



# MEETING THE MOMENT

Looking back at the first 10 years of Prime  
and looking forward to our next 10 years 



## MISSION

Prime Coalition is a nonprofit organization that steers and influences capital to support scalable solutions to climate change.

## VISION

A world in which humanity thrives, without the threat of climate change.

Prime Coalition completed our original 10-year strategic plan – 18 months early! – in 2021. Upon its conclusion, Prime’s Board of Directors challenged our team to consider how Prime might amplify its impact by 10–100x over the next 10 years. Throughout 2022 and early 2023, our team worked hard on a long list of research-oriented inputs to dream about our next decade. We conducted an internal SWOT analysis, external interviews and surveys, staff and Board retreats, and a facilitated process with The Bridgespan Group to inform our thinking and planning. This report looks back at what we’ve done so far and where we intend to go in the future to advance solutions that rise to the speed and scale required by our global climate challenge.



## Acknowledgments

We are grateful to all the past, current, and future staff, and partners of Prime – it is much easier to tackle seemingly insurmountable challenges with you in our corner. Extra special thanks to the staff and board members that turned Prime’s founding 10-year vision into reality: Dame Fiona Murray, Sarah Kearney, Maica Rollin, Geoff Chapin, Dennis Costello, Alicia Seiger, Michael Solomentsev, Nicole Systrom, Scott Burger, Rachel Wasser, Ryan Macpherson, Wendy Hernández, Maggie Cutts, Dan Sherman, Matthew Nordan, Johanna Wolfson, Brian von Herzen, Jeff McCarthy, Phil Giudice, Amy Duffuor, Michael Campos, Lauren Hartle, and Lubna Elia.

We spoke with dozens of people from Prime’s ecosystem, both formally and informally, in the process of developing this vision. We are so appreciative of the many people in our sphere: our now 250+ philanthropic partners that have joined in Prime programs over the past decade; our phenomenal legal and audit teams blazing new pathways with us; the interviewees who have supported and cheered us on in too many ways to count; the Creating an Adaptive Plan team at the Bridgespan Group for their deep content and process expertise; and of course the governance and advisory committee volunteers from Prime’s Board of Directors,

Fund Advisory Committee, Mission Alignment Committee, Investment Advisory Committee, Limited Partner Advisory Committee, and Project Frame Steering Committee, who help us learn and do day in and day out.

Our work would not be possible without courageous, impact-first philanthropic partners who put their trust in us, or game-changing, phenomenal portfolio companies and teams that we believe in, even when others do not. While we can’t precisely predict what the next ten years will bring, we are most optimistic in community with others seeking to shift the world toward positive impact.

We work at and for Prime, but we are people first and foremost. We hold deep affection and care for the people outside of work who help us get up in the morning and give us the energy to work on tough issues. Here’s to all the tributaries that have led us down this river: love and light to our many friends, families, colleagues, mentors, ancestors, and inspirations.

Finally, our sincere thanks to Esmé Park for proofreading and Kelly Cassella of [Genaes](#) [Creative](#) for designing the report. We are grateful that you made this work look and feel beautiful.

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# SECTION 1: IMPETUS



## Prime's role in the ecosystem and in this moment in time

We're publishing this strategic plan shortly after the closure of Silicon Valley Bank ("SVB"), a financial crisis that impacted Prime's own investment funds, our portfolio companies, and thousands of others working tirelessly in climate. The disaster was a poignant reminder to us about the critical role that philanthropy and catalytic capital plays whenever other private and public investors cannot step in. Prime was ready to construct an Emergency Relief Catalytic Fund that would've been able to aggregate private philanthropy to deploy toward the most impactful climate solutions that were also most in need of support. During the 48-hour SVB shutdown, Prime received 128 separate climate company requests for support, representing about \$1.7B in assets banked at SVB, with approximately \$200MM in financial requirements due in the following 120 days.

Miraculously, the federal government stepped in to protect SVB depositors in time to make payroll uninterrupted, and we didn't have to. But we were left with the lasting reminder: Prime and its philanthropic partners are here to advance our climate mission when and because no one else can, and we'll continue assessing those needs rigorously and in real time in order to honor the life-saving nature of philanthropic capital, which has the dual privilege and responsibility of being singularly unencumbered by election cycles, fund life cycles, or short-term reporting cycles.

The concept of additionality at Prime is rooted in our founder Sarah Kearney's discovery of the program-related investment (PRI) language in the US Tax Code during her graduate research in 2011 and realization that the PRI mechanism could be much more versatile than it had been to date. Since 1969, program-related investments have allowed the infusion of private foundation capital into for-profit entities but count toward minimum grant distribution requirements. Defined in Section 4944(c) of the Internal Revenue Code enacted 50 years ago, "through program-related investments, a private foundation can invest money – equity, loan, loan guarantee, etc. – in ventures that aim to achieve the foundation's charitable purposes but do not otherwise meet the criteria to be a permissible business investment."

To qualify as a program-related investment, an endeavor must meet three requirements:

- 1 The primary purpose of the investment is to accomplish one or more of the charitable, religious, scientific, literary, educational, and other exempt purposes described in section 170(c)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code;
- 2 No significant purpose of the investment is the production of income or the appreciation of property; and
- 3 No purpose of the investment is to lobby, support, or oppose candidates for public office or to accomplish any of the other political purposes forbidden to private foundations by section 170(c)(2)(D)<sup>1</sup> of the Internal Revenue Code.<sup>2</sup>

The first prong – primary exempt purpose – requires a two-part test: 1) investment must **significantly further** the accomplishment of the foundation’s exempt activities, and 2) it would not have been made **but for** the relationship between the investment and the accomplishment of exempt purposes.<sup>3</sup> “But for” in the Code here is synonymous with additionality as Prime imagines it today.

Additionality is the linchpin of how Prime has aimed to achieve impact during our first 10 years. Using the logic denoted in Figure A, Prime has aggregated and deployed approximately \$300MM of catalytic capital toward climate change. To date, whenever an early-stage venture investment is proposed, we consider each of three underwriting criteria:

1. **ADDITIONALITY:** The company will not receive sufficient investment to develop its novel climate solution without catalytic capital.
2. **BRIDGE TO SOMEWHERE:** If the company receives sufficient investment, it will be attractive to follow-on capital to continue developing and deploying its novel climate solution.
3. **IMPACT POTENTIAL:** If the company’s novel climate solution is deployed at scale, it will have a gigaton-scale Greenhouse Gas (GHG) impact.”

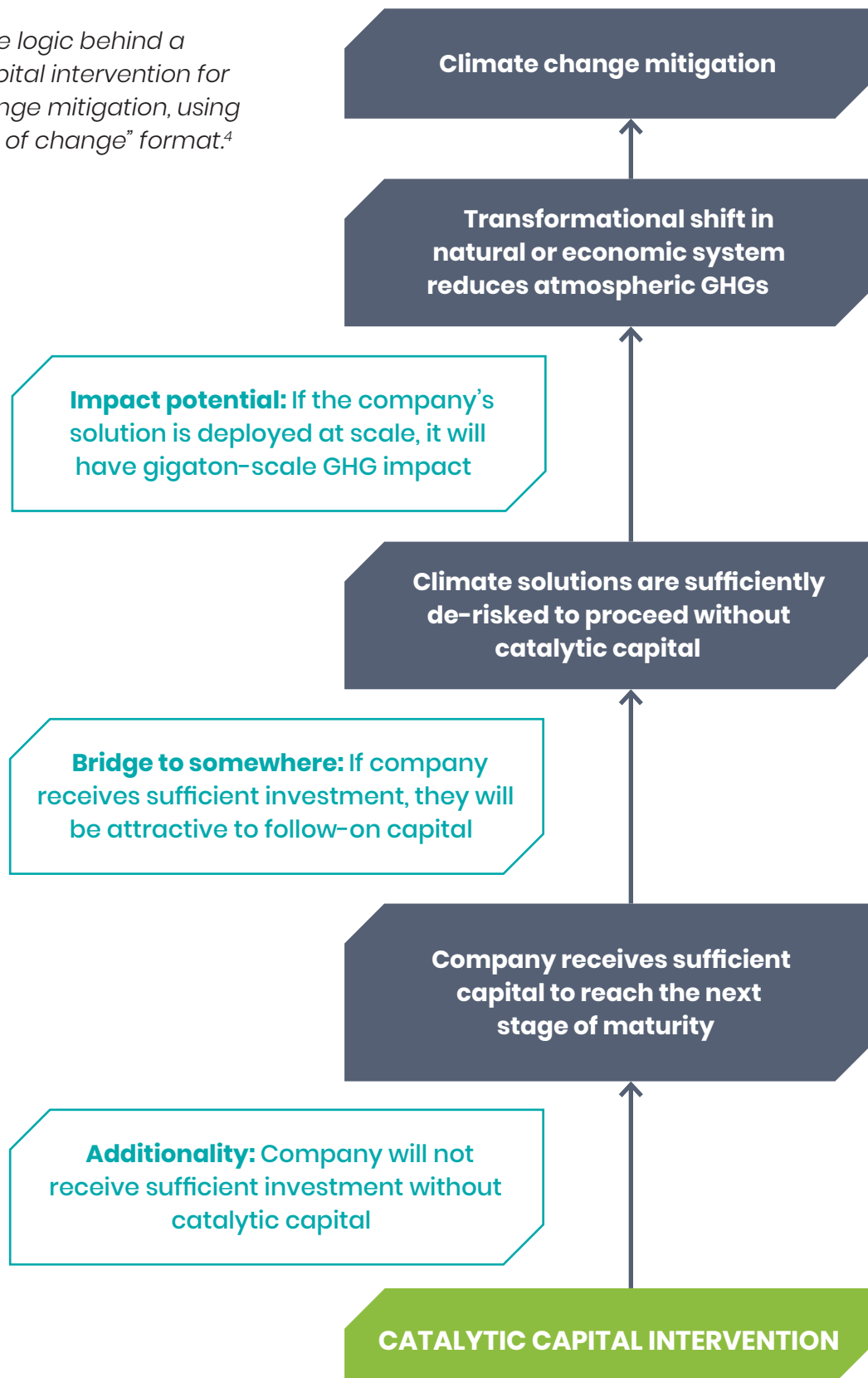
We can never be certain that any of these conditions are true without a crystal ball. However, if our rigorous diligence process demonstrates that all three criteria may be met, then we choose to intervene with catalytic investment.

