

Amazing Ideas in Business from TED2018



Insights from

TED

+



The Age of Amazement.

Amazement can come in many forms. It arrives as surprise, astonishment, awe, terror, consternation, bewilderment and wonder, all giving way to curiosity and an utter sense of humbleness in the face of our world. At TED2018, the program aimed to highlight amazement in all its forms. With more than 100 mainstage speakers, 26 TED Fellows presentations and scores of special guests hosting workshops and events, the conference featured important ideas that stirred all kinds of emotions. And, most of all, a sense of possibility.

In business, so much can spark amazement — a great idea that suggests a new market, a product or service that becomes a part of people's lives, a plan that has an entirely different effect than what was predicted. Because the Brightline Initiative is all about helping organizations move from idea to implementation, we were onsite at TED2018, looking for insights. Whether you're a C-suite executive, a startup founder or a star employee, these ideas will push and challenge you to incredible end.

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How to restore trust and get “GRACED”

If you'd met Harvard Business School professor **Frances Frei** six months ago, she would've been wearing an Uber T-shirt. That's because she was brought in to restore the culture at the transportation behemoth, and she'd agreed to wear her shirt until other employees felt proud to wear theirs, too. What happened at Uber was something devastating for any business, she says — trust in it had eroded.

According to Frei, trust is like a stool with three key legs: empathy, logic and authenticity. “When I got there, Uber was wobbling all over the place,” says Frei. “Empathy, logic, authenticity were all wobbling like crazy.” On the empathy front, people didn't believe the company was in it for them, and it took soul-searching to identify where they weren't extending real, genuine concern — to drivers, to cities fearful of shake up, to employees. As for logic, fixing this wobble came with a flip in communication — starting with the point and then backing up to prove it, rather than winding toward it on a path others found hard to follow. And on authenticity, Frei says, Uber had a lot of work to do. With massive growth, managers had been promoted to positions that outstripped their experience — and they needed coaching in how to foster diverse teams. They had to learn to encourage people to bring their real selves in the door, rather than to just “yes” things.

Tamekia MizLadi Smith also spoke to what causes trust in companies to break down. She turns her attention to a special group of employees who are the gatekeepers of trust: front desk specialists, cashiers at stores, customer service representatives at call centers and registration clerks at hospitals and medical offices. These employees are often

instructed to ask questions of customers and clients. Sometimes, it's: “What is your zip code?” Other times, it's: “What is your ethnicity?” Too often, front desk specialists don't understand why they're asking these things, so they do it in a way that won't yield an accurate answer or make their company look bad. This, says Smith, leads to diminished trust. And it also leads to bad data that costs companies time, money and resources — and that drives disparities in care.

Smith shares an acronym that might help. She wants these employees to get “GRACED.” That means:

- **G**etting the front desk specialist involved and letting them know the
- **R**elevance of their role as they become
- **A**ccountable for the accuracy of their data while implementing
- **C**ompassionate care within all encounters by becoming
- **E**quipped with the education needed to inform people of why
- **D**ata collection is so important

In other words: front desk specialists need to know why these questions are important. They can't be given a memo, they can't be trained quickly by a computer system, and there can't be an impersonal “change-everything meeting” where they're given new procedures without any real discussion. “When teaching human beings to communicate with other human beings,” says Smith, “It should be delivered by a human being.”



“When you go to work and schedule that ‘change-everything meeting?’ Don't forget the food.”

Tamekia MizLadi Smith on the simplest way to get employees onboard with new policies

Let's explore new revenue streams for online services



If you're not paying, then you're probably the product. We all understand this to be true. But is it acceptable? And is it a sustainable way for businesses to operate? TED2018 took place against the backdrop of Mark Zuckerberg testifying to Congress after the Cambridge Analytica data breach, and several speakers confronted the model that led to it.

Virtual reality pioneer **Jaron Lanier** started the conference by bringing us back to the early days of the internet. He offered a simple analysis of how we got where we are today: early digital culture had two competing desires — to make everything free and available to all, while also worshipping individuals who could create thriving businesses. This led to online advertising, which started innocently but has become something entirely different. “It’s turned into

behavior modification,” says Lanier.

His plea to tech companies: seek out new revenue streams. One obvious idea is asking users to pay, either with a subscription fee or by how much they use the service. “We cannot have a society in which, if two people wish to communicate, the only way that can happen is through a third person who wishes to manipulate them,” says Lanier.

