



# a wave across the Americas

## NEXT SYSTEM TEACH-INS

A Report on Impact, Lessons & Next Steps  
Nov. 2025 Wave of Next System Teach-Ins



**Next System Taskforce**

Center for Next System Studies  
at George Mason University

December 9, 2025

<https://nextsystem.org>



# Table Of Contents

- Introduction.....3
- Planning & Implementation .....5
- Local Teach-In Spotlights.....8
- Outcomes, Learnings & Reflections.....17
- Next Steps.....19
- Acknowledgements.....21

# In November 2025, communities and universities across the Americas came together to answer the question: **“As the world collapses around us, can we build the next system?”**

Drawing together organizers, scholars, activists, and community members, the November wave of Next System Teach-Ins created spaces to address overlapping social, political, economic, and ecological crises while nurturing creative visions and concrete practices for system change.

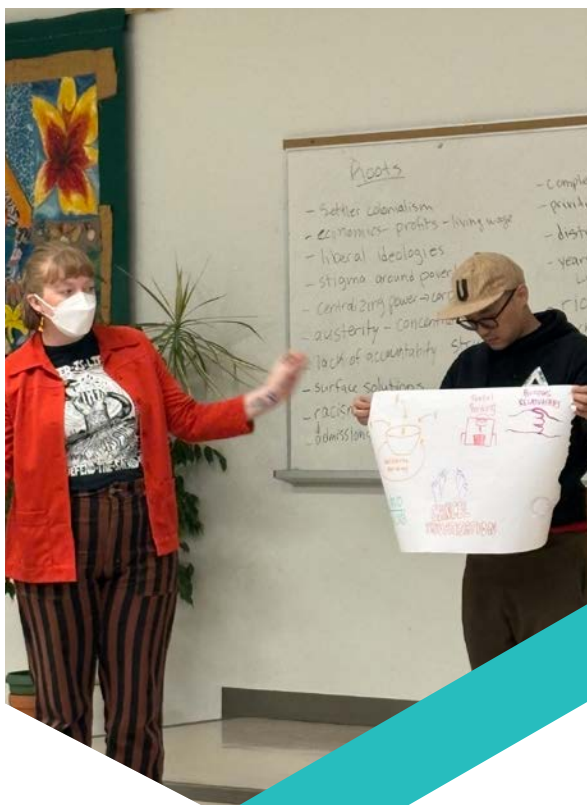


# The Call

The “Call for Next System Teach-Ins” poses the question:

“As the world collapses around us: Can we build the next system? If we take our social, political, economic, and ecological crises seriously enough, can we build a world that is democratic, sustainable, and just? Maybe we can, if we ask:

- *How well do we understand the crises of our time?*
- *What do we need to know about alternative designs to our current system?*
- *What can we learn from movements for system change?”*



“ How well do we understand the crises of our time? What do we need to know about alternative designs to our current system? What can we learn from movements for system change? ”

(Read the full [Call for Next System Teach-ins here.](#))

Across a dozen locations—from Argentina, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Canada to four regions of the United States—the process of planning and hosting these Teach-Ins helped weave a stronger trans-local network. Through collaborative preparation, shared resources, and public events, the initiative deepened relationships among partners, established new partnerships, and highlighted emerging experiments, strategies, and narratives for building the next system.

The international coordination of the Teach-Ins is being performed by the Next System Teach-Ins Taskforce, a project of the [Center for Next System Studies](#), with support from staff from [Next System Studies](#) at George Mason University and the University of Vermont together with academic and community partners at [The Democracy Collaborative](#), [encuentro5](#), [Leadership for the Ecozoic](#), [Presente.org](#), [U.S. Solidarity Economy Network](#), [Move to Amend](#), and [World Beyond War](#).



# Planning & Implementation

The priorities of the Next System Teach-In Taskforce included onboarding local Teach-In organizers, volunteers, and co-conveners, and doing sustained outreach to enable individuals and organizations to find a place in this work.

We focused on developing and equipping local organizers with concrete support materials and infrastructure—an [organizing guide](#), [webinars](#), materials, one-on-one consulting, and startup grants—while dedicating staff time to international organizing so that participation could be genuinely transcontinental, multilingual, and multicultural. We also planned a second online [Next System Convergence](#) for September 2025, both as a shared milestone for our network and as a collective springboard leading into the November Teach-Ins.

**Each locally organized Teach-In highlighted this work from a unique vantage point, rooted in local realities yet connected by a shared crisis of the world system and vision for a sustainable, democratic and just alternative.**

Across countries and regions, organizers and participants showed how people are already building elements of a next system in close relationship with their communities: transforming food systems, reimagining governance, democratizing the economy, and centering care and ecological justice in daily practice. Rather than treating systemic crises as abstract or private burdens, these gatherings made them a public concern while simultaneously creating the relationships, infrastructure, and collective capacity—time, energy, knowledge, and material resources—needed to experiment with and sustain systemic solutions.