<sup>1</sup> “For purposes of this section, the term “charitable contribution” means a contribution or gift to or for the use of a corporation, trust, or community chest, fund, or foundation which is not disqualified for tax exemption under section 501(c)(3) by reason of attempting to influence legislation, and which does not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.”

<sup>2</sup> IRC Section 53.4944(a)(1)(i-iii)

<sup>3</sup> IRC Section 53.4944-3(a)(2)(i)

**FIGURE A.** The logic behind a catalytic capital intervention for climate change mitigation, using a “pathways of change” format.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Anderson, Andrea. “The Community Builder’s Approach to Theory of Change.” *The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change*, 2009.

Prime's evaluation of our underwriting criteria spans  
**three motivating thresholds:**

### COMPLIANCE

As a public charity, Prime must advance our nonprofit mission and benefit the public good. Public charities have a lower “but for” compliance threshold than private foundations in contemplating direct charitable investments. Prime, however, holds itself to the highest standard of the “but for” test to align with our philanthropic partners and to go above and beyond the compliance threshold. In other words, we consider compliance the lowest hurdle to clear alongside optics and conviction.

1

### OPTICS

Prime strives to achieve the highest and best use of every philanthropic dollar we raise and deploy toward our mission of mitigating climate change. We share the driving motivation to avoid both the appearance of and actual risk of private benefit among our philanthropic partners, co-investors, and investment managers. This is yet another reason we are explicit about our process and transparent in our documentation of assessing additionality for every venture we support with catalytic capital.

2

### CONVICTION

Most importantly, Prime is focused on addressing the catastrophic effects of climate change for present and future generations. Our role in this space is to ensure the capital we raise is used to address unseen and misunderstood gaps persistent in the landscape of climate change solutions. Out of a deep appreciation for the scale of the problems – and in honor of the uniqueness of charitable capital – our staff and board have an exceptionally high drive to channel capital only where it is most needed. Convincing ourselves of additionality is our highest threshold and the one we view as most important to forging and stewarding trusting relationships with our philanthropic partners.

3



# 2014–2023 Key Performance Indicators



**\$300MM**

Total catalytic capital raised and deployed by Prime since inception.



**\$130MM**

Total capital mobilized into Prime itself and Prime portfolio.



**\$50MM**

Total raised for Prime Impact Fund.



**\$230MM**

Total raised for Azolla Ventures.



**256**

Philanthropic partners engaged since inception.



**24**

DAF sponsors with completed transactions.



**78**

Private foundations with completed transactions.



**78**

First-time philanthropic investors.



**49**

First-time energy or climate investors.



**30**

Portfolio companies supported.



**3,700**

Active CRANE tool users.



**\$200B**

AUM of Project Frame members.

## Charge from Prime’s Board of Directors

In October 2021, Prime completed its original 10-year strategic plan 18 months early. Upon achieving this milestone, driven by the urgency and scale of climate change, Prime’s Board of Directors challenged our team to consider how Prime could amplify its impact by 10–100x over the next 10 years. Their charge required us to think about what our impact has been so far and where we want to go next. The following shortlist of draft options was developed after deep reflection:

### Draft Scenario A: “Build all the funds we can”

In this scenario, Prime could aggregate and deploy catalytic capital through many more impact-first funds, dramatically expanding our catalytic investing practice. As a point of reference, Prime worked with one investment team during its first ten years. This scenario assumed that we would be most impactful by expanding internal teams to address neglected opportunities due to Prime’s ability to mobilize catalytic capital. Our team ultimately decided against this approach as we agreed that focusing solely on adding investment teams would not necessarily advance our climate mission as expansively nor allow us to maintain our relentless pursuit of excellence.

### Draft Scenario B: “Concierge”

In this scenario, our team considered keeping Prime as a small and tight-knit team to focus on scaling impact via a “concierge” service for philanthropic partners seeking to enable climate change solutions with their capital. Prime would center its impact on connectivity and relationship-building between different actors in our spheres of influence, primarily serving the philanthropy community. We eventually decided against this scenario as we recognized that to remain meaningful “connectors,” we must also be meaningful “doers.”

### Draft Scenario C: “Steer and influence capital”

In this scenario, we imagined a Prime that would both steer capital through the expansion of our own impact-first investment programs and *influence* capital by working with investors beyond our own affiliated activities. This scenario integrates the distinct yet complementary aspects of Scenario A and Scenario B. It aims to balance the needs we’ve identified for our organization, the needs we’ve heard and seen in the field, and the significant demands of the climate crisis.

We are proud of our decision to proceed with the “Steer and Influence Capital” vision for Prime-in-ten-years. Within this vision, there are myriad ways to expand, deepen and add toward our board’s challenge of achieving 10–100x Prime’s current organizational impact by 2033. As we make decisions, we will continue to hold tight to our core value of *additionality*<sup>5</sup> – avoiding redundancy in the nonprofit sector whenever possible and dedicating ourselves to activities that require the Prime-specific blend of expertise, relationships, corporate form, values, and experimentation.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix A: Prime values and counterbalances

## Lessons from our first decade

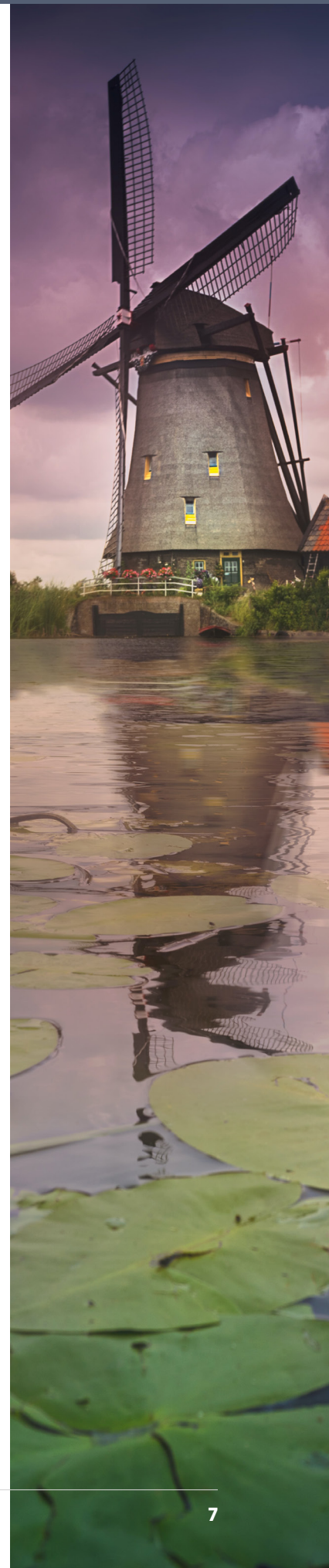
The spirit of experimentation runs strong and deep at Prime. From 2013 through 2023, we focused over 90% of Prime’s time and resources on our first three impact-first investment programs – deal-by-deal venture syndication (2015–2018), Prime Impact Fund (2018+), and Azolla Fund I (2021+). We view these interventions as early, foundational experiments where we explored the boundaries of what charitable capital is capable of from both a compliance and conviction standpoint.

Through our experimentation, we found that there were many interesting and hard questions to address: What are the regulatory limits for charitable organizations and their dollars? What are the capabilities of their respective structures? What is the philanthropy community ready to do? What can we learn from and about philanthropists of all stripes? What are the optimal ways to navigate the complexities that arise at the intersection of nonprofit and for-profit logic? Where and how will we find our people?

