

***Two-Generation Innovation (2GenIn): A Concept for Well-Being and Economic Mobility in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution<sup>1</sup> (4IR) and the Innovation Economy<sup>2</sup>***

Proposed by the Pine Grove Association (PGA) of Canton, Madison County, Mississippi, Two-Generation Innovation (2GenIn), is a concept that builds upon and expands the current two-generation model of mobility defined by Ascend, the Aspen Institute to include the development of low-wealth families as innovators and futurists. PGA has been led by its founding Executive Director, Angela Carson, who was a W.K. Kellogg Fellow and has over 30 years of non-profit, community, and economic development experience. Additionally, PGA has worked closely with a cross-section of Cantonians and others to address issues related to the LatinX/Hispanic and African American communities in particular. PGA is requesting your consideration to submit a full two-year proposal to: A) Design 2Gin, including the voices and visions of the families and establishing principles such as equity, inclusion, and flourishing, B) Develop a specific womanist futurism and culturally infused foresight framework to engage mothers/women and daughters/girls, C) Pilot the program with at least 25 families in Madison County, 4) Partner with other 2Gen initiatives to create a Community of Learning, Policy, and Leadership, and, 5) Design a state of the art facility that reflects innovation, futurism and beauty to which the families are entitled and in which they and the community can immerse themselves in hands-on learning and exploration. The current 2Gen definition by Ascend is: “Two-generation (2Gen) approaches build family well-being by intentionally and simultaneously working with children and the adults in their lives together. As children, parents, and families grow and change across their lifespans, 2Gen approaches align opportunities to help families pursue their goals and thrive, optimizing each person’s potential along the way. The results are healthy parents with family-supporting jobs, healthy children meeting developmental milestones, and better-connected individuals able to participate in civic and family life.”

Our program will work with the parents and extended families of our current Madison Area Global Innovation Collaborative (MAGIC) youth program to establish 2GenIn by implementing the five standard components defined by Ascend and two new components introduced by PGA:

**Standard Components:**

- **Physical and Mental Health** (Ensuring that families have access to healthcare, environments for proper childhood development of the brain, mitigation and prevention of adverse traumatic experiences, self-care, environmental and recreational spaces, emotional and physical security, psychosocial well-being, and other features; *Our model recognizes the role of spirituality and the interior life to families, especially in communities of color.*)
- **Early Childhood Education** (Kindergarten readiness, Headstart, third-grade reading levels, high-level K-12 standards, 21st-century learning, parent/family engagement, education advocacy, etc.)
- **Post-secondary and Employment Opportunities** (Achieving a higher education, which is predictive of health, economic, and well-being outcomes; *Our project particularly will address pathways in the Hidden STEM Economy, which are those sub baccalaureate high growth and high demand jobs in the region.* Local studies of women’s success in Mississippi’s community colleges have found that adult learners were diverted to low-wage entry-level jobs rather than more lucrative and middle-skill to high-skill STEM pathways. *Our efforts will introduce as well as entrepreneurship in the current and future economies and next-generation jobs.* The families in this program face the greatest threat posed by automation, deep learning, and artificial intelligence; however, they deserve to be introduced to the benefits of this technologically and socially disruptive and innovative economy and ethos; however, they are rarely included in this types of economic and

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<sup>1</sup> The Fourth Industrial Revolution is our current era of ferociously rapid technological social innovation and disruption, which presents both threats of obsolescence and increased disparity, moral and ethical considerations and opportunities for flourishing.

<sup>2</sup> The Innovation Economy is the high growth industries accelerated by research, development, talent, capital and job production of STEAM/STEM-driven investments.

planning discussions. For those workers and families who have developed innovation, creativity, problem solving, lifelong learning and adaptability, they will be able to manage and/or thrive in the current and next generation economy. )

- **Economic Assets** (Development of savings and transferrable assets such as homes, land, intellectual property, and cash, including participation in the formal economy rather than predatory financial institutions and the informal economy, which may pose additional risk to documented and undocumented immigrant families; For these families, financial literacy, entrepreneurship and remittances to family members in other countries are key considerations in the 2GenIn approach), and
- **Social Capital** (Navigating and building networks both inside and outside of one's familiar communities; 2GenIn introduces the term, Innovation Capital, which is the ability to understand, build and leverage creativity, adaptability, and problem-solving as competencies and to navigate and participate in the Innovation Economy. Innovation Capital also builds upon the existing skills of families to survive and to thrive, applying their creativity to improve the circumstances of the lives and often communities and extended families.

