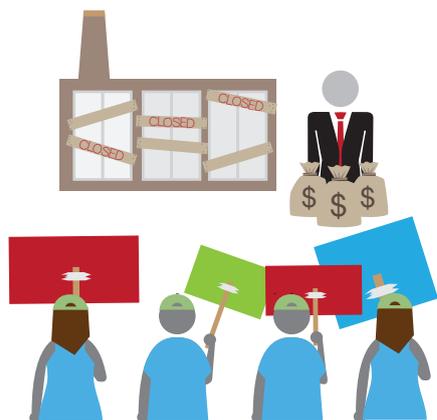


# Worker Cooperatives: Origin Stories

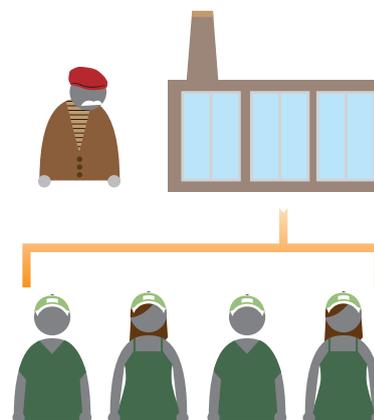
There are four ways cooperatives get started...

## Lemons to Lemonade



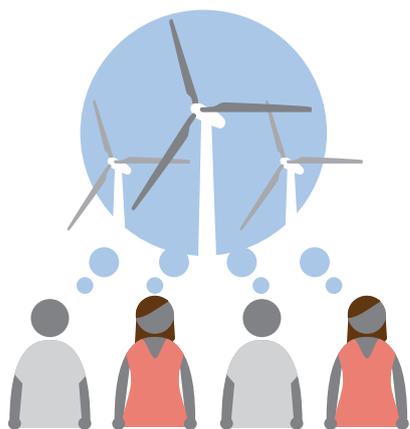
Worker co-ops can be started by people self-organizing a response to economic crises, like the worker-owners at New Era Windows in Chicago, who started their cooperative factory when the owners of their former factory shut down production and closed the doors.

## Pass It On



Worker co-ops can be started when retiring owners sell their business to their own workers, like they did at Select Machine in Ohio, instead of closing down or selling to a competitor with no regard for the well-being of their employees or the community.

## Build a Better World



Worker co-ops can be started by people who share a desire to make the world a better place, like the worker-owners at Equal Exchange in Massachusetts, who created a cooperative business to better reflect the values they wanted to put into practice as pioneers of fairly traded coffee.

## Start It Up

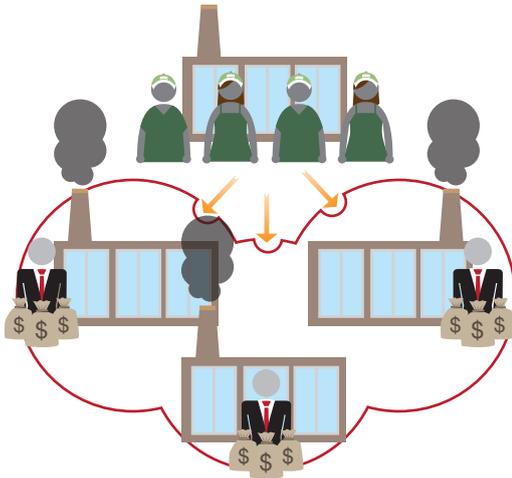


Finally, worker co-ops can be started with the aim of building wealth for low-income communities through the development and incubation of new worker-owned businesses; for instance, WAGES helps immigrant women in the San Francisco Bay Area start co-ops in housecleaning and other industries.

# Cooperative Development in Low-Income Communities

## Five strategies for building democratic ownership and community wealth

### Industry Transformation



A hybrid approach combining the creation of model cooperatives with policy work and organizing to transform working conditions and standards across a single industry.

*Examples:*

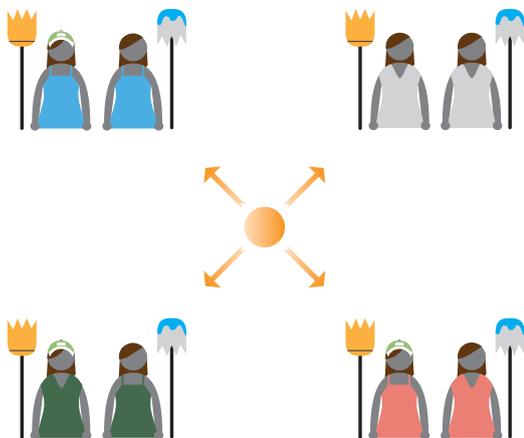
*Cooperative Home Care Associates, Restaurant Opportunities Center*

### Single Industry Replication

This franchise-like strategy creates a network of multiple linked cooperatives in a single sector, with the developer providing a core source of industry expertise and cooperative best practices.

*Examples:*

*WAGES, Arizmendi Bakeries*

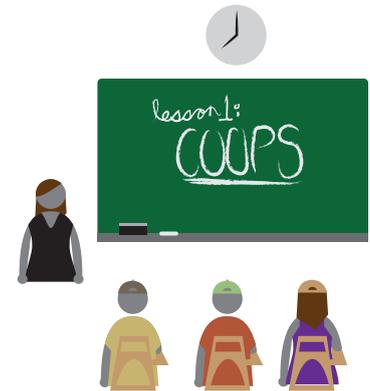


### Co-op Academies

An approach bringing together cohorts of teams in community-based classrooms to learn business skills and cooperative models, with the goal of launching new worker-owned businesses after graduation.

*Examples:*

*Green Worker Cooperatives' Co-op Academy, Cooperation Texas' Co-op Business Institute*



### Placed-based Clusters

A strategy focusing on developing multiple co-ops in diverse industries, but located in a single geographic area, with the goal of creating good jobs and strengthening the local economy.

*Examples:*

*Evergreen Cooperatives, Center for Family Life*

### Anchor Institution Engagement

This strategy builds on the place-based cluster approach by connecting the cooperatives with anchor institutions like non-profit hospitals and universities, who invest in local economic development by purchasing from the co-ops.

*Examples:*

*Evergreen Cooperatives, Wellspring Collaborative*