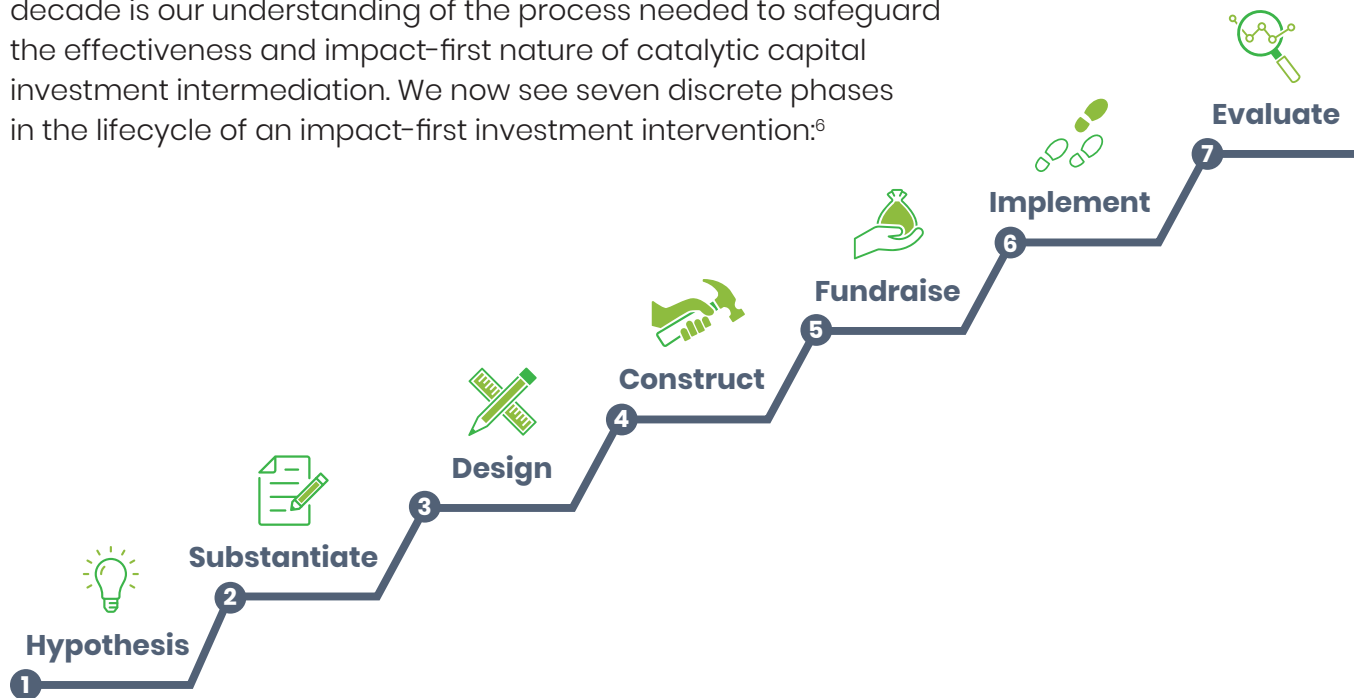
We learned a great deal during our first decade-long set of experiments, both about the day-to-day work of designing and implementing impact-first investment interventions ourselves and about gaps in the field that are salient to our work but that are not investment problems.

In the context of our impact-first investment practice, here are a few of the lessons we’ve learned about the philanthropy community as it relates to catalytic investing:

- ▶ There are more types of philanthropists, more diversity among each type, and a larger number willing to do brave things than we could’ve known.
- ▶ Interest and readiness for catalytic capital investments among philanthropists of all types accelerated and continue to accelerate faster than we anticipated.
- ▶ Optionality is key, and we can (still!) never predict which mechanism for making an impact-first investment will be the best fit until we’re working hand in hand with the philanthropist and their advisors toward closing a transaction.
- ▶ It is difficult for us and our philanthropic partners to predict how long the process will take to move everyone involved from “curious” to “closed” in the context of any transaction.



For Prime, one of the most important learnings from the past decade is our understanding of the process needed to safeguard the effectiveness and impact-first nature of catalytic capital investment intermediation. We now see seven discrete phases in the lifecycle of an impact-first investment intervention:<sup>6</sup>



**FIGURE C.** Prime Coalition’s seven phases of a catalytic capital intervention.

**Hypothesize:** Codify the suspected capital gap and how catalytic capital might help address it.

**Substantiate:** Build the case around specific point-in-time gap(s) for compliance, optics, and conviction thresholds.

**Design:** Explore options for bringing catalytic capital to the substantiated gap(s), often including “learning by doing” on a deal-by-deal syndication basis.

**Construct:** Draft, iterate, and approve legal documents, making sure staff, governing boards, and advisory committees are onboarded thoroughly.

**Fundraise:** Steward philanthropic partners and co-investors through a fundraising pipeline, paying attention to who is stewarding which relationships.

**Implement:** Ongoing operations and continuous process improvement of the intervention.

**Evaluate:** Assess what worked well and what could be improved in subsequent interventions, relative to the nonprofit Theory of Change.

<sup>6</sup> For more detail on each of the seven phases, visit Prime’s [Catalytic Capital Intermediation Resources Library](#).

Another key learning for Prime has been around how we characterize the “north star” of our impact goals. Our first 10 years of climate programming had a narrow focus on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and removal. This is a common approach and is still the primary driver for many climate grantmakers and investors today. The urgency of the climate crisis and its disastrous impacts on people’s lives lead many to believe that stopping emissions and reversing warming are the highest priority, buying us more time as a species to work out all other social and environmental problems.

Today, Prime acknowledges the blind spots left by a singular focus on emissions. The obsession with atmospheric concentration of GHGs leaves little space to consider our effect on people’s lives, which is the ultimate motivation for Prime. We have been listening as the climate justice movement, led by communities of color around the globe, speaks loud and clear about the interconnectedness of climate with other planetary crises.

Achieving a safe, stable climate will require radical systems change. GHG emissions must be dramatically slowed and then stopped. The removal of atmospheric GHGs from past emissions, which will contribute to warming for years to come, must be accelerated. Infrastructure must be rebuilt to withstand a warmer climate, and society must be reshaped to become more resilient to future climate shocks. To address these challenges, we must make transformational changes in how we live and work.

Enacting these transformational system changes is a one-time opportunity to restore planetary balance. However, we must not lose the opportunity to simultaneously address threats to humanity that go beyond climate change. Ecosystems must be protected from loss of biodiversity. Water and air pollution from energy and industrial facilities that cause loss of life and health, especially in communities of color, must be stopped. Wealth inequality and racial injustice must be addressed so all people can thrive. Depending on the path taken, a net zero future could be a beneficial outcome for all of humanity or a harmful outcome for all but a lucky few. We are beginning to recognize how our deployment of philanthropic capital and the norms of climate tech innovation threaten to exacerbate many of the world’s problems, and what we have learned is now informing our vision of the next 10 years for Prime.





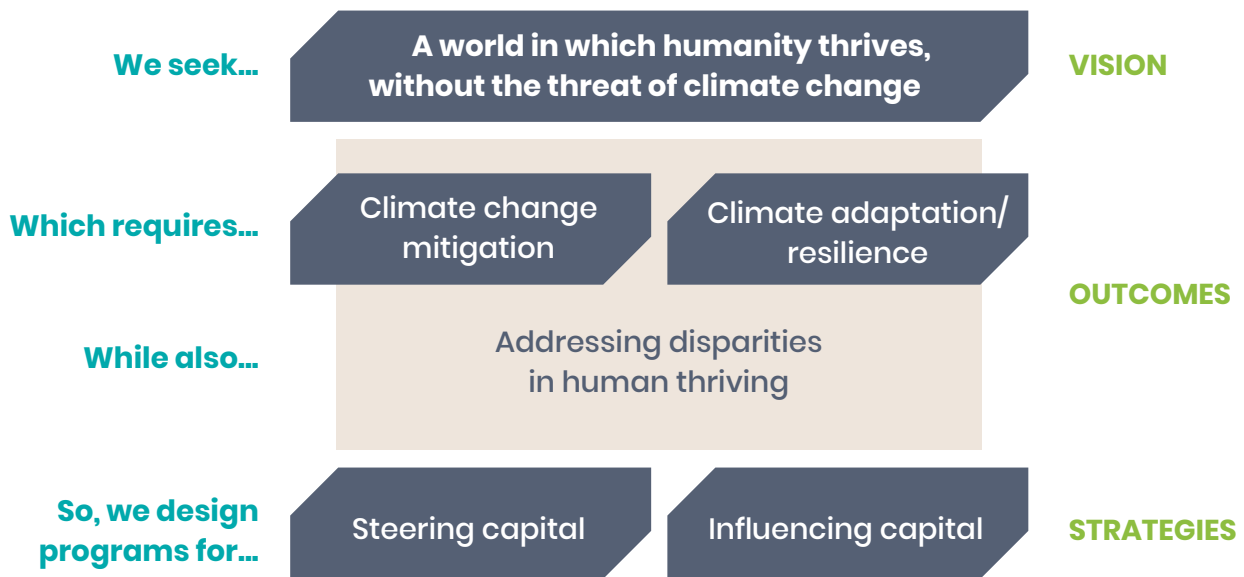
## SECTION 2:

# THE GO-FORWARD PLAN



Prime envisions a world in which humanity thrives without the threat of climate change. We see climate change as the greatest threat to the well-being of people and the planet, while acknowledging the interconnectedness of the climate crisis and other systemic threats. We are committed to using our resources and capabilities to address the causes of climate change and reduce harm from the consequences of a warmer climate.