TED Fellow **Olga Yurkova** studies a devastating side effect of our current system: fake news. Online advertising makes attention a commodity, and thus misinformation is profitable. “Fake news is not only bad for journalism,” says Yurkova, “it’s a threat for democracy and society.” Yurkova lives in Ukraine, which has been subject to fake news for years, and she started the site [StopFake.org](https://stopfake.org) to fight it.



The site takes viral stories and verifies them. They've identified key fake news narratives in Ukraine, started 11 language versions and are now training fact checkers around the world. Their goal is to help ordinary people question the stories they see, especially ones designed to ignite their anger. "If it's too dramatic, too emotional, too clickbaity, then it's very likely it isn't true," she says. "The truth is boring sometimes. Manipulations are always sexy. They're designed to captivate you."

Also designed to captivate: YouTube videos for kids. **James Bridle** directs our attention to "surprise egg" videos — a genre of people opening candy eggs to reveal toys inside, which young people watch for hours. Knockoffs of these videos, with keywords that look legit but content that veers into sexual and violent territory, are being used to, "hack the brains of very small children, in return for advertising revenue," says Bridle. This shows how easily automated systems can be gamed to nefarious ends, and reveals what can happen when revenue is generated via views. "This probably isn't the thing we should be basing our society and culture on, and it certainly isn't the way we should be funding it," says Bridle.

So what do we do? Lanier's talk, [available on TED.com](#), offers one way forward.

"When you pay, things get better," says Lanier, noting how Netflix went with a subscription model, resulting in "peak TV." What would "peak social media," "peak search" and "peak online video" look like? "It would mean when you get on, you can get really useful, authoritative medical advice instead of cranks," says Lanier. His vision is good information and authentic art, rather than hackery. And in a short Q&A after his talk, Lanier points to how this could provide a solution to the job crisis that will arise as more industries go automated: tech companies can pay creators who add real value into the system. He imagines a new creative class of responsible content-makers, who are paid for the worth of their creations rather than by the attention they generate.

All this leads to some big questions: What new models could you create around online services? And what opportunities could Lanier's vision open up for you and your industry?

**“WE DID HAVE ONE ADVANTAGE.
WE WERE BORN ON DVD AND KNEW THAT
WAS GOING TO BE TEMPORARY.
SO YOU HAVE THAT PARANOIA ON
WHAT’S COMING NEXT.”**



Reed Hastings, CEO of Netflix, on how fear
drove him toward smart decisions

How to mentally reframe the impossible

Gwynne Shotwell was employee number seven at SpaceX. An engineer by training, she's now the company's president and COO, working side-by-side with Elon Musk. In an interview with TED curator Chris Anderson, Shotwell shared the key to her job satisfaction: that when Elon asks for something that sounds impossible, she holds her tongue. "I can't say, 'That's impossible,' or 'That's not going to happen,' or 'I don't know how to do that.' I zip it and then try to figure it out," she says. This almost always involves breaking the larger problem down into smaller, easier-to-accomplish parts. Among the innovations Shotwell discussed: reusable rockets (demoed earlier this year), a satellite system to bring internet to the whole planet (in progress) and a "residual capability" of SpaceX's technology, the ability to travel across the world in 30-40 minutes for the cost of a business class plane ticket. "It sounds incredible," she says, "but we're working on the pieces."



"Oh, it's definitely going to happen."

Gwynne Shotwell on SpaceX's plan to rocket you around the world in 30-40 minutes

Other speakers echoed the theme of attacking the impossible, step-by-step. Rock climber **Alex Honnold** talked about "free solo climbing" El Capitan in Yosemite National Park — ascending it without a rope, in four hours, rather than three to five days. He prepared by climbing the wall 50 times, to get a feel for its nooks and crannies. "Once I found sequences that felt secure and repeatable, I had to memorize them," he says. He rehearsed every movement and felt the texture of every hold, over and over. Just as important: rehearsing the emotional feel. "Free soloing plays out in the mind," he explains. "Doubt is the precursor to fear, and I knew that I couldn't experience my perfect moment if I was afraid." Preparation was what got him through the climb, smoothly and confidently. "It felt like mastery," he says.

Steve Wilson agrees. He is 70-years-old and a three-time national champion in the equestrian event of "combined driving," despite the fact that his eyesight has diminished to the point of legal blindness. Like Honnold, he achieves what he does by walking each course over and over, sometimes as much as 11 miles a day, in order to know all the little moments that will add up to the full race. "With steadfast determination," he says, "the impossible is possible."

