

New Utopian Economics Writers Workshop

J M Applegate & Andrew Dana Hudson

4 June, 2024

The global hegemony of free market, profit-maximizing capitalism is persistent, despite both obvious and ubiquitous shortcomings of the neoclassical economic theory that supports it and evidence of the damage it has wrought around the world in terms of social fabric, wellbeing and planetary systems. We believe a lack of viable alternative visions for new economic orders is a primary contributing factor for this continued hegemony.

Meanwhile, a growing cohort of speculative fiction writers are seeking to incorporate sophisticated ideas about economics into their works and worldbuild around alternative economic systems—imagining the end of capitalism at last, rather than merely imagining the end of the world.

The purpose of this workshop is to promote and accelerate the development of such alternatives by assisting speculative fiction writers with developing economic imaginaries that are both coherent and consistent. This is accomplished through facilitating and promoting cooperation and connections between heterodox economists and speculative writers who endeavor to explore economic themes in their work.

We propose a two-day workshop with writers who have such speculative works in-progress and economists who can serve as consultants to exercise the proposed economic imaginaries. The mix would be four writers per economist, with a dedicated facilitator to assist with the processes.

The workshop will begin with three hours of level-setting information the first morning. This information would include topics such as

- economies as socially determined structures of value-compatible incentives,
- elements that descriptions of comprehensive economic systems need to address, and
- participant introductions with brief descriptions of the work they are bringing.

The remainder of the workshop will consist of a mix of breakout sessions for sharing and exploring the economic themes of the nascent worlds and creative work-time. The workshop will conclude with a plenary discussion about the development of economic ideas that occurred.

The facilities available at ASU's Center for Science and the Imagination would be suitable for this event. Breakfast, lunch and breaks will be catered, along with dinner at the conclusion of Day One. Writers will not be charged for participation, but will cover their own travel and lodging expenses. Travel and lodging for participating economists will be covered.

The proposed budget for this event is:

Travel	airfare	3 nights hotel	participants	total
	\$1,500	\$750	3	\$6,750
Catering	per meal	meals	participants	
	\$25	5	24	\$3,000
Total Request				\$9,750

This proposed workshop is a second iteration of the successful Space Economy Camp for Writers hosted by ASU's Interplanetary Initiative in November 2023. A summary and lessons learned from that event is [here](#). The Space Economy Camp for Writers produced graphics describing the output from each of the breakout groups, with CC-by licensing. The camp participants were left to use the material if and how they saw fit. We are not yet aware of any creative output from the participants specifically derived from the camp. This iteration, we expand the scope beyond the space theme and explore whether engaging directly with in-progress work will have more of a direct impact.