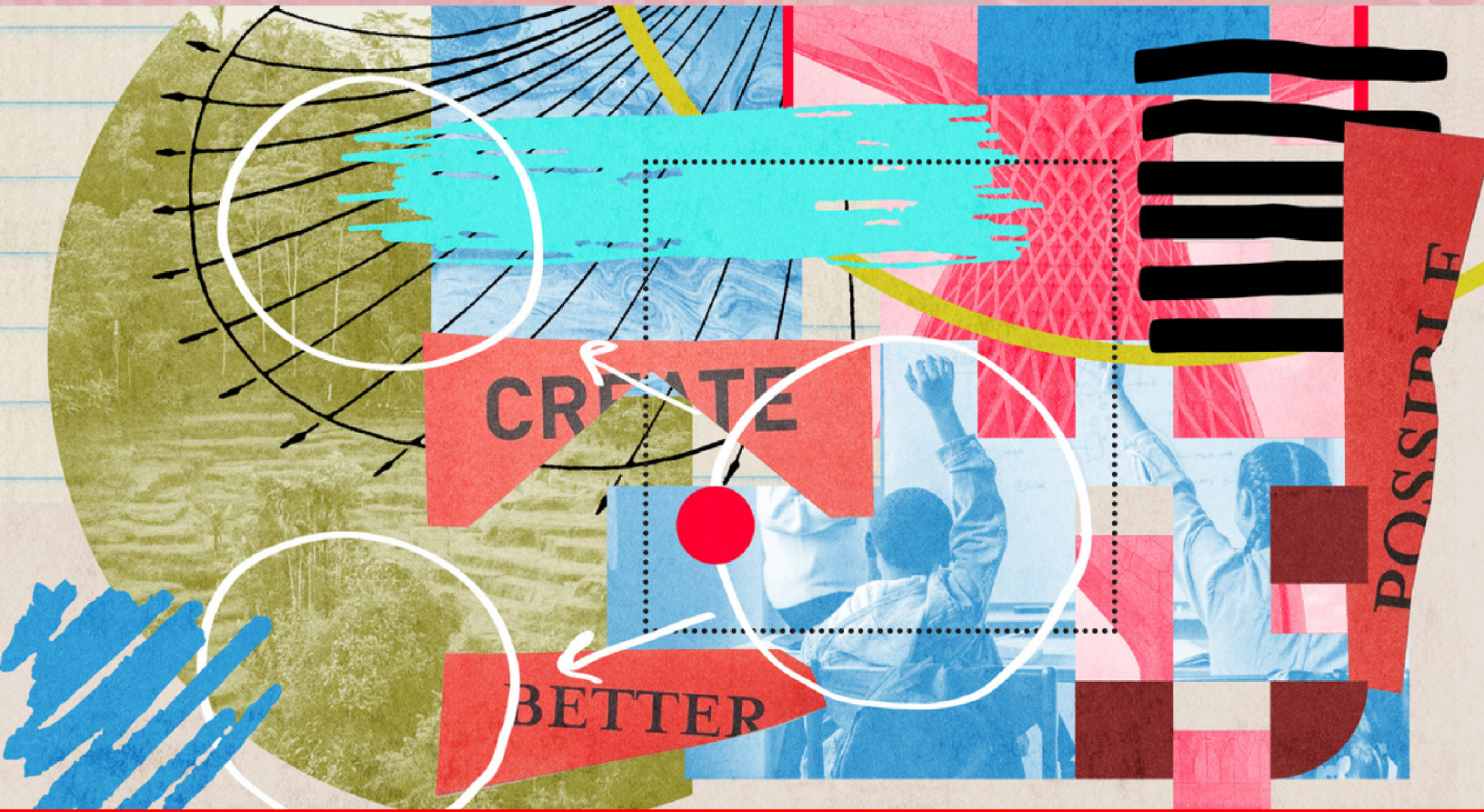
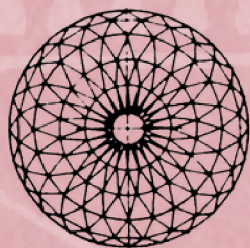


SYMBIOCENE



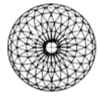
AN EXPLORATION OF THE POSSIBLE FROM



Practical
Utopias

Led by Margaret Atwood

Powered by  DISCO



Practical **Utopias**

SYMBIOCENE

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ABOUT PRACTICAL UTOPIAS AND THE SYMBIOCENE ANTHOLOGY

“There isn’t ‘the future’ that we’re doomed to enact. There are all kinds of possible futures. And which one we’re going to get is going to depend on what we do now.” — Margaret Atwood

If we want to make change or create something new so we can bring about a better future for all, we have to be able to imagine what’s possible. Not sci-fi epics or fantasies, but real, better living plans that could actually work.

That’s just what a diverse, global community of trailblazers and difference-makers collectively did in *Practical Utopias: An Exploration of the Possible*, a collaborative virtual learning experience led by world renowned author, teacher, and environmental activist Margaret Atwood and powered by Disco, the all-in-one platform that brings together community and learning.

With the guidance of Margaret and an all-star lineup of special guests, 200 Fellows from all walks of life ranging in age from 18 to 75+ and representing over 40 countries across 6 continents came together to boldly grapple with some of the most pressing challenges facing humanity today — the climate crisis and social inequalities being foremost.

Over the course of eight weeks from September to November 2022, Fellows collaborated as a member of one of eight teams and engaged in a highly ambitious collaborative world-building process guided by a facilitator and supported by an illustrator to help visualize their imagined worlds. Their challenge was to co-design a possible future that embraced the following constraints:

- 10 years from our present day
- Specific to a chosen geography
- Sustainable (i.e. carbon negative or neutral)
- Scaleable
- Attractive enough so that people will want to embrace it
- No magic wands: Must leverage solutions that already exist today in some form or have existed in the past

Within their teams, Fellows worked together in smaller subgroups to explore the following topics:

MATERIAL WORLDS

- Shelter
- Water
- Food
- Clothing
- Electricity
- Transportation
- Waste
- Death & Human Remains

SOCIAL WORLDS

- Education
- Health
- Gender Equality
- Arts & Culture
- Governance
- Communication
- Wealth & Financial Systems
- Faith & Spirituality

This digital anthology is one of the outputs of the team of Fellows who co-designed the practical utopia Symbiocene. It's a collection of narratives developed by the subgroups and a series of illustrations to tell the story of this possible future.