For the next 10 years, Prime will remain a climate-focused organization, expanding our mission to include climate adaptation and resilience alongside mitigation. At the same time, we recognize that the climate crisis is inherently linked to other threats to human thriving and that these threats are most acute for those with the least power and privilege. By including an equity lens in Prime’s updated Theory of Change, we are setting our sights on climate solutions and interventions that improve health and well-being for all people.



**FIGURE D.** Prime’s Theory of Change for 2023 and beyond

In the coming years, we will continue to apply careful, rigorous thought to Prime’s decision-making processes around impact, and we will update those processes to incorporate an equity lens. Although absolute harm avoidance is impossible when working toward systems change, we will develop processes to identify known risks of harm and mitigate them in partnership with the communities affected by those risks. We will consider harm avoidance across two spheres of influence: internal to Prime (our organization, portfolio, and close partners) and external (affected communities, regions, and the world). We will lean into our value of humility and strive for progress rather than purity.

## It's 2033. Prime has 10–100x greater impact than today. What will that look like?

Recognizing the urgency of the climate crisis, Prime will be guided by two interrelated strategies over the next ten years:

### STEERING CAPITAL<sup>7</sup>

We will substantiate, design, construct, fundraise and implement impact-first investment programs that each target an acute capital gap and a well-defined impact threshold salient to climate mitigation, adaptation, or resilience. This could include subsequent interventions in partnership with our two existing investment teams and/or the addition of new-to-Prime investment teams.

### INFLUENCING CAPITAL<sup>8</sup>

We will create spaces, guidance, and tools that strengthen the investment practices of asset owners and investment managers outside Prime and that drive toward Prime's nonprofit mission, including (but not limited to) best practices in both climate impact accountability and catalytic capital intermediation.

Prime has the unique privilege of being both an investor and a nonprofit, which means that important opportunities to advance our mission outside ourselves have sprouted from our investment activities over the past ten years. Our ability to be nimble and responsive to a rapidly changing world (in terms of where we might be needed most) is a strength that we aspire to retain. Our 10-year vision and 2-year adaptive plan can and will evolve to meet the needs of the moment. We're sharing one set of estimates around impact indicators below, with the disclaimer that this is not a comprehensive list of indicators that our in-house impact team will be tracking, these are not our internal targets as of yet (though we've charted target-setting as a necessary and near-term workstream), and the indicators themselves will adapt as we launch specific programs:

<sup>7</sup> In Prime's 2022 definition of our three nonprofit programs – 1) catalytic investing, 2) impact accountability, and 3) learning & leadership – program 1 will be included in the "steering capital" strategy in 2033.

<sup>8</sup> Programs 2 and 3 in 2022 will both be included in the "influencing capital" strategy in 2033.

Example indicators	Current 2023	Possible Future 2025	Possible Future 2033	10-year delta
<b>STEERING CAPITAL</b>				
Affiliated impact-first investment teams, actively investing	2	3	4	2x
Companies or projects that received Prime investment (annually)*	6	8	24	4x
Catalytic capital deployed (including Azolla Fund I)	\$297MM	\$800MM	\$3B	10x
Non-catalytic co-investment (aka "crowding in")	\$185MM	\$1B	\$5B	27x
<b>INFLUENCING CAPITAL *</b>				
CRANE reports generated by users (annually)	1,000	1,500	25,000	25x
Capital raised intended for climate among firms participating in Project Frame	\$40B	\$80B	\$1T	25x

**TABLE 1.** A subset of Prime's key performance indicators to share an approximate sense of impact scaling over the next 10 years.

\* Units here – companies, projects, funds, systems innovation programs, etc. – will be determined by the specific program/investment teams themselves, so this line is meant to be demonstrative of units to be determined in the years ahead.

## How will Prime steer capital in 2033?

Over the next 10 years, we will build subsequent investment interventions within our two existing programs – 1) Emissions reduction/Seed to Series B equity, and 2) Emissions reduction/Scaling investment – and launch at least two additional programs by 2033, leaving our constellation of investment programs with at least four affiliated investment teams. This means we will expand our engagement with Prime's existing catalytic investors into additional catalytic investment opportunities over time and welcome as many new-to-Prime catalytic investors as possible. • We will add the in-house ability to complement investments with systems innovation grants, which are not investments per se, but shift the systems around our investments.



### ***Continuing to mobilize the philanthropy community and aggregate catalytic capital***

Over the past ten years, Prime has worked with over 250 philanthropists to mobilize more than \$300 million towards climate solutions. Our relationship-first approach to working with philanthropists is centered on building and maintaining trust and credibility. Additionally, our approach focuses on solving the structural challenges that philanthropists encounter when deploying charitable capital toward market-driven solutions. We plan to work with more philanthropists of all stripes, guiding the philanthropy sector to consider the tools of catalytic investing as a standard part of their grantmaking.

In 2033, we will maintain our strategic position as an expert concierge for philanthropists who want to pursue market-driven solutions to climate change, specifically envisioned as:



- ▶ Solving strategic challenges for philanthropists in designing impact-first investment interventions, using a practitioner’s approach to launching interventions, which is hard-earned from our many years of experience on the ground;
- ▶ Continuing to enable philanthropists to deploy their program dollars toward market-driven solutions to climate change by a) bringing together many different philanthropic partners to achieve meaningful scale in a way they cannot do on their own, and b) removing barriers to perceived regulatory risk for catalytic capital transactions;
- ▶ Enabling philanthropists’ use of the full range of mechanisms available for catalytic capital, including grantmaking (~100% IRR) all the way to the boundary of competitive financial returns (up to 15% IRR in venture capital);
- ▶ Serving as a welcoming onramp for new-to-climate philanthropists and new-to-catalytic-investing asset owners and intermediaries;
- ▶ Continuing to earn trust in many ways, one of which will be through our relentless pursuit of excellence around impact accountability and additionality; and
- ▶ Continuing to serve as knowledgeable switchboard operators by directing philanthropic partners toward programming outside our own, especially toward efforts developing solutions that enable and are complementary to Prime’s Theory of Change.



### Deepening our catalytic investing practice

In Prime's first 10 years, we primarily worked with one investment team focused on early-stage climate tech companies. Over the next 10 years, we will build a larger constellation of closely affiliated impact-first investment teams, each focusing on a capital gap or impact threshold in which they are most experienced. We imagine Prime working with up to four teams in 2033 – each with investment interventions at various stages of development<sup>9</sup> – contingent on clear catalytic investing hypotheses developed by values-aligned investment teams. Partnering with multiple teams will enable us to tackle multiple capital gaps in tandem.