INSIGHTS FROM BRIGHTLINE

Where to start. So ... how exactly do you break down a big, complex idea into small, actionable parts? Brightline Initiative offers cutting-edge research and content to guide organizations through the complex task of turning ideas into reality. The key is to start with a clear and defined strategy and goals. Second, build robust plans using proper planning and preparation, define programs and projects with clear interfaces and deliverables. Always be aware of opportunities to learn from your missteps and failures along the way — be ready to "fail fast and learn fast," and create a safe environment to experiment, learn and course correct whenever necessary. Leaders are accountable for proactively supporting implementation teams, so they need to help teams stay focused and keep it as simple as possible. Implementing a complex, big idea will always reveal many challenges, uncertainties and risks, so simplicity is key to keep the implementation team moving steadily to achieve results, quickly and effectively. Finally, celebrate every win and every successful move along the way, to help shape the right culture and inspire people and to drive accountability to make ideas a reality.



“PEOPLE WORKING IN MORE COLORFUL OFFICES ARE ACTUALLY MORE ALERT, MORE CONFIDENT AND FRIENDLIER THAN THOSE WORKING IN DRAB SPACES.”

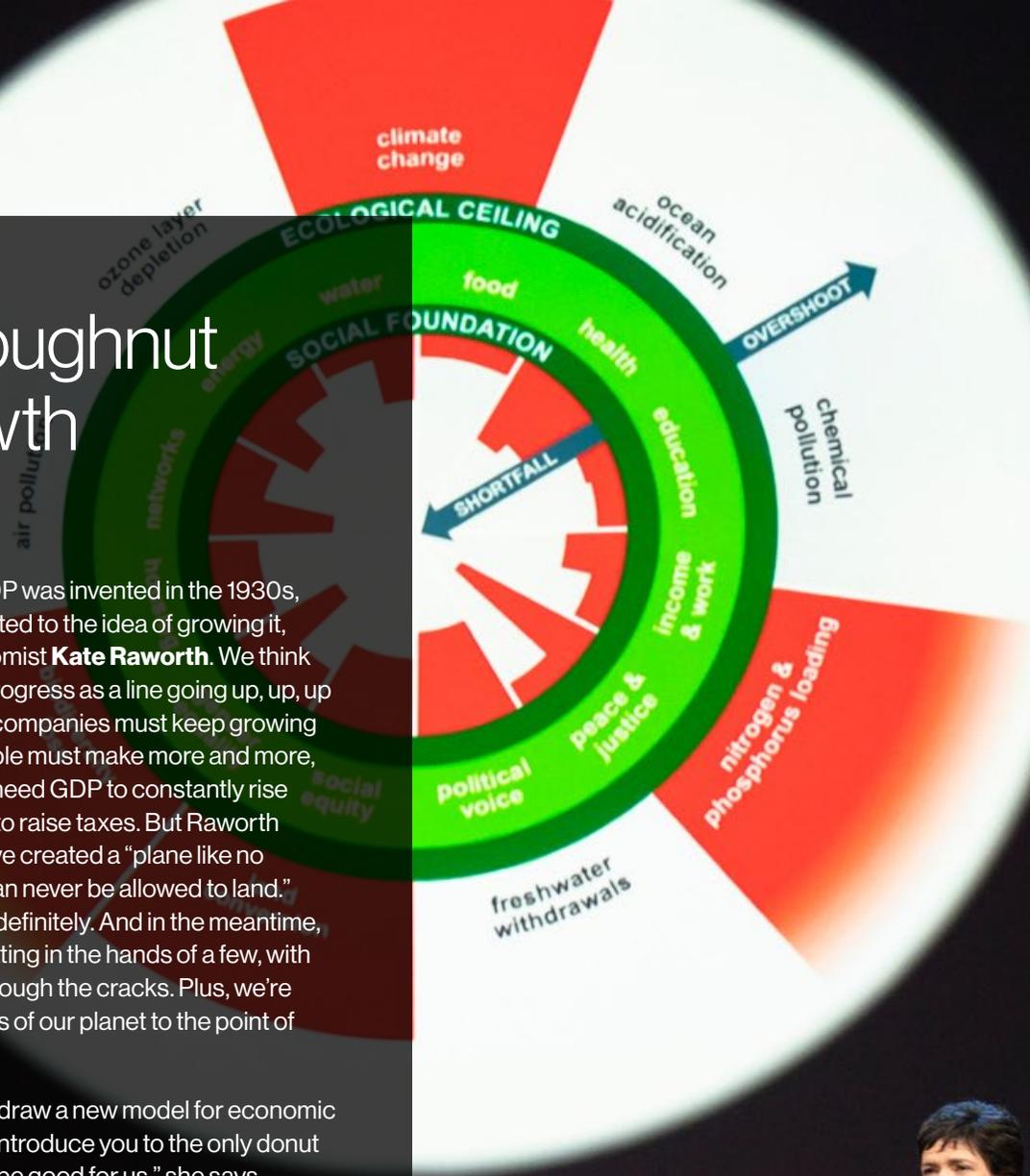


Designer **Ingrid Fetell Lee** on the importance of designing for joy rather than just function

The doughnut of growth

The concept of GDP was invented in the 1930s, but we're still addicted to the idea of growing it, says Oxford economist **Kate Raworth**. We think about economic progress as a line going up, up, up on the diagonal — companies must keep growing their revenue, people must make more and more, and governments need GDP to constantly rise so they don't have to raise taxes. But Raworth points out that we've created a "plane like no other, because it can never be allowed to land." GDP can't go up indefinitely. And in the meantime, wealth is accumulating in the hands of a few, with too many falling through the cracks. Plus, we're using the resources of our planet to the point of destabilizing it.

Raworth set out to draw a new model for economic progress. "Let me introduce you to the only donut that might actually be good for us," she says, pointing to what she came up with — a green circle with a hole in the middle. Her idea is that we aim to grow economies in countries where essentials like food and housing aren't met, and move them from the center into the green band. But for countries already in the band, we aim not to grow physical production to the point where they ripple over the edge into unsustainability. Achieving this would mean creating economies that are distributive, pushing wealth out to many, and regenerative, rewarding the use and reuse of resources so as not to hit the ecological ceiling. It's a fascinating way to look at growth, for a country, a household — or a company.



