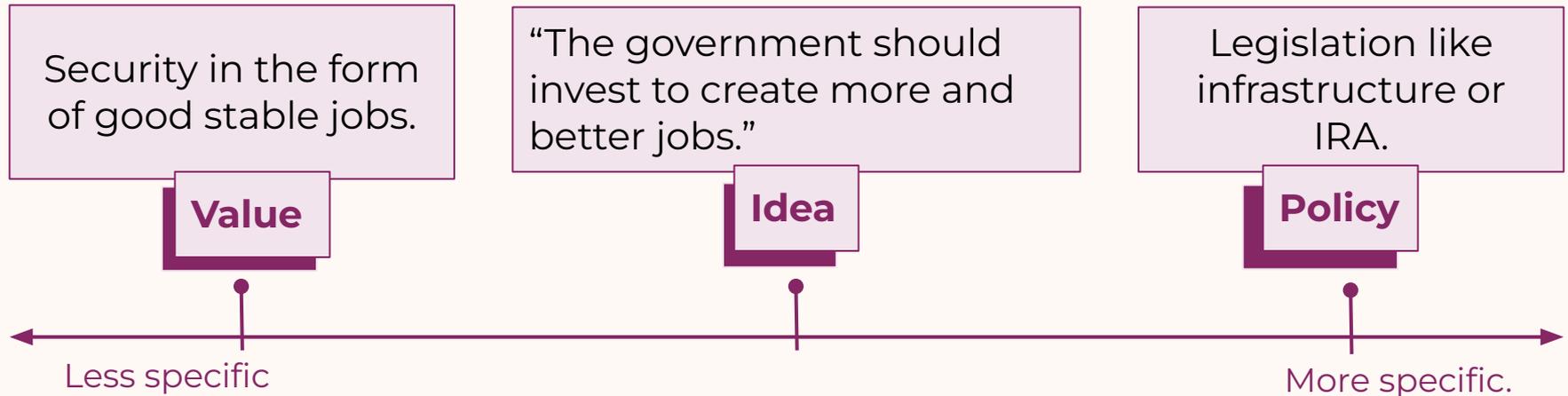
Generate new ideas through labs that can be used in new and existing campaigns.



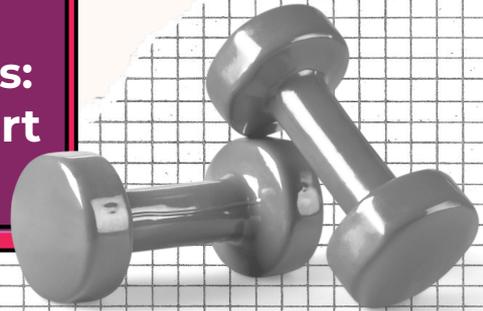
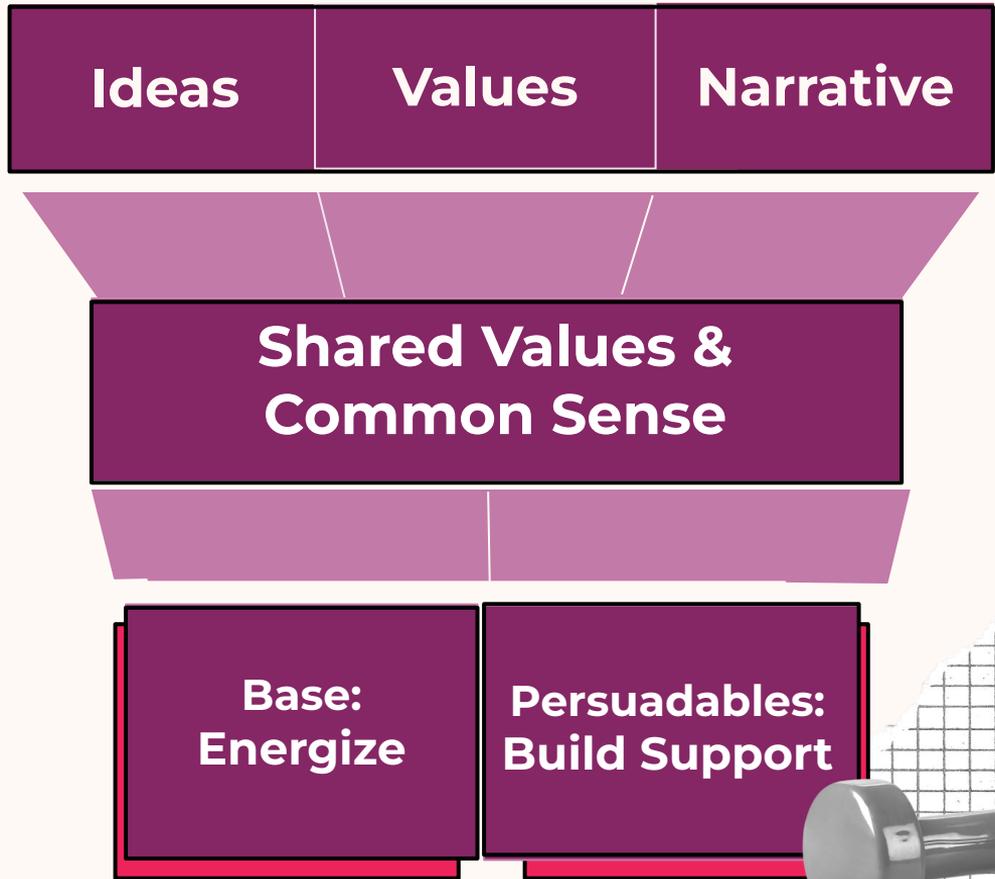
Create products and methods that activists, voters and members can use to impact the narratives about the economy