# NS Teach-Ins at-a-glance



+11



## 11 Teach-Ins held across the Americas

Toronto, Canada; Buenos Aires, Argentina; Puebla, Mexico; Puerto Rico; Toronto (ON), Canada; Burlington (VT), Duluth (MN), Chicago (IL), Fairfax (VA), Arlington (VA), and Arcata (CA) in the US.

+840



## Individuals in physical attendance at Next System Teach-Ins

+87



**Organizations & networks engaged as partners, co-conveners and collaborators in the Next System Teach-In organizing process locally and globally**

# Organizing Steps & Timeline

**To support and coordination of the Next System Teach-Ins unfolded along a deliberate timeline in 2025:**

**Throughout June**, the Next System Teach-Ins Taskforce and its organizing teams focused on a communication strategy to promote the Teach-Ins and invite potential partners and organizers into the process, developing an extensive outreach dashboard to track participation and engagement.

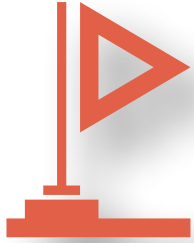
**In early September (4-5)**, the team hosted the second [Next System Convergence](#), a combined Organizing Conference and open Forum that brought over 200 people across the globe — faculty, students, and staff from more than 50 universities and colleges, as well as three dozen community, labor, and research organizations — into live conversation, with all sessions recorded and [shared online](#) for continued use.

**In Late September**, we launched a media push and began weekly coordinating calls with local teach-in organizers to offer hands-on support, troubleshoot challenges, and exchange resources.

**This groundwork culminated between November 1-15**, when the 2025 Next System Teach-Ins took place at 11 campuses and community sites across the Americas, turning months of preparation into locally rooted, globally connected action.

**Following the November Teach-Ins**, the central coordinating team collected reports, reflections and documentation from local organizing team, reflected on our own learnings from the process, and began to integrate insights gathered into planning next steps for maintaining and building momentum toward the next wave of Teach-ins in April 2027. Immediate next steps include centralizing media artifacts from local Teach-ins to share with our broader network and organizing a global live call for all Teach-in participants, organizers as well as those in our network to learn first-hand about each event and how they can be involved in growing a next system within their own locale and arena of work.





# Local Teach-In Spotlights

“ Thanks for inviting me to the Next System Teach-In. It fed my soul and transformed my perspective. It was so powerful for me because the right people were brought together and the container was created so that I could be present and listen. ”

Amy Landolt,

Chicago Teach-In Partner & Participant

## Growing Community Power & Mapping Alternatives

### CHICAGO, IL

Chicago’s [community-based Teach-In](#) combined a half-day “Community Power Convergence” with a “Local Tapestry of Alternatives,”\* a showcase of locally organized events representing expressions of a next system. In the midst of a daily barrage of federal raids targeting immigrants across the city, community members gathered at the historic First Immanuel Lutheran Church to ask: How can we integrate the work of building what we want with the urgent need to resist and to defend our communities?

The half-day Convergence opened with [a libations ceremony](#), words from elder organizers [Prexy Nesbitt](#), a [lightning panel](#) from local leaders and innovators, and the creation of an asset map naming areas of movement strength inspired by the locally-born global approach, [Asset-Based Community Development](#) (ABCD). Using [Open Space Technology](#), facilitators invited participants to choose between pre-programmed workshops and offering their own topics, then dive into those that most interested them. Topics included mutual aid and community defense, trusting neighborhood partnerships, restorative economics, youth leadership, digital cooperatives, the [Vital Conditions Framework](#), cooperative family structures, and creating a Chicago Civic Week. Participants reconvened to exchange learnings and plans that arose from their breakouts, discussed plans to continue momentum and cross-pollination, closing with words from elder organizer Pat Devine Reed and young organizers from Increase the Peace.





Additional events featured in the Chicago Teach-In through the [Local Tapestry of Alternatives](#) included [a class on Community Wealth Building](#) opened to the community by UIC professor Stacey Sutton, Peace Circles led by students of professor Joe Rice through DePaul University's criminology dept., a neighborhood tour on the South Side led by Rosemoor Neighborhood Association, a national webinar on [Activists and the Academy](#), several ICE Watch Trainings, and a ["Faith Over Fear"](#) interfaith unity protest at the Broadview Detention Center (used to detain individuals seized by federal ICE agents).

The planning process and choice to showcase existing work across the city enabled the organizing team to solidify relationships exciting group or diverse partners while also conveying a core idea of Next System Studies -- that many of the alternatives that represent a potential next system exist already in our communities and regions. Partners included the [Steans Center](#) and [Egan Office](#) at DePaul University, [Chicago Teacher's Union](#), [CHI Commons](#), [Increase the Peace](#), [Goldin Institute](#), the [ABCD Institute](#), [Chicago Peace Fellows](#), [Tribe Learning Cooperative](#), [Coop Ed Center](#), and [La Villita Community Church](#).

See [this harvest video of participant impressions and scenes](#) from the *Community Convergence*.