As you read this story, we invite you to immerse yourself in possibility and

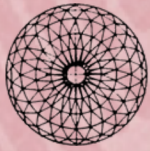
You can learn more about Practical Utopias and explore the digital anthologies of the other teams of Fellows at <https://disco.co.atwood>.



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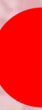
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Practical **Utopias**

SYMBIOCENE



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Symbiocene!

Nestled within one of North America's mixed-use forests beside the Esperus river, our city is home to 120,000 humans thriving in a buzzing urban ecosystem. We pay attention to lifecycles, food, and the cultures of this place.

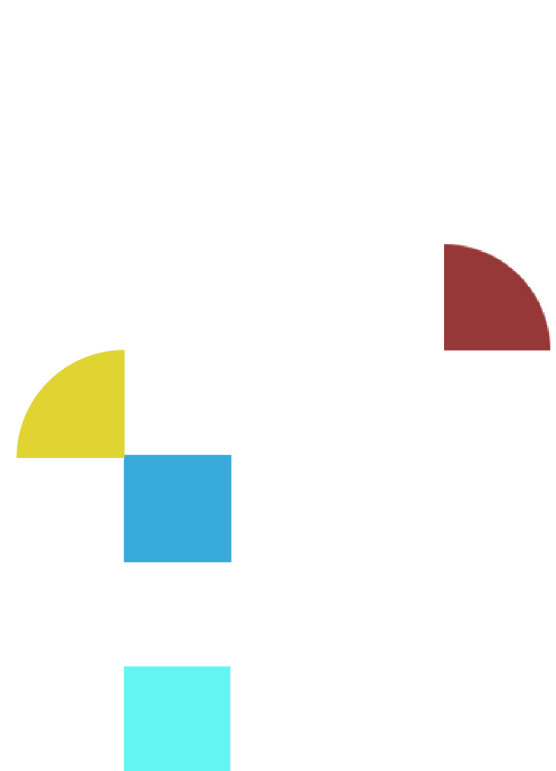
Our harmonizing of human built & natural infrastructure makes us more resilient to climate events like fires and floods while furthering atmospheric repair through ecological regeneration.

We attend to our watersheds so that our salmon return to their native streams full of ocean-rich nitrogen to nourish the orcas, wolves, eagles, grizzlies, and forests along the way. We recognize that the Earth is our life support system so we design our community to support life.

Symbiocene's distributed network of modular and nested community hubs creates a sense of belonging, a place to pursue passions, to be taken care of, and to celebrate. Our right-size lifestyles provide all species with shelter, space, food, water, mobility, power, and warmth to live their best life and die their best death.

We celebrate the values that our city's name reflects – beneficial symbiosis! We learn from Nature. Respect, care, sustainability, circular economies – these are all mainstays of our way of life.

We learn from Nature. Respect, care, sustainability, circular economies – these are all mainstays of our way of life.



CONCEPT ILLUSTRATIONS

SYMBIOCENE – FULL SERIES



This compilation showcases various facets of Symbiocene. Each of the 5 panels of the compilation are zoomed in on in the following pages.

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RIGHT-SIZED LIFESTYLE



We are Nature and the connection between personal and planetary health is emphasized through the design of our products, processes, and systems.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE



The community hubs in Symbiocene leverage local energy, mobility & movement, resource recovery and lifecycle systems. These approaches harmonize natural and human built infrastructure.

SYMBIOCENE



Following the Anthropocene, the Symbiocene (coined by philosopher Glenn Albrecht) emerged as we made the Human-Nature connection and lived together in relationships of beneficial symbiosis.

DIVERSITY IS THE KEY TO STABILITY



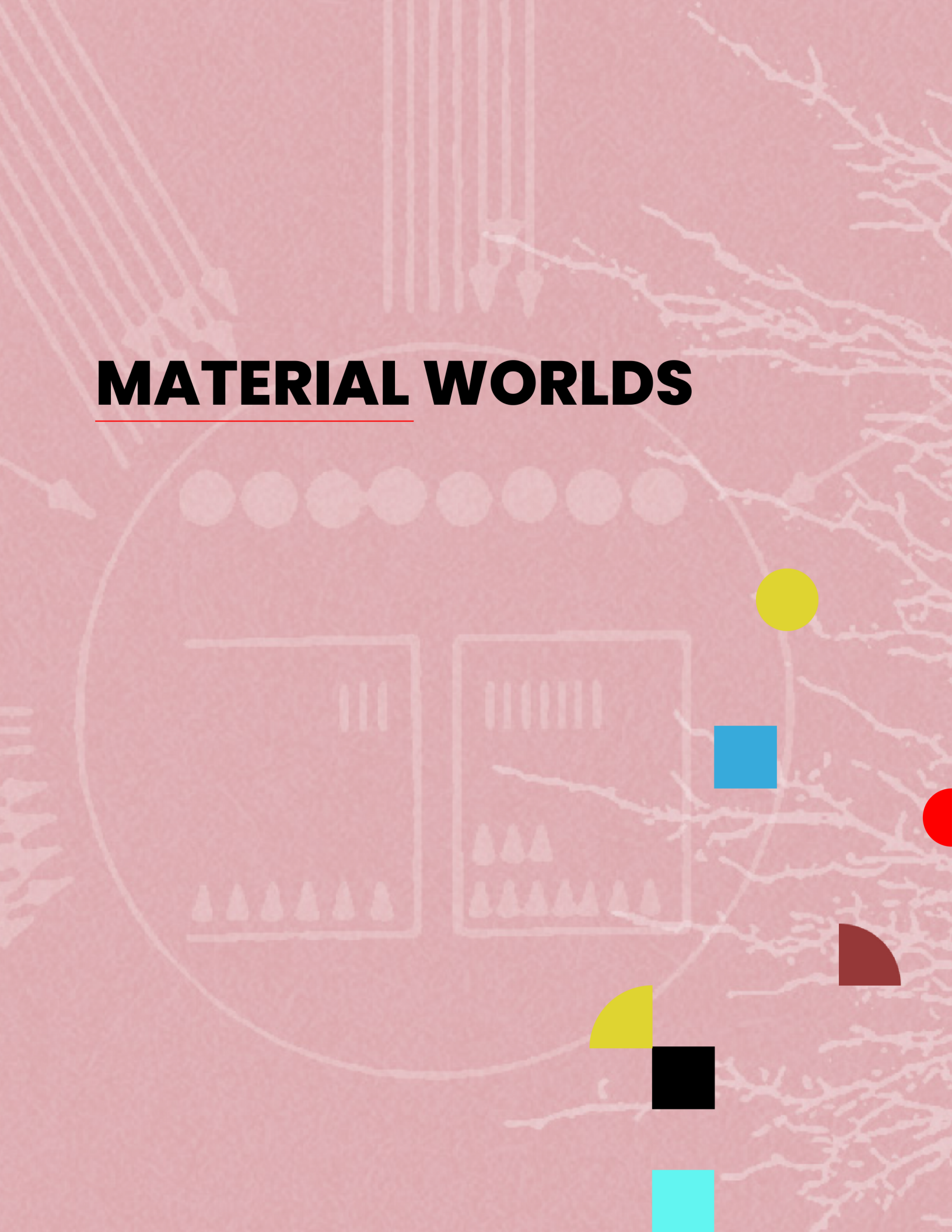
A sense of belonging is supported by systems that foster learning, creativity, wellbeing and inclusivity.