Unconventional applications for AI

Artificial intelligence is on the way, and it will change everything. At TED2018, several speakers addressed some of the less obvious, more intriguing implications.

César Hidalgo of the MIT Media Lab wondered: Could AI improve democracy? Only a slim percentage of people vote, and even fewer make their desires known to the legislators who represent them. What if we could each teach an AI to advocate on our behalf — either automatically, or with our sign-off on each decision?



Meanwhile, Dolby Laboratories scientist **Poppy Crum** showed how AI is learning to understand our inner states. Sensors are able to spot invisible, non-verbal tells — our pupils dilating when we're thinking, our cheeks radiating heat when we're embarrassed, the chemical composition of our breath when we're scared — and machine learning can predict what's really going on inside. Yes, this technology could have dark sides. But if deployed wisely, it could bring us into the “era of the empath,” says Crum.



Yasmin Green sees this potential, too. She's using machine learning to counter radicalism and online bullying. “It's actually not tech savviness that lets ISIS win hearts and minds,” she says. “It's their insight into people's vulnerabilities, their prejudices, their desires.” At [Jigsaw](#), a division of Alphabet, she helped create the “Redirect Method,” which uses targeting tools to identify people in the process of radicalization and delivers them content to nudge them toward less extreme views. She's also using machine learning to give commenters real-time feedback on how their language might affect people. It's allowed the New York Times to open up commenting on a wide variety of stories.

MIT professor **Dina Katabi** notes that wireless signals are constantly around us, bouncing off walls and our bodies. She's created a device that uses these signals to sense tiny changes in breathing, heartbeat and movement for patients with chronic diseases. This AI will have the ability to spot medical emergencies before they happen — and get people the care they need.



The traditional narrative goes that AI are great for certain tasks, but that they'll never be as artistic as human beings. Entrepreneur **Pierre Barreau** questions this. He's created an AI composer named [AIVA](#), which has ingested more than 30,000 scores from legendary composers and learned to recognize patterns in them. AIVA can infer what notes should come next and can build mathematical rules for writing new scores. This could lead to personalized music — a soundtrack made just for us, that washes over our lives.

