# How to make TZM activism sustainable by successfully organizing funding

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The scientific enterprise is organized among similar principles with TZM. There is a great deal of volunteer work involved in science and people are not motivated to work because of money, but because of higher purposes. The main goal is to increase knowledge and share it. Science thrives within the current economic system, even though the current system is hostile to it and somewhat alien to its working principles. The organizational structure of science enables near limitless approaches and ideas, while everyone still supports the core, keeping the whole enterprise intact. Even though money is used, it has been consciously planned to be done in a way that mostly eliminates and minimizes corruption. (Please be aware, that I am talking from the standpoint of pure Biological science in this document.)

How could we use this as a model for TZM?

First thing to understand is, that science would not work, if scientists had to do it as a hobby on their free time. Research takes a lot of time and effort, and progress would be too slow or non-existent if people didn’t get paid for the work they put in. Similarly, activism is not efficient if done on free-time, and our progress has therefore been slow, unencouraging and even non-existent in many places. If TZM is to have any large-scale impact on the world, we need to be able to pay for the work people put in. People must be able to earn a living by doing socially beneficial work that takes TZM forward. Consider this: There are 52 weeks in a year. If you put in 2 hours of work a week on activism (which is what most can just about afford), that amounts to 104 hours of work a year. Divide that into regular 40 hour payed workweeks and you get 2.6 of them. So, every month we lose about two years of work. We simply cannot afford that if we wish to make a change on a planet with 7.6 billion people and increasing ecological and social pressures.

So, how could funding be organized? In science, researchers apply for grants by writing a research plan (in which they present their ideas, the methods they have planned to use and a budget for the work, including personal pay) and a motivational letter. For TZM there aren’t a lot of funding agencies available, nor are there (as of yet) any patrons with great inheritances directed towards our work. Therefore, it would seem that crowdfunding/donations are the only option (as can be observed from the work of other NGOs). Several options would be available: <https://www.patreon.com/> could be used for the official YouTube channel, coordinators could actively encourage members who can afford it to give out monthly donations to the NPO, chapters could be allowed to produce and sell creative content with a meaningful social function to the public (think of the amount of witty t-shirts and other products we could come up with as a global community), etc. There are many ways to get money.

The money generated could then be shared through a global network of interconnected national NPOs, through which it would be distributed to chapters and members with great ideas that the movement sees important enough to provide funding for. In science, the money from funding agencies is distributed via a group of experts who are called in and assembled for this specific purpose (they volunteer) because they have knowledge of the needs and the state of their scientific field. This group evaluates the motivational letters, CVs and research plans of the applicants. TZM could have a similar structure, whereby we could call in coordinators, and members who the coordinators trust to be intelligent and knowledgeable, to evaluate applications which any TZM supporter or chapter could send in. This way all the people who have good ideas, rational and willingness to work for TZM goals could get paid doing the job they do. Having even one person doing full-time work in a chapter would make all the difference. Ask any coordinator. And where need exists, coordinators could also get some pay from the enormous and important work they put in – especially in developing countries where free time is not as plentiful.

At this point we would have money, applicants for the funding and a volunteer structure to distribute that money. This means we would have people working, on pay, to do projects in time, and to work on big and important projects as well. We could do bigger events, better quality content and more visibly.

Scientists get paid for their ideas (before the work is done), are legally required to finish the project they get funded for (or risk paying back the money in full). They do not get paid when their work is published in a journal. The work they do is shared freely to the scientific community and the public (at least in open source journals – but I won’t get into the specifics of publication here). TZM coordinators know the people who work for the chapter, they know who are trustworthy and who can get work done. Coordinators could then recommend people who seek funding, and once a person is selected, TZM has three options for how payments could be made: 1) The money is transferred prior to the work as is done in the scientific fields, 2) The money is transferred at the end of the month like is normally done in jobs, 3) NPOs would pay half of the money when the project begins, and the rest when it is finished. These options obviously need to be discussed and the specifics written down, and in-depth criticism is needed to see if any potential problems exist that we need to be prepared for.

Pure science (in contrast to the applied science in industries where profit making is a goal) is not corrupted by money, because the goal is not to make money. The scientific way of thinking doesn’t put value into that. TZM members would not get corrupted, because if they understand the train of thought, they too are opposed to the concept of selfish gain at the expense of others. Scientists put in a vast number of hours and do not get paid for all of it. They do not have a high pay compared to the amount of skill and education required and compared to the importance of the work. Similarly, full-time TZM members would not get a high pay, but probably the minimum wage of their region, which would already help them enormously. For scientists, more important than pay is to get to do things that are meaningful and interesting. Same applies to TZM members. And another motivational factor is to have success, because successful scientists get funding more reliably in the future. This same process could motivate TZM supporters as well, to pursue great things with efficiency, so they would get to continue doing what they love, what they find important and fulfilling.

The Natural Law / Resource Based Economy is to TZM as the evolutionary theory is to Biology. All biologists support evolution, even if they disagree in some other biological questions. Similarly, all TZM supporters support an NL/RBE even if they disagree on what is the best way to conduct activism or what we should and shouldn’t support or oppose. Biology has survived as an intact science, even though science is sceptical, ruthless in criticism and has many aspects on which people disagree. What keeps it intact is the process through which it works: Everyone accepts that the only thing that matters it what works, what the evidence says. NL/RBE and the activism in support of it, should also be taken forward only by evidence. As I wrote in the beginning of this text, the main goal is to increase knowledge and share it. Science thrives within the current economic system, even though the current system is hostile and somewhat alien to its working principles. So can TZM, if we learn from the successes of science. The new organizational structure could enable us too, to implement near limitless approaches and ideas, in a collective bottom-up way, while everyone still supports the core, keeping the movement intact.

These changes would enable many ways to affect change, in an efficient way. The experience and knowledge of coordinators would guide the development of the movement more and the movement would become more connected, because people would have more time to make it happen.