

# Center for Rural Entrepreneurship

energizing entrepreneurial communities

## **Nurturing and Growing Entrepreneurial Talent** *It Takes a Community Ecosystem*

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**Appalachian Conference on Social Enterprise**  
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# Challenges associated with Economic Transition

1. Need to create more and better jobs
2. Need to improve educational attainment, especially post-secondary
3. Need more investment to improve health status
4. Need more investments in areas of persistent and severe economic distress



Investing in  
Appalachia's  
Future

The Appalachian Regional  
Commission's Five-Year  
Strategic Plan for Capitalizing  
on Appalachia's Opportunities

2016-2020

# ARC Investment Goals



**Economic Opportunities**



**Critical Infrastructure**

**Natural and Cultural Assets**



**Leadership and Community Capacity**



**Ready Workforce**



# Defining a Social *Entrepreneur*

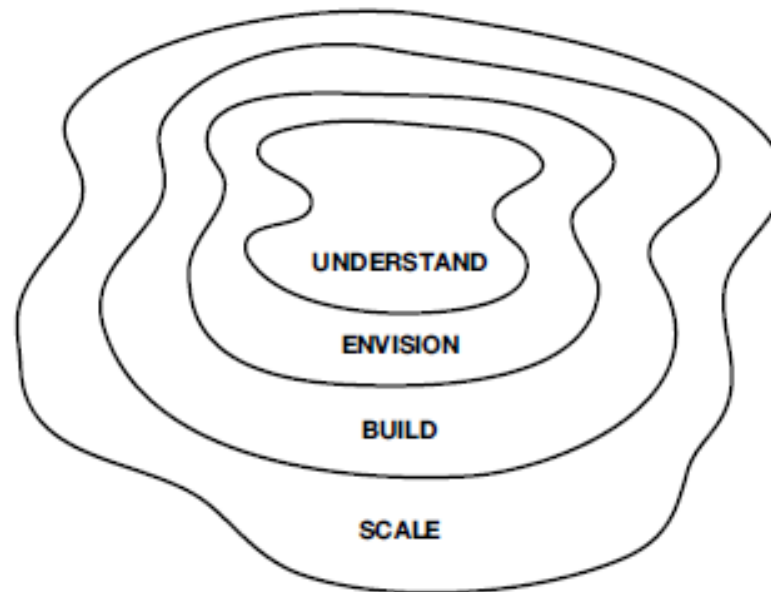
- Innovates and creates value
- Recognizes opportunities
- Continually builds skills
- Builds networks among investors, suppliers, customers, peers to tap new resources and assets
- Manages and shares risk
- Accounts to stakeholders for outcomes created

# Process of Social Entrepreneurship

FIGURE I-2

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## Stages of transformation



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Martin and Osberg, *Getting Beyond Better: How Social Entrepreneurship Works*, 2015

# Social Entrepreneurs as System Leaders



1 - See and map the larger system



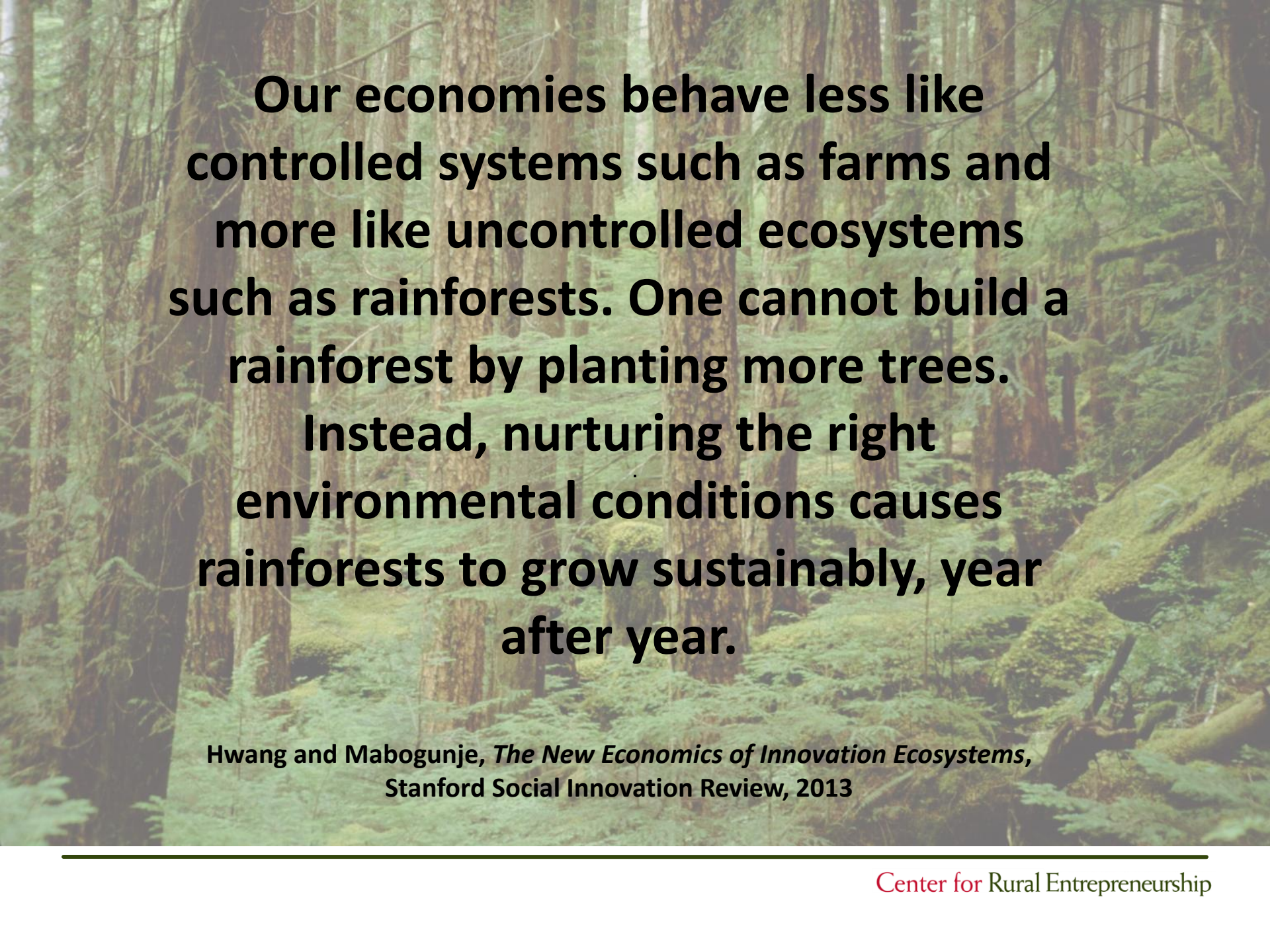
2 - Foster reflection and generative conversations