### **New Components:**

- **Innovation** (Empowering and recognizing families as creative problem solvers, visionaries, participants in the Innovation Economy/Fourth Industrial Revolution, including pathways to Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM) jobs, certifications, and career pathways, participation in high growth job creating entrepreneurship and possessors of imagination; Innovation, problem-solving and creativity are considered the preeminent 21st-century skills and critical to the future of work and the future of learning.)
- **Futurism** (Empowering and recognizing families as builders, shapers, and responders to the future by applying strategic foresight, which is long-term planning informed by Spiritual, Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental, and Political pre-signals, signals, trends, and megatrends; This includes honoring culturally and indigenous derived traditions of defining and imagining the future, addressing resiliency and recovery and equipping families to navigate Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity, (VUCA) which constitute different levels of disruption. Cultural examples of futurism are the sacrifice of the current generation to ensure that the next generation(s) progress beyond the family's current status and pathways to opportunity and the belief in spirituality, human dignity, which remains under assault, and hope as part of a religious framework that often was the primary framework for developing a just, non-violent and human worldview, inclusive of others as brothers and sisters. Our work includes introducing data futurism, informed by 2GenIn families with statisticians and evaluators trained in foresight and equity.

The 2GenIn womanist futurism thrusts acknowledge that when women and girls are empowered to define their futures and to participate in the definition of a bright, just, and inclusive future of the community, the entire ecosystem benefits and there is a disproportionate impact accelerated by female leadership. Additionally, data show that most often women of color heads of households with children are the poorest demographic in a community, and our efforts particularly address the quasi-rural opportunities and challenges of embracing the Innovation Economy and 4IR.

**Potential Partners:** Jackson Medical Mall Foundation, Springboard for Opportunity, Center for Adult and Experiential Learning, and Art2Health2Wellness, Federal Bank, Atlanta, (policy simulation, data infrastructure, convening of federal and philanthropic partners) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Others to be determined...

**Overview of MAGIC:** With funding from the Hardin Foundation and private donors, PGA has implemented an organizational, strategic and programmatic process to develop global competence in youth

as futurists and innovators, including the Sankofa Futures Project, which will connect middle school and high school leaders from around the world beginning with Africa and South and Central America. The funding allows for the development of the board of directors, advisory board, fund development and strategic planning, program design and evaluation and a pilot youth leadership academy.

United States of America. Haiti. Afganistán. Israel. France. Russia. Palestinian Territory. Ukraine. Cop27 Climate Summit. Great Britain. India. These countries, international bodies or territories in this week's news cycle alone are dominating the headlines and international relationships, ranging from immigration to climate change to terrorism to domestic and political intrigues. MAGIC is a year-long Saturday leadership program and an annual summer camp for middle school youth. MAGIC promotes global learning, global competence, leadership, community bonding, and skills-building. The Asia Society's Center for Global Education has four domains of Global Competence: 1) **Investigate the World:** Globally competent students are aware, curious, and interested in learning about the world and how it works, including expanding beyond one's familiar neighborhood and networks of similar demographics, views, and expressions. B) **Recognize Perspectives:** Globally competent students recognize that they have a particular perspective and that others may or may not share it. C) **Communicate Ideas:** Globally competent students can effectively communicate, verbally and non-verbally, with diverse audiences; and D) **Take Action:** Globally competent students have the skills and knowledge to not just learn about the world, but also to make a difference in the world.

Using tools and resources such as Educating for Global Competence, the Global Competence Outcomes and Rubric, Mapping the Nation, which gives the global and international profile of every county in the United States, the International School's Network, MAGIC develops Mississippi's youth as 21st-century leaders and learners able to navigate a world of dynamic change and connectivity. Finally, our program will work with the state's global and international assets, including foreign language teachers, exemplary programs in global and 21st-century learning, such as the University of Mississippi Office of International Programs and International Education at Mississippi State University, expert professional services, and international trade offices. Issues such as climate change, hunger/food insecurity, sustainable development, human geography caused by war, ethnic and gender violence, corruption, famine, and disaster, justice/equity and youth viability, vision, and vulnerability may be addressed by youth.

MAGIC engages 25 middle school scholars from mixed-income, linguistically diverse backgrounds in Madison County's middle schools. Inclusion also involves students of different disabilities/abilities. The large majority of students will be 200% or below the poverty line and show underachievement; however, one of the fundamental tenets of global learning is broadening the base beyond one's familiar demographic and ideological enclaves, which will be achieved through inclusive and diverse student populations. For example, a student may be doing well socioeconomically and academically but poorly socioemotionally. Youth will attend immersive and interactive activities from 9:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays, evening activities as required and summers camp. MAGIC will use the following integrated themes and components: 1) **Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM), Creativity and Innovation;** 2) **Well-Being and Social Emotional Support;** 3) **Communication Skills;** 4) **Changing the Narrative:** Educator, Community, Parent and Stakeholder Engagement about the possibilities of young people 5) **English Language Learning (ELL)** for our Hispanic youth and parents and Spanish for our English-speaking youth; 6) **Sports (Soccer and Golf),** 7) **21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Skills and Skills of the Future,** including Foresight, Empathy and Imaginative Problem-Solving, and 8) **2GenIn.** We believe that learning can be rigorous, consequential, fun and exploratory, driven by the students' passions, aspirations and competencies, and such a model can be deployed to many other conditions, problems and domains. Plus, we shall address both short-term and futuristic development of our communities through the eyes of 2GenIn families and youth.