INTERGENERATIONAL LOVE AND CONSCIOUS CARE



The inhabitants of Symbiocene are connected, respected, protected and equipped to actualize at every stage of their life cycle, no matter their path or beliefs.

MATERIAL WORLDS



SHELTER

AT HOME IN SYMBIOCENE

In Symbiocene you can choose to live in one of several connected neighborhoods whose aesthetics vary, as do their structures for sustainability and inclusivity.

Our earthships have solar, grey-water, and house-based agriculture. They are made from natural and recycled materials.

Our modern minimal homes have solar, green and cool roofs, high performance glass, cross-laminated timber, alternative concrete, and gardens.

Your neighbors may be friends, families (including chosen and multigenerational), people raising children, seniors, or multigenerational households. The architects and Universal Designers created spaces that fit what people need at every stage of life. Their responsiveness to varied needs and accessibility means more people can have comfort, freedom, and safety in all the places we live, work, play and learn. Homes are rich with built-ins like bookshelves, couches, and nooks. Rooms have organic shapes and less definition of indoor and outdoor spaces so everyone enjoys the beauty of our

mixed forest. We are as proud of our homes as we are the unique people who have come together to thrive in this community!

We are as proud of our homes as we are the unique people who have come together to thrive in this community!

Even though our homes have roof gardens, inside gardens, and traditional outside gardens, our neighborhoods are shaped around larger central gardens. We depend on a clean, well-managed water supply for these gardens to thrive and for our homes and daily needs.

Finally, we are one of the first communities to build a space for mobile nomads. They are welcome and can find a community, not just a place to park. We provide electricity to recharge vehicles, outdoor and indoor eating, as well as areas to refresh and connect with others.. We also have sinks, showers, and bathrooms that are safe, clean, and energy efficient. New people are welcome to join events in our other neighborhoods and visit our community kitchen, which is abundant in a diversity of food.

Testimonial: A Bird's Perspective

I am a songbird. My parents dropped out of the migration here, since our travel routes became deadly. They recognized utopia when they saw it! The whole place is green and growing, the air and water are clean.

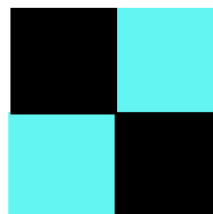
The humans create all the habitats we could want – low earth-ships with green roofs, high cliff-like dwellings, lush gardens where young and old gather to watch us share in the abundance.

All of the habitats are connected. Roadkill is the stuff of birdlore! Now, there are safe greenways for everyone to move across the city.

My generation is the first to be hatched and raised here among the humans, where we might just survive.

They know we are here. They let us practice our culture without persecution. They put collars and bells on their cats. They are noisy at times, but they have rhythms. They respect a quiet quotient at dawn and dusk, when we sing out to each other.

All of us – furred, finned, web-footed, winged, rooted, spored and microbial – are watching our humans. We don't yet trust them, and we call out to remind them, "We are all relations!"



WATER

SMART WATER FOR SMART CITIES

Water is life. Gurgling, babbling, bringing the birds. Each morning, our home's rainwater catchment system lets me awake to a vibrant, diverse garden environment.

Each morning, our home's rainwater catchment system lets me awake to a vibrant, diverse garden environment.

I make breakfast and sip my tea, giving thanks to the elixir. Long gone are the days when I must worry about the quality of water that comes out of my faucet.

Water is life, yes. Symbiocene's water is also smart.

Last Solstice, while entertaining out-of-town relatives, I took a city tour of our smart water system. AI water management optimizes water resources, wastewater treatment, and smart irrigation. I learned that IoT sensors allow water managers to identify anomalies in water systems, including pipe leaks and equipment failure. These sensors also help measure the composition of chemicals in water after treatment. Automated meter readers which

collect data in real-time enable us to use less water at home and at work (and we pay less as a result!) Businesses can easily detect leaks that result in a considerable amount of water waste annually.

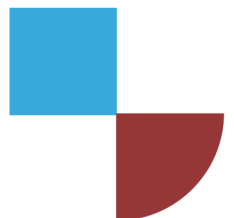
Everyone who cares to know where our water is being sourced, stored, and allocated can easily access the information.

This makes me happy because my politicians and activist friends use it to practice water equity – for all members of our community (human and non-human) as well as the forest we live in.

Water is trust. I trust my city to manage it well – to mitigate flood damage, monitor water health, and reduce water waste.

My trust runs deep. So deep that I almost never think about water management. My passions lie elsewhere.

Water. Water is everything.