\* inspired by the [Global Tapestry of Alternatives](#)

## From Waste to Commons: Community Composting & Popular Education

### BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

The Teach-In held in Buenos Aires on November 2, highlighted the power of a dynamic, cross-sector coalition involving a worker cooperative ([Colectivo Solidario](#)), a neighborhood [composting club](#), a community organization (INCLUIR), a public university (UNSAM - Ctedra HERAS), and a local preschool and elementary school. It drew many people who were new to collective composting and allowed participants who had only met online to connect in person. Organizers were able to fund volunteer work, provide food, and print [educational "Cartillas,"](#) channeling resources into cooperative efforts. The event also linked Andean local traditions such as Dia de los Muertos with neighborhood composting practices. At the same time, university students put their scholarship into practice by contributing time and effort to a community-centered activity. The start-up of compost bins served as an inspiring model of community collaboration, highlighting concerns about the global climate crisis, waste management, and overconsumption, particularly in local contexts in Argentina. See: [Composting demonstration video](#).

This initiative also featured the participation of teachers and students from the United States, who contributed by painting the compost bins; the academics involved—Gary Anderson, Dipti Desai, and Carol Anne Spreen—are part of the New York University Summer Education Abroad Program and have maintained a long-standing relationship with Ana Ines Heras. Approximately 40 people participated in this specific activity, and through additional related activities, the Teach-In reached around 100 participants in total.



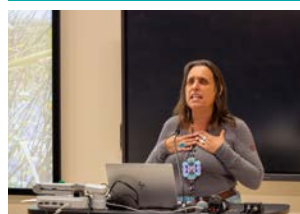
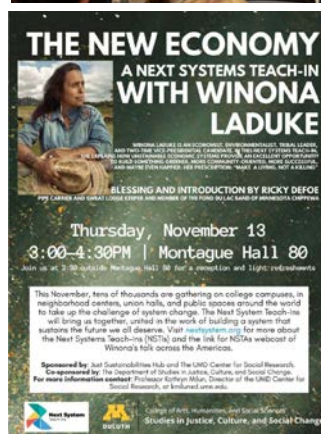
# Local Teach-in Spotlights

## Centering Indigenous Leadership toward a New Economy

### DULUTH, MN

Sponsored by the Just Sustainabilities Hub at the UMD Center for Social Research and the Department of Studies in Justice, Culture, and Social Change, this [Teach-In](#) brought together 100 faculty, students and community leaders and members gathered in-person and virtually to [listen to a talk](#) from locally and globally famous economist, environmentalist, and two-time Green vice-presidential candidate Winona LaDuke. Following a blessing and opening words from local leader Ricky DeFoe, Winona described what rural economic development in the region looks like when done sustainably, from an Ojibwe perspective, and with attention to keeping supply chains and economic value circulating locally, and proposed that viewers learn from what she and her colleagues are doing around the White Earth Ojibwe reservation in northern Minnesota. LaDuke reported on several successful initiatives over the past decade including local hemp agricultural and manufacturing industry creation for fabrics, for housing materials, etc; growing a local, Indigenous food system; efforts to stop fossil fuel pipelines and protect local waterways; and local resiliency hubs with solar & storage at schools, as well as a local cultural museum that centers the cosmological meaning of this transition work in an Indigenous value system.

The planning team reports, “We have already received many requests for the link and significant appreciative feedback for those who came to the talk—from our community and from campus. The talk was powerful and touched many people. As an online talk, it will continue to do so into the future.”



“ Given the framework of ‘Teach-In,’ [our community partners] interpreted that in their way, which was expansive for them, which made it a kind of community education event. That’s how they spoke, that’s how the community responded. It didn’t feel like a university presentation. That’s how it can feel. ”

Kathryn Milun, University of Minnesota  
NS Teach-In Organizer

“Representing the Teach-Ins as part of a larger movement can be so impactful. . . With the current climate at our university, the Teach-Ins seemed to inspire and rejuvenate campus activism and engaged scholarship and we hope to keep that momentum and energy going.”

GMU Organizing Team

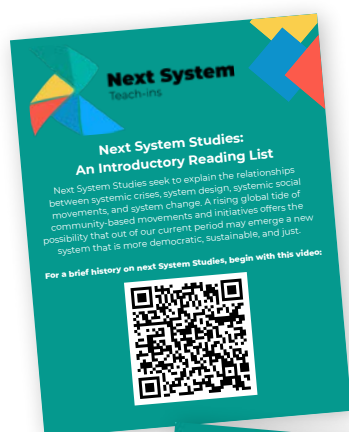
## Scholars as the Public: Knowledge, Care, and the Next University

### FAIRFAX, VA

An incredible line-up of scholars, community leaders, and artists came together at the [George Mason University \(GMU\) Teach-In](#) from November 7-14: a week-long series of panels, workshops, and cultural events organized by the Next System Studies program and its new campus coalition. The Teach-In featured a core of Next System discussions: [“A Democratic University for a Democratic Society”](#) with Richard Flacks, co-founder of Students for a Democratic Society and eminent social movement scholar; a panel on [“Taking the System Crisis Seriously,”](#) with Yasemin Ipek (Global Affairs, GMU), Ben Manski (Sociology, GMU), Nara Roberta Silva (Brooklyn Institute for Social Research), and Richard Rubenstein (Carter School, GMU); a plenary panel on [“Building the Next George Mason University”](#) with Alyssa Cazier, Hanaan Kazia, and Bethany Letiecq; [“Revisiting the 2010s Protest Movements: Organization and Strategy in Post-Horizontalism,”](#) with Nara Roberta Silva; and “Building Next Systems as a Path to Well-Being,” with Laura Buckwald.

