

# Who We Are

Omidyar Network is a social change venture that reimagines critical systems to build a more inclusive, equitable, and resilient society. We invest in new models and policies to ensure individuals have the social, economic, and democratic power to thrive.

Established by philanthropists Pam and Pierre Omidyar — the founder of eBay — Omidyar Network has committed more than \$1 billion to innovative for-profit companies and non-profit organizations since its founding in 2004.

Omidyar Network focuses on structural issues that undergird our economy, technology, and society—three areas that can fundamentally reshape our lives, our democracy, and our world.

## Building Cultures of Belonging

Reimagining Capitalism



Responsible Technology



## The Systems Change We Believe In

### Creating a responsible, safe, and competitive technology ecosystem

- We believe **competitive, dynamic economies are threatened by monopoly power**. We support strong market guardrails in the form of real competition, strict checks on monopolies, and empowered consumers.
- We fight to **stop the spread of disinformation** while making peer-to-peer messaging platforms **safer, healthier, and more trustworthy**, without compromising user privacy or encryption.
- We examine **outdated economic frameworks** and business models used by the tech industry that are built on surveillance, data maximization, and manipulation to **find fairer and more cooperative alternatives**.
- We support **tech workers who are speaking up, organizing, and changing the industry from the inside out**, to ensure the full societal impact of their products are considered and addressed.

### Shaping a more equitable, inclusive, and resilient economy

- **Government plays a critical role in people's lives**. We believe we must restore people's faith in government so it can fulfill its charge to deliver public goods and help people when they need it most.
- We support **new organizing models** to increase the power of workers in innovative ways. We believe **US labor law** should cover all working people, whether in the gig economy, homes, farms, or conventional workplaces.
- We believe **our tax code is rigged against everyday Americans**. We support tax policies that require those who make the most to pay their fair share.
- We advocate for policy and regulatory reforms that shift business towards embracing a **stakeholder-oriented approach to corporate governance**, including ESG reporting requirements, the limitation of stock buybacks, and greater **corporate political accountability**.
- We strive to build an economy that is not only inclusive, but **explicitly anti-racist**. We support policies that address systemic barriers by creating opportunities for Black and Brown Americans to increase their economic and political power in pursuit of a more just democracy and economy.

### Building cultures of belonging

Against the backdrop of intensifying social conflict, we support **system-level innovations in networks, narratives, and norms to help an increasingly diverse society flourish**. We are working to create conditions for choosing community over chaos as we evolve into a society where no one racial or ethnic group holds the demographic majority. We want to disrupt the zero-sum pattern of social conflict and evolve toward the ideal of difference without domination.

# Day of Unreasonable Conversation Resource Note

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The following highlights are a selection of stories and protagonists from our partner organizations. For further details on any of the stories or introductions to those featured, please contact [communications@omidyar.com](mailto:communications@omidyar.com) or [nallred@omidyar.com](mailto:nallred@omidyar.com).

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## Building Cultures of Belonging

**john a. powell: Belonging is Inclusion 2.0**



UC Berkeley's Professor john a. powell, who spells his name in lowercase in the belief that we should be "part of the universe, not over it, as capitals signify", has a bold vision for a world in which all people — no matter their race, religion or origin — truly belong.

An internationally recognized expert in the areas of civil rights, civil liberties, structural racism, housing, poverty, and democracy, his embrace of this work goes back to his experiences growing up in a close family of 9 siblings in Detroit.

A key turning point occurred at age 11 when he asked his church pastor how the hundreds of millions of people he had been reading about in a book could be sent to hell because they hadn't been baptized. The pastor had no response, and john walked out of church, never to return. For many years, because of the structures built into the church, he lost the fellowship of his beloved community — his understanding that we all deserve to belong ironically leading him to experience what it meant to lose belonging.

In 2012 powell founded the Othering & Belonging Institute in response to what he observed to be a world that was becoming increasingly fractured along racial, national, and religious lines. The Institute's focus is on the way othering causes the most harm when it is built into institutional structures, and identifies how elites often build power by dividing us

from each other through a strategy called breaking — the dehumanization of the other.