FOOD

A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE EARTH

In Symbiocene, food is a direct partnership with the earth: the earth feeds us, and we feed the earth.

Neighbourhoods center around green spaces that grow fruits, vegetables, nuts, berries, mushrooms, and local novelties. These biologically rich hubs include community centers, daycares, schools, senior homes, health centers, and kitchens where social connections and food intersect.

Personal gardens extend the diversity and abundance of the hubs. A community maple syrup operation harvests sap and produces syrup. Bees are encouraged. Small animals are raised, and meat is eaten to manage these populations.

Cross-pollination across the neighbourhoods occurs as seeds, ideas, and food is shared. The city supports, through funds and policies, best practices but does not dictate what must be grown. The flavors of the neighbourhood depend on who lives there.

On the outskirts, diverse mixed farms operate with a sustainable and ecologically sound economy of scale. They produce staple crops such as legumes, corn, wheat, barley,

potatoes, buckwheat, and sugar beets. Horticulture practices include dairies, egg farms, and limited meat production. Neighbourhoods build relationships directly with farmers who transport foods to hubs in bulk for distribution. Most calories consumed are locally sourced. Inputs from distant places include non-perishable luxuries like tea, coffee, chocolate, and spices.

Food providers are respected for their life-giving work and everyone is offered opportunities to experience all levels of food production.

There is no food waste. Food no longer fit for humans becomes animal feed or compost is processed at a community hub or transported to farms where it returns to the land as fertilizer.

Symbiocene's food system is a resilient web of diverse and interconnected neighborhoods and farms that cycle nutrients between humans, other species, and the land. In the Symbiocene, we move toward free, abundant food for everyone.

Testimonial: A Senior's Perspective

Today is our community thanksgiving feast. I rise early and slip outside to harvest herbs for dinner. We in our later years care for smaller plants that grow in raised beds lining the path just outside our seniors lodge. This morning I clip fresh parsley, sage, rosemary, thyme and mint. We will have turkeys to celebrate our harvest, meat is rare and looked forward to.

An apprentice will collect our herbs if we hang them at the end of the path, but today I want to stretch my stiff muscles. Yesterday, school-children joined the seniors to pick buckets of berries for 200 pies.

I walk to the community kitchen, bustling already, and the smell of our pies in the oven greets me before I enter. I leave my bundle for the chefs, who pull a sprig of mint and offer me tea.

As I sit in the morning sun, children's voices rise from the open-harvest pea patch. A child shyly brings me pockets full of peas. I accept with a smile, knowing these are descendants of the seed that I saved when I worked on a farm on the outskirts in my youth.

CLOTHING

RIGHT-SIZED LIFESTYLE

Express your passion through your fashion! The new *Right-sized Lifestyle* lets you be your own brand.

Walk right into our swap shop/maker space complete with tailors and tools for you and me. The ol' dusty thriftstore has been replaced by an affordable, delightful, and therapeutic shopping experience. There's an abundance of nearly new and vintage clothing, as well as tailors and tools to customize personal style and fit.

All emphasize upcycling the threads of the future to suit the person and the planet.

Upcycling, Cradle to Cradle, Circular Economy. Materials are separated into technical and biological streams. Manufacturers pride themselves on finding the new you through take-back programs. What they all have in common is a mechanism to redirect petroleum-based fabrics into a technical recycling stream removing the nanofibers that get under our skin and released into the water supply by washing. All emphasize upcycling the threads of the future to suit the person and the planet. New fabrics are self-repairing, self-cleaning, preserve

energy, superhydrophobic, and always ready to wear. Plastic is out!

Your favourite accessories convert your movement into electricity (piezoelectric) to deliver a personal energy source for charging and entertainment, as well as for health monitoring & accessibility aids. This wearable tech amplifies your ability to calm yourself, monitor your vibes, and accessorize.

Finally fashion is becoming truly iconic!



ELECTRICITY

KNOW YOUR POWER

Symbiocene has progressively moved toward self-sufficiency. This does not mean we are cut off from the wider grid, but rather that all our energy can be produced locally over time. We are building a grid of the future, focusing on flexibility for a variety of energy sources. To begin, we are connecting to the existing grid and making current homes and buildings more efficient. Any new buildings are designed with efficiency and conservation in mind. We have installed solar and are evaluating if the location of our utopia will support wind.

We are building a grid of the future, focusing on flexibility for a variety of energy sources.

Each neighbourhood is aware of the source of their electricity and how it impacts the natural environment.

Each neighbourhood features a microgrid with a representative sculpture which stores excess energy for times when renewables are scarce. These sculptures can also feed back into the grid when other neighborhoods need support.

Over time, and, as our population expands, we will consider larger power sources by evaluating which sources are best for the community and currently available. Some ideas that are already feasible are:

- Small modular reactors (LFTR or uranium)
- Hydro-electric dams
- Ideally, fusion when widely available.



TRANSPORTATION

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Symbiocene accommodates the migrations of all species across the bioregion. Greenways and blueways make space for Nature and restore watersheds, culture, and community spirit.

It's September, so it's the festival of the Salmon Returning Moon. You can see the salmon swimming upstream that have been daylit next to the sidewalks. It feels like I'm walking through a rainforest. I am. You can hear birds everywhere now that the honks and beeps of vehicles transmit to dashboards.

Symbiocene is a hopping place! Everyone is super chill and totally in the zone. Hip, happening hubs offer products and services for a right-sized lifestyle that is only ever 30 minutes away! Nowhere is too far to go at your own pace. No rush. It's a walk in the park. So peaceful.

Much of our transportation is built on personal power.

Much of our transportation is built on personal power. We can self-propel, arriving in style and on time through piezoelectric surfaces, shoes and

clothes. The more you ride, roll, slide and dance, the more you amplify the power of the people.

Our switch to renewables and installation of hybrid converters makes transport truly accessible. Commuters & groups move with the convenience of a networked and flexible carbon-neutral transport fleet that is right-sized for the journey.