The Teach-In also featured additional events coordinated by local and national partners including Yasemin Ipek’s book launch for [Crisiswork: Activist Lifeworlds and Bounded Futures in Lebanon](#), a [national day of protest](#) against attacks on higher education organized by Frontline for Freedom, and a public conversation with Grammy Award-winning band and [artist-in-residence La Santa Cecilia](#).

Rooted in the world’s first Next System Studies program, launched in 2021, that now includes a fellows program, courses, major research projects, and the new [Center for Next System Studies](#), this teach-in focused deliberately on internal engagement at GMU. A newly formed Next System Teach-In Coalition brought in additional faculty, students, and staff, fostering relationships across departments that had been orbiting Next System Studies but had not yet collaborated closely. To support engagement with Next System thinking, organizing staff created a short [Next System Reading List](#), and took time to capture their learning from this process to project a [planning timeline for the next teach-in](#). Participation in the combined activities totaled an estimated 200–250 attendees, marking an unusually strong in-person turnout for what has historically been a commuter campus.



View reading list [here!](#)





## Local Teach-in Spotlights

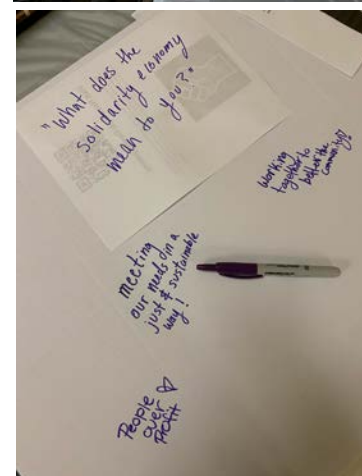
# A Potluck for Building Community, Solidarity, & Shared Solutions

### ARLINGTON, VA

Coordinated by NOVASEN (Northern Virginia Solidarity Economy Network) a new community-led network organization, this Next System Teach-In invited community members to bring a dish to share for a night of getting to know our collective needs and solutions. Neighbors from the region attended to discuss topics that affect their everyday lives, including housing, creating work opportunities for our neighbors, mutual aid and the solidarity economy, and protecting our neighbors and the local environment.

With 30 attendees, the gathering provided an opportunity to slow down and connect with other community members over homemade and favorite dishes. Spanish-to-English conversations were facilitated by translator, and non-Virginia guests included representatives from across the Potomac River: Montgomery County's Everyday Canvassing. The breadth of connection allowed for a lively exchange of local perspectives, shining a light on the cultural values that are integral to how Northern Virginia functions. These conversations also illustrated that the needs of a community are interconnected; that dignified living is central to the conversation and includes systemic improvements to public safety, land availability, and opportunities for business development.

Next steps include updating our contact database, following up with attendees, and continuing to build relationships by joining listservs and exploring opportunities for collaboration.

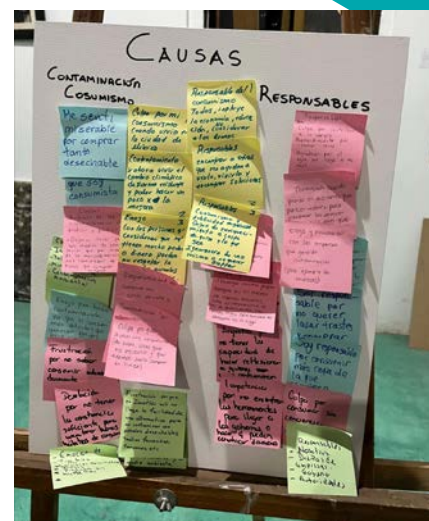


# Women Talking in a Burning World: Climate Emotions Workshop

## PUEBLA, MEXICO

In Mexico, Professor Alice Poma organized a workshop for women to identify, name, and reflect on the emotions they experience as they live through the climate crisis. This question brought together 10 women from Puebla during the November Next System Teach-Ins. The workshop took place in a self-managed cultural space in Zacatlan, Puebla, on November 13. Alice facilitated the session, offering participants a [pamphlet](#) as support material and inviting them to write on small colored papers the emotions they felt in relation to the effects, causes, and responses to the climate crisis. One participant shared, “Learning to recognize those feelings of guilt, and knowing that I fall into this system and acknowledging it, does make me feel a bit guilty, but also very aware of the systemic crisis. When I’m aware that something there doesn’t quite fit with my ethics, my morals, with what I think and promote, then I’m in a position to change it.”

