# 17 ROOMS

## A platform for "big ideas"

**Do you have a bold idea – or the kernel of one – to improve a large number of lives or many parts of the planet by 2030?**

## WE SEEK IDEAS THAT COULD BENEFIT FROM:

A facilitated virtual "sprint" with a curated group of partners to test and refine the proposition

A brainstorm about who has the most to gain from the idea and who might resist it

A public dialogue to sharpen related debates

**IF YOU KNOW OF A RELEVANT IDEA, IT MIGHT BE A TERRIFIC CANDIDATE FOR THE 17 ROOMS FLAGSHIP!**

## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY BIG IDEAS?

Since 2018, the 17 Rooms flagship, organized by the Center for Sustainable Development at Brookings and The Rockefeller Foundation, has brought together more than a hundred short-term working groups to catalyze ideas and accelerate actions for the world's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through these experiments, we've uncovered efficient and collaborative techniques to improve ideas, while building relationships along the way.

In 2025, 17 Rooms aims to surface and develop "big ideas," fresh approaches that are audacious enough to inspire but also practical enough to be viable. We are looking for concepts that can capture the imagination while steering implementation debates toward tangible results.

A big idea might be an action, tool, or mechanism that could be scoped, launched, or replicated to meaningfully improve, say, 200 million people's lives or some commensurate share of the planet by 2030. Concepts that blend evidence-based viability with risk-accepting novelty. The most transformational ideas will often work across sectors to drive impact.

**Big ideas could mean anything from:**

- A new type of global fund to ensure digital cash transfers reach the world's poorest communities, to

- A public data tool to help investors identify and avoid companies that use forced labor

- An international "impact hub" to achieve zero maternal deaths by 2030, or

- Scaling "interspecies money" using artificial intelligence to give animals a say on how digital currencies are spent on their own protection.

## HOW DOES 17 ROOMS SUPPORT BIG IDEAS?

For selected big ideas, we convene curated virtual working groups (or "Rooms") to help vet, refine, and advance the thinking. These "sprints" are organized in sessions of 1-3 rapid-sequence meetings.

Leveraging the unique abilities of the Brookings Institution and The Rockefeller Foundation to convene experts and new perspectives, our secretariat organizes:

### Purpose-built convening techniques
We work with Room co-leads to facilitate virtual Room meetings, aiming for best-in-class working sessions to advance thinking quickly.

### An empirical anchor
We bridge frontier thinking with our colleagues' deep expertise in innovation systems and policy breakthroughs.

### A rigorous publication process
We work with Room co-leads to produce a short evidence-based memo (example here) on the practicalities of the idea and the opportunity to submit an op-ed to Project Syndicate for potential publication across their global network of media partners.

## WHAT DO I NEED TO BEGIN?

We are looking for several key ingredients:

### A big idea
You have a bold vision for a mechanism, technology, initiative, or intervention that, if realized, could have a transformative impact on some specific aspect of the SDGs by 2030. The thing need not originate from traditional policy communities or be at a particular stage of development – it can be scoped on concept, starting in pilot phase, or already developed or tested enough to be ready for scale.

### A signal of demand
You have persuasive evidence that the idea might work – for example, through interest from key validators or decision-makers, impact metrics from a test run, or simply a well-informed case for how to incentivize uptake.

### Potential contributors
You have thoughts on good candidates who could co-lead a Room – or at least the types of people who could add value to developing the idea further. Ideally, the insights are from disciplines outside your own and bring a complementary perspective.

### Readiness to "unlock" a next step
The idea is at a stage where the 17 Rooms virtual convening format can open a key door in refining, testing, or advancing it. The expert-informed outputs – a sharpened argument and public discussion of the idea – will add value toward next steps.

## HOW DO I GET IN TOUCH?
Complete our online form or write to us at 17Rooms@brookings.edu