Kevin Frans may be 18, but at [OpenAI](#) lab, he's taken on a fascinating challenge. Most AI work by running trial-and-error exercises en masse, incredibly quickly. But Frans wants to create AI that actually learn and master skills. The implications would be mind-boggling. Technology legend Kai-Fu Li is thinking along the same lines. Many worry about the impending job crisis and the loss of meaning people will experience as a result. But Li suggests that we're missing an opportunity. Our culture has driven us to workaholism, he says, and AI offers us a way out. "AI is taking away routine jobs, but routine jobs are not what we're about," he says. "AI is here to liberate us." From here on out, people can pair with AI to do work that requires creativity and compassion. It will be much more fulfilling.

And AI can also help us protect the environment. **Will Marshall** updated us on [Planet](#), his fleet of satellites imaging earth everyday. Their next mission: using AI to find objects in these images. Just

as AI can identify cats in videos, their technology will note ships, trees, cars, roads, buildings, planes and more — and create a database of them over time. "Google indexed what was on the internet and made it searchable," he says. "We're indexing what's on the earth and making it searchable."



Speaking of Google, in a special Q&A, futurist **Ray Kurzweil** announced a project he's been working on for the tech company — an experimental AI called [Talk to Books](#). It allows users to ask meaty questions like: "How can I stop thinking negative thoughts?" or "Why is the Turing test important?" Rather than searching for keywords, it searches for ideas and concepts by querying a database of 120,000 books. In less than half a second.

So, in the coming years, AI will help us vote, empathize, de-radicalize, heal, create, protect and understand. Everything will change, indeed. How do you anticipate your business and industry transforming as a result? What risks are involved in that? And what opportunities could it burst open?

**“MY TOOTHBRUSH HELMET
IS RECOMMENDED BY ZERO OUT OF 10
DENTISTS, AND IT DID NOT REVOLUTIONIZE
THE WORLD OF DENTISTRY. BUT IT
DID COMPLETELY CHANGE MY LIFE.”**



Simone Giertz, on what happened when she started making useless robots and posting them on YouTube

The identity ring



We use an awful lot of methods to prove who we are. We all walk around with wallets full of ID cards — government issued ones, employee badges, credit cards, public transit passes. Meanwhile, our keychains clank in our pockets, and we're constantly asked to come up with passwords with increasingly hard-to-remember parameters. When our data is compromised, we get new credit card numbers or set up two-step authentication. It's some solace, but not enough.

"The internet was built in such a way that computers could be easily identified, but humans couldn't," says **Melanie Shapiro**. "So we came up with all these weak stand-ins."

Shapiro is the CEO and co-founder of **Token**, a high-tech ring that's a biometrically secure replacement for ID cards, keys and passwords. In the morning when you put it on, it scans your fingerprint — then you're able to use it online, at turnstiles, at cash registers and more. If you lose it or it's stolen, it won't work without your biometrics — so it's not a big deal. It's a more seamless way to identify yourself to the systems around you, Shapiro says.

Token is an intriguing idea that could change our daily experience. Would you use it? Would your company? And what basic systems in our world do you see that are deeply flawed but accepted simply because there's nothing better yet?

INSIGHTS FROM BRIGHTLINE

Escape the room. Escape rooms typically ask you to spot patterns, unlock boxes and solve puzzles. At TED2018, we put our own twist on the form. Our "Escape the Room" workshop was based on Brightline's [10 Guiding Principles](#), and we challenged more than 100 participants to think from strategy to implementation in order to get out. Oh, there were still puzzles — but we also asked participants to deliver a strategy, mobilize the right resources and promote team engagement to make it work.

Participants were from different backgrounds, and most of them met for the first time during the workshop. Still, they had to work as team to complete the workshop. The key success factors? Leadership, communication and collaboration, all driving toward the objective. And just like in every business, participants could not go it alone. They had to work as a team to successfully escape the room.

Call it a live social experiment, but when it comes to strategy implementation, we find that most organizations are facing the same, well-known problems related to people's behaviors and interactions. Overcoming these is a challenge. But with the right approach, it can also be deeply satisfying. And even fun!



“A LINEAR WRITER NEEDS TO DEAL WITH TIME AND SPACE. AS AN INTERACTIVE WRITER, I NEED TO DEAL WITH TIME, SPACE AND POSSIBILITIES ... THIS IS A MEDIUM WAITING FOR ITS ORSON WELLES OR STANLEY KUBRICK.”