The team’s proudest outcome was creating a safe, reflective space with people who are not experts or activists to explore these emotions—a task they see as both a professional and personal challenge, and as a core responsibility of public universities in the absence of adequate institutional responses. They understand this work as an alternative to lukewarm, green-capitalist climate discourse, aiming instead to foster a critical and empathetic vision that supports bottom-up solutions for ordinary people. Participants, in turn, deeply valued having a protected environment to share feelings they rarely voice elsewhere—several women were moved to tears—and expressed strong appreciation for the organizers’ empathy, commitment, time, and initiative, which now serves as a key motivation to continue opening and sustaining these kinds of spaces.



# Syracuse Action for Land & Transformation Teach-In on Housing

## SYRACUSE, NY

In Syracuse, organizers centered their Teach-In on pressing local issues and available solutions. The event plan included a facilitated conversation, a market, an exhibit, and a planning meeting. Suren Moodliar, a founding board member of [Syracuse Action for Land and Transformation](#) (SALT) and one of the core organizers of the Teach-In, explained, “Our city’s industrial base globalized and evaporated, redlining suburbanized good housing and concentrated poverty, and suddenly hospitals and universities were the only games in town.” He added, “We are inspired by emerging systemic change movements worldwide, yet at the same time we are also turning to this region’s history of social innovation to recover our community’s wealth.” Due to a major winter storm, the Teach-In was rescheduled for early 2026, most likely February.

“ We are very happy to be able to join efforts between the Global South and the Global North to show that public universities can help people confront the crises we are experiencing; a better world is also built by sharing scientific knowledge to improve the quality of life for the global majority. ”

Dr. Alice Poma, Research Professor at UNAM, Mexico



## Local Teach-in Spotlights

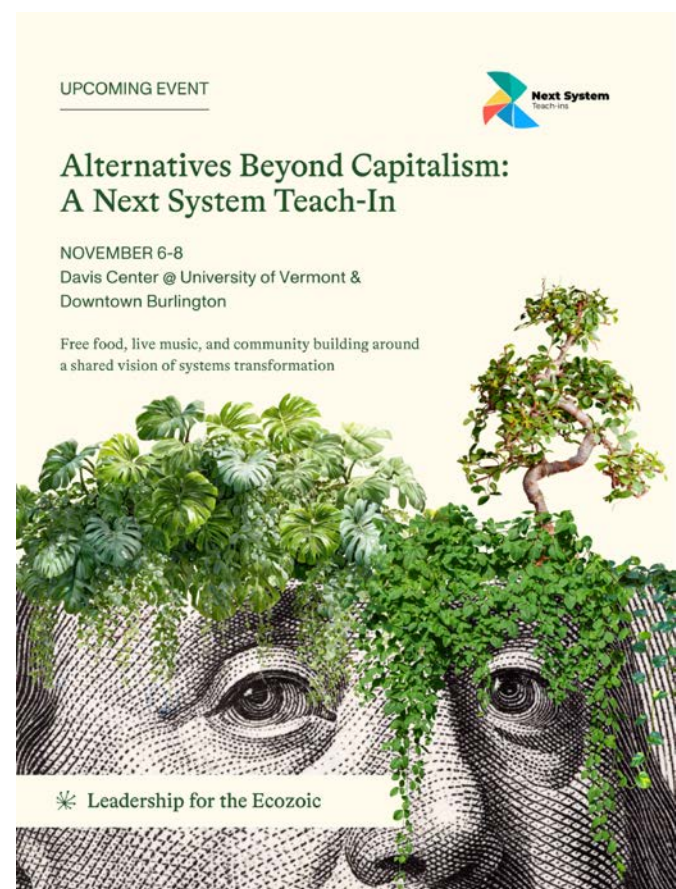
# Exploring Alternatives to Capitalism

### BURLINGTON, VT

University of Vermont students and faculty joined together with local innovators and leaders for [three days of learning and community building](#) around a shared vision of systemic transformation.

The Teach-In kicked off with an evening offering free dinner, live music, perspectives from Indigenous economist Ronald Trosper, and a panel titled “Next System(s): Alternatives in Dialogue” featuring community members and academics with experience in alternative economic models. Speakers included political anthropologist Eleanor Finley, Michelle Eddleman McCormick of Cooperation Vermont, Joe Ament, a professor of Community Development and Applied Economics, Amanda Janoo of the Wellbeing Economy Alliance, David Bollier of the Schumacher Center for a New Economics, Keetu Winter of Wellspring Commons, and hosts Matthew Burke of University of Vermont and Leadership for the Ecozoic and Emily Kawano of Wellspring Commons and the U.S. Solidarity Economy Network. Workshops went beyond the theoretical, offering attendees space to dig into concrete practices and tools such as Agroecology and Food Systems Transformation, Narrative and Storytelling, and Zine-making.

The process was highly creative and collaborative. “Each session was organized similarly but with lots of autonomy,” reported lead organizer Matt Burke. “Each one had its own vibe, flavor. We gave the students a lead organizing role as far as how they were facilitating it, how they were engaging with people on campus. It kind of leveled the roles.” Attendees appreciated not only the theme of the event, which is rare to find on campus or in community, but also the fun, interesting nature of the event. The event also served to bring together academics with shared interest in systemic transformation who had not been interacting previously.



