Flourish!

Welcome to ShareTown – a fictional town that will be your home for the next 45 minutes!

It’s a typical post-industrial market town, that is trying its best to bounce back from local authority budget cuts and adapt to a future shaped by climate crisis, demographic shifts, rapidly evolving technology and changing patterns of work. In response, a whole range of opportunities is emerging for a generative rather than extractive economy, based around the principles of community wealth building, community ownership, the commons and social wellbeing.

As public, private and third sector players in the community, you are looking for ways to work together to benefit the widest group of people in the local area, by focusing on economic policies and projects that use psychological health as a measure of success. That means you want to develop a place which supports greater agency, security, connection, meaning and trust, enabling Sharetown and its communities to Flourish!

In this storytelling-based game, you will explore a preferred future for the way citizens, organisations and local government live and work together, shaping the local economy in the process. You’ll each play a character in the community, working your way through decisions in which you will make the case for and choose between a range of options for the local economy – from housing co-operatives to participatory budgeting.

So, take a moment to get into character and get ready to shape the future. It’s time for ShareTown to Flourish!

How to play

Objectives

Collective – to increase the levels of agency, security, connection, meaning and trust throughout the town

Individual – to promote the 2 values most important to your character

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The Rules

1. There are 6 players and 1 facilitator per game.
2. Each player is dealt a character card and will play from the perspective of that character, illustrating their arguments with relevant insights into what this character cares about.
3. Each character has two values that they want to see grow in the town. Characters will argue in favour of these values throughout the game.
4. Play starts with the player sat to the left of the facilitator and continues clockwise.
5. Players in turn will be given 4 project cards, reading the cards out to the group. They will choose two projects to argue in favour of, based on which projects support the values most important to their character.
6. Starting with one of the two selected projects, the facilitator invites players to volunteer to present an argument in favour of the project, based on the first value shown on the project card.
7. The quality of the argument is judged by other players as good, very good or excellent with the facilitator making the final call. Very good arguments earn 1 bonus point, excellent arguments earn 2 bonus points.
8. Other players are invited to make a second argument for the project, this time for a value of their choice. This argument is also scored.
9. Arguments are then made in the same way for the second selected project.
10. When all 4 arguments are made, the person who initiated the discussions rolls the dice to score. 3 dice are rolled per project. For each project, the scores on the dice are added together along with the argument bonus scores. The highest scoring project is then placed on the board and becomes policy. If there is a draw, that player picks between the two projects.
11. The value counters are moved along the trackers on the board, according to the score awarded for the winning project – 1 point for winning + any bonus points.
12. Play continues by moving to the next player to the left, until 5 rounds have been completed or the time has expired – whichever happens first.
13. The winner is the player with the highest score when the values on their character card are added together. The group can judge how well they have done together by how far the set of 5 value counters have moved up the board.

Value definitions

We need to make economic decisions that support the kind of society in which people can lead healthy, fulfilling lives – in which they can flourish. In this game we are exploring how to work towards a more equitable and participatory society; one that moves away from purely financial measures of success to focus on how psychologically healthy our communities are, using the following indicators:

Agency
The subjective sense of having control over yourself and your environment, including the power to make decisions and shape the future.

Security
Meeting the needs for food, shelter, income and absence of crime which underpin the ability to be happy and healthy.

Connection
Contact and involvement with others that creates a sense of meaningful identity and place in the world.

Meaning
The ability to live a positive life and feel a strong sense of belonging, whether through work, relationships, community activities or creative pursuits.

Trust
A crucial component in developing and sustaining the social bonds, networks and associations needed for strong and stable interpersonal relationships.
A game by Nesta. Produced in collaboration with Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES). Designed by Digital Liberties.
Founder Member, Housing Co-operative

As part of a group of 40, you own and maintain a set of 20 homes.
Founder Member, Housing Co-operative
Community Activist

You’ve been involved in community projects for years, with a focus on sustainability/youth engagement (pick one).

