

INSIGHTS REPORT 2020

NATION
SWELL

BUILD
IT BACK
BETTER

DATA FOR GOOD

CULTURE OF CONNECTION, BRIDGING AND BELONGING

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND FUTURE OF WORK

CLIMATE JUSTICE

EDUCATION



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WELCOME



FRIENDS

Welcome to ‘Build It Back Better’, a NationSwell initiative designed to surface and advance solutions to some of the world’s biggest challenges, to help build a more equitable, inclusive and resilient world for all. This report synthesizes the key insights and impact arising from the Education track within ‘Build It Back Better’, and we hope you will use it to inform your strategy, collaborations and solution-building going forward.

At NationSwell, our mission is to strengthen society and the planet by helping purpose-driven leaders and organizations take their impact to the next level. We do that by creating the conditions for impact to thrive:

- Creating forums where change-makers can access cross-sector expertise and inspiration to shape strategy and build confidence in solutions;
- Making connections that catalyze meaningful partnerships to accelerate and scale their work;
- Engaging stakeholders through experiences and content designed to drive awareness and action; and
- Providing proximity to resources that empowers innovators to find mission-aligned funders and investors for impact solutions.

‘Build It Back Better’ represents the culmination of many months of work from across our mission-driven team of strategists, creators, producers and community-builders, and would not have been possible without the inspiring partnership of the Lumina Foundation.

The Lumina Foundation works in partnership with education and business leaders, civil rights organizations, policymakers, and individuals who want to reimagine how and where learning occurs, with the goal of ensuring that 60% of adults will have a college degree, certificate, industry certification, or other credential of value by 2025.

Thank you to Jamie, Danette, Domy and the Lumina Foundation team; and to all who participated with ideas and energy to make this track possible.

With gratitude,



Greg Behrman
NationSwell Founder & CEO

WHAT IS 'BUILD IT BACK BETTER'?





WHAT IS 'BUILD IT BACK BETTER'?

As the human and economic impact of COVID-19, racial injustice and economic turbulence continue to be felt across the country, strong and informed leadership, and solution-building across sector boundaries, has never been more essential.

We created 'Build It Back Better' to give leaders and organizations — across business, philanthropy, investing, nonprofits, public office and entrepreneurship — the expert, action-focused forums they need to workshop solutions, share resources, spark new connections, raise their profile and form cross-sector coalitions for meaningful change.

In 2020, we facilitated six tracks for inspiration and collaboration around some of the world's most pressing challenges: Climate Justice, Culture of Connection, Bridging & Belonging, Data for Good, Economic Opportunity, Education, and the Future of Work.

Within each track, we worked with our partners to co-design, plan, curate, facilitate and produce a series of expert working sessions and high profile live events. Plus, we created bespoke thought leadership and social content to amplify the solutions and leaders involved, and have synthesized Insights Reports — including this one — for each track that capture the insights and imperatives to drive action.

In 2021, we will launch our next round of expert tracks focused on fostering cross sector 'collaboratives' around solutions to issues including sustainability, health equity, justice reform and more.

EDUCATION: THE CONTEXT





WE MUST MAKE

RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY

It has been a long accepted truth that “knowledge is power” and for many years — while policies on schooling and funding for public education have varied — society has largely acknowledged the importance of school education in everyone’s personal development.

However, as Danette Howard at Lumina Foundation wrote in her article [Here’s what it means to put racial equity first in the nation’s recovery and struggle for justice](#), “we know that a good K-12 education just isn’t enough anymore, and learning beyond high school is necessary to be a part of the middle class. But there are longstanding and persistent differences in who gets to enjoy this reality. Entrenched policies, practices, and beliefs continue to stand in the way of the education that Black and Hispanic Americans seek. While the educational attainment rate for all races has increased over the last five years to 53 percent, the attainment rate for Hispanics still sits at 25 percent. For Black Americans, it’s 32 percent.”

So, in order to build a truly equitable education system that provides opportunity for everyone, we must — as individuals, and as a collective system of education institutions, employers, policy makers, and mission-driven organizations — must, in Howard’s words, “make racial justice and equity the number one priority.”