Solar Art cars for hire are part of the new gig economy and your next date night. Artists, drivers and your own concierge keep your finger on the pulse and your head in the clouds. My driver is a life coach so I got my mind back in gear as we took a 'lil bypass to accommodate a turtle crossing. The solar cars work with the city's piezoelectric surface system and almost everyone is getting their shoes resoled with piezoelectric tech so they can power their own scene. A ride in a mini-solar art car with a drinks bar costs \$2 because the subsidies they paid to big oil are now going to co-ops for transport.

Dream machines fuel the circular and sharing economy of people, places and things. Delivery drops, VR & pop-up shops and a sweet pit stop in the

virtual reality hub are all in play. Travel to Japan on Wednesday and Morocco on Thursday. Or, come to the augmented reality cafe and delight in eating dinner with your international friends from the comfort of your utopia. And for a late-night escape, let's not forget that the mindfulness process of astral traveling is zero carbon.



WASTE

ZERO WASTE CITY

In Symbiocene we minimize waste and main sources of pollution. Our economy is circular by design and all materials re-enter the economy at the end of their use. Many products are maintained, shared, reused, repaired, refurbished, remanufactured, and, only as a last resort, recycled.

Many products are maintained, shared, reused, repaired, refurbished, remanufactured, and, only as a last resort, recycled.

We have tackled the food waste problem with our smart food hubs where supermarkets/ canteens/ individuals donate food and NGOs redistribute it to people in need.

We don't even waste the leftover food in restaurants: after appropriate treatments it becomes safe & affordable food for our pets.

When we can't re-circulate food and other biological materials, we return them to Nature where it regenerates the land and fuels the production of new food and materials (if it is safe to do so).

Our smart system allows us to track all materials and products along the whole life cycle. Combined with distribution and re-distribution hubs, to reroute materials where they are needed, we minimize waste.



Testimonial: A Teen's Perspective

Check out my hat. It's made entirely out of mushrooms. You can hardly tell.

I gotta tell you. My dad just won the James Beard award in the Already-Been-Served food category. Can you believe it? Everyone is freaking out about his chili paste.

Dad says that back-in-the-day people felt the same way about lab-grown meat and plant-based fish. My mom isn't surprised since her company has been making popular pet food out of ABS food for years. We're gonna walk to the hub tonight to celebrate with a fancy dinner. Wanna come? Good. I'm gonna order my favorite ugly fruit salad. You know the one with those heirloom tomatoes grown along the greenbelt? They're the best!

So, don't tell my dad, but I don't know about ABS. I really like local farm food. Did you know that you can track its entire lifecycle from farm to fork to fertilizer? It's easy to do. I can show how. You just log into the smart food grid.

Three cheers for the circular economy. Be a hero! Get your waste to zero!

Three cheers for the circular economy. Be a hero! Get your waste to zero!

Dad says I should spend less time in front of screens. But I'm doing fine. I checked in with my digital doula yesterday. My health habits are A-OK.

Hold up...I hear the ice cream truck. I need to give them our unused food. Ever since they started accepting backyard fruit and veggies we've been making bank.

Gotta go. See ya tonight!



DEATH & HUMAN REMAINS

DYING, DEATH AND BEYOND

As Rajul enters the last expected year of his life, he begins to play the Dying Game, bringing friends and family together to discuss his priorities around his end of life, while telling stories and connecting.

Rajul decides to be buried in a mushroom suit. There is no need for him to purchase any of the materials associated with his death, including a plot for his burial. These are provided by Symbiocene. Death is no longer a predominantly classist experience.

Rajul decides to be buried in a mushroom suit.

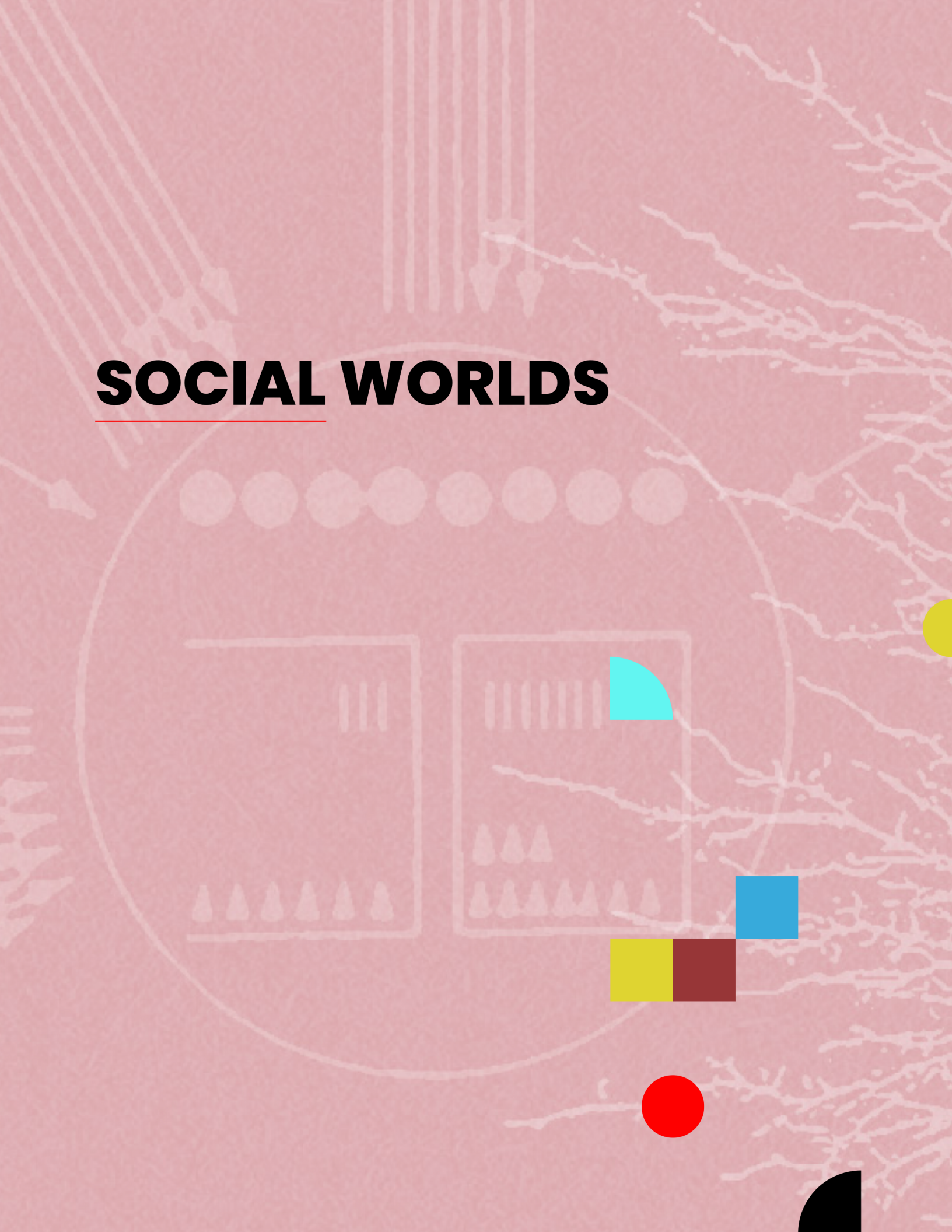
When he dies, his community brings his remains to a designated spot in the forest. Enshrouded in a mycelial suit, his body is dedicated to the forest's mycelial network. Afterwards, people tell stories about the ways Rajul has nourished the community.

