



Imagining a better future

Youth Homelessness Funders
Predict Our Path Forward

We asked youth homelessness funders:

Imagine a future in which philanthropy failed to catalyze the movement to end youth homelessness...

...*why did it fail?*

Here's what they said:

We failed to build narrative around the solvability of youth homelessness.

We never achieved real partnership: where everyone's contributions are valued.

We failed to support leaders with lived experience.

We didn't integrate young people's needs into our affordable housing agenda.

We never accounted for the tolls of the pandemic (e.g., isolation).

We failed to motivate government behind data-driven interventions. | Government never scaled up the solutions.

We retreated from our commitment to racial justice.

Shiny-object syndrome inhibited us from focusing on the long term.

Paternalism is the status quo we return to when we don't listen to young people.

We never implemented
trust-based
philanthropy.

We focused too much on
data at the expense of
funding grassroots
organizing.

We mined youth for
stories but didn't
implement their
recommendations.

We ignored the pipelines
into homelessness.

We shied away from
out-of-the-box ideas.

We disagreed with each
other on how to
coordinate funding.

We feared innovation.

We never engaged other
systems outside the
homelessness sector.

We never built a shared
vision with adjacent
systems like foster care,
education, etc.

We never confronted the systemic homophobia and transphobia that push so many into homelessness.

We underinvested in movement and power-building.

We didn't support leaders of color with lived experience.

We focused on the near-term at the expense of the long.


Systems remained unchanged.

We funded studies but never shared learnings widely enough.

We sacrificed meaningful participation at the feet of tokenization.

Maybe it was never philanthropy's role in the first place.

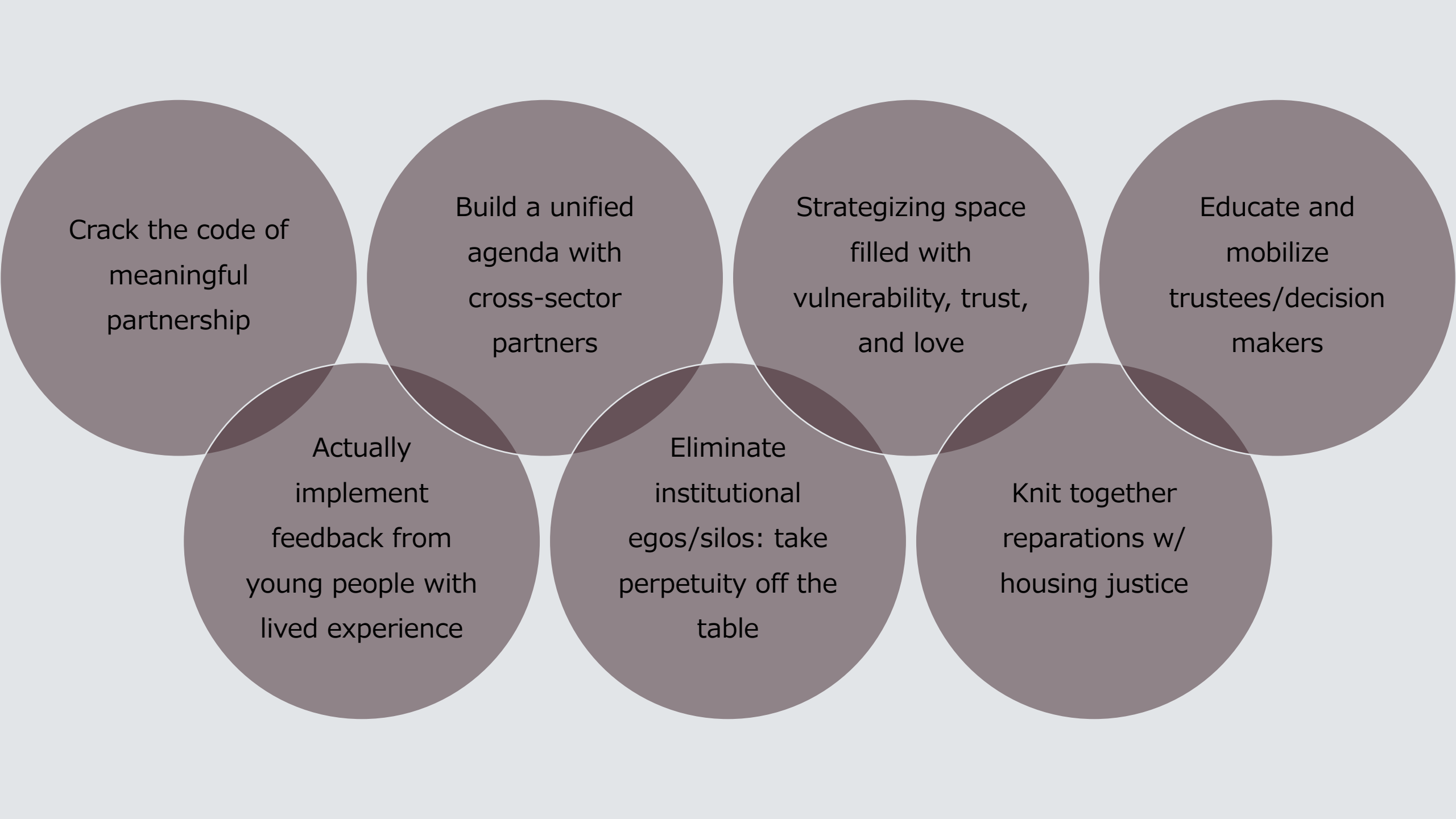
We never got to the root of the problem: capitalism.



So, how do we prevent such failure?

What do we need to learn?

How do we need to be?



Crack the code of
meaningful
partnership

Build a unified
agenda with
cross-sector
partners

Strategizing space
filled with
vulnerability, trust,
and love

Educate and
mobilize
trustees/decision
makers

Actually
implement
feedback from
young people with
lived experience

Eliminate
institutional
egos/silos: take
perpetuity off the
table

Knit together
reparations w/
housing justice

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS FUNDER
STRATEGY CIRCLES



Strategize with us

4th Tuesday every other month at 2pm ET

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