3 - Shift from reactive problem-solving to co-creating the future



# To Nurture and Grow *MORE* Social Es...



A dense forest with tall trees and a mossy ground. The text is overlaid on this background.

**Our economies behave less like controlled systems such as farms and more like uncontrolled ecosystems such as rainforests. One cannot build a rainforest by planting more trees.**

**Instead, nurturing the right environmental conditions causes rainforests to grow sustainably, year after year.**

Hwang and Mabogunje, *The New Economics of Innovation Ecosystems*,  
Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2013

# Does the community...



Support or encourage the creation of diverse networks, i.e., help build social capital?

Create an environment where teams can form and grow, with the right skills to get the work done?

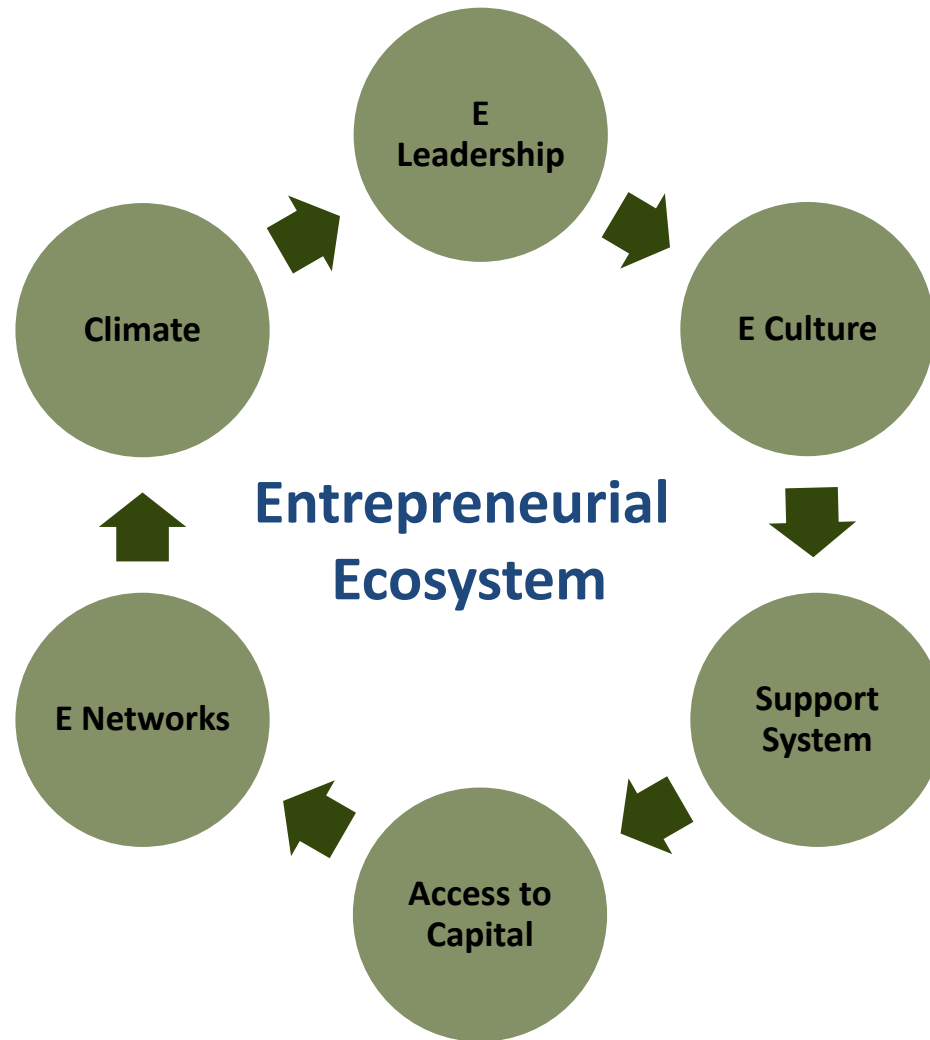


Foster conditions where people choose to identify as creative, hopeful, entrepreneurial?

Facilitate collaboration, new alignments and relationship building without high transaction costs?



# So, what *IS* the community's role?



# Call to Action

- Engage a broader group of community leaders in a discussion about entrepreneurship **and** ecosystem development.
- Work to understand the components of the ecosystem and connect often siloed pieces into a more coordinated system of support – build relationships and trust.
- Identify and fill the gaps in the system, specifically related to support for social enterprise development.
- Invest in building the culture of entrepreneurial thinking and behavior that is lacking in too many parts of the region.

# Pipeline of Entrepreneurial Talent