Conversely, Rajul's neighbour Mary decides on a traditional coffin burial, also paid for by the city. When she dies, her community embellishes her grave with flowers and other objects.

While Symbiocene allows a wide variety of types of burials, most people opt to have their body return to nature in one form or another.



SOCIAL WORLDS



EDUCATION

EDUCATION IS A LIFESTYLE

Education in Symbiocene means being immersed in learning experiences to build knowledge and skills, to explore your world, and to get to know and respect yourself, your classmates, and the citizens here. Ancient wisdom and science-based practices have nurtured me like I've learned to nurture the natural life around me.

Our learning is experiential, either collaborative or individual, to figure out strategies, use tools, and apply math, science, philosophy, or art. And sometimes all at once!

I used to go to school outside Symbiocene so leaving a classroom with lots of kids, desks, and tests was a huge shift. My teachers have shown me how my curiosity and learning are linked. Our learning is experiential, either collaborative or individual, to figure out strategies, use tools, and apply math, science, philosophy, or art. And sometimes all at once! I've made some real messes. But my teachers and really all our parents and caregivers tell me how mistakes are experiences to build on.

As you get older, you do more and more at other education hubs and specialized hubs. I met new people and got excited about discovering new things. We also get to know different families and community members to develop skills in our 2nd and 3rd languages and get to be part of the culture of the languages without even leaving Symbiocene.

We also learn about civics first hand. We attend council meetings and listen to our elders debate and make decisions. They always take time for our questions and ensure we understand the implied and explicit guidelines of the council.

Soon I'll be moving to a new phase of my education. Some of my friends are ready to apply their knowledge and skills in agriculture, architecture, or painting. One friend is even being mentored in the forest medicine research guild. I've chosen to attend our free university to look more closely at the past. I want to examine and document the shifts that took place for communities like Symbiocene to be created and thrive. Books, articles, artifacts, and people will be my guides in this new journey.

HEALTH

A CULTURE OF CARE

Our Culture of Care recognizes that we are all interconnected; our health is dependent on that of our community members and environment. It is in our best interest to take care of ourselves and each other. Quality health care is a human right.

Quality health care is a human right.

Health care is accessible in each neighbourhood. A cutting-edge holistic health hub offers services in the languages of the community and at the discretion of the community. Health hubs include always-open nursing stations as well as therapy rooms for a diversity of healers and health practitioners. Health scans using biowell and blue opal metatron tech and gut microbial ecosystem evaluations are free on-site indicators of health. Workshops, counseling, mental health services, and classes are available. Prevention and recovery from early childhood trauma is a focus. People who have overcome health problems are encouraged to share their path to health in an evolving pie chart database which identifies support groups within and

beyond the community. A greenhouse and garden is associated with the healing hub to encourage nutrition and food as preventative medicine.

Stigmatism of addictions and mental health struggles is reduced at all levels. Support mechanisms are in place to do the slow work of helping people rewrite their personal narratives and make healthy decisions for themselves in the community. A social service app gives common citizens tools needed to help others experiencing mental health crises. The app guides users in supporting someone stuck in a hard moment – it empowers not only the person suffering but the person helping and is building an entire society more resilient to trauma. Centers are available for harm reduction, rehab, and safe injection.

The elderly and people with disabilities are supported across the community. Health services come to them as needed through a robust and well-funded homecare program. There is a home for seniors in each neighbourhood.

Children can be born at the community birthing house near to the

health hub. Midwives are available locally; emergencies or planned c sections are transferred to the central hospital.

Communities are empowered to take care of their citizens and health at the local level. In the case of a pathogen outbreak, neighbourhoods will be able to form independent bubbles. Quarantine support will be available within each community and methods for locking down together will be established.

There will be central hospitals where bigger, more complicated and technical procedures take place, such as surgeries and advanced treatments. Hospitals have healthy, culturally-appropriate food and nutrition programs, robust composting and recycling programs, plants, artful design, and clowns in the children's wards.

GENDER EQUALITY

DIVERSE REPRESENTATION

Symbiocene promotes equity at all levels, starting on the day a child is born. All parents take leave. Neighbourhoods share the burden of care. Need someone to hold a baby while you shower? Need a meal because of a crazy day at work? Reach out to a group of trusted and trained volunteers of all ages, races and genders from within your neighbourhood. Care-giving is shared equally between all parts of society regardless of age, race and gender.

Gender equity is practiced across all fields and at all levels, across all of society. There is representation from all ages, races, abilities and genders across all sectors of the workforce. Universal Basic Income is provided for all humans simply because they are.

Ensuring equality is ingrained into the culture of lifelong learning that is at the heart of Symbiocene, from childhood to old age. Different ages are brought together in institutions and events. The Windows, Mirrors, and Sliding Doors concept is used in teaching to share diverse perspectives (windows), recognize and validate each citizen (mirrors), and give an open invitation to participate in the wider world (sliding

doors). Citizens are encouraged not to judge. They use the Living Library resource to humanize stereotypes and build acceptance, understanding and respect.