Designer **David Cage** on the fields of video games, interactive TV and virtual reality

Chetna Gala Sinha grew up in Mumbai but moved to a small village after college when she fell in love. There, she made friends with a female blacksmith named Kantabai. Kantabai wanted to open a bank account — but her application was denied because she planned to save just 15 rupees a day (about 15 cents). Sinha had the idea to register for a license to open a bank herself and serve women micro-entrepreneurs like Kantabai. When her license was denied because the women she planned to serve weren't literate, she started literacy classes, where the local women excelled.



Sinha founded [Mann Deshi Bank](#). Today, it has 100,000 accounts and has done more than \$20 million in business. But that's not what's most

notable — what's truly incredible is Sinha's commitment to creating new tools for her customers. Because many work all day, this bank goes door-to-door. And when they moved into digital banking, they heeded their client's demand that a pin number wouldn't be secure enough and jumped directly to fingerprint identification. Just because people don't make a lot of money doesn't mean they don't deserve excellent service, says Sinha.

“Never provide poor solutions to poor people.”

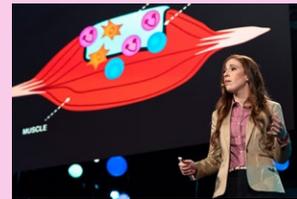
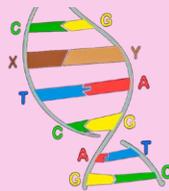
Chetna Gala Sinha on why she works hard to innovate, even if her customers' accounts are 'micro'

The lesson to take away: when a product or service or system doesn't exist, make it yourself. In addition to the bank, Sinha founded a “cattle camp” where clients can essentially mortgage water for their animals — and she's currently setting up the first stock market for micro-entrepreneurs. “These women overcome so many obstacles,” she says. “They find other ways.”

A bank of one's own

Your near-future shopping list

1. A robot inspired by an octopus. (From **Giada Gerboni**'s talk on robots that are soft, flexible and adaptable)
2. A pill to help healing. (From TED Fellow **Kaitlyn Sadtler**'s talk on a method that would signal to the immune system it should build tissue to heal wounds)
3. 6-letter DNA medication. (From **Floyd Romesberg**'s talk on how he's expanded the vocabulary of DNA in order to generate new, hyper-targeted medicines that, for example, seek out and destroying cancer cells)
4. A red-light MRI. (From **Mary Lou Jepsen**'s talk on a simple method for spotting tumors, blood clots and other anomalies — without an MRI)
5. A vertiport commute. (From **Rodin Lyasoff**'s talk on how, rather than taking a car, you may soon use an app to summon a personal flying machine)
6. An alarm clock with personality. (Meet Kuri, a robot in TED's Tech Playground, who learns the rhythm of your household — and wakes you up adorably)
7. The 52-megapixel camera. (From **Rajiv Laroia**'s talk on his pocket-sized camera with 16 lenses that uses machine learning to stitch together images so detailed, you can read a watch on a person's arm)



**“[THIS PRINTER] ALLOWS
BIOLOGICAL TELEPORTATION...
WE IMAGINE IT WILL DEVELOP LIKE
THE FAX MACHINE DID.”**



Bioengineer **Dan Gibson** on his biological printer,
which writes and prints DNA to create vaccines and
personalized medicines

The hidden cost of cooling

Seventeen percent of all the electricity used worldwide goes to cooling systems. Air conditioners, refrigerators, coolers for server rooms — all of these require a tremendous amount of energy, says applied engineer **Aaswath Raman**. Cooling systems are a major contributor to global warming, accounting for 8 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. And as the planet heats up, these emissions will only get worse, leading us into a dangerous feedback loop. “What keeps me up at night is that the energy use for cooling might grow six-fold by the year 2050,” says Raman.

Raman has an idea that could save you a lot of money in keeping your office cool — and that could also help us curb climate change. He’s created a material that harnesses the phenomenon of “night sky radiant cooling.” It’s the same principle that creates frost on the ground when the temperature is mild — warm objects send out their heat as infrared light to the air around them. Our planet does this as well, allowing certain wavelengths of light to escape the atmosphere to outer space.

Raman’s material sends its heat out smartly, at the wavelength needed to escape the atmosphere. It’s so efficient that it actually gets cooler in sunlight. A trial showed that panels of this material could boost an air conditioner’s efficiency by 12 percent. This material could allow us to make cooling systems that consume less energy — and it could help us make solar panel systems more robust, too. It’s an exciting prospect, both for your energy bill and the environment. And it makes you wonder: What other laws of physics could be applied in new ways?