In addition, the nature of work is rapidly changing as reliance on technology increases and people live longer, with big implications for education — what are we preparing people for and how are we helping them continue to grow and learn? Rather than assuming that jobs must be lost to machines, Jamie Merisotis, CEO & President of Lumina Foundation, makes the case for focusing on “human work”: Work that requires the application of empathy, ethics and creativity that only we as humans can bring, and breaking down the boundaries between “earning” and “learning”.

With this context, the goal of the Education track was to identify and explore the big ideas and the most meaningful ways in which we as individuals and as institutions can center racial justice and equity in education, bring lifelong learning opportunities to workers, bridge the opportunity divide with support and systems that empower all young people, and embrace “human work” as a concept and a practice.

EVENTS



NationSwell produced and hosted four events in the Education track.

A FIRESIDE CHAT WITH JAMIE MERISOTIS

Oct. 7, 2020

Opening public event

Speakers

JAMIE MERISOTIS

President & CEO, Lumina Foundation

ANNE-MARIE SLAUGHTER

CEO, New America

Event Description

To kick off the Education track, we hosted a conversation between two thought leaders on human work, AI and the work of the future.

THE WHOLE VILLAGE: RE-THINKING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Oct. 12, 2020
Working Group session

Featuring solutions from

DR. BROOKE STAFFORD-BRIZARD

Vice President Research to Practice,
Chan Zuckerberg Initiative

Participants

ANNA HUTCHINSON

Associate, Whiteboard Advisors

ART BARDIGE

CEO, What if Math

BEN NEWTON

COO, Vivvi

BRIDGET HAMRE

Co-Founder and CEO, Teachstone

CHARLES BONELLO

Co-Founder and Managing Director, Grand Central Tech

Event Description

We convened educators, parents, and leaders to explore how we can reimagine an early childhood system that aligns with our new normal. The working group — designed to be generative and impact-driven — surfaced the resources and systems change necessary to build a future that provides equal outcomes to all of our nation's early learners.

DEBORAH MINTZ

Senior Fellow, Third Sector Capital

JANINE GOMEZ

Co-Founder, I Dream Academy D.C.

KYLE PETERSON

Partner, Laurel Strategies

SAMANTHA MARTINEZ

Founding Assistant Principal, Polaris Village Academy

AN EQUITY FIRST

APPROACH:

REBUILDING HIGHER ED

Oct. 28, 2020

Working Group session

Featuring solutions from

DR. DANETTE HOWARD

Chief Policy Officer and Senior Vice President at Lumina Foundation

Participants

ALETHEA HANNEMANN

COO, God's Love We Deliver

ALEX JOHNSTON

President and Founder, Impact for Education

ALLISON SOLOMON

Corporate Citizenship Manager, Deloitte

ANKUR GOPAL

CEO, Interapt

ART BARDIGE

CEO, What if Math

BERNIE WINSTON

Educational Consultant

ELISSA YANCEY

Co-Founder, A Picture's Worth

ELIZABETH BONEY

Director, Whiteboard Advisors

ERIC CLEMENT

Managing Director, NYCEDC

Event Description

Racial justice sits front and center in the work to rebuild our higher education system. Lumina Foundation is one organization at the helm, who through storytelling and action, is taking an Equity-First approach in tackling the effects structural racism has on higher education. We hosted a working group on how we can advance this Equity-First approach. It surfaced ways for leaders and organizations in the higher education space and beyond to refocus their work around equity, racial justice and spur action now.

HAVIVA KOHL

New Tech Student Development Manager, Google

KATHERINE WHEATLE

Strategy Officer, Lumina Foundation

KIRA TRAORE

Senior Program Manager, AWS Social Impact

LEE-SEAN HUANG

Founder and Creative Director, Foossa

LIZ SIMON

Co-COO, General Assembly

MARY PEARL

Dean, CUNY Macaulay Honors College

RAY REYES

Director of College and Career Success, The Opportunity Network

SUBIRA GORDON

Executive Director, ConnCAN

TONIO DESORRENTO

CEO and Director, Vemo Education

REVITALIZING DEMOCRACY: THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Oct. 19, 2020
Closing Public Event



Speakers

JAMIE MERISOTIS

President & CEO, Lumina Foundation

JAMES ARROYO

OBE, Director, The Ditchley Foundation

Event Description

It is shown that higher learning develops us into more well-rounded and free-thinking individuals. It creates space for us to reflect upon our learned behaviors, reassess the status-quo and think critically about equality and justice. In turn, higher education works against authoritarianism and brings us closer to living out the values on which most democratic societies are founded.