Why are economic ideas important?

Ideas occupy the land between **values** and **policy**. In one sense they are more specific than a generic value, but not so specific that they are tied to a specific policy.



**Strengthening
the Muscle:
Ideas,
Values &
Narrative
in
Movement
Building**



Findings



Top Five Values



Safety, Security, & Stability



Care



Community/Family Wellbeing



Hard Work



Racial Justice & Equity

Key Findings

Reactions to New Ideas

Among voters nationwide, ideas centered on **meeting the immediate needs of individuals and families** by investing in creating **good, quality jobs in every community** so anyone willing to work can earn a living wage from one job, rather than having to work two or three and paying employees wages they can sustain a family on rise to the top. UBI and Guaranteed Income are less well-known ideas, but the latter is slightly more popular amongst voters overall.



Better Jobs / Basic Needs. To meet the immediate needs of individuals and families, like **putting food on the table, paying utility bills, and keeping a roof over their heads**, we should invest in **creating good, quality jobs** in every community so anyone willing to work can **earn a living wage from one job**, rather than having to work two or three.



56%

81%



Better Jobs / Basic Benefits. To meet the immediate needs of individuals & families, – from **child & elder care** – we should invest good, quality jobs in every community so anyone willing to work **can earn a living wage from one job**, rather than having to work two or three.



56%

79%



Family Sustaining Jobs. To meet the immediate needs of individuals & families, like putting food on the table, paying utility bills, and keeping a roof over their heads, we should invest in creating stable jobs in every community **that pay employees wages they can sustain a family on.**



55%

81%



Training. We should help people prepare for the jobs of tomorrow beyond relying solely on a 4-yr college degree & invest in programs & training opportunities that teach people the skills they need & help people find quality jobs.



52%

76%

Full Text of Ideas Generated by Grassroots Discussions

Better Jobs / Basic Needs. To meet the immediate needs of individuals and families, like **putting food on the table, paying utility bills, and keeping a roof over their heads**, we should invest in **creating good, quality jobs** in every community so anyone willing to work can **earn a living wage from one job**, rather than having to work two or three.

1

Better Jobs / Basic Needs. To meet the immediate needs of individuals and families, – from **child & elder care** – we should invest good, quality jobs in every community so anyone willing to work **can earn a living wage from one job**, rather than having to work two or three.

2

Family Sustaining Jobs.

To meet the immediate needs of individuals and families, like putting food on the table, paying utility bills, and keeping a roof over their heads, we should invest in creating stable jobs in every community **that pay employees wages they can sustain a family on.**

3

Training. We should help people prepare for the jobs of tomorrow beyond relying solely on a 4-yr college degree & invest in programs & training opportunities that teach people the skills they need & help people find quality jobs.

4

Price Control. Similar to what some cities have implemented through rent control policies, we should limit price gouging by putting restrictions on what corporations can charge for certain industries or products, like food, housing, utilities, and actual costs

5

Guaranteed Income. With rising prices and unexpected expenses, we should implement a Guaranteed Income program that provides households with a consistent flow of money to help us meet our needs, care for our families, and budget for whatever may come our way.

8

Better Standards. We need to encourage new 21st century standards for work, like flexible work schedules, guaranteed paid leave for being sick or to take care of a loved one, and tougher rules on employers to prevent firing workers without cause.

7

UBI. With rising prices we should implement Universal Basic Income program that provides households with a consistent flow of money to help us meet our needs, care for our families, and budget for whatever may come our way.

9

Domestic Production. We should encourage employers – big and small – in every region of the country to create family-sustaining jobs while addressing critical shortages in the economy, like affordable housing, semiconductors, and other goods and services facing rising prices.