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Testimonial: A Parent with a Disability's Perspective

I can't express how much my life has changed since joining the Symbiocene community. As a person with a disability, I feel heard, respected and included in all aspects of life. My wife and I were fortunate enough to welcome our first child here and we both took parental leave, raising her and watching her grow together.

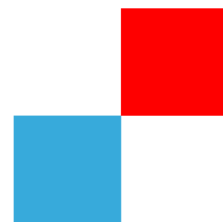
Our earthship home perfectly tailors to our every need through the use of solar, grey water, and house-based agriculture. Our Universal Designers created spaces that fit what people need at every stage of life. This means that more people can have comfort, freedom, and safety in all the places we live, work, play and learn.

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Every community member has the right and ability to work and contribute, while all of our essential needs are met through the implementation of Universal Basic Income. Life-long learning is at the heart of our community and

leadership roles, education, neighbourhoods and other groups feature a diverse representation across all ages, races, abilities and genders.

Everyday, I'm blown away by the digital tools available to us. Nature and technology work in perfect harmony. Real-time translation, captioning and ASL interpretation is easily done through augmented technologies. I take comfort in knowing that as we age, our community has in place everything we'll need, but most importantly, our daughter will be able to learn of our history through the learning library and be taught important lessons from our elders for years to come, far beyond our time here.



ARTS & CULTURE

THE SUMBIOS PRIZE

Thank you. As an elder of my people and member of the Sumbios Committee, I am honored to accept this appointment by the United Nations. I am here, of course, because of the Sumbios Prize, which is often credited for the Great Turning.

Many of you will recall the juggernaut we faced a decade ago. We had the technology and solutions we needed to stay the climate crisis and sixth extinction but would not alter our destructive ways. The collective will of humanity faltered. We could not act at the scope and scale required to turn the tide. We needed a cultural accelerator. A grassroots, distributed, replicable, democratic, scalable way to elevate and bolster the adoption of the solutions so many people were taking to address our problems. It's a mouthful, I know. Those were stressful times.

The Sumbios Committee started back in 2024 on a humble city block in Symbiocene. About 30 households got together on summer solstice and decided to pool their money and fund a solar-powered fog capturing device that one of their kids invented. This quickly grew into a seasonal block contest. They gave out prize money

and trophies at their local hub during the equinoxes and solstices. Their trophies were made of biosynthetic materials that biodegrade over time. (That idea came from a prize winner and we continue this custom to this day.)

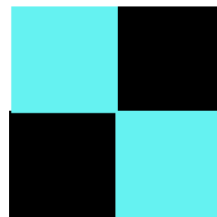
Their idea quickly spread. Other city blocks created their own Sumbios Prizes. The city began funding the prizes and added a second tier to be awarded at the neighborhood level, about 5000 people in the case of Symbiocene. Winners of Tier 1 prizes nominate people for these larger Tier 2 prizes. Both Tiers are government-funded, community led and awarded 4 times a year.

Encouraged by the Prize's success at fostering innovation, cultural change, democracy, and community engagement, a third tier was added.

Tier 3 prizes are annual, city-wide prizes chosen by the indigenous-led Sumbios Committee that solicits nominations from experts. Awarding institutions select laureates by majority vote. 9 prizes are awarded annually in the fields of Science, Health, Finance, Food, Ecology, Arts, Culture, Communications, and

Governance to the organization, team, or individual who has done the most or best to advance the principles of the Symbiocene. (These include ecological repair, biodiversity, regeneration, climate justice, inclusion, empathy.) The annual prizes are announced on Sumbios Day, Symbiocene's annual holiday. Previous laureates also announce how they are going to disseminate the decayed remains of their own trophies.

The Sumbios Foundation's innovative non-profit franchise model for funding and awarding its prizes is now used by numerous cities, nations, and, now in coordination with the United Nations, is administered internationally.



GOVERNANCE

A PROSPEROUS AND JUST SOCIETY FOR ALL

Peace and serenity surround the inhabitants of Symbiocene. We are a democracy where voting starts at age 16. Every person has a voice and every person has a choice. We ensure representation of all ages, all cultures, and abilities.

Community service and servant leadership are encouraged from an early age and embedded in the culture of the community.

Symbiocene's governance system is similar to Sociocracy and fosters citizen engagement and collaborative process over voting. Each household chooses a member to participate in their community's consent-based decision making. In turn, each community selects a representative for the neighbourhood, and so on. At each level, no more than 30 people work to make and approve policies and decisions related to their scale of governance.

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The decision making system is scalable: each house has one representative, and thirty houses make a Community. Each Community elects one representative to participate in Neighbourhood meetings (twelve communities make one Neighbourhood, six Neighbourhoods make one Hamlet and so on). The representative person can be changed whenever the community wants by whatever method the community uses.

Laws are unbiased and aim to provide safety in the world of Symbiocene and online.

We are:

- A Model of quality of life for communities around the world
- Ranked #1 in the World Happiness Report five years in a row!
- Ranked #1 digital government of the 193 United Nations Member States



COMMUNICATION

THE QUIET QUOTIENT & DIGITAL DOULAS

A Geneva Convention for Online Communication

We are pleased to announce that the new Geneva Convention for Online Communication enshrines the following rights:

- Digital access and online communication is a human right.
- People have the right to security, privacy, and transparency in online communications.
- People have the right to review, repair, and manage their online data.
- Algorithms must be transparent and based on humane values.

We are not trading access for surveillance anymore!

The upshot? We are not trading access for surveillance anymore! Former patterns in algorithmic advertising that compromised mental health and directed wealth into the hands of the few are a thing of the past. The carbon footprint of data is decreasing, especially as we now factor new ethics into our ESG ratings.

Digital Doulas, the Online Red Cross

Digital Doulas are available to educate and help individuals and organizations at key growth points:

- Children coming online & their early years.
- Digital end of life care and legacy.
- Aid in the repair, removal, or management of one's digital identity.
- Deprogramming from disinformation or addiction.
- AI and digital ethics education.