We held a conversation between two experts about the role of higher education in revitalizing democracy. We unpacked the link between education and democratic society and how we can hone these connections to become better, more civically-minded citizens and leaders.

INSIGHTS & RESOURCES

'Aha moments' that can shape your thinking, and powerful evergreen ideas to take forward into how you approach your work.



1

EDUCATION SHOULD PREPARE PEOPLE FOR HUMAN WORK

Human work is not just what will be left over once machines have done their work. Human work is work only humans can do: Blending uniquely-human traits and capabilities like empathy, the ability to make ethical decisions, collaboration, creativity.

2

EDUCATION SHOULD CELEBRATE OTHER-SERVING SKILLS, NOT JUST SELF-SERVING KNOWLEDGE

The credentials one can get (e.g. degree, license, certificate) should focus on both human capabilities and content. The education system is set up to reward knowledge accumulation but there needs to be a shift to reward both educator and student on things like teaching empathy, living responsibly, conflict mitigation, etc.

3

EDUCATION IS INEXTRICABLY LINKED TO DEMOCRACY

As our learning evolves, we come to appreciate diverse expressions of ideas which in turn helps you contribute to your broader community and helps one get comfortable with complexity. Education can determine the kind of person that turns up at the ballot box and how one engages with information. Being educated doesn't mean you end up on one political side or another — it changes how you engage with the media, and your ability to distinguish truth from falsehoods.

4

EDUCATION IS A POWERFUL TOOL TO PUSH BACK AGAINST AUTHORITARIANISM

According to a [2017 Pew Research Center study](#), about a quarter of people with a high school diploma or less say “military rule would be a good way to govern our country.” Only 7% of college grads support that view.

5

“MOST WORKERS WOULD TRADE MEANING FOR MONEY”

— Jamie Merisotis

Work is about meaning, serving others, dignity, and an expression of who we are as people. Human work is not just what will be left over once machines have done their work. Machines don't understand the nuances of ethics, empathy or the unpredictable nature of humans. Therefore we need to steer learning towards what we are uniquely qualified to do.

6

EMPLOYERS HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN PROMOTING LEARNING

Those who invest in the training of their employees do see a positive ROI. As employees get more training, recruitment costs go down, employee retention goes up, as does productivity.

7

YOU CAN'T ADVANCE EDUCATION WITHOUT ADDRESSING RACIAL EQUITY

Due to the large gaps in education attainment outcomes that exist between race/ethnicity across our nation (e.g. on average, there is a 20-30% gap attainment difference between Asians/Whites vs. Black/Native American/Hispanic), it's critical that we all make racial equity a priority. When equity populations are taken care of, everyone benefits.

8

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS CAN REINFORCE SOCIAL RIGIDITY

Technology (particularly social media) has the ability to magnify the effectiveness and utility of personal networks, but it can also reinforce silos — strengthening the circles of exclusive social capital. Let's ask how technology can push against this so that it's in service of connecting talent to opportunities and mentorship that amplify a person's prospects.

9

EDUCATION IS TIED TO EQUITABLE DIGITAL ACCESS, NOW MORE THAN EVER

We must strive for equity in technology access to ensure quality instruction for all students & families. The rise of learning pods and the amplified digital divide showcase heightened access barriers during the pandemic.

10

EMOTIONAL EDUCATION IS EDUCATION

There are elements of human development (social emotional, identity, cognitive) you have to invest in to get to academic skills (reading, writing). Consider the framework designed by The Center for Healthy Minds.

11

A HUMAN APPROACH TO WORK WILL HAVE PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS POST-PANDEMIC

What separates ritual from routine is symbolism and essence. So much can spring from investing in rituals: togetherness, civic action, celebration of achievement, joy.

12

BLUR THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN LEARNING, EARNING AND SERVING

These are not distinct phases of life, they all exist together and evolve with you. It's a virtuous cycle so we need to do the work to erode these distinctions. We need to create for ourselves and for others the conditions and opportunities to continue to learn, earn and serve others as an expression of the human experience.