Drawing from his decades of experience working around the world to support movements for justice, including in apartheid South Africa and as the national legal director for the ACLU, John Powell built his organization to offer an alternative approach to hierarchical and fear-based othering. That approach is belonging — a concept which considers the diversity of our societies across the world as enhancing who we are.

<https://belonging.berkeley.edu/>

### **Mia Birdsong: Redefining Freedom in America**



Freedom is a complex concept — it is a fundamental right, but where does one's freedom begin and another's end? And is the American definition of freedom built upon independence and individualism?

Much of the conflict we experience today sees freedom at the center, but with a version that often contributes to individualism, scarcity, and the rejection of accountability to others. What if we could redefine freedom to a concept predicated on connection, respect, and mutual accountability?

Mia Birdsong is pioneering that approach, using research, deep listening, and culture change to show us that another version of freedom is not only possible, it already exists. A pathfinder and community curator, her work helps us reimagine common narratives.

Her 2015 TED talk "The Story We Tell About Poverty Isn't True" drew attention to people finding their way into leadership roles despite myriad barriers. In "More Than Enough," her podcast miniseries from The Nation, she expanded the guaranteed income movement by tapping into the voices and visions of low-income people. And as founding Co-Director of Family Story, Mia lifted up a new national story about what makes a good family. With a deep belief that progress must happen collectively, Mia has made an art out of inviting people into rich explorations of how we map paths forward.

[www.miabirdsong.com](http://www.miabirdsong.com)

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# New Power in Tech

EMMA LEMBKE



## “I joined Instagram when I was 12.”

Emma Lembke, a rising sophomore at Washington University in St. Louis, has experienced the negative effects of social media firsthand. Emma copes with generalized anxiety, OCD, and disordered eating, which were exacerbated by mindless scrolling and absorbing unrealistic standards of beauty online. Since the age of 17, she has been working to loosen the hold of social media on her well-being.

She started the [Log Off Movement](#) in June 2020 to spur dialogue among young people who are feeling the adverse effects of social media and want to adjust their relationship to it. Through the project’s podcast, a leadership council, educational curriculum, and blogs, Emma is working to make social media a tool again rather than something that controls lives. The Log Off advocacy initiative also pushes for laws, like the [California Age Appropriate Design Code Bill](#), that help ensure teens have a safe online experience.

Emma’s story is not just one of social media addiction, but of how young people are driven to act and have the agency and power to change the tech system.

[Adapted from [The New York Times](#)]

Other stories like Emma’s, include:

- **Sneha Ravenur** | Teen founder and president of Encode Justice
- **Ziad Ahmed** | American-Muslim-Bangladeshi entrepreneur and CEO/Co-Founder of JUV Consulting
- **Zamaan Quereshi** | Policy advisor at The Real Facebook Oversight Board
- **Jules Terpak** | TikTok content creator and Washington Post columnist offering advice related to our digital lives
- **Elise Joshi** | Gen-Z for Change organizer

## ELLEN PAO



### **“Ellen Pao’s case against sexism in venture capital sparked a national conversation.”**

Ellen Pao is co-founder and CEO of the award-winning diversity and inclusion nonprofit Project Include. Project Include collects, analyzes, and shares data to recommend actions and benchmarks for tech startups. Its reports on workplace harm since the start of the pandemic are changing work culture.

Her efforts to end workplace discrimination have led to the term “Pao effect.” After facing gender discrimination, Ellen pursued a lawsuit against the venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, declined severance, Kleiner’s attempts to settle, and millions of dollars — all of which would have required her silence. Instead, she pursued a very public trial and lost. TIME hailed her as “the face of change.” She has written about her experiences in her memoir *Reset* and for The Washington Post, TIME, The New York Times and WIRED.

During her two decades as a tech leader and investor, Ellen was also the first head of a major social media platform to ban revenge porn, unauthorized nude photos, and harassment.

