

Preface

The book you're holding now is a call to action for social innovators who are preparing to address the urgent social and environmental needs of our planet. The authors are two long-time colleagues, Michael Halvorson and Shelly Cano Kurtz, who are excited to share their vision about renewing ecosystems and communities through entrepreneurial mindsets, creative partnerships, and appropriate, scalable technologies.

With *This Little World: A How-To Guide for Social Innovators*, we hope to engage a larger audience than the core group of business leaders and climate activists who have framed their creative work around the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). Although we deeply value their support, it's time to engage a wider circle of collaborators, including nonprofit leaders, entrepreneurs, students, impact investors, philanthropists, and new partners who will help address our planet's urgent needs by 2030 and beyond. Climate activists have been the lead voices in this effort to date, but its time to turn up the volume!

Climate change action needs to expand beyond the usual suspects—Climate Week NYC, Conference of the Parties, and the United Nations General Assembly. Now it's essential for businesses, individuals, and community groups to engage in the work of the SDGs. As Halvorson and Kurtz suggest, it's time to find your passion, pick a cause, and get started!

The goal that inspires me is *SDG #3: Climate Action*. I'm exciting about the way that the framework is gradually becoming normalized within organizations, encouraging them to set achievable goals, implement new programs, and report on progress. Climate change has expanded from a niche business to major consumer brands and organizations—from sports and entertainment to gaming and Hollywood. Creative organizations are building LEED certified professional sports stadiums and concert venues, drawing audiences that are eagerly participating in conversations about sustainability. The next step is engaging individuals around the world to participate in social innovation projects. The work of Junk Kouture is just one example.

In the coming year, I'm excited to work with the organizers of Earth Aid Live to launch the first impact-focused entertainment and concert series, designed to activate a global community around eco-friendly products and technologies. We'll bring leading artists and entertainers together to touch billions of lives around the world, inspiring new audiences to be focused on climate change. This movement will feature an exciting line-up of concerts, television broadcasts, and educational experiences designed to empower individuals and governments to move as one.

We're also organizing the first annual 2026 TEC Summit in Phoenix, Arizona, focused on vital technology, entertainment, and climate issues. We'll bring global leaders together from many sectors to showcase innovations that accelerate change in exciting ways. Among the key stakeholders will be government leaders, public and private companies, and citizens who are passionate about *SDG #3: Climate Action*.

Whether you attend Earth Aid Live or the TEC Summit, or you find your own way to elevate pressing challenges, I encourage you to make a difference using social innovation principles.

Together, we can inspire action, drive innovation, and pave the way for a brighter, more sustainable world. The case studies in this book will help you get started.

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