Agency

Connection
Community Activist
You run an organisation that organises lunch clubs for old people to combat loneliness.
Voluntary Organisation
You represent workers across the public sector.
Branch Secretary, Trade Union
Council Chief Executive

Leading the management team at the Council, your priority is to kick-start the stalled local economy while maintaining service provision with a vastly reduced budget.

Connection

Security
Council Chief Executive
You are responsible for managing the efficient performance of local hospitals and improving the quality of clinical care.
Chief Executive, NHS Hospital Trust
Chief Superintendent, Police

Your top priority is maintaining effective policing, with a focus on crime reduction and ensuring that your policing style meets community expectations.
Chief Superintendent, Police
You chair the board of a social enterprise that employs previously homeless people to run a bike recycling project to gain bike mechanic and business skills.
Chair, Social Enterprise
You are the leader of the largest political group on the council. Your priority is improving civic participation (pick your politics!)
Leader of the Council
Vice Chancellor, University

You are the academic and administrative leader of the University with a focus on developing its research reputation but also championing student experience.
Vice Chancellor, University
Create a mutually-owned bank underwritten by the local authority pension fund to lend money to individuals, social enterprises and small businesses.
Community Bank
Workers Buyout

Support employees to mutualise an existing provider of cleaning services to the Council and major local institutions.
Workers
Buyout
Participatory Regeneration Scheme

Support local people and community groups to come together to plan the revitalisation of a derelict residential neighbourhood.
Participatory Regeneration Scheme
Local Renewable Energy Company

Establish a multi-stakeholder co-operative to supply green energy to local households, businesses and institutions.

Agency
Neighbourhood Alliances

Local people work with their councillors to address local problems such as graffiti, fly tipping, dog fouling and unauthorised parking.
Community Grocery Store

A co-operative that sources and sells food from local producers, providing employment and supporting a sustainable local food supply.
Community Grocery Store
Housing Co-operatives

Support tenants to co-own and manage social housing.
Housing Co-operatives
The Council and major local institutions co-create a fair work strategy for their employees, contractors and funded organisations.
Living Wage Pledge
Citizens’ Assembly

Bring together a representative sample of the local population to understand the town’s problems and find ways to solve them.
Citizens’ Assembly
Community Pub and Cafe

Support local people to own and run their own pub, providing a social hub for a neglected neighbourhood.

Connection?
Community Pub and Cafe
Digital Democracy

Create an online space for the members of the community to collaboratively suggest, discuss and vote on solutions to local problems.
Digital Democracy
LETS Scheme

Support a complementary local currency to encourage residents, co-operatives and small businesses to trade with each other.
LETS Scheme
Creative Land Trust

Find and finance collaboratively-run workspaces for artists, digital enterprises and cultural innovators
Creative Land Trust
Create an organisation to provide training for local residents to set up social enterprises in their area.
People’s Park

Transfer the management and maintenance of a green space to a community enterprise, which prioritises local employment.
People’s Park
Connect GP surgeries to indoor and outdoor facilities to ‘prescribe’ participation in healthy physical activities.
Community Health and Sports Centre
Enable the collection and upcycling of unwanted furniture to reduce bulky waste going to landfill and address furniture poverty - while changing attitudes to waste management.
Enhanced Recycling Scheme
The Council and major local institutions ensure that all contracts awarded include commitment to the living wage, trade union recognition and local sources of supply.
Progressive Procurement
Support community groups to purchase premises in a run-down retail area to develop socially sustainable enterprise spaces.
High Street Regeneration
The Council hosts neighbourhood meetings and digital forums to decide on the priorities for a portion of local spending.
Participatory Budgeting
Flourish!
Good Argument

No Bonus
Good Argument
No Bonus
Good Argument
No Bonus
Good Argument

No Bonus
Good Argument

No Bonus
Very Good Argument

+1 Bonus
Very Good Argument

+1 Bonus
Very Good Argument

+1 Bonus
Very Good Argument

+1 Bonus
Very Good Argument

+1 Bonus
Excellent Argument

+2 Bonus
Excellent Argument

+2 Bonus
Excellent Argument

+2 Bonus
Excellent Argument

+2 Bonus
Security
Agency
Trust
Meaning
Connection