RESOURCES

Websites, books, news articles and organizations that offer vital context, detail and solutions on this issue

ORGANIZATIONS & INITIATIVES

Lumina Foundation

Ditchley Foundation

Camelback Ventures

New America

PENCIL.org

Service Year (National Service) and their Serve America Together campaign

Nucor, an American steel company which is designed to give their employees plenty of opportunities to innovate and lead

East Palo Alto Primary Schools

Springboard Collaborative

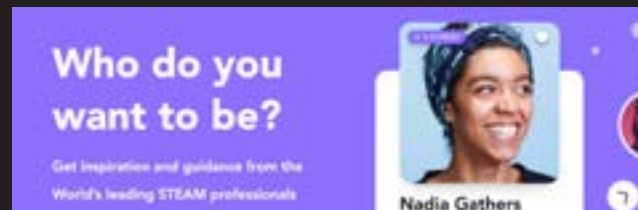
The National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement (NAFSCE)

The Center for Healthy Minds

TOOLS

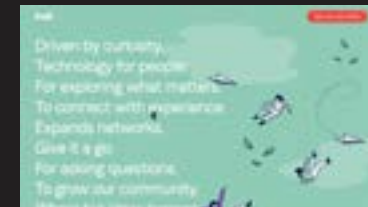
[The Degree Qualifications Profile](#) — A learning-centered framework for what college graduates should know and be able to do to earn the associate, bachelor's or master's degree, from the Lumina Foundation

[STEAMrole](#) — discover STEAM leaders to inspire & inform you



[A Framework for Communicating about Racial Justice](#) from the Lumina Foundation

[‘Stronger Nation’ Report](#) on education beyond high school in the US from Lumina Foundation



[Inqli](#) — social network for career pathway support

[CDC - Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACE\)](#)

[World Trust curricula on Racial Equity](#), including training by [Ericka Huggins](#) a renowned Human Rights Advocate
[OER Commons](#) — open educational tools



[OER Commons](#) — open educational tools

RESOURCES

Websites, books, news articles and organizations that offer vital context, detail and solutions on this issue

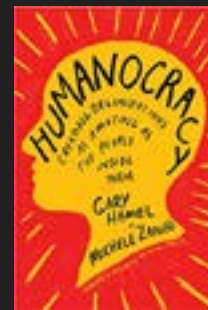
BOOKS & MEDIA

Human Work in the Age of Smart Machines — by Jamie Merisotis



America Needs Talent — by Jamie Merisotis

Here's what it means to put racial equity first in the nation's recovery and struggle for justice — by Danette Howard

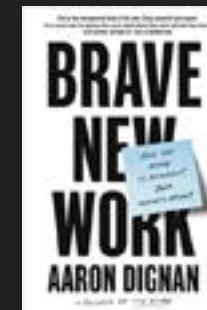


Humanocracy — by Gary Hamel

Reinventing Organizations: A Guide to Creating Organizations Inspired by the Next Stage of Human Consciousness — by Frederic Laloux

College drop out rates — from EducationData.org

McKinsey & Company - Women in the Workplace 2020



Brave New Work — by Aaron Dignan



Caste: The Origins of our Discontents — by Isabel Wilkerson

SOLUTIONS





SOLUTIONS THAT WORK

Relevant, cutting-edge solutions – both global and local – to explore and consider supporting

LEARNING STIPENDS AT WORK

A learning stipend is a valuable benefit for employees, providing them with cash to support continued professional development and education. Pre-pandemic, according to Gallup, 87% of Millennials (the largest generational group in the current workforce) consider career growth and professional development opportunity as important when considering a job; and jobs evolve rapidly with technology it becomes ever more necessary to offer people opportunities for continuous learning.

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

Finding a common issue (for example: bus schedules) that allows for generations to come together to work towards a solution, instead of expecting the older generation to fit in with the younger generations' needs (or vice versa). For example, a local community center using table tennis to bring generations together in Leeds, UK.

PUTTING COMMUNITY AND EQUITY AT THE HEART OF EXPERIENCE DESIGN

To ensure authenticity and relevance to the needs of the communities you serve, bring community voices into all aspects of your design processes. For example, you can use tools like Creative Reaction Lab's field guide that includes a guide on how to integrate equity-centered community design into Classrooms and Youth Programs.