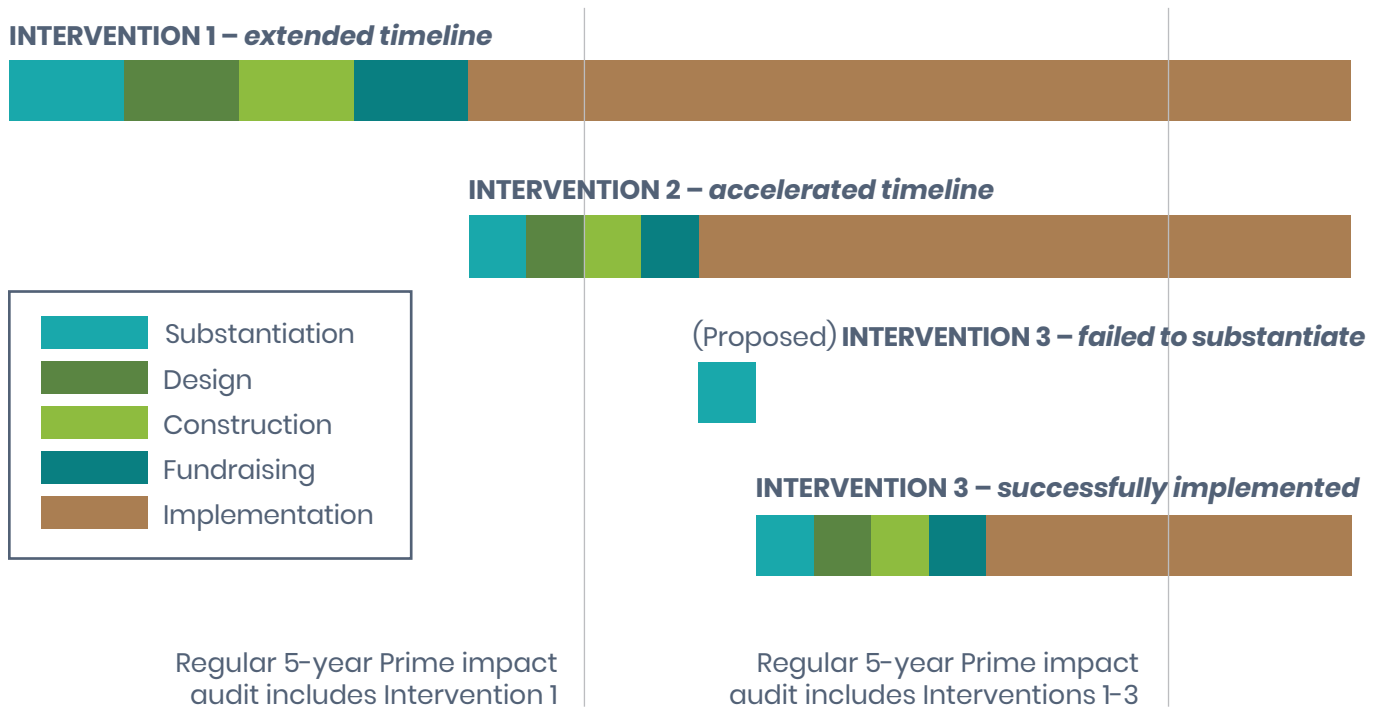
An “investment intervention” could be defined across several dimensions, including a) sector, b) asset class, and c) type of barrier or gap being addressed. There are many ways to ring-fence money collected for a specific charitable purpose, managed by an all-star team, and with aligned performance incentives to ensure we're deploying capital to its most catalytic use.

Program	STEERING CAPITAL										
	<i>We imagine one investment team per row</i>										
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
 <b>Azolla</b> Ventures <small>Created by Prime Coalition</small> Emissions reduction / Seed to Series B equity	3	3	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	6
 Emissions reduction / Scaling investment	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3
Impact Type / Capital Gap TBD 1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
Impact Type / Capital Gap TBD 2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	2
Total active impact- first investment interventions at Prime	4	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

**TABLE 2.** Table showing one scenario for how Prime's programs could steadily grow over the coming 10 years, where the unit of each line is the combination of a capital gap and well-defined impact threshold.

<sup>9</sup> See Prime's seven phases of developing new catalytic investment programs for definitions of each phase in the “lessons learned from our first ten years” section of this report.

In 2033, Prime will have four steering capital programs, expanding from the two we have today – Azolla Ventures and Early Climate Infrastructure – to include two additional teams. Each intervention will proceed through the previously outlined seven phases, with varying speeds depending on the circumstances of the program.



**FIGURE E.** Example program building up a set of interventions over time. Before the substantiation phase begins, investment managers ideate their investment thesis – we call this the hypothesis phase (not shown).

The closeness of the relationship between Prime and any investment team will be determined by the circumstances of the work being performed. Closeness could include corporate form, employer, governance, workplace culture, compensation structure, and more. Whether the team is inside or outside Prime’s nonprofit corporate form, all our interventions will be impact-first. We do not underestimate the time and energy required to forge and maintain productive working relationships with mission-aligned investment management teams.

We will contemplate “systems innovation” (grant-supported) programming alongside our catalytic investments for any investment interventions launched after Azolla Fund I. We will make lessons learned and resources available beyond the context of our investments where possible, but this ambition does not mean Prime is necessarily supporting organizations outside of our own interventions with those resources.

## How will Prime influence capital in 2033?

The center of our **influencing capital** strategy is *impact accountability*. We will focus on two broad themes around which we will work to influence outside investors: 1) climate impact management enabled through community and tools, and 2) structured learning to advance positive impact, climate or otherwise, through course curricula and fellowships (e.g., Prime’s lessons learned developing catalytic capital intermediation and impact accountability methodology).

Over the next ten years, our nonprofit interventions, such as Project Frame, CRANE, the catalytic capital resources library, and more, will be deepened and expanded. In 2033, they will provide vital resources to asset owners, asset managers, intermediaries, and investees toward higher-impact outcomes than would have otherwise been achieved, hopefully far beyond our current center of gravity in the US and Europe.

We will have built a services function to share Prime’s lessons learned around similar themes – climate impact assessment, climate impact management, and/or design and construction of impact-first intermediation. The purpose of Prime’s services will be to serve those that would like to implement impact accountability practices, but cannot access the resources they need elsewhere, loosely following the logic of program-related investing:

1

**Partners might struggle to advance a climate mission but for Prime’s expertise;**

2

**Partners’ work will significantly further Prime’s mission; and**

3

**Financial return is not a primary purpose of the service Prime delivers.**

Our services function will have strong policies in place to control for the use of Prime’s deliverables to avoid abuse and ensure continued evaluation is built in (including strong terms of engagement around publication). To live our values around diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) we will continue to build programs that consider access, equity, and cost.

## What is it like to work at and with Prime in 2033?

### ***A culture of care, iterative progress, and learning***

Nonprofit professionals are chronically overworked, often because of our internal drive to advance our nonprofit mission. This is particularly acute in the climate ecosystem – we care deeply about the work, and a ticking clock adds significant urgency to everything we do. At the same time, we are working against anthropogenic climate change for the world we want to be in – a space full of joy, imagination, and life – where humans and ecosystems can thrive. We find hope in the world that is beginning to sprout, and before we get there, we are working to build an environment at Prime that reflects the world we want to live in.

In 2033, we will continue to assertively talk the talk and walk the walk on our values, ensuring that humility, care, collective abundance, additionality, and tenacity are present in all we do. People will be attracted to Prime to build a mission-aligned career in climate, and Prime will be a place where people can grow and learn. We will maintain high staff retention through our values, culture, and excellent compensation and benefits. Term-limited team members will represent a cadre of Prime alumni that continue to bring Prime’s values to mission-aligned work elsewhere in the field. Prime’s advisory positions will be considered prestige appointments and advance volunteers’ respective professions. Staff will consistently say that Prime is where they can do their best work.

Our team will continue to emphasize DEIB in our organization and impact on the world. When we influence capital, we will make sure we’re working with a wide range of organizations, including those that do not have the resources to fully build out impact accountability and impact-first investment practices themselves. When we influence capital, we will make sure we’re supporting the organizations that both do and do not have the resources to fully build out impact accountability and impact-first investment practices themselves.

We will show how to use “no as a love word” externally and internally, showing strength with warmth and competence. We will provide guidelines, talking points, and support internally to empower our staff to say no with clarity to supervisors, cross-department directors, board members, advisors, or philanthropic partners.

### **Things we do not see in our 2033 vision because “no is a love word.”**

When we say no to one thing, it’s because we’re saying yes to something else. To frame our next ten years, we also want to name several ideas that we’ve decided are not a part of our 10-year aspirations:

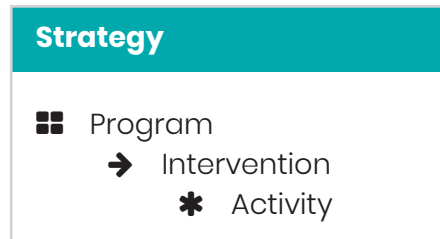
- ▶ We will not reach 10-100x impact by substantiating, designing, constructing, fundraising and implementing 10-100 funds ourselves. From both a capacity and expertise standpoint, we don’t think this is the highest and best use of our team’s time.

- ▶ We will not exclusively focus on teaching others to build and raise funds because we cannot be excellent teachers without continuing to be excellent “doers.”
- ▶ We will not aspire to be experts at all climate grantmaking and programming everywhere. We will not be an all-seeing keeper of what other climate-related organizations are doing. We will live our values of humility and abundance by serving as switchboard operators whenever possible, but we will not claim that we have a perfectly comprehensive perspective of the field.
- ▶ We will not focus on convincing corporations to change their corporate form or give up their wealth if they aren’t already equipped to act. We feel there is enough for Prime to do toward implementing excellent programming in partnership with philanthropists that are ready to move.
- ▶ We will not be a policy advocacy platform. We will focus on regulation and policy only when it’s required from a systems perspective in the context of a specific investment intervention we are either launching ourselves or coaching others to launch. However, we plan to engage actively with other organizations around these critical topics as outside enablers of Prime’s Theory of Change.