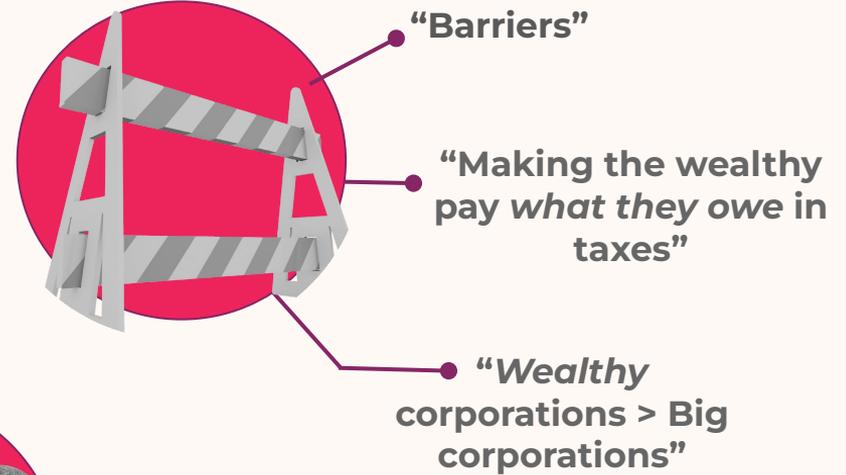
6



The Economy & What People Want



Talking About Problems & Issues



Talking to People About People

Key Takeaways

Deep listening!

Deep listening helps challenge & test our fundamental assumptions, as well as build trust with our audiences.



Address costs

This is the most defining lived experience people have around the economy right now.



Good jobs •

are the way to ensure life is affordable and people are reimagining what 'good' should mean in taking care of themselves and family.

Unity

is a progressive pathway for care & community action.

Ensure that people feel

Stable & Secure.

People are drawn to progressive ideas when we frame them as solutions to the insecurity people feel.

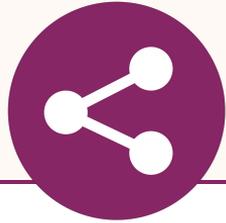


Use positive, validating messaging.

People are drawn to messages that validate their concerns and ideas, and offer realistic sounding solutions.



How are we using the research?



Sharing the **the methodology** with our grassroots partners & national allies.



We are offering support to allies **building & conducting labs at the local level.**



We are using the data and results to inform **our own decision making process.**



Our work with Make the Road NY is creating a blueprint for future actions.



How are our campaigns answering lab questions? How do we mobilize increasingly diverse portions of the electorate?

Ideas Labs Model

Deep Listening as an Organizing Tool

Deep Listening is a key component to the process of encouraging cognitive shifts.



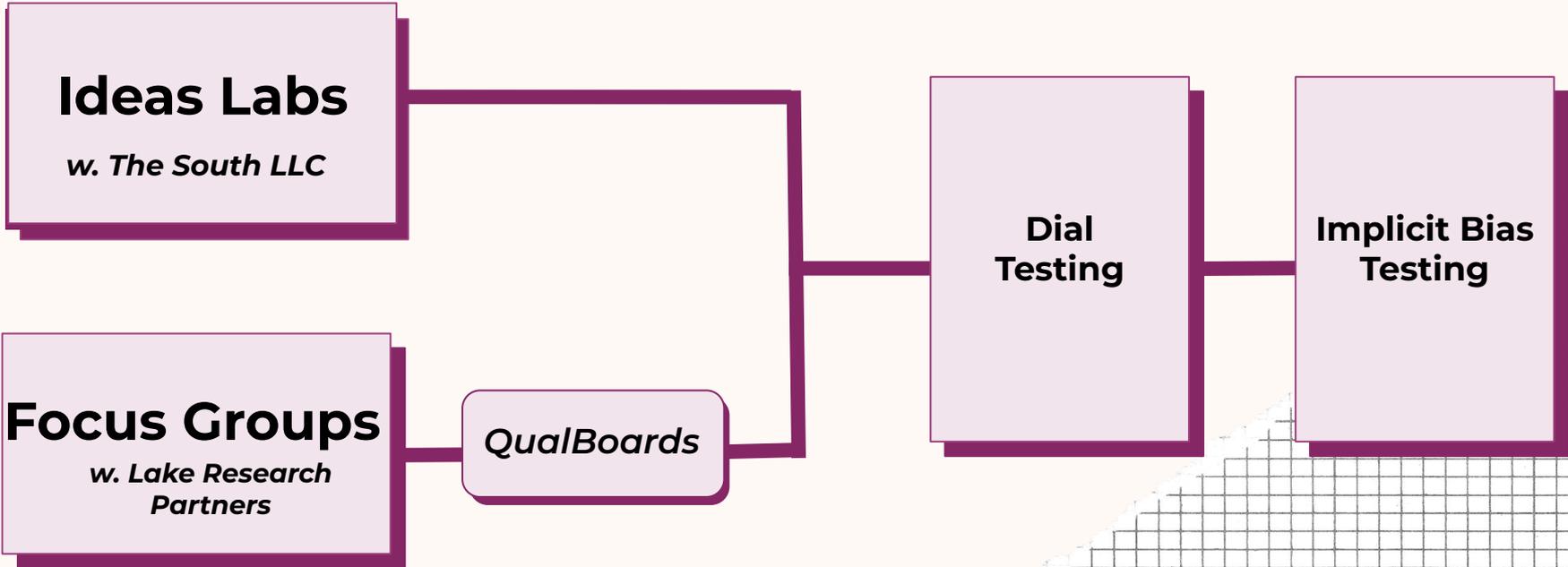
Listening creates interaction that makes the speaker feel **validated**.