The upshot? A walk & talk service is available along the greenway with someone who is trained to listen and help. Transparency and tech are making all the difference to people's sense of community and wellbeing. There is more trust in accessing basic services like healthcare with privacy, digital diets, and tech support as part of the right-sized lifestyle. A "while you wait" tech overhaul service called Consent & Cookies is available at cafés to protect privacy and provide tips & tricks to keep people safe.

The Quiet Quotient Legislation

A simple calculation informs a policy that keeps the noise of human activity in check so that the biodiversity of the land and water has optimal conditions for the signals and responses critical to the smooth running of our planet.

The upshot? Electric ferries are so quiet that a whole pod of orcas swim alongside, their hearing & health improved since the enactment of these new laws. Personal devices identifying bird calls - help us become familiar with our fellow creatures in the Symbiocene. Wildlife numbers are growing as their capacity to hear each other improves. Better conditions for pollinator communication mean food security for everyone. The sounds of Nature support wellbeing and relaxation across the Symbiocene.

Access & Linguistic Diversity

Our culture of communication is shifting. Digital tools that prioritize access and cut through literacy barriers are abundant. Real-time translation, captioning, and ASL interpretation is easily done through augmented technologies.

The move to support language revitalization across First Nation and

indigenous communities is providing critical insights to the secrets our biodiversity holds and what Nature needs to restore health and balance. By allocating resources to center this work, we are finally on the road to reconciliation and understanding how indigenous perspectives and way of life leads to the culture of abundance we are working towards.



WEALTH & FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

A DISTRIBUTION ECONOMY

Symbiocene measures wealth distribution among its citizens rather than GDP and growth.

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Closing tax holes and adding a wealth cap created the resources to pay for a Universal Basic Income. Initially directed towards the most vulnerable, eventually UBI widened to the entire population and increased from a "basic" income to livable wage.

Symbiocene's economy recognizes diverse types of capital. Some are zero sum (e.g. physical resources), others are non-zero sum (e.g. health of Nature, knowledge, and happiness). Resources are cycled through a circular economy. Nothing is wasted.

Many needs are met at the local level through a share and barter economy. Community hubs have lending libraries, repair services, and exchanges. Entrepreneurs are supported in creating passion-based economies with Enough is Enough salaries (including emergency insurance). The Dream Machine is a

vision board and Project Love is a dating app that helps people find collaborators and resources. A DAO (decentralized autonomous organization) crypto funds the passion projects through town voting.

For profit businesses exist, but many organizations are non-profit. Closed books are unfashionable and even suspicious. Resource hoarding is no longer venerated, but seen as a mental illness to be healed.



Testimonial: A Tourist's Perspective

One of Symbiocene's main economies is tourism. They love bartering, so in exchange for my consulting services, they offered me an all-expense-paid visit.

An art car taxi with plants growing on the roof and pink projection lights picked me up. What a delight! The driver sent me Symbiocene crypto tokens and a menu of experiences designed by local healers, performers, chefs, and artists. I could pick from 48 hour day-in-the-life experiences as a monk or a rock star, a date-yourself-innerstanding weekend with air-harp and personality profiles to the international mystery bag. I chose the last one.

My first stop was lunch at the Andy-Worm Hole cafe. Each table was bi-located in two places using holographic life-size screens. I sat across from three people in Uzbekistan. I digested my food, reclined in a magnetic bed with a VR headset which took me to the surface of Mars and then a mountain in Japan to meditate.

Next, we toured Sybiocene's version of a thrift store. The front had a subsidized maker-space with 3D printers, laser cutters, and young and old seamstresses to teach people

how to alter the once-used fashion. This was an experimental shop that had been funded in what they called a dream machine, a classified system for passion projects that included 10 forms of capital (only one of which was actual money). Tourists and locals donate time and equipment and the remainder of the budgets were funded by a town cryptotrust. As a visitor, I could upvote 3 projects for funding.

I loved the shared community spaces, and the emergency funds which enabled people to have enough-is-enough salaries. Money had been converted into a true and flexible energy exchange. Impressive! I encourage you to trade your consulting skills for one of the most epic and delightful weeks of your life.

FAITH & SPIRITUALITY

ATTENDING TO FAITH

Symbiocene's vision of faith and belief is simple: we are inclusive and all are welcome.

Agnostics, atheists, informal spiritual groups, and organized religions have the same footing with none being privileged. Symbiocene ensures everyone has physical space to practice their beliefs and minister to the community. We hold that all those with a belief system have prosocial values. We encourage active collaboration and connection among those of faith and belief. Our faith collective is one place to engage, listen, debate, and understand others' beliefs. It also allows us to work alongside people of diverse faiths and spirituality across the hubs. We organize projects to ensure the natural environment and citizens of Symbiocene receive care, connection, and support.

Our faith collective is one place to engage, listen, debate, and understand others' beliefs.



Testimonial: A Parent's Perspective

Today my 11-year-old son asked, "Dad, what happens when we die? I'm scared to die. What happens!?"

I didn't know what to say in that moment. So I said, "I bet there's a good answer out there. Let's go find it."

So we went to the places of worship in Symbiocene. The Christians told us about heaven and hell. We were moved to tears and joy by the Baptist choir. At the synagogue, we learned about wrestling with God and how in asking difficult questions it's important to listen. We had lunch with the Sunnis in the park and left them as they moved into afternoon prayer. Later, we heard amazing stories from the Hindu musicians by their temple. The Blackfeet medicine man cleansed our spirits, and my son danced around a fire after sunset to the big drum and the sparks rising to the stars.

The next morning, we sat with one of the Buddhist women down by the river. She helped my son see how incredible it can be to observe the contents of consciousness.

We hunted rabbits in the afternoon and said our prayers of gratitude which helped with the tears.

Later that evening, we brought rabbit stew to the senior home to visit grandma and her friends. We asked grandma what she thought about the afterlife. She said, "Part of me will go to the Earth, but part of me will live on. I think I'll finally get to learn all the secrets! Like how they built the pyramids and who killed JFK. Death is the last great adventure!" My son laughed and said "I love you grandma."



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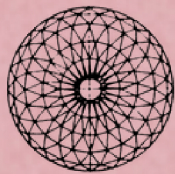
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