## It's 2023. Prime is already executing at high velocity. How do our current activities fit into the 10-year vision?

Prime is already moving at a high velocity to steer and influence capital toward scalable climate solutions. Here's the taxonomy we use in-house to keep track of our activities:



Here's a snapshot of our current activities, which we share alongside a huge helping of gratitude for the operating grantors that have enabled us to build. We've positioned all our activities from May 2023 inside the Steering Capital/Influencing Capital framework:

Steering Capital	Phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Emissions reduction/Seed to Series B equity               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Syndication</li> <li>→ Prime Impact Fund ("PIF")</li> <li>→ Azolla Fund I</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>IMPLEMENTING</b></p> <p><b>IMPLEMENTING</b></p> <p><b>IMPLEMENTING</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Emissions reduction/Scaling investment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ ECI Trial Interventions 1-3</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>DESIGNING</b></p>
Influencing Capital	Phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ GHG Impact Accountability               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Project Frame                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Community</li> <li>* Pre-Investment Methodology</li> <li>* Education/guidance</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Tools                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* CRANE</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>IMPLEMENTING</b></p> <p><b>EVALUATING</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Field-building for Catalytic Capital               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Catalytic capital intermediation education                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Pilot course</li> <li>* Resources library</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>SUBSTANTIATING</b></p>

## It's Summer 2025. Where is Prime in terms of the organization itself and its impact en route to our 10-year vision?

To stay on course toward our 10-year vision, we've set 2-year impact and organizational destinations, which are described below. Our 2-year destinations are informed heavily by two overarching priorities:

### **Team Capacity & Wellness Priority**

Build our team to achieve our 2-year destinations and 10-year vision while balancing workloads, especially focusing on restructuring our partnerships and communications capacities.

### **Equity Priority**

Center equity across programming, operations, and governance, while tracking progress toward specific, verifiable, equity-focused metrics.

We have pinned these priorities to our 2-year adaptive plan, which our senior leadership intends to revisit and modify every six months. Our board and staff will review our performance regularly using an internal dashboard, which will include indicators focused on our Impact and Organization destinations described below.

## **2-Year Impact Destination**

### ***Steering Capital***

- ▶ We will have completed the scoping work around how our “Steering Capital” strategy might expand to include additional investment teams over time. We will have completed the process to identify a third investment team partner in addition to Azolla and ECI.
- ▶ We will track and evaluate the impact of existing investments and will continue to iterate and refine those processes (e.g., impact framework, impact audit).
- ▶ We will have learned how to build an impact-first ECI investment team through 2-3 syndicated interventions.
- ▶ We will have demonstrated how systems innovation grants can and should accompany catalytic investment capital in the context of our ECI interventions, providing critical, early examples of systems lens investing at Prime.
- ▶ We will be ready to decide whether and how to build a more permanent version of the Early Climate Infrastructure program beyond the “learning by doing” syndication phase.





## 2-Year Impact Destination *(continued)*

### **Influencing Capital**

- ▶ Project Frame will be a global voice for the impact accountability community. Frame will have released resources including updated methodology guidance and a repository of investor profiles.
- ▶ Prime will have developed a 'data and tools platform' based on feedback from the Project Frame community bringing together tools, data sets, experts, and third-party verifiers supporting GHG mitigation.
- ▶ CRANE will have addressed user concerns to improve the tool's overall functionality with version 2.0 and cleared its backlog of pending 'CRANE-verified' reports. Prime, in partnership with Rho Impact, will also have secured funding to develop version 3.0, incorporating portfolio and retrospective analysis.
- ▶ We will have recruited a dedicated staff lead for Prime's Learning and Leadership practice. They will have developed a strong workplan to advance our work on catalytic capital intermediation field-building and Frame's pre-investment methodology guidance.
- ▶ We will have decided whether to develop a services program and, if so, identified core design elements and initial workplans to implement.

## 2-Year Organization Destination

- ▶ Everyone working at Prime will be fluent in the intersection of climate, equity, and justice. They will also know how Prime's work is positioned relative to others pursuing systems change.
- ▶ We will have developed a comprehensive diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging organizational strategy, with accountability at the senior leadership level. We will have developed strong organizational definitions to set an internal baseline for understanding the systems of oppression we are living and working in.
- ▶ Our staff, governance, and leadership will reflect our commitment to including voices and experiences across many different dimensions of diversity (inclusive of racial identity, wealth, educational background, age, and more).
- ▶ We will have improved Prime's capabilities around managing and retaining staff, in service of our staff's long-term well-being. In addition, we will have aligned our organizational capital and resource with our values and put guardrails in place to push back on external forces that might imperil this work.
- ▶ We will have begun to track well-being metrics so that we can walk the walk on enabling our team to cleanly set boundaries around their focus time, meeting time, work time, and more. Our staff will feel like they have the time and space they need to do their best work. Concrete internal infrastructure tasks include:
  - Additional Partnerships team staff
  - Additional Communications staff
  - Updated employee manual
  - Updated employee benefits and guidance
  - Staff and leadership performance review process
  - Organizational scorecard on wellness and DEIB
  - Dedicated support to continue Prime's DEIB journey



# PHILANTHROPISTS OF ALL STRIPES NOW IS THE TIME TO STEP UP



Since our founding in 2015, Prime has worked with over 250 philanthropic partners and mobilized approximately \$300 million to support climate solutions whose impact would not have otherwise enabled, accelerated, or deepened but for our catalytic intervention. This group of courageous philanthropists and their advisors includes 78 private foundations and 24 donor-advised fund (DAF) sponsors. 78 of our philanthropic partners had never made a catalytic investment before working with Prime, and 49 were new to climate change investment or grantmaking altogether.

To achieve our vision of steering and influencing capital to address the global climate crisis over the next 10 years, we'll need every type of philanthropic partner to step up to the challenge by believing in the power of catalytic capital to de-risk, connect, and crowd-in conventional capital to the companies, projects, and funds whose potential for climate impact is undeniable.

Table 3 below maps out the different philanthropic partners Prime has worked with and their driving motivations as we see them from our vantage point as a catalytic intermediary.

Motivations	Subtypes and typical characteristics
<b>PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Program staff driven by nonprofit mission; investment staff driven by mission to varying degrees</li> <li>▶ Vary widely in their own internal infrastructure (especially legal and investment staff)</li> <li>▶ Vary widely in their appetite for complex financial transactions, usually led by internal champion(s) from program staff</li> </ul>	<p><b>Larger foundations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Independent trustees</li> <li>▶ Large program staff with specializations</li> <li>▶ Large investment staff or OCIO (Outsourced Chief Investment Officer)</li> <li>▶ Reputationally risk averse</li> <li>▶ Long (4 months+) diligence processes</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Smaller Foundations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Trustees are family members</li> <li>▶ Little or no staff</li> <li>▶ Focus areas often led by one family member</li> <li>▶ Can be nimble</li> </ul>

Motivations	Subtypes and typical characteristics
<b>DONOR ADVISED FUNDS*</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Sponsors are highly client-driven</li> <li>▶ Sponsors are responsive to optics and are risk-averse</li> <li>▶ Tend to be slow and bureaucratic</li> </ul>	<p><b>Nationally serving DAF sponsors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Part of a wider wealth management service offering</li> <li>▶ Issue agnostic, limited expertise on hand</li> <li>▶ Traditional grantmaking process is streamlined, catalytic capital investing is usually new and cumbersome</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Specialized DAF sponsors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Understand catalytic investing</li> <li>▶ Tend to charge higher fees</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Community foundations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Extremely client-driven and responsive to client requests</li> <li>▶ Offerings reflect interest of their donor base (local)</li> <li>▶ Mission-driven and usually resource constrained</li> </ul>
<b>CORPORATE GIVING PROGRAMS*</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Very few have leaned into catalytic investing to date</li> <li>▶ Alignment with other business units can help advance the case for catalytic investing</li> <li>▶ Need leadership at the top in order to execute on vision</li> </ul>	<p><b>Corporate foundations with an independent endowment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Able to deploy different types of capital</li> <li>▶ Usually behave similar to a private foundation</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Corporate foundations without an endowment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Rely on revenue from their core business</li> <li>▶ Success depends on internal champions as well as corporate leadership</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Corporate giving program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Philanthropy is part of employee engagement</li> </ul>

Motivations	Subtypes and typical characteristics
<b>INDIVIDUALS, HOUSEHOLDS, OR TRUSTS*</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Risk tolerant</li> <li>▶ Highly motivated for impact</li> <li>▶ Interested in deal flow and context</li> <li>▶ Active donors will often want to be involved beyond financial contributions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Driven by the content</li> <li>▶ On a learning journey</li> <li>▶ Unaware of the full extent of options available</li> <li>▶ Looking for connections and anchor organizations</li> </ul>

**Table 3.** *Landscape of asset owner types, motivations, and typical characteristics.*

*\*Corporate giving programs and individuals often hold an affiliated private foundation or DAF, which expands the option set available to them for catalytic investing.*

There are no limits on the extent to which philanthropists can use the tools of catalytic capital to make a leveraged impact on the causes they care about. Prime’s next 10 years will consist of deepening our practice and pushing our partners as far as they might want to go on their impact-first investing journeys.

