

Solidarity Economy Principles (see solidarityeconomyprinciples.org to explore practices)

Collective Care, Relationships, & Accountability

1. We value relationships over transactions and single outcomes.
 2. We commit to reflecting on how we are collectively living up to our values and practicing accountability together.
 3. We study and respect the traditions, ancestors, and legacies of cooperative, solidarity economy, and social movements.
 4. We embrace conflict as generative and clarifying.
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Shared Resources & Shared Vision

5. We create abundance by cooperating to access resources across all levels - internationally, nationally, regionally, and locally.
 6. We share information with each other. Financial and data transparency are essential to our democratic practices and to learning as a movement.
 7. We invest in Solidarity Economy and cooperative entities directly.
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Liberation Culture

8. We build movements, not projects. Even as we organize to build our co-ops, land trusts, and other enterprises, we do so not only for their own sake, but also connected to the larger goal of social transformation.
 9. We build relationships on solidarity and cooperation, not competition, because despite our particularities we are all in this together.
 10. We shift culture with our language, practices, expectations, and pedagogy.
 11. We respect nature because we are nature. We organize as though our survival as humans is based on clean water, clean air, healthy soil, and respect for all living beings.
 12. We make robust commitments to racial justice within and outside our organizations by moving beyond performance to actually shifting power and addressing legacies of harm while creating opportunities for repair.
 13. We acknowledge the history of patriarchy and misogyny as a root of capitalist exploitation and we seek to address these behaviors as they appear in our organizations and ourselves.
 14. We support workers' rights and the liberation of poor and working people.
 15. We incorporate disability justice principles into our organizations and incorporate access as a value, practice, and culture.
 16. We move with reverence for life and intentionally make room for joy, pleasure, grief, and connection.
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Democracy & Process

17. We practice democracy in all aspects of our work. Democracy is defined here as the whole body deciding how power is shared and where decisions or work can be delegated.
 18. We make decisions and organize work at the most local level possible, by those directly impacted by the decisions.
 19. We see our solidarity economy enterprises (both formal and informal) as autonomous, sovereign self-help organizations democratically controlled by their members in keeping with International Cooperative Principle #4.
 20. We take into consideration the impact that our decisions have on the broader community, future generations, and the earth.
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Education & Leadership Development

21. We commit to the ongoing education of ourselves and our members following International Cooperative Principle #5 - Member Education.
 22. We value collective learning to examine, adapt, and improve in response to challenges, opposition and new ideas.
 23. We democratize educational practices. Everyone is a learner and everyone is a teacher.
 24. We continually build new leadership within our organizations.
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Collective Care, Relationships, & Accountability

Relationships based on trust and mutual respect which recognize and honor our inherent interdependence are the core of Solidarity Economy work. In order to build a radically different economy, we must practice a radically different culture: caring for each other in good times and in hard times, through disagreement and through conflict. As SE organizers, we commit to struggling for freedom together, and learning to face conflict and challenges directly. This means that we don't exclude people from organizations or movements except as a last resort. We set healthy boundaries and we don't let harm slide. We pay attention to our collective needs and support each other to stay true to our shared values.

Shared Resources & Shared Vision

The dominant culture tells us that there is not enough to go around. We are pitted against each other and compete for scraps while the main course is kept out of our reach. If we want a Solidarity Economy, we must reject the myth of scarcity and embrace the possibility of abundance. By practicing the values we wish to see reflected in our culture and society, including sharing resources and planning collectively within our movements, there will be more than enough to go around. Even as we make agreements with more powerful entities like governments and foundations, we support each other to maintain our sovereignty and stay true to our values.

Liberation Culture

We believe Fannie Lou Hamer: "Nobody is free until everybody is free." Our commitment to building a Solidarity Economy is about the liberation of all from systems of domination. We must attend to the ways that those systems operate within us and within our organizations and enterprises, or else we risk replicating the very things we are working to transform. We commit to addressing the harm created by systemic oppression, including the ways we and our communities are both harmed by and benefit from dominance, privilege, and oppression. We understand this work takes place on a scale from the local and interpersonal level to that of global networks.

Democracy & Process

The solidarity economy can't exist without democracy. Unfortunately, more often than not, our organizations, enterprises, and coalitions fail to practice internally what we demand externally. This leaves us unpracticed and unprepared for power. If we want to build a stronger movement, we must figure out how to come together in groups and make all manner of decisions through a process that shares power and decision making between all stakeholders. Doing democracy is not easy, and sometimes it requires us to slow down at first, but democracy is necessary for robust, strategic, and sustainable decisions in the movement. Democracy also allows us to create a microcosm of the world our movement is trying to build.

Education & Leadership Development

Our movements for freedom thrive when we share and develop knowledge together. We learn from what we have in common, and we learn just as much from our differences. We value deep collective study, and we honor what we have observed and experienced ourselves. This empowers members to contribute effectively to the development of their enterprises/organizations, and to inform the general public (particularly young people and opinion leaders) about the nature and benefits of solidarity and cooperation. We also know that our movements are more resilient and powerful when we are leaderful, instead of dependent on a small number of overworked and burned out individuals. To get there we have to prioritize developing leadership within our organizations and across our movement.