NATIONSWELL SOLUTIONS SPOTLIGHT

CAMELBACK VENTURES

Camelback Ventures is an accelerator that identifies, develops, and promotes early-stage underrepresented entrepreneurs with the aim to increase individual and community education, and generational wealth. In their words “Genius is equally distributed. Opportunity is not. Camelback is here to change that. We support innovative, diverse leaders ready to take their social impact vision to the next level.” Their flagship program — The Camelback Fellowship — works to support early stage social impact entrepreneurs in three tracks: Education, Conscious Tech, and Local Economies; providing coaching, capital, connections, community, and curriculum to underrepresented entrepreneurs.

“Education is a long-tail game. This isn’t how many people downloaded your app. This is about students and families, and it takes time to cultivate these relationships.”

— Aaron Walker, Founder & CEO, Camelback Ventures

CAMELBACK
ventures

To find out more visit camelbackventures.org

NATIONSWELL SOLUTIONS SPOTLIGHT

INTERAPT

Interapt develops software and skills. They focus on communities in need of economic development by offering software training (including HTML, CSS, and Javascript) and job readiness to overlooked individuals and transitioning soldiers. The training is organized through partnerships with local philanthropic organizations and companies and is at no cost to students, with the ultimate goal of providing them the knowledge and skills to launch a technology-oriented career.

At the conclusion of their program, students enter a registered Apprenticeship Program, approved by the Department of Labor. As apprentices, individuals are placed in year-long engagements with Interapt or other partner companies. Historically, their graduates have a 94% success rate in obtaining employment after completion of our program.

“Intellect is not distributed by zip code and we are able to find people who have the chops to do [the work]. Our curriculum is difficult. We are not here to coddle you through this program, but we are here to support you through it.”

— Ankur Gopal, CEO & Founder, Interapt



To find out more visit interapt.com

NATIONSWELL SOLUTIONS SPOTLIGHT

PENCIL

PENCIL was founded with the goal of raising awareness about public education by inviting civic and business leaders into New York City public schools. Their mission is to “to connect students to success” through hands-on, immersive programs that open eyes, open minds, and open doors. PENCIL makes it easy for business professionals, educators, and students to work together—in schools and the workplace. Their programs include in-school partnerships, mentoring, internships, and immersive experiences like Principal For A Day. They strive to provide students with access to the relationships, skills, and opportunities that support their success.

“I think the business community has got to step up and recognize that its self-interest is dependent on meaningful connections to public schools.”

Gregg Bethel, President, PENCIL



To find out more visit pencil.org

NATIONSWELL SOLUTIONS SPOTLIGHT

YEAR UP

Year Up's mission is to close the Opportunity Divide by ensuring that young adults gain the skills, experiences, and support that will empower them to reach their potential through careers and higher education. They offer a one-year training program learning the skills hiring companies need and make important professional connections. 100% of qualified students earn an internship and 90% of their grads are either employed within the profession they studied or in school within four months. Rather than paying, Year Up students actually earn educational stipend payments to offset expenses during their training and internship.

“I am hopeful we'll build a country that sees the potential inherent in all our young people, not just the ones born in the 'right' zip codes.”

— Gerald Chertavian, Founder & CEO, Year Up



To find out more visit yearup.org



SOLUTIONS WE NEED

Solutions that our group of experts identified that address an urgent, unmet need

RIGOROUS EXAMINATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO EQUITY WITHIN INSTITUTIONS

Education institutions, businesses, organizations, should all be doing the work to advance equity, including:

- Bring in consultants who are experts on social justice and equity who can take a look at the legacy of racism in your institution.
- Clarifying definitions around what racial equity/justice is and how it can be achieved.
- Setting goals and follow-up on those regularly.
- Have open and honest conversations with your partners/contractors to understand the make-up of their organizations, and encourage them to reflect the racial diversity of the communities they aim to support and serve.
- Engage in an internal conversation to raise consciousness, even if it feels scary.
- When considering your office footprint, build offices in communities of color.



SOLUTIONS WE NEED

EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS THAT REPRESENT THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE

In order to achieve this, there are several steps an institution can consider including:

- Involve Black Student Alliance groups, alumni and staff in joint planning
 - Restructure budgets to hire BIPOC faculty
 - Re-examine the syllabi to be culturally accurate.
-

EXPANDED 'TRAUMA INFORMED' APPROACHES

A trauma-informed approach is essential to nurture the whole child. However, the model for assessing trauma is outdated, overlooking the impact of systemic racism on students, families and school staff of color.