When it comes to private foundations and donor-advised funds, donors themselves are the most effective change agents, particularly as they emerge from a generational and cultural transition. This is evident by an increasing number of spend-down foundations, new commitments to climate change, and a stark realization that existing systems are failing to protect humanity from the worst consequences of climate change. We are enthusiastic about the bold commitments we’ve seen from small family foundations that commit a larger amount of their assets toward climate, experiment with different funding approaches, and place trust in their partner intermediaries.

Similarly, we are seeing more and more DAF holders demand a higher level of funding flexibility for impactful organizations in the climate space. The onus is increasingly being placed on DAF sponsors to step up to the demand of their clients for a new standard of impact and accountability that has not previously existed. Prime will continue to focus on field-wide education and support so that DAF holders and their advisors have what they need to move money to where it is needed most.

Corporate partnership is an area where Prime has historically been relatively less active. By nature, corporate giving programs require more internal staff capacity for us to be thoughtful partners. Now, with a few leading corporate partners in our network who are similarly rallying their peers, Prime is launching a landscape research project to explore what corporate partnership could look like with a larger team. This research will take two paths: 1) investigating

the breadth of difficult-to-decarbonize industries and the quality of their climate commitments to better understand how one might plug into Prime’s existing approach and programs, and 2) looking at a wide range of corporate foundations and their appetite for catalytic capital approaches regardless of their direct or indirect role in greenhouse gas emissions.

Regardless of your corporate form, the Prime team will continue to equip our community of philanthropic partners with the tools you need to influence and educate your own set of decision-makers and advisors in true partnership toward our shared mission.

### **Here are a few of the ways that any philanthropist can join in partnership with Prime in 2023 to help us achieve our 10-year vision and 2-year destinations:**

#### **Commit traditional grants to Prime:<sup>10</sup>**

- ▶ Make a general operating grant if you align with Prime’s mission, vision, and values, and feel our team has earned your trust. Multi-year general operating dollars (“MYGOD”) are and will always be our favorite type of partnership.
- ▶ Make a grant into our catalytic investment opportunities. We would love to put your grant dollars to work at Prime over and over again!
- ▶ Make a systems innovation grant to support Prime’s catalytic capital interventions and ensure we’re shaping the systems around each of our investments and ensuring that our investments move the needle to make global shifts to the status quo.
- ▶ Make a grant to support our work to “influence capital” beyond our own investment programs. We’d love to make a project-specific proposal upon request.

#### **Make catalytic investments with Prime (recoverable grants or program-related investments):**

- ▶ Support an ECI intervention while we’re in syndication mode 2023-2024.
- ▶ Keep asking us for more catalytic capital opportunities to demonstrate your interest and enthusiasm – it helps us build out new-to-Prime teams of investment managers with the wind at our backs!

#### **Co-invest with Prime:**

- ▶ Opt-in to our follow-on investor list for select opportunities with our venture portfolio companies.
- ▶ Opt-in to learning about opportunities to co-invest in our ECI investments, when appropriate.
- ▶ We can help you substantiate charitability if/when it is present in the context of your co-investment.

<sup>10</sup> There are nonprofit programs outside Prime that we view as enabling of our own Theory of Change. We love introducing philanthropic partners to other values-aligned nonprofit organizations – please ask us!

## CONTACT

To learn more about anything we've shared above, email us at [impact@primecoalition.org](mailto:impact@primecoalition.org). We'll direct you to the right place.





# RESOURCES



Throughout this document, we've referred to many different concepts and activities that we've undertaken during our first decade. In the spirit of collective abundance, below is a suite of resources that we are glad to share widely with the world.

## **Barriers to the Timely Deployment of Climate Infrastructure**

Many climate solutions scale more slowly and need more capital than other technologies. For example, after promising climate technologies have built pilot projects, they need capital to build demonstration projects. But infrastructure projects in the demonstration phase don't always fit into venture, growth, or project finance investment criteria. As a result, they may go unfunded in a "[second valley of death](#)."

To understand what exactly is needed for climate technologies to move beyond their hatchling stages into large-scale deployment, Prime conducted a [research study](#) in 2021, which was published in the Spring of 2022. We discovered that climate technologies face 4 gaps on the road to large-scale deployment, detailed in the report. As of Q1 2023, we are actively experimenting with investing in various technology stages, project sizes (and sizes of the catalytic investment), industry segments, and capital structures. Prime will also explore working with co-investment partners in this space as we consider our role in the ecosystem.

## **Catalytic Capital Resources Library**

Through 2022, Prime worked with a research team at MIT to strengthen the evidence base around how catalytic capital can be used to support high-risk, deep-impact science and engineering innovation and deployment. This [library](#) draws on our experiences at Prime launching 3 different impact-first investment programs from 2014-2022, as well as field-leading work from organizations we admire. We hope this library will be useful to anyone looking to strengthen their catalytic capital toolbox, whether they are at the very beginning of characterizing a capital gap or interested in improving an existing catalytic investing program.



## CRANE

In 2018, Prime was asked to make our in-house methodology for assessing the “Emissions Reduction Potential” or “ERP” of early-stage climate ventures available to the public. To rise to that call, we built the [CRANE](#) tool, co-developed by [Greenometry](#), [Rho Impact](#), and [Evergreen Climate Innovations](#) (formerly Clean Energy Trust), built by the team at [Rho Impact](#) and supported by [The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation](#), [NYSERDA](#), and [Massachusetts Clean Energy Center \(MassCEC\)](#). CRANE is an online tool and data source to help philanthropists, impact investors, and others assess the potential future emissions reductions of new or early-stage climate solutions. In 2023, CRANE had well over 3000 users. The 2021 User Report is available [here](#).

## Inaugural Climate Impact Audit

Prime has committed to conducting a climate impact audit every five years. The overarching goal is to provide a third-party review of Prime’s impact-first commitment to transformative climate ventures and to share Prime’s lessons learned with the emerging field. The report and summary of high-level findings from Prime’s inaugural climate impact audit are available [here](#).

## Prime Impact Fund

[Prime Impact Fund](#) (PIF) is a \$50MM, 100% catalytic capital fund formed in 2018. Prime Coalition governs PIF and works with its [investment team](#), tightly tethering our nonprofit structure and charitable purposes to PIF’s corporate form to ensure and maintain the primacy of mission and impact. PIF’s final initial investment was made in October 2021. PIF’s full portfolio of companies is available [here](#).

## Azolla Ventures Fund I

[Azolla Ventures](#) (“Azolla”) is the second fund created by Prime. Azolla is building a portfolio of 20 to 25 otherwise neglected climate startups across industries, each with the potential for gigaton-scale greenhouse gas emission reduction. In addition to meeting the threshold for high impact potential, all companies in Azolla’s portfolio must also be a fit for Prime’s test of additionality, meaning they would not be able to scale their solution and achieve their climate impact goals were it not for Azolla’s support. Azolla is focused on ventures that tend to have long time horizons, are capital intensive, and carry outsized risk in the eyes of returns-first investors but are a critical component of those needed to bring the planet back into balance. Azolla Ventures is a \$230+MM fund that uses both charitable capital and traditional investments in a structure that allows it to catalyze transformative climate ventures at the early stage and keep them on track for impact through exit.

## Project Frame

As we reach greenhouse gas emissions levels that cause catastrophic harm, new, deep-impact solutions must be a critical element of our global climate strategy. [Project Frame](#) is building frameworks and a platform for collaboration to help climate investors better assess the impact that innovations they support today will have on greenhouse gas emissions in the future. Many resources are on the website, including [publications](#), a [glossary](#), and [investor profiles](#).



# ACRONYMS

## USED IN THIS DOCUMENT



<b>AUM</b>	Assets Under Management
<b>AV</b>	Azolla Ventures
<b>CRANE</b>	Carbon Reduction Assessment for New Enterprises
<b>DAF</b>	Donor-Advised Fund(s)
<b>ECI</b>	Early Climate Infrastructure
<b>FOAK</b>	First Of A Kind
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gas
<b>IMM</b>	Impact Measurement and Management
<b>IRR</b>	Internal Rate of Return
<b>MM</b>	Million
<b>PIF</b>	Prime Impact Fund
<b>PRI</b>	Program-Related Investment
<b>VC</b>	Venture Capital

# > APPENDIX A

## PRIME'S VALUES AND COUNTERBALANCES



At Prime, our vision is our guiding star, our mission is what we do, and our values are how we do it. We recognize that the relentless pursuit of any of our values could lead down a slippery slope; as such, we name a counterbalance for each value to help us recognize and hold tensions.

### ADDITIONALITY

- ▶ We are always looking for gaps that Prime can fill – not seeking the next hot thing.
- ▶ Organizationally, we're eager to swim against the tide.
- ▶ A "Prime is the only organization that can do this" orientation can imply saviorism and egocentrism – we must temper our approach and methodology with humility.