“ Each session was organized similarly but with lots of autonomy. Each one had its own vibe, its own flavor. We gave the students a lead organizing role as far as how they were facilitating it, how they were engaging with people on campus. It kind of leveled the roles. You had faculty in the room, grad and undergrad, and organizers. They were just connecting as people. A lot of those hierarchies were softened a bit. It created a really interesting dynamic in those spaces. ”

# Mapping Vulnerabilities, Strengthening Communities: A Public Health & Planning Teach-In

## PUERTO RICO

Hosted by the Graduate School of Public Health of the Medical Sciences Department, the University of Puerto Rico Teach-In, “Recognizing Vulnerabilities in Community Planning and Evaluation for Disaster Prevention,” held on November 12, 2025, convened around 25 graduate students and four panelists (Carol Ramos, Liza Millan, Mariangelie Ortiz and Karla Peña) from public health, planning, housing, and community organizations for an interactive dialogue on disaster prevention and community resilience. The session emphasized participatory, community-centered planning, horizontal relationships with local leaders, evidence-based decision-making, and tools such as a game developed by La Maraña to foster engagement.

Organized by faculty and students from the university, in partnership with the Puerto Rico Department of Health, La Maraña, and Habitat for Humanity Puerto Rico, the Teach-In built on ongoing interdisciplinary efforts at UPR to strengthen community empowerment, equitable access to safe housing, and local capacities for resilient food systems and decentralized services. Highlights included the innovative use of participatory tools such as La Maraña’s community-centered game to foster dialogue and make complex concepts accessible and actionable, as well as the application of evidence-based decision-making to recognize who experiences the greatest vulnerability and why “the community saves the community.” Attendees especially valued insights on identifying community vulnerabilities, fostering horizontal partnerships, and cultivating a culture of preparedness; specific outcomes included individual “minute papers” in which students synthesized key ideas and generated questions for future investigation. As next steps, the team plans to use insights from this Teach-In to develop future workshops emphasizing participatory planning, local food systems, and housing equity, with follow-up steps that include sharing student reflections, strengthening partnerships with community organizations, exploring funding opportunities to sustain similar interdisciplinary initiatives and promote the well-being of many individuals and communities by applying the strategies and tools discussed at the event.

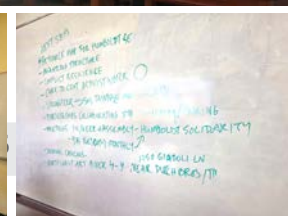


# Growing the Solidarity Economy Movement in Northern California

## ARCATA, CA

Anchored by the Cal Poly Humboldt Department of Sociology, North Coast Progressive Alliance, and the Democracy Collaborative, this [day-long Teach-In](#) held on the Cal Poly campus in Arcata, California gathered attendees for a series of workshops and conversations focused on the growing [Solidarity Economy](#) movement - highlighting cooperative ownership, community wealth building, and democratic approaches to meeting human needs.

A plenary of speakers explored how to make the Solidarity Economy Real, and multiple rounds of workshops hosted by local and national practitioners offered a chance to dive more fully into cooperative economic approaches. Topics including Proportional Representation; how the Wiyot Tribe is making Land Back real and creating Affordable Housing through the Dishgamu Humboldt Community Land Trust; an exploration of basic income the led by the Income Movement; Public Banking; Participatory Budgeting, how it's been used at the City of Eureka, and a mini participatory budgeting session. Workshops also explored transgender rights, belonging, inclusion and care, Community Wealth Building, and Hip Hop & activism. Local organizer David Cobb celebrated the successes of the Teach-In: “Existing relationships were strengthened, new ones were forged, and plans are already underway for a followup Skill Share for Spring 2026.”



# Local Teach-in Spotlights

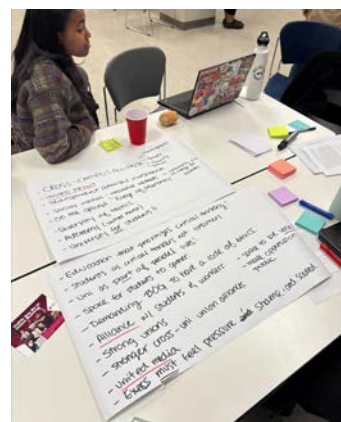
## Imagining the Next University: Campus Organizing Teach-In

### Toronto, CANADA

The York University Teach-In, “What kind of university do we want to create?” united diverse campus campaigns as well as to collectively envision the kind of university community they want - . The organizing committee included sociology faculty, the Ontario Public Interest Research Group, a graduate student, and a community member.

It provided a rare chance for students, faculty, and community members to collaborate across issues, drawing 45 participants—about two-thirds undergraduate students, including roughly 15 from a Sociology 1010 class—with around 20 being new to organizing.

The event also drew participation from the presidents of the full-time York University Faculty Association (YUFA), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE 3903), and the undergraduate student union, York Federation of Students (YFS). Organizers were particularly pleased with the range and quality of speakers and the strong, diverse turnout, describing it as one of the largest and most inclusive campus organizing events in recent memory. They valued the “imagining the next system” framing for helping participants step back from day-to-day campaign work to envision broader, structural change.