If you want to know what power in tech looks like and why. If you are curious about how the Silicon Valley elite behave — and why so few women and people of color roam their corridors of power. If you want to help tell the story that lit a fuse under the tech bro culture. If you’ve ever wondered if it’s possible to fix tech and what it will take... then Ellen Pao is a great person to talk to.

### **Other stories like Ellen’s include:**

**Ifeoma Ozuma** | Founder and Principal of Earthseed, a firm advising organizations on the issues of tech accountability and public policy. She is a tech policy expert with experience leading public policy partnerships, content safety, and policymaker engagement at Pinterest, Facebook, and Google.

After suffering discrimination on the basis of gender and race, Ifeoma made it her mission to end the abuse of non-disclosure agreements. She is a co-sponsor of the [Silenced No More Act](#). This legislation, signed into law in 2021, allows every worker in California to share



information about discrimination or harassment they have faced on the job, regardless of an NDA.

Ifeoma is also the creator of [The Tech Worker Handbook](#), a collection of resources for tech workers looking to speak out on issues in the public interest. She also co-founded the Transparency in Employment Agreements Coalition, which is working to scale the protections in the Silenced No More Act to workers across the globe through shareholder engagement.

**Coraline Ada Ehmke** | An internationally recognized engineer and activist with over 25 years of industry experience.



In 2013, she helped create the LGBTech community. During this announcement, she also came out publicly as a transgender woman, an experience which is summarized in her highly-praised speech "[He Doesn't Work Here Anymore.](#)" Coraline first gained access to a computer at age 7 and the internet allowed her to play with identity. But the real world wasn't easy. After 40 years of gender identity struggles and two suicide attempts, Coraline came out to her family, community, and employer. In the process, she was forced out of her job and lost many relationships.

Living on both sides of sexism and adapting how she communicates has ultimately made her a more responsive, empathetic coder. She deeply understands cisgender privilege and how media, the entertainment industry, technology makers, and employers can be model allies. Today, she actively speaks out about sexism, racism, and transphobia despite repeated personal attacks, including being doxxed.

Today, Coraline is the founder of the Organization for Ethical Source. In 2014, she created the [Contributor Covenant](#), the first and most popular code of conduct in service of a harassment-free internet experience and work culture for developers. In 2018, she addressed the United Nations Forum on Business and Human Rights on human rights abuses in the tech industry. Coraline authored the [Hippocratic License](#), which allows creators of code to establish "do no harm" standards with the goal of confronting the potential harms and abuses technology can have on fundamental human rights.

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# Reimagining Capitalism

## Neidi Dominguez: Building a new “normal” for poor and working-class people



“In two years we have built the largest network of unemployed and underemployed people in the country, with 160,000 people and counting.”

Neidi migrated from Mexico at the age of nine with her mother and younger sister to Pasadena, California, where she began her involvement in social justice organizing from a very young age. Formerly undocumented herself, Neidi was a central leader in the campaign to win Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). She continues to organize with immigrant and Latinx communities today, serving as Executive Director of Unemployed Workers United (UWU), a movement project to organize precarious and jobless workers.

## Felicia Wong: Solving the puzzle of economic inequality with big ideas



Felicia Wong was midway through getting her doctorate when she realized that academia might not be the only road to impact. While taking time “off” to teach public high school, she found her true calling: converting abstract ideas into “real-world” policies. That took her on a path with stops at the White House, Democracy Alliance, and her current role as president of the Roosevelt Institute, a think tank focused on the economy, power, and the interplay of race and gender inequality.

Under her leadership, Roosevelt has grown more than fourfold, and now regularly works with the nation’s top public officials, academic experts, and progressive movement organizers.

The Institute’s work to move America toward a new, more inclusive economy has changed the rules of engagement — building the case for issues like large-scale public spending, a wealth tax, and student debt forgiveness.

“We use research to look at how the world ought to work, and then connect that information to specific policy recommendations and get them into the hands of people who can do something about them.”