**“MOLECULES ARE THE STORYTELLERS
OF WHO WE ARE AND WHAT
WE’VE BEEN UP TO.
WE JUST NEED THE RIGHT
TECHNOLOGY TO MAKE THEM TALK.”**



Analytical chemist **Simona Francese** on her incredible work on fingerprints, analyzing not just the pattern, but the molecules embedded in them

Doing business to do good



Moral philosopher **Will MacAskill** asks a perplexing question: With so many problems out there, how do we decide which ones to tackle? He suggests an interesting framework: that we look for problems that are big, solvable and neglected. Easy to say, harder to do. Yet throughout the conference, many people stepped onstage who are doing just that. In many ways, TED2018 was a celebration of social entrepreneurship, highlighting the incredible things that can happen when people apply business principles to problems that meet these criteria.

This thinking was on display at the launch of TED's newest initiative, [The Audacious Project](#), which aims to inspire global change by raising funding and gathering support communities around big ideas that address pressing problems. The key to doing this? Harnessing the principles that allow great ideas for businesses to get off the ground: the ability for investors to pool both resources and risk. "The nonprofit world lacks many of the tools open to business

entrepreneurs," says TED curator Chris Anderson, noting that there are no venture capitalists or stock markets for nonprofits. The Audacious Project, he explained, is "the nonprofit equivalent of an IPO."

More than \$406 million has been raised for The Audacious Project's inaugural ideas. And the ideas themselves are incredibly varied. **Raj Panjabi** (of [Last Mile Health](#)) and **Chuck Slaughter** (of [Living Goods](#)) both run organizations dedicated to supporting community health workers — they're teaming up to give smartphones to 50,000 community health workers in East and West Africa, so they can better diagnose their patients and also earn a living. Public defender **Robin Steinberg** is launching [The Bail Project](#) to address the fact that, in the American legal system, individuals who can pay their bail are able to approach sentencing from a place of freedom, while those who can't afford it spend days or weeks in jail without a conviction. **Heidi M. Sosik** of [Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution](#) is exploring the "twilight zone"

— a mysterious region of the ocean that could house a million new species and up to 90 percent of the world’s fish biomass.

Caroline Harper of [Sightsavers](#) is seeking to end trachoma, an ancient disease that’s a major driver of preventable blindness. **Fred Krupp** of [Environmental Defense Fund](#) is launching a satellite to track methane emissions and surface data that could inspire companies and governments to take action on climate change. And **T. Morgan Dixon** and **Vanessa Garrison** of [GirlTrek](#) are creating the Summer of Selma festival, an event to train 10,000 Black women to lead a health movement of a million women walking.

Finally, **Andrew Youn** shared how the [One Acre Fund](#) bundles resources and training for Africa’s small farmers, boosting their productivity by 50 percent on supported activities. The approach helps hard-working farmers feed their families — and their countries. “As an organization gets bigger, it gets harder to grow,” Youn says, showing how One Acre Fund’s impact had plateaued. But with investment from The Audacious Project, it’s tripled in size in three years — and will do it again over the next three. By 2020, they’ll serve more than 1,250,000 families per year, with more than 5 million children.

But this wasn’t the only call at TED2018 to apply business principles toward the social good. TED Fellow **Rola Hallam** shared the observation that led to [CanDo](#): while local organizations carry out 75 percent of humanitarian work in Syria, they receive just 0.3 percent of the aid budget. Her nonprofit identifies trusted local groups, incubates them and connects them directly with crowdfunding. In fact, she launched CanDo seven months early in order to help build the world’s first crowdfunded hospital, to

serve displaced children in the region. Hope Hospital opened a year ago and has already treated 15,000 kids.

Meanwhile, pediatrician **Lucy Marcil** — also a TED Fellow — started StreetCred, an organization that brings free financial services to waiting rooms at clinics and hospitals. They offer parents tax preparation assistance and help them understand tax credits, which few know about but are the “best poverty prescription we’ve got.” In its first two years, StreetCred has returned \$1.6 million to more than 700 families in Boston alone. It’s now expanding to nine sites in four states.