Listening creates a dialectical process in which two or more narratives create **NEW narratives**.

Validation of each others narratives and the search for new narratives **build agency** and open space for **hope**.

In the focus groups, these moments **generate ideas**: ways to solve the issue that directly empowers the speaker.

Research Tracks



Ideas Labs: an Adaptable Tool



- **Hear from participants** about their current situations & needs
- **Share strategies** for critical thinking to examine issues
- **Create space for imagination** and creative generation of bold ideas for change

**Focus Group + Brainstorming Session +
Knowledge Sharing Workshop = Ideas Lab!**

Facilitation

1. Listen



Deep listening is more important than ever. Significant differences in lived experience are getting lost in our filter bubbles.

2. Trust



the community participants we're listening to - these ideas and how they're talked about are highly motivating.

3. Focus



on the ideas.

4. Address jobs & costs



because economically, that's what people care about right now.

This is actually a big change and people are thinking much more broadly about what a "good" job means and more open/excited about organizing around it right now.

5. Make people feel secure & stable.



Ensure participants don't think that these ideas are "radical" therefore scary or unattainable.

6. Use positive & validating messaging.



People are drawn to messages that validate their concerns and ideas, and offer uplifting, positive solutions.



Economic Narratives & Ideas Project

by Community Change



[Grounding & Initial Findings](#)

[The Ideas Lab Model](#)

[Next Steps](#)

Community Change's Narrative and Ideas project set out to develop a research program with real people and hand raisers from our wider movement base. This project specifically focused on the economy and economic ideas – our recommendations and findings are based on this focused topic. We wanted to learn ...

- **How** people understood the state of our current economy
- **Where** people understood themselves to be within our economy
- **What** differences or changes people would like to see in our economy, & then
- **How** they shared those ideas & how they responded to ideas shared by others

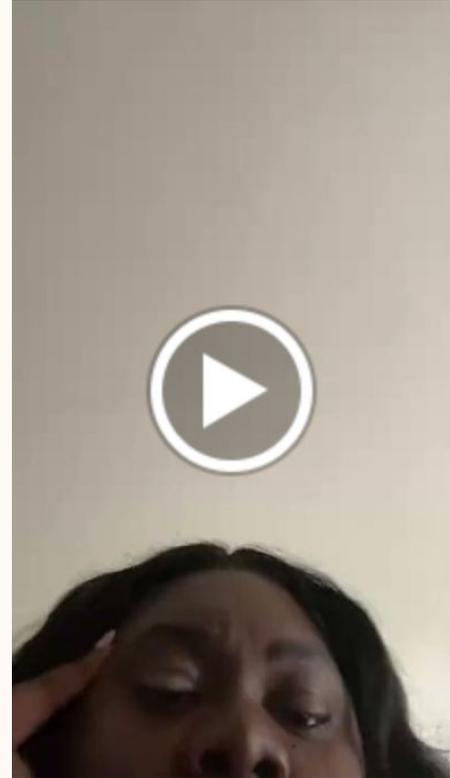


Ideas & Voting

Examples From the Field

Economy messaging on TikTok

- 11.5M Views
- 1.5M Engagements



Examples From the Field



Democrats Should Be Campaigning on a Permanent Expanded Child Tax Credit

By Dorian Warren

The 2021 credit expansion in the American Rescue Plan cut poverty for millions, according to a recent Census Bureau report. Unsurprisingly — it's overwhelmingly popular with voters.



Rent Stabilization Ballot Initiative Could Help Bring Workers Back to Central Florida

By Topacio Marrero

The initiative and using American Rescue Plan funds for longer term housing solutions could provide critical relief to Florida renters



This Year's Back to School Blues are Linger Without the Expanded Child Tax Credit

By Eileen Sepulveda

Our government has the funds we need to let millions of parents breathe easier.

Next

Implications for philanthropy?

1

Funding methodologies that build more agency from the people whose lives will actually be impacted. We know that testing your ideas in focus groups is fundamentally different than asking them for their own ideas.

2

Speaking about new economic ideas can be the basis for uniting differences across our movements. Funders can help unite progressive factions by creating space for common ground.

3

Allow grassroots campaigns access to resources to conduct their own types of participatory research. It unites organizing with ideas and policy initiatives in more powerful ways.