**What kind of university do we want to create?**

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> Nov  
3-7pm  
HNES 140  
York University  
Keele campus

**UNIVERSITY AS FACTORY**

**NO!**

shorturl.at/DGXXC

Dinner provided  
ASL Available on request  
Masks encouraged

Artwork: Robert Rauschenberg, 1970s. Photo: updated by Josh MacPhee @macphee

**Whose University? Our University!**  
**The University is Not a Factory!**

Join us, as we ask:  
“What kind of university do we want to create?”

Come learn about existing campaigns to transform the university and discuss the themes:

1. A democratic university.
2. A university that nurtures just relationships with neighbouring communities.
3. A decolonized university that serves all our relations.
4. A university that helps all to thrive, create and learn.

After hearing about existing campaigns, we will get into small group discussions that will help us dream big and create a new university. We'll close by sharing a free dinner together.

Students, faculty, staff, community members are all welcome.

This event is part of a global wave of teach-ins to build a next system:  
nextsystem.org

OPIRG at YORK  
PRACTICAL TOOLS. POLITICAL ACTION.

liberal arts & professional studies | **YORK U** | Department of Sociology

# Outcomes, Learnings & Reflections

*Building this wave of learning, connection and cohesion within communities and campuses across the Americas has yielded significant outcomes, including valuable lessons learned for the various formations of planning and coordination teams including the NSTI Taskforce, the core planning team, and local Teach-In organizing teams.*



**“Making the invisible visible”** An important part of the planning and execution of the Teach-Ins involved a disciplined and ongoing practice of researching and documenting practitioners, projects and resources aligned with “Next System” thinking at the local, regional, hemispheric, and global levels. This valuable knowledge was made collected, compiled, and can be made visible for use in future organizing.



**Cohering the next system through relationship-building.** We believe that a preferable next system becomes more possible through strong, living ties of collaboration, coordination and mutual respect between diverse individuals and entities at various levels of society. One of the most important outcomes of this Teach-In process was the strengthening of relationships between and also within communities and universities. For instance, Minnesota’s Teach-In planning process pulled together faculty from departments who held a common focus on systemic solutions. Institutionally, these faculty members were isolated from each other, but the Teach-In provided a new vehicle for cross-departmental collaboration that the university itself had not. Globally, relationships have been activated and deepened, bringing in new partners and collaborators.



**Exchange and dissemination of concrete practices and thinking.** Participants in Teach-Ins across the wave reported gaining valuable knowledge about ways to think about the challenges posed by Next System Studies and to put real-world practices for system change into action. For instance, digital cooperative worker-owners at the Chicago Teach-In learned practical tools from local community defense organizers about neighborhood-level recording and reporting of repressive anti-immigrant activities, as well as approaches to coordinating community care.



**Built core organizing capacity.** Beginning in the summer of 2024, faculty and students from a dozen academic institutions joined with staff and volunteers from social movement and community organizations to form the Next System Teach-Ins Taskforce. The Taskforce has met monthly since then and the effort until the late summer of 2025 was largely volunteer-driven. In September of 2025, sufficient funding came in to hire a small team of part-time staff; this limited staff support helped enormously. In October, significantly more funding arrived; this has allowed us to transform that staff team into a longer-term core organizing group with a very healthy working rhythm and culture as we build momentum toward the April 2027 Teach-In wave.

Outcomes

*With 11 Teach-Ins completed and several additional ones planned for the Spring of 2026, and a new team formed to carry the work forward, organizers have learned many valuable lessons around what it takes to activate and nurture regional learning exchanges under the banner of studying and building a next system.*



## Teach-Ins as a valuable organizing and field-building process

The call for Teach-Ins was itself an extremely valuable process for field-building, system-building and movement-building in and of itself. On both the global and regional scales, teams formed and began by pooling their knowledge of which promising practitioners, scholars, innovators and networks already existed who were spearheading next system work—perhaps using different terminology but fundamentally aligned. The work of implementing the Teach-Ins further developed and clarified partnerships among those organizing teams, while the Teach-Ins themselves ushered in new engagement from a variety of existing and new partners and participants in the work of system-building and co-learning.

## “Next System” framework and Teach-Ins meet an unmet need for intersectional, systemic thinking, exchange and practice.

The Next System framing and invitation has provided a welcome “frame of frames” which not only allows but affirms the inclusion of often siloed fields of work and thought such as solidarity economy, participatory politics, ecological sustainability, just transition, constitutionalism, abolition, and digital commoning, among many others. Through this highly collaborative organizing process, local and global teams have confirmed the presence within communities, organizations and networks of a strong demand for both the broad systemic lens and analysis offered by Next System framing, the invitation into shared and cross-disciplinary analysis, as well as live spaces for conversations and exploration of tactics and opportunities of an equally systemic nature. Many who joined the planning process and the Teach-Ins themselves reported having been in search of, and in some cases innovating their own frameworks and spaces of this nature.