And in the final session of the conference, venture capitalist **John Doerr** spoke on how important it is for companies to identify the right objectives and drive toward them with concrete, actionable key results. “Objectives are a kind of vaccine against fuzzy thinking,” he says, pointing to the missions of Google and ONE. But he lingered on the story of a less famous endeavor: **Jini Kim**’s healthcare technology firm, [Nuna](#). Their objective: to make high-quality healthcare accessible to everyone. As Nuna was starting out, they were asked to bid on a contract to create a cloud for Medicaid data. The project was big, and they didn’t stand to make much money on it. But Kim jumped anyway. As a child, her older brother was diagnosed with autism, and she had been in charge of enrolling her family in Medicaid — she credits Medicaid with keeping them out of debt. “This was a bet-your-company moment,” says Doerr. “Jini seized it.” That decision has helped her set the company’s compass ever since.

All in all, the conference was a powerful reminder that profit can’t be the only motive — but that a genuine desire to make lives better needs to be in the mix, too.

INSIGHTS FROM BRIGHTLINE

Making a big idea into reality. The Audacious Project is an incredible opportunity to support ideas that have the potential to help heal our fractured world. But what if you’re the one with an idea that, if brought to scale, could influence the lives of many, many people? What should you do now?

Brightline Initiative was founded to help organizations bridge this gap, from strategy (the idea) to reality. We believe there are many different ways, practices and tools you might use to bring ideas to life; your “toolbox” must be as comprehensive as possible to cover different needs and deal with the most complex challenges. But, at the core, we have [Brightline’s 10 Guiding Principles](#). Practices may vary from one context to another, but these principles do not change — they are “the soul of your implementation capabilities.”

So here are three key steps to make a big idea a reality: (1) Adopt a set of guiding principles in your organization to steer implementation initiatives. (2) Invest in and nurture the right culture and talent — remember that people are the most critical factor. And (3) adopt a wide range of practices and techniques to manage your portfolio, programs and projects that will help you to successfully bring ideas into reality.



Stephen DeBerry of Bronze Investments gave a fascinating look at “The East Side Dilemma.” He’s referring to the fact that, in both the US and globally, economically disadvantaged communities tend to live on the East side of town. This is because the wind blows to the East in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres, which means smog from smokestacks and soot from train tracks travels in that direction. (Yes, “wrong side of the tracks” is a literal description.) East sides are where bank redlining took place and became a self-fulfilling prophecy — the inability to get a loan leading to a low property tax base, bad schools and a less-prepared workforce. “We got ourselves into this East Side dilemma through bad design, so we can get out of it with good design,” DeBerry says. “I believe the first principle of good design is simple: we have to start with the commitment to design for everyone.”



Design for inclusion

TED Fellow **Antionette Carroll** echoed this sentiment. She wants to see “equity designers” working in every sector, location and scenario, making intentional choices around inclusion. It’s only in this way that systems of oppression will fall, she says.

Architect **Vishaan Chakrabarti** thinks about this along different lines. Our cities, he says, are starting to look very similar. “There’s a creeping sameness besieging us,” he says, and this homogeneity has a social cost and a mental cost to anyone told they don’t belong. He issues a design challenge to all: create cities of difference, that have their own character and yet embrace all kinds of people.

Finally, **Walter Hood**, the founder of Hood Design, showed the role national landscapes play in this. They open up the possibility of understanding and empathy, he says, and they help us confront difficult histories. He walked us through several projects he’s been a part of, ending with one that will open in 2020: the International African American Museum in Charleston, South Carolina. The museum is located where Gadsden’s Wharf once stood — this is where 40 percent of African diaspora landed. Rather than an unmarked place, this museum and its surrounding parks will bring visitors face-to-face with the reality of what happened here. “As people move through this landscape every day, unreconciled, they’ll remember,” Hood says. “And remembering, together, is the only way to move forward.”

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HUMAN FLOURISHING.”**

Psychologist **Steven Pinker** on how, despite what we see on the news, the human species is making astonishing progress



Brightline™ Initiative

The Brightline™ Initiative is a coalition led by the Project Management Institute together with leading global organizations dedicated to helping executives bridge the expensive and unproductive gap between strategy design and delivery.

- **Brightline Coalition**

Project Management Institute, The Boston Consulting Group, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Saudi Telecom Company, Lee Hecht Harrison and Agile Alliance

- **Academic and Research Collaboration**

University of Tokyo Global Teamwork Lab, MIT Consortium for Engineering Program Excellence, Technical University of Denmark and Blockchain Research Institute

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