SERVICE WORK PLANS INTEGRATED INTO WORK

Leaders need to develop more cohesive, integrated plans to re-tool training and education efforts, particularly for people looking for work now, so that we link work to service at all levels. Think beyond paid-volunteer time off and instead craft integrated service-work plans.



SOLUTIONS WE NEED

MAYBE, MANDATORY NATIONAL SERVICE?

While the infrastructure isn't there yet, formalized civic engagement could give those both below and above the poverty line a chance for solid employment and expose people to a diverse set of challenges, communities and learning experiences. It could also provide an alternate means for paying for college.

FOCUS ON SOCIAL CAPITAL AS WELL AS SKILLS

One of the ways in which opportunity divide becomes entrenched is through the generational accumulation of valuable social capital by those with privilege — networks of connections to people in positions of power through family and friends, that offer exclusive learning opportunities and a “foot in the door” at places that are unobtainable to most. There are proven methods for breaking these cycles that should be built upon, including mentoring systems like Big Brothers Big Sisters, but more needs to be done to connect everyone to social capital.

CALLS TO ACTION

Imperatives for leaders and organizations alike that surfaced from our experts across the track.

1

BLAME THE SYSTEM, NOT THE INDIVIDUALS

Flip the script to show the system is failing the students, not the students failing the system.

3

BE BOLD TO TRULY ADVANCE EQUITY

Opportunity isn't enough. We must level the playing field, by being explicit about racial equity and being bold in our actions. And it's not just words: We need regular commitments to auditing what is/isn't in support of the cause and then seeing through "equity actions" and be willing to go beyond the typical aperture of your organization's mission. For example, focus on wealth accumulation so we can narrow equity gaps. Invest in those who can help people of color grow wealth. If this barrier can be overcome, it's a clear conduit to providing security and continued success.

2

EXPLORE HOW YOU CAN NURTURE LEARNING AND VALUES

Building trust, service, empathy, diversity, ethical frameworks and collaborative systems into both formal learning contexts and work environments are avenues towards growing and advancing learners. A work community where we are learning and also working to serve others is ideal given our communal nature. Dig deeper into what other skills you can support among your employees and ensure they have an understanding of what is happening out in the world and within their communities so giving back becomes second nature.

4

ESCAPE YOUR ECHO CHAMBER

If you are thinking about joining politics or advancing policy, get exposure outside of your political orbit and be where the people are. Find someone you profoundly disagree with and try to understand why they believe what they believe. It's part of continuous learning.

5

PASS ON THE POWER OF POLITICS

If you are thinking about joining politics or advancing policy, get exposure outside of your political orbit and be where the people are. Plus, It's not just about practicing politics but contributing to society. Continue the process of nurturing the next generation of student leaders to take the baton from the current generation, empowering them to use their voices for impact.

7

IDENTIFY YOUR OCCUPATIONAL TRAITS AND LEAN INTO THEM

Jamie Merisotis, President & CEO of Lumina Foundation, identifies four different occupational categories of the future which all rely on human traits and characteristics: Helpers, Bridgers, Integrators, Creators. Ask yourself which one(s) you most fall into and think about how you can re-frame your own work and encourage others (including your children) to identify themselves/others in this way.

6

AVOID DEFICIT LANGUAGE

Be precise and consistent with your language, standards, and implementation. If you don't know what to say, ask for training. Don't fall back into using deficit language, but use asset-based language instead, E.g. rather than referring to "minority populations", speak specifically about the population in question and/or use "equity populations"; instead of "achievement gaps" consider "equitable differences in attainment".

EMERGING IMPACT

At NationSwell, our goal is to create the conditions for impact to thrive. Specifically, this track was designed to surface solutions, diversify experts' perspectives and catalyze new collaborations to accelerate impact around Education. We are excited to share several ways in which that impact is starting to emerge.

1

More NationSwell Council members are exploring training with [Ericka Huggins of World Trust](#) on how to build racial equity into education

2

A FTSE100 global business is following up with Interapt to learn more about apprenticeship programs and possible collaboration to offer more people software job opportunities

WITH THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

In Partnership With



Patrick J McGovern
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THANK YOU

For more information,
contact the NationSwell team at
new@nationswell.com

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