## Bridging the academy, social change movements and communities

This effort has tested and affirmed an exciting pathway for bridging the worlds of academia and scholars and that of communities and activists. As George Mason University’s Next System Studies founder Ben Manski has written, “Can the academy contribute to a better world beyond capitalism? Arguably, it already has. But let’s accept that universities and colleges can be and usually are simultaneously: pillars of the state, predatory corporations, and agents of social reconstruction. The best counter to academic institutions doing the wrong thing may be to build their capacity to do the right thing.”

By tapping into the leadership of engaged scholars and the resources of academic institutions to hold spaces open to the community for knowledge exchange, relationship-building and activating real-world solutions, the Teach-In process offers a promising vehicle for pulling together the “all hands on deck” that are required as we advance daily into a period of spiraling crisis.

## Teach-Ins offer an opportunity to build communities across national borders through synergies with popular education

While the core team encountered some challenges in translating the [U.S.-born concept of a “Teach-In”](#) to international partners, especially those in the Global South, we discovered and began to experiment with the synergies between the philosophies and particular practices of teach-ins and the more general and internationally-known approach of popular education. This is an exciting arena to continue exploring with international partners.

## Longer runways and organizing capacity will yield greater results

Due to various factors including various factors and availability of resources, both the teams organizing local Next System Teach-Ins (NSTI) and the central coordinating NSTI team worked within a much shorter time period for planning the Teach-Ins than had been hoped. Fortunately, this points to the much greater impact and engagement to be had with the advance planning pathway now in place as we move forward from this wave.

## Next System framework’s openness is a complex strength

The Next System “frame of frames” is by nature broad, inclusive and intersectional. It is also open-ended, in that unlike a sharply defined political program, it avoids prescribing any single pathway to building a next world system. However, the Next System frame does call forth examples of deeply democratic, equitable, and sustainable alternatives to the current world system. Through this effort, we have found that partners and participants can find this both refreshing and disorienting, welcoming the broad inclusiveness of the frame while struggling to understand exactly “what is the Next System?” Going forward, the team will grapple with these dualities to refine and improve NS framing, materials and organizing practices for greater accessibility and practical use.

“ We were delighted by the range and quality of speakers; and the turnout. This was one of the largest and most diverse campus organizing events in recent memory on campus. We also really appreciated the framing of ‘imagining the next system’ which took us outside of the daily campaign work. ”

York University Next System Teach-In Coalition



## Next Steps

The Next System Teach-In process is a multi-year strategy for building local, regional, and global capacity for advancing collaborative exchange of knowledge exchange and development as well as real-world implementation, experimentation and coordination of democratic, just and sustainable alternatives.

The goals of the Next System Teach-Ins are to:

- prepare the way for the emergence of Next System Studies on university and college campuses everywhere;
- build ties within and among campuses and local communities; and,
- infuse a broad array of next system organizations, campaigns, and projects with energy, ideas, and other resources.

The work of system change is by nature a long-term, evolving practice of working, thinking, studying, and exchange across sectors, positions, disciplines, traditions and cultures. The work of strategically and consistently convening diverse voices to not only imagine but concretely build out solutions together is key.

**Below is the timeline of next steps following the success of the 2025 wave of Teach-Ins:**

## 2026

**January 2026.** Host a major coordinating call for all Teach-In organizers to debrief and highlight reports.

### **Summer.**

The Next System Teach-In Task Force will continue meeting online and, funding permitting, in person to explore and sharpen our understandings of what this emerging field includes, what it assumes to be true, how it approaches learning, what its tasks and challenges are, and how it should be organized.

Begin the selection process for the physical site of the 2028 Next System Convergence, the first such convergence that will take place in a particular community/location.

**October.** Launch new online tools and websites to support the process in advance of the 2nd major wave of Next System Teach-Ins (planned for April of 2027) and the first in-person Next System Convergence (planned for January of 2028).

**December.** Convene a global online Next System Teach-In Organizing Conference to prepare organizers for the upcoming April 2027 wave of Next System Teach-Ins.

## 2027

**January.** Announce site selection for the 2028 Next System Convergence.

**April.** The 2027 Next System Teach-Ins: This will be a second major wave of the Next System Teach-Ins.

## 2028

**January.** Convene the first in-person Next System Convergence: This will be a major gathering with expected in-person attendance in the high hundreds to low thousands, with some online/hybrid components to facilitate greater international participation.

The Convergence will host within it the Founding Meeting of the Next System Studies Association together with the conferences of various partner social movement organizations and networks.

# ***Join us** in building and studying the next system!*

We invite you to continue this dynamic process of locally rooted, globally linked co-learning and cohering. Here are ways you can engage with and contribute to the Next System momentum as we move forward to the just, democratic and sustainable world we desire:

- **Join a virtual gathering.** Be sure to [sign up for our communications](#) so you don't miss announcements.
- **Become a regional Next System organizer!** Sign up to begin building local next system synergies at your university, college, or schools and/or in your city, town or region -- toward the next wave of Teach-Ins in April 2027.
- **Invest in this effort.** Your financial donations fuel this work and allow us to build better, stronger and faster. [Contribute here.](#)



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**Next System**

**Next System  
Teach-In Report**

2025