#### **Counterbalance value: Humility**

- We're thoughtful and structured about what we say yes to, both organizationally and individually.
- We aren't everything to everyone (and don't feel obligated to be). We always ask who we're crowding out and who we're crowding in, while recognizing that we don't always know the answers.
- We seek spaces and gaps where Prime can add unique value (catalytic capital and beyond).
- We seek to bring others with us. If we're building bridges, we make sure they lead to somewhere (e.g., field-building infrastructure and more).
- We come from a place of curiosity rather than naysaying, especially around the constraints and barriers that others experience.
- We are thoughtful about how we design our work, and we seek to include everyone (with particular care for those who are underrepresented).

### CARE

- ▶ We feel cared for when expectations are clearly communicated across teams (e.g., deadlines, urgency, working styles).
- ▶ Flexibility and empathy are critical to demonstrate care.
- ▶ Care is an assumption that every human being has something to give to the world. We are open to learning with people who have different perspectives and approaches.
- ▶ We all care about our work and colleagues a lot – and need to ensure that we develop and implement boundaries and systems that create space for holistic wellness.

**Counterbalance values: Tenacity & Additionality**

- We clearly and proactively communicate our needs and expectations. That includes respect for personal and professional boundaries, deadlines, and processes.
- We are present with one another in group settings (especially virtual ones) and let our colleagues know if we need to be less present.
- Knowing that work isn't the only thing in our lives, we take time to get to know each other as individuals.
- We only take on work if we know we can do it well, and our perspective and experience are additive.
- We lead our relationships with transparency about our organizational values.
- We use our values to guide our strategy, process, systems, and culture.
- We try to course-correct if we find ourselves judging others, and instead use qualitative and quantitative data/facts/structure to do our work.
- Sometimes we decide we're not going to care about one thing, so that we can care about something bigger.
- We give feedback directly, respectfully, and with a focus on solutions.
- We are thoughtful about our impact on the environment.
- We welcome conversations across different perspectives and challenge each other respectfully.

**COLLECTIVE ABUNDANCE**

- ▶ Generosity: power, time, financial resources, knowledge, sharing, learning, and more.
- ▶ A fundamental push against scarcity and anxiety that enables us to feel like we can confidently push back against extractive modes of operating.
- ▶ A mode that enables hope and transparency, reduces competition – and creates new ideas for the future.
- ▶ A long-term, not a short-term, mindset. We always try to include big picture thinking in how we operate.

**Counterbalance value: Care (e.g., in protection of time, of our team)**

- We hold space to express when we're challenged by living in abundance.
- We share when we're feeling resource-constrained and take action to avoid it.
- We agree that it's okay to say no to things (internally and externally).
- We support protecting our own and each other's time in a way that enables us to do our best work.
- We don't let limits define our sense of imagination and what is possible. We don't eschew something because "it's always been done this way."
- We name when we're using a competitive rather than a collaborative mindset, and we fight the urge to be competitive.
- We find humor, joy, and connection in our work.

## HUMILITY

- ▶ Everything we do is tempered and enabled by humility.
- ▶ As a nonprofit investor, we recognize our own contradictions.
- ▶ Humility enables collaboration – because we can't do everything on our own.
- ▶ We aren't so humble that we're consistently deferential – and we own our confidence and power.
- ▶ Humility is not a weakness. In work scenarios that demonstrate strength as being all-knowing and infallible, we demonstrate humility as a strength.

### **Counterbalance value: Tenacity**

- We do our best, informed by the data we have, and we also recognize that no one knows everything.
- The scale of global problems is bigger than us as individuals and Prime as an organization – we're just one part of a broader ecosystem of people and organizations working to reimagine global systems.
- We use humility as a learning mindset.
- We listen to and learn from as many people as possible.
- We actively listen and are open to feedback and improvement.
- We take responsibility for our mistakes and learn from them.

## TENACITY

- ▶ A consistent reminder that our work is a marathon, not a sprint – we must move “with deliberate speed.”
- ▶ “We can do hard things” – always living and working in spaces where we can push ourselves and the field to reflect, maintain integrity and rigor, and do our work better.
- ▶ It's hard to live tenaciously when that requires opposition to our other values. Under these circumstances, it's hard to say no and hard to say yes at times.
- ▶ We must also consider that this can become bullheadedness and consistently interrogate how we are tenacious. Consequently, it must be balanced with care!

### **Counterbalance values: Humility & Care**

- We recognize our accomplishments, which helps enable us to feel like we can do hard things.
- We are constantly using a long-term, big-picture, and systemic view to maintain focus on the long, challenging road ahead.
- We ask for support when we need it.
- We seek to agitate for change in big systems (e.g., culture and expectations in market solutions).



# APPENDIX B

## EARLY-STAGE COMPANIES SUPPORTED 2015–2023



At time of publication, all PIF and Azolla portfolio companies are showing operational progress toward their future GHG impact potential, and one company is also reporting emissions reduction realized (Charm Industrial). We expect many others to join the ranks of reporting realized emissions reductions in the years ahead.”

	Company	Description
<b>Syn 01</b>	Quidnet Energy	Pioneering a form of pumped hydro – Geomechanical Pumped Storage – that is widely deployable at a very low cost
<b>Syn 02</b>	ConnectDER	Designing products for utilities seeking to monitor and manage residential distributed energy resources (DERs) while improving and standardizing the DER interconnection process
<b>Syn 03</b>	RedWave Energy	Provided solid-state conversion of low-quality industrial waste heat to electricity (no longer active)
<b>Syn 04</b>	Anfiro	Worked on high permeability and energy-efficient membranes to reduce the cost and energy of desalination and water treatment (no longer active)
<b>Syn 05</b>	Rebound Technologies	Developing a revolutionary, energy-efficient, and more cost-effective alternative to traditional vapor compression cooling systems
<b>Syn 06</b>	Gradient	The company building a climate-friendly window A/C unit (also in PIF)
<b>Syn 07</b>	Mallinda	Creating VITRIMAX™, a platform resin system to revolutionize how we think about and use composite materials
<b>Syn 08</b>	Twelve (fka Opus 12)	Transforming CO <sub>2</sub> emissions into the building blocks for essential products currently made from fossil fuels
<b>Syn 09</b>	Wright Electric	Seeking to make all single-aisle flights shorter than 800 miles zero-emissions

	Company	Description
<b>Syn 10 / PIF 01</b>	Lilac Solutions	Transforming lithium extraction to enable low-cost and environmentally-friendly lithium to power electric vehicles and energy storage
<b>PIF 02</b>	Via Separations	Electrifying energy-intensive processes for industrial chemical production
<b>PIF 03</b>	C-Motive Technologies	Developing electrostatic drive motors for electric vehicle applications
<b>PIF 04</b>	MicroByre	Using synthetic biology to replace petro-feedstocks in biomanufacturing
<b>PIF 05</b>	Verdox	An electric carbon capture and removal company
<b>PIF 06</b>	Gradient	The company building a climate-friendly window A/C unit
<b>PIF 07</b>	Sublime Systems	Developing technology for the manufacture of cement using intermittent renewable electricity
<b>PIF 08</b>	Clean Crop Technologies	Developing high voltage plasma technology which can increase yields and improve food safety while reducing food waste
<b>PIF 09</b>	Charm Industrial	Sequestering carbon emissions via bio-oil
<b>PIF 10</b>	Leading Edge Equipment Technologies	Enabling solar manufacturers to produce high-quality, low-cost silicon wafers with a greatly reduced resource footprint
<b>PIF 11</b>	Noon Energy	Developing low-cost battery technology for long-duration energy storage, allowing intermittent renewables to meet continual demand
<b>PIF 12</b>	Avalanche Energy	Creating a fusion reactor that you can hold in your hands
<b>PIF 13</b>	Zanskar Geothermal and Minerals	Using AI to discover and derisk new geothermal resources
<b>PIF 14</b>	Tynt Technologies	Developing smart tinting windows for the residential market
<b>PIF 15</b>	Vesta	Exploring carbon capture using the mineral olivine to deacidify the ocean

	Company	Description
<b>PIF 16</b>	Ovipost	Using automation to produce insects at scale with higher-quality protein and a lower carbon footprint
<b>AV 01</b>	Heaten	Accelerating the transition to clean and efficient industrial heating processes through a high-temperature heat pump
<b>AV 02</b>	SiTration	Developing a system to recycle critical materials from lithium-ion battery cathodes using a novel silicon-membrane-based system
<b>AV 03</b>	Funga	Optimizing the microbiome of tree roots to accelerate growth, storing carbon in wood and soil
<b>AV 04</b>	Carbon Reform	Developing modular carbon capture systems for commercial buildings to reduce CO2 and contaminant levels internally, while